ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: PROCOPIUS OF CAESAREA, *PRAGMATIKE HISTORIA*, AND THE LIMITS OF IMPERIAL POWER

Joseph Raymond Frechette, Doctor of Philosophy, 2017

Dissertation directed by: Professor Arthur M. Eckstein
Department of History

The implicit assumption in many recent treatments of the sixth century historian Procopius of Caesarea and his history of the wars of the emperor Justinian is that the "classicizing" elements contained in the *Wars* are a product of *mimesis* that Procopius deployed for literary or political purposes. These approaches lead to the conclusion that the *Wars* are disconnected from the realities of the mid sixth century.

This dissertation suggests that we may gain a better understanding not only of this important historian and his most substantial work, but also the regime he served and criticized, by suspending our disbelief and taking the *Wars* on its own terms. That is, as a work of analytical history whose author expected would be useful to its readers in the conduct of military and political affairs. To this end it examines Procopius' career, the nature and relative dates of his works, the historiographic context in which he operated, the nature of his audience, some of the recurrent issues faced by Roman commanders as described in the *Wars* and their practical applicability to a contemporary military audience, points of contact between Procopius and the didactic military literature of the period, the inapplicability of discussing Procopius as a critic of a "totalitarian" regime, and the Wars' portrait, instead, of an imperial regime limited by both external and internal constraints.

PROCOPIUS OF CAESAREA, *PRAGMATIKE HISTORIA*, AND THE LIMITS OF IMPERIAL POWER

by

Joseph Raymond Frechette

2017

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of the
University of Maryland, College Park in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
2017

Advisory Committee:

Professor Arthur M. Eckstein, Chair

Professor Eric Adler

Professor Elizabeth A. Fisher

Professor Denis F. Sullivan

Professor John Weisweiler

©Copyright by
Joseph Raymond Frechette
2017

Dedication

For Adriane and Luc, my refuge and support through this process.

Acknowledgements

There are many to whom I owe a debt of gratitude for their assistance and support throughout my doctoral studies and the dissertation process. Foremost I would like to thank my adviser, Arthur Eckstein for his guidance and erudite counsel, without which this project would not have come to fruition. Likewise, the members of my committee, Eric Adler, Elizabeth Fisher, Denis Sullivan, and John Weisweiler were generous both with their time and sagacity. Kenneth Holum, although ultimately unable to serve on my committee, helped shepherd my return to graduate studies and this dissertation through their formative periods, both of which would have been poorer without his genial influence. Jodi Hall has been unfailingly patient and kind in helping ensure that I met the university's administrative requirements.

Among the those who have helped me along the way special thanks are due to my colleagues in the Army Historical Program, particularly Michael Bigelow and Thomas Hauser at the U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command and Rebecca Raines, Roma Danysh, Ned Bedessem, Stephen Everett, Kathleen Fargey, Joseph Seymour, Jennifer Nichols, Mike Yarborough, LaJuan Watson, Janet Valentine, Blair Haworth, David Goldman, Chris Koontz, Kathy Nawyn, Frank Shirer, Carrie Sullivan, Mark Reardon, Stephen Carney, Ronnie Davis, and Ed Raines at the Center of Military History who were hardly alone, but bore the brunt of my near-constant distraction, and kindly allowed me to discuss various concerns well outside their job descriptions.

Too many to mention have lent their both their considerate encouragement, and practical assistance with the travails of juggling academic, familial, and professional responsibilities. To say that I am especially grateful to Tom and Annie Galvin, Brad and Carolyn Norton, John and Kristi Bilek, John and Heather Bragg, John and Jennifer Kiesling, and Alexandra Griffen is only to scratch the surface of a circle of friends and family whose kindness is more than my poor merits warrant.

Maria Kouroumali graciously shared her excellent D.Phil. thesis with me, an act of scholarly generosity I find humbling. Jeannie Awono, Parfait Awono, Eran Lupu, Eva Stehle, and Anke Stoneman all helped correct the many deficiencies in my command of the necessary languages. Will Burghart, Nick Seetin, Nik Overtoom, Elizabeth Conner, Heather Juliussen, Greg Stoehr, Dustin Cranford, Nicole McLean, Peter Weinberger, John Ziolkowski, Chrissie Reilly, Bianka Adams, Rob Rush, Jacqueline Hazelton, Randy Papadopoulos, Lisa Wagner, and Alexis Hammersen have all either read or discussed at least portions of my study with me and it has benefited greatly from their input. Any errors that remain are, of course, my sole responsibility.

Finally, I would note the several mentors, friends, and family members who were snatched away too early to see this project in its final form, and whose absence is dearly felt. Most especially, Robert Hadley, Angela Frechette, Mary Frechette, Tom Popa, Jeanne Rutenburg, Jean Oakes, Kathryn Griffen, Donna Everett, and Patrick Frechette, I hope this would have done you proud.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction, Life, and Works…… 1
Introduction…….. 1
Life…….. 13
Works…….. 25

2. The Tradition of Classicizing History and Other Historians in Late Antiquity 46
The Tradition of Classicizing History……..... 46
Procopius' Fourth and Fifth Century Predecessors…… 59
Procopius' Contemporaries and Successors…… 81

3. Procopius and His Audience…….. 92

4. The Practical Problem of Chance…… 114
The Persian Wars – Failure of Hope…… 121
The Vandal Wars – The Knees of God…… 127
The Gothic Wars…… 132
The Dangerous World of Cities…… 138

5. The Late Antique Art of War, Military Manuals, and Procopius……. 143
Understanding Sixth Century Warfare…… 147
The Sixth Century Treatises on Military Science…….. 155

6. The *Wars* and the Limits of "Totalitarianism" – Theory……. 176
The Philosophical Approach of Arendt and Talmon……. 182
The Perspective of Political Science…… 185
"Posttotalitarian" Approaches…… 199

7. The *Wars* as Evidence for the Limits of Imperial Power……. 201
The *Wars* as a History of Imperial *Renovatio* or Constraint?……. 204
External Constraints and the International System……. 210
External Constraints and the Western Periphery……. 221
Internal Constraints - Roman Leaders and Forces in the Field…… 239

8. Conclusion……..... 268

Appendices

A. Listing of the Types of Individuals Noted by Procopius..... 279
Roman Soldiers..... 279
Emperors and Aristocrats..... 284
Mythological/Historical Figures..... 286
Roman Officials..... 290
Foreign Soldiers..... 292
Foreign Aristocrats and Royalty..... 294
Foreign Officials..... 296
Civilians..... 297
Clergy..... 298

B. Procopius' References to *Tyche*..... 299

Bibliography..... 317

Chapter 1: Introduction, Life, and Works

Introduction

It is a notable fact that most of the substantial recent general treatments of Procopius of Caesarea and his works discuss the explicitly Thucydidean passages in his *Wars* alternatively as a "classical mask" behind which he might more freely criticize Justinian's regime,[1] a requirement of genre that imposed artificial restrictions of language and content that hindered contemporary analysis,[2] part of a "conceptual backdrop" against which Procopius' contemporaries might be judged,[3] or a "declaration of allegiance" to the classical past and a method of critiquing the Justinianic regime by including carefully coded allusions to previous authors, a view inspired by Leo Strauss' theories of esoteric writing.[4] Despite the great utility of much of this modern work, these studies all share an implicit assumption. They all presume that the "classicizing" elements contained in the *Wars* are a product of *mimesis*[5] that Procopius

1. J.A.S. Evans, *Procopius* (New York: Twayne, 1972), 40-41.

2. Averil Cameron, *Procopius and the Sixth Century* (New York: Routledge, 1985), 17, 33-34, 150. Denis Rocques, "Histoire et rhétorique dans l'oeuvre de Procope de Césarée: Procope est-il historien?" in *Categorie linguistiche e concettuali delle storiografia bizantina*, eds. U. Criscuolo and R. Maisano (Naples, 2000), 9-39, "historiographe, Procope est bien plus un lettré qu'un authentique historien." Dariusz Brodka, *Die Geschichtsphilosophie in der spätantiken Historiographie* (New York: Peter Lang, 2004), 14-20, "Prokopios ist zwar kein solcher Philosoph der Geschichte wie Thukydides oder Polybios."

3. Charles F. Pazdernik, "Procopius and Thucydides on the Labors of War: Belisarius and Brasidas in the Field," *TAPA* 130 (2000): 149–187.

4. Anthony Kaldellis, *Procopius of Caesarea: Tyranny, History, and Philosophy at the End of Antiquity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 18.

5. Herbert Hunger, "On the Imitation (ΜΙΜΗΣΙΣ) of Antiquity in Byzantine Literature," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 23/24 (1969/70): 15–38.

deployed for literary or political purposes, creating a certain artificiality and disconnect from the reality of the mid sixth century.

The notion that Procopius allowed his penchant for imitating earlier classical authors, Herodotus and Thucydides in particular, to distort his account of events can be traced back at least as far as the nineteenth century when scholars noted his many classical allusions and attributed them to a sort of degenerate Late Antique *Nachahmungssucht* driven by "die Freude mit thukydideischer Diktion glänzen zu können."[6] Such studies, in turn, have prompted traditional defenses of Procopius' basic historical veracity and credibility which noted that independent sources confirm at least some of the episodes in his account,[7] and that he included fundamentally differentiating elements in his narrative despite deploying Thucydidean diction in describing events with ancient analogs such as the Justinianic plague.[8] Nevertheless, contemporary Procopian studies are dominated by his literary and rhetorical qualities, or lack thereof. Even an interesting recent dissertation on Procopius' battle descriptions includes a concluding admission that in future work, "unlike

6. Hermann Braun, "Procopius Caesariensis Quatenus Imitatus Sit Thucydidem" (Ph.D. diss., Erlangen, 1885), 61; idem, *Die Nachahmung Herodots Durch Prokop* (Nürnberg, 1894), 43; Max Brückner, *Zur Beurteilung Des Geschichtschreibers Procopius von Cäsarea* (Ansbach, 1896), 11.

7. Jakob Haury, *Zur Beurteilung des Geschichtschreibers Procopius von Cäsarea* (Munich: H. Kutzner, 1896), 3-10.

8. G. Soyter, "Die Glaubwürdigkeit des Geschichtschreibers Prokopios Von Kaisareia," *BZ* 44 (1951): 541-545.

this thesis, more attention ought to be paid to the reality, and less to the rhetoric [in the *Wars*]."[9]

To my knowledge, only a few modern studies have directly engaged with Procopius as an analytical and didactic historian in his own right.[10] To be blunt, more ink has been spilled on Procopius' use of classical idiom as a political or literary pose or method of expression than in dealing with the *Wars* directly as analytical history. This is not to deny the seriousness and utility of such scholarship, but it runs the risk of relegating Procopius to the role, at best, of a literary critic of the Justinianic regime and, at worst, to that of a mere reporter who is capable of mimicking Thucydides' style and vocabulary, but apparently with no understanding or inclination to engage in serious analysis of history and the human condition. I propose instead that we may gain an additional understanding not only of this important historian and his most substantial work, but also of the regime he served and criticized, by suspending our disbelief and engaging with the *Wars* on its own terms. That is, as a work of serious history whose author expected would be useful to its readers in the conduct of military and political affairs. It was not a mere rhetorical affectation when Procopius noted that "the memory of these events would be a great thing and most helpful

9. Conor C. Whately, "Descriptions of Battle in the Wars of Procopius" (Ph.D. diss., University of Warwick, 2009), 343.

10. Katherine Adshead, "Procopius' Poliorcetica: Continuities and Discontinuities," in *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity*, ed. Graeme Clarke (Elmsford: Pergamon Press, 1990), 93–115; Walter Kaegi, "Procopius the Military Historian," *Byzantinische Forschungen* 15 (1990): 53–85; Börm, *Prokop und die Perser* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2007); Conor Whately, *Battles and Generals: Combat, Culture, and Didacticism in Procopius'* Wars (Leiden: Brill, 2016), esp. 337-340. Börm concludes that Procopius' portrait of the Sassanians is generally consistent with what would be expected of a good-faith effort on the part of a contemporary observer and, *contra* Kaldellis, that he cannot be convicted of outright fabrication.

to men of the present time, and those to be born after as well, in case time should ever again place men under a similar constraint."[11]

In the introduction to his *Wars*, Procopius made his most pointed methodological claims for his history. They deserve his readers' attention in that they spell out his overt intent.[12] Procopius declared that he had written the history of the wars Justinian waged in the east and west so that great events would not be overwhelmed by the passage of time and forgotten,[13] going so far as to claim, because of advances in the equipment and practice of war, that even the deeds of antiquity do not compare with those of his time.[14] Furthermore, he is explicit that this was no mere antiquarian inquiry, but valuable for contemporary and later readers whom time placed under similar constraint, and might be engaged in planning for war as well as other struggles, since the study of similar situations in the past will help in understanding the outcome of analogous present events.[15] Like Thucydides and Polybius before him, Procopius claimed a utilitarian purpose for his work, expecting that his audience would include soldiers and statesmen who would be able to learn from his work and apply its lessons in their own circumstances. This understanding of the use of military

---

11. Procopius *Wars* 1.1.2-3. τοῖς τε γὰρ πολεμησείουσι καὶ ἄλλως ἀγωνιουμένοις ὄνησίν τινα ἐκπορίζεσθαι οἵα τέ ἐστιν ἡ τῆς ἐμφεροῦς ἱστορίας ἐπίδειξις, ἀποκαλύπτουσα μὲν ὅποι ποτὲ τοῖς προγεγενημένοις τὰ τῆς ὁμοίας ἀγωνίας ἐχώρησεν,αἰνισσομένη δὲ ὁποίαν τινὰ τελευτὴν τοῖς γε ὡς ἄριστα βουλευομένοις τὰ παρόντα, ὡς τὸ εἰκὸς, ἕξει.

12. Proc. *Wars* 1.1.1-2.

13. Cf. Hdt. 1.1.

14. Proc. *Wars* 1.1.6-17.

15. Cf. Thuc. 1.22.4. *Pace* H.-P. Stahl, *Thucydides: Man's Place in History* (Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2003), 15-18; Charles W. Fornara, *The Nature of History in Ancient Greece and Rome* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 106. Note also Polyb. 1.1.2, 1.35, 3.7.6, 3.31; 12.25b, 30.6.1-4.

history was neither new in Procopius' day, nor has it been dispensed with by military professionals in our own.[16] Understanding this purpose helps to illuminate Procopius' work, and to set it in context as a serious product of an ancient Greek historical tradition which retained some of its Classical and Hellenistic vitality.

Taking Procopius' introductory comments at face value represents something of a departure from much of the recent historiography on Procopius noted above. Indeed, Roger Scott dismissed the introduction to the *Wars* as a mere "farrago of Herodotus and Thucydides" that was a part of "sophisticated game" of "poking fun at his classical models."[17] The recent focus on Procopius' language, style, and rarefied literary allusions runs the risk of leading us to miss the forest for the trees. Procopius was undoubtedly a "highly artful reporter."[18] However, an additional approach is suggested by two articles published in 1990 that deserved greater attention in the quarter century since their publication and a recent monograph. Walter Kaegi, although denying that Procopius presented coherent lessons concerning strategy, operations, and tactics, was willing to take Procopius' declaration of didactic intent at face value, noting that military professionals have, and still do, regard history as an empirical database of

16. Cf. John E. Jessup and Robert W. Coakley eds. *A Guide to the Study and Use of Military History* (Washington: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2004), *passim*.

17. Roger Scott, "The Classical Tradition in Byzantine Historiography," in *Byzantium and the Classical Tradition*, eds. Margaret Mullet and Roger Scott (Birmingham: Center for Byzantine Studies, University of Birmingham, 1981), 73.

18. Cameron, *Procopius*, xi.

practical information.[19] Likewise, Katherine Adshead suggested that in the *Wars* Procopius' Thucydidean echoes were due in part to his analysis of a real military problem common to both their times, that is, the attack and defense of walled cities.[20] More recently, Conor Whately, working under the assumption that Procopius was describing real events,[21] sought to elucidate specific lessons Procopius presented for his readers through his descriptions and explanations of combat, with a focus on how Procopius describes and explains combat with an eye towards how to defeat particular enemies.[22] The present study would suggest that if we build upon this perspective, and focus on the *Wars* on its own terms as a work with an important message to convey to its readers, we may gain a better understanding not only of this important historian and his most substantial work, but also the regime he served and criticized.

This is something of a counter-reformatory effort away from both a recent tendency to privilege the perspective of the *Secret History* and a larger trend in ancient historiography represented by the so-called "literary turn." Procopian studies have experienced something of a historiographic inversion over the last half century. In 1962, in a brief discussion of Procopius' works, A.H.M. Jones could, in the same breath, both praise the *Wars* as a source, and dismiss the

---

19. Walter Kaegi, "Procopius the Military Historian," *Byzantinische Forschungen* 15 (1990): 53–85. "Behind his history was not only a classical historiographical tradition but the realities of and the decision to come to grips with the realities of sixth century warfare."

20. Katherine Adshead, "Procopius' Poliorcetica: Continuities and Discontinuities," in *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity*, ed. Graeme Clarke (Elmsford: Pergamon Press, 1990), 93–115.

21. Whately, *Battles and Generals,* 13-20.

22. Ibid. 68-196.

Secret History as a "venomous pamphlet" unworthy of respect.[23] The notion, however, of the *Wars* as the more serious work of a serious historian did not remained unchallenged long. Only a decade later, J.A.S. Evans suggested instead that the Thucydidean elements of the *Wars* were merely a "classical mask" which allowed *Profanhistoriker* like Procopius to critique the regime with some degree of safety behind a veil of classical rhetoric.[24]

Averil Cameron went even further, emphasizing the literary requirements of the various genres into which Procopius' works fall. In her estimation "we cannot privilege the *Wars* over the *Secret History* or the *Buildings* on grounds of high style or seriousness of composition."[25] Tradition dictated both style and content and "Thucydidean history" only denoted a "set of external characteristics to which Procopius largely conforms."[26] That is, the logic of the genre conditioned the treatment of the subject matter, and any elements of Thucydidean analytical history are a mere affectation. In short, Procopius was apparently capable of creating a quite sophisticated facsimile of a classical history in terms of vocabulary and style, but incapable of practicing true analytical history. "He writes throughout," Cameron insists, "from a set of fixed or stereotyped attitudes which in fact stood in the way of critical thinking."[27] After

---

23. A.H.M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992) 266.

24. Evans, *Procopius*, 40–41; idem, "The Attitudes of the Secular Historians of the Age of Justinian Towards the Classical Past," *Traditio* 32 (1976): 353–58.

25. Cameron, *Procopius*, 25.

26. Ibid. 45.

27. Ibid. 143.

taking a rather dim view of the tradition of Greek historiography overall, particularly regarding its disinterest in economic, social, and religious issues, the best that Cameron can say of Procopius is that he "was an excellent reporter rather than a historian."[28] In essence she was amplifying a point she had made two decades earlier, that Procopius and Agathias "simply like the schoolboy composer today *imitated* the writers they had chosen as their models."[29] This is all very much of a piece both with nineteenth century German scholarship which suggested that Procopius' imitation of classical antecedents came at the expense of accuracy,[30] as well as a trend in modern scholarship to regard the classical elements in late antique or early Byzantine literature as not only out of place, but seriously distorting.[31]

Recently, Anthony Kaldellis has responded to Cameron's study with a pungent critique. In his estimation, it is unbelievable that serious Greek writers were educated for a millennium on the basis of the classical authors, and managed to absorb rhetorical forms and phraseology, but nothing of their values.[32] However, Kaldellis is interested less in Procopius the historian, and more in Procopius the Platonist critic of a totalitarian Christian regime. He refers

---

28. Ibid. 150-151.

29. Averil Cameron and Alan Cameron, "Christianity and Tradition in the Historiography of the Late Empire," *CQ* (1964): 327.

30. See above n. 6.

31. See for instance Cyril Mango, *Byzantine Literature as a Distorting Mirror* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975); idem, "Discontinuity with the Classical Past in Byzantium," in *Byzantium and the Classical Tradition*, ed. Margaret Mullet and Roger Scott (Birmingham: Center for Byzantine Studies, University of Birmingham, 1981).

32. Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 40.

to the methodological passages in the introduction to the *Wars* as a "declaration of allegiance to a specific cultural tradition" and an indication of intent "to adhere to the canons of classical historiography," rather than a requirement of genre on the part of a classicizing historian. There is some debate on the nature of those canons, and Kaldellis is not particularly interested in Procopius' deployment of specific historical truth. Instead, he prefers a view of ancient historiography in which the facts could be and often were subordinated in the service of some larger truth that "can paradoxically be truer than the facts."[33] That is, classical historians could and did practice free invention in order to drive home some larger point through clever inter- and intratextual references. For example, Kaldellis believes that Procopius' resume of Persian history at the opening of the *Wars* correlates too closely to Plato's sequence of regimes away from the ideal, though timocracy, oligarchy and democracy, and ending in tyranny, to be either accidental or strictly factual.[34] In his view, this is a coded critique of the Justinianic regime interpretable only by those select readers steeped deeply enough in the classical *paideia,* and Plato in particular, to appreciate them.[35] Thus, it is naïve to subject ancient authors to analysis that aims to do nothing more than separate truth from falsehood. Literary analysis is necessary in order to analyze an author's allusions properly. Essentially, although they both regard the *Wars* as literary artifice, Kaldellis represents a view at the opposite extreme from Cameron. Instead of Procopius deploying classical rhetoric as a mere

33. Ibid. 12.

34. Ibid. 94-115.

35. Ibid. 115-117.

unthinking pose, we are to believe that he and at least some of his readers understood his literary forebears so well and to such a sophisticated degree that allusion and metaphor became a vehicle of political critique, in which subtle classical references that would be lost upon the emperor and his loyalists would be interpretable to a circle of intellectual opponents to the regime.

Kaldellis' point regarding the proper interpretation of literary allusions has much to recommend it, and both Charles Pazdernik and Katherine Adshead have independently made use of this principle in order to explore certain parallels they discern between the texts of Thucydides and Procopius.[36] However, Kaldellis carries the view to such an extreme that he leaves little room for Procopius' programmatic statement that, "while cleverness is appropriate to rhetoric, and inventiveness to poetry, truth alone is appropriate to history."[37] If Cameron's Procopius is unable to escape his unconscious sixth century classicizing sensibilities, Kaldellis' Procopius is all too conscious of his literary pose and is in danger of subverting the truthfulness of an historian for cleverness and inventiveness.

This is not inconsistent with recent trends in the assessment of the ancient historians as dealers in rhetoric and literature rather than essentially truthful scholars attempting to be accurate.[38] This is far from a settled debate and

---

36. Adshead, "Procopius' Poliorcetica," 93-104; Pazdernik, "A Dangerous Liberty," 144-184.

37. Procopius *Wars* 1.1.4-5.

38. For a good, if witty, introduction to this debate in general see J.E. Lendon, "Historians Without History: Against Roman Historiography," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Historians*, ed. Andrew Feldherr (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 41–61.

Kaldellis' interpretation depends to a great degree upon a controversial understanding of ancient historiography in general.

It is contended here that Procopius himself and much of the tradition of classical Greek historiography of which he was a part were not so disconnected from the practical realities of the events with which they dealt. In part, this was because, like Thucydides and Polybius before them, they were often men of affairs concerned with the practical deeds of war and politics concerned with utilitarian lessons for at least the portion of their audience composed of soldiers and statesmen. The obvious consequence to retailing rhetoric unconnected to reality under the guise of "truthful" history would be to hazard the interests of the empire and the lives of its soldiers. Following from this proposition is the implication that the *Wars* contain Procopius' honest understanding of the empire he served, which, in turn, suggests certain problems with the modern understanding of Procopius as an ancient critic of a "totalitarian" regime. The *Wars* do contain criticism of Justinian's regime, but they are more often realistic critiques of imperial weakness, inefficiency, and impotence rather than either some sort of premodern Stalinism or the divinely appointed regime of contemporary propaganda. If this impression regarding our best narrative source for the period is correct, there are larger implications for our understanding of the era.

This argument will be pursued through the present and six additional chapters. The balance of this chapter will be spent in examination of Procopius' biography and the nature and relative dating of the works in his oeuvre. The

purpose of this examination will be to first draw out and emphasize the aspects of Procopius' career that imply a professional interest in the conduct of war and statecraft. Second, it will suggest that it is reasonable to treat the *Wars* separately, as a work of didactic history, from Procopius' other, undeniably rhetorical, works, the *Secret History* and the *Buildings*. Chapter Two will survey the tradition of classical historiography in late antiquity, and argue that Procopius was far from a singular figure in laboring within the vineyard of classical historiography as a man of military and political affairs with a practical intent for his work. The third chapter will examine Procopius' audience and suggest that it contained at least a leavening of like-minded individuals in the imperial military and bureaucratic apparatus, who might reasonably be expected to bring a degree of practical understanding to their reception of the *Wars* and to expect to profit from them. Chapter Four will examine Procopius' incorporation of the role of chance in military affairs into his narrative. Far from a purely intellectual historiographic question, this is a serious issue with which military theorists and policy makers still grapple. Chapter Five will reinforce this assertion of Procopius as a serious thinker on military issues by seeking points of contact between the Wars and the didactic military manuals of Late Antiquity. Having argued for Procopius' seriousness, the final two chapters shall attempt to tease out certain implications of this approach. Chapter Six will be something of a digression on the theoretical literature on totalitarianism and its applicability to any premodern regime, let alone Justinian's, while Chapter Seven will suggest that one of the persistent themes in the *Wars* is actually the severe external and internal

limitations on the efficient exercise of imperial power. In the *Wars*, Procopius presented the emperor and his regime as neither divine nor diabolical as he respectively did in the *Buildings* and the *Secret History*, let alone as the Stalin of the sixth century, and this is the contemporary assessment that deserves to be taken seriously.

Procopius' Life

An examination of Procopius' biography is suggestive of certain preoccupations and concerns. First and foremost, the modern reader must bear in mind that Procopius was a participant in events, a fact he regarded as a qualification for writing history, [39] like his forebears.[40] The practical nature of the events he described would have had an immediacy that it is hard to appreciate from the remove of the modern academy. In suggesting that Procopius' biography must be borne in mind when interpreting his *Wars*, it may be fairly argued that this approach is something of a throwback to that of Berthold Rubin, who saw the *Wars* as written on behalf and for the glory of Procopius' patron, Belisarius.[41] The approach here, however, is that it was not the person of the general, but of the historian himself that provides a key to the work.[42]

39. Proc. 1.1.3.

40. Hdt. 2.99.1; Thuc. 1.22.2-3; Polyb. 12.26-28a.

41. Berthold Rubin, *Prokopios von Kaisareia* (Stuttgart: Alfred Druckenmüller Verlag, 1954), 84.

42. An approach explicitly eschewed by Cameron, *Procopius*, 15.

He was a man who had spent a good deal of his adult life on campaign with one of the premier captains of his generation, and had seen many of the practical problems of war first hand. If his abilities as an operational and strategic historian sometimes appear to leave something to be desired, we should still remember that Procopius was no mere armchair analyst of events. He was a man of affairs who had seen triumph, defeat, genius, bungling, death, maiming, and atrocity, all of which might be frustrated or retrieved by the impenetrable whim of chance. The problems of war were not simply academic for him, but tragically serious. If his claims for utility or the lessons he imparts occasionally seem to modern readers to be *topoi*, that does not mean that they were not meant in earnest and did not bear repeating.[43]

The evidence we have for the life and career of Procopius himself depends mainly upon his own works. To these we may add some later *testimonia* which confuse as much as they illuminate certain issues. He tells us he was a native of Caesarea in Palestine,[44] and that he was well qualified, as an advisor to the general Belisarius, [45] to relate the history of Justinian's wars. It is generally assumed, on the basis of his obvious education and later references to Procopius as either a *dikēgoros*[46] or a *rhetor*,[47] that he was a trained jurist,[48] and

---

43. Note P.J. Rhodes, "In Defence of the Greek Historians," *Greece and Rome* 41 (1994): 156-171. Simply because something is a common-place, does not make it untrue.

44. Proc. *Wars* 1.1.1, *SH* 11.25.

45. Ibid. 1.1.3 and 1.12.24 (*symboulos*) and 3.14.3 (*paredros*).

46. Menander Protector Fr. 14.2 [Blockley].

47. Agathias *Hist.* pref. 22, pref. 32, 2.19.1, 4.15.1, 4.26.4, 4.29.5, 4.30.5; Evagrius *HE* 4.12, 4.19, 5.24; *Suda*, pi 2479.

48. Bury, *LRE* II, 419 n 2; Otto Veh, *Zur Geschichtsschreibung und Weltauffassung des Prokop von Caesarea* I (Bayreuth: 1950/51), 5; followed by Evans, *Procopius* (New York: Twayne, 1972), 32; Tony Honoré, *Tribonian* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), 6 n.42, 243; Cameron, *Procopius*, 6; Geoffrey Greatrex, "Lawyers and Historians in Late Antiquity," in *Law, Society, and Authority in Late Antiquity*, ed. Ralph Mathieson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 150; idem, "Recent Work on Procopius and the composition of *Wars* VIII," *BMGS* 27

that he served Belisarius as an *assessor*, or legal advisor. Procopius tells us that he joined Belisarius' retinue at Dara in 527,[49] and, except for a hiatus in the service of the general Solomon in Africa,[50] remained with Belisarius at least until his entry into Ravenna in 540.[51] While serving in the west he occasionally appears as a specific actor in his history, receiving and noting particular omens of success against the Vandals,[52] engaging in a bit of espionage regarding the location of the Vandal fleet,[53] organizing supplies for the forces besieged in Rome,[54] and advising Belisarius on an effective system of tactical trumpet signals.[55] He was resident at Constantinople by the outbreak of the plague in spring of 542 and thereafter presumably devoted himself to writing not only his history of Justinian's wars, but also his notorious invective, the *Secret History*, and his panegyric on Justinian's building programs, the *Buildings*. Despite occasionally noting an intention to compose an ecclesiastical history, Procopius does not appear to have ever produced such a work.[56]

(2003), 58. But cf. Felix Dahn, *Prokopius von Cäsarea: ein Beitrag zur Historiographie der Völkerwanderung und des sinkenden Römerthums*, (Berlin, 1865), 67-69; Haury, *Zur Beurteilung*, 19-20; James Howard-Johnston, "The Education and Expertise of Procopius," *AnTard* 8 (2000): 19-30.

49. Proc. *Wars* 1.12.24.

50. Ibid. 4.14.39-41.

51. Ibid. 6.29.32.

52. Ibid. 3.12.3-5, 3.15.35.

53. Ibid. 3.14.3-15.

54. Ibid. 6.4.1-20

55. Ibid. 6.23.19-23.

56. Proc. *Wars* 8.25.13, *SH* 1.14, 11.33, 26.18.

If Procopius truly was Belisarius' *assessor*, he would presumably have ranked among the *spectabiles comites primi ordinis*.[57] Ernest Stein suggested, on the basis of the *Suda*'s reference to Procopius as *illustris*,[58] that the vacant illustrate may have served as a "*bien mince*" imperial reward for his service with Belisarius.[59] In his late seventh century chronicle John of Nikiu referred to Procopius as a patrician and prefect.[60] Although Malalas and Theophanes[61] attest a Procopius as the urban prefect of Constantinople in 562-3, John's testimony is late and somewhat confused.[62] Thus, the identification with the historian remains inconclusive.

Such, in brief, is what may be said with some degree of confidence. To this we may add more or less speculative theories concerning Procopius' background, education, interests, and religion. Procopius' outlook as expressed in his works is thoroughly conservative and aristocratic,[63] while his mastery of classical literature and rhetorical ability has occasioned differing conclusions regarding his level of education. The preponderance of opinion and the traditional view is that he must have received a reasonably sophisticated education in the *liberales artes*. Likewise, Procopius' fluency with the canon of classical history is unsurprising. While history was not one of the formal exercises within the rhetorical training of the *progymnasmata*, such exercises

---

57. *CTh* 6.15.1; *CJ* 1.51.11; Stein, *Bas-Emp* II, 711-12; on assesors generally, cf. Jones, *LRE*, 500-3.

58. *Suda*, pi 2479.

59. Stein, *Bas-Emp*, 712.

60. John of Nikiu, 92.20; Stein, *Bas-Emp*, 712.

61 Joh. Mal. 494, 496; Theoph. AM 6055.

62. Stein, *Bas-Emp*, 712.

63. Dahn, *Prokopius von Cäsarea,* 134-144; Stein, *Bas-Emp*, 711; Rubin, *Prokopios,* 28; Evans, *Procopius*, 95-96; Cameron, *Procopius*, 6-7, 227-228.

included a great deal of historical material touching on archaic and classical Greece to be memorized and imitated.[64]

For over a century scholars have noted that Procopius' affinity for Thucydides appears to be shared by his contemporaries, the rhetors of Gaza.[65] The point is suggestive and it is possible that Procopius received some part of his education there. The essential point of this position is encapsulated by Haury's argument that, with respect to language and world-view, Procopius should be counted among the Gazans.[66] Haury and Greatrex have gone so far as to suggest that Procopius not only studied at Gaza, but that he was the son of a certain Stephanus, who was proconsul of Palestina Prima in 536. Obviously this conclusion is conjectural and has met with varying degrees of favor.[67] I would only note that Rubin was certainly correct, that such a connection would fit with the traditional understanding of Procopius' social class and education. There certainly was a fair degree of intellectual contact between Caesarea and Gaza,[68] but the issue must ultimately remain an aporia, particularly since the school of Gaza did not have a monopoly on the study of Thucydides.[69]

---

64. Craig A. Gibson, "Learning Greek History in the Ancient Classroom: The Evidence of the Treatises on Progymnasmata," *CPhil*. 99 (2004): 103-129. "History was at the center of a young man's training in the manipulation of words and ideas to create spoken and written discourse; one simply could not learn how to argue without learning how to argue about history."

65. Haury, *Zur Beurteilung,* 10-19; Glanville Downey, *Gaza in the Sixth Century* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963) 112; Evans, *Procopius*, 31-32; Geoffrey Greatrex, "Stephanus, the Father of Procopius of Caesarea?" *Medieval Prosopography* 17 (1996): 125-45.

66. Haury, *Zur Beurteilung,* 10-19, "Prokop von Cäsarea in Bezug auf Sprache und Weltanschauung völlig zu den Gazäern zu zählen ist."

67. Note the objections of Bury, *LRE* II, 420; followed by Rubin, *Prokopios*, 23-24 and Cameron, *Procopius*, 6-7.

68. Choricius, *Or*. 8.12-14.

69. Gibson, "Learning Greek History," 116-17.

Recently, in an important revisionist study, Kouroumali has suggested a more conservative view of Procopius' education and literary talents.[70] She argued that Procopius does not display the level of practiced rhetorical or sophistic ability that we might expect from someone who had progressed far beyond the standard secondary education of the day into advanced study of rhetoric or philosophy. Rather than a writer of great ability at sophistic declamation or epideictic rhetorical displays, Kouroumali saw the work of man of a more prosaic and technical mind. Additionally, she noted that we need not necessarily look beyond his native Caesarea for the location of Procopius' formative education. We have his own testimony that there was some number of rhetors resident there, one of whom was successful enough to purchase an entire coastal village before being gulled out of it by Justinian.[71]

Kouroumali's argument relies to some extent on Procopius' relative lack of rhetorical sophistication in comparison to Thucydides, and, like Cameron before her, she takes a very narrow view of Procopius' purpose in the *Wars*.[72] I would suggest that the very fact that she could make such an argument is telling. It should caution us against too easily assuming that his intended audience was confined to those whose education had progressed into the rarefied air of

70. Maria Kouroumali, "Procopius and the Gothic War" (D.Phil. Thesis, Oxford University, 2005), 62-83. Cf. Ramsay MacMullen, *Soldier and Civilian in the Later Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 174-77 on the "military mind."

71. *SH* 30.18-19.

72. Kouroumali, 59, "the random project of a well-educated individual with a flair for writing and the ability of a good reporter."

advanced rhetorical and sophistic writing. This has implications regarding his intent in writing the work.

That all said, we should also take care not to over-analyze these points. The plain fact of the matter is that Procopius was educated enough to compose the most substantial extant history in Greek since Cassius Dio as well as an invective and panegyric and to lace them with references to classical literature. Whether these came at first or second hand, as Cameron suggests,[73] the ability to draw these elements together in a coherent fashion is indicative of a degree of literary skill and analytical thought that should not be readily dismissed.

When we turn to the related issue of Procopius' professional interests, we also encounter a point of debate. The current general consensus is that Procopius was indeed a lawyer.[74] However, Kouroumali has noted that Procopius does not display an interest in or knowledge of legal issues beyond what might be expected of any civil servant, and that we should be cautious about assuming he had received advanced legal or rhetorical education.[75] Although this conclusion is based in part on an argument from silence, it is a further indication that the assumption that Procopius was a jurist or rhetorician is somewhat tenuous.

James Howard-Johnston, inspired by Kouroumali's work when it was still in progress, has made much of the fact that, despite the archaizing features of Procopius' prose, his syntax is actually rather simple, suggesting that he was

---

73. Cameron, *Procopius*, 38-39.

74. See above n.48.

75. Kouroumali, 9.

perhaps not so well-trained a rhetorician or lawyer as is often supposed.[76] In his estimation Agathias and Evagrius made an inferential leap when they applied the title "rhetor," noting that Procopius' references to legal issues are few and not terribly sophisticated.[77] Instead, Howard-Johnston suggests, based on the *Buildings*, that Procopius was an engineer rather than a literary intellectual, whose education was more likely technical than rhetorical, with a particular interest in hydraulic construction.

Geoffrey Greatrex has vigorously challenged this conclusion, noting that Procopius displays interests in other technical matters such as wounds, military technology, and economic affairs.[78] Greatrex makes a good case against identifying Procopius as an engineer. However, Howard-Johnston deserves credit for reinvigorating an old discussion. In the nineteenth century, neither Dahn nor Haury were convinced that Procopius was a jurist and the question deserves further consideration. [79] In a modern intellectual environment in which the literary and rhetorical elements in the works of historians ancient and modern is often privileged, [80] the degree to which Procopius' interests may be said to be a product of a rhetorical or legalistic background is not a purely academic question.

---

76. Howard-Johnston, "Education and Expertise," 19-30. A point reinforced and elaborated by Kouroumali, 19-61.

77. Ibid. 24.

78. Greatrex, "Recent Work on Procopius," 57-61.

79. Dahn, 67-69; Haury, *Zur Beurteilung,* 19-20.

80. Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism*, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985) esp. 81-100; A.J. Woodman, *Rhetoric in Classical Historiography*, (Portland: Areopagitica Press, 1988) esp. 70-101.

Much depends on how we construe Procopius' position on Belisarius' staff. If he was an *assessor*, it naturally follows that he was a jurist.[81] In his discussion of the issue Greatrex notes that Procopius himself, like his contemporaries, did often used the term *rhetor* to refer to jurists,[82] but we should note that he never applies the term to himself, and that in contemporary usage it was indiscriminately applied to nearly all the historians and chroniclers of the period.[83]

The identification of Procopius as an *assessor*, requires us to imbue a specific and technical significance to the terms that Procopius does use to refer to his position on Belisarius' staff which are *symboulos*[84] and *paredros*.[85] An examination of these terms in the handful of other instances in which they occur does not lend itself to any neat conclusions, but we may note some suggestive points. Procopius uses the term *symboulos* elsewhere without any technical specificity other than to denote individuals serving in advisory capacities, two of which occur in entirely non-Roman contexts. The Armenian *strategos* Bassicius was a *symboulos* to his king, Arsaces.[86] Likewise Stephanus of Edessa noted that he had been a *symboulos* to the Persian king Kavad I.[87] The only instance

81. Adolf Berger, "Encyclopedic Dictionary of Roman Law," *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 43 (1953): 351; Jones, LRE, 500-501; Veh, *Zur Geschichtsschreibung* I, 5.

82. Greatrex, "Lawyers and Historians," 150 n. 14.

83. Georgios Fatouros, "Zur Prokop-Biographie," *Klio* 62 (1980): 517-518.

84. Proc. *Wars* 1.1.3, 1.12.24.

85. Ibid. 3.14.3.

86. Ibid. 1.5.17.

87. Ibid. 2.26.35.

that occurs in a Roman context is a vague statement put into the mouth of the officer Gregorius in an address to his cousin Artabanes that Belisarius had come to Africa with many *symoubouloi*.[88] Not only is such a statement not dispositive, we should note that the occasion for the statement is an exhortation to liberate Africa from the rebel, Gontharis, and thereby surpass the glory of Belisarius whose victory over the Vandals had been assisted by a formidable force. The *symbouloi* referenced here were supposedly a formidable aid to the campaign. It is difficult to believe that Procopius meant his readers to believe that they were mere jurists without recalling the joke about white-collar FBI agents telling felons to surrender because they were "surrounded by lawyers and accountants." The usage of the other classicizing historians of the period is no more specific.[89]

Procopius' use of *paredros* and the related verb *paredreuo* is a bit more suggestive, but hardly conclusive. In the majority of cases he clarifies his use of the term to indicate that he is referring to individuals serving as *quaestores palatii* to the Roman and Ostrogothic courts: Proclus,[90] Tribonian,[91] Fidelis,[92] and Spinus.[93] Clearly there is a legal connotation here, but it is unclear how universal such usage might be when, as in his own case, he does not add the specific clarification *quaestor*. In one instance, when referring to members of the imperial

88. Ibid. 4.27.12.

89. Malchus, Fr. 23.20 [Blockley]; Priscus, Fr. 14.76 [Blockley]; Agath. *Hist*. 3.12.1; Theoph. Sim. 4.5.4, 7.7.2.

90. Proc. *Wars* 1.11.11, *SH* 6.13.1.

91. Proc. *Wars* 1.24.12; *SH* 13.12.1.

92. Proc. *Wars* 5.14.5.

93. Ibid. 7.40.20.

court, Procopius simply meant the various learned advisers that typically surround sovereigns.[94] In one non-autobiographical instance in which he used the term to describe a member of a general's retinue, he notes that Hermogenes, who had served as an adviser to the general Vitalian, held the office of *magister* and assisted Belisarius in organizing the defense of Dara in 530.[95] We might also note that neither term has any legal connotation in Procopius' thematic and stylistic models, Herodotus and Thucydides.[96]

Even if we accept that *paredros* generally denotes an *assessor* and therefore a jurist in Procopius' specific case, it could easily fall well short of comprehending the true scope of an individual's activities and interests. The example of the *paredros* Hermogenes is a case in point, since he also served extensively as an envoy to the Persian court and as *magister officiorum*.[97] In the case of Procopius himself, it was, in part, his wide-ranging interests and activities that caused Howard-Johnston to question the notion of Procopius as simply a jurist. After noting that Procopius depicts himself dealing with personnel, intelligence, and operations in his service with Belisarius, Howard-Johnston then dismisses the notion of Procopius as a staff officer rather than an engineer since

94. Ibid. 1.2.6.

95. Ibid. 1.13.10.

96. *Symboulos*: Hdt. 5.24 Histaios as adviser to Darius; 7.50 advisors to shahs; 8.101 advisers to Xerxes.; Thuc. 2.85.1 Spartans send Timocrates, Brasidas, and Lycophron with ships as *symbouloi*, 3.42.4 fear deprives city of advisers, 3.69.2 and 3.76.1 Brasidas as *symboulos* to Alcidas, 5.63.4 ten advisors to Agis, 8.39.2 and 8.41.1 Spartans send eleven *symbouloi* wi. Astyochus. *Paredros*: Hdt. 5.18 Persian envoys to Macedon want girls to sit beside them; 6.65 ephors sitting next to Ariston; 7.147 advisers/companions of Xerxes; 8.138 adviser/companion to king of Macedon; 9.94 Apollonians sitting next to Evenius.

97. *PLRE* IIIA 590-593.

he views such a combination of functions as appropriate only to a “chief of staff” which Procopius certainly was not.[98] This entails an implicit and anachronistic assumption that the late Roman army must have organized its staff system along the lines of that developed in nineteenth century Europe with specialized discrete elements for the various functions of military staffs.

Of course, Justinian himself did pronounce that those who completed a legal education would be able to perform whatever official duties might be entrusted to them.[99] However, even if we concede some degree of legal training and responsibility, to sum up Procopius’ position in Belisarius’ retinue as a jurist runs the risk of conjuring up an anachronistic picture of a modern judge advocate or provost. I would suggest a simpler proposition. If we must have a modern analogy for his function, it seems to me that Procopius was precisely what he presents himself to be, a soldier or adjutant on Belisarius’ staff. This has the virtue of making sense of the passage noted above, in which Gregorius suggests that *symbouloi* were of real value to generals on campaign, as Hermogenes was in the defense of Dara. Whatever the scope of his legal education, function, and responsibilities may have been, they certainly do not represent at all the sum total of Procopius’ activities on campaign or his interests as a historian. We should not lose sight of the fact that, first and foremost, he was a man with significant expertise and experience in a variety of areas who was witness to and personally involved with some of the great events of his time and who claimed

98. Howard-Johnston, “Education and Expertise,” 23-24. Cf. Kouroumali, 9-11, “an advisor, but certainly not the senior or most important one.”

99. *Institutes*, proem [Constitutio *Imperatoriam maiestatem*] 7.

that his narrative and analysis of event would be useful to other men like himself. As Evans noted, "He spoke in the *Wars* with the voice of the military establishment."[100]

Procopius' Works

A brief examination of the nature and relative dating of his works is also useful in this context. The generally held view is that Procopius' various *opera*, although adhering to the rules of their own genres, should be viewed as being in communication with each other and that they cannot be understood in isolation from each other. In Averil Cameron's words, they "slot" in to each other and each informs the others.[101] Singly, they are but "noble failures, or at least only partial successes," and must be taken together to arrive at an accurate representation of Justinian's regime.[102] This is particularly true with regard to the *Wars* and the *Secret History*.[103] Procopius himself certainly indicates a connection between the two works in the introduction to the *Secret History*. He explicitly references the *Wars* and notes that here he will include a great deal of

---

100. Evans, *Procopius*, 103.

101. Averil Cameron, *Procopius and the Sixth Century* (New York: Routledge, 1985), 107, 263.

102. Ibid. 11, 266; Reiterated in Averil Cameron, review of *Procopius of Caesarea: Tyranny, History and Philosophy at the End of Antiquity,* by Anthony Kaldellis, *AHR* 109 (2004): 1621.

103. Geoffrey Greatrex, "Procopius the Outsider?" in *Strangers to Themselves: The Byzantine Outsider*, ed. Dion Smythe (Burlington: Ashgate, 1998), 218–19, 227; Kaldellis, *Procopius of Caesarea: Tyranny, History and Philosophy at the End of Antiquity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004) 48-49; idem, "Procopius' *Persian War*: A Thematic and Literary Analysis," in *History as Literature in Byzantium*, ed. Ruth Macrides (Burlington: Ashgate, 2010), 255; idem, *Prokopios: The Secret History with Related Texts* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2010), xxvi-xxvii.

material that had to be left out of the earlier work because it would be unsafe while his subjects still lived.[104] Likewise, in the *proem* to the *Buildings* he notes that he has cataloged Justinian's other accomplishments, but here he turns his attention to the emperor's architectural accomplishments.[105] Thus, in both cases, he claims that he is filling in certain gaps left by the *Wars*.

It is my contention however, that, despite some undeniable inter-textual connections, the *Wars* can and do stand on their own terms. That is, when Procopius shifted to other genres, he started playing by other rules, highlighting different material, and with different aims. This is not to deny that modern scholars seeking a full view of the period need to consider all of his works, but this is true of all periods of ancient history. No ancient account is entirely comprehensive for its period, and we must always consider alternative, contemporary accounts. In this case, they simply happen to be by the same author. In short, I am advocating a "splitting" rather than a "lumping" approach to Procopius' works.

An overview of the relative dating of Procopius' works is suggestive. The proximity or distance that should be assumed between them brings us to one of the traditional controversies surrounding them. Kaldellis suggests that the precise dating of the works is irrelevant to their interpretation,[106] but it is my contention that, if there was more chronological distance between them than is

---

104. Proc. *SH* 1.1-3.

105. Proc. *Buildings* 1.1.12

106. Anthony Kaldellis, *Procopius of Caesarea: Tyranny, History, and Philosophy at the End of Antiquity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 46.

often supposed, it is more defensible to treat them individually. Books 1-7 of the *Wars* present relatively few problems. They were published first, with Books 1-2 bringing the events on the eastern frontier down to 549, Books 3-4 covering affairs in Africa down to 548, and books 5-7 dealing with the war in Italy to 550/1 which is thus the *terminus post quem* for their publication as a whole. However, we should note that it is entirely possible that Procopius presented separate portions before that date. We know that he had composed substantial elements by 545, including at least some of the account of the siege of Rome in 537-8, which could have been presented separately. Thus, at 6.5.24-27 Procopius related the dramatic story of a soldier, Trajan, who survived an arrow wound to the face during the siege and notes that, at the time of writing, only eight years had elapsed since the incident.[107] We should be wary of assuming a discreet publication date as opposed to a series of smaller works throughout the late 540s, culminating in the comprehensive work about 551.

One recent and dramatic theory even suggests that Procopius continued revising the *Wars* up through 558/9. Ewald Kislinger would identify the Hunnic invasion described at 2.4.10-11, traditionally dated to 540, with the Kotrigur invasion of the Balkans in 558/9 described by Agathias, and thus the work went through continuous revisions throughout the 550s.[108] Given the fact that each account reports a different outcome for the defenders of Thermopylae, Kislinger pushes the apparent similarities too far, but his hypothesis serves as a useful

107. Jakob Haury, *Procopiana* (Augsburg: Haas and Grabherr, 1890/91) 5-6; Evans, *Procopius*, 37, 138, n.57; idem. "The Dates of Procopius' Works: A Recapitulation of the Evidence," *GRBS* 37 (1996): 302.

108. Agath. 5.11-23; Ewald Kislinger, "Ein Angriff zu viel," *BZ* 91 (1998): 49-58.

reminder that the *Wars,* as we have them, probably represent a process of composition rather than being the product of a single publication date.[109]

The later addition of Book 8 is more problematic. Its preface notes that the previous seven books were already in circulation throughout the empire and that it would dispense with the geographical arrangement of the other books in favor of a composite narrative which brings events in all theaters up to date, i.e. down to 553/4.[110] It is generally assumed that it was published it soon thereafter.[111] However, Evans has advocated a long delay based on his reading of the events surrounding a treaty with the Persians at 8.15.1-19.[112] The passage deals with Roman payments to the Persians as part of truce agreements on the eastern frontier. Originally, twenty *centenaria* were paid for the period 545-550, at which point the truce lapsed and was not renegotiated for eighteen months. The new agreement was for another twenty *centenaria* for five more years of truce, plus an additional six *centenaria* for the period of the lapse. Since the passage indicates that the tribute was assessed at a rate of four *centenaria* annually, and notes that 46 *centenaria* had been paid over as the price for eleven years and six months of truce at the time of writing, Evans argues that the *terminus post quem* for Book 8 must be 557.

---

109. For a comprehensive critique of Kislinger's theory, see Geoffrey Greatrex, "The Dates of Procopius' Works," *BMGS* 18 (1994): 101-114.

110. Proc. *Wars* 8.1.1-2.

111. Rubin, *Prokopios*, 80-81; Cameron, *Procopius*, xii-xiii, 134-151; M.R. Cataudella, "Historiography in the East," in *Greek and Roman Historiography in Late Antiquity: Fourth to Sixth Century A.D.*, ed. Gabriele Marasco (Leiden: Brill, 2003) 397.

112. Evans, *Procopius*, 43, 138 n.68; idem, "The Dates of Procopius' Works," 306-308.

Greatrex has defended the traditional dating for Book 8 by emphasizing the fact that the Romans chose to pay the money in lump sums rather than annually, in order to avoid giving the appearance of being tributary to the Persians.[113] Thus, the traditional date can be defended if we assume that Procopius was writing as if the entire period of the truce had passed, a point long ago conceded by Evans.[114] Greatrex also adds a suggestive argument *ex silentio* based on the conclusion of 8.15. [115] After describing the departure of the Persian envoy with the money, Procopius notes that the autumn of 551 was remarkably warm. Although some thought this an omen of some impending event, Procopius only notes that time would tell and gives no indication of subsequent events. The passage has a contemporaneous sense that would be odd had Procopius composed the book as late as Evans suggests.

On balance, although both are cogently argued, neither position is conclusive. My preference is for the earlier date. Had Procopius been writing later that 554, we might have reasonably expected a bit more discussion of affairs both in Italy and in the east such as the dramatic events surrounding Narses' victory at Casilinum in 554 and the assassination of Gubazes, the king of the Lazi, in 555.

---

113. Proc. *Wars* 8.15.6-7; Greatrex, "The Dates of Procopius' Works," 105-107; idem, "Recent Work on Procopius," 52-57. Cf. the lump sum payment of initial subsidies to the Persians required by the peace treaty reached in 562, Menander Protector, Fr. 6.1.134-154 [Blockley].

114. Evans, *Procopius*, 138 n.68

115. Proc. *Wars* 8.15.21-25; Greatrex, "Recent Work on Procopius," 57.

The composition dates of the *Buildings* and *Secret History* are even more problematic. Each might be dated either roughly contemporaneously with the *Wars* in the early 550s or towards the end of the decade. The problem of the *Secret History*, since it contains no references to the present moment of composition precise enough to date the work, depends very much on how we construe Procopius' dating of Justinian's regime within the work. At four different places he referred to Justinian having spent thirty-two years damaging the Roman polity at the time of composition.[116] The issue is whether or not this should be interpreted to mean from 518, when Justin I ascended to the purple with Justinian acting as the power behind the throne, or 527 when Justinian became emperor in his own right. Thus, we must decide whether or not to prefer 550/1 or 558/9. As the proem of the *Secret History,* refers retrospectively to the geographic arrangement of *Wars* 1-7, we are probably safe in assuming it was written after they were substantially published, but how soon after?

Procopius made some suggestive statements in all his works regarding Justinian's power during his uncle's reign.[117] There is no denying that Justinian was probably the most influential man in Justin's court. The number of explicit references to *Wars* 1-7, and the apparent lack of material that can be securely dated to after 550 led Haury to prefer the earlier date. Modern scholars have generally followed him or settled on a date immediately thereafter.[118] Although

116. Proc. *SH* 18.33, 23.1, 24.29, 24.33.

117. Proc. *SH* 6.19, *Buildings* 1.3.3, *Wars* 3.9.5.

118. Haury, *Procopiana*, 9-16; followed by Bury, *LRE* II, 422; Stein, *Bas-Emp* II, 720-721; Rubin, *Prokopios*, 81; Cameron, Procopius, 8-9; Greatrex, "The Dates of Procopius' Works," 102; Evans, "The Date of Procopius' Works," 302-303, 308; Juan Signes Codoñer, "Prokops

not dispositive on its own, the earlier date lends plausibility to a "lumping" approach, and particularly those scholars who wish to see the *Secret History* as an intimately necessary commentary for readers of the *Wars*.[119]

However, there are problems with the traditional interpretation and some scholars have recently made reasonable arguments for dating the *Secret History* towards the end of the decade.[120] I would argue that, if there is both temporal as well as thematic distance between the *Wars* and the *Secret History*, it is possible that they do not slot together so neatly as is often supposed. We are thus justified in examining the *Wars* separately and on their own terms.

Some general considerations are important. First, Procopius' own *proem* indicates that the *Secret History* was not intended for publication until after all the protagonists were dead and that he hesitated for "a long time" before writing.[121] Although Theodora had died in 548 and John the Cappadocian's power had been broken, Belisarius, Antonina, and, most importantly, Justinian himself all lived into the 560s. Despite Justinian's bout with the plague in the early 540s there does not appear to have been any reason Procopius should have expected the imminent end of Justinian or his regime in the late 540s or early 550s. If the

---

Anecdota und Justinians Nachfolge," *JÖBS* 53 (2003): 47-53; Anthony Kaldellis, "The Date and Structure of Procopius' *Secret History* and His Projected Work on Church History," *GRBS* 49 (2009) 585-616.

119. Cameron, *Procopius*, 11 "not essential for our thesis – though it is obviously helpful to it." Cf. Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 48-49; idem, "Procopius' *Persian War*, 255; idem, *Prokopius: The Secret History with Related Texts* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2010), xxvi-xxvii; Geoffrey Greatrex, "Procopius the Outsider?" 218–19, 227; Signes Codoñer, "Prokops *Anecdota,*" 49-50.

120. Roger Scott, "Justinian's Coinage and Easter Reforms and the Date of the *Secret History*," *BMGS* 11 (1987): 215-221; Cataudella, "Historiography in the East," 400-403; Brian Croke, "Procopius' *Secret History*: Rethinking the Date," *GRBS* 45 (2005): 405-431.

121. Proc. *SH* 1.6.

book was composed with the expectation that its danger to the author would soon be past, the later date seems preferable as all parties concerned were at least more advanced into old age.

Second, Haury's contention that nothing in the *Secret History* post-dates 550 is ultimately an argument *ex silentio*. It is true that the explicit cross-references in the *Secret History* all refer to passages from *Wars* 1-7,[122] but this is not necessarily conclusive. Roger Scott has suggested that the devaluation of the currency referred to *SH* 25.11-12 should be identified with a reference by Malalas to a debasement in 553, and that a reference at 28.17-18 to tampering with the date of the celebration of Passover, should it ever precede the observance of Easter, refers to a dispute in the 550s, described by the seventh century Armenian scholar, Ananias of Shirak.[123] In 552/3 the 200-year calendar for the calculation of Easter, established by Constantius II, expired. The resultant dispute culminated in a convention of scholars at Alexandria which settled the issue in 562.[124] Assuming that Procopius is referring to the dispute while it was still ongoing, but before it was settled, it would support the 558/9 date.

Third, whatever the literary representation of events might be, we should acknowledge the fundamental fact that Justinian's reign did represent a clear break with that of his uncle in at least one respect. It was only after formally ascending to the purple that Justinian was able to truly put his stamp on the

---

122. Scott, "Justinian's Coinage," 215.

123. Malal. 486.

124. Scott, "Justinian's Coinage," 217-220; for Ananias' account, see F.C. Conybeare, "Ananias of Shirak (A.D. 600-650), On Easter," *BZ* 6(1897): 574-584.

Roman administration by nominating his own candidates for high office. His uncle had been content to leave many of the generals and officials with whom he had served under Anastasius in place, with a dramatic turn-over occurring after his death.[125] If Justin had been entirely under his nephew's control, we might reasonably wonder why officers in his confidence such as Belisarius, Sittas, Coutzes, and Bouzes had to wait to come into their own.

These suggestions are not without their critics who support the earlier date. Both Greatrex and Evans have challenged the need to place the currency reform in 553. Evans suggests instead that it refers to the introduction of a lightweight *solidus* in 548,[126] while Greatrex follows A.H.M. Jones in placing the devaluation in 539.[127] Likewise, nothing need necessarily connect the passage at 28.17-18 with the Easter dispute of the 550s, since Passover often does precede Easter in any case, and Justinian could have interfered just as easily in the 540s while the specific date that we do have for the conference in 562 is too late to be truly conclusive regarding what might have occurred in the 550s.

Croke and Cataudella, however, have each proposed new challenges to the traditional dating. While no passages in the *Secret History* may be securely dated after 550, there are also none that would securely rule out a later

125. Geoffrey Greatrex, "Flavius Hypatius, *Quem Vidit Validum Parthus Sensitque Timendum*, An Investigation of His Career," *Byzantion* 66 (1996): 139-40

126. J.A.S. *Evans, The Age of Justinian: The Circumstances of Imperial Power* (New York, Routledge, 1996) 236-237; idem, "The Dates of Procopius' Works," 309.

127. Greatrex, "The Dates of Procopius' Works," 103-104; Jones, *LRE*, 443-444 and 1185 n.81.

composition either.[128] In fact, Croke has adduced a number of other passages which at least *might* post date the traditional *terminus ante quem* for the *Secret History*.[129] These refer to the details of the careers of three individuals: the *quaestor* Constantinus; Marthanes, *dux* of Cilicia; and Peter Barsymes, when he was *comes sacrarum largitionum*,[130] which might all be situated just as comfortably as late as the mid 550's as earlier.

To this we may add Cataudella's comparison of the proems of the *Secret History* and *Wars* 8.[131] Their wording is very similar when referring to departure from the geographical arrangement of *Wars* 1-7. However, they do differ in one respect. The proem to *Wars* 8 mentions only geographic criteria, while the Secret History refers to chronological considerations as well. The addition of this twist suggests to Cataudella that *Wars* 8 provided the original text which Procopius modified in the *Secret History*, which must lead us to prefer the later date of composition.

These arguments will not convince everyone, but they do support a final line of argument that is much more telling. The fundamental supposition that Procopius might have reckoned Justinian's reign from 518 in the *Secret History* is simply more problematic than is often assumed. Justinian himself officially decreed that his reign be reckoned from 1 April 527.[132] Procopius followed this

---

128. Cataudella, "Historiography in the East," 401.

129. Croke, "Procopius' Secret History," 417-420.

130. Proc. *SH* 20.20-23 (Constantinus), 25.22-25 (Peter), 29.26-38 (Marthanes).

131. Proc. *Wars* 8.1.1-2, *SH* 1.

132. *Nov*. 47

example in the *Wars,* as did all of his contemporaries.[133] If he departed from the standard form of dating in the *Secret History*, we should have expected some word of explanation on this point, but instead his readers are left to simply assume that he was using the official reckoning.

Ultimately, this creates something of a paradox for those who wish to see very close connections between the *Secret History* and the *Wars*. Either the works were roughly contemporary, but Procopius adopted an entirely different system for noting something so basic as the passage of time without informing his readers, or Procopius was consistent in his method of reckoning the years of Justinian's reign. The latter would be precisely what we should expect if the *Secret History* really was intended as the unpublished commentary on the *Wars*, but then the two works must be separated by nearly a decade. Whichever was the case, we are left with the possibility of more intellectual distance between the two works than is often assumed.

Kaldellis has gamely attempted to counter Croke's suggestions,[134] arguing that the key is to be found by noting that Procopius distinguished at *SH* 18.45 between a period of regency and Justinian's actual reign through the respective use of the phrases "administering the state" (διοικούμενος τὴν πολιτείαν) as opposed to "possessing imperial power" (ἔχοντος τὴν αὐτοκράτορα ἀρχὴν). However, such explicit dichotomy is absent from the four references to Justinian's thirty-two year period of power. The only partial echo occurs at *SH*

133. Croke, "Procopius' *Secret History*," 413-416; Proc. *Wars* 1.16.10, 1.22.17, 2.3.56, 2.5.1, 2.28.11, 2.30.48, 3.12.1, 4.14.6, 4.19.1, 4.21.1, 4.28.41, 5.5.1, 5.14.14, 8.15.12, 8.33.26. Cf. Cataudella, "Historiography in the East," 400-401.

134. Kaldellis, "Date and Structure," 585-606, but taking no note of Cataudella.

24.29 in which Procopius indicates that thirty-two years had passed since Justinian "began administering the state" (διῳκήσατο τὴν πολιτείαν). In order to defend the earlier date, Kaldellis would freight this phrase with a specific meaning that would only apply to the exercise of power by either a regent or advisor. He notes that in the handful of other cases in all of his works in which Procopius used the verb *dioikeo* in connection with objects such as *arche, politeia*, *basileia*, or *pragmata* it was as a reference to regencies.[135]

There are two problems with this prong of Kaldellis' argument. First, while proving that Procopius did, on occasion use such phraseology to refer to regencies, to assume that this was his specific meaning at *SH* 24.29 is an inferential leap depending on an *argumentum ex silentio* that Procopius would never use such language in any other sense. Second, Kaldellis neglects to note an additional instance of the use of the *dioikeo* phraseology at *SH* 18.37 except in passing. In this case Procopius notes that while Justinian was "administering the affairs of the Romans" (Ῥωμαίων διοικουμένου τὰ πράγματα) a number of natural disasters occurred. While some of these disasters, such as the flooding of Edessa by the Scirtos river in 525, and the earthquake that levelled Antioch in 526, occurred late in Justin's reign, the majority took place during Justinian's actual reign, including the outbreak of the great plague in 542, the flooding of the Nile in 547/8, the flooding of Tarsus in 550.[136] Although the passage concludes

135. Ibid. 590-591. Proc. *Wars* 3.9.5 (Justinian under Justin), 5.1.2 (Orestes for Romulus Augustus), 5.2.3 (Amalasuntha for Athalaric), 7.35.17 (Audoin for Valdarus), *Buildings* 1.3.3 (Justinian and Justin); and *SH* 12.29 (Justinian and Justin), although this last depends upon a textual emendation.

` 136. Proc. *SH* 18.38-44.

with the bipartite note of *SH* 18.45, the clear implication of *SH* 18.37 is that Justinian's "administration" of Roman affairs continued into his reign, and the passage is in fact mainly about his reign, a fact militating against interpreting the phrase as applicable only to regencies.

Kaldellis has also tried to connect the passage at 18.45 to the first reference to the thirty-two year period of rule that occurs only a few paragraphs earlier at 18.33, arguing that the two proximate references flank a coherent passage on the violence of the factions and natural disasters, and that they should be treated as complementary.[137] Reasonable readers may reach differing conclusions however,[138] as even the intervening passage, on closer inspection is less unitary than Kaldellis suggests. The first portion, *SH* 18.31-35 is actually a discussion of the fighting between the circus factions, while *SH* 18.36-45, as we have seen, is focused on the natural disasters that afflicted the empire. Further, *SH* 18.33 not only refers to the thirty-two years of Justinian's affliction, but also informs us that the faction-fighting in that period was exacerbated because the Blues were supported *by the emperor* (*tôi basilei*), without any indication that part this should be understood to include a period of regency.

Kaldellis has also attacked the passages contained in the *Secret History* that Croke suggests might date to after 550.[139] While he does raise some strong objections against the later dating of the details of the three officials' careers,

---

137. Kaldellis, "Date and Structure," 588.

138. E.g. Roger Scott, *Byzantine Chronicles and the Sixth Century* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2012), XIX 13 n. 37.

139. Kaldellis, "Date and Structure," 593-598.

Croke's contention was only that these could *possibly* have occurred later. Certainty either way is problematic.

Finally, Kaldellis adds a supplementary argument that is potentially more telling than his philological arguments.[140] At *SH* 23.1 Procopius charged that Justinian had never granted a general amnesty for tax arrears over the previous thirty-two years. However, Justinian did grant a general tax amnesty in 553.[141] Either the thirty-two year period had elapsed by then, or Procopius was misrepresenting Justinian's record. Much depends on how seriously we regard the veracity of the *Secret History* on this point. Kaldellis concedes that Procopius may have occasionally distorted his account of events, but argues that "nowhere in the *Secret History* does he flat out lie about Justinian's acts," and that such a patent lie would have resulted in a loss of credibility.[142]

Such faith in the reliability of the *Secret History* on this (or any other) point, however, depends very much upon the *a priori* assumptions scholars bring to their analyses. Kaldellis and Cameron, who believe that the *Secret History* should be taken at least as seriously as the *Wars*,[143] will naturally have a less critical outlook than those who regard it as a mere "venomous pamphlet,"[144] or a

---

140. Ibid. 592-593.

141. *Nov.* 147.

142. Kaldellis, "Date and Structure," 593.

143. Cameron, *Procopius*, 11 and *passim*; Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 45-61 and *passim*; idem, *Prokopios: The Secret History,* vii-x. In Kaldellis' case, perhaps more seriously than the *Wars*, given his view of ancient historiography in which the facts could be and often were subordinated in the service of some larger truth that "can paradoxically be truer than the facts." Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 12.

144. Jones, *LRE* I, 266.

joking satire.[145] To the chronological problems inherent in relating the *Secret History* and the *Wars*, must be added the obvious issues of tone and genre. Some have questioned whether invective rose to the level of a formal genre, suggesting the *Secret History* was never intended to be a stand-alone work, but was either cobbled together from multiple separate pamphlets long after Procopius' death,[146] or was a repository for material to be worked into an edition of the *Wars* after Justinian was safely dead.[147] Nevertheless, the work's inclusion of what can only be described as gendered *topoi* of inappropriate conduct provides an awfully neat inversion of what would be expected in a formal encomium resulting in "an extraordinarily effective work of slander," "appealing to his readers' prurience and spitefulness."[148]

It is also worth noting that the *Suda* describes the *Secret History* as including both invectives and satire (*psogous kai komoidian*) of Justinian and Theodora.[149] I would suggest that, however simple or sophisticated the critiques of the *Secret History* may be,[150] its elements of the absurd take it as far away from the *Wars* as Aristophanes' comedies were from Thucydides, or Tacitus' lost

---

145. Peter Heather, *The Restoration of Rome: Barbarian Popes and Imperial Pretenders* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 110-116.

146. Katherine Adshead, "The Secret History of Procopius and its Genesis," *Byzantion* 63 (1993): 5-28.

147. Greatrex, "Procopius the Outsider?" 215-228.

148. Elizabeth A. Fisher, "Theodora and Antonina in the Historia Arcana: History and/or Fiction?" *Arethusa* 11 (1978): 253-279 esp. 276-277; Leslie Brubaker, "Sex, Lies and Textuality: The Secret History of Prokopios and the Rhetoric of Gender in Sixth-century Byzantium," in *Gender in the Early Medieval World: East and West, 300-900*, eds. Leslie Brubaker, Julia M. H. Smith (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 83-101.

149. *Suda*, pi 2479.

150. Cameron, *Procopius*, 66; Greatrex, "Recent Work on Procopius," 61-67.

book of jokes must have been from his histories.[151] A full exploration of the *Secret History* lies beyond this study, but it is worth noting that absurd defamation of the emperor may not have been so problematic as is sometimes supposed. A law in Justinian's *Code* exempted from punishment those who slandered the emperor, specifically noting "levity" as worthy only of contempt,[152] and, by the *Secret History*'s own testimony, the *quaestor* Tribonian managed to get away with gibes at Justinian's expense.[153] Jokes and satire at the regime's expense may have been more acceptable than those of us looking back through the lens of twentieth century totalitarianism might suppose.

Turning to the *Buildings*, we have a work which is situated at the opposite rhetorical extreme from the *Secret History*. Its dating, however, is equally controversial, with partisans on the side of earlier dating c. 554,[154] and those who prefer c. 558 or a bit later.[155] As with the *Secret History*, the dating is relevant to the degree of intellectual proximity we should assign to the *Buildings* and the *Wars.*

---

151. Paul Plass, *Wit & Writing of History: The Rhetoric of Historiography in Imperial Rome* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988), v; Heather, *Restoration*, 114. "The response of at least 95 per cent of all the students I've taught in the last twenty-five years, especially to all the chickens, has been to laugh."

152. *CJ* 9.7

153. Proc. *SH* 13.12.

154. Stein, *Bas-Emp* II, 837; Cameron, *Procopius*, 84-86; Greatrex, "The Dates of Procopius' Works," 110-111; idem, "Recent Work on Procopius," 49-50; idem, "The Date of Procopius' Buildings in the Light of Recent Scholarship," *Estudios Bizantinos* 1 (2013): 13-29; Kouroumali, 14-16.

155. Michael Whitby, "Justinian's Bridge Over the Sangarius and the Date of Procopius' *de Aedificiis*," *JHS* 105 (1985): 141-147; Kislinger, 55 n.56; Denis Roques, *Procope de Césarée: Constructions de Justinien Ier* (Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2011), 54-57.

Ultimately, the modern debate revolves, on the one hand, around how we date Procopius' accounts of the construction of a bridge over the Sangarius River and certain other building projects and, on the other hand, what we are to make of the omission of the collapse of the dome of the Hagia Sophia in 558.

Two passages appear to provide us with a relatively secure *terminus post quem* for the work. First, references to the repair of the Anastasian Walls in Thrace and at Selymbria, after a recent attack appears to refer to the attack of the Kotrigur Huns in 559.[156] Second, there is the reference to the beginning of construction of a bridge over the Sangarius River which Theophanes dates to A.M. 6052, or 559-60.[157] To this we may add a point of external evidence. The Sangarius bridge appears to have been completed in 562. Paul the Silentiary referred to it as complete in the *ekphrasis* he recited at the rededication of the Hagia Sophia in December 562 and Agathias also referred to it in a contemporary epigram.[158] Since Procopius refers to the bridge as a work in progress, we should be on firm ground to assume a composition between 559 and 562. To these, Roques adds a number of other projects noted by the *Buildings* that would appear to support the later date,[159] including the completion of a church for the monks of the Sinai that may not have been dedicated until 557;[160] the restoration of a bath at Nicomedia may have been in response to

156. Proc. *Buildings* 4.9.9-13; Agath. *Hist*, 5.12.5-20.8; Theophanes, A.M. 6051.

157. Proc. *Buildings* 5.3.8-12; Theophanes, A.M. 6052.

158. Paul Sil. *Ekphrasis* 928-33; *Greek Anthology* 9.641.

159. Roques, *Constructions,* 56-57.

160. Proc. *Buildings,* 5.8.1-9.

damage suffered in the earthquake of 554;[161] the building of the sanctuary of the Theotokos at Pêgê is dated by Cedrenus, like the Sangarius bridge, to 559/60;[162] the replacement of an unstable wooden bridge over the Thracian strait, the "Myrmex," the repaving of nearby roads, and the repair of the circuit wall of the town of Athyras may have been prompted by an earthquake of 557;[163] the construction of a bridge at Siberis in Galatia which may be mentioned in the Life of Theodore of Sykeon dating to sometime after 555;[164] the repair of the church of St. Thecla may have occurred in the aftermath of a fire dated by Theophanes to 560;[165] and, finally, the improvement of the fortifications of the Thracian Chersonese may also have been in response to the Kotrigur attack of 559.[166]

There are problems however. The account of Theophanes may be unreliable on this point. The assumption has been that, if Malalas was the source for this portion of the text, it could be considered fairly reliable. However, the text of Malalas is corrupt at this point and Greatrex has suggested that the passage derives from another source altogether, making certainty difficult, and there are chronological errors in this portion of Theophanes' text.[167] In addition,

---

161. Ibid. 5.3.7.

162. Ibid. 1.3.6.

163. Ibid. 4.8.4-18.

164. Ibid. 5.4.1-6.

165. Ibid. 1.4.28. One should note, however, that Procopius does not claim that Justinian repaired this church, but rather that he built it during the reign of Justin.

166. Ibid. 4.10.5-18.

167. Greatrex, "The Dates of Procopius' Works," 110-111; idem, "Recent Work on Procopius," 49-50; idem, "Date of Procopius' *Buildings*," 15-22. Greatrex also questions whether, in the straightened circumstances of the 550s and given the fact that the rebuilding of the dome of the Hagia Sophia took five years, a three year window to bring such a project to completion is

he has challenged each of Roques' other points, noting that in no case is the dating of these events secure.[168] Complicating the issue further is the fact that the Hagia Sophia is the centerpiece of Book I and Justinian is credited with providing technical advice to his architects twice in order to ensure its structural integrity, yet there is no mention of the disaster of 558. Here Evans is undoubtedly correct in noting that the composition of such passages after the collapse would have been far too obviously ironic for a panegyric.[169]

Despite these issues, a compromise case for the later date remains strong. We might first note that, despite the arguments against the later date, there is no unequivocal positive evidence for the 554 date. In addition, Elizabeth Jeffreys has defended Malalas' role as Theophanes' source on stylistic grounds.[170] Finally, we should note the apparently unfinished character of the *Buildings* in general and Books 4 and 5 in particular, the very books that contain the references scholars hope to date via Theophanes. They are not nearly so polished as the remainder of the text and this fact does provide a way to explain the omission of the Hagia Sophia's collapse. Haury, followed by Downey and Evans, suggested that Procopius may have composed Book 1 before 558 and

---

realistic. The differing contexts, however, between an imperial monument in the heart of the capitol (for which a premium would be placed on ensuring no subsequent collapse) and maintaining a military and logistic line to the east (implying efficiency and effectiveness above all else), suggest that the comparison may be inapt.

168. Greatrex, "Date of Procopius' *Buildings*," 22-26.

169. Evans, "The Dates of Procopius' Works," 305. Here I would note that although I agree with Kaldellis' point that the *Buildings* are, in fact, laced with irony and that they were an insincere work of flattery, the instance of the collapse this would have been far too obvious to have been safe. Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 51-60; *contra* Cameron, *Procopius*, 89, 112.

170. Elizabeth Jeffreys, "Malalas, Procopius, and Justinian's Buildings," *AnTard*. 8 (2000): 76.

continued working on the manuscript until at least 559-560.[171] Although certainty is impossible, this appears to me the most plausible solution. For the present purpose, it is enough to note that even if the date were to be slipped a bit earlier, we must still grant a gap of roughly five years between *Wars* 8 and the *Buildings,* which makes the intellectual gap between them that much more understandable. Allowing for this greater span of time also saves us from having to presume that Procopius would have had to perform the necessary mental and logistical gymnastics necessary to compose all three of his works, in disparate genres nearly simultaneously.

Finally, I would note an additional argument against straining too hard to view Procopius' works as dependent on each other, which does not rely on their relative dating. In his introduction to Book 8 of the *Wars* Procopius notes that the first seven books had already been published and circulated throughout the empire.[172] It is also likely, as noted above, that at least pieces of the *Wars* were presented piecemeal, orally, and publicly.[173] That is, Procopius could not count on the audience of the *Wars* having copies of their entirety, let alone the *Secret History* or the *Buildings* to hand as a true companion volume in order to highlight his criticisms of the Justinianic regime. As Kaldellis notes, he could not have expected everyone in his audience to catch his intratextual, never mind

171. Haury, *Procopiana*, 27-28; Glanville Downey, "The Composition of Procopius, De *Aedificiis*," *TAPA* 78 (1947): 171-183; idem, *Constantinople in the Age of Justinian* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960) 95; Evans, *Procopius*, 43-44; idem, "The Dates of Procopius' Works," 305.

172. Procopius *Wars* 8.1.1.

173. Brian Croke, "Uncovering Byzantium's Historiographic Audience," in *History as Literature in Byzantium*, ed. Ruth Macrides (Burlington: Ashgate, 2010), 28–29.

intertextual, allusions.[174] While this does not invalidate the position of those scholars who argue for a more unitary view of Procopius' *oeuvre*, it suggests that Procopius knew the *Wars* could not and would not necessarily be read in so subtle a fashion as such a position requires. We are entitled to study the *Wars* as a singular work on their own.

174. Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 115, although he makes no attempt to deal with the identity of this larger audience or Procopius' intentions towards it.

Chapter 2: The Tradition of Classicizing History and Other Historians in Late Antiquity

The Tradition of Classicizing History

It is illuminating to consider the various secular historians in whose tradition Procopius was working. He did not suddenly take up his stylus in a vacuum. He was working in a genre of literature bounded by conventions and practices visible in the works and his predecessors and successors. Despite their frequent literary artistry, and the expectations of modern readers enamored of the "literary turn," who might prefer to emphasize their rhetorical quality, we should not be misled by our own subtlety.[1] Most of these authors were not men who were unfamiliar or unconcerned with the practical world of implementing imperial policy. With only a few exceptions, Procopius' predecessors and successors were men who were comfortable operating in various circles of the Roman administration and in the cosmopolitan world of the imperial capitals. This fact alone is suggestive. If Ammianus and Procopius were somewhat atypical as military men, it was common for late antique historians to have been diplomats and other well-traveled officials. We must reasonably expect them to be acquainted with the dangers of the empire and its margins as well as the hazards run by its servants as they travelled its length and breadth to ensure the

1. Most famously, Hayden White, *Tropics of Discourse* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978); T.P. Wiseman, *Clio's Cosmetics: Three Studies in Greco-Roman Literature* (Ottowa: Rowman and Littlefield, 1979); A.J. Woodman, *Rhetoric in Classical Historiography: Four Studies* (Portland: Areopagitica Press, 1988). But see the vigorous response by Arnaldo Momigliano, "The Rhetoric of History and the History of Rhetoric," *Comparative Criticism* 3 (1981): 259-269; and J.E. Lendon, "Historians Without History: Against Roman Historiography," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Historians*, ed. Andrew Feldherr (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 41–61.

loyalty of subjects and allies, and to encounter dangerous enemies. Eunapius stands out among them, being neither an imperial official nor spending any significant time near the centers of power. As residents of Constantinople, these historians' intimates would inevitably have included men like themselves, who would have been well-placed to confirm or deny instantly not only the plausibility of much of their narratives, but often their specific accuracy as well. They moved in the same circles as the actors within their histories. There is no reason to disbelieve, as T.J. Cornell put it in the context of the Roman republic, that a significant portion of the audience for later imperial historiography "knew a pseudo-historical lie when they came across one."[2] If their readers judged them by their literary merits, the historians of late antiquity also had every reason to suppose that they would be judged by their ability to convey practical reality as well. We should be careful before denying them the traditional historians' virtues of accuracy, sober analysis, and practical utility.

Any discussion of historiography in the sixth century must grapple with two fundamental issues that have tended to dominate modern scholarship. As with any study of historiography, from ancient to modern, the role of style, rhetoric, and bias versus veracity, accuracy, and the quality of analysis is of primary interest. Concomitant with this is the question of the quality and degree of continuity of classical forms into what is a seemingly non-classical age. That is, do general points regarding the Greek and Latin historians of a more "classical" vintage apply to those of late antiquity and in what ways? Of course, these

2. T.J. Cornell, review of *Clio's Cosmetics* by T.P. Wiseman, *JRS* 72 (1982): 206.

questions are interrelated, since how we answer the second informs the first. If the *Profanhistoriker* of late antiquity, who wrote ambitious secular histories in a classical mode, may be intellectually classed with their Greek and Roman forebears as a part of a still vibrant tradition, there are certain larger implications. If their work was more than a sterile literary exercise in an antiquated genre that was ill-suited for the times, then our understanding of them is necessarily in a dialectical relationship with our understanding of more "classical" historians. The "classical" and "classicizing" may illuminate one another.

Krumbacher argued long ago, with regard to Byzantine literature in general, that this involves more than the simple identification of resonances in style, form, and vocabulary. He counseled against regarding the Greek literature of Late Antiquity and Byzantium merely "*als Fortsetzung und Ausfluss des Altertums*."[3] Cosmetically, the influence of ancient historiography upon Late Antique and Byzantine authors was unavoidable. Most obviously, Procopius' works are replete with textual borrowings from Herodotus and Thucydides.[4] But what are we to make of this? Romilly Jenkins argued that the influence of Hellenistic historiography in general, and Polybius in particular, could be detected clear through into later Byzantine practice.[5] However, the notion of continuity

3. Karl Krumbacher, *Geschichte der Byzantinischen Litteratur von Justinian bis zum Ende des osterömischen Reiches 527-1453* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1897), 22.

4. Assembled in Hermann Braun, *Procopius Caesariensis quatenus imitatus sit Thucydidem* (Erlangen: 1886); idem, *Die Nachahmung Herodots durch Prokop* (Nuremburg, 1894).

5. Romilly Jenkins, "The Hellenistic Origins of Byzantine Literature," *DOP* 17 (1963): 50-52.

has not gone unchallenged.[6] Fortunately for our purposes, even those who argue against the continuity of classical practice through the Middle Ages would not place a clear break until after Procopius and his immediate successors.[7]

Here it is worth noting that the distinction between secular history as practiced by Procopius and ecclesiastical history was one that the ancients recognized. Eusebius was clear that he regarded himself as the first in an entirely new genre of literature.[8] Likewise, in the sixth century, Procopius indicated that there are certain issues that he felt were appropriate to be treated discretely in a separate ecclesiastical history.[9] In the following generation, Evagrius traced two separate historical traditions, the ecclesiastic and the secular, recommending works appropriate to each.[10] As Momigliano noted, in contrast to Christian historical forms such as ecclesiastical history and saints' lives, "the models for political and military history remained irretrievably pagan."[11]

---

6. Roger Scott, "The Classical Tradition in Byzantine Historiography," in *Byzantium and the Classical Tradition*, eds. Margaret Mullet and Roger Scott (Birmingham: Centre for Byzantine Studies, University of Birmingham, 1981), 61-74, argues for a genuine break in the sixth century; Jakov N. Ljubarskij, "New Trends in the Study of Byzantine Historiography," *DOP* 47 (1993): 133-134; J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 239-48 likewise sees a "cultural turning point" in the reign of Justinian that had run its course by the reign of Heraclius.

7. Scott, "Classical Trends," 74. Ljubarskij, "New Trends," 133-134, "Histories and chronicles existed in parallel only at the beginning of Byzantine history until the so-called Dark Ages." I.e. they were concurrent but distinct phenomena until the seventh century.

8. Eusebius *HE* 1.4-6

9. Proc. *Wars* 8.25.13, *SH* 1.14, 11.33.

10. Evagrius *HE* 5.24.

11. Arnaldo Momigliano, *The Conflict Between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), 89, 94.

Even within the secular tradition, there are distinctions to be made. Most fundamentally, Krumbacher distinguished between two types of non-ecclesiastical historical works.[12] The first were histories in the ancient sense, written in a literary style *à la* Herodorus, Thucydides, or Polybius, and intended for an elite audience. The others were chronicles, written in a more accessible style, preferring mere collection of historical detail to in-depth analysis, and intended for a naïve popular audience of *Klosterbewohner*.[13] Despite some revisionist arguments that the distinction between the audiences for histories and chronicles is misleading and that their audiences not so discrete as Krumbacher suggested,[14] his model does indicate some empirical differences between the genres, particularly with regard to linguistic sophistication and breadth of historical vision. For our purposes here it is enough to note that the ancients themselves did regard them with a degree of distinction. Evagrius' list of secular works is notably free of reference to chronicles.[15] Thus, we shall generally

12. Krumbacher, 219.

13. Ibid. 220

14. H.-G. Beck has noted that the evidence for a firm ancient distinction between the audiences for histories versus chronicles is more speculative than is often assumed. H.-G. Beck, "Zur byzantinische 'Mönchschronik,'" in *Speculum historiale. Geschichte im Spiegel von Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsdeutung*, eds. Clemens Bauer, Johannes Spörl, Laetittia Boehm, and Max Müller (Freiburg and Munich: Alber, 1965), 188-97; followed by Ljubarskij, "New Trends," 132-33; Jan Olaf Rosenqvist, *Die byzantinische Literatur: vom 6. Jahrhundert bis zum Fall Konstantinopels 1453* (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 10-11; and Brian Croke, "Uncovering Byzantium's Historiographical Audience," in *History as Literature in Byzantium*, ed. Ruth Macrides (Burlington: Ashgate, 2010), 33. It may also be worth noting Cameron's assertion that there were not separate audiences for secular history and hagiography; Averil Cameron, *Procopius and the Sixth Century* (New York: Routledge, 1985), 29.

15. Evagrius *HE* 5.24.

restrict our treatment here to authors who shared Procopius' self-conscious practice of writing contemporary or near contemporary history in a high style.

However, this very style is itself something of an issue. Procopius and many of his compatriots wrote in a deliberately classicizing style that had more in common with the literature of fifth century B.C. Athens than the spoken Greek of their own day. Much is made of the Atticism or classicism of the late antique historians like Procopius, whether to note it as a symptom of their artifice and disconnect from contemporary language, and perhaps from reality,[16] or a self-conscious pose serving as both a mask for and transmitter of hidden allusions.[17] However, we do well to remember that the "*Profanhistoriker*" did not have a monopoly on Atticism. All authors who were products of the classical *paideia* employed it, including leaders of the Christian church.[18] For the present purpose, it will be regarded as a literary idiom of the educated elite, to which all classical historians belonged. Archaizing style in ancient historiography was not an end in itself, but was both a marker of education and, as Blockley put it, "an adequate

16. Averil Cameron and Alan Cameron, "Christianity and Tradition in the Historiography of the Late Empire," *CQ* 14 (1964): 316-328; Averil Cameron, *Agathias* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 57-88; idem, *Procopius*, 33-35; Mary and Michael Whitby, introduction to *The History of Theophylact Simocatta* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), xxvii-xviii.

17. J.A.S. Evans, *Procopius* (New York: Twayne, 1972), 40–41; idem, "The Attitudes of the Secular Historians of the Age of Justinian Towards the Classical Past," *Traditio* 32 (1976): 353–58; Anthony Kaldellis, *Procopius of Caesarea: Tyranny, History, and Philosophy at the End of Antiquity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 24-45.

18. Robert Browning, *Medieval and Modern Greek* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 45-50.

vehicle of description and narrative,"[19] whose audience could be expected not only to be reasonably educated in the same literary culture, but also to appreciate the practical content it presented.

That said, teasing out the influence of classical historiography on the Greek historians of late antiquity is further complicated in at least three ways. First, there is the obvious difficulty of tracing a golden thread of continuity through the span of time involved, and the natural differences in the situations and interests in authors separated, in some cases, by many centuries. In other words, if there is a "Royal Road from Herodotus to Procopius,"[20] it is not a route without twists, turns, detours, and branches. We should be wary of the implicit teleology behind such metaphors as "roads" or the notion that secular historiography in late antiquity was undergoing some sort of linear evolution (or devolution) from the "classical" to the "byzantine." As we shall see, Procopius, his predecessors, and continuators were each unique, with their own idiosyncrasies, interests, and aptitudes. All the same, they were recognizably products of the same cultural tradition, and some consideration of Procopius' fellows will help to illuminate what it was he thought he was doing when he chose to work in the genre of history.

Second, there is also something of a chronologically limited focus in modern general studies of both classical and late antique historiography. The

---

19. R.C. Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire* I (Liverpool: Francis Cairns, 1981), 90-91.

20. Luke Pitcher, *Writing Ancient History: An Introduction to Classical Historiography* (London: Tauris and Co, 2009), 179.

"Royal Road," noted above, was often less traveled by, or, more often, exited abortively. General studies of the classical historians, after transitioning from Greek to Roman authors, often climax with detailed discussions of Tacitus, perhaps including some discussion running through the early third century and some mention of Ammianus Marcellinus as a denouement, rather than progressing on with the Greek historians of the fourth, fifth, and sixth centuries.[21] Likewise, general studies of the historiography of the later empire, although generally acknowledging the classical past, have to contend with the introduction of new genres and outlooks on history, and understandably tend to focus on works postdating the conversion of Constantine. The result is that, with the exception of Ammianus, the third century represents something a scholarly terminus at the end of classical and the beginning of late antique historiography, highlighting the differences and obscuring the continuities between the two eras. To some degree this is perhaps understandable. Periodization is always problematic, and in this case, traditional Greek historiography appears to have

21. E.g. Wiseman, *Clio's Cosmetics*; Charles Fornara, *The Nature of History in Greece and Rome* (Berkley, University of California Press, 1983); M.I. Finley, *Ancient History: Evidence and Models* (New York: Viking, 1986); Woodman, *Rhetoric in Classical Historiography*; Michael Grant, *Greek and Roman Historians: Information and Misinformation* (New York: Routledge, 1995); John Marincola, *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Ronald Mellor, *The Roman Historians* (New York: Routledge, 1999); John Marincola, ed., *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography* (Malden: Blackwell, 2007), of fifty-seven chapters, only four explicitly deal with the third century and later, of which two are devoted to Ammianus; Andrew Feldherr, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Historians* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Pitcher, *Writing Ancient History*, despite the Royal Road quotation noted above, does not discuss any Greek historian later than Herodian in any detail; John Marincola, ed., *Greek and Roman Historiography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). A notable recent exception to this trend is Andreas Mehl, *Roman Historiography: An Introduction to its Basic Aspects and Development* (Malden: Blackwell, 2011).

petered out with the work of Dexippus in the third century, and does not restart until over a century later. Whatever the reason, a modern diachronic study of ancient *Greek* historiography as a whole remains a desideratum.

Third, the modern understanding of classical historiography has been in a great state of ferment in recent decades as a result of the so-called "literary turn" and the subsequent debate regarding the degree to which some, or even any, ancient historians might be described as operating under the governance of empirical evidence as opposed to the composition of, in their most extreme manifestations, literary flights of fancy.[22] With modern understanding of classical historiography in general in a state of flux, understanding its later permutations is a fraught exercise.

Obviously, the issues of continuity and periodization are related. As with any discussion of historical phenomena over time, left and right limits are necessary for the sake of practicality. Even Krumbacher, who argued for a continuity in classical Greek historiography down through the fall of Constantinople in 1453, introduced his history of Byzantine literature by arguing that the conversion of Constantine and the founding of his new capital was a logical starting point for the study of Byzantine literature, but only began his own study with the reign of Justinian.[23] The implication, intentional or not, is that there was something different, particularly after the development of Christian historical

22. See above, n.1.

23. Krumbacher, 1-2, 219-220, 226-227 (although noting a break from the seventh to the ninth centuries).

literature, even in the secular historiography of late antiquity. To paraphrase Krumbacher, secular historiography is often treated as *Ausfluss* rather than *Fortsetzung* and treated as the product of an entirely different political and cultural context or as something apart and "classicizing" rather than as an organic element of the classical past. Averil Cameron, focusing on the new Christian genres of historiography, is indicative, suggesting that "the project of remaking the past during late antiquity demanded great imaginative effort and ingenuity," which led to the classical inheritance either being woven in or subordinated to the biblical.[24] While there may be much truth here, we risk -- as with discussions of the vitality or decline of the *polis* -- obscuring the continued vitality of the writing of history in a classical mode. [25]

Let us begin by briefly examining the state of the art as Procopius would have found it. The caesura that followed Dexippus in the late third century did not prevent Evans from placing Procopius at the end of a historiographical tradition that can be traced back to the Second Sophistic and Lucian of Samosata's second century A.D. essay, *How to Write History*.[26] If this is so, we

24. Averil Cameron, "Remaking the Past," in *Late Antiquity: A Guide to the Post Classical World*, eds. Glen W. Bowersock, Peter Brown, and Oleg Grabar (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 15.

25. For a discussion with bibliography of the "vitalists" and "declinists" of the Hellenistic polis, see John Ma, *Antiochus III and the Greek Cities of Western Asia Minor* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 152-160, 167-168. For the decline of the polis in late antiquity, see Liebeschuetz, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City,* 400-416 and *passim*; but note the response in Kenneth G. Holum, "The Classical City in the Sixth Century: Survival and Transformation," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian,* ed. Michael Maas (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 87-112.

26. J.A.S. Evans, "The Attitudes of the Secular Historians of the Age of Justinian Towards the Classical Past," *Traditio* 32 (1976): 353–55.

should be alert to the vitality of classical Greek historiography. When histories in the Greek tradition suddenly reappeared at the end of the fourth century, they did so with variety and verve.

For our purposes here we will mainly only be concerned with a few points. First is the question of how the practical intent of these works compared with Thucydides' and Polybius' notions of history as a guide to action. Second is the balance each struck between the competing imperatives of rhetoric and what we might regard as a good-faith effort to convey the facts as they understood them. That is, to what degree did each demonstrate that their literary art was bound by what they understood to be empirical data. Finally, what can reasonably be assumed about the intended audience for each work?

Regarding this last point, we should bear in mind that while the level of late antique literacy, like that of the ancient world in general, was very low by modern standards,[27] this was mitigated to some degree in military and bureaucratic circles because of their professional need to employ the benefits of the written word,[28] and the aural nature of Roman literature, which might just as

27. William V. Harris, *Ancient Literacy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 285-322.

28. Alan K. Bowman, "The Roman Imperial Army: Letters and Literacy on the Northern Frontier," in *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World*, eds. Alan K. Bowman and Greg Woolf (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 109-125; Nicholas Everett, "Literacy from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages," in *The Cambridge Handbook of Literacy*, eds. David R. Olson and Nancy Torrance (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 364-365; Sara Elise Phang, "Military Documents, Languages, and Literacy," in *A Companion to Roman Army,* ed. Paul Erdkamp (Malden: Blackwell, 2011), 286-305.

easily be heard by its audience at the *recitatio* or in the *theatron* as "read."[29] Although it is from a Christian context, a good example of a "trickle down" of sophisticated ideas from the literate elite to a wider populace is St. Gregory of Nyssa's famous quip about having to confront Christological disputation from cloak sellers, money changers, bakers, and bath attendants.[30] Further, we should avoid drawing too firm a distinction between the "military mind" of late antiquity and the literary culture of the classicizing historians.[31] The literary aristocracy of the late Roman world was not distinct from the bureaucratic and military elite of the empire; rather, they very much overlapped. If the apex of the literary world consisted of those who could compose and appreciate classicizing Greek in a fulsome manner, the literate class also included an audience for a less sophisticated "letteratura di consumo."[32] Likewise, Augustine's description of his father as a *municeps tenuis* indicates that, while the literary elite of late

29. Herbert Hunger, *Schreiben und Lesen in Byzanz: Die byzantinische Buchkultur* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 1989), 125-129; Raymond J. Starr, "Reading Aloud: *Lectores* and Roman Reading," *CJ* 86 (1991): 337-343; Guglielmo Cavallo and Roger Chartier, introduction to *A History of Reading in the West* eds. Cavallo and Chartier (Boston: University of Massachesetts Press, 1999), 16; Cavallo, "Between Volumen and Codex: Reading in the Roman World" in *A History of Reading*, 75; Premyslaw Marciniak, "Byzantine Theatron – A Place of Performance?" in *Theatron: Rhetorische Kultur in Spätantike und Mittelalter/Rhetorical Culture in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, ed. Michael Grünbart (New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2007), 277-85; Rex Winsbury, *The Roman Book: Books, Publishing, and Performance in Ancient Rome* (London: Duckworth, 2009), 10-11, 110-12, 122-25, 171-73; Elizabeth Mattingly Conner, "Mapping a Late Antique Republic of Letters" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Maryland, 2014) 116-63.

30. Greg. Nyss. *On the Divinity of the Son and the Holy Spirit, PG* 46.557.

31. Ramsay MacMullen, *Soldier and Civilian in the Later Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 152-77 esp. 174-77 on the military mind.

32. Guglielmo Cavallo, "L'altra Lettura. Tra Nuovi Libri e Nuovi Testi," *Antiquité Tardive* 9 (2001): 131-38.

antiquity was “on the upper slopes of the pyramid,” it represented a larger group than the wealthiest senatorial aristocracy.[33] It is also worth remembering that Ammianus and Procopius were not unique as military men with literary talent. Flavius Merobaudes, a fifth century western orator, poet, and Romano-Frank *magister utriusque militiae* also united literary competence and practical military experience, and his work only survives in one manuscript.[34] There is no telling how much more we may have lost.

None of this is to say that the literate class writ large was anything but a select group of the socially, economically, and educationally privileged, or that performances in the *theatron* did not involve jokes at the expense of the poor and uneducated,[35] only that its audiences included a spectrum of literary sophistication.

It may be argued that this emphasis on the oral and aural components of late antique and Byzantine literature is problematic, given the gulf between the *Hochstil* practiced by the *literati*, including Procopius, and the *koinê* used in less rarefied circles. However, the ability of those outside the literary elite to

---

33. August. *Conf*. 2.3.5; Peter Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle: Wealth the Fall of Rome, and the Making of Christianity in the West, 350-550 A.D.* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012), 151-52. Cf. James O’Donnell, *Augustine: A New Biography* (New York: Harper Collins, 2005), 281-82 on the snobbism even younger bluebloods such as Julian of Eclanum could have towards Augustine at the height of his reputation.

34. Frank M. Clover, *Flavius Merobaudes: A Translation and Historical Commentary*, (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1971), 7-10. It is also worth noting that the centurionate of the later principate included men of at least modest literary aspiration. J. N. Adams, “The Poets of Bu Njem: Language, Culture and the Centurionate,” *JRS* 89 (1999): 109-34.

35. Conner, 116-63.

comprehend Atticizing prose, at least when read aloud, should not be under estimated.[36] We should not assume all members of an historian's audience were any more capable of appreciating every nuance of a text than the interested laymen in attendance at a modern academic lecture. For many, the "the text would inevitably be flatter, even if still more than adequate as a historical narrative."[37] This however, leaves a great deal of room for interpretation. It is this "flatter," but still "more than adequate" valence that is our concern. While it may be of less interest to modern literary analysts interested in decoding texts for their hidden meaning, it is perilous to dismiss it too readily as an element of authors' genuine concern.

Procopius' Fourth and Fifth Century Predecessors

The greatest of Procopius' late antique forerunners, Ammianus Marcellinus, self-consciously styled himself as the continuator of Tacitus.[38] More

36. George Alexander Kennedy, *Greek Rhetoric under Christian Emperors* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 48; Jaclyn L. Maxwell, *Christianization and Communication in Late Antiquity*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 19-20.

37. Anthony Kaldellis, introduction to Prokopios, *The Wars of Justinian* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2014), xi.

38. This is a point that used to be accepted uncritically, based on his statement (Amm. Marc. 31.16.9) to have begun with the reign of Nerva. For the traditional view, see J.C. Rolfe, introduction to *Ammianus Marcellinus* I (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1935), xv-xvi; Ronald Syme, *Tacitus* II (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), 503 n. 5; E.A. Thompson, *The Historical Work of Ammianus Marcellinus* (Groningen: Bouma's Boekhaus, 1969), 121; Arnaldo Momigliano, *Essays in Ancient and Modern Historiography* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1977), 131; Timothy D. Barnes, *Ammianus Marcellinus and the Representation of Historical Reality* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), 192-95; David Rohrbacher, *The Historians of Late Antiquity* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 25; Guy Sabbah, "Ammianus Marcellinus," in *Greek and Roman Historiography in Late Antiquity: Fourth to Sixth Century A.D.* ed. Gabriele Marasco (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 47-49. Challenged by John Matthews, *The Roman Empire of Ammianus*

pertinently, as he himself tells us, he was a soldier and a Greek.[39] As such, although writing in Latin and having soldiered and lived in both east and west, he was heir to the Greek historical tradition as well.[40] Whether Libanius intended the historian when he addressed a letter of 392 to a certain Marcellinus living and publishing at Rome,[41] it is indicative of the literary culture of the time. Libanius' correspondent was clearly at home in both eastern and western literary circles, and was making a larger literary work public through piecemeal public recitations. Ammianus, like Thucydides and Polybius before him, justified his authority as an historian in part because of his diligence in inquiry, but also his participation in, and autopsy of, events.[42] A *proctector domesticus* at a young age, Ammianus must have been the product of a well-to-do family and, if Libanius was referring to the historian in a letter of 360, service in the military had not prevented him

---

Marcellinus (Ann Arbor: Michigan Classical Press, 1989 [rev.2007]), 32, 456, 468; Gavin Kelly, "Ammianus Marcellinus: Tacitus' Heir and Gibbons Guide," in Feldherr, 348-53; Warren Treadgold, *The Early Byzantine Historians* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), 60-61.

39. Amm. Marc. 31.16.9.

40. Matthews, *Roman Empire of Ammianus,* 454-455; Barnes, *Ammianus Marcellinus*, 65-78

41. Lib. *Ep*. 1063. A point of some controversy accepted by Matthews, 8, 454. Challenged by Charles Fornara, "Studies in Ammianus Marcellinus I: The Letter of Libanius and Ammianus' Connection with Antioch," *Historia* 41 (1992): 328-44; Barnes, 54-58. Reaffirmed by Rohrbacher, *Historians of Late Antiquity*, 15-17; Sabbah, 50-51; Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians,* 51-59.

42. Amm. Marc. 15.1.1. Cf. Thuc. 1.22; Polyb. 4.2.1-2. Charles Fornara, "Studies in Ammianus Marcellinus: II: Ammianus' Knowledge and Use of Greek and Latin Literature," *Historia* 41 (1992): 420-438 casts doubt on the depth of Ammianus' direct knowledge of Greek Historiography; but see Matthews, *Roman Empire of Ammianus*, 468 ("'Graecus' defined the literary character and scale of the history."); Barnes, *Ammianus Marcellinus*, 66 ("Ammianus thought of himself as a historian in the tradition of Polybius – and hence also of Thucydides."); Rohrbacher, *Historians of Late Antiquity,* 25 (although following Fornara sees the "*miles et Graecus"* signifying both a "man of action" and a "learned scholar and master of literature."

from cultivating philosophical and intellectual virtues.[43] He was as well-equipped and positioned to see, hear, and contemplate the events of his times as any of his predecessors.

Methodologically, he claimed high regard for the truth and accuracy,[44] but this has not spared him from the literary debates swirling around ancient history in general. While modern scholars have traditionally regarded Ammianus as an honest, if occasionally biased, pagan reporter,[45] recent studies have emphasized the literary aspects of his history. Barnes has gone so far as to declare it a work of "imaginative literature" by a militant anti-Christian and to denigrate Ammianus' commitment to veracity.[46] In a sort of radical third way, Gavin Kelly has mined the vein of literary analysis so far as to declare his truthfulness as simply "the wrong question."[47]

However, we should note an important article by Roger Blockley that traces out the clear influence upon Ammianus of Cicero's historiographical discussion in his *De oratore* 2.51-54 and 62-64. This is the very text of which Anthony Woodman makes so much in his discussion of rhetoric and

---

43. Lib. *Ep*. 233.

44. Amm. Marc. 15.1.1, 26.1.1, 31.5.10, 31.16.9.

45. Ronald Syme, *Ammianus and the Historia Augusta* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), 94, notes that conventionality of truth claims; Matthews, *Roman Empire of Ammianus,* 228; Roger Blockley, "Ammianus and Cicero on Truth in Historiography," *AHB* 15 (2001): 14-24; Rohrbacher, *Historians of Late Antiquity,* 30-34; Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians,* 75-78.

46. Barnes, *Ammianus Marcelinus*, esp. 195-98.

47. Gavin Kelly, *Ammianus Marcellinus: The Allusive Historian* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 64.

historiography, arguing that its protestations of truthfulness do not equate to what we would regard as a modern historical concern for factual accuracy, but merely impartiality.[48] Blockley's conclusion is that Ammianus' conception of history followed that prescribed by Cicero, but he comes to a strikingly different conclusion. In his estimation Ammianus shared the *De oratore*'s insistence on the truth in history in the fullest sense of the term. For Ammianus, and by extension for Cicero, objective truth governed both the establishment of historical fact and the interpretation of those facts.[49]

One aspect of Ammianus' method which deserves particular attention as it relates to his successors, including Procopius, is his understanding of the nature of historical causation, the role of higher powers, and the degree of agency available to mankind. His understanding of the role of contingency in human affairs is often expressed by the invocation of *Fortuna*, who may be shaping affairs with a moral purpose, or simply be the force behind the unforeseen events with which humans must grapple.[50] It is this latter aspect of *Fortuna*, very much inherited from the Hellenistic conception of *Tyche* so evident in Polybius, which is most common in Ammianus. The degree of optimism with which Ammianus viewed the *efficacia* of the human *virtus* in the face of capricious *Fortuna* is a

48. Woodman, *Rhetoric in Classical Historiography,* 74-101

49. Blockley, "Ammianus and Cicero," 20.

50. On the role of *Fortuna/Tyche* in Ammianus, see C.P.T. Naudé, "Fortuna in Ammianus Marcellinus," *Acta Classica* 7 (1964): 70-89; R.L. Rike, *Apex Omnium: Religion in the* Res Gestae *of Ammianus Marcellinus* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987), 16-17; Matthews, *Roman Empire of Ammianus,* 544-45 n. 9.

point of some debate,[51] but both Polybius and Procopius would have recognized both the challenge of *Fortuna*, and the moral imperative to act in even the direst of circumstances.[52]

This faith in human freedom of action might be viewed as anachronistic, particularly given the views Augustine would shortly propound on original sin, the need for God's grace, and predestination. Ammianus and historians like him, however, were men of action, active on the fringes of the Roman world and familiar with its dangers. It is probably no coincidence that the fatalism of the bishop of Hippo faced its greatest difficulty in its competition with the Pelagian "sword of the free will" in the missionary clergy of the northwestern frontiers. These churchmen, like Roman soldiers and officials, were confronted with the dangers of the wider world, and the "terrible Irish" in ways that Augustine was not until the Vandal invasion of North Africa.[53]

---

51. Naudé, 86-88; Matthews, *Roman Empire of Ammianus,* 472, "Ammianus' career, his morality and his history alike express the conviction that, whatever the crisis and whatever the scope of the accident, something can be done, and that it is in the nature of man to attempt it." For a much more pessimistic assessment, cf. Barnes, *Ammianus Marcelinus*, 184.

52. Arthur Eckstein, *Moral Vision in the Histories of Polybius* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 272-84.

53. Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967), 401; idem, *Through the Eye of a Needle*, 308-09; Henry Chadwick, *Augustine: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 124; idem, *Augustine of Hippo: A Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 165; Michael Frede, *A Free Will: Origins of the Notion in Ancient Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 153-174. For the attenuated, but still present Neoplatonic free will cf. Georges Leroux, "Human Freedom in the Thought of Plotinus," in *The Cambridge Companion to Plotinus*, ed. Lloyd P. Gerson (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 292-314; Juliana Acosta López de Mesa, "Plotinus, Aristotle, and the Origin of Free Will," *Revista Disertaciones* 3 (2012): 32-50.

When we turn to the question of Ammianus' intended audience, Blockley's case can be bolstered. Most fundamentally, Ammianus was keenly aware of the criticisms which his readership might raise,[54] and even the dangers that accompanied the telling of recent truths,[55] which implied an audience confident in its knowledge of the affairs under discussion. The criticisms of complete ignoramuses could simply be dismissed. Unlike the traditional view that Ammianus wrote for the Roman senatorial aristocracy,[56] his audience seems to have included men not all that different from himself.[57] Rather than the highest of senatorial aristocrats, his immediate audience may have been drawn from the lower elites which were educated enough to appreciate such a work, and likely included other members of the imperial military and bureaucracy. Indeed, a study of the 485 persons mentioned in Ammianus' history reveals that 305 were either civil officials or soldiers.[58] It seems reasonable to assume that he wrote about the very sort of men he expected to appreciate his work. If this is so, he knew that his work was going to likely be scrutinized by knowledgeable readers, making intentional distortion of the facts problematic. It is hard to believe that old

54. Amm. Marc. 28.1.15.

55. Ibid. 26.1.1-2.

56. Rolfe, intro to *Ammianus* xix; Thompson, *Historical Work of Ammianus,* 15-16.

57. Matthews, *Roman Empire of Ammianus,* 8 (writing for the officials of the imperial court rather than parochial senators); James T. Kearney, "Ammianus Marcellinus and his Roman Audience" (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Michigan, 1991) 24-28 (implies an aristocratic audience, but not necessarily narrowly so - those wealthy, educated, and socially adept enough to participate in the *recitatio*); Robert M. Frakes, "Ammianus Marcellinus and his Intended Audience," *Collection Latomus* 254 (2000): 392-442 (an audience of civil administrators).

58. Frakes, "Ammianus," 399-402.

soldiers in Late Antiquity were any more bashful about denouncing what they regarded as inaccurate reporting than their modern counterparts. Even if Woodman is correct regarding the priority the ancients gave to plausibility as opposed to accuracy, there is nothing likely to destroy an account's plausibility faster than an audience that can legitimately impugn its accuracy. His history, like any other, may be distorted by prejudices and biases, but we have no reason not to regard him as "an honest man in an age of fraud and fanaticism."[59]

Ammianus' contemporary, Eunapius of Sardis, presents a marked contrast. Unlike Ammianus, he was not a man of action who had spent a career embedded in the cosmopolitan imperial establishment. Eunapius was a sophist who, other than spending a few years studying at Athens, spent the majority of his life (c. 343-404) in his hometown and its vicinity as a civic notable and rhetorician. He lacked Ammianus' virtue of autopsy. His career would not have required the breadth of vision, practicality, or back-breaking travel and physical exertion necessary in imperial military or diplomatic service. His history has not survived intact, but enough has survived in the earlier books of Zosimus' *Nea Historia* and in the tenth century Constantinian *Excerpta,* together with the ninth century *testimonia* of Photius and the tenth century encyclopedia, the *Suda,* to draw a few conclusions.

Eunapius claims to have written his history, at the urging of, and in consultation with, his cultivated friends, precisely where Dexippus had left off.

---

59. Ronald Syme, review of *Zeitkritik und Geschichtsbild im Werk Ammians* by Alexander Demandt, *JRS* 58 (1968): 215.

Their intent was to ensure that events since the reign of Claudius II would be treated by an historian of note, and to show that history had reached a climax in the reign of Julian the Apostate.[60] It also appears that he made his history public in piecemeal installments,[61] and composed an original and a revised edition. According to Photius, who consulted both, Eunapius carried events forward to the reigns of Honorius and Arcadius, and he was a militant pagan who slandered the Christian emperors but treated Julian the Apostate encomiastically.[62] Despite some idiosyncrasies, Photius found his style generally acceptable for an historian, although occasionally more suited to forensic oratory. While the second edition excised some of the more virulent anti-Christian sentiments, this apparently came at the expense of syntax and clarity. Eunapius is clear that he relied on both written and oral sources.[63] At least one of his correspondents, the philosopher Oribasius, had been a member of Julian's circle, and composed a memorandum as a source for Julian's reign,[64] and Eunapius notes that he had recourse to the writings of Julian himself.[65] If Ammianus, the man of action, was

60. Eunap. Frag. 1.90-101.

61. Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians* I, 5.

62. Phot. *Bibl*. 77.

63. Eunap. Frag 30.

64. Ibid. Frag. 15.

65. Ibid. Frags. 17, 22.2, 25.3, 28.5

the Polybius of the fourth century,[66] Eunapius, the armchair historian working from the writings of others, was perhaps the Timaeus.[67]

Eunapius' claim for the utility of history, although acknowledging its value in war,[68] is relatively general. He notes that it provides the experience of old age by providing a moralizing narrative of what to seek and what to avoid.[69] This being the case, he regarded an excessive focus on extraneous facts, which, in his view, included precise chronology, as positively harmful since it distracted the reader from the real benefits to be gained.[70] While we may take issue with the selectivity he exercised, it is an indication that he was discriminating and analytical in his authorial choices, as any historian must be. We might note that Ammianus made a similar point about those seeking minutiae being akin to those counting atoms.[71]

Regarding his handling of the evidence at his disposal, modern appraisals of Eunapius' historical abilities are generally unfavorable. In Blockley's estimation he had many faults including weak chronology, lack of numbers, vague terminology, insufficient geographic detail, and his emphasis on moralizing resulted in simplistic causation and weak analysis. Even Eunapius' concern for

66. Referenced at Amm. Marc. 24.2.16.

67. Polyb. 12.25.

68. Eunap. Frag. 44.1.

69. Ibid. 1.52-56.

70. Ibid. Frag. 1.56-78, 28.6.

71. Amm. Marc. 26.1.1.

truth was warped by his rabid “monomaniacal” paganism which led him to view his task as the exposure of the “lies, folly, and deceit” of Christianity rather than dispassionate analysis.[72] More extreme is the view that he was the purveyor of propaganda and historical fiction.[73]

Even so, Eunapius did include a few passages on his approach to history which, although conventional, suggest a somewhat less pessimistic appraisal. In discussions of events for which written evidence was scanty or tendentious, such as the early history of the Huns,[74] the details of Gratian’s court,[75] or the confused accounts of the dominance of the master general Stilicho in the west and the chamberlin Eutropius in the east,[76] he noted that he had to evaluate prior accounts upon the basis of probability and he vetted oral reports for accuracy, in order to ensure his account’s plausibility and its truthfulness. Furthermore, he ruminated on the truer interpretation of events as the goal of history,[77] and the bravery and endurance required to write truthful contemporary history.[78] Given the fact that he included what Photius regarded as slander of the Christian emperors and unfavorable discussion of the reigns of Theodosius I and his heirs

---

72. Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians* I, 9-10, 25.

73. D.F. Buck, “Dexippus, Eunapius, Olympiodorus: Continuation and Imitation,” *AHB* 1 (1987): 48-50.

74. Ibid. Frag. 41.

75. Ibid. Frag. 50.

76. Ibid. Frag. 66.

77. Ibid. Frag. 62.

78. Ibid. Frag. 66.

in works made public before their dynasty had run its course,[79] he must certainly have been possessed of some degree of dedication and nerve. Eunapius may have had an axe to grind regarding the exploits of Julian, and the evils of Christianity, but that is not enough to convict him of outright falsification. In addition, although his audience, composed of the sophist and philosopher friends who urged him to undertake the task, may have been more intellectual and less pragmatic than that of Ammianus, we should not imagine that they were completely ignorant of affairs and incapable of recognizing errors of fact that would contradict Eunapius' professions of truth. If the case of Oribasius is indicative, it was members of Eunapius' own audience that provided him with much of his source material. Willful and gross distortion would again seem to be unlikely given the potential, at the least, for embarrassment before the very audience for which Eunapius claimed to have such regard.

According to Photius, Eunapius' successor, Olympiodorus of Thebes, was a pagan and self-described poet,[80] one of whose verses survives,[81] but he has as much if not more in common with Ammianus than Eunapius. Presumably he was a member of the literary circle of Egypt and Constantinople, but he also knew Latin and served in the eastern court. As an ambassador to the Huns he

---

79. For a recent discussion of the dating of the two editions of Eunapius' history, see Rohrbacher, Historians of Late Antquity, 66-67; J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, "Pagan Historiography and the Decline of the Empire," in Marasco, 179-191; Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians,* 82-83.

80. Phot. *Bibl*. 80.

81. Olymp. Frag. 41.1.

had to soothe the royal feathers ruffled by an assassination of a certain Donatus, by presenting gifts to the Hunnic king, Charaton.[82] It appears that he travelled twice to the Blemmyes of southern Egypt, perhaps on official business, but certainly taking time for ethnographic inquiry.[83] He was an acquaintance of the governor of Thrace,[84] and was instrumental in the appointment of Leontius, the father of the future empress Eudocia, to his chair of rhetoric at Athens.[85] His fragments conclude with the eastern efforts to suppress the usurper John and install Valentinian III as western emperor in 425,[86] and given the level of western detail he includes, it is generally assumed that he accompanied the expedition.[87] The majority of his surviving fragments deal with military and political events in the western empire, and he had a habit of using transliterated Latin.[88] Maenchen-Helfen and Blockley have each suggested that he might have spent

82. Ibid. Frag. 19. Otto Maenchen-Helfen, *The World of the Huns: Studies in Their History and Culture* (Berkely: University of California Press, 1973), 73-74; Olympiodorus claims the murder was committed unlawfully (*ekthesmos*), implying that he disapproved of the move and was left to clean up the diplomatic mess it created.

83. Olymp. Frag. 32, 35.

84. Ibid. Frag. 27.

85. Ibid. Frag. 28; Kenneth G. Holum, *Theodosian Empresses: Women and Imperial Dominion in Late Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982), 116-17.

86. Olymp. Frag. 43.

87. John Matthews, “Olympiodorus of Thebes and the History of the West (A.D. 407-425),” *JRS* 60 (1970): 80; Warren Treadgold, “The Diplomatic Career and Historical Work of Olympiodorus of Thebes,” *International History Review* 26 (2004): 723-26.

88. Matthews, “Olympiodorus,” 85-87.

some time in service to the western court as well,[89] although Treadgold has noted that there is no direct evidence for this point.[90] For our purposes, the important point is to note that Olympiodorus was no mere philosopher or sophist from a provincial town, but a well-travelled man who moved in rarefied political circles, not too unlike Procopius.

Judging Olympiodorus' qualities as an historian through the preserved fragments of his work is complicated by the fact that, as Photius complained, he did not set himself to write an entirely classical history, but the "material" (*hūle*) of a history, and it was lacking in the style that might be expected of a classical history. Undoubtedly this accounts for the omission of Olympiodorus' work from the Constantinian *Excerpta*. Even so, Olympiodorus took his work seriously enough to organize it into books, include prefaces, and dedicate it to Theodosius II. In contrast to Eunapius, he included great detail regarding geography, numbers, and technical terminology and seems fairly reliable in general.[91]

Regarding his work's audience, given that it provided critical background information about western affairs at a time when the east was being called upon ever-more frequently to assist the west, Andrew Gillett has called it "a monograph about affairs of state immediately relevant to Olympiodorus's

89. Maenchen-Helfen, *The World of the Huns,* 73-74; Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians* I, 27.

90. Treadgold, "Diplomatic Career," 714.

91. On Olympiodorus' reliability, see Matthews, "Olympiodorus,"85; Rohrbacher, "Historians of Late Antiquity," 79. Although note Maenchen-Helfen, *The World of the Huns*, 459.

contemporaries."[92] Rohrbacher notes that Olympiodorus' use of Latin transliterations, as opposed to translating to a Greek equivalent, creates an impression that his audience must have included "'Latinized' administrators and courtiers."[93] Treadgold amplifies this point further by arguing that Olympiodorus' dedication to Theodosius II was not a mere formality, but the entire work was a sort of official memorandum intended to inform and influence policy decisions, which would also account for the work's less elevated style.[94] Whether discussions of the author's parrot, or complaints about the personal hardships of his journeys would have been appropriate for such a memorandum,[95] the fact remains that, so far as we may determine, Olympiodorus was writing for men of political and military affairs.

The biography of Priscus of Panium, the next historian of whose work substantial portions survive, is not dissimilar from that of Olympiodorus. His surviving fragments cover the relations between the Romans and the Huns in the fifth century and imperial politics down through the ascension of Nepos as western emperor in 472. Much like Olympiodorus, he served the eastern court in a diplomatic capacity and was widely-traveled, with autopsy figuring prominently in his work. He tells us that he accompanied his friend, Maximinus, a *comes rei*

92. Andrew Gillett, "The Date and Circumstances of Olympiodorus of Thebes," *Traditio* 48 (1993): 25-26.

93. Rohrbacher, *Historians of Late Antiquity*, 79-80.

94. Treadgold, "Diplomatic Career," 731-733; idem, *Early Byzantine Historians,* 96.

95. Olymp. Frag. 28, 35.

militaris, on a number of military and diplomatic missions.[96] In 449, at Maximinus' invitation, he joined an embassy to Attila himself that was complicated by a clandestine attempt on the part of other Roman officials to suborn Attila's officer, Edeco, into murdering his king.[97] In his dramatic account of these events, Priscus comes across as something of a political fixer, smoothing over ruffled feathers when his companions had despaired of being allowed to see Attila,[98] and acting as a go-between with the Hun's lieutenants and family.[99] Priscus may also have accompanied Maximinus on a mission to Rome,[100] and they traveled together in Syria.[101] In 453, Priscus was present with Maximinus during negotiation with the Blemmyes in the wake of a Roman victory.[102] Although these discussions were cut short by Maximinus' untimely demise, Priscus soon found himself in Alexandria during riots brought on by a disputed episcopal election, and his moderate counsel helped restore calm.[103] Priscus' last appearance is c. 456 as an adviser to Marcian's *magister officiorum*,

96. *PLRE* II, 743, Maximinus 11.

97. Priscus, Frag. 11-15.

98. Frag 11.2.171-204.

99. Frag. 11.2.400-406, 511-523, 544- 585, 13.1.1-18.

100. Frag. 20.3.

101. Frag. 26.

102. Frag. 27.

103. Frag. 28.

Euphemius.[104] Although his history continued down to the 470s, there is no indication that Priscus served in any official capacity during the reign of Leo.

His disapproval of Basiliscus' role in the Vandal expedition of 468 suggests that Priscus would not have made the later portions of his history public until after that grandee's final downfall in 476.[105] However, there is no reason why the portions of his work dealing with the reigns of Theodosius and Marcian might not have been presented earlier.[106] Presumably it was during the reigns of Leo and Zeno that he acquired his reputation as a sophist and *rhetor* and composed not only the bulk of his history but also rhetorical exercises and prepared a collection of letters for publication.[107]

In contrast to Photius' complaints about Olympiodorus, Evagrius found Priscus' style elegant.[108] His work is well-represented in the Constantinian *Excerpta*, and it was popular enough for Priscan material to find its way into the works of Jordanes, Procopius, Evagrius, John of Antioch, and Theophanes.[109] While the debt to Priscus may not always have been direct, his work clearly had some cachet. Unlike Olympiodorus, he tried to avoid latinisms, and owed a stylistic debt to Herodotus and Thucydides. This led Thompson to doubt his

---

104. Frag. 33.2.

105. Frag. 53.1, 53.3.31-80.

106. Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians* I, 49-50.

107. *Suda*, pi, 2301; Evag. *HE*, 1.17.

108. Evag. *HE*, 1.17.

109. Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians* I, 113-123.

veracity, arguing that his description of the siege of Naissus was mere "*thukydideische Floskeln,*" stressing his role as a sophist and *rhetor* without military experience, and downplaying his diplomatic service.[110] However, the modern *communis opinio* is that Priscus' account included nothing inherently implausible, and included important differences in detail from his models.[111]

If we are to judge Priscus by modern standards, he was not without his flaws. Like Eunapius, his chronology and topography are often vague, his omission of technical terms and accurate numbers and statistics is sometimes problematic, his lack of military expertise sometimes impairs his analysis, and his grasp of historical causation is often focused on the immediate context and personalities involved.[112] However, we do well to remember that Priscus, having trodden from the trans-Danube domain of Attila to the southern frontiers of Egypt, was as well-traveled as any ancient historian. He had seen much of the breadth of the empire and the variety and fearsomeness of its present foes. Indeed, as a member of Maximinus' mission to the Huns, Priscus had a hand in trying to reconcile some of the most dangerous and least tractable of the empire's neighbors to its interests. This is precisely the point he makes in one review of the Romans' policy of continuing to pay tribute to Attila.[113] However distasteful

---

110. E.A. Thompson, "Priscus of Panium, Fragment I b," *CQ* 39 (1945): 92-94.

111. R.C. Blockley, "Dexippus and Priscus and the Thucydidean Account of the Siege of Plataea," *Phoenix* 26 (1972): 18-27. Esp. p. 26, "Verbal imitation by itself is no proof of historical unreliability." Followed by Rohrbacher, *Historians of Late Antiquity*, 92.

112. Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians* I, 69-70.

113. Priscus, Frag. 10.

this may have been, Priscus notes that the Romans had a number of other enemies, including Persians, Vandals, Isaurians, Arabs, and Ethiopian tribes, against whom they needed to wage war. He had a broad view, and understood that the international context in which the empire operated was a highly threatening environment. Whatever stylistic or rhetorical gloss he may have included in his history, it is difficult to believe that he did not take his account of the conduct of military and diplomatic affairs seriously, or that his history bore little relation to the realities he observed.

Following Priscus, at the end of the fifth century, we have the somewhat obscure figures of Malchus of Philadelphia and Candidus of Isauria. Both dealt with the reigns of Leo and Zeno. Unfortunately, as with the other Greek historians of the fifth century, little remains of their works. Of Candidus, we have little more than Photius' summary of his work, while we have rather more of Malchus since certain passages were quoted in the Constantinian *Excerpta*. Photius referred to Malchus' work as the *kanon* of historical writing, and he was undoubtedly happy to find him "not outside the Christian faith."[114] Perhaps referring to his elegant style, both Photius and the *Suda* labeled Malchus as a sophist,[115] while Candidus was a secretary to Isaurian aristocrats.[116] Photius' appreciation of Candidus was less effusive. Although noting his orthodoxy,

114. Phot. *Bibl*. 78.31-34.

115. Phot. Bibl. 78.1,31-32; *Suda*, mu, 120.

116. Phot. Bibl. 79.11-12.

Photius found his style and syntax lacking in elegance.[117] Unlike Olypiodorus and Priscus, there is no evidence that either Candidus or Malchus ever served the imperial government in an official capacity. This likely helps account for the fact that, while Malchus had a generally poor opinion of Zeno, Candidus may have been more favorably inclined to his fellow Isaurian.[118]

Too little remains of Candidus' work to come to any detailed conclusions regarding his quality as an historian. If Photius had his full text, it consisted of only three books covering a total of thirty-four years. Thankfully, the greater body of Malchus' surviving material is a bit more enlightening. Although Photius and the Constantinian compilers only had access to the portion of the text covering 473/4-480, Photius indicated that Malchus had also covered earlier material, and according to the *Suda* his complete work ran from the reign of Constantine to Anastasius.[119] He was evidently an educated man, familiar with the library of 120,000 volumes destroyed by fire along with the Aphrodite of Cnidus during the usurpation of Basiliscus.[120] Despite this, he gave a thoroughly unfavorable account of the reign of Zeno, which is only slightly less damning than his discussion of Leo. Malchus attributed Zeno's willingness to negotiate with the barbarians to cowardice and negotiations with the Thracian and Amal-led Goths over who would receive Roman support were a mark of vacillation, weakness,

117. Ibid. 79.12-24.

118. Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians,* 105-106.

119. Phot. Bibl. 78.1-26; *Suda*, mu, 120; Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians* I, 72. Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians,* 104.

120. Malch. Frag. 11; *Suda*, mu, 120.

and treachery rather than a conscious policy of trying to play them off one another.[121] Likewise, Malchus had no sympathy for Zeno's delicate political position other than the fact that his rivals, such as Basiliscus and the dowager empress Verina, do not come across any better.[122] He did, however, have some empathy for the Goths,[123] indicating that he was not entirely unsympathetic to the plight of at least some groups on the Roman periphery.

It is difficult to believe that the audience of either Candidus or Malchus was ever particularly large. By the ninth century Photius no longer had Malchus' work intact, and Candidus' work was apparently either unknown or uninteresting to the *excerpators* of the tenth, although some passages of the *Suda* may be tentatively assigned to him.[124]

The first of Procopius' late antique predecessors who wrote in Greek and has survived generally intact was Zosimus. His work's title and Photius refer to him as a *comes* and *exadvocatus fisci* (*komes kai apophiskosunegoros*), to which the good bishop also added the charge of being an impious pagan.[125] Nevertheless, he credited him with a clear and concise style, despite essentially cribbing from Dexippus, Eunapius, and Olympiodorus.[126] The balance of

---

121. Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians* I, 80-82.

122. Malch. Frag. 9.3, 18.4.

123. Blockley, *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians* I, 83.

124. Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians,* 105 n.104.

125. Zos. 1; Phot. Bibl. 98.

126. Phot. Bibl. 98.

evidence suggests that he composed his work in the early sixth century, although it may have been earlier.[127]

Zosimus clearly had certain ambitions for his work, explicitly setting himself up as a sort of continuator to Polybius.[128] Where Polybius had charted Rome's rise to dominance in a short time, with specific reference to the factors that made this possible, Zosimus took up the pen to describe how the Romans lost their empire in a similarly short interval through their wickedness (*atasthalia*). Unlike Polybius, there is no discussion of the advantages of the Roman constitution or of cycles of political history. Instead Zosimus refers to the compulsion of the Fates (*Moirai*), the revolutions of the stars, and the will of the gods which impose a series of causes (*aitiai*) on events, with the result that human affairs are at the mercy of divine providence (*pronoia*).[129]

Unfortunately, his work is not so much an original historical narrative as an uncritical compilation of his sources. It begins with a brief synopsis of Greek and Roman history, becoming more detailed as it moves forward into the third century and breaking off in 410, on the eve of the sack of Rome. Whether Zosimus left the work incomplete, or if it originally contained a latter portion, unknown to Photius, is unanswerable, but it is likely that he would have intended to include,

---

127. Ronald T. Ridley, introduction to *Zosimus: New History* (Canberra: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1982), xii; Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians,* 108; but note the caution of Liebeschuetz, "Pagan Historiography," 215 suggesting the plausibility of an earlier date.

128. Zos. 1.1.1, 1.57.1.

129. Zos. 1.1.2.

at least, the sack of Rome as a dramatic point in the story he wished to tell. The narrative is interspersed with occasional digressions and commentary which provide a diagnosis of the empire's deterioration as the result of the abandonment of its traditional pagan cults.[130] Regarding the audience for Zosimus' work, it is worth noting that it, alone among those of Procopius' late antique predecessors, has survived intact, and, despite its trenchant paganism, remained popular enough for Evagrius to fulminate against it in the sixth and Photius to recommend it in the ninth centuries.[131] One suspects it was more than stylistic virtues of clarity and brevity or some illicit thrill of pungent paganism that accounts for this fact. However inadequately he may have explored them, Zosimus' themes of imperial decline in the face of increasing barbarian pressure remained serious issues down through Procopius' time and beyond.

Finally, it is worth noting here that Zosimus' text includes several passages invoking the power of *Tyche* as a driver of historical events.[132] It is likely that he inherited most of this language from Eunapius and Olympiodorus.[133] Whatever the theological and philosophical ramifications of this language, it serves as a convenient indicator of the continuing importance of chance and contingency for these late antique historians, as well as the duty of men to act

---

130. Liebeschuetz, "Pagan Historiography," 207-214, contra Francois Paschoud, *Cinq etudes sur Zosime* (Paris: Belles Lettres, 1975), 100-183.

131. Evagrius *HE* 3.40-41; Glenn F. Chesnut, *The First Christian Historians: Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, and Evagrius* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1986), 224-226.

132. Ronald T. Ridley, "Zosimus the Historian," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 65 (1972): 287-288.

133. Matthews, "Olympiodorus," 96-97.

virtuously in the face of *Tyche*'s caprice.

Procopius' Contemporaries and Successors

In the early sixth century, Procopius' interest in history was not unique among his contemporaries. The chroniclers, antiquarians, and minor historians working in his era were, generally speaking, men who had seen imperial service of one kind or another, and may reasonably be expected to have had some practical understanding of the events they described. Whether or not the chronicler Marcellinus Comes served as a clerk in one of the praesental armies, as Treadgold suggests, he was a *cancellarius* to Justinian himself during his patriciate, and, if he was not there himself, he must have had acquaintances in the military establishment who provided him with information about events in the east and Illyricum.[134] Likewise, although his career is more obscure, the chronicler John Malalas may have worked in the *scrinia* of the *comes Orientalis*.[135] The work of the ambassador Nonnosus has not survived, but Photius' discussion of him suggests a figure very much like Olympiodorus or Priscus, who served Justinian as an envoy to the Arabs, Ethiopia, and the

134. Brian Croke, *The Chronicle of Marcellinus* (Sydney: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1995), xix-xx; Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians,* 227-230.

135. Brian Croke, "Malalas: The Man and his Work," in *Studies in John Malalas* eds. Elizabeth Jeffreys, Brian Croke, and Roger Scott (Sydney: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1990), 10-11; Elizabeth Jeffreys, "The Beginning of Byzantine Chronography: John Malalas," in Marasco, 504-505; Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians,* 235-240.

Yemen and wrote up a detailed account of his travels.[136] John Lydus had a forty-year long career as a Constantinopolitan functionary in the praetorian prefecture before composing his administrative survey, *On the Magistracies*.[137] Certainly the most spectacular career of any late antique historian must be that of Peter the Patrician. Whatever the quality of his lost imperial history through the reign of Constantius II, his history of the office of the *magister officiorum*, or his account of his negotiations with the Persians, he was an intrepid diplomat, no stranger to the dangers of foreign courts, and held the exalted post of *magister officiorum* for twenty-six years (539-565).[138]

Procopius' immediate continuator, Agathias of Myrina, presents something of a throwback to Eunapius. Like Eunapius, he did not have a government post of any kind, but instead lamented his need to eke out a living as a barrister in Constantinople.[139] Likewise, his classicizing and literary ambitions went well beyond historical treatises and in fact began with poetry. After publishing his *Daphniaca* of early poems, he assembled the *Cycle*, an anthology of poetry by his friends and acquaintances, and only turned to composing his history of the

136. Phot. *Bibl*. 3; M.R. Cataudella, "Historiography in the East," in Marasco, 441-442; Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians,* 256-258; G.W. Bowersock, *The Throne of Adulis: Red Sea Wars on the Eve of Islam* (New York, Oxford University Press, 2013), 135-144.

137. Michael Maas, *John Lydus and the Roman Past: Antiquarianism and Politics in the Age of Justinian* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 28-37; Christopher Kelly, *Ruling the Later Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 11-17; Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians,* 259-262

138. Cataudella, "Historiography in the East," 431-441; Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians,* 264-269; Thomas M. Banchich, *The Lost* History *of Peter the Patrician: An Account of Rome's Imperial Past from the Age of Justinian* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 1-3.

139. Agath. *Hist.* 3.1.4.

events of 552-559, at his friend Eutychianus' urging.[140] In contrast to Aristotle, Lucian, and Procopius, he did not regard his poetic inclinations as particularly incompatible with history, citing his friend Eutychianus' opinion that they only differed radically in meter.[141] Here Kaldellis sees a distinct break with the practice that stretched from Thucydides to Procopius of keeping poetry and history separate.[142]

As with Procopius, much of the modern scholarship tends to fall into two camps regarding Agathias' qualities as an historian. Compounding whatever flaws he may have by modern historical standards, Agathias, like the other *Profanhistoriker*, including Procopius, generally avoids reference to ecclesiastical affairs, despite their increasingly wider political and historical relevance, not even deigning to mention the Fifth Ecumenical Council, the wrangling over the Three Chapters controversy, or the developing rift between orthodoxy and monophysitism.[143] Cameron views Agathias' moralizing as leading to an unsatisfactory historical approach, lacking in both political and philosophical theory,[144] and his classicism, like that of Procopius, as awkwardly excluding the "whole Christian complex" that really shaped the thinking of most of their

---

140. Ibid. pref. 11.

141. Agath. *Hist.* pref. 12. Contrast Arist. *Poet*.9.1451a-b; Lucian, *How to Write History*, 8; Proc. *Wars* 1.1.4-5.

142. Anthony Kaldellis, "Agathias on History and Poetry," *GRBS* 38 (1997): 295-305.

143. Cameron, *Agathias*, 84, 134.

144. Ibid. 30-52 esp 50-52, "Agathias' record as a historian is dismal."

contemporaries."[145] On the other hand, Kaldellis prefers to view Agathias' classicism as a conscious "protest" against the ongoing Christianization of his society and "obstinately opposed to contemporary trends," simply fabricating much of narrative as a sort of in-joke for readers of sufficiently rarefied classical education.[146]

However, Agathias did acknowledge a Herodotean moralizing practical purpose to history, in that it would preserve the remembrance of great deeds, and was more useful than political philosophy since it palatably instilled virtue through the edifying anecdote, and noted that he was inspired to write in part because the knowledge of the momentous occurrences, and vicissitudes of *Tyche*, might be valuable for posterity.[147] Katherine Adshead even goes so far as to suggest, based on Agathias' clear familiarity with Thucydides, that he followed his example in some key ways, including providing sets of speeches which are reflected in the subsequent narrative, the psychology and efficacy of human actions, and, most important for our purposes, the practical utility of history.[148] Like Thucydides, Agathias was concerned to present more than

---

145. Ibid. 134-35.

146. Anthony Kaldellis, "Things Are Not What They Are: Agathias *Mythistoricus* and the Last Laugh of Classical Culture," *CQ* 53 (2003): 295-300.

147. Agath. *Hist.* pref. 4-11; Cameron, *Agathias* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 97 suggests that in his history *tyche* simply refers to "chance" rather than an personified higher power, but Katherine Adshead, "Thucydides and Agathias," in *History and Historians in Late Antiquity,* eds, Brian Croke and Alanna M. Emmet (New York: Pergamon Press, 1983), 85, notes the Thucydidean overtones of Agath. *Hist.* pref. 5, in which he describes the sources of calamity as either mistaken *gnome*, or adverse *tyche*.

148. Adshead, "Thucydides and Agathias," 82-87.

simply a set of cautionary moral tales. He was concerned with what might or might not be profitable as well as what might be just.[149]

We should be careful of being either too dismissive or of overcomplicating his work. Agathias' works also provide an intriguing snapshot of at least a part of the circle of the Constantinopolitan *literati*. A number of imperial officials were among his acquaintances, collaborators, and patrons. They included Paul the Silentiary[150] and his superior Theodore,[151] the ex-consul Cyrus,[152] Gabriel (prefect of the city 543),[153] Theodore the son of Peter the Patrician and his successor as *magister officiorum*,[154] Eutychianus (a member of the secretariat),[155] Sergius (a Persian interpreter),[156] the courtier Zeno, and Zeno's prankish neighbor, the master builder, Anthemius of Tralles.[157] These were not men who might be expected to be unfamiliar with, or unsympathetic to, the realities of contemporary statecraft. It may be that Agathias, as Kaldellis suggests, veered too far from the Scylla of objective fact towards the Charybdis

149. Ibid. 86.

150. Anth. gr. 5.292-293; Agath. *Hist.* 5.9.7-9.

151. Anth. gr. 4.3.

152. Ibid. 9.808-809.

153. Ibid. 16.208.

154. Ibid. 1.36.

155. Agath. *Hist.* pref. 11-12.

156. Ibid.4.30.3-4.

157. Ibid. 5.6-8. Agathias' descriptions of Anthemius' mechanically simulated earthquakes, thunder, and lightning is one of the most amusing digressions in classical historiography.

of his own subjectivity,[158] but it is hard to believe he would have invited inevitable public scorn by presenting patent falsehoods to a knowledgeable audience. Indeed, Agathias dared to dispute some of Procopius' conclusions and to claim greater veracity for his account of the reign of the Persian king Kavadh because of his access to Persian sources through the interpreter Sergius.[159] Likewise, he emphasized that truth was his ultimate goal, regardless of consequence.[160] This suggests certain things about the culture of historical scholarship in sixth century Constantinople. Accuracy was important, and if one made errors one might expect to find oneself publicly corrected.

Picking up where Agathias left off, and carrying events down through 582, is the fragmentary history of Menander Protector, which carried through the reign of Tiberius II to the ascension of Maurice.[161] Writing under Maurice's patronage, Menander was a few decades removed from Procopius. Despite a good classical education and training in law, Menander claimed to have lived a life of idleness, mainly interested in the fights of the circus factions, the chariot races and pantomimes, and a disgraceful stint as a wrestler, until Maurice decided to offer subsidies to historians and poets. [162]

---

158. E.H. Carr, *What is History?* (New York: Knopf, 1962), 34.

159. Agath. *Hist.*4.26.4-6, 4.30.2-5.

160. Ibid. pref. 20.

161. Roger Blockley, *The History of Menander the Guardsman: Introductory Essay, Text, Translation, and Historiographical Notes* (Liverpool: Francis Cairns, 1985), 4.

162 Men. Prot. *Frag*. 1.

Unsurprisingly, given that the majority of his fragments are preserved in the tenth century *Excerpta de legationibus*, those that have come down to us are primarily concerned with statecraft, but, even allowing for this sample bias, Menander seems to have had the strong interest in foreign relations characteristic of most ancient historians.[163] Like most of the other *Profanhistoriker*, Menander's style is generally classicizing, but he also sometimes simply reproduced some of the official documents upon which his account was based.[164] Less reserved about references to Christianity,[165] Menander's narrative still enjoins caution and moderation since human beings must still reckon with unexpected reverses, but now they are imposed by an unknowable God as opposed to the caprice of *Tyche*.[166] Given that he enjoyed imperial patronage, and had access to good quality oral and documentary sources,[167] it seems reasonable to assume that Menander's audience included imperial officials and at the very least he must not have greatly offended their sensibilities, since he went on to receive the lucrative sinecure of membership in the *protectores*.

The final substantial writer to work in the tradition of secular historiography before the Byzantine Dark Age, Theophylact Simocatta, did not pick up where

---

163. Blockley, *History of Menander*, 13-18.

164. Ibid. 18-20

165. Cameron, *Agathias*, 134.

166. Blockley, *History of Menander*, 20-22.

167 Ibid. 18-19.

Menander left off, with the reign of Maurice, for nearly half a century. In the intervening period, not only did the empire suffer the successive military coups of 602 and 610, which overthrew Maurice and Phocas in turn, but the climactic struggle with Sassanian Persia, only brought to a triumphant conclusion by Heraclius in 628.[168] As with his predecessors, Theophylact was a man of good education, who could claim no less a notable than the prefect of Egypt as a kinsman.[169] By 610 he was in Constantinople and of enough account to deliver a belated eulogy for Maurice.[170] Apparently a protégé of the patriarch Sergius,[171] he did well enough for himself that Photius and the titles of his works, as we have them, accord him the titles of *scholastikos*, *apo eparchon,* and *antigrapheus*.[172] If the Theophylact mentioned on a lead seal and in an inscription from Aphrodisias is to be identified with the historian, he may have also served as a *referendarius* and an imperial judge.[173]

Although concentrating on the traditional themes of military and political affairs, Theophylact had a greater facility in discussing Christian affairs, which

---

168. Michael Whitby, *The Emperor Maurice and His Historian: Theophylact Simocatta on Persian and Balkan Warfare* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 39-40.

169. Th.Sim. *Hist.* 8.13.12.

170. Ibid. 8.12.3-7.

171. Whitby, *Emperor Maurice,* 32-33 and n.20.

172. Phot. Bibl. 65; Whitby, *Emperor Maurice,* 30-31; *ODB* 133-134, 1852. The term *scholastikos* suggests some time spent as a lawyer which, unlike Agathias, Theophylact parlayed to better things since *apo eparchon* was an honorific designation applied to former prefects, and *antigrapheus* was a term applied to *magistri scriniorum*.

173. Whitby, *Emperor Maurice,* 31-32. The *referendarii* were the emperor's legal clerks and messengers, cf. Jones, *LRE* I, 575.

might be seen as the culmination of an evolutionary trend in which the secular historians became more comfortable including ecclesiastical affairs in their works and increasingly assumed Christian thinking.[174] However, we should be careful about assuming a teleology of general evolution too easily. We are dealing with a very small sample size of historians and, given Sergius' role, not only as Theophylact's patron, but as Heraclius' viceroy at Constantinople and financier during the Persian war, the power of the church in military and political affairs may simply have been resonating at too high a pitch to be ignored, even by a determined secular historian.

In general, the secular historians of late antiquity were men possessed of the requisite aristocratic background to afford them the classical educations which they flaunted in their literary endeavors. However, we should remember that with only a few exceptions they had all seen some kind of imperial service and operated in circles that were near the levers of imperial administration, although only Ammianus and perhaps Marcellinus Comes could match Procopius' military background. To say that these were generally men of practical affairs is not to deny their literary talents or interests. Literary polish had long been a requirement for advancement in imperial service,[175] and Lydus and

174. Cameron, *Agathias*, 134-136; J.A.S. Evans, "The Attitude of the Secular Historians of the Age of Justinian Towards the Classical Past," *Traditio* 32 (1976): 358.

175. *CTh*. 14.1.1; N.G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium* (London: Duckworth, 1996), 2.

his ilk undoubtedly viewed such ability as a *sine qua non* of public service.[176] However, we should be careful. To say that such education and ability were necessary for an imperial career is not to say that they were sufficient. The bureaucracy still had to have the paperwork in order.[177] Ambassadors still had to confront the unpleasant reality of premodern travel and the dangers of treating with possibly volatile foreigners. Indeed, the late antique or early Byzantine *Peri Strategias* indicates the caliber of imperial envoys and the risks they ran by noting that they would be tested on topics relative to their missions and that they must be public spirited enough to risk death.[178] In the case of military men such as Ammianus and Procopius, they faced the grim reality of not only the battlefield, but the less glamorous yet still necessary staff work required in such mundane areas as logistics and training. Traditional though it may have been, it is both unsurprising and a measure of their practicality that they focused on the themes of diplomacy and war. When Zosimus claimed to be following Polybius or others historians included paraphrases and allusions to Thucydides, however sometimes clumsy in execution, they were making weighty claims about the tradition in which they saw themselves working. Didactic history with a serious purpose had not outlived its usefulness for the soldiers and statesmen who might be either among its authors or in its audience, a point that shall be amplified in

176. Maas, *John Lydus*, 29; Claudia Rapp, "Literary Culture Under Justinian," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian,* ed, Michael Maas (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 390.

177. Lydus, *Mag*. 3.68.

178. Syrianos Magister [Anon.], *Peri Strategias* 43.

the next chapter. When Agathias grounded his critique of Procopius specifically on the notion of accuracy, he implied a culture of historical scholarship in which the narrative is governed by a good faith investigation of the evidence. There is no reason to suppose this was any less current in Procopius' generation. The practical utility of history diminishes if it is based on a misleading presentation of the facts, and the audiences for all of these writers were interested, in some part, in practical utility. If the Greek historians of late antiquity did not always equal the level of analysis of Thucydides or Polybius, we should beware a teleology of decline. They are no worse and often better than many more "classical" historians. Procopius was not an accident, but was one in a series of reasonable writers who were still working within a vital tradition.

Chapter 3: Procopius and His Audience

The reigning general studies of Procopius, despite some vigorous disagreement, share certain fundamental assumptions regarding his readership. They assume a highly elite audience and a rarefied literary intent, focusing either on his fulfilling the Atticist requirements of the genre of classical history or upon sophisticated inter- and intra- textual references as a way of critiquing the imperial regime.[1] In addition, they are not particularly interested in exploring Procopius' military background or interests. What's more, both assume the *Wars* are not a self-contained narrative that may be profitably understood independently. Instead, they regard the *Secret History* as an essential commentary on the *Wars*.[2] Perhaps, but there is an obvious problem. That is, Procopius could not count on the audience of the *Wars* having a copy of his secret invective to hand as a true companion volume in order to highlight his criticisms of the Justinianic regime. As Kaldellis concedes, Procopius could not have expected everyone in his audience to catch his intratextual, never mind intertextual, allusions.[3] The question of this larger audience is made even more necessary when we recall that opponents of the regime did not have a monopoly

1. Averil Cameron, *Procopius and the Sixth Century* (New York: Routledge, 1985), 33-46; Anthony Kaldellis, *Procopius of Caesarea: Tyranny, History, and Philosophy at the End of Antiquity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 34-38.

2. Cameron, *Procopius*, 16; Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 48-49; idem, "Procopius' *Persian War*: A Thematic and Literary Analysis," in *History as Literature in Byzantium*, ed. Ruth Macrides (Burlington: Ashgate, 2010), 255; idem, introduction to *Prokopios: The Secret History with Related Texts* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2010) xxvi-xxvii; cf. Geoffrey Greatrex, "Procopius the Outsider?" in *Strangers to Themselves: The Byzantine Outsider*, ed. Dion Smythe (Burlington: Ashgate, 1998), 218–19, 227.

3. Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 115; idem, introduction to *Prokopios: The Wars of Justinian* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2014), xi, although he does not deal with the identity of this larger audience or Procopius' intentions towards it.

on advanced literary education.[4] As Strauss himself conceded in developing the theory of esoteric literature upon which Kaldellis' analysis depends, "As a matter of fact, this literature would be impossible if the Socratic dictum that virtue is knowledge, and therefore that thoughtful men, as such, are trustworthy and not cruel, were entirely wrong."[5] Regardless of the general validity or naiveté of Strauss' theory, in sixth century Constantinople, when regime loyalists included such men of sophistication and literary talent as the *quaestor* Tribonian and *magister officiorum* Peter the Patrician, a literary double game was a dangerous proposition. While this does not invalidate sophisticated literary analyses of the *Wars*, it suggests that Procopius knew they would not only be read in so sophisticated or subtle a fashion as is sometimes supposed.

We therefore must ask what Procopius' intention was regarding the vast majority of his audience for the *Wars*, who did not have the benefit of his *Anecdota*. Such a position might seem so obvious as to need no defending, save for the fact that it is generally rejected on the one hand in favor of pessimism regarding Procopius' aims and abilities as he fulfilled the requirements of genre almost by rote, or on the other in the search for rarefied literary allusions for a dissident philosophical audience. It is not my purpose to dispute the utility of either of these approaches, only to suggest that there is no reason for us to suppose that *Wars* were any less multivalent than the *Res Gestae* of Ammianus Marcellinus.[6] That is, Procopius, much like any classical author may have had

4. Geoffrey Greatrex, "Perceptions of Procopius in Recent Scholarship," *Histos* 8 (2014): 96-97 n.81

5. Leo Strauss, "Persecution and the Art of Writing," *Social Research* 82 (2015): 83.

6. Gavin Kelly, *Ammianus Marcellinus: The Allusive Historian* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 153, 179-183. Although he disagrees with Frakes' proposition (see below, n. 78) that Ammianus wrote primarily for civil administrators, and Kelly is interested in the

multiple "lateral relationships" extending synchronically and allowing for multiple legitimate receptions on the part of variable audiences.[7] We should be wary of assuming there is one key to understanding Procopius rather than allowing for a degree of multivocality in the *Wars* whose audience may have been far from unitary.[8] In many ways "we all get the Procopius we deserve."[9]

A quarter century ago Walter Kaegi suggested that Procopius was at least partially concerned with providing present and future soldiers with a practical database of historical examples.[10] We should not be afraid to consider the possibility that at least part of Procopius' intent was for them to be taken at face value, as contemporary *pragmatike historia*, not simply in imitation, but genuinely in the tradition of Thucydides and Polybius. After all, the *Wars* were, above all, a contemporary history of political and military events that Procopius felt especially qualified to write because of his privileged eye-witness position as an adjutant to Belisarius.[11] If Procopius might be said to differ from his predecessors, one

---

portion of Ammianus' audience capable of catching his rarefied literary allusions, he concedes that Ammianus likely had multiple audiences.

7. Lorna Hardwick and Christopher Stray, "Introduction: Making Connections," in *A Companion to Classical Receptions*, eds. Hardwick and Stray (Malden: Blackwell, 2008), 5.

8. On the problem of non-unitary audiences in the context of Roman comedy, cf. Amy Richlin, *Rome and the Mysterious Orient: Three Plays by Plautus* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005), 22-30.

9. Comment made during discussion at the Dumbarton Oaks 2012 Byzantine Studies Symposium, "Rome Re-Imagined: Byzantine and Early Islamic Africa, c. 500–800."

10. Walter Kaegi, "Procopius the Military Historian," *Byzantinische Forschungen* 15 (1990): 59-60. "Military strategists, however, were and are dead serious – occasionally overconfident to a tragic degree – about the applicability of historical examples for contemporary and future military experiences." Cf. Dariusz Brodka, "Zum Wahrheitsbegriff in den *Bella* des Prokopios von Kaisereia," *Klio* 89 (2007): 470-471 "Die Leser, die er ansprechen will, sind jedoch nicht diese Ignoranten und Lobredner der Vergangenheit, sondern die Männer der Tat, die sich politisch engagieren und von dem Wissen um die dargestellen Vorgänge profitieren können."

11. Proc. *Wars* 1.1.3-4.

might point to his work's even greater emphasis on the military, rather than political issues.[12] Even his justification for the greatness of the wars which he treated is couched entirely in terms of advances in military tactics and technology since Homeric times.[13]

Alas, Kaegi ended his study on a somewhat pessimistic note regarding Procopius' readership. Despite noting that Procopius provided his readers with a good idea of the realities of warfare in the sixth century, he was unsure whether or not Procopius' work had any practical effect upon the military leadership of the Roman and Byzantine empires.[14] Other than a reference to a stratagem of Belisarius that *might* be drawn from Procopius in the formerly anonymous *Peri Strategias* which used to be conventionally dated to the reign of Justinian, but now appears to have been part of a compendium of three works attributed to one Syrianos Magister whose floruit may be as late as the reign of Leo VI (r. 886-912), it is difficult to draw a direct line between the *Wars* and what might be referred to as late Roman professional military education.[15] An investigation of

---

12. Brodka, "Zum Wahrheitsbegriff," 470.

13. Proc. *Wars* 1.1.3-17. *Contra* Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 21-24; idem, "Classicism, Barbarism, and Warfare: Prokopios and the Conservative Reaction to Later Roman Military Policy," *The American Journal of Ancient History* 3 (2005): 189-218. Kaldellis prefers to view this passage as a cryptic criticism of Justinian's regime since Procopius compares the mounted archers of his own day to Homeric archers rather than the front-rank fighters of the Iliad, and therefore inherently unrealistic, necessitating an ulterior motive. While his argument is interesting, there is no denying the fact that Procopius' description of contemporary troopers is a picture of a formidable soldier, capable of holding his own in both archery and in a melee, and was probably intended to be received as such by the majority of readers.

14. Kaegi, "Procopius the Military Historian," 85.

15. Ibid. 84. On the the *Peri Strategias* see Oliver L. Spaulding, "The Ancient Military Writers," *The Classical Journal* 28 (1933): 667; George T. Dennis, introduction to *Three Byzantine Military Treatises* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1985), 3. For revised attributions and later dating see Constantine Zuckerman, "The Military Compendium of Syrianus Magister," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 40 (1990): 209-224; S. Cosentino, "Syrianos' Strategikon - a 9th Century Source?" *Bizantinistica* 2 (2000): 262-280; J.E. Lendon, *Soldiers and*

Procopius' contemporary audience, and whether or not he might have reasonably expected it to include military men, may be helpful on this point.

Procopius' own testimony is suggestive. In the preface to Book 1 Procopius claimed explicitly, in good Thucydidean fashion, that his work was intended as a help to men of his own time and future generations who might engage in war or other sorts of struggle.[16] This implies an audience among military men and imperial officials whose life and death decisions might be illuminated by the study of contemporary military history. If he could reasonably expect an audience including soldiers, statesmen, and officials of the Roman Empire who would not necessarily be able to benefit from overly clever allusions or unpublished commentary in the *Secret History*, we have less justification to overlook his direct purpose. Furthermore, in his preface to Book 8 of the *Wars* Procopius claimed that the first seven books had already been "made public" (δεδήλωνται) "ubiquitously" (πανταχόθι) throughout the Roman Empire.[17] So he claimed a wide circulation. It is also likely that at least pieces of the *Wars,* such as the dramatic account of the siege of Rome, like other works of the time and

---

Ghosts: A History of Battle in Classical Antiquity (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005) 433-434; Philip Rance, "The Date of the Military Compendium of Syrianus Magister (formerly the Sixth-Century Anonymous Byzantinus)," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 100 (2007): 701-737.

16. Proc. *Wars* 1.1.1-3. ὥνπερ τὴν μνήμην αὐτὸς ᾤετο μέγα τι ἔσεσθαι καὶ ξυνοῖσον ἐς τὰ μάλιστα τοῖς τε νῦν οὖσι καὶ τοῖς ἐς τὸ ἔπειτα γενησομένοις, εἴ ποτε καὶ αὖθις ὁ χρόνος ἐς ὁμοίαν τινὰ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἀνάγκην διάθοιτο. τοῖς τε γὰρ πολεμησείουσι καὶ ἄλλως ἀγωνιουμένοις ὄνησίν τινα ἐκπορίζεσθαι οἵα τέ ἐστιν ἡ τῆς ἐμφεροῦς ἱστορίας ἐπίδειξις, ἀποκαλύπτουσα μὲν ὅποι ποτὲ τοῖς προγεγενημένοις τὰ τῆς ὁμοίας ἀγωνίας ἐχώρησεν, αἰνισσομένη δὲ ὁποίαν τινὰ τελευτὴν τοῖς γε ὡς ἄριστα βουλευομένοις τὰ παρόντα, ὡς τὸ εἰκὸς, ἕξει.
Cf. Thuc. 1.22.4. ὅσοι δὲ βουλήσονται τῶν τε γενομένων τὸ σαφὲς σκοπεῖν καὶ τῶν μελλόντων ποτὲ αὖθις κατὰ τὸ ἀνθρώπινον τοιούτων καὶ παραπλησίων ἔσεσθαι, ὠφέλιμα κρίνειν αὐτὰ ἀρκούντως ἕξει.

17. Proc. *Wars* 8.1.1.

many of their classical models, were presented piecemeal, orally, and publicly as rhetorical "showpieces."[18]

Against this we must reckon with a number of issues suggesting greater exclusivity for Procopius' audience. Most obviously there is the low absolute level of literacy in the ancient world, to which late antiquity was no exception.[19] Beyond this, facility with the generally atticizing *Hochstil* of Procopius and the other "classicizing" secular historians of late antiquity, as opposed to the literary *koine* used in less self-consciously literary contexts, let alone spoken Greek, was the province of the rarefied circle within the literati who had the requisite means to avail themselves of the benefits of the classical *paideia*.[20] There is also the fraught question of the degree to which literary texts were able to circulate around the empire in the sixth century. Despite Agathias' testimony that there were bookshops near the Royal Stoa in Constantinople,[21] the late antique book trade, ultimately commerce in expensive luxury goods, cannot have been terribly

18. Jakob Haury, *Procopiana* (Augsburg: Haas and Grabherr, 1890/91) 5-6; J.A.S. Evans, *Procopius* (New York: Twayne, 1972), 37, 138, n.57; idem, "The Dates of Procopius' Works: A Recapitulation of the Evidence," *GRBS* 37 (1996): 302; Brian Croke, "Uncovering Byzantium's Historiographic Audience," in *History as Literature in Byzantium*, ed. Ruth Macrides (Burlington: Ashgate, 2010), 28–29. See also John Marincola, *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 28-29 on the potentially broad appeal of history when performed in public places.

19. Robert A. Kaster, *Guardians of Language: The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity* (Berkely: University of California Press, 1988), 35-50; William V. Harris, *Ancient Literacy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 285-322; Robert Browning, "Education in the Roman Empire," *CAH* (2) XIV, 855.

20. On the development of this diglossy see Robert Browning, *Medieval and Modern Greek* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 45-50.

21. Agath. *Hist.* 2.29.1-5.

large.[22] Furthermore, against Procopius' claim for rapid dissemination of his work to the provinces should be set the testimony of Evagrius, who claimed that, even a decade after its composition, the text of Agathius' history remained unavailable to him at Antioch.[23] Finally, there is the general impression that the reign of Justinian marked a turning point of sorts for secular *belle-lettres*. There is some evidence that the imperial environment was becoming less receptive of, and even hostile towards, secular literature and the classical literary culture.[24] It was Justinian, after all, who outlawed teaching by anyone but orthodox Christians,[25] and forbade the teaching of philosophy at Athens.[26] His reign included the burning of pagan books,[27] the withdrawal of imperial support for education in general,[28] and a gradual decline in Latin literary education in the east as Greek came into ever greater use in official circles.[29] Supposedly a

22. N.G. Wilson, "Books and Readers in Byzantium," in *Byzantine Books and Bookmen*, eds. Ihor Ševčenko and Cyril A. Mango (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1975), 2-4; Raymond J. Starr, "The Circulation of Literary Texts in the Roman World," *CQ* 37 (1987): 213-23.

23. Evag. *HE*, 4.24.

24. Paul Lemerle, *Byzantine Humanism, The First Phase: Notes and Remarks on Education and Culture in Byzantium from its Origins to the 10th Century* (Canberra: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1986), 73-79; Guglielmo Cavallo, "La circolazione libraria nell'età di Giustiniano," in *L'imperatore Giustiniano: storia e mito*, ed. G.G. Archi (Milan: A. Giuffrè, 1978), 211-216, 235-236; J.H.W.G. Liebeschuetz, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 239-248.

25. *CJ* 1.5.18.4, 1.11.10.2.

26. Malalas 18.47; Agath. *Hist.* 2.30-31.

27. Malalas 18.136.

28. Proc. *SH* 26.1-8.

29. Robert Browning, "Education in the Roman Empire," *CAH* XIV, 876-877.

period of *agroikia* (rusticity) prevailed over the schools in the *poleis* of the empire.[30]

This last point is especially problematic because Justinian's regime is often referred to as "totalitarian,"[31] and more than one modern scholar has explicitly compared the emperor to Stalin or Hitler.[32] The natural effect of such anachronistic comparisons is to create an impression of far-reaching, efficient, and modern control and censorship. In this context, without making excuses for, or trying to minimize Justinian's faults and crimes, it may be worth remembering that no less a student of totalitarianism than George Orwell drew a sharp distinction between the fascist and communist dictatorships of the twentieth century and "the stony cruelty of antiquity."[33] This is a topic that goes beyond the scope of this chapter, but one might note that, if the sixth century empire was capable of censoring or suppressing heterodox writings as thoroughly as Stalin's NKVD, never mind the firemen of *Fahrenheit 451,* the long slow death of paganism and the propagation and survival of Christian heresies in late antiquity, let alone the survival of subversive tracts such as the *Secret History*, would require a great deal more explanation.

---

30. Zonaras 14.6 (Dindorf vol. 3, 273-274).

31. E.g. Michael Maas, *John Lydus and the Roman Past* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 98; Stephen Mitchell, *A History of the Later Roman Empire* (Malden: Blackwell, 2007), 27; Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 133, 157; idem, *Prokopius: The Secret History,* xlvii.

32. Tony Honoré, *Tribonian* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), 18 n.165, 28-30; Cyril Mango, *Byzantium: The Empire of New Rome* (New York: Charles Scribener's Sons, 1980), 135; Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 158; James J. O'Donnell, *The Ruin of the Roman Empire: A New History* (New York: Harper Collins, 2008), 224; Peter Heather, *The Restoration of Rome: Barbarian Popes and Imperial Pretenders* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 203.

33. George Orwell, *Collected Essays* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1961), 239. Cf. also Mischa Meier, "Das späte römische Kaiserreich ein 'Zwangsstaat'? Anmerkungen zu einer Forschungskontroverse," *Electrum* 9 (2003): 193-213.

We should also remember that the reign of Justinian was an era which emphatically did not draw down the curtain on classical literature instantly. Even if we restrict ourselves to historiography, Procopius had contemporaries and successors working in various historical modes such as Peter the Patrician, John Lydus, Agathias, Evagrius, Menander Protector, and Theophylact Simocatta. Even Roger Scott, who does see a break between classical historiography in the sixth century and later Byzantine practice, could only go so far as to say, "Procopius is neither the last historian to write in the classical tradition, not yet the first in the Byzantine tradition, but he is remarkably close to both."[34] Furthermore, the literary culture of sixth century Constantinople stands in favorable comparison to most other eras of antiquity if we consider the sheer volume and variety of material which has come down to us. J.A.S. Evans, echoing such scholars as J.B. Bury and Glanville Downey, could describe the era as "the last great flowering of classical culture."[35] Even education in Latin did not completely decay until after Justinian's death.[36] A *grosso modo* assumption of outright decline or even dramatic departure from previous practices as opposed to gradual evolution seems unlikely.

---

34. Roger Scott, "The Classical Tradition in Byzantine Historiography," in *Byzantium and the Classical Tradition*, eds. Margaret Mullet and Roger Scott (Birmingham: Centre for Byzantine Studies, University of Birmingham, 1981), 74.

35. Bury, *LRE* II, 418; Glanville Downey, *Constantinople in the Age of Justinian* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960), 154; J.A.S. Evans, *The Age of Justinian: The Circumstances of Imperial Power* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 271. Cf. Claudia Rapp, "Literary Culture Under Justinian," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian,* ed, Michael Maas (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 376-377.

36. Robert Browning, "Education in the Roman Empire," *CAH* XIV, 876. Although note Fergus Millar's point that, outside of official circles, Latinity had not been widespread since at least the fifth century. Fergus Millar, *A Greek Roman Empire: Power and Belief under Theodosius II 408-450* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 17-24.

It is true that imperial service notionally required a fair degree of literary polish,[37] and men like John Lydus and Peter the Patrician undoubtedly viewed such ability as a *sine qua non* for a public position.[38] However, imperial officers and officials were not necessarily rhetorically literate, much less at home with the nuances of classicizing rhetoric. Waggish stories could be plausibly told regarding the need of both Justin and Theoderic for stencils to sign official documents.[39] Even the notorious and crafty praetorian prefect, John the Cappadocian, was not a man of advanced education.[40] In one case, the want of education in either Greek or Latin cost an Armenian *strategos* his life when he was incapable with communicating with his captors.[41] If there was a pragmatic "military mind" in late antiquity, it was not necessarily much concerned with intellectual niceties such as literary Atticism and clever intertextual references to classical literature so prized by men like Lydus and Peter,[42] and foregrounded by Kaldellis. Conversely, as Luttwak put it, "young gentlemen sent from literate Constantinople were unlikely to be successful in commanding semi-wild horsemen."[43]

---

37. *CTh*. 14.1.1; N.G. Wilson, *Scholars of Byzantium* (London: Duckworth, 1996), 2.

38. Maas, *John Lydus*, 29; Rapp, "Literary Culture Under Justinian," 390.

39. *SH* 6 (Justin); Anon. Valesianus 14.79 (Theoderic).

40. Proc. *Wars* 1.24.12.

41. Ibid. 7.26.24-28.

42. Ramsay MacMullen, *Soldier and Civilian in the Later Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), 152-177 esp. 174-177 on the military mind.

43. Edward N. Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Byzantine Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 237.

Even so, we should not overstate the situation. As discussed in the previous chapter, members of the Roman political and military hierarchy might attend readings, and at least some officers would have been willing and able to read military history for themselves.[44] Vegetius prescribed literacy as a qualification for at least some military recruits,[45] and even a "smattering of literary education" might be enough to ensure a place in the imperial military or bureaucracy.[46] As Roger Bagnall has pointed out, there is no evidence for the claim that literacy might have declined among soldiers in Late Antiquity.[47] Indeed, a case can be made that the expanded bureaucratic apparatus of Late Antiquity resulted in an increase in official documentation, thus increasing the need for literate imperial officials.[48] Likewise, even among the common soldiers literacy could coexist with illiteracy, with the literate assisting their unlettered comrades.[49]

We also have the evidence of the late sixth or early seventh century *Strategikon* attributed to the emperor Maurice. Written in non-literary Greek, it outlines the operations of the later imperial army with an emphasis on cavalry, but also deals with much of the minutiae of contemporary practice. It seems to

---

44. Croke, "Uncovering Byzantium's Historiographic Audience," 32-33; Jaclyn L. Maxwell, *Christianization and Communication in Late Antiquity: John Chrysostom and his Congregation in Antioch* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 19.

45. Veg. *Mil*. 2.19

46. Raffaella Cribiore, *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), 189.

47. Roger Bagnall, *Egypt in Late Antiquity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 243 n. 69. *Contra* Harris, *Ancient Literacy*, 294.

48. A.D. Lee, *Information and Frontiers: Roman Foreign Relations in Late Antiquity* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 34-35

49. Bagnall, *Egypt*, 243.

have been primarily intended for mid-level officers,[50] which in turn suggests that at least a fair portion of the officer corps had a fair degree of functional literacy.[51] It, in fact, hints at a greater degree of literacy than some might suppose. In listing the qualities of the relatively senior *merarchai*, who would command the major divisions of a cavalry field army, the author of the *Strategikon* noted that they should be "prudent, well-ordered, experienced, and, if possible, literate" (φρονίμους, εὐτάκτους καὶ ἐμπείρους, εἰδότας, εἰ δυνατόν, καὶ γράμματα).[52] There is also a later passage that indicates that they should be capable of comprehending written orders.[53] To say that fairly senior officers should have some of literacy may not seem very dramatic, but it also notes that written orders should be issued down to the level of the *bandon* or *tagma,* units of no more than a few hundred soldiers.[54] In modern terms, this would have been the equivalent of at least some of the junior field grade and senior company grade officers. It is also suggestive that the *Strategikon* specified that among the soldiers assigned additional duties of each *arithmos* of infantry, again a unit of roughly a few hundred, there should be heralds who were capable of speaking not only Latin and Greek, but, ideally, Persian as well.[55]

---

50. Denis Sullivan, "Byzantine Military Manuals: Prescriptions, Practice, and Pedagogy," in *The Byzantine World*, ed. Paul Stephenson (New York: Routledge, 2010), 150-151.

51. Herbert Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner* (Munich: Beck, 1978), 329-30; George T. Dennis, introduction to *Maurice's Strategikon* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984), xiv-xv.

52. *Strategikon* 1.4. *Contra* Luttwak, *Grand Strategy of the Byzantine Empire*, 236-237 who focuses only on this passage and makes much of the phrase "if possible," but does not note the passages below regarding written orders to officers of both the *meroi* and *tagmata*.

53. *Strategikon* 3.11.

54. *Strategikon* 7.4; 12.B.24.

55. Ibid. 12.B.7.

All of this is to say that Procopius probably had the reasonable expectation of a sizeable portion of his audience being somewhat less literarily sophisticated, including less senior military officers and imperial officials. They may have had the benefit of the elementary stage of classical educations and perhaps moved on to secondary education under a grammarian, but had not undertaken the higher rhetorical study that remained the capstone of classical education and in which it was, perhaps ironically, more common to read histories as a part of the formal curriculum.[56] It is worth noting here that a recent dissertation has suggested that Procopius himself had only attained precisely this level of education,[57] relying to some extent on his relative lack of rhetorical sophistication in comparison to Thucydides, and, like Cameron, took a very narrow view of Procopius' purpose and abilities in the *Wars*.[58] Likewise, as we saw in Chapter 1, Howard-Johnston makes much of Procopius' relatively simple syntax, despite his Atticisms, suggesting that he was perhaps not so well-trained a rhetorician as some might suppose.[59] I would suggest that the very fact that such arguments could be made at all is telling. Whether or not Procopius received a rhetorical education himself, it supports the notion that at least a fair portion of his audience would therefore be unlikely to appreciate some of the

---

56. Cribiore, *Gymnastics*, 144, 192-194. On the place of history in rhetorical education cf. Craig A. Gibson, "Learning Greek History in the Ancient Classroom: The Evidence of the Treatises on Progymnasmata" *CPhil*. 99 (2004): 103-129.

57. Maria Kouroumali, "Procopius and the Gothic War" (D.Phil. Thesis, Oxford University, 2005), 62-83.

58. Ibid. 59, "the random project of a well-educated individual with a flair for writing and the ability of a good reporter." Cf. Cameron, *Procopius*, 151, "Procopius was an excellent reporter rather than a historian," 241, "he was more a reporter than a historian."

59. James Howard-Johnston, "The Education and Expertise of Procopius," *Antiquité Tardive* 8 (2000): 19-30.

Wars' more subtle allusions. It should caution us against too easily assuming that the entirety of his intended audience was confined to those whose education had progressed into the rarefied air of advanced rhetorical and philosophical writing. That is, Procopius' stated intent of preparing present and future readers engaged in planning for war as well as other struggles may have had an element of practical and deadly seriousness that should not be overlooked.

Although Procopius' more literary qualities are of undeniable interest for modern scholars, the original, potentially wider, audience should be considered as well. Many, and perhaps most, officers and officials will not have been on par with Procopius' facility at Greek composition and literary subtlety, but we should be wary of declaring his work entirely inscrutable to them. Kaldellis concedes as much when he notes that although some portion of Procopius' audience was incapable of appreciating the *Wars*' subtler intertextual elements, and that these readers would have found his account in the *Wars* "flatter, even if still more than adequate as a historical narrative."[60] "Flatter" or not, we should not dismiss this portion of Procopius' audience and his intentions towards it as inconsequential.

Likewise, we should be wary of assuming that the interests among the ranks of the senior officials, whose educations probably did progress through the more advanced stages of rhetorical and philosophical education, were bloodlessly literary. Procopius must certainly have appealed to more literarily inclined aristocrats through his Atticism and references to classical literature. It is worth bearing in mind, however, that this sort of literary elitism did not entirely define the Roman aristocracy as a whole. In the previous chapter we noted the intriguing snapshot of at least a part of the circle of the Constantinopolitan *literati*

60. Kaldellis, intro to Prokopios, *Wars*, xi.

that can be teased out from the works of Procopius' younger contemporary, Agathias. A number of these individuals were men in positions of responsibility and influence. Possessing refined literary tastes and educations would not have precluded a serious interest in practical affairs of state. Indeed, the lack of such practical interests would likely have been the fastest route to the loss of their positions either through death on the battlefield or dismissal or marginalization for ignorance and incompetence.[61] Rather, there was a long tradition in the Roman empire of the literary elite significantly overlapping the political and military elite.[62] The Roman aristocracy's relationship to the bureaucracy and military that it staffed had significantly evolved by the sixth century. Indeed, the distinction between civil and military competency could now simply be described as haphazard, with the military elite coming to greater prominence by the reign of Maurice, soldier taking charge of aspects of civil administration, and civilians taking on military command.[63] Nevertheless, even during the reign of Justinian, there was some discernable cross-over between military and political offices, and the literary and artistic production of the period is a heavy leavened with discussions of military concerns.[64]

---

61. Not that the ignorant and incompetent cannot hide in large military and governmental bureaucracies, but there are limits to the dysfunction that can be tolerated, particularly once disaster has occurred.

62. Susan Mattern, *Rome and the Enemy: Imperial Strategy in the Principate* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 1-23.

63. Sam Barnish, A.D. Lee, Michael Whitby, "Government and Administration," *CAH* (2) XIV, 170, 198-200..

64. Connor Whately, "Militarization, or the Rise of a Distinct Military Culture? The East Roman Ruling Elite in the 6th Century A.D." In *Warfare and Society in the Ancient Eastern Mediterranean: Papers Arising from a Colloquium Held at the University of Liverpool, 13 June 2008,* eds. Stephen O'Brien and Daniel Boatwright (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013), 49-57.

This point takes on an additional coloration if we consider Procopius' source material for the contemporary events presented in the *Wars*. Once Procopius' narrative progressed beyond the coverage of Belisarius' career through the dramatic entrance into Ravenna in 540, Procopius could not rely upon autopsy for events in the far-flung theaters of war. The simplest, and traditional response to this issue is to assume that he must have made extensive use of oral informants, resulting in the comfortable classical diad of *opsis* and *akoue*.[65] The degree to which Procopius made use of official documents as well, particularly from theaters in which he was physically absent or had ceased to have a formal relationship to the command structures in the field, is more problematic. He did not specifically quote any records he might have used,[66] with the exception of a letter of Belisarius which he may have composed for the general himself.[67] It is easy to envision Procopius having access to, and perhaps drafting, some of the documents produced during his sojourns of campaign with Belisarius. It is less clear how easily he might have been able to lay hands upon the records of other commanders' forces or other officials after the fact. There is a good case to be made for the existence of diplomatic archives in Constantinople,[68] and Lydus does note that an *instrumentarius* stored the records of the praetorian prefecture in the Hippodrome and made them available

65. Stein, *Bas-Emp* II, 713-14; Cameron, *Procopius*, 15, 136; Warren Treadgold, *The Early Byzantine Historians* (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010), 215-16.

66. Geoffrey Greatrex, *Rome and Persia at War* (Leeds: Francis Cairns, 1998), 64.

67. Proc. *Wars* 5.24.1-17; Treadgold, *Early Byzantine Historians*, 179, 182.

68. Lee, *Information and Frontiers*, 35-40.

"to those who inquire" (τοῖς ἐπιζητοῦσιν).[69] Whether or not Procopius, or indeed any other researcher, would have had the same entrée as men with Lydus' standing within the prefecture is an open question. One need only consider the territoriality and suspicion with which modern government agencies often view one another, let alone private citizens, and their tendency to "silo" and hoard information with an eye towards their own parochial interests, to be somewhat pessimistic on this point. There was no ancient equivalent to the National Archives, with a state-sponsored mandate to make records available to all and sundry. These were the records and working files of the imperial administration. Modern researchers in U.S. history, even with the Freedom of Information Act at their disposal, can testify to how difficult it can be to gain access to agencies' working files in the face of bureaucrats keen to protect their organizations from even perceived scandal -- as well as their own prerogatives. This does not even account for the confusion that must have resulted from the administrative reforms in the 530s of John the Cappadocian which included doing away with the *instrumentarius* and supposedly left his archives deserted and empty.[70] Whatever the salutary effects of bureaucratic reorganization, regular records-keeping while institutional memory is diminished is not one of them.

Thus, it is significant that Ian Colvin has recently made a compelling argument for Procopius' use of documentary sources, with specific reference to his account of Lazica.[71] In his estimation, Procopius was less dependent on oral

---

69. Lydus, *Mag*. 3.19; Christopher Kelly, "Later Roman Bureaucracy: Going through the Files," in *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World*, eds. Alan K. Bowman and Greg Woolf (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 161-163.

70. Lydus, *Mag*. 3.19.3-4; Christopher Kelly, *Ruling the Later Roman Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 100.

71. Ian Colvin, "Reporting Battles and Understanding Campaigns in Procopius and Agathias: Classicising Historians' Use of Archived Documents as Sources," in *War and Warfare*

sources than has often been supposed and relied instead upon certain classes of official documents. He based this analysis on the types of information contained in Procopius' narrative, suggesting that reliance on oral informants would have surely resulted in a narrative with greater operational and topographic detail. Instead, when stripped of "literary chaff" -- that is the material Colvin regards as largely authorial invention such as speeches, excursuses, "*topoi* of combat," and Procopius' own commentary -- we are left with good accounts of political, diplomatic, and strategic details, and accounts of heroic deeds and some weaker operational details.[72] Colvin suggests that this was due to a reliance on higher level correspondence and reports, and citations for good conduct.[73]

If there is a weakness in this analysis, it is the assumption that oral sources would or would not have included any particular class of information, or that Procopius would have felt obligated to include it. This is a dangerous proposition given the inherent problems of oral histories and human memory, particularly of stressful and complex military actions.[74] Neither this, however, nor Colvin's assumption that much of Procopius' narrative must have been pure invention, invalidates his argument for at least a partial reliance on official documents. Indeed, the majority of this correspondence appears to have been of

---

in Late Antiquity: Current Perspectives II eds. Alexander Sarantis and Neil Christie (Boston: Brill, 2013), 571-597.

72. Ibid. 573-76.

73. Ibid. 581-92.

74. A.J. Woodman, *Rhetoric in Classical Historiography: Four Studies* (Portland: Areopagitica Press, 1988), 18-22, Paul Fussel, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1975), 175-189 on participants' use of literature to convey comprehensible accounts of their experiences.

a high level diplomatic character,[75] and communiqués between the emperor and his commanders and officials,[76] including confidential informants and those whose duty it was to note and reward soldiers' heroics.[77]

If Colvin's analysis is even partially correct, there is a practical implication which must follow. Procopius was capable of gaining access to an array of official documents. Whether this was by virtue of his official position, his ability to deploy the influence of friends and patrons in the corridors of power, his relationships to the custodians of such documents, or a combination of these factors, it is an indication of the degree to which the composition of his history was embedded in a network of imperial soldiers and officials. Indeed, the grist for Procopius' historical mill would have been severely reduced without the good-will of precisely these individuals. That they would have provided a large part of his audience is a natural implication.

A recent investigation into the audience of Ammianus provides a method of bolstering this suggestion. Robert Frakes conducted a prosopographical analysis of the contemporary figures mentioned in the text of the *Res Gestae* and determined that, out of 485 individuals, 32 percent (161) were civil administrators, and 30 percent (146) were soldiers. Based on these facts Frakes suggested a primary audience of imperial functionaries rather than the Roman senatorial aristocracy.[78]

---

75. Proc. *Wars* 2.29.9, 2.29.30-32, 2.30.28-29, 8.9.1-3 (Communications between Justinian and the Lazi).

76. Ibid. 2.29.40, 8.9.12, 8.10, 8.12.28, 8.14.43 (Communications between Justinian and the commanders in Lazica).

77. Although the evidence of Procopius is somewhat ambiguous for these officials, there are clear examples in Agath. *Hist.* 3.2.4-5, 4.11.1-2, 4.17.2-3.

78. Robert M. Frakes, "Ammianus Marcellinus and his Intended Audience", *Collection Latomus* 254 (2000): 392-442. Followed by David Rohrbacher, "Ammianus' Roman Digressions,"

It would appear to be reasonable to expect similar results from such an analysis of the works of Procopius.[79] That is, the vast majority of individuals would again be imperial officials and soldiers. This however, proves to be only partially correct. Unsurprisingly, given Procopius' subject matter, imperial soldiers, at 197 out of 569 contemporary individuals or 35 percent, formed the largest group across Procopius' works. If we restrict ourselves to the *Wars* alone, this figure jumps to 40 percent. What is surprising is the relatively small number of civil officials mentioned by Procopius, representing only 12 percent of the total across all works and a mere eight percent of individuals mentioned in the *Wars*. This is roughly comparable to the numbers of Roman aristocrats lacking any specific imperial portfolio. Obviously there is a degree of subjectivity in deciding to which categories various individuals should be assigned, but this does give a rough barometer of Procopius' interests, and, perhaps, of the sort of audience he expected. The differences in the results between Ammianus and Procopius suggest that Procopius was less interested in the workings of the civil bureaucracy than his predecessor, despite the modern *communis opinio* that he was Belisarius' *assessor*, and foregrounds his interests as a military historian concerned with the details of the personnel in his narrative. This is a point that is reinforced when we recall that Procopius' handful of autobiographical notes include references to an espionage mission against the Vandals,[80] and the organization and transport of supplies and reinforcements to Belisarius during the

---

in *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography* ed. John Marincola (Malden: Blackwell, 2011), 471; disputed by Kelly, *Ammianus*, 151, 182 n.70, but his main objection is to the assumption of homogeneity in the audience.

79. See Appendix A.

80. Proc. *Wars* 3.15.3-15.

first siege of Rome.[81] He was intimately acquainted with the unpleasant, mundane, and dangerous practical realities of pre-modern campaigning.

Thus, when Procopius recounted a particular self-congratulatory anecdote in which it is the sharing of his knowledge of Roman military history that allowed Belisarius to implement an effective system of tactical trumpet signals,[82] or how a Persian general used his knowledge of recent operations to introduce a new more effective battering ram into his arsenal,[83] these were not solely academic or literary points. Procopius knew from experience that history could be and was of practical utility on the battlefield, and he hoped to share these lessons with an interested audience. If Eunapius is to be believed, soldiers and officials could and did, sometimes truculently, compare notes regarding contemporary history in the fourth century.[84] It is no less likely that they did so in the sixth century as well.

Overall, we would do well to remember that the *Wars,* is first and foremost, a work of military history written by a man who had a professional interest in military matters who could count soldiers among his readers. We must also ask whether Procopius would have written a work that would have been either unbelievable or so esoteric as to be without utility for what was probably the majority of his public audience as well as his erstwhile comrades in arms.

None of this is surprising when we recall that, with only a few exceptions, the secular historians of late antiquity from the fourth through the seventh

---

81. Ibid. 6.4.1-20.

82. Ibid. 6.23.19-23.

83. Ibid. 8.14.3-5.

84. Eunapius, fr. 66.2.

centuries in whose tradition Procopius was firmly embedded were not academic homebodies, but men of affairs. Above all we should be wary of assuming Procopius' literary sophistication indicates that he wrote for an audience of men who spent their lives cloistered in Constantinopolitan libraries and monasteries any more so than he did himself. Indeed, he would probably be disappointed to learn that his largest audience in our age is among academics and antiquarians rather than policy makers and military men.

Chapter 4: The Practical Problem of Chance

One of the recurrent themes Procopius raises in the *Wars* is the ability of chance in the form of *Tyche* to both exalt and frustrate men's ambitions. This chapter shall not attempt to tease out Procopius' inner beliefs or private philosophy. Instead, it shall attempt to steer something of a middle course. On the one hand, it does not accept the conventional wisdom epitomized by the view of Averil Cameron and others that Procopius was a conventional Christian whose classicism was an affection which limited his ability to analyze and convey the reality of his own times.[1] On the other hand, it is not so over-subtle as Anthony Kaldellis' revisionist view of Procopius as a crypto pagan Platonist whose classical allusions are a vehicle that serves to criticize the regime of Justinian and Theodora.[2] This chapter shall focus instead upon certain passages of Procopius' *Wars* which both hearken back to his classical predecessors and illuminate his didactic intent. Of particular interest are those passages specifically relating to the power of *Tyche* and men's reactions to the dramatic setbacks and opportunities she presents.[3]

---

1. J.A.S. Evans, *Procopius* (New York: Twayne, 1972), 113, "Procopius' classical mask is purely literary;" Averil Cameron, *Procopius and the Sixth Century* (New York: Routledge, 1985), esp.134-151; Dariusz Brodka, *Die Geschichtsphilosophie in der spätantiken Historiographie* (New York: Peter Lang, 2004), 14-20, "Prokopios ist zwar kein solcher Philosoph der Geschichte wie Thukydides oder Polybios."

2. Anthony Kaldellis, *Procopius of Caesarea: Tyranny, History, and Philosophy at the End of Antiquity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), *passim*.

3. For a discussion of *Tyche* in classical historiography and its avoidance (or not) by the ecclesiastical historians of late antiquity, see Glenn F. Chesnut, *The First Christian Histories: Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, and Evagrius* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 1986), 7-18, 41-42, 45, 188-192, 213, 217-225, 255-256.

All told, Procopius referred to *Tyche* in the *Wars* roughly two hundred times.[4] Many of these passages are essentially innocuous in the sense that they refer to things happening "by chance" or to a present condition as current "fortune," or in variously quoted direct and indirect discourse, but they also help create a tone in which the power of contingency seems to be ever-present. Furthermore, more than a quarter of these comments are in Procopius' own voice, and may be judged (admittedly sometimes somewhat subjectively) to include *Tyche* as a more or less important force to be accounted for in describing events. For Procopius' readers her influence was never far away.[5]

Although much ink has been spilled on Procopius' use of *Tyche*, previous scholarship has mainly focused on what it may tell us about the author's religious beliefs, philosophy of history, or whether or not his notices amount to much more than literary flourishes meant to invoke his classical predecessors.[6] I regard the

---

4. See Appendix B.

5. For a recent study that suggests that Procopius' use of *Tyche* in the *Wars* falls into three conceptual categories, see Sarah Gador-Whyte, "Procopius and Justinian's Propaganda," in Basilea: *Essays on* Imperium *and Culture in Honour of E.M. and M.J. Jeffreys*, eds. Geoffrey Nathan and Lynda Garland (Brisbane: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 2011), 109-119. Gador-Whyte divides Procopius' use of *Tyche* into three categories: "Definite *Tyche*" when used with a definite article, usually indicating a divine agent identified with the Christian God; *Tyche* indicating simple contingency, usually occurring without an article; and *Tyche* with the indefinite article *tis*, indicating chance or luck when the causes are uncertain or irrelevant.

6. Cf. Felix Dahn, *Prokopius von Cäsarea: ein Beitrage zur Historiographie der Völkerwanderung und des sinkenden Römerthums* (Berlin: E.S. Mittler und Sohn, 1865), 193 (Procopius the Jew); Glanville Downey, "Paganism and Christianity in Procopius," *Church History* 18 (1949): 89-102 (a skeptical Christian whose conflation of God and *Tyche* was typical of contemporary literature and not a categorical expression of belief); Berthold Rubin, *Prokopios von Kaisareia* (Stuttgart: Alfred Druckenmüller Verlag, 1954), 56-58 (classical flourishes by a Christian author); Averil Cameron, "The 'Scepticism' of Procopius," *Historia* 15 (1966): 466-482; idem, *Procopius*, 117 (an entirely conventional Christian who made no real attempt to reconcile pagan *Tyche* and divine providence); M.A. Elferink, "TÝXH et Dieu chez Procope de Césarée,"*Acta Classica* 10 (1967): 111-134 ("agnostique et fataliste," rational God in opposition

question of whether or not Procopius was a Christian, a pagan, or a Platonist to be at least somewhat incidental to his purpose in his *Wars*. I am not interested in his deepest "beliefs" as they manifest themselves in his writing, but those elements of the *Wars* which indicate to some degree those things with which we may confidently say Procopius was deeply concerned about in terms of practical advice.[7] Given his statement that he regarded investigation into the nature of God as a type of "insane folly,"[8] we may assume that whether or not Procopius' view of *Tyche* was truly pagan, represented a notion of Christian providence, or was a sometimes incoherent conflation of the two was not central to his purpose.[9] Whatever the metaphysical implications of his inclusion of such

---

to irrational *Tyche* elaborated as polemic when meditating on Belisarius' failures); J.A.S. Evans, "Christianity and Paganism in Procopius of Caesarea," *GRBS* 12 (1971): 81-100; *idem*, *Procopius*, 125-126 (a Christian who still believed in free will and contingency); Katherine Adshead, "Procopius and the Samaritans," in *The Sixth Century: End or Beginning?* eds. Pauline Allen and Elizabeth Jeffreys, (Brisbane: Byzantina Australiensia, 1996), 35-41 (Procopius the Samaritan); Brodka, *Die Geschichtsphilosophie,* 55-6 (ideology was conclusively Christian, *Tyche* is only a literary formula made necessary by the limits of human understanding); Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 165-221 (substitutes Evans' classical mask for a Christian one, behind which, the *Tyche* of a Platonist dissident is supreme); Warren Treadgold, *The Early Byzantine Historians* (New York: Palgrave, 2010) 177, 223-224 (an orthodox Christian with conventional morals, respectful of monks and relics, and fearful of demons, fundamentally Christian outlook); Gador-Whyte, "Procopius and Justinian's Propaganda," 113 (*Tyche* is aligned with the Christian God to undermine Justinian's propaganda).

7. Peter A. French, *Cowboy Metaphysics: Ethics and Death in Westerns* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1997), 5, "We can believe in quite a number of things we could not care less about… If you care about something, it is important to you. In the colloquial befitting Westerns, you 'give a damn' about it." 9, "Philosophers worry about the coherence of belief sets; people just live."

8. Proc. *Wars* 5.8.6-7, cf. 8.4.11.

9. Here it is useful to note Maas' point about the social identity of a Late Antique aristocrat being a complex web of allegiances: Michael Maas, *John Lydus and the Roman Past: Antiquarianism an Politics in the Age of Justinian* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 4, "In the course of a single day he might read Plato, be healed at a saint's shrine, deliver a panegyric in Latin, praise or criticize the emperor, and sing the Trisagion hymn – without any sense of contradiction."

language as *Tyche*, *theos*, or *daimonion* for philosophers and theologians, Procopius' focus on the dangers and opportunities of chance represents a practical problem for all soldiers and statesmen that was neither new in his day and has not been overcome even in ours. That is, when we take the *Wars* on its own terms as a work of *pragmatike historia* whose author expected would be useful to its readers, we discover practical lessons for the conduct of military and political affairs. It was not a mere rhetorical affectation when Procopius noted that, "the memory of these events would be a great thing and most helpful to men of the present time, and those to be born after as well, in case time should ever again place men under a similar constraint."[10]

The echo of Thucydides here is obvious, and we might well be tempted to dismiss this statement as a commonplace of the type decried long ago by Lucian of Samosata.[11] That would imply that no serious didactic themes recur through the text. Indeed, although Kaegi has stressed Procopius' military knowledge, and noted that although the *Wars* are replete with detailed descriptions of operations and gnomic statements about war which might be useful for future belligerents, he denies that Procopius provides any "absolutely coherent lessons regarding tactics, strategy, or operations."[12] Kaegi did note the importance of *Tyche* and the problem of the incalculable for military theorists and historians but specifically shied away from an extended analysis of the problem in the text of

---

10. Procopius *Wars* 1.1.2.

11. Lucian, *How to Write History* 15.

12. Walter Kaegi, "Procopius the Military Historian," *Byzantinische Forschungen* 15 (1990): 76.

the *Wars*.[13] I would suggest that it is precisely in this area that a coherent practical, as opposed to metaphysical, lesson should be sought. It is a lesson that is entirely traditional in the Greco-Roman world but which the author thought was worth repeating nonetheless.

If Procopius' assertion of didactic intent in the introduction of his *Wars* has any explanatory power, that he intended his history to be useful to his readers, we may reasonably ask what lessons he sought to impart. As we have noted, Procopius was no less a man of affairs than any of his predecessors, including Thucydides and Polybius. As we have noted in the previous chapter, one of the audiences for which his work was intended was the aristocracy that supplied the military and bureaucratic administration of the later Roman empire. This represents a genuine point of contact between Procopius and his predecessors, Thucydides and Polybius, whose readership was not so very different. The *Wars* was a serious work for serious men engaged in the dangerous world of late antique war-making and politics and should be understood within their own context.[14]

Although Procopius may not be as explicit as Clausewitz, who enshrined fortune, alongside violence and policy, in his famous trinity of war,[15] he was

---

13. Ibid.

14. See Ch.1.

15. Clausewitz, *On War* 1.1.28. Cf. Williamson Murray, "Clausewitz Out, Computer In: Military Culture and Technological Hubris," *National Interest* 48 (1997): 57-64; Jon Tetsuro Sumida, *Decoding Clausewitz* (Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2008), 127-128. Whatever its applicability to modern academic history, the dismissal of the role of chance in history as a "savoury red herring," as a sign of intellectual "bankruptcy," and of a "group or nation which is riding in the trough, not on the crest, of historical events," as by E.H. Carr, *What Is History?* (New

keenly aware of the role of chance and man's inability to comprehend all the variables relevant to military operations. Modern scholars have emphasized that both Thucydides and Polybius recognized the practical import of the unforeseen for soldiers and statesmen and the limits to rational planning.[16] Procopius was even more explicit than his forebears. Twice he paraphrased Thucydides' famous remarks[17] that historical situations are likely to recur in similar fashion due to the *physis* of humankind, but recast them to attribute the fact of historical recurrence to the *Tyche* of mankind.[18] While Thucydides looked towards an anthropological explanation for the thrust of human events, Procopius privileged historical contingency. Whatever Procopius' religious or philosophical convictions regarding such concepts as *Tyche,* they provided him with an idiom for discussion of practical problem of the incalculable.[19] The general and soldiers

---

York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1962), 119, 132 is simply insufficient, if not positively false in the realm of didactic military history.

16. Lowell Edmunds, *Chance and Intelligence in Thucydides* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975); W. Robert Connor, *Thucydides* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984); Josiah Ober, "Thucydides Theoretikos/Thucydides Histor: Realist Theory and the Challenge of History," in *War and Democracy: A Comparative Study of the Korean War and the Peloponnesian War*, eds. David R. McCann and Barry S. Strauss, (Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2001) 273-306; Arthur M. Eckstein, *Moral Vision in the Histories of Polybius* (Berkeley: University of California Press) 263-264, 272-284.

17. Thuc. 1.22.4, 3.82.2.

18. Proc. *Wars* 4.7.18, 8.33.25.

19. Proc. *Wars* 8.12.35; cf. *SH* 4.44; Polyb. 36.17. Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 188-189 "a hermeneutical device that is deployed when the historian feels that events were beyond control," 201 "only a literary way of expressing unpredictable or uncontrollable contingencies," 218 "scarcely veiled his lack of belief in other gods treating God, *Tyche*, and *daimonion* as equivalent terms." Cf. F. W. Walbank, *Polybius* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 61-62. Kaldellis deserves credit for taking Procopius' conception of the contingent and irrational seriously, but, in my opinion, takes his argument too far in arguing that Procopius sought to entirely "displace" a moral Christian deity with amoral and irrational *Tyche,* 219, or that she was "a powerful weapon of cultural polemic and an expression of political dissidence," 220. In any

who planned and acted entirely correctly could still be frustrated or overthrown by the caprice of chance and misinformation, a lesson that soldiers and statesmen of any era would do well to take to heart and must often tragically relearn. It was not intellectual laziness or despair that moved Procopius to note that human affairs cannot be apprehended with accuracy.[20] It is a brute fact.

Like Thucydides, Polybius, and Ammianus before him, however, Procopius' recognition of this grim reality did not lead him to counsel despair or fatalism. As we shall see, he not only left room for human agency in his work, decisive action at the correct time was an absolute requirement for success. Bravery, insight, diligence, and, above all, self-possession, the ancient Greek virtue of *sophrosyne* were critical in this environment. This last was a virtue Procopius specifically ascribed to Belisarius in his encomium of the general at the beginning of Book 7,[21] and noted that the general stressed its importance to his troops repeatedly.[22] *Sophrosyne* might not guarantee success in a world in which contingency reigned, but precious little could be achieved without it.

---

case, he elides the practical import of the power of contingency as a practical point for readers uninterested in philosophical and political dissidence. N.B. Brodka, *Die Geschichtsphilosophie,* 44, "Es ist nicht nötig, überall die Polemik und Anspielungen auf Justinien zu suchen und zu erkennen."

20. Ibid. 5.3.7.

21. Ibid. 7.1.11.

22. Ibid. 3.16.8, 3.20.18.

The Persian Wars – Failure of Hope

Like most classical historians, Procopius' account is replete with antilogies, speeches, and pre-battle exhortations. Leaving aside the question of the historicity of many of these speeches, or whether Procopius invented them out of whole cloth, the reader cannot help but be impressed by the fact that the course of events generally bears out the opinions of those speakers who acknowledge the unpredictable nature of war and the responsibility of leaders to cope with it.[23] Two specific instances in Book 1, both involving the Persian king, Kavadh, illustrate these points which then recur throughout the *Wars*.

The first is the statement of an old priest to Kavadh during the sack of Amida, which convinced the king to stop the slaughter of the citizenry in 503. The city had only fallen after a stubborn siege through a stroke of fortune in which the Persians found an entrance to the city whose defenders had fallen asleep. Even so, the townsmen rallied and nearly beat off the assault. Only the personal intervention of Kavadh at the decisive point allowed the Persians to press home the attack.[24] He was inclined to allow his army to vent the frustration of a long siege upon the town when the priest informed him that it was hardly a royal act to slaughter captives. Kavadh angrily asked why the citizens had dared to resist him in the first place. The priest quickly retorted that God had given Amida into his hands not because of the citizens' decision, but because of his

23. For the view that Procopius speeches are complete fabrications which serve to provide the reader with useful commentary cf. Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 19-31; James M. Gilmer, "Procopius of Caesarea: A Case Study in Imperial Criticism," *Byzantina Symmeikta* 23 (2013): 47-51.

24. Proc. *Wars* 1.7.20-30.

own valor.[25] That is, Kavadh's good fortune was insufficient for victory. Vigorous action was necessary in order to grasp the opportunity *Tyche* presented.

The advice of the Lakhmid Arab chieftain, al-Mundhir to Kavadh before the campaign of 531 later in Book 1 emphasizes the respect all leaders must have for the power of *Tyche*. Significantly he emphasizes not only the direct dangers of war, but her threat to self-possession:

> Not everything, O Master, should be entrusted to fortune, nor should one believe that all wars ought to be successful. For this is not likely and besides it is not in keeping with the course of human events, but this idea is most unfortunate for those who are possessed by it. For when men who expect that all good things will come to them fail at any time, if it so happen, they are distressed more than is seemly by the very hope which wrongly led them on.[26]

Al-Mundhir's suggestion is therefore to try to avoid the perils of fortune entirely by avoiding the fortified zone of Mesopotamia, and to lead a surprise strike into Syria.[27] When the Persians were surprised by the fact that the Romans did in fact manage to intercept them, they prudently decided to withdraw, rather than risk a general engagement.[28] In this instance, the instinct of Belisarius, the Roman commander who dominates much of the narrative, is also to avoid needless danger by simply shadowing the Persian force.[29] Only at

---

25 Ibid. 1.7.30-32.

26. Ibid. 1.17.30-31. Οὐ πάντα, ὦ δέσποτα, χρεών ἐστι πιστεύειν τῇ τύχῃ οὐδὲ τοὺς πολέμους οἴεσθαι δεῖν κατορθοῦν ἅπαντας. οὐδὲ γὰρ εἰκὸς τοῦτό γε οὐδὲ ἄλλως ἀνθρώπειον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀξύμφορος αὕτη μάλιστα τοῖς αὐτῇ ἐχομένοις ἡ ἔννοιά ἐστι. τοὺς γὰρ ἅπαντα σφίσιν ἐλπίσαντας τἀγαθὰ ἔσεσθαι σφαλέντας ποτὲ, ἂν οὕτω τύχοι, ἡ ἐλπὶς οὐ δέον ἡγησαμένη τοῦ προσήκοντος μᾶλλον ἠνίασε.

27. Ibid. 1.17.32-39.

28. Ibid. 1.18.9.

29. Ibid. 1.18.17-23.

the insistence of his troops was he goaded into a general engagement which resulted in a heavy defeat for the Roman forces.

Thus, in his first book Procopius presented his reader with the cruel reality of the need to act vigorously at the right moments, but also to avoid action and the arena of *Tyche* when it was unnecessary, since the caprice of fortune was dangerous. This was not a mere philosophical nicety, or some hold-over of the classical past. It is a lesson still relevant to the conduct of human affairs.

Procopius reinforces the theme later in Book 1 in his presentation of a speech by the senator Origen to the rebels in the Nika Revolt of January 532. Origen counseled prudence, deliberation, and steadfast action for an extended time:

> When action involve great issues, it refuses to be brought to a successful conclusion by the brief crisis of a moment, but this is accomplished only by wisdom of thought and energy of action, which men display for a length of time. Therefore, if we should go out against the enemy, our cause will hang in the balance, and we shall be taking a risk which will decide everything in a brief space of time; and, as regards the consequences of such action, we shall either fall down and worship Fortune or reproach her altogether. For those things whose issue is most quickly decided, fall, as a rule under the sway of Fortune.[30]

The rebels ignored this counsel. Falsely believing this to be an opportune moment for action, they assembled in the hippodrome – only to be cut down by the imperial response.

While the rebels should have followed Origen's advice to respect the caprice of fortune, Justinian and his generals had the opposite problem. They had to muster the courage to act in the crisis or the regime was doomed. First

---

30. Ibid. 1.24.28.29.

Theodora had to convince Justinian not to simply flee the capitol with her famous exhortations that “royalty is a fair winding-sheet.”[31] But this was not enough. Even Belisarius lost his nerve, finding the way barred on his first attempt to reach the hippodrome, and the situation remained in the balance until Justinian directed him to an alternate route. Only then could the imperial troops begin the massacre that ended the revolt.[32]

Taken as a whole, the episode illustrates the paradox in which prudence and action are both necessary in order to minimize the dangers associated with fortune and to seize upon the opportunities which she presents. In fact, the ephemeral nature of such opportunities is a point remarked more than once in the *Wars*, perhaps most explicitly by the Gothic ambassadors to the Persian king, Khusro, in the run-up to the renewal of hostilities in the east. Noting Justinian’s preoccupation with the reconquests in the west, they suggest to the king that it would behoove him to act at this acme of opportunity, which would not recur if he let the moment slip.[33] These sentiments were echoed to the king by a deputation of Armenians seeking assistance in a revolt against the empire.[34] The problem is not simply to choose the opportune moment to act in a dangerous and uncertain environment. It is compounded by the fact that, should the proper moment for action go by, inaction could be as disastrous as misplaced action. In this case, Khusro chose his moment well. The Roman forces in the East had been

31 Ibid. 1.24.32-38.

32 Ibid. 1.24.38-54.

33 Ibid. 2.2.11.

34 Ibid. 2.3.32.52-53.

neglected since the peace of 532, Rome's Armenian allies were restive,[35] and the defenses of Antioch were flawed.[36] The Persian campaign of 540 thus climaxed with the great city's sack.

Belisarius' counter-thrust in 541, despite his assertion to his officers that long experience in war gave the ability to foresee the future and pursue the better course,[37] was ultimately only a limited success. Belisarius could not account for the seemingly erratic actions of his Saracen allies nor the virulence of camp diseases which afflicted his men.[38] The contingency and friction of the campaign were at times impenetrable to even to the foremost general of the age. However, in 542, it was Khusro's inability to properly assess the situation that allowed Belisarius to bluff him into a withdrawal from Roman territory with only a scratch force.[39]

The outbreak of plague in 542 provided another occasion to comment upon the limits of human calculation in a world that could be upset by the unforeseeable. Here, Procopius had material that lent itself to imitation of Thucydides' account of the plague that struck Athens in the Peloponnesian War.[40] Procopius' account, however, differs from his model in certain respects. Most significant for our purposes here is their different attitude towards

35. Geoffrey Greatrex and Samuel Lieu, eds. *The Roman Eastern Frontier and the Persian Wars Part II AD 363-630* (New York: Routledge, 2002) 99, 102.

36. Proc. *Wars* 2.6.9-14.

37. Ibid. 2.19.6-7.

38. Ibid.2.19.26-46.

39. Ibid. 2.21.1-29.

40. Thuc. 2.47-54. Cameron, *Procopius*, 40-43.

causation. While Thucydides was content to leave the investigation of his plague's causes to other writers,[41] Procopius, after noting mankind's penchant for conjuring outlandish theories to account for the incomprehensible, could only refer it to God, noting that certain events for which no rational explanation was possible were simply "beyond reason."[42] Cameron has noted this distinction but then suggests that it is of a piece with a fatalist Christian outlook that may also be seen in the work of Agathias.[43] This may be so, but it is also a clear point of contact with Polybius, who similarly conceded that certain events, such as the career of Andriscus the "Pseudo-Philip," might not be susceptible to rational analysis, and that such issues in which the cause was impossible to determine might likewise be referred to the power of *Tyche* or the gods.[44] This, however, did not prevent Procopius from following Thucydides' example,[45] and providing a detailed, practical account of the progress of the disease and its symptoms. Even if the causes were unknowable, and full understanding of the situation therefore impossible, Procopius apparently felt that his readers deserved

41. Thuc. 2.48.3.

42. Proc. *Wars* 2.22.1-2, 34.

43. Cameron, *Procopius*, 40-41.

44. Polyb. 36.10 and 36.17. Similarly, Procopius, both in the *Wars* and the *Secret History,* explicitly noted this tendency to refer what was beyond rational analysis to *Tyche*. Proc.. *Wars* 8.12.34-35, *SH* 4.44-45. Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 218-220.

45. Thuc. 2.48-54.

whatever empirical information was available and provided not only a resume of symptoms, but of the social effects.[46]

The Vandal Wars – The Knees of God

When Procopius turned to the events of the reconquest of North Africa, he chose to include a curious speech to the emperor by the notorious praetorian prefect, John the Cappadocian.[47] Despite the clear antipathy displayed elsewhere in the *Wars* towards John,[48] in this instance, Procopius summed him up merely ambiguously as the "boldest" (*thrasutatos*) and "sharpest" (*deinotatos*) of men.[49] According to Procopius, John was the only man at court who dared try to dissuade Justinian from his plans for war with the Vandals. In his speech, John presented the emperor with a simple calculus. If Justinian was confident of victory, then the sacrifice of blood and treasure were justified. However, if the outcome of a risky expedition ultimately rested on the "knees of God," i.e. was beyond human calculus, the dangers outweighed the potential benefits. Significantly, John goes on to note that it was this moment of planning that was decisive. Second thoughts would be useless once Justinian let slip the dogs of war. One does well to consider before undertaking a campaign whether or not it is worth the risk of giving *Tyche* an opening.

---

46. Proc. *Wars* 2.22-23. Perhaps the most striking social distinction is Procopius' assertion (2.23.14-16) that the plague caused a temporary change for the better in people's behavior and degree of piety, while Thucydides (2.53) only saw changes for the worse.

47. Ibid. 3.10.8-17.

48. Ibid. 1.24.12-15, 1.25.3-44, 3.13.12-20.

49. Ibid. 3.10.7.

The similarities of this scene to Herodotus 7.10.1 and Artabanus' warning to Xerxes have long been noted. Braun doubted the authenticity of the scene because it paraphrases some elements of the Corinthians' speech in Thucydides 1.68 and quotes *Odyssey* 1.267 (cf. also *Odyssey* 1.400 and 16.129) when noting that the outcome of events might "rest upon the knee of God." Since Procopius had already noted that John was a man upon whom a liberal education had made very little impression, Braun assumed that the Cappadocian could not have given such a speech.[50] The subsequent identification of the "wise advisor" trope in Herodotus has undoubtedly done little to bolster confidence in such set pieces.[51] Rubin, however, saw little in the way of caricature in the scene and argued that it was credible apart from its "unvermeidlicher Rhetorik."[52] Regardless of anything else, given the eastern empire's distinct lack of success against the Vandals in the past, and the undoubtedly palpable aftermath of the Nika riot, it would be unbelievable if no such contrary points were raised regarding a military adventure in a distant land.

We might dismiss John's speech as the sentiments of a deeply flawed character, but it includes the prediction that his advice would win renown if the Libyan adventure was prolonged, as indeed proved to be the case. Despite the

---

50. Hermann Braun, *Nachahmung Herodots durch Prokop* (Nuremburg: Altes Gymnasium zu Nürnberg , 1894), 46-47.

51. Richmond Lattimore, "The Wise Adviser in Herodotus," *CP* 34 (1939): 24-35; Roger Scott, "The Classical Tradition in Byzantine Historiography," in *Byzantium and the Classical Tradition*, eds. Margaret Mullet and Roger Scott (Birmingham: Centre for Byzantine Studies, University of Birmingham, 1981), 73-74; Gador-Whyte, "Procopius and Justinian's Propaganda," 114-115.

52. Rubin, 135-136.

speed with which Gelimer's kingdom collapsed in 533-4 and the pageantry of the triumphal celebrations, more than a decade of hard fighting against both the Moors and rebellious troops was required of the Romans in Africa before an exhausted and depopulated province knew peace.[53]

More immediately, Procopius presented the initial Roman victory over the Vandals as a study in the power of contingency, and human success and failure at seizing opportunities. On the road to Carthage, the Roman order of march combined with the uncoordinated arrival of two of the three Vandal columns in the battle of *Ad Decimum* resulted in the piecemeal defeat of the Vandals and the death of one Gelimer's brothers, Ammatas. Even so, in Procopius' opinion, had Gelimer pressed home the attack with the main Vandal army, he would have crushed the Romans. Instead, he gave himself over to lamenting his brother, let the opportunity slip, and allowed Belisarius to reorder his troops and rout the Vandals.[54] Here Procopius noted that, in a world subject to the overriding power of *Tyche* and God, men have no way of knowing if they have made the right decisions or whether or not they will succeed or fail.[55] Even the correct decision or plan is no guarantee of success. He goes on to note that the battle served as an object lesson to the Vandals which illustrated the fragility of human arrangements.[56]

---

53. Ibid. 4.28.52, 8.17.22.

54. Ibid. 3.18-19.

55. Ibid. 3.18.1-3; Brodka, *Die Geschichtsphilosophie,* 40-43.

56. Ibid. 3.22.1-12.

However, we should note that human agency is not entirely lacking in the narrative either.[57] In the end, it is Belisarius and the Romans who succeeded in grasping the opportunity presented by Gelimer's failure. The point is emphasized in Belisarius' harangue before the battle of Tricamarum. He notes that "valor of the soul" is critical for victory in an environment in which the perception of bad fortune can "enslave the mind." That is, moral courage is required to act at the decisive moment lest it be allowed to run past, and overpowering passion prevents men from making use of their opportunities.[58] This is an analysis that neatly sums up not only Gelimer's previous failure, but bears out the results of Tricamarum as well.[59] The persistence and bravery of the Roman cavalry, led by John the Armenian, resulted in the death of another of Gelimer's brothers and broke the Vandal center. The rout was on, Belisarius ordered a general advance, and Gelimer fled. Procopius then added a meditation on the end of the Vandal kingdom in which he stressed that such seemingly wondrous events are and will be impenetrable to human *logos* so long as the *Tyche* of mankind is the same.[60] However, he again leaves open the door for human agency by noting that such events could be ascribed either to fortune or virtue.[61]

---

57. Here I differ with Kaldellis who is inclined to see the theme of the *Vandal War* as the complete supremacy of *Tyche* and the irrelevance of valor. Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 176-189.

58. Ibid. 4.1.16-25.

59. Ibid. 4.3.

60. Ibid. 4.7.18-21

61. Rubin, 58; Brodka, *Die Geschichtsphilosophie,* 43; Contra Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 188.

In fact a number of episodes in the remainder of Book 4 illustrate a reciprocal relationship between contingent events and the responsibility of men to act decisively at the correct moments, either keeping their heads and preventing disaster, or simply seizing the moment of opportunity. A good example is the battle of Justinian's nephew, Germanus, against an army of mutineers led by Stotzas. Although the rebels routed his right wing, Germanus rallied his men and turned the tables.[62] Likewise, in a battle with the Moors, when the enemy's camels threw his cavalry into disorder, the general Solomon kept his head and led a dismounted attack that broke the Moorish formation.[63] The link between fortune and action is explicit in Solomon's harangue before the later Roman attack on the Moorish stronghold of Toumar.[64] Men must not prove false to favors from above but undergo danger and strive for success at the decisive moments. Those who are too fearful to act forsake their fortune have only themselves to blame for failure. Almost on cue, the entire army then followed the spontaneous advance of an individual soldier and took Toumar.[65] *Tyche* or providence might set the stage and provide inspiration, but that did not mean human agency was not necessary to the outcome.

62. Proc. Wars 4.17.13-23.

63. Ibid.4.11.47-56.

64. Ibid. 4.20.5-9.

65. Ibid. 4.20.10-22.

The Gothic Wars

In his account of the Gothic War Procopius composed a narrative in which the caprice of fortune combined with the virtue and folly of men. She alternatively lifted first the Romans, and then the Goths to dramatic heights before dashing their hopes over the course of nearly two decades of hard fighting. The final Roman victory is accompanied by the advice of the general John that victory is sufficient for the wise, but extravagant desire may lead to disadvantage.[66] I would suggest that this entirely traditional advice is one of the essential lessons Procopius was trying to teach. It encapsulates much of the Roman and Gothic experience in Italy in which inconstancy of mind in the face of the vicissitudes of fortune often worked to their ultimate detriment, while self-possession could overcome apparent set-backs.

Procopius' critique of the Goths' worthless king, Theodahad, in the early part of the war provides a case in point.[67] As the immediate fortunes of war changed Theodahad oscillated between states of unreasoning terror and unreasoning boldness, neither of which was justified by proper understanding of the situation. In the first case, he secretly negotiated to simply abdicate in Justinian's favor,[68] and in the second he repudiated his agreements with the emperor and detained his envoys.[69] By the time Belisarius arrived in Italy and laid siege to Naples in 536, Theodahad's anxiety had returned and he took no

66. Ibid. 8.35.35.

67. Ibid. 5.7.11.11-13.

68. Ibid. 5.6.

69. Ibid. 5.7.13-25.

useful steps for the defense of either the city or his realm.[70] Unsurprisingly the Goths deposed and killed him in favor of Vitigis.

Although an improvement over Theodahad, Vitigis in Procopius' portrait is not that of a man of such mental and moral constitution as to be impervious to the vicissitudes of history. Despite counseling careful planning and against hasty action,[71] he was unable to endure Belisarius' occupation of Rome and advanced against him in haste and anger.[72] The siege of Rome would prove to be Belisarius' finest hour. Vitigis could only vent his "anger and perplexity"[73] by massacring such Roman senators as were in his power, and ultimately ended the siege as emotionally as he had begun it. The mere presence of a small Roman strike-force in Ariminum filled him and the Goths with anxiety for the safety of Ravenna, possibly the strongest fortress in Italy.[74] Upon returning to Ravenna, he was paralyzed by fear and despair and eventually surrendered in 540.[75]

The account of the Roman commanders in this phase of the war, particularly Belisarius, and his rival, John the nephew of Vitalian, indicates the efficacy of constancy and mental fortitude in the face of events. The Romans generally seized their opportunities such as the discovery of a passageway into

---

70. Ibid. 5.9.1-7, 5.11.1-9.

71. Ibid. 5.11.12-13.

72. Ibid. 5.16.19-5.17.12.

73. Ibid. 5.26.1

74. Ibid. 6.10.1-12.

75. Ibid. 6.24.12-13, 6.28.27.

Naples or the capture of Ariminum,[76] kept their heads in adverse circumstances such as the false report that the Goths had breached the defenses of Rome and an all-out Gothic assault at Ariminum,[77] were clear-eyed about their tactical advantages over the Goths,[78] and only rarely allowed themselves to be goaded into battle on unfavorable terms.[79]

It is true that the Gothic surrender to a smaller Roman force without fighting a decisive battle prompted Procopius to ruminate that it was neither human wisdom, nor virtue but some divine power (*daimonion*) that drove such events.[80] While this is again reminiscent of Polybius 36.17, and drives home the point that the course of events may at times be inscrutable to rational analysis and planning, we should not read too much into the apparent denial of human agency.[81] The course of the narrative to this point is also generally of Roman success through self-possession in the face of contingent circumstance, and Gothic emotional overreaction and failure. The very next chapter deals with the recall of Belisarius, which introduces an inversion of Roman and Gothic fortunes that would play out over the next decade.[82] Belisarius' successors, with few exceptions, were "more equal" with one another, lacking an overall commander

76. Ibid. 5.9.10, 6.10.1-12.

77. Ibid. 5.18.36-37, 6.12.1-25.

78. Ibid. 5.27.25-29.

79. Ibid. 5.28-29 vs. 6.3.

80. Ibid. 6.29.32.

81. *Contra* Brodka, *Die Geschichtsphilosophie,* 44.

82. Ibid. 6.30.

to direct strategy, and were, in any case more interested in profiting from their positions than advancing the interests of the empire, while the Goths found a king worthy of the name in Totila.[83] In fact, Procopius explicitly attributed the initial ruination of the Romans' position in Italy to the misdeeds of the imperial officers,[84] a point reinforced by Totila's quip in a letter to the Senate that it was precisely the bad conduct of the imperial army and officials that had brought them to their current fortune.[85]

If *Tyche* played a relatively small part in Procopius' narrative of the Goths' early resurgence, this changed with Belisarius' return to Italy in 544. Procopius suggested that his old commander was now unable to stem the synergistic workings of *Tyche* and Roman missteps because the opposition of God and *Tyche* ensured the frustrations of his plans when they were sound and in leading

---

83. Ibid. 7.1.23-24 Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 198 has noted the similarity of Procopius' contrast of Belisarius with his successors to the description of Thuc. 2.65 of the successors of Pericles, but one might also note the similarities to Polybius' description of the Carthaginian commanders' disunity in Spain after their victories over the Scipios in 211 B.C. and his notes that those who win victories in the field are more numerous than those who make advantageous of such victories, and that one should avoid tyrannical behavior after victory, Polyb. 9.11, 10.36.

84. Proc. Wars 7.1.28-33 (Alexander's improvident fiscal policies cause disaffection in both the populace and army), 7.3.6-22 (failure to exploit opportunity provided by Artabazes at Verona), 7.4.1-9 (the imperial commanders ignore Artabazes and lose the opportunity for victory), 7.5.7-19 (lack of cooperation and flight at false report of John's death), 7.6.9-7.7 (timidity prevents relief of Naples), 7.11.1-2 (assessment of Belisarius).

85. Ibid. 7.8.21. Although a few passages do still remind the reader of her power. E.g. Ibid. 7.4.4 (Artabazes warning to the other Roman officers not to despise the resurgent Goths since when *Tyche* has reduced a man to despair it leads him to extraordinary daring), 7.4.27 (Although he killed Gothic champion Valaris, by some chance the spear of the dead man pierced the artery in Artabazes' neck, killing the most active Roman commander in Italy), 7.5.8 (the Roman generals cast lots and awaited the decision of fortune to see who should lead their vanguard against the Goths in 542).

him to plan unwisely by limiting his ability to correctly perceive the truth.[86] Here Procopius indicates the dangers inherent in any such enterprise, even for so experienced and formidable a soldier. Sometimes the outcome of war does truly rest "on the knee of God." Not even Belisarius could bend the independent-minded imperial officers to his will if they chose to go their own ways,[87] and the mental and moral resilience he had demonstrated in the earlier campaign utterly deserted him during a botched attempt to resupply Rome. The frustration of his plans sent him to his sickbed, while Totila occupied the capitol.[88]

Even so, Procopius was also clear that human decision-making plays a role. Fairly or not, he described Justinian as simply uninterested in the vigorous prosecution of the war at critical times.[89] Only with the appointment of Narses to command in the west in 551 did he address two of the structural problems that had plagued the imperial cause. Narses' authority was apparently more clear cut than John's or Belisarius' had been, mitigating the problem of divided command,[90] and the emperor found the wherewithal to send him forth with the final and largest western expeditionary force in Procopius' account.[91] For his part, Narses did not allow himself to be distracted by incidental issues, and

---

86. Ibid. 7.13.15-18.

87. Ibid. 7.18.29 (John); 7.19.12-14 (Bessas); 7.19.23-30 (Isaac).

88. Ibid. 7.19.28-34, 7.20. Cf. Belisarius' similar mental collapse in the face of Theodora and Antonina's machinations, Proc, *SH* 4.

89. Ibid. 7.35.9-11, 7.36.4-6.

90. Ibid. 8.21.5-9.

91. Ibid. 8.26.5-8.

aimed to settle affairs directly.[92] Although Procopius invoked *Tyche* in the aftermath of Totila's defeat as a capricious force that had both raised up and cast down the Gothic king for inscrutable reasons,[93] and he depicted Narses as correctly attributing the victory to God,[94] he is also clear in his description of the battle that a combination of human factors was also critical. When Narses brought Totila to bay at Busta Gallorum he not only outnumbered him, he also outgeneraled him, and the Romans took the opportunity created by Gothic panic to turn the rout into a slaughter.[95]

Likewise, Procopius specifically invoked God and *Tyche* and man's inability to comprehend their workings in his paired accounts of the Roman recapture of the fortress of Petra in Lazica and the final liberation of Rome.[96] Yet his descriptions of the actual events in both cases also emphasize the role of human agency on the part of officers who had failed in the past. At Petra, despite his greed and corruption in Italy, the seventy-year old Bessas redeemed himself by being the first in the assault, and kept his wits about him despite being toppled off the wall. He pulled himself together and pressed home the attack to a successful conclusion despite the valor of the defenders.[97] The contrast with Belisarius' mental collapse during his failed relief of Rome is heightened when

---

92. Ibid. 8.28.11.

93. Ibid. 8.32.28-30, 33-36.

94. Ibid. 8.33.1.

95. Ibid. 8. 32.1-21.

96. Ibid. 8.12.34-35, 8.33.24-25.

97. Ibid. 8.11.39-62.

we note that Bessas himself had been the very officer in command of the beleaguered city's garrison. Likewise, at the final capture of Rome, Procopius is clear that Narses specifically directed Dagistheus, an officer who had previously failed to recapture Petra, to assault those sections of the walls the Goths were not defending.[98] That is, Narses was both intelligent enough to perceive the opportunity, and decisive enough to exploit it. *Tyche*'s power was fearsome both in the obstacles and opportunities she created, but vigorous action remained a necessity.

The Dangerous World of the Cities

Finally, I would note that the lessons that Procopius has to teach on these points are also cruelly applicable to the citizens of the cities who had to try to guide their communities safely through the dangerous world of the sixth century. The citizens of both Amida and Antioch improvidently insulted the Persian monarchs. At Amida, this lack of self-control provoked Kavadh to press on to victory when he was on the point of abandoning the siege.[99] At Antioch, the citizens' folly resulted in opportunity for Khusro. They rejected the king's demands for ransom, insulted him from the battlements, inexplicably did not occupy the heights outside a vulnerable portion of the city's wall, and yet resisted bitterly when the cause was hopeless.[100] The result for the citizens was

98. Ibid. 8.33.20-23.

99. Ibid. 1.7.17-19.

100. Ibid. 2.8.6-7, 12-35.

slaughter, plunder, and slavery. Procopius rhetorically threw up his hands in the face of the destruction of so beautiful a city by such an evil man in his emotional summation of the episode. The notion of any rational divine plan that would account for such an event was simply incomprehensible, but it did emphasize the inherent dangers of contingency facing his readership.[101] The Antiochenes' mistaken decision to resist gave *Tyche* an opening which compassed their doom. Here Procopius once again touched on a point that would be familiar to readers of Polybius. The decision to provoke and resist in the face of enemy strength was not bravery, but folly and madness that invited further disaster, as had been the case for the Macedonians, Aetolians, Achaeans, and Carthaginians in choosing war with Rome.[102]

These issues recur in the description of the siege of Naples in 536.[103] The Neapolitan ambassador, Stephanus, accused Belisarius of injustice by putting them in the awkward position of having to choose between resisting the imperial army or running the hazard of rebelling against the Goths. Belisarius was no more interested in debating the merits of his presence than were the Athenians at Melos, promising only good treatment if they admitted him and war if they refused. Two of the pro-Gothic Neapolitan notables, Pastor and Asclepiodotus, reasonably pointed out to the populace that they had to consider more than the simple, immediate question of their safety. They had also to consider the

---

101. Ibid. 2.10.4.

102. On Polybius' disapproval of policy based on emotion and such rash folly see Eckstein, *Moral Vision*, 210-21

103. Proc. Wars 5.8.5-5.10.48.

ultimate outcome of the war and the fact that, “no man in the world is competent to guarantee the decision of fortune.”[104] That is, they would be vulnerable to reprisals if the Goths won. Ultimately, the Neapolitans chose to resist and the Romans looted the city, although Belisarius called a fairly quick halt to the slaughter.[105] In the long run, however, it was Pastor and Asclepiodotus, despite having their corpses desecrated by their townsmen, who were proven right by events. When Totila reinvigorated the Gothic cause and reoccupied the town in 543 after a prolonged siege he was conspicuously merciful out of regard for the citizens’ earlier loyalty.[106]

The populations of Rome and Milan would not be nearly so fortunate. Fearing the fate of Naples, the Romans admitted Belisarius into the city in 536.[107] Unfortunately, the city went on to change hands four more times before the war ended and had to stand three destructive and prolonged sieges. Procopius noted that even the ultimate success of the imperial cause and final liberation of the city was a cause of further destruction for the people of Rome. The fleeing Goths took care to kill any Romans that fell across their path, while the barbarian elements of Narses’ army treated all alike as enemies. Likewise the Goths in Campania slew any Roman senators they could find in the area, and Teias, Totila’s successor, ordered the slaughter of three hundred aristocratic Roman

104. Ibid. 5.8.29-40.

105. Ibid. 5.10.29-34.

106. Ibid. 7.7.11-7.8.9.

107. Ibid. 5.14.4-6, 12-14.

children being held as hostages.[108] In the case of Milan, the bishop and notables invited Belisarius to send them a garrison, which he did.[109] The result, however, was a desperate siege by the still active Goths. When the imperial garrison surrendered in exchange for the promise of safe treatment, the Goths vented their fury on the townsfolk, killing the men of every age and selling the women into slavery.[110] Even choosing the final victor correctly was no guarantee of safety.

This chapter has been an attempt to show, with particular reference to his use of *Tyche*, that it is insufficient to regard Procopius' *Wars* as either a simple exercise in literary *mimesis*,[111] or a subtle commentary on the regime of Justinian. Instead, Procopius' use of *Tyche*, commands the attention of the lay reader interested in the practical lessons his history could impart. Cameron regarded *Tyche* in the *Wars* as "traditional," an unsafe guide for those who would question his Christianity, and, since it was part of the "inherited language" of the classicizing authors, not indicative of his views of historical causation.[112] All the same, she suggested that Procopius found *Tyche* useful as a tool to discuss unexpected events and the role of the irrational in history.[113] If we set aside the

---

108. Ibid. 8.34.1-8.

109. Ibid. 6.7.35-38, 6.12.26-41.

110. Ibid. 6.21.

111. For a general discussion, see Herbert Hunger, "On the Imitation (ΜΙΜΗΣΙΣ) of Antiquity in Byzantine Literature," *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 23/24 (1969/70): 15–38.

112. Cameron, *Procopius*, 31,36; idem, review of *Procopius of Caesarea: Tyranny, History and Philosophy at the End of Antiquity,* by Anthony Kaldellis, *AHR* 109 (2004): 1621.

113. Cameron, *Procopius*,118.

question of what these passages might reveal or obscure regarding Procopius' religious or philosophical beliefs, his use of *Tyche* is still freighted with practical import. The *Wars* may be read as a series of case-studies on the practical problem of the incalculable and its interaction with human effort. Procopius' readers may intuit Clausewitz' lesson, that chance and violence, as elements of his trinity of war, leave only one element of war subject to reason, that of policy.[114] Once plans were laid, campaigns undertaken, and battle joined, the relative power of *Tyche* increased at every turn, limiting humans' ability to affect the outcome save through well-judged resolute action if, and when, an opportunity presented itself. If Procopius was presenting a lesson that would have been familiar to students of Greek historiography in general, and Polybius in particular, it was and is deadly serious and the need for self-restraint, prudence, decisiveness, and courage should not be dismissed as a commonplace or mere moralizing without practical consequence.

114. Clausewitz, *On War* 1.1.28.

Chapter 5: The Late Antique Art of War, Military Manuals, and Procopius

If Procopius intended the *Wars* to be taken seriously as a didactic guide to practical military and political action, rather than primarily as an archaizing literary exercise in genre or a vehicle for esoteric criticism of the regime, then the natural implication is that his account would necessarily be grounded in the realities of sixth century warfare and statecraft as he understood them. Alongside his professed devotion to the truth as a historian, the soldiers and statesmen among his readers would reasonably expect that he had something relevant to say regarding their problems and experiences. How we should understand the *Wars* depends in large part how closely we understand Procopius to have approached these sixth century realities.

To suggest that the Procopius understood and, in the *Wars*, was capable of and interested in discussing military and political realities may sound like an absurdly elementary suggestion in need of no defense. It is undeniable that certain elements of the Wars, such as his wild exaggeration of Gothic numbers at the first siege of Rome in 537, suffer from the lack of precision that modern historians find troublesome.[1] Recently, however, scholars have emphasized the literary aspects of Procopius' work, not only questioning his competence as an

1. Proc .Wars 5.16.11. Knud Hannestad "Les forces militaires d'après la Guerre Gothique de Procope," *Classica et Mediaevalia* 21 (1960): 136-83, suggested that Procopius inflated enemy numbers before 540 in order to spotlight Belisarius' accomplishments. But note Averil Cameron, *Procopius and the Sixth Century* (New York: Routledge, 1985), 148, "Procopius is far from unusual here, of course; indeed he is notable for the amount of credible information he does give despite this kind of manipulation." Although the figure for 150,000 Goths at the siege of Rome is extreme, it is hardly a unique distortion of enemy strength in the annals of military history. Historians of the American Civil War can testify how easily figures for enemy forces, in even relatively modern times, tend to inflate out of all reasonable proportion by making simple reference to George McClellan's routine overestimation of Confederate strength.

historian by modern standards,[2] but suggesting that large portions of the *Wars*, including some of the discussions on military matters, are mere literary fantasies, perhaps with a didactic or invective purpose, but no grounding in reality.[3]

Unfortunately, the nature of sixth century warfare is not so clear to modern historians as we might wish and has occasioned a good deal of debate. Of particular relevance to Procopius' understanding and presentation of military matters is whether or not the armies of Justinian reflected a late antique "revolution in military affairs" due to greater reliance on, and perfection of, the tactics of armored *hippotoxotai*, mounted archers, armed with powerful Hunnic compound bows, but equally at home in shock or melee combat.[4] More recent scholarship has nuanced this long-held view by teasing out the evidence for, and emphasizing the continuing importance of, infantry in late Roman warfare. In turn, this then has occasioned debate regarding Procopius' own description and understanding of the war of his own time. This question takes on a particular

---

2. Averil Cameron, *Procopius*, 151.

3. Anthony Kaldellis, *Procopius of Caesarea: Tyranny, History, and Philosophy at the End of Antiquity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 12 and *passim*.

4. E.g. C.W.C. Oman, *The Art of War in the Middle Ages, A.D. 378-1515* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1953), 12-14 ("The efficiency of Justinian's army in the Vandalic, Persian, or Gothic wars depended … almost entirely on the combination of archers and heavy cavalry."); Hans Delbrück, *History of the Art of War II: The Germans* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1980), 408 ("The armored horseman also carried a bow, and they fought on foot as well, in other words the real warrior was the man on horseback; an actual infantry no longer existed."). More recently: Edward Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Byzantine Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 267-280 ("The *Strategikon* depicts an army radically different in structure from the classic Roman model, most obviously because of a fundamental shift from infantry to cavalry as the primary combat arm. That was no mere tactical change; it was caused by a veritable strategic revolution in the very purpose of waging war, which compelled the adoption of new operational methods and new tactics."); Peter Heather, *The Restoration of Rome: Barbarian Popes and Imperial Pretenders* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 147-149 (more restrained, but still arguing for the importance of the *hippotoxotai* to Justinian's ambitions, "In this case, a temporary but sufficient advantage was given by a more flexible adoption of the capacities of the Hunnic mounted archer, and the result was devastating.").

salience given his famous portrait of a mounted archer in the opening of the *Wars* as an example of how contemporary military science had reached its acme,[5] let alone his description of the importance of Roman *hippotoxotai* to Belisarius' defense of Rome in 537.[6] If Procopius was wrong, or worse, intentionally misleading on this point for rhetorical purposes, then the practical utility of the *Wars* might well be called into serious question and justify the more literary approach favored by recent studies.[7] Likewise, if Procopius' account can be reconciled with our best understanding of the warfare of his day, we may more confidently regard it as a good-faith account not only of the history of his times as he understood them, but also of the didactic issues he wished to emphasize for his readership.

In essence, the modern student of Procopius finds oneself groping for evidence to use as a control, not necessarily so much for the specific historical details of the episodes he relates, but for whether or not his account could be squared with the life and death requirements of sixth century campaigning, and, in turn, whether his work was as practically useful as he claimed for it to be. Unfortunately, the other narrative historians of the sixth century lacked his practical military experience, and, even more so than Procopius, were often devoted to a classicizing atticist idiom making them an imperfect guide. Fortunately, we may also compare Procopius' work as a military historian with

5. Proc. *Wars* 1.1.6-16.

6. Ibid. 5.27.27.

7. A position adopted by Kaldellis, *Procopius of Caesarea*, 21-24; idem, "Classicism, Barbarism, and Warfare: Prokopios and the Conservative Reaction to Later Roman Warfare," *American Journal of Ancient History* 3 (2005): 189-218.

another genre of writing intended for a military audience with a utilitarian intent. That is the military manual.[8] Such works provide a sense for what might be expected in the didactic military literature of the day. Certainly, if the substance of the *Wars* is reasonably consistent with these works, it suggests that, while sometimes rhetorical by modern standards, it is a bounded rhetoric, and they also describe practical realities that would not have been entirely foreign to a professional military audience. Whately has noted that in the *Vandal Wars* Procopius placed certain military maxims in the speeches of key generals that are consistent with those found in various military treatises, but there are additional points of contact worth noting.[9]

This chapter will first outline some of the debates regarding the realities of sixth century warfare with specific reference to the relative roles of cavalry, mounted archers, and infantry. Second, it will attempt to show that the *Wars* can be reconciled with a dispassionate understanding of those realities through a comparison with the technical military manuals of the period, particularly the *Strategikon* attributed to the emperor Maurice. Assuming that the *Wars* represent a practical reality with a didactic purpose "for men who purpose to

---

8. For a general discussion of the genre see Karl Krumbacher, *Geschichte der Byzantinischen Litteratur von Justinian bis zum Ende des osterömischen Reiches 527-1453* (Munich: C. H. Beck, 1897), 635-38; Spaulding, "The Ancient Military Writers," 657-669; Alphonse Dain, "Les Stratégistes Byzantins," *Travaux et Mémoires du Centre de Recherche d'Histoire et Civilisation Byzantines* 2 (1967): 317-392; Herbert Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner* (Munich: Beck, 1978), 323-340; Brian Campbell, "Teach Yourself How to be a General," *JRS* (1987): 13-29; Ilka Syvänne, *The Age of Hippotoxotai: Art of War in Roman Military Revival and Disaster (491-636)* (Tampere: Tampere University Press, 2004),12-23; Denis F. Sullivan, "Byzantine Military Manuals: Prescriptions, Practice, Pedagogy," in *The Byzantine World*, ed. Paul Stephenson (New York: Routledge, 2010) 149-161.

9. Conor Whately, *Battles and Generals: Combat, Culture, and Didacticism in Procopius'* Wars (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 145-151.

enter upon a war,"[10] it is reasonable to expect that at least some of the issues regarding Roman military operations upon which Procopius intended his readers to reflect would have been echoed in this other branch of literature.

Understanding Sixth Century Warfare

The army of the later Roman Empire in the sixth and early seventh centuries has inspired various notions among modern historians regarding its size, structure, and operational details. There is a definite sense that the army of Justinian and his successors had changed from that of the fourth and fifth centuries and would change again in the face of the challenges of the seventh century but whether this was the process of gradual evolution or dramatic reforms on the part of particular emperors is more problematic. When fundamental moments of change occurred, moving us into what can comfortably be referred to as the Byzantine era, remain points of contention. What's more, there remains some debate regarding the degree to which cosmetic changes in nomenclature might have obscured more fundamental continuities in organization at least through the eve of the Islamic conquests and possibly beyond.

Recently, prominent modern scholars have emphasized the continuities to be found in the early Byzantine army with late Roman military practices. Both John Haldon and Warren Treadgold have each, in separate ways, presented the Byzantine army not only as the successor of the late Roman army but as the

10. Ibid. 1.1.2.

Roman army retooled and recognizable well beyond the Islamic conquests.[11] If this is true, we must still account for the dramatic changes that did in fact occur as the army of late antique Rome made the transition to that of medieval Byzantium. While administrative and institutional continuities through the period have long been recognized, we are left with the problem of operational changes. Specifically, the relative importance of cavalry versus infantry, and whether or not infantry was still relevant on the sixth century battlefield, is problematic. Following on from this, if cavalry had indeed assumed new importance as the imperial *force de frappe*, scholars are divided regarding the relative importance, or even widespread existence, of *hippotoxotai* as Procopius described them, as opposed to troopers armed more purely for melee and shock tactics.

In broad terms, the fourth century division of the army between the troops of the mobile field armies (*comitatenses*) and those assigned to frontier zones (*limitanei*) under the command of *duces* persisted.[12] Certainly, the *limitanei* were considered useful enough for Justinian to reestablish them in North Africa despite allowing the pay of those in the east to fall well into arrears.[13] The glimpses we have of the *limitanei* and garrison troops during the reign of Maurice indicate that

---

11. Warren Treadgold, *Byzantium and Its Army, 284–1081* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995), 8-42; John Haldon, "Administrative Continuities and Structural Transformations in East Roman Military Organization c. 580–640," in *State, Army and Society in Byzantium* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1995), V 1-20; idem, *War, State, and Society in the Byzantine World 565-1204* (London: UCL Press, 1999) 67-106.

12. Jones, *LRE*; 654-57; Pat Southern and Karen Dixon, *The Late Roman Army* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 64-66; Ilkka Syvänne, *The Age of the Hippotoxotai: Art of War in Roman Military Revival and Disaster 491-636* (Tampere: Tampere University Press, 2004), 31-42; Hugh Elton, "Military Forces," in *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare II: Rome from the Late Republic to the Late Empire*, eds. Philip Sabin, Hans Van Wees, and Michael Whitby (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 276-77.

13. *CJ* 1.27.2; Proc. *SH* 24.12-14.

at least some of them could still be counted on as effective forces. A soldier of the *Legio IV Parthica* was singled out for bravery at Solachon in 586 while the garrison at Asemus so impressed the emperor's brother, Peter, that he tried to draft it into his army.[14] As late as the Muslim conquest the sources continue to mention *duces* and their *limitanei* operating in Egypt and Palestine.[15]

Likewise, the high command was still composed of the *magistri militum* commanding the field armies of the East, Illyricum, Thrace, and the two praesental armies, with Justinian's addition of *magistri* for Armenia, North Africa, and Italy.[16] Though the exarchates of North Africa and Ravenna would become exceptional for their fusing of civil and military authority, the traditional *magistri* are attested as late as the reign of Constans II (641-668).[17]

This is unsurprising given the state of the current debate regarding the establishment of the Byzantine military themes as the basis for east Roman military organization. If we follow Ostrogorsky's classic description of a major military reform in the reign of Heraclius (610-641) the introduction of the themes was based on the old *limitanei*.[18] This view has had recent champions. Irfan Shahid has argued fiercely for the introduction of the thematic system by Heraclius in the wake of the final war with Persia but before the Muslim

---

14. Th.Sim. *Hist.* 2.6.1-9, 7.3.2-10.

15. Haldon, "Administrative Continuities," V16-17.

16. A.D. Lee, "The Empire at War," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian,* ed. Michael Maas (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 117.

17. Haldon, "Administrative Continuities," V16.

18. George Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1969), 95-98.

conquests. In his view the four districts (*ajnād*) of Syria that the Muslim armies occupied in the wake of their conquest perpetuated pre-conquest Roman military regions that he identifies as proto-themes.[19] While looking for a similar grand reform, Treadgold would prefer to place the organization of the themes in the reign of Constans II based on a tenth century reference ascribing them to the successors of Heraclius.[20]

Against this, and in favor of a rather stronger strain of continuity and gradualism, is a peculiar fact that Charles Diehl noticed long ago. The original Byzantine themes each seem to have perpetuated the various eastern field armies of the *magistri militum per Orientem, per Armeniam, per Thracia*s, and *praesentalis/obsequii* under the Hellenized names Anatolikon, Aremeniakon, Trakesion, and Opsikion respectively.[21] Following Diehl, Haldon views the themes simply as the armies of the *magistri militum*, and that they lacked a geographical component until they were pulled back in the face of the early Muslim onslaught, and billeted across Asia Minor. Likewise, he argues that the Roman reestablishment of the pre-existing pattern of ducal commands is a

19 Irfan Shahid, "Heraclius and the Theme System: New Light From the Arabic," *Byzantion* 57 (1987): 391-406; idem, "Heraclius and the Theme System: Further Observations," *Byzantion* 59 (1989): 208-243; idem, "Heraclius and the Unfinished Themes of Oriens: Some Final Observations," *Byzantion* 64 (1994): 352-376; idem, "The Thematization of Oriens: Final Observations," *Byzantion* 72 (2002): 192-249.

20 Treadgold, *Byzantium and its Army*, 23-25.

21. Charles Diehl, *Études Byzantines* (New York: B. Franklin, 1905) 290-292; Haldon, *War State and Society*, 71. The two praesental armies seem to have amalgamated at some point while the army of Illyricum had disappeared from the historical record.

sufficient model to explain the *Ajnād* without having to posit an entirely new system.[22]

Wherever the truth may lie, for our purposes here, it is enough to acknowledge that these administrative and structural changes could, at best, only have been in their infancy during Justinian's reign, with dramatic change waiting until sometime in the seventh century. This does not, however, preclude the notion of large operational changes. The structure of the twenty-first century U.S. Army is still broadly recognizable as that of the First World War A.E.F., but its operational art has hardly remained static. [23]

The actual face of late antique battle, however, remains elusive. Neither Procopius' narrative, nor any other source, is particularly focused on the detailed experiences of the common soldiery.[24] Neither the demise of Roman infantry, nor the novelty of Roman cavalry as a significant striking arm in Late Antiquity are so clear-cut as readers of Vegetius' late fourth or early fifth century *Epitoma Rei Militari*, let alone the sixth century sources might be led to believe. Nevertheless, Vegetius provides a convenient point of departure. Before turning

---

22. John Haldon, "The *Ajnād* and the 'Thematic Myth,'" in *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East III: States Resources and Armies,* ed. Averil Cameron (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1995): 421.

23. Hugh Elton, "Cavalry in Late Roman Warfare" in *The Late Roman Army in the Near East from Diocletian to the Arab Conquest,* eds. A.S. Lewin and P. Pellegrini (Oxford: BAR, 2007), 377, sounds a sensible note of caution on the difficulties inherent in establishing more than a high-level generality on this point given the complexity of the evidence. For a useful discussion and note of caution regarding the application of the "face of battle" approach to the study of ancient history, see Everett Wheeler, "Firepower: Missile Weapons and the 'Face of Battle,'" *Electrum* 5 (2001): 170-74; *idem*, "Greece: Mad Hatters and March Hares," in *Recent Directions in the Military History of the Ancient World*, eds. Lee L. Brice and Jennifer T. Roberts (Claremont: Association of Ancient Historians, 2011), 64-69.

24. Whately, *Battles and Generals*, 231-232.

to proscriptions for revitalization of Roman infantry, which he felt had deteriorated in his day, Vegetius simply noted that the cavalry of the time had advanced by study of the practices of the Goths, Alans, and Huns and therefore did not warrant lengthy discussion.[25] Against this, we must place the testimony of Ammianus, in whose descriptions of pitched battles at Strasbourg and Adrianople, it was the cavalry that proved the weaker link while the serried ranks of Roman infantry won the day on one hand, and were the last to be routed on the other.[26] If numbers are any guide, infantry still made up the bulk of Roman field armies. At Strasbourg Julian disposed of 10,000 infantry and only 3,000 cavalry. Similar proportions are reported for an eastern field army in 478.[27] Elton goes so far as to declare that even in the sixth century, the increased reliance on cavalry represents an increase in emphasis as opposed to numbers.[28] Even in the sixth century an army was considered well-proportioned even if cavalry made up only a quarter to a third of its total strength.[29] If there was a sea change in Roman tactics it seems to have come late. On the other hand, if Vegetius may be taken seriously, the relative merits of Roman cavalry and infantry seem to

25. Vegetius, *Epitoma Rei Militari*, 1.20; 3.26. On the date of Vegetius see Walter Goffart, "The Date and Purpose of Vegetius' 'De Re Militari,'" *Traditio* 33 (1977): 88-89 and T.D. Barnes, "The Date of Vegetius," *Phoenix* 33 (1979): 254-257.

26. Amm. Marc. 16.12.36-61 (Strasbourg), 31.13.1-7 (Adrianople).

27. Malchus, fr. 18.2.14-18

28. Hugh Elton, *Warfare in Roman Europe 350-425* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 105-106, n. 45; M.J. Nicassie, *Twilight of Empire: The Roman Army from the Reign of Diocletian Until the Battle of Adrianople* (Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1998).

29. *Strategikon* 12.A.7.9-12.

have reversed since Ammianus' time, in part through the study of Rome's enemies from the northern plains.

Even this, however, is hard to assess. Cavalry has always possessed something of an aristocratic mystique, particularly in relation to the more terrestrial arms, exemplified by the old saw, "*Fuerst kommt der Allerhöchste, dann der Kavallerieoffizier, dann das Pferd des Kavallerieoffiziers, dann kommt nichts und dann kommt der Infanterieoffizier*." Modern armored cavalrymen put it more colloquially by referring to their comrades in the infantry as "crunchies." It is not impossible that Vegetius, also the author of a tract on veterinary medicine with a focus on Hunnic warhorses,[30] was possessed of an ancient version of this intra-service rivalry. Likewise, Procopius seems to have had a distinct preference for the dramatic events that he could illustrate through the discussion of cavalry actions and monomachy.[31] Whitby has suggested that Belisarius, primarily a cavalry commander, might have "infected" Procopius with a cavalryman's traditional contempt for infantry.[32] Conversely there was an archaizing contemporary counter argument in favor of the old legionary-style infantry of the Republic and Principate. The anonymous *Dialogue on Political Science*, composed during the reign of Justinian, acknowledged the then higher

30. Vegetius, *Digesta Artis Mulomedicinae* 3.6.5; N.P. Milner introduction to *Vegetius: Epitome of Military Science* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1996), xxxiii-xxxiv.

31. Philip Rance, "Battle," in *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare II: Rome from the Late Republic to the Late Empire*, eds. Philip Sabin, Hans Van Wees, and Michael Whitby (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 348.

32. Michael Whitby, "Recruitment in Roman Armies from Justinian to Heraclius (ca. 565-615)," in *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East III: States Resources and Armies*, ed. Averil Cameron (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1995) 71 n.34.

reputation of cavalry before arguing for the greater importance of infantry as the arm that had won the Empire.[33]

Here it is worth noting Everett Wheeler's study of Roman imperial infantry tactics inspired by Arrian's *Acies contra Alanos* of c. 135. A rare detailed account of Roman deployment between the fall of the Republic and the history of Ammianus, it details a formation for use against an enemy employing heavy cavalry. Arrian's plan called for his legions to deploy in a close order phalanx eight ranks deep supported by auxilia and mounted archers in order to receive the Alan charge. The first four ranks are described as forming a hedge of *kontoi* with the four rear ranks armed with *lanceae*.[34] Wheeler argues convincingly that such a phalangical formation was not a second century aberration but was a constant element in the Roman arsenal not only in the principate but well into late antiquity, in which the Latin term *testudo* might signify such a close-order formation.[35] Alas, the sources for the fifth century are problematic enough that it is hard to discern the general state of things. For what it is worth, Jordanes, in his non-contemporary account of the Battle of Châlons, put a speech into Attila's mouth describing the Roman battle formation, in contrast to their mounted Gothic

33. *Dialogue on Political Science* 4.26-51.

34. Everett L. Wheeler, "The Legion as Phalanx," *Chiron* 9 (1979): 303-318.

35. Everett L. Wheeler, "The Legion as Phalanx in the Late Empire, Part I," in *L'Armée Romaine de Dioclétien à Valentinien Ier, Actes du IIIe congrès de Lyon sur l'armée romaine,* ed. Yann LeBohec (Lyon: Centre d'etudes et de recherche sur l'Occident romain, 2004), 309-358; idem, "The Legion as Phalanx in the Late Empire, Part II," *Revue des Études Militaires Anciennes* 1 (2004): 147-175.

allies, as a slow-moving *testudo*.[36]

The Sixth Century Treatises on Military Science

Certainly the earliest tactical literature of the sixth century reinforces the impression of close-order phalangical battle lines of solid infantry formations. Even here however, lurks the specter of archaizing classicism and literary antiquarianism. Such essays on military science belong to a genre of literature dating back to classical times and, as often as not, the authors might simply be antiquarian laymen rather than serious military thinkers. It is an issue that cannot be avoided in any discussion of such works of the sixth century.

In the reign of Anastasius (A.D. 491-518) one such layman, a certain Urbicius composed his *Tacticon*, an epitome of Arrian's *Ars Tactica* focused on phalanx tactics, and his *Epitedeuma* in which he advocated, despite his confessed military inexperience, a design for an anti-cavalry barrier similar to a *cheval de frise* around a marching camp supported by wagon-mounted *ballistae*.[37]

Likewise, the formerly anonymous *Peri Strategias*, now ascribed to Syrianus Magister which has been traditionally dated to the reign of Justinian, although more recent scholars have suggested it may be as late as the reign of Leo VI (r. A.D. 886-912), does not devote undue attention to mounted warfare and tends to be more theoretical than practical in dealing with tactical matters as

36. Jordanes, *Getica* 39.

37. Geoffrey Greatrex, Hugh Elton, and Richard Burgess, "Urbicius' *Epitedeuma*: An Edition, Translation and Commentary," *BZ* 98 (2005): 35-74. For the text of the *Tacticon* see Richard Förster, "Studien zu den griechischen Taktikern," *Hermes* 12 (1877): 467–471.

opposed to engineering.[38] Although the dating is insecure, the fact that Syrianus did include a reference to Belisarius' use of Fabian tactics is suggestive enough that dismissing it as a sixth century source may be premature.[39]

When it does turn to tactical matters it also stresses the deployment and evolution of a seemingly archaic Hellenistic style phalanx "designed to hold off the enemy."[40] For those such as Dain and Luttwak, inclined to regard this work as that of an "armchair strategist," such *prima facie* antiquarianism needs no particular explanation.[41] On the other hand, Dennis followed the judgement of Spaulding, a career soldier as well as a classical scholar, who judged the author was an experienced soldier who had seen contemporary combat, although probably in some technical capacity.[42] On balance, the latter view seems more plausible. Even Luttwak has conceded that certain sections, such as a

---

38. Oliver L. Spaulding, "The Ancient Military Writers," *The Classical Journal* 28 (1933): 667; George T. Dennis, introduction to *Three Byzantine Military Treatises* (Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1985), 3. For revised attributions and later dating for the *Peri Strategias* see Constantine Zuckerman, "The Military Compendium of Syrianus Magister," *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 40 (1990): 209-224; S. Cosentino, "The Syrianos' Strategikon [sic] - a 9th Century Source?" *Bizantinistica* 2 (2000): 262-280; J.E. Lendon, *Soldiers and Ghosts: A History of Battle in Classical Antiquity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 433-434.

39. Syrianos Magister [Anon.], *Peri Strategias* 33.35; Conor Whately, "War in Late Antiquity: Secondary Works, Literary Sources and Material Evidence," in *War and Warfare in Late Antiquity: Current Perspectives*, eds. Alexander Sarantis and Neil Christie (Boston: Brill, 2013), 118-19.

40. Syrianos Magister [Anon.], *Peri Strategias* 15-18, 21-25, 31-32, 34-37.

41. Dain, "Les Stratégistes Byzantins," 343 ("Il semble appartenir à la tradition bien représentée des stratèges en chambre."); Luttwak, *Grand Strategy of the Byzantine Empire*, 258-259.

42. Spaulding, "The Ancient Military Writers," 667 ("He gives us a manual not unlike that of Vegetius, almost a Field Service Regulations; he does not concern himself with history or controversy, but simply treats of the military machine which he finds in existence. He speaks with confidence and authority, as one who has seen war, but not quite in the tone of a commander of troops; one might infer that he had served as an engineer officer on some headquarters staff."); Dennis, intro to *Three Byzantine Military Treatises* 3.

discussion on river crossings in the face of the enemy, are not only practical, but "one can sense the author has done it."[43]

Whatever leavening of classicism might have influenced his vision of a phalanx, it might also be noted that the notion that close order infantry formations were entirely antiquated and without utility is counterintuitive in an age in which enemy cavalry, armed much as the Alans had been in the second century, were coming into greater prominence. It is serried ranks of heavy infantry that would necessarily form a tactical base and reserve from and around which fluid cavalry maneuvers might be launched, upon and behind which cavalry might rally or seek refuge in case of tactical defeat, and with which light armed troops could shelter from enemy cavalry.[44] If the Hellenistic phalanx still touted by the military manuals was somewhat archaic, close ordered infantry formations of some kind would still have been necessary for Roman armies dealing with mounted opponents and needing some equivalent to the early modern infantry square.

It is a simple axiom of military tactics through the early modern era that cavalry is generally incapable of charging home against the face of an unbroken formation of close-order infantry. Horses will simply refuse to press to contact against what is a seemingly solid hedge of spears or bayonets and missile fire.[45] Hence the use of the square in early modern armies theoretically rendered

---

43. Luttwak, *Grand Strategy of the Byzantine Empire*, 258-265.

44. Philip Rance, "The *Fulcum*, the Late Roman and Byzantine Testudo: The Germanization of Roman Infantry Tactics?" *GRBS* 44 (2004): 281-2; Wheeler, "The Legion as Phalanx in Late Antiquity I," 323-24.

45. A point recognized by the *Strategikon* 11.1.67-70

infantry invulnerable to charging cavalry. Only if their formations should present a vulnerable flank or break ranks due to some combination of indiscipline, missile fire, and shaken morale will infantry be vulnerable to being ridden down by cavalry.[46] There is no obvious reason why this should have been any less true in the late antique Mediterranean. Further, in theaters such as Italy and the East, where conflict had a tendency to devolve into wars of posts and stations with an emphasis on siege warfare rather than pitched battle, infantry would have been invaluable for its manifestly greater ability to assault and garrison fortifications.

The late sixth century *Strategikon* attributed to the emperor Maurice, on the other hand, does focus more strongly on cavalry operations, including those of mounted archers. While the *Strategikon* represents our best operational evidence for the Roman army in the latter half of the sixth century, it is somewhat misleading to regard it as specific to Maurice, given that the composition of the *Strategikon* need not even be chronologically dated to his reign. Not only is the true author unknown,[47] but the generally accepted dates given for its composition range from 570 to 630, that is after the Avars, but before the Arabs, had become a threat.[48] This being the case, we may well ask whether the practices it describes represent a dramatic break with the past or if they have clear antecedents and represent a more gradual evolution. Given that the author

46. John Keegan, *The Face of Battle* (New York: Viking Press, 1976), 94-97, 153-159.

47. John Wiita, *The Ethnika in Byzantine Military Treatises* (Ph.D. diss., University of Minnesota, 1977) 30-49. Wiita does suggest the possibility that it was authored by Philippicus, *Magister militum per Orientem,* in the 580s but it remains an open question.

48. Ibid. 15-24; Dennis, introduction to *Maurice's Strategikon,* xvii; Michael Whitby, *The Emperor Maurice and His Historian,* 130-132. Both Wiita and Dennis seem inclined towards a date either late in the reign of Maurice (r. 582-602) or early in the reign of Phocas (r. 602-610).

claimed to “make no pretense of breaking new ground or of trying to improve upon the ancients,”[49] it is not unreasonable to suggest that it represents a substantial portion of the *ars militaris* of the earlier sixth century and the armies of Procopius.

Those inclined to see a revolutionary role for Roman cavalry can point to the *Strategikon*’s emphasis on the operations of a cavalry army. Detailed discussion of infantry is relegated to book twelve, which seems to have been a later appendage.[50] On first glance this seems to jibe with the impression of Delbrück that, “the real warrior was the man on horseback; an actual infantry no longer existed.”[51] Such statements are understandable, given the marked contrast between the serried ranks of armored infantrymen that had dominated the battlefields of the classical Mediterranean and the apparent predominance of medieval European heavy cavalry, but a careful reading makes it clear that even the *Strategikon* does not necessarily support such an extreme view. The evolution of Haldon’s views is suggestive. While he once suggested that the *Strategikon* represented a reform in the army’s tactical organization, he has since revised his opinion to a more gradual view.[52]

---

49. *Strategikon* Pro. 17-19.

50. Dennis, introduction to *Maurice’s Strategikon,* xvii-xviii, “certainly by the author himself.”

51. Delbrück, *History of the Art of War II,* 408-409.

52. John Haldon, *Byzantine Praetorians: An Administrative, Institutional and Social Survey of the Opsikion and Tagmata, c. 580-900* (Bonn: Dr. Rudolf Habelt GMBH, 1984), 107; idem, “Administrative Continuities and Structural Transformations in East Roman Military Organization c. 580–640,” in *State Army and Society in Byzantium* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1995), V 5 n.5.

Supporters of a sea-change in cavalry tactics can point to one specific technological change noted in the *Strategikon*. It is the earliest work to attest the Roman use of stirrups. Whatever the merits of Lynn White's technologically determinative view of the stirrup as the foundation of western feudalism, they certainly must have facilitated mounted shock combat in which heavy cavalry would charge home with the lance.[53] However, this need not have been as revolutionary as is often assumed. Roman saddles appear to have been fairly stable, even without stirrups.[54] Furthermore, heavy cavalry, both lancers and archers, had been a part of the Roman order of battle for centuries by this point and there is dramatic iconographic evidence of lancers charging home as early as the third century in Sassanian relief sculptures.[55] Regarding mounted archers without stirrups, as Wheeler observed, if they were entirely incapable of hitting their targets "many nomadic and herding peoples from horse-based cultures would have starved to death."[56]

The other equipment that the *Strategikon* lists as essential for the cavalryman is certainly not representative of a dramatic break with the immediate past. The prescribed panoply included:

---

53. *Strategikon* 1.2; 2.11; Lynn White, *Medieval Technology and Social Change* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962), 14-23, 28.

54. Peter Connolly and Carol van Driel-Murray, "The Roman Cavalry Saddle," *Britannia* 22 (1991): 33-50.

55. A.D.H. Bivar, "Cavalry Equipment and Tactics on the Euphrates Frontier," *DOP* 26 (1972): 271-91; John W. Eadie, "The Development of Roman Mailed Cavalry," *JRS* 57 (1967): 161-73; J.C. Coulston, "Roman Parthian and Sassanid Tactical Developments," in *The Defence of the Roman and Byzantine East*, eds. P. Freeman and D.L. Kennedy (Oxford: BAR, 1986), 59-75.

56. Wheeler, "Firepower," 179.

> … hooded coats of mail reaching to their ankles, which can be caught up by thongs and rings, along with carrying cases; helmets with small plumes on top; bows suited to the strength of each man, and not above it, more in fact on the weaker side, cases broad enough so that when necessary they can fit the strung bows in them, with spare bow strings in their saddle bags; quivers with covers holding about thirty or forty arrows; in their baldrics small files and awls; cavalry lances of the Avar type with leather thongs in the middle of the shaft and with pennons; swords; round neck pieces of the Avar type made with linen fringes outside and wool inside.[57]

Roughly a half century earlier, Procopius had listed an almost identical collection of armaments in his description of a mounted archer as the soldier *par excellance*:

> The bowmen of the present time go into battle wearing corselets and fitted out with greaves which extend up to the knee. From the right side hang their arrows, from the other the sword. And there are some who have a spear also attached to them and, at the shoulders, a sort of small shield without a grip, such as to cover the region of the face and neck.[58]

Other than the comment that certain pieces of equipment should be of the "Avar" type the collection of weapons enumerated in the *Strategikon* is remarkably similar to those in the arsenal of Procopius' *hippotoxotes*. This leads to at least two implications. Procopius did not invent the panoply, at least, of his mounted archers, and second, the cavalry tactics of the *Strategikon* were well underway even before Procopius' day.

Nor are the *Strategikon*'s categories of cavalrymen entirely new. When discussing elite troopers, it mentions three types mounted troops that could be marshaled less deeply in the battle line: the *foederati*, *bucellarii*, and *optimates*.[59]

---

57. *Strategikon* 1.2.

58. Proc. *Wars* 1.1.6

59. *Strategikon* 1.2-3.

Both *foederati* and *bucellarii* were well known to Procopius. He noted that the *foederati* were no longer simply allied barbarians but now formed a corps within the regular army into which anyone could enroll while the *bucellarii* were armed retainers in the service of Roman notables and making up a large proportion of the troops under generals such as Belisarius and Valerian. The *optimates*, on the other hand, appear to have come into being during a recruitment drive of Tiberius in 575. Though they are an additional *corps d'elite* it is unclear that the *optimates* represent a dramatic departure from previous practice. It may be that they simply provided an additional body that could be filled out during a time of increased recruiting.[60]

The focus of the *Strategikon* on cavalry, however, is only natural given that it was originally a treatise specifically on the operations of a cavalry army rather than *ars militaris* in general until the addition of book twelve.[61] Likewise, Procopius' battle descriptions often highlight the role of cavalry as either the arm of decision on the battlefield or particularly suited to bringing mobile enemies to battle. Belisarius' victories at Dara in the east,[62] and Ad Decimum[63] and Tricamarum[64] in North Africa, were all primarily due to the strength of the Roman

60. Proc. *Wars* 3.11.3-4; 7.1.20; 7.27.3; Theophylact Simocatta, *Hist*. 3.12.4-8; Evagrius *HE* 5.14; Haldon, *Byzantine Praetorians,* 96-100; Jones, *LRE,* 663-667; Whitby, "Recruitment in Roman Armies," 72-73.

61. Philip Rance, "Narses and the Battle of Taginae (Busta Gallorum) 552: Procopius and Sixth Century Warfare," *Historia* 54 (2005): 429; Whitby, "Recruitment in Roman Armies," 71.

62. Proc. *Wars* 1.14.34-55.

63. Ibid. 3.19.11-33.

64. Ibid. 4.3.4-19, though we might note that the Roman victory was not complete until the infantry came up to permit the storming of the Vandal camp.

cavalry with infantry in a distinctly supporting role. The fact that through the remainder of the sixth century and into the seventh, continued fighting against such highly mobile opponents as the Avars and Persians ensured that successful cavalry operations remained one of the keys of Roman success suggests that Procopius' stress on cavalry operations was no mere idiosyncrasy, but the simple reality of his military service.[65]

Procopius was quite particular about the superiority of the Romans and their Hun allies, nearly all of whom were proficient *hippotoxotai*, over that of the Goths whose cavalry relied solely on melee weapons and shock while their archers fought on foot with the infantry.[66] The need for Roman cavalry to be able to both charge home and to function as archers is echoed in the *Strategikon*'s injunction that all of an army's men must learn to shoot.[67] The versatility on the part of the Roman cavalry so impressed Delbrück that he assumed that the divisions between the various combat branches had blurred and saw Belisarius' reluctance to sortie his infantry outside of Rome as further evidence of the atrophy of actual infantry.[68] Procopius even went so far as to attribute the victories in North Africa specifically to Belisarius' 5,000 cavalry,[69] and the (initial)

---

65. John Haldon, *Warfare, State and Society in the Byzantine World 565-1204*, (London: UCL Press, 1999) 195-196.

66. Proc. *Wars* 5.27.26-29 (διαφέρειν δὲ, ὅτι Ῥωμαῖοι μὲν σχεδόν τι ἅπαντες καὶ οἱ ξύμμαχοι Οὖννοι ἱπποτοξόται εἰσὶν ἀγαθοὶ, Γότθων δὲ τὸ ἔργον τοῦτο οὐδενὶ ἥσκηται, ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν ἱππεῖς αὐτοῖς μόνοις δορατίοις τε καὶ ξίφεσιν εἰώθασι χρῆσθαι, οἱ δὲ τοξόται, πεζοί τε ὄντες καὶ πρὸς τῶν ὁπλιτῶν καλυπτό μενοι, ἐς μάχην καθίστανται).

67. *Strategikon*, 1.2.

68. Delbrück, 346; Proc. *Wars* 5.28.21-29, 5.29.39-44.

69. Proc. *Wars* 4.7.20-21.

destruction of Theoderic's kingdom in Italy to Belisarius' household cavalry.[70] Oman, Delbrück, and, more recently, A.D.H. Bivar put the moment of transition from infantry to cavalry for the Romans as early as the battle of Adrianople.[71] Even Haldon and Treadgold, despite their belief in the late Roman army's *longue durée* seem to be convinced that the "Roman fought on foot, the Byzantine on horseback."[72] This does not mean, however, that the Roman infantry were absent or useless either on the battlefield or in Procopius' narrative, simply that we must look a bit harder for them.

The Roman armies of the sixth century do not, in fact, appear to have been ignorant of the vital capability infantry offered. In all three great battles of Narses' final conquest of Italy, as described by Procopius and Agathias, infantry was critical. At Busta Gallorum (552), Narses deployed his army with spear armed infantry in the center and archers and cavalry on the wings in order to receive the shock of the Gothic cavalry charge.[73] In contrasting the two armies, Procopius showed the importance of proper employment of infantry by noting that Totila ordered his cavalry to assault the Roman line unsupported, and relying solely on the hope of charging home only with the cold steel of spears.[74] Thus,

---

70. Ibid. 7.1.20-21.

71. Oman, 4-5; Delbrück, 269-284; Bivar, 273.

72. Haldon, *Warfare, State, and Society*, 191-197; Treadgold, *Byzantium and its Army*, 56-57. To Haldon's credit, in his more nuanced study, he is sensitive to the fact that when the change came it was likely neither so early nor so complete as the traditional view would have it, and that infantry did remain in the Byzantine line of battle.

73. Proc. *Wars* 8.31.1-7, 8.32.5.

74. Ibid. 8.32.6. προείρητο δὲ Γότθοις ἅπασι μήτε τοξεύματι μήτε ἄλλῳ ὁτῳοῦν ἐς συμβολὴν τήνδε ὅτι μὴ τοῖς δόρασι χρῆσθαι.

Totila was overcome by his own thoughtlessness (ἀβουλία) by leading his army to battle in this way against the Romans who fought with whatever weapons, melee or missile, and in whatever manner, mounted or on foot, was appropriate to give them the advantage in a particular situation.[75] The followers of Oman, despite noting the battle's resemblance to Creçy for its "combination of pike and bow," seem to regard this as a unique product of Narses' genius rather than standard Roman practice.[76] Recently, however, Rance has convincingly demonstrated that such dispositions were far more typical than has often been allowed.[77] Even within Procopius' narrative, this reliance on infantry is not unique. Although he was vague in his account of most of the operational details of the battle at Mons Lactarius (552), he was quite clear that both sides simply eschewed mounted combat entirely and the battle was fought out on foot.[78]

Though Agathias lacked the military experience of Procopius, if we may trust his account of Casalinum (554), Narses, as at Busta Gallorum, stood on the tactical defensive and "made the regular tactical arrangements and dispositions of his troops."[79] I.e. the infantry once again held the center of the Roman line. It bent but did not break under the brunt of the Frankish charge while the cavalry posted to the wings acted as the arm of decision eventually executing a classic

---

75. Ibid. 8.32.7.

76. Oman, 35; J.B. Bury, *LRE* II, 267; Lawrence Fauber, *Narses: Hammer of the Goths* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), 88-89.

77. Rance, "Narses and the Battle of Taginae," 424-472.

78. Proc. *Wars* 8.35.19-33.

79. Agath. *Hist*. 2.8.1-12.

double-envelopment reminiscent of the tactics of Hannibal at Cannae or the battles of Alexander. Certainly it does not require a great leap of historical imagination to appreciate the parallels with Arrian's second century battle line.

Likewise, it would be a mistake to assume that close-order infantry formations were absent from the tactical doctrine of the *Strategikon*. Though detailed discussion of infantry forms only a piece of the twelfth book that was added after the fact, the manual does illuminate how the Roman infantry at the end of the sixth century was employed. It quite clearly envisions operations in which an army's cavalry should be closely supported by infantry, part of whose function was to provide a solid refuge behind which routed horsemen might rally.[80]

Of particular relevance is the discussion of the basic fighting formation, the *foulkon,* which was to be formed just outside the range of enemy missiles and as the two armies moved to contact. The infantry would close ranks with the first two ranks interlocking their shields to the front and above in order to ward off missiles while moving up towards the melee. The heavy infantry in the rear ranks would keep their shields above their heads while throwing such missiles as they had and the light infantry in the rear discharged arrows overhead.[81] Speed of attack would have been sacrificed for tactical cohesion.[82] Here we have a graphic example of precisely what it means to say "the Romans had a significant

80. *Strategikon*, 12.B.13.

81. Ibid. 12.B.16.

82. Philip Rance, "The *Fulcum*," 277.

advantage over barbarian opponents because of their training, discipline, and armour."[83] If all went as outlined above, the Roman infantry would move to contact reasonably unscathed while the formation of the enemy would be disrupted by missile fire.

The parallels with earlier practice and the narrative historians, including Procopius, become even clearer when we examine the formation to be used should cavalry assault Roman infantry:

> If the enemy advances to within bowshot and attempts to charge and break up our phalanx, a very dangerous move for them, the infantry should close ranks in the regular way. The first, second, and third men in each file form a *foulkon*, interlocking their shields, fix their spears firmly in the ground, holding them inclined forward and straight outside their shields, so that anyone who dares to come too close will quickly experience them. They also lean their shoulders and put their weight against their shields to resist any pressure from the enemy. The third man, who is standing nearly upright, and the fourth man hold their spears like javelins, so when the foe gets close they can use them either for thrusting or for throwing and then draw their swords. The light armed infantry and the cavalry use the bow. If the enemy should try to move against the cavalry from the rear, something they generally attempt, the infantry divides into a double phalanx. Every second file drops out to the rear, passing between the cavalry units, and the cavalry stays there in the middle. The light-armed infantry are also divided, half of them go forward with the forward phalanx, and half with the phalanx to the rear.[84]

Rance has recently pointed out that this formation bears not only a striking resemblance to that of Arrian's *Acies* but the descriptions of other sixth century authors.[85] Although the term *foulkon* is etymologically unattested before the *Strategikon*, that does not mean that such a formation in unrecognizable in other

---

83. Elton, *Warfare in Roman Europe*, 254.

84. *Strategikon*, 12.A.7.49-67.

85. Rance, "The *Fulcum*," 277-281.

literature of the sixth century where if might be labeled as either a *chelone* or *testudo*. Indeed, given that the vocabulary of the *Strategikon* includes contemporary military technical terms and vernacular that would have been anathema to writers of higher style, it is precisely what we should expect. Pseudo-Joshua Stylites went so far as to include a Syriac transliteration of *chelone* in his description of Roman *limitanei* beset by Persian cavalry at Constantina in 502.[86] Likewise, John Malalas included an account of infantry and dismounted cavalry standing firm against Persian cavalry and covering the Roman retreat at Callinicum in 531.[87] This is particularly instructive given that Procopius also described the action at Callinicum and, despite some major differences between their accounts, he recorded similar dispositions, also noting that determined close-order infantry and dismounted cavalry were able to stand off the Persian cavalry once the battle had turned against them.[88] So useful was the defensive value of such tactics that Procopius described Roman cavalry dismounting in the course of a battle in Lazica in 549 to stymie the Persian cavalry's charge, reducing the battle to an exchange of missiles, which the Romans won.[89]

---

86. Ps.-Joshua Stylites, *Chron*. 51.

87. Malalas, *Chron.* 18.60.464-465. Although he included few details, Th.Sim. *Hist.* 6.9.15 described a similar engagement with the Slavs in 593 in which the Roman cavalry was routed and depended on the protection of the infantry to retrieve the situation.

88. Proc. *Wars*, 1.18.45-48. The fact that Procopius put Belisarius in command of this rear guard, rather than the Hun officers Sunicas and Simmas, who commanded the Roman left and according to Malalas covered the Roman retreat, does not change the general tactical dispositions.

89. Ibid. 8.8.30-34

Such tactics as at Callinicum and Lazica provide an additional point of contact between the *Wars* and the *Strategikon*. The manual specifically directed that cavalry, when hard-pressed, should retire to the infantry, and, if necessary, dismount and defend themselves on foot in close-order.[90] One might be tempted to view this as conformation of Delbrück's notion that cavalry had become the single, jack-of-all-trades, combat branch in the late Roman army but that would be to ignore the critical role of true infantry outlined throughout the sixth century both in the narrative histories and the *Strategikon*. A more apt description might be that at least some of the highly skilled mounted archers were capable of performing the same role filled by dragoons in early modern armies.[91] That is, these elite mounted troops could operate on foot when the tactical situation called for it, yet their presence would not have obviated the need for true infantry any more than dragoons did in the early modern era.

A fair reading of the *Wars* does not suggest that Procopius distorted this reality. In one instance Procopius went beyond simply noting the successes of the Roman cavalry, and discussed the general state of Roman infantry in such a way as to support the traditionally pessimistic view of late Roman infantry. He noted the insufficiency and unsteadiness of Belisarius' foot soldiers when the Romans ventured upon a general engagement with Vittigis during the siege of Rome in 537.[92] This, however, was a particular case in which a large proportion

90. *Strategikon*, 7.B.11.45-52, 12.A.7.83-88, 12.B.13.19-20; Rance, "The *Fulcum*," 285.

91. Luttwak, *Grand Strategy of the Byzantine Empire*, 269-70.

92. Proc. *Wars* 5.28.21-22.

of Belisarius' infantry had captured horses and "become horsemen" (ἱππόται ᾖσαν), leaving too few soldiers to form much of a phalanx and with a tendency to flee the Gothic advance. Two of Belisarius' *bucellarii*, Principius and Tarmutus, also pointed out that the troops' reliability was, as often as not, a question of the steadiness of their officers, and were confident enough to volunteer to lead the phalanx into battle.[93] In the battle that followed the Romans had the worst of it and were pursued back to the walls of Rome by the Goths. Although the infantry was caught up in the rout of the cavalry, a large enough force remained with Principius and Tarmutus, and held together well enough, to cover the retreat of the rest of the army.[94] This is far from a generalized dismissal of the value of Roman infantry on the late antique battlefield.

Although cavalry was often the arm of decision in some dramatic pitched battles such as Dara, Ad Decimum, and Tricamarum, and was critical in certain asymmetric contexts such as Belisarius' sorties against Vittigis' siege of Rome, he depicted Roman tactics as fairly flexible. In other battles, such as Busta Gallorum and Mons Lactarius, it was steady infantry or dismounted cavalry that won the day. Nor was this merely an exercise in a solid shield wall standing on the tactical defensive while relying on the "pike and bow," but a variety of tactics employed as the situation required.

Here we may identify to another point of contact with the *Strategikon* which famously contains an entire book detailing the different tactics and

93. Ibid. 5.29.23-29.

94. Ibid. 5.29.37-44.

formations of likely opponents, the Persians, Hunnic peoples, the Germanic peoples, and the Slavs, and the appropriate tactics to adopt in response to each.[95] An equally important theme was how terrain might affect tactics, both on its own, and might benefit or disadvantage the Romans or the enemy.[96] "We should choose the terrain not only to suit our armament, but also with a view to the various peoples."[97] The role of infantry outside the defensive *foulkon* comes across with the comment that "infantry are necessary not only in narrow passes and fortified places, but also in rough country and along rivers."[98]

Turning back to the *Wars*, Whately has suggested a parallel between Procopius and the ethnographic portion of the *Strategikon* regarding the different tactics that might be adopted and guarded against depending on the opponents in question.[99] This point may be further amplified by Procopius' discussion of Roman infantry operations in broken terrain. Even leaving aside the tactically defensive phalangical shield wall of Busta Gallorum, we find that the example of Mons Lactarius, a Roman assault on foot against enemies on rough terrain, is far from unique in Procopius' narrative. That is, whether attacking enemies on high ground, behind some kind of defensive work, trying to breach a city's defenses through direct assault, or other operations unsuitable for cavalry, Procopius described the Romans, as the *Strategikon* suggested, adopting offensive infantry

95. *Strategikon* 11.

96. Wiita, *The Ethnika,* 51-52.

97. *Strategikon* 8.2.88-89;

98. Ibid. 11.4.141-142.

99. Whately, *Battles and Generals*, 228-29.

tactics when the terrain and opponents called for it. Of course, it may well be argued that siege warfare presents a special case since infantry would always be necessary both to defend fortifications and to carry them by close assault and, thus has little to say about the relative merits of late Roman infantry and cavalry in the field. Nevertheless, even setting aside Procopius' many and varied siege accounts, the *Wars* contain accounts of decisive Roman infantry operations that went far beyond massed phalanx tactics. That is, however biased towards cavalry he may have been, Procopius' readers come away with a sense of the practical value of infantry in certain tactical situations.

While the high points of Book Three are the dramatic cavalry victories of Ad Decimum and Tricamarum over the Vandals, Book Four details the aftermath in Africa of a series of conflicts with the Moors and mutinies of the soldiery. The central personage of much of the book is the eunuch general Solomon who led successful operations against the Moors until his death in battle in 544. Rather than the mounted operations of Book Three, Solomon's successes came through careful exploitation of terrain and infantry assault, much as the *Strategikon* might recommend. His forces were tactically flexible enough to dismount to assault a Moorish camp fortified with camels whose presence would panic opposing horses.[100] This tactic, a few decades earlier, had utterly stymied the Vandals. They apparently lacked the same flexibility as the Romans.[101] The aftermath is even clearer. The Moors attempted thenceforth to avoid battle with Solomon on

100. Proc. *Wars* 4.11.15-56.

101. Ibid. 3.8.25-29.

open ground and sought advantage in rugged terrain.[102] Roman tactics were nevertheless versatile enough and the infantry of sufficient quality to scale the heights and outmaneuver the Moors on Mount Bourgaon in Byzacium,[103] and to directly assault the Moorish camp on the heights of Toumar in the Aurès.[104] These were not the operations of dismounted cavalry, but steady infantry capable of more than a mere shield wall.

In a more general sense, the *Strategikon* does echo some of Procopius' concerns regarding the mutability of *tyche*, which we discussed in the previous chapter, and the care a good commander should take regarding the dangers of chance and uncertainty. Book Eight of the *Strategikon* is a compilation of general instructions and maxims which are replete with such sentiments. These include the note that it is better to hurt the enemy by ruse and hunger than a pitched battle, which is "more a demonstration of *tyche* than of bravery."[105] Likewise, there is the note that the best leader "does not willingly engage in a hazardous and highly uncertain battle," and does not emulate those who operate recklessly and are admired for their brilliant fortune (τύχῃ λαμπρᾷ), but one who,

102. Ibid. 4.12.4, 4.13.21, 4.19.18.

103. Ibid. 4.12.10-30.

104. Ibid. 4.20.10-22.

105. *Strategikon* 8.2.4. Ἢ δόλοις ἢ ἐφόδοις ἢ λιμῷ τοὺς πολεμίους βλάπτειν καλόν· οὐχὶπάντως πρὸς πόλεμον ἐγκαλεῖσθαι δημόσιον, ἔνθα πλέον τῆς τύχης ἢ τῆς ἀνδρείας ἐστὶν ἡ ἐπίδειξις.

while keeping the enemy on the move, remains secure and always in circumstances of his choosing."[106]

The *Strategikon*'s concern with chance is earthy and immediate. Its readers cannot help but be struck by both the potential benefits as well as serious dangers of *tyche.* While it noted that a lucky (εὐτυχής) general is more useful to the commonwealth than a merely well-born one,[107] *tyche*'s power was a double edged sword. Several passages refer to the need to guard against a reversal of fortune (τύχη δευτέρα).[108] The power of contingency and chance in the *Strategikon* is not a literary or metaphysical construct or mere gnomic commonplace. As the preface noted, the manual was not intended to be a "sacred work," but was concerned more with "practicality and brevity of expression."[109] Whether or not chance possesses a supernatural force or will makes little difference to those who must navigate through and adjust to the

106. Ibid. 8.2.56. Ἄριστος ἡγεμὼν ὁ μήτε μάχης ἐπικινδύνου καὶ πολλὴν ἐχούσης ἀδηλίαν ἑκουσίως ἁπτόμενος, μήτε τοὺς παραβόλως χρησαμένους τοῖς πράγμασι καὶ θαυμασθέντας ἐπὶ τύχῃ λαμπρᾷ ζηλοῦν ἀνεχόμενος, ἀλλὰ τοὺς μὲν πολεμίους κινῶν, αὐτὸς δὲ ἀσφαλείας ταῖς οἰκείαις ἐπιβολαῖς ἑκάστοτε χρώμενος.

107. Ibid. 8.2.94. Εὐτυχὴς στρατηγὸς τοῦ γενναίου μᾶλλον τοῖς κοινοῖς ἐστιν ὠφελιμώτερος·

108. Ibid. 2.1.7 (stressing the need for a reserve in case of a reversal of fortune), 2.14.10 (noting the need for a distinctive flag to serve as a rally-marker in case of a reversal of fortune), 7.A.7.3 (noting that generals should consider the possibility of reversal of fortune in battle and make provisions to mitigate its effects), 8.2.78 (a similar maxim noting that all generals should bear in mind the possibility of a reversal of fortune and plan accordingly), 11.2.81 (noting that when facing Hunnish peoples who are advancing for battle it is important to make preparations in case of a reversal of fortune).

109. Ibid. Pro. 28-29. οὐδὲ γὰρ ἔργον ὂν ἱερόν, πραγμάτων δὲ μᾶλλον καὶ συντομίας λόγος γέγονεν·

shoals of contingency. It remains a force with which soldiers and statesmen must always reckon.

Overall, given the present discussion, it seems fair to conclude that the *Wars* are neither inconsistent with the best modern understanding of the late antique art of war in general, nor many of the concerns expressed in contemporary military manuals. This need not imply that Procopius was a genius who had composed an entirely original work of great profundity. If his practical military interests seem somehow insufficient by modern standards, or in comparison to other ancient historians, that does not negate the seriousness of either his theme or his approach, neither of which were alien to contemporary authors writing for a military audience. On the other hand, these points of contact should also give pause to those, such as Kaldellis, who find it all too easy to assume that Procopius was possessed of esoteric literary aims and was comfortable with free invention with little basis in the realities of contemporary warfare.[110]

110. Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 12; idem, "Classicism, Barbarism, and Warfare," 189-204.

Chapter 6: The *Wars* and the Limits of "Totalitarianism" – Theory

Central to several modern analyses of Justinian, and key to Kaldellis' view of Procopius, is the notion that the sixth century emperor was a sort of late antique precursor to Hitler or Stalin. This view goes further than that of Leo Strauss, who argued that the merely illiberal character of pre-seventeenth century society required philosophically inclined authors to esoterically conceal their meanings "between the lines."[1] Instead, Kaldellis posits a Justinian who was not merely a conventional ancient tyrant, but instituted and headed a totalitarian regime that was a unique nightmare for the inhabitants of the empire. Supposedly, Justinian's tyranny was "modern in that it was founded on ideology," and was possessed of a "totalitarian disposition, which he had in common with no other ancient monarch."[2] Other scholars have made similar statements.[3] The

1. Leo Strauss, "Persecution and the Art of Writing," *Social Research: An International Quarterly of Political and Social Science* 8 (1941): 488-504.

2. Anthony Kaldellis, *Procopius of Caesarea: Tyranny, History, and Philosophy at the End of Antiquity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), esp. 133, 157-58; idem, introduction to *Prokopios: The Secret History with Related Texts* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2010), xlvii. Kaldellis' notion of Justinian's unique nature is all the more striking given his recent revisionist suggestion that the Byzantine Empire remained, in fact, a "stable monarchical republic in the Roman tradition masquerading, to itself as much as to others, as an imperial theocracy," in which popular sovereignty was expressed through the emperor's continual need for popularity and the threat of civil war. Anthony Kaldellis, *The Byzantine Republic: People and Power in New Rome* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015), 200, on Justinian as a "tyrant" in this republican system who was unique in utilizing sufficient force to put down a popular insurrection, see 68-69, 90-91, 121.

3. E.g. Tony Honoré, *Tribonian* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), 18 n.165, 28-30; Cyril Mango, *Byzantium: The Empire of New Rome* (New York: Charles Scribener's Sons, 1980), 135; Michael Maas, *John Lydus and the Roman Past* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 98; Stephen Mitchell, *A History of the Later Roman Empire* (Malden: Blackwell, 2007), 27; James J. O'Donnell, *The Ruin of the Roman Empire: A New History* (New York: Harper Collins, 2008), 224; Peter Heather, *The Restoration of Rome: Barbarian Popes and Imperial Pretenders* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 203.

common-place nature of such references begs the question of whether they obscure more than they enlighten, or if their value can be more than rhetorical. More specifically, such a position is critical for Kaldellis' reading not only of the *Wars*, and his search for hidden critiques therein, but also for the seriousness with which he regards the *Secret History*. If the *Secret History* is to be taken seriously as a true companion to the *Wars*, and not as an exercise in the genre of invective,[4] or an elaborate joke,[5] its hysterical tone and wild accusations are hard to explain without reference to some special pathology and unprecedented power on the part of the Justinianic regime. If Procopius "felt he had been living in a nightmare for most of his adult life," we must account for such an attitude in our analysis of his work.[6] Certainly, as one recent scholar has noted, the impression of paranoia regarding the possibility of being informed upon either by spies or his own family which Procopius conveys in the introduction to the *Secret History*,[7] sounds typical "of Moscow in the 1930s – or Pyongyang today."[8] We also have Procopius' statement in the *Buildings* that Justinian was a ruler of such broad power and insight that he was capable of producing not merely enlarged, but transformed *politeiai*.[9] However, the comment of a modern social scientist

4. Cameron, *Procopius and the Sixth Century* (New York: Routledge, 1985), 17, 59-60.

5. Peter Heather, *The Restoration of Rome*, 110-116

6. Kaldellis, introduction to *The Secret History*, vii.

7. Proc. *SH* 1.2.

8. Peter Bell, *Social Conflict in the Age of Justinian: Its Nature, Management, and Mediation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 9-10.

9. Proc. *Buildings* 1.1.8

should be borne in mind as well: “To apply the term ‘totalitarian’ to every form of morally reprehensible government is to render the term useless.”[10] One may therefore legitimately ask whether it, or some other despotic label is appropriate to the sixth century, so we may be clear not only about the regime with which we are dealing, but also how to interpret Procopius’ understanding of it, for his readers.

In a sense, this notion of Justinian’s regime as somehow uniquely oppressive, represents a departure from traditional views of late antiquity in which the entire period after the reign of Gallienus could be referred to as a Dominate, characterized by military despotism and “oriental” tyranny.[11] There continues to be a lively debate regarding the degree to which the later Roman Empire was a “*Zwangstaat*.”[12]

To begin with, we might note that concepts of totalitarianism and authoritarianism are problematic, occasioning debate about their specific meaning and applicability to even modern regimes. Some modern social scientists have even questioned the value of the term “totalitarianism” at all. Its use in Cold War anti-communist polemics suggest that it might simply have

10. Leonard Schapiro, *Totalitarianism* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1972), 94.

11. E.g. Theodor Mommsen, *Abriss des römischen Staatsrechts* (Leipzig: Duncker and Humblot, 1893), 347-363; Michael Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire* (Michael Rostovtzeff, The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), 449-488.

12. Alfred Heuß, “Das spätantike römische Reich kein «Zwangsstaat»? Von der Herkunft eines historischen Begriffs,” *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* 27 (1986): 603-618; Chris Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean 400-800*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 62; Mischa Meier, “Das späte römische Kaiserreich ein ‘Zwangsstaat’? Anmerkungen zu einer Forschungskontroverse,” *Electrum* 9 (2003): 193-213.

become a pejorative, the analytical value of which is outweighed by its promiscuous use in political invective, or that such an extreme form of government may be a mere chimerical aspiration of despots who are merely authoritarian.[13] Others, however, have defended the use of the term as necessary to distinguish certain particular forms of nondemocratic regimes possessing specific characteristics, although noting that promiscuous use of the term should be avoided and careful criteria established.[14] This tendency to use a parsimonious definition of totalitarianism may be illustrated in the case of Italy and the genesis of the term. Although the Italian Fascists adopted the term from their opponents, as a way of denoting the all-encompassing reach of their regime in which nothing would be "outside the state," when post-war analysts came to grapple with the concept there has been more than a little reluctance to concede that Mussolini presided over a truly totalitarian system, or if so, it was a weak case.[15]

13. Herbert J. Spiro, "Totalitarianism," in *The International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* Vol. 16 ed. David Sills (New York: MacMillan, 1968), 106-113; Robert Burrowes, "Totalitarianism: The Revised Standard Version," *World Politics* 21 (1969): 289-294; Benjamin R. Barber, "Conceptual Foundations of Totalitarianism," in *Totalitarianism in Perspective: Three Views*, eds. Carl J. Friedrich, Michael Curtis, Benjamin R. Barber (New York, Praeger, 1969), 3-5; Michael Curtis, "Retreat from Totalitarianism," in *Totalitarianism in Perspective*, 53-56; Amos Perlmutter, *Modern Authoritarianism: A Comparative Institutional Analysis* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981), 62-75; Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World , 1914-1991* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1994), 393-394; Paul Brooker, *Non-Democratic Regimes: Theory, Government and Politics* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 20-21; Michael Mann, *Fascists* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 390 n. 3; idem, *The Sources of Social Power 4: Globalizations 1945-2011* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 33.

14. Leonard Shapiro, *Totalitarianism* (London: Pall Mall Press, 1972), 105-118; Juan J. Linz, *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2000), 129-136.

15. Brooker, 12-13.

Without making excuses for the brutalities of the Justinianic regime, it is worth recalling that the term "totalitarianism" was not coined until the twentieth century, first in relation to fascist Italy, and then applied to the Nazi and Soviet regimes and their functional successors. Even this, however, is somewhat controversial. As such, we should beware of assuming that the applicability of such a modern heuristic concept to the study of the ancient world in general or Procopius and Justinian in particular may be taken for granted any more than modern theories of economics.[16] Thus, it is useful to review briefly how the term is used by some of the more prominent scholars of authoritarian regimes, and whether or not it may be a helpful device to describe either the later Roman Empire in general or Justinian's regime specifically. This is not to suggest that a negative conclusion implies that the ancient world was an idyllic time by comparison. George Orwell, no mean student of totalitarianism, and familiar with the classics, noted that "utter mercilessness" was a characteristic of classical history that was beyond modern ken precisely because the present was "too

16. Here it may be worth digressing for a moment to address the work of Karl Wittfogel. Basing his work on Marx's so-called "Asiatic mode of production," he suggested that the need for the mobilization of resources for large scale irrigation projects led to "totalitarian" "hydraulic societies," among which he included the eastern Roman empire. In his view, these were genuinely totalitarian premodern societies, whose "formidable concentration of vital functions … gave the hydraulic government its genuinely despotic (total) power." Karl A. Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), 100. In his view, such governments lacked any effective checks (ibid. 101-108), and operated on a basis of "total terror" leading to "total submission," "total loneliness," and "partial alienation" (ibid. 137-160). Without detailing the antiquated Orientalizing that underlies this approach, we might note that Wittfogel's premise of an "Asiatic means of production" is vulnerable as "a product of inadequately documented nineteenth-century speculation." Bruce G. Trigger, *Understanding Early Civilizations: A Comparative Study* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 51-52. One might also note that Wittfogel himself still maintained a distinction between premodern "hydraulic societies" possessing a "semimanagerial agrarian apparatus" and the "modern total managerial apparatus state" capable of creating "total alienation." Wittfogel, 156-157.

terrifying to be escaped from," while in the nineteenth century one could still "think himself into the stony cruelty of antiquity."[17] That is, the totalitarian horrors of the twentieth century have a tendency to stunt the historical imagination, causing modern students of history to project the horrors of the own day into antiquity. If Orwell was correct, all of antiquity, including the reign of Justinian, may present a horror to modern students, but it is a horror of a different sort than that of the twentieth century. As we shall see, most modern students of totalitarian and authoritarian systems would agree with Orwell. They are typically careful to distinguish between autocracies in modern forms, made possible by the economic, political, social, and industrial revolutions of recent centuries, which give modern governments enormous powers, and those of more traditional societies. Even so, given Kaldellis' assertion of the uniquely modern nature of Justinian's regime, it is worth outlining the characteristics of totalitarianism as understood by social scientists in order asses the value of its application to the sixth century. We must decide whether or not the concept has trans-historical utility, or whether the study of the reign of Justinian is a "journey into otherness" with its own rules and logic that differentiate it from twentieth century dictatorships.[18]

---

17. George Orwell, *Collected Essays* (London: Secker & Warburg, 1961), 239. On Orwell's knowledge of the classics cf. Arthur Eckstein, "The Classical Heritage of Airstrip One," in *The Revised Orwell*, ed. J. Rose (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1992), 97-116; Paul Burton, "George Orwell and the Classics," *Classical and Modern Literature* 25 (2005): 53-75.

18. Paul Veyne, introduction to *A History of Private Life: From Pagan Rome to Byzantium* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992), 2. For the utility of trans-historical comparison more generally, with specific reference to the sixth century, see Bell, *Social Conflict*, 21-26.

For our purposes, leaving aside some of the Cold War polemics of both the right and left,[19] two strands may be discerned in the postwar studies of totalitarianism. The first, best exemplified by Hannah Arendt and Jacob Talmon, took what might be described as a philosophical approach. Reflecting on larger social and intellectual concerns, they sought the roots of totalitarianism in modernity or the Enlightenment. The second approach examined here, that of academic political scientists concerned with identifying taxonomies of regimes and their attributes, took a perhaps less intellectually ambitious, but more precise, empirically oriented approach.

The Philosophical Approach of Arendt and Talmon

Ironically, Hannah Arendt may have been the most restrictive in her usage of the term, insisting on the qualitative novelty of such regimes, and noting that she knew of only two authentic forms of totalitarian domination, National Socialism 1938-1945, and Stalin's regime after 1930, although she feared for the future of China at the cusp of the Cultural Revolution.[20] In her estimation, such regimes were a novel product of modernity. Totalitarianism was not the mere result of a one-party dictatorship seizing the levers of power and occupying the offices of the state, but leaving the state intact as the ultimate base of authority.

19. Usefully summarized in Abbott Gleason, *Totalitarianism: The Inner History of the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), *passim*.

20. Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* (New York: Harcourt, 1968 [1951]), xxvi-xxvii, 419; Margaret Canovan, "The Leader and the Masses: Hannah Arendt on Totalitarianism and Dictatorship," in *Dictatorship in History and Theory: Bonapartism, Caesarism, and Totalitarianism*, ed. Peter Baehr and Melvin Richter (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 241-245.

For Arendt a totalitarian movement must seize the state without amalgamating with it. The movement itself, and not the apparatus of the state is thus the ultimate *locus* of power.[21] The characteristics she regarded as essential for such regimes create a high bar. The precondition for such a movement is the social atomization of individuals, made possible only in the twentieth century when capitalism, war, and revolution swept away many traditional social relationships leaving masses of isolated humanity.[22] These masses were then ripe for mobilization by leaders at the heads of ideological movements which provide a mechanism for total domination of these isolated individuals, but whose details and goals are less important than the perpetual and destructive movement of the regime, "whose essence is terror and whose principle of action is the logicality of ideological thinking."[23] If true totalitarianism is a product of modern alienation, its application to any ancient regime, let alone Justinian's, is inappropriate.

Similarly, Talmon's study is an attempt to define totalitarianism of the Left as a development of modern messianic democratic impulses set in motion by the Enlightenment.[24] For Talmon, there could be no true totalitarianism until the

---

21. Arendt, 419-420.

22. Ibid. 311-323. Compare the much more optimistic assessment of Joseph Schumpeter regarding the results of the modernity and capitalism removing the associations "that had shackled and protected people for centuries" who "were all inevitably democratized, individualized, and rationalized." Joseph Schumpeter, "The Sociology of Imperialisms," in *Imperialism and Social Classes*, ed. Paul M. Sweezy (New York: Augustus M. Kelley Inc., 1951), 86-96.

23. Arendt, 259-60, 323-26, 474; Canovan, 247-51.

24. Talmon distinguished between totalitarianism of the Left and Right, but did not initially treat the latter in detail, only noting that it differed from the former by basing itself on a collective entity such as a state, nation, or race and a pessimistic view of human nature rather

development of modern mass democracy under the influence of the Enlightenment *philosophes*, laying particular stress on Rousseau's theory of the "general will."[25] Indeed, for Talmon democracy itself must evolve into either a liberal or totalitarian form. A regime based upon the notion of its mission to forward the general will can brook no dissent or other parties and, like the Jacobins, will feel justified and compelled to inflict terror not only upon opponents, but upon the indifferent and passive.[26] The novelty of totalitarianism is emphasized by the work's epigraph, Tocqueville's assessment of the novel dark side of American mass democracy:

> Je cherche en vain moi-même une expression qui reproduise exactement l'idée que je m'en forme et la renferme; les anciens mots de despotism et de tyrannie ne conviennent point. La chose est nouvelle; il faut donc tâcher de la définir, puisque je ne peux la nommer."[27]

Talmon's vision of a continuity of thought from the Enlightenment to the messianic totalitarianisms of the twentieth century has not remained free of criticism;[28] however, a recent study of the all-pervading aspects of the Stalinist regime as it attempted to "build socialism," in which the people were genuinely mobilized, taught new skills, new ways of thinking, and new ways of living in

---

than a universalizing notion of mankind and human perfectibility. He later integrated totalitarianism of the Right into his theory by arguing for nationalism as a sort of particularistic perversion of the leftist messianism. J.L. Talmon, *The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1970 [1952]), 6-7; idem, *Political Messianism: The Romantic Phase* (New York: Praeger, 1960), 514-15.

25. Talmon, *Origins*, 38-49.

26. Ibid. 113-15

27. Alexis de Tocqueville quoted by Talmon, vi; cf. Michael Halberstam, *Totalitarianism and the Modern Conception of Politics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999), 1-2.

28. Gleason, *Totalitarianism*, 115-120.

pursuit of a dream reemphasized that it was the product of Enlightenment utopianism and nineteenth century industrial dislocation.[29] For our purposes, it is enough to note that his emphasis on the Enlightenment renders Talmon's approach to totalitarianism inappropriate to the sixth century and Justinian, whose society and government were not post-Enlightenment phenomena.

The Perspective of Political Science

If Arendt, writing in the late 1940s, made no pretense of writing with scientific detachment, "still in grief and sorrow and, hence with a tendency to lament, but no longer in speechless outrage and impotent horror,"[30] the classic study of political scientists Carl Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski is more dispassionate and systematically empirical. Like Arendt, however, they stressed that totalitarian dictatorship was a modern phenomenon unlike anything in history.[31] They expanded the list of examples to include Soviet satellite regimes and China, as well as Italy as a borderline case, and presented a "syndrome" of six characteristics that may be present to greater or lesser degrees, but are all essential to totalitarian regimes. These include an elaborate ideology to which everyone is supposed to adhere, a single party typically led by one man, a system of terror directed against selected classes of the population, a monopoly

29. Stephen Kotkin, *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 364.

30. Arendt, xxiii. Burrowes, 280.

31. Carl J. Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski, *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy* (New York: Praeger, 1966), 19.

on mass communication, a monopoly on weapons, and a centrally directed economy.[32] Although they included ideology in this list and did not deny its importance, they did not regard its details or differences, such as those between fascism and communism, as critical in themselves. Rather, the presence of this syndrome of traits rendered such regimes sufficiently similar to be classified together as "basically alike," if not "wholly alike."[33] All that was required was that the ideology be a "reasonably coherent" set of ideas for the total and forcible remaking of society. If Friedrich and Brzezinski were less extreme in their view of totalitarian terror than Arendt, they still regarded it as an essential point, in which the "process of terror" was perfected with the skills and insights of modern technology. Ambitious ideological goals, going well beyond the mere seizure of power, require a "violent passion for unanimity," and a state of permanent revolution in which the regime's desire for total change and the extension of its power throughout society give rise to terror and repression aimed not only at open enemies, but all segments of the population.[34] Likewise, the regime's propaganda is inescapable, not only because of its control of modern mass communications, but also face to face methods of indoctrination, including both the formal education establishment and the deployment large numbers of personal agitators.[35]

---

32. Ibid. 21-22.

33. Ibid. 18-21, 88-89.

34. Ibid. 161-171.

35. Ibid. 129-60.

If we are to accept Friedrich and Brzezinski's syndrome, premodern autocracies can never have been truly totalitarian. Justinian may have been driven by an imperial Christian ideology to which all inhabitants of the empire were notionally expected to adhere, but his public and utter failure to impose doctrinal agreement on the imperial church,[36] or even his own empress,[37] suggests practical limits. Whatever else the emperor might be, he was not the leader of a single, empire-wide political party in the modern sense. Justinian could and did employ a degree of terror against Christian heretics, pagans, religious minorities, and homosexuals.[38] The other elements of the syndrome, however, are simply inconceivable in the premodern world. Mass communication, never mind a monopoly on it, could not exist in a world still a millennium removed from mass-market printing.[39] Despite legislation prohibiting the private ownership of weapons and against private armed retainers,[40] the prevalence of *buccellarii* at the private disposal of great land owners belies the

36. On the failure of Justinian's religious policies see, e.g. Jones, *LRE* 296-8; John Moorhead, *Justinian* (New York, Longman, 1994), 120-40; J.A.S. Evans, *The Age of Justinian: The Circumstances of Imperial Power* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 183-92; Robert Browning, *Justinian and Theodora* (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2003), 142-53; Peter Sarris, *Empires of Faith: The Fall of Rome to the Rise of Islam, 500-700* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 160-8; A.D. Lee, *From Rome to Byzantium A.D. 363 to 565: The Transformation of Ancient Rome* (Edinburgh University Press, 2013), 279-85.

37. Jones, *LRE*, 270; J.A.S. Evans, *The Power Game in Byzantium: Antonina and the Empress Theodora* (New York: Continuum, 2011), 169-78; David Potter, *Theodora: Actress, Empress, Saint* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 166-77.

38. Pierre Chuvin, *A Chronicle of the Last Pagans*, trans. B.A. Archer (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990), 131-148; Bell, *Social Conflict*, 270-2.

39. Lucien Febvre and Henri-Jean Martin, *The Coming of the Book: The Impact of Printing 1450-1800*, trans. David Gerard (New York: Verso, 1976), 248-9; Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1991), 37-8.

40. *Digest* 48.6-7; *CJ* 9.12.10; *Nov.* 30, 85, 116.

notion that the imperial government was able to maintain any sort of monopoly on weapons or armed force.[41] Finally, the notion of a centrally directed economy in a premodern context, in which the emperor's control of the landed magnates of the provinces was becoming ever more tenuous, must likewise be regarded with skepticism.[42]

Subsequent generations of scholars have built upon these classic studies, taking into account the evolution and eventual fall of the Soviet regime, and responding to various critiques and refining the concept. Leonard Schapiro thought that Friedrich and Brzezinski's six point syndrome was confusing and in need of revision since it included both characteristic features or "contours" and the instruments of rule or "pillars" of totalitarian regimes. Thus, he proposed a list of five characteristics which include a leader without institutional rival, an entirely subjugated legal order incapable of offering any protection from the regime, control of private morality in order that there be no room for individual judgments contrary to the public morality imposed by the state, the intensive and unremitting mobilization of the population behind the regime's goals, and some form of legitimacy deriving from the mass of the people, setting totalitarian regimes more in the tradition of democratic revolutions than the autocratic traditions of the past.[43] To these he added three instruments of rule by which totalitarian leaders maintain themselves in power. They were an ideology which legitimates the

41. Peter Sarris, *Economy and Society in the Age of Justinian* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 162-75; Bell, *Social Conflict*, 83-4;

42. Sarris, Economy and Society, 219-22.

43. Schapiro, 18-43.

regime while neutralizing moral objections to its crimes and helping to mobilize the populace, a party which is the tool of the leader and the repository of the ideology, and finally the administrative machinery of the state which is brought to heel by and serves the regime.[44]

In Schapiro's estimation, regimes possessing all of these characteristic features victimized the state as much as the populace. It was not the state's power which was total, but that of the movement, its leader and his *apparat.* Ideology took precedence over the law and bureaucratic institutions.[45] In that sense, it was anachronistic to speak of pre-twentieth century totalitarianism. In contrast to theories of statist absolutism, in which individual private liberties outside of the state's (however extensive) competence might be defended as rights, the subjugation of the legal order and the resulting characteristic disregard of the established order, rules, and institutions created an environment in which such freedoms only persist based upon the capricious will of the *apparat*. Therefore, even theorists of statist absolutism such as Calvin, Bodin, and Hobbes, who maintained clear distinctions between the legal and the arbitrary, were not prophets of totalitarianism but aiming at something different, in which legitimate state power could still be distinguished from naked force.[46]

---

44. Ibid. 44-71.

45. Ibid. 65-71.

46. Ibid. 74-77.

Schapiro also considered and rejected a number of historical cases which might be *prima facie* precursors of totalitarianism.[47] Mere tyranny, in the classical Greek context, was not concerned with the mass of the population, beyond ensuring it did not revolt, and lacked the ideology, mass mobilization, and mass legitimacy required of true totalitarianism. However gruesome, the Spartan oligarchy was a proverbial case of constitutional stability, lacking a leader and *apparat* who deliberately subverted the established order.[48] The "caesaropapist" Byzantine emperor's power was circumscribed not only by tradition, but by semi-independent institutions such as the legal system, the church, and the bureaucracy.[49] Other, more theocratic examples such as the Incan empire, Calvin's Geneva, or Wittfogel's so-called "hydraulic empires" lacked the contours of mass mobilization and legitimization in part due to the lack of a monopoly of communications and weapons so necessary for totalitarian assertions of authority. Ultimately, although more expansive in his use of the term to classify modern regimes than either Arendt or Friedrich and Brzezinski, Schapiro's view was still for a relatively restrictive usage within the twentieth century.

Writing two decades after Stalin's death, Schapiro could also respond to critics of the concept with the benefit of greater hindsight. In addition to the

---

47. Ibid. 90-98.

48. Notably Schapiro does not note the revolutionary Spartan regimes of the third century B.C.

49. It should be noted Schapiro relied upon the work of J.M. Hussey on this point, and she did regard Justinian as exceptional. J.M. Hussey, *The Byzantine World* (New York: Harper, 1961), 21, but cf. 92-93. On "caesaropapism" more generally, see Gilbert Dagron, *Emperor and Priest: The Imperial Office in Byzantium* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 282-312. This point will be discussed further in the following chapter.

criticism of the concept as a mere term of Cold War opprobrium,[50] the changes that had taken place in the Soviet Union and the diversity of communist regimes elsewhere might suggest the need for a more nuanced terminology of analysis,[51] and the fixation on the public sphere and the state's threats to individual liberty might obscure more pernicious threats emanating from social groups and monopolies within the private sphere such as large commercial enterprises or trade unions.[52]

While acknowledging these issues, Schapiro thought "totalitarianism" should be retained in the professional lexicon, since it had a history of equal application to the Nazis and the Soviets that predated the Cold War, and if irresponsible or propagandistic use were sufficient to eliminate a term we would lose much of the vocabulary of modern political science.[53] Likewise, although acknowledging arguments based on the diversity and change taking place in communist regimes with less prominent leaders, a decrease in terror, and incipient forms of pluralism based on nascent pressure groups based in such places as the army, the bureaucracy, and the church, Schapiro argued that the "quintessence" of totalitarianism remained so long as the regime could continue to override all other institutions through the persistent subjugation of the legal order and lack of discrete organs of power. That is "the omnipresence of total

50. See note 3 above.

51. Curtis, 53-116.

52. Barber, 33-39.

53. Schapiro, 110.

control over the individual" remained substantially intact although there was the possibility of a transition to "some less easily definable system of dictatorship."[54] Finally, Schapiro dismissed the argument that the influence of powers within the private sphere had rendered the control of the state antiquated as inappropriate in the case of regimes such as the Soviet Union. He argued that ostensibly private sector bodies such as the academy and cultural, scientific, and professional organizations were, in fact, controlled by the ruling elite, leaving the ruler-ruled relationship as the only one with any meaning in the determination of individuals' scope of action.[55] If totalitarian regimes vary along a spectrum of intensity and totality in which certain characteristics may sometimes be weak or absent, ranging from weak examples such as Fascist Italy or Ghana under Nkrumah to the classic cases of Nazism and Stalinism, and can change and evolve or collapse, that does not override the overarching similarity of such regimes.[56]

Nevertheless, the search for greater nuance in discussing the proliferation of modern non-democratic regimes in the decades following World War II, many of which were quite repressive but lacked the defining characteristics of totalitarian regimes, has also led social scientists to develop and elaborate the concept of "authoritarianism," either in tandem with totalitarianism, or to its exclusion. This might suggest that such a problematic concept as totalitarianism

54. Ibid. 112-117.

55. Ibid. 118.

56. Ibid. 124-25.

was no longer useful even in the modern world, or set an unrealistic standard of which even the Nazis and Communists often fell short in practice.[57]

Juan Linz advocated the retention of the concept of totalitarianism, while simultaneously developing a descriptive theory of authoritarian regimes. Linz found the notion of the destruction of the line between state and society noted by Schapiro to be unlikely to be fully realized in practice, let alone the mass internalization of an ideology and the realization of the "new man," although he recognized that "privatized, inner-oriented man is a latent threat" to such regimes.[58] Rather he reduced the number of characteristics of totalitarian systems to three, a monistic center of power embodied in a leader and his followers, an exclusive ideology with which the leadership identifies and uses as a basis for and legitimation of their policies, and mandatory citizen mobilization demanded with little tolerance for passive obedience or apathy.[59] For Linz, it was this third characteristic which generally differentiates totalitarianism from other "nontotalitarian nondemocratic systems." It would not be proper to label mere "Caesaristic" dictators, oligarchies, or juntas as totalitarian unless they exercised power in the name of some guiding *Weltanschauung*, and mobilized society in some way beyond the military and police in order to impose their will. Otherwise, we must speak of authoritarian systems and regimes which, lacking in ideological

57. Brooker, 16-17, 20-21.

58. Linz, 66-67, 71.

59. Ibid. 70.

zeal, do not have the same propensity for terror that often distinguishes totalitarian systems.[60]

If we accept the point that an ideology is necessary, but not sufficient to produce a totalitarian system absent the mass mobilization of the populace, even such ideological ancient regimes as that of Justinian, fall short of the totalitarian mark. Mass mobilization presupposes mass communications. Here it is useful to bear in mind the necessity of print-capitalism and widespread publication of writing in "national" languages of the past few centuries as described by Benedict Anderson for the conception of the "imagined community" of the modern nation state.[61] It is hard to imagine mobilization on a totalitarian scale in premodern communities that remained fundamentally "face-to face" societies with relatively limited literacy.

Linz acknowledged some of the same conceptual critiques of totalitarianism as Schapiro, and responded similarly. He noted additionally that that term needed to be used precisely to describe a specific type of autocracy, and that its use as a synonym for an indiscriminate array of appalling dictatorships, despotisms, and nondemocratic regimes was problematic. If the term is to be of any use, it cannot be used loosely. On the other hand, he recognized the problem of conceiving of totalitarianism as an ideal type, in which case it will never correspond to specific empirical examples. In fact, granular

60. Ibid. 67-68, 72.

61. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 37-46.

studies of the reality of totalitarian rule often suggest the practical limits and heteronomy of power in such systems despite their centralizing ambitions and rhetoric. Nevertheless, Linz felt that totalitarian regimes could still be identified by their centralizing tendencies, which distinguish them from other autocracies.[62]

Turning to these other nondemocratic systems, we may well ask whether or not there is a different modern autocratic type that might apply to Justinian's regime. Linz, however, continued to distinguish between various forms of traditional patrimonial or feudal authority identified by Max Weber, and true authoritarianism, which he saw as a modern phenomenon, although traditional autocratic regimes might persist in mixed political systems following the introduction of modern institutions.[63] These mixed regimes might include oligarchic democracies in underdeveloped countries in which the population was politically unmotivated or "sultanistic" personal regimes, such as those of Trujillo and Duvalier in the Dominican Republic and Haiti as personal regimes based on fear and rewards to collaborators in which leaders and their followers made use of power for essentially private ends.[64] These are to be distinguished from totalitarian regimes since they lack ideological goals or interest in mobilizing the population other than is convenient for the ruler and his coterie. Likewise, mixtures of traditional and modern elements of rule might give rise to *caudillismo*,

---

62. Ibid. 129-136.

63. Ibid. 144-151; cf. Reinhard Bendix, *Max Weber: An Intellectual Portrait* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 329-384.

64. Linz, 151-155.

or chieftain politics, in which local strongmen and their followers jockey for advantage with one another. This, in turn, might serve as the basis for *caciquismo* in which central authorities form alliances of mutual support with local leaders.[65] Despite the reliance on modern elements to produce this bewildering array of mixed regimes, and Linz' insistence they were uniquely modern, we are at least closer to a useful fit for the ancient world. They are all, however, characterized by instability due to the limited resources at the rulers' disposal and competing power centers. Whether such notions are applicable or not to the empire of Justinian, they are far from describing powerful totalitarian polities.

Nor is Linz' conception of authoritarianism a useful fit. According to Linz, authoritarianism is neither totalitarianism, nor simply a modern expression of traditional rule. Rather it exists in a continuum between democracy and totalitarianism, and is expressed in various forms. Although clearly distinct from democracy, authoritarian regimes may be either the precursors or successors to totalitarian systems while maintaining their own particular characteristics. For Linz, these were regimes with limited political pluralism of tolerated elites, generally without elaborate guiding ideologies or political mobilization, and led by a leader or small group whose powers' limits were ill-defined in theory, but predictable in practice.[66] Linz acknowledged that this definition was expansive enough that it could encompass a diverse assortment of regimes in practice, and that any discussion of typology must be confusing because of the diversity of

65. Ibid. 155-157.

66. Ibid. 159.

regimes and the frequent inauthenticity of their claims. Such regimes might have greater or lesser degrees of ideological sophistication or popular mobilization, but ultimately the limited pluralism of such systems typically prevent them from moving on towards the greater pluralism of democracy or the monism of totalitarianism. Not being particularly ideologically committed, authoritarian regimes incorporate whatever symbols and ideas may be current and seem to support their "*arcana imperii*."[67] That is, interest groups with a stake in the authoritarian regime such as the army, bureaucracy, or the church would defend the *status quo*.[68] One obvious consequence, in contrast to true totalitarian systems, in which the military and other interest groups are clearly subordinate to the movement, in Linz's authoritarianisms they might enjoy privileged, and perhaps even dominant positions.

Even if we assume that Justinian's regime was atypical for the ancient world in its centralism, there are difficulties applying Linz's description of authoritarianism to sixth century Constantinople. First, there is Linz's simple assertion of the novelty of authoritarianism in the modern world. Second, there is his notion that it exists on a continuum between the poles of liberal democracy and monistic totalitarianism. That is, it is a concept that can only be described in relation to two modern referents. Finally, and most problematically, the relatively small place Linz allowed for ideology in authoritarian regimes suggests that the

67. Ibid. 171-173.

68. Ibid. 165-168.

concept is an ill fit for the sixth century. As Kaldellis has noted, the regime of Justinian was nothing if not ideological.[69]

If Linz was willing to allow for both totalitarianism and authoritarianism as distinct systems, and to distinguish between traditional rule and modern systems, Amos Perlmutter took a different tack. He defined authoritarianism even more broadly, both temporally and qualitatively. On the one hand, he was willing to apply the appellation "authoritarian" to traditional as well as modern regimes, although he saw premodern authoritarianisms as the "rule by the few in the name of the few" and modern authoritarianisms as "rule by the few in the name of the many," and marked by scope and type of its political support, control, mobilization, and ideology.[70] On the other, he described even the Nazi and Stalinist regimes as merely examples of authoritarianism, and true totalitarianism as a chimera.[71] Nevertheless, Perlmutter denied that all nondemocratic states were authoritarian, except in the broadest sense. Rather, he attempted to identify the structural and instrumental factors required to create and sustain such a system, while also noting that such regimes exist on a continuum of greater and lesser degrees of authoritarianism.[72]

It is worth noting that Perlmutter's three structural factors were all creations of the modern world. These were a single authoritarian party, the

---

69. See above, n. 2.

70. Perlmutter, 2.

71. Ibid. 62-75.

72. Ibid. 8

corporative bureaucratic military complex, and the auxiliary structures of domination, mobilization, and control such as political police, "praetorian" security forces, and militant "sub-elite" organizations including youth and student movements. Perlmutter was explicit that these auxiliary structures were not only critical, but that they were an innovation of the twentieth century. Authoritarian regimes might privilege one or another of these three instruments at the expense of the others. Thus different types of authoritarianism may be distinguished by the variations in the priority, employment, and the presence or absence of these instruments. If Bolsheviks prioritized the party, Nazis prioritized the police and propaganda, while "corporate-praetorian" regimes concentrated on the bureaucracy and military.[73]

"Posttotalitarian" Approaches

Finally, it is worth noting that the historiography of even Nazi Germany and Bolshevik Russia in the waning years of the Cold War entered what may sometimes be described as a "posttheoretical and posttotalitarian" phase in academic literature.[74] This trend that has only strengthened since the fall of the Soviet Union. On the one hand, the perceived inability of the concept of totalitarianism to accommodate the idiosyncratic details and peculiarities of classified systems, even when limited to Nazism and Stalinism, have limited its

73. Ibid. 9-12.

74. Michael Geyer and Sheila Fitzpatrick, "Introduction: After Totalitarianism – Stalinism and Nazism Compared," in *Beyond Totalitarianism: Stalinism and Nazism Compared* eds. Michael Geyer and Sheila Fitzpatrick (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 1-37.

appeal on theoretical grounds.[75] On the other hand, more empirically oriented work, such as that of Sheila Fitzpatrick, on these supposedly prototypical totalitarian regimes has often pointed to the degrees in which they fell short of the theoretical ideal. Instead, they emphasize social history and the peripheries of the regimes, downplaying the role of terror, and focusing upon the actual functioning of society from the "bottom up," sidestepping the "Cold War bias" of studying state power emanating from a totalitarian center.[76]

Here we have a convergence with Procopius which the following chapter shall explore. Despite the public presentation of Justinian's regime in the *Corpus Iuris Civilis,* and the panegyrics of imperial partisans as an omnicompetent divinely sanctioned reign with caesaropapal pretentions, Procopius' description of the imperial periphery is one in which events often run ahead of and beyond imperial control. If even the totalitarian credentials of the archetypical states of the twentieth century, with all of the advantages of modern technology and bureaucracy, can be called into question by pointing to a lack of central control outside the regimes' metropolitan centers, where does this leave the sixth century, in which, as we shall see, Procopius described similar imperial limitations? Seeking a Stalin in the Late Antiquity must surely be an anachronism.

---

75. Ian Kershaw, *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 36-46.

76. Sheila Fitzpatrick, "New Perspectives on Stalinism," *The Russian Review* 45 (1986): 357-373; Gleason, *Totalitarianism,* 140-142.

Chapter 7: The *Wars* as Evidence for the Limits of Imperial Power

The propaganda of the Justinianic regime often painted a picture of a divinely appointed emperor of immense power and control. Procopius himself stoked this image of imperial strength in his *Buildings*, claiming that Justinian was capable of "transforming *politeiai*."[1] Likewise, modern scholars have often been comfortable seeing the dark inverse, referring to Justinian's regime as "totalitarian,"[2] or Stalinist.[3] Indeed, as we saw in the previous chapter, Anthony Kaldellis sees this as one of the keys to understanding Procopius' works and his description of the empire.[4] If, however, such notions are an ill-fit for the era, we may justifiably look elsewhere for a better understanding of Procopius' intentions. There are at least two problems with attempting to view Justinian's regime through a totalitarian lens. First, none of the modern theories of totalitarianism are a good fit for the ancient world in general, nor even for Justinian's centralized ideological government.[5] Second, the totalitarian construct is particularly vulnerable to studies that emphasize the actual workings of power, particularly in peripheral areas. Recent social histories of the Soviet Union under Stalin have questioned the applicability of totalitarianism at all when examining the actual

---

1 , Proc. *Buildings* 1.1.8. ὁ δὲ δὴ οὐκ ἀμελέτητός ἐστιν ἐμπορίζεσθαι πολιτείας ἑτέρας.

2. E.g. Michael Maas, *John Lydus and the Roman Past* (New York: Routledge, 1992), 98; Stephen Mitchell, *A History of the Later Roman Empire* (Malden: Blackwell, 2007), 27; Anthony Kaldellis, *Procopius of Caesarea: Tyranny, History, and Philosophy at the End of Antiquity* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004), 133, 157; idem, *Prokopios: The Secret History with Related Texts* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2010), xlvii.

3. Tony Honoré, *Tribonian* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), 28–30; Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 158.

4. Kaldellis, *Procopius, passim.*

5. See Ch. 6.

working of power away from the Stalinist center.[6] Here, it is useful to note a point of Peter Sarris in his recent study of economics and social relationships in Justinian's reign. Although noting that Justinian's reform program and ideology led him into conflict with the magnates who owned the great estates and dominated life in the provinces, and undoubtedly provoked resentment among these aristocrats, Sarris' conclusion is that this was a struggle that the imperial government had essentially lost by the late 540s, well before the *terminus post quem* for the completion of *Wars* 1-7.[7] That is, the emperor's limited ability to bring the provincial magnates to heel, and to enforce his will in the provinces, must have been becoming ever more apparent while Procopius was writing.

A straightforward reading of the *Wars* and the themes they present may be helpful not only on this point, but for understanding of Procopius' historical goals and audience as well. Of course, Procopius, like most ancient historians, was far from being a social historian. If, however, we take his claim of didactic intent for soldiers and statesmen seriously, one of the recurring features that must strike his readers is how difficult it was to project imperial power effectively. The *Wars* confront their readers with an imperial regime whose power in the far-flung theaters of war was actually severely limited even in the face of serious problems and threats. Those purposing upon a war in Procopius' audience

6. Sheila Fitzpatrick, "New Perspectives on Stalinism," *The Russian Review* 45 (1986): 357-373; Abbott Gleason, *Totalitarianism: The Inner History of the Cold War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 140-142.

7. Peter Sarris, *Economy and Society in the Age of Justinian* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 219-22.

would have found this theme almost inescapable.[8] Even modern soldiers and policy makers do well to bear in mind the dictum that “everything in war is very simple, but the simplest thing is difficult.”[9]

Procopius illustrated this point in at least three areas noted here. First there is his description of Persian initiative and ability in the east. Second is his account of the outbreak of hostilities in the west against the Vandals and Ostrogoths. Third is his presentation of Roman officials, forces, and officers in the field, and their tendency to operate in ways contrary to imperial interests. The first two elements are essentially external constraints imposed by the structure of the international system in which Justinian’s empire was but one player out of several. The third element is an internal constraint that Procopius identifies in his repeated discussions of the various issues such as problems of uncertain communications, disunity of command, corruption, poor situational awareness, and flat-out incompetence that all too often rendered imperial policy an uncertain trumpet and the imperial army an uncertain tool.

Rather than the grand strategist and engine of reconquest, the *Wars* show their readers an emperor and imperial establishment that is at best reactive, and at worst passive, in the face of evolving international crises, and possessing limited tools with which to shape events. Procopius deliberately painted a picture which, on one hand, publicly and explicitly subverted imperial propaganda, and on the other hand, provided the soldiers and statesmen in his audience with a

---

8. Walter Kaegi, “Procopius the Military Historian,” *Byzantinische Forschungen* 15 (1990): 64.

9. Clausewitz, *On War* 1.7.

primer on the difficulties of controlling events in an imperial periphery. Such problems were not only a recurrent fact with which generals had to grapple. They were a yet another source of uncertainty for those making policy in the imperial metropole.

The Wars *as a History of Imperial* Renovatio *or Constraint?*

The traditional impression of the primacy of metropolitan imperial agency is reinforced by the regime's rhetoric of *renovatio*, not only in imperial legislation,[10] and panegyrics such as Procopius' *Buildings*,[11] but, ironically, also in his invective *Secret History*.[12] In these accounts, Justinian is either the supremely powerful imperial agent of God's will, bent on restoring the ancient limits of the empire, or a demonic figure intent on the senseless destruction of mankind. In both cases, it was the Romans', and specifically Justinian's, decision to initiate the wars in the west. Most modern scholars have also viewed Justinian's western conquests through the perspective of the metropole, attributing them either to an ideological sense of mission, or to Justinian's opportunism.[13] Thus, these wars are reduced to the simple product of forces

10. Esp. *Nov*. 8.10.2 (535); *Nov*. 30.11.2 (536); but see also *Digest*, proem 3 [Constitutio *Tanta*] (533); *Institutes*, proem [Constitutio *Imperatoriam maiestatem*] (533); *Cod*. 1.27.1; *Cod*. 1.27.2 (534); *Nov*. 1, proem. (535); *Nov*. 78.4.1 539). It is worth noting that none of these statements really indicate anything like a long-standing preexisting strategy.

11. Proc. *Buildings* 1.1.6-16; cf. Paul Sil. *Ekphrasis* 1-20.

12. Proc. *SH* 18.1-45; For the Secret History as an inverted version of imperial propaganda, cf. Roger Scott, "Malalas, The Secret History and Justinian's Propaganda," *DOP* 39 (1985): 99-109.

13. E.g. Bury, *LRE* II, 124 (suspects Justinian had "ambitions" and "would have created pretexts, if they had not occurred"); P.N. Ure, *Justinian and His Age* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1951), 17-18 ("the wars and the laws were part of one grandiose plan"); Jones, *LRE*, 270

operating within the imperial metropole, that is, Roman imperialism and Justinian's ideology of restoration. It is worth bearing in mind that Procopius did not compose the first seven books of the *Wars* until the late 540s to 551. Had he

---

("mission"); John W. Barker, *Justinian and the Later Roman Empire* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966), 131-139 ("aim was to reconquer and annex as many of the barbarian realms as possible, regardless of the immediate grounds for war"); John Moorhead, *Justinian* (New York: Longman, 1994), 63, 73 (although noting that the texts supporting a sense of "mission" all postdate the success against the Vandals, he describes precipitating events in the west merely as "rationales" for Justinian's reconquest); idem, "The Byzantines in the West in the Sixth Century," *CMH* (2) I, 123-124 (deposition of Hilderic was "merely a pretext," after success in Africa Justinian's thoughts "naturally turned to a more ambitious project); Berthold Rubin, *Das Zeitalter Iustinians* (New York: De Gruyter, 1995), 15 (the Vandal succession was a "Vorwand," "Der Krieg war längst geplant"); J.A.S. *Evans, The Age of Justinian: The Circumstances of Imperial Power* (New York, Routledge, 1996), 269 ("opportunist" western policies); Dariusz Brodka, "Prokopios von Kaisareia und Justinians Idee 'Der Reconquista,'" *Eos* 86 (1999): 250 ("Man kann also annehmen, daß die byzantinische Intervention in Italien, die zwar nur aus der Entscheidung des Kaisers resultierte, für Prokop anzunehmen war."); Robert Browning, *Justinian and Theodora* (Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2003), 78-79, 101-107 (although noting events in Africa and Italy as triggers of intervention, speaks of "pretext" and Justinian's "plan"); Averil Cameron, "Justin I and Justinian," *CAH* (2) XIV, 73-74 (events described without reference to anything other than Justinian's ambitions); *idem*, "Vandal and Byzantine Africa," *CAH* (2) XIV, 559 (North African expedition described as a "useful distraction after the Nika revolt" and Hilderic's overthrow a mere "pretext"); Timothy E. Gregory, *A History of Byzantium* (Malden: Blackwell, 2005), 136 (pretense); Andrew Louth, ""The Eastern Empire in the Sixth Century," *CMH* (2) I, 101 (reconquest discussed in context of "grand design of imperial rule"); Edward Luttwak, *The Grand Strategy of the Byzantine Empire* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009), 77-85 (Justinian's "ambitions"); Peter Heather, *Empires and Barbarians: The Fall of Rome and the Birth of Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 361 (reconquest due to Justinian's "need of a victory to shore up his waning prestige"); idem, *The Restoration of Rome: Barbarian Popes and Imperial Pretenders* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 123-143 ("the last desperate gamble of a bankrupt regime"); Andy Merrills and Richard Miles, *The Vandals* (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 228-230 (Justinian was motivated primarily by deflection of domestic discontent); Massimiliano Vitiello, *Theodahad: A Platonic King at the Collapse of Ostrogothic Italy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), 94-104 (Although stressing events in Italy, still speaks of Justinian's "pretext" and "ambitions"). Particular exceptions to this interpretation are Stein, *Bas-Emp* II, 311-312, 328-339 (greater weight on events in the west and circumspection about Justinian's ambitions); Mischa Meier, *Justinian: Herrschaft, Reich und Religion* (Munich: C.H. Beck, 2004), 46, 62-67 ("Justinian hatte keineswegs, wie immer wieder zu lesen ist und wie es auch die oströmische Geschichtsschreibung — allerdings aus der Rückschau — deutet, von Beginn an beabsichtigt, das Vandalenreich zu erobern." Although he is willing to concede a plan of reconquest after the conquest of North Africa); Henning Börm, *Prokop und die Perser: Untersuchungen zu den römisch-sasanidischen Kontakten in der ausgehenden Spätantike* (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2007), 41-42 (following Meier); Hugh Elton, "Army and Battle in the Age of Justinian," in *A Companion to the Roman Army*, ed. Paul Erdkamp (Malden: Blackwell, 2011), 534 (suggests that Justinian's "opportunism" may have been combined with "personal factors" and that the deposition of the friendly regimes in Africa and Italy "may have provoked genuine outrage"); Roger Scott, *Byzantine Chronicles and the Sixth Century* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2012), VI 7-12 (Justinian had no interest in western adventures until after the Vandal expedition, which began merely as an exercise in "showing the flag").

wished to present the Vandal and Gothic Wars as products of imperial agency, it would have been very much of a piece with elements of imperial propaganda published in the previous decade in Justinian's legislation.

Procopius' presentation of events in his *Wars,* however, was different. He noted that there were strong elements at play in the western periphery which drew the Romans against the Vandals and Ostrogoths, and they play a central role is his description of the outbreak of hostilities, whatever Justinian's preferences might, in fact have been. The difference between Procopius' account and both modern scholarship and imperial ideology begs the question why this should be so. This issue not simply whether or not Procopius approved of, or ever questioned the ideology of reconquest.[14] Rather, it is an indication of the sophistication of his analysis of foreign and military affairs and his appreciation of imperial power and its limits.

Procopius did occasionally present the perspective in the *Wars* that a worthy emperor could quite appropriately, justly, and with divine sanction wage aggressive war in order to liberate the territories of the old western empire and bring them back under Roman dominion, [15] but it was mainly in certain speeches

14. This is an issue that has sparked widely divergent opinions. Cameron and Brodka see Procopius as approving and unquestioning of the ideology of restoration, although disappointed by the less than ideal results. Cesa sees the ideology of the *renovatio* in the reconquest as contrasted by the description in *Wars.* Likewise, Kaldellis argues that Procopius concluded that the divine sanction for the reconquest was merely the emperor's conceit. Maria Cesa, "La Politica di Giustiniano Verso L'Occidente nel Giudizio di Procopio," *Atheneum* 59 (1981): 389-409; Averil Cameron, *Procopius and the Sixth Century* (New York: Routledge, 1985), 247-248; Brodka, "Prokopios von Kaisareia," 243-255; Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 187.

15. Brodka, "Prokopios von Kaisareia," 245-255.

or letters and rarely in his own voice.[16] Most often, these passages are clearly diplomatic or propagandistic in character and are unsafe guides to Procopius' own analysis of events. Procopius' inclusion of certain supernatural portents and occasional musings on the role of the divine in human affairs might also be indications of the justice of the Romans' cause.[17] As we have seen above, however, Procopius' view of the presence of the divine in human affairs is problematic and he often emphasized its unpredictability and inscrutability to human actors.[18] This being the case, the presence or absence of the supernatural is of no help in determining Procopius' view of the justice of a particular imperial undertaking. What we are left with is Procopius' note that charges of aggression levied by Justinian's enemies were simply the result of envy since expansion of one's realm was, as it had been for Cyrus and Alexander, an attribute of a worthy monarch.[19] The only ideology here is that of

---

16. Proc. *Wars* 3.10.19-21 (Bishop tells Justinian God will make him lord of Libya); 3.16.2-9, 3.19.5-6, 3.20.19-21, 5.8.13-18 (Belisarius using rhetoric of freedom, justice, and shared *romanitas*); 5.5.8-10 (letter of Justinian to Franks asserts imperial right to Italy and invokes religion); 5.6.6-13 (Peter trying to intimidate Theodohad); 6.6.15-26 (in debate with Gothic ambassadors Belisarius denies their right to Italy).

17. Ibid. 3.12.3-5 (Procopius' oracular dream of success in Africa); 3.18.2-3 and 3.19.25-26 (ruminations on the role of God and Tyche in the victory at Decimum); 6.29.32-34 (ruminations on the role of the divine during the entry into Ravenna); 8.31.1 (cited by Brodka, "Prokopios von Kaisareia," 255), is presumably a typographical error. Presumably Brodka meant to cite 8.32.29-30 (*Tyche*'s role in Totila's defeat and death); or 8.33.24-25 (*Tyche*'s role in the final recapture of Rome). In no case does Procopius imply in these passages that the will of God or *Tyche* in bringing about an outcome in any way legitimizes the ideology of the victor.

18. Given Procopius' respect for the double-edged power of *Tyche* I am not convinced that the passages adduced by Brodka indicating a supernatural element in Roman success are indicative of the decision to go to war as opposed to the happenstance of the outcome. See above, ch.4 and Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 165-221.

19. Proc. *Wars* 2.2.14-15. Similarly, Proc. *Buildings* 1.7-15 in which he compared Justinian to Themistocles and Cyrus and noted Themistocles' ability to "make small states large." Kaldellis, *Procopius*, 54-56 argues that the identification of Justinian with Themistocles and Cyrus in the *Buildings* was intended, and received, ironically. This seems to me unconvincing since both undeniably left their peoples in stronger positions.

the traditional Hellenistic kings, all of whom were international predators of one sort or another, and only indicates that Procopius did not see Justinian's wars as necessarily unremarkable on the part of any strong monarch.[20]

However, in contrast to these rhetorical set-pieces, Procopius' description of actual events in the *Wars* allowed for an interpretation of events at once free from, and subversive of, the imperial propaganda. He placed a much greater emphasis on the imperial periphery as the motor of events than is often acknowledged. This is a difference that requires some degree of explanation, and may shed some light on both Procopius *qua* historian and on Justinian's regime. To be clear, this does not mean that Justinian did not cherish the notion of reuniting the Roman empire or that his appetite did not, perhaps, grow with the eating in the sense that success in Africa may have bred confidence for further adventures.[21] I would not deny that Justinian was any less an international predator than the Hellenistic monarchs before him had been. However, Procopius' analysis of events in the *Wars* was both subtler than and different from that of most modern historians and in the presentation in his other works.

Roger Scott has recently noted Procopius' description of the relatively meager commitment of forces to the west,[22] along with the relatively light weight accorded to Justinian's occidental ventures in our other sources, particularly Malalas and the other chroniclers. Based on these points he suggests that these

---

20. M. M. Austin, "Hellenistic Kings, War, and the Economy," *CQ* 36 (1986): 450-466.

21. Brian Croke, "Justinian and the Ideology of Reconquest," *Byzantine Studies in Australia Newsletter* 4 (1980): 1-2.

22. Proc. *Wars* 3.11.1-21; 5.5.2-5; Scott, "Malalas, The Secret History and Justinian's Propaganda," 99-109; idem, *Byzantine Chronicles,* VI 7-12.

campaigns were relatively unimportant compared to the other issues confronting the imperial government. In essence, he uses Procopius' own testimony to impugn the historian's introductory assertion of the significance of his history and the events he related.[23] I would suggest instead that what Procopius indicated is not that Justinian was uninterested in the west, but rather that imperial policy was essentially reactive with regard to unforeseen events on its periphery, and that the emperor had limited and uncertain tools at his disposal. This has the virtue of allowing Procopius' presentation to remain internally consistent, while the disparity of treatment by the chroniclers is accounted for by recalling their broader range of interests and temporal breadth.[24] This becomes evident when we closely examine Procopius' narrative of the events leading up to and in the early stages of hostilities in both the east and west, and the difficulty of actually implementing imperial policy in the field due to complications in both marshalling imperial power and usefully and consistently pursuing strategic goals in the far-flung theaters of war.

Although various theoretical models of imperial expansion have been applied to the expansion of the Roman empire,[25] as we have noted, most of the attention paid to Justinian's reconquests fits comfortably within what is referred to as the metropolitan disposition or unit attribute theory of imperialism, in which an

---

23. Proc. *Wars* 1.1.6.

24. Scott, *Byzantine Chronicles,* VI 4-5.

25. For discussion with bibliography, see Arthur Eckstein, "Conceptualizing Roman Imperial Expansion Under the Republic: An Introduction," in *A Companion to the Roman Republic*, eds. Nathan Rosenstein and Robert Morstein-Marx (Malden: Blackwell, 2006), 567-589.

imperial power is driven to conquest by its own internal dynamics or *Sonderweg*. However, other major theoretical concepts of imperial expansion that have developed since the 1960s should not be ignored. If we may speak of what John Moorhead called the "continuing unity of the post-Roman world,"[26] it behooves us to examine the place of the imperialized periphery and international system as a whole as well as the imperial metropole.

External Constraints and the International System – A Peer Competitor in the East

International systems theory, a product of realist political analysis, argues that any analysis of imperial expansion should be made in the context of the overall dynamics at play in a given international arena. In an environment unrestrained by either a strong custom of mediation or enforceable international law, states are driven to pursue power-maximizing strategies by the stark motive of self-preservation. That is, in a Hobbesian international anarchy one must either be predator or prey. The internal disposition of a given polity may mitigate or strengthen these tendencies, but ultimately, in this model, imperialism is the result of the brutality of the entire system rather than solely the product of some internal pathology. All states must pursue power-maximizing activities, because to do otherwise is to risk being weaker than one's competitors and thus objectively to court disaster. The will to conquer need not be the product of some

26. Moorhead, "The Byzantines in the West," 118.

special unit attribute, but tragically typical of all rational actors in a given system.[27]

This is essentially the approach adopted in some important exceptions to the metropolitan disposition model of Justinian's policy noted above. Ze'ev Rubin has argued that the emperors of the fifth and sixth centuries essentially found themselves trapped in a strategic dilemma as they watched the correlation of the empire's power to that of Sassanian Persia slowly moving against them. Any attempt to turn to the west to address the erosion of Roman power there could offer the kings of Persia the opportunity to extort tribute and assert their dominance. The alternative was to watch the death of the empire in the west by a thousand cuts as the eastern empire slowly became a tributary state to the Persians. Thus, Justinian's western conquests were a desperate attempt to break out of this wasting death spiral.[28]

Likewise, Peter Sarris also sets Justinian's western conquests in the context of the Romans' relations with the Sassanian monarchy. Sarris suggests that it was the revival of warfare on the empire's eastern flank in 503, which continued sporadically through the sixth century, set the stage for Justinian's western ambitions. In Sarris' estimation, the heightening of tensions and renewed conflict between the two major powers may have driven Justinian to reestablish direct control in the west in order to safeguard the empire's maritime

---

27. Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1979), esp. 38-78, 100-106; Michael Doyle, *Empires* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986), 21, 25-26; Arthur Eckstein, *Mediterranean Anarchy, Interstate War, and the Rise of Rome* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), 12-36.

28. Ze'ev Rubin, "The Mediterranean and the Dilemma of the Roman Empire in Late Antiquity," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 1 (1986):13-62.

lines of supply and communication and to increase the resources at the empire's disposal.[29]

Whether the analysis of Rubin or Sarris is correct in all details, they have moved beyond the monocausal, metrocentric analysis typical of most of the modern literature. Their arguments that Justinian's western reconquests were motivated by the perceived threat of the relative loss of Roman power and thus independence fit nicely into the international systems theory model and suggest other lines of inquiry that dovetail with Procopius' presentation of Persian initiative in the east, and crises in the kingdoms of the west, as motive forces of the wars rather than the Romans' own inclinations. In Procopius' description of the Romans' conflicts with Persia, the Sassanian regime comes across as the one true peer competitor on Justinian's frontiers, and he attributed a great deal of agency to it. Significantly, he described the Persians as the initiators of the various full-blown conflicts in the east. [30] Although Procopius also often mentioned systemic pressures in the form of the Hun and Turkic peoples of the Eurasian steppes and the concern for maintaining networks of alliances with the secondary powers of Arabia and the Caucusus, it was Persia that was, along

29. Peter Sarris, *Empires of Faith: The Fall of Rome to the Rise of Islam 500-700* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 145-46.

30. Geoffrey Greatrex, "Roman Frontiers and Foreign Policy in the East," in *Aspects of the Roman East: Papers in Honour of Professor Fergus Millar FBA*, eds. Richard Alston and Samuel N.C. Lieu (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), 115-16, Mark Humphries, "International Relations," in *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare II: Rome From the Late Republic to the Late Empire*, eds. Philip Sabin, Hans Van Wees, and Michael Whitby (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 242-246.

with Rome, one of the "eyes of the earth," and whose actions set the agenda in the east for the regime in Constantinople.[31]

Procopius emphasized the Persians' power potential almost immediately by recounting the tale of the Persian king Yazdigerd's guardianship over Theodosius II during that emperor's minority.[32] His brief account of the war of 421-22 (or 440) simply noted that the Persian king Bahram V invaded Roman territory and only turned back because of the dramatic show of respect made by the *magister militum* Anatolius.[33] Although Procopius noted internal dissension and pressure from the Hephthalite Huns on Persia over the course of the

31. Theophyl. Sim. 4.11.2-3.

32. Proc. *Wars* 1.2.7-11. For Procopius' qualities as a historian of fifth century Persian history, Börm has noted reasonably that Procopius' grasp on Sassanian history for the fifth century was variable. Although he did have some good sources and present some useful information, he did also include some gaps, distortions and inaccuracies, due in part to dealing with non-contemporaneous history, and in part to the fact that he tended to focus on Persian internal history only insofar as it was necessary to discuss the development of Romano-Persian relations. By contrast, Kaldellis believes that Procopius' resume of Persian history at the opening of the *Wars* correlates too closely to Plato's sequence of regimes away from the ideal, though timocracy, oligarchy and democracy, and ending in tyranny, to be either accidental or strictly factual. Börm, *Prokop und die Perser*, 242. Kaldellis, *Procopius,* 94-115.

33. Proc. *Wars* 1.2.11-15. For discussion of whether this passage should be assigned to the war of 421-22 or 440 cf. Kenneth G. Holum, "Pulcheria's Crusade A.D. 421-22 and the Ideology of Imperial Victory," *GRBS* 18 (1977): 169 n. 66; Brian Croke, "Dating Theodoret's *Church History* and *Commentary on the Psalms*," *Byzantion* 54 (1984): 70 n.45; R.C. Blockley, *East Roman Foreign Policy: Formation and Conduct From Diocletian to Anastasius* (Leeds: Francis Cairns, 1992), 200 n. 31. Geoffrey Greatrex, "The Two Fifth-Century Wars Between Rome and Persia," *Florilegium* 12 (1993): 8-9; Geoffrey Greatrex and Samuel N.C. Lieu, *The Roman Eastern Frontier and Persian Wars II AD 363-630* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 259 n. 60 both of which accept the 421-22 date. Anthony Kaldellis *Prokopios: The Secret History with Related Texts* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2010), 6 n.11 assumes that Procopius has simply fused both conflicts based on the assumption that Anatolius would not have been active at that date. The 421-22 date seems preferable since, as Holum noted, Anatolius' presence in 421-22 is noted in independent traditions. Note Procopius' contrast with ecclesiastical sources which indicate Roman support for Persian Christians, e.g. Augustine, *City of God* 18.52; Cyr. Scyth. *Life of Euthymius* 10; Quodvultdeus, *Book of the Promises and Predictions* 3.34.36; *Acts of Peroz* 258-9; Socr. *HE* 7.18.1-8. For Roman suppression of Zoroastrian temples in imperial territory and Theodosius II's need for victory as a buttress to his regime cf. Holum, "Pulcheria's Crusade," 153-72. For a good overview with sources and commentary see Greatrex and Lieu, 36-43.

remainder of the fifth century,[34] he did not record war flaring again with Rome until 502. [35] Once again, he described the initiative being with the Persians, as Kavadh was determined to wring money out of Anastasius to pay off the Hephthalites. The Romans' actions were reactive.

In Procopius' presentation, when hostilities reignited the Persians were once again the main aggressors.[36] Although he conceded that Anastasius' construction of the frontier fortress cities Dara and Theodosopolis was provocative,[37] and that tensions increased following Justin's refusal of Kavadh's request to adopt Khusro in 524-25,[38] when each side crossed the frontier in force in the Caucuses and upper Mesopotamia in the 520s after the defection of Iberia to the Romans,[39] and when the Persians stopped Belisarius' attempted fortification of Mindouos by force,[40] he also noted that there were expectations that negotiations would be successful.[41] These hopes were dashed "suddenly" (ἄφνω) when a strong Persian army moved against Dara.[42] Even after the subsequent Roman defensive victory Procopius emphasized how formidable the

34. Proc. *Wars* 1.3-6.

35. Ibid. 1.7-9.

36. For the general course of the war with sources cf. Greatrex and Lieu, 82-101; Beate Dignas and Englebert Winter, *Rome and Persia in Late Antiquity: Neighbors and Rivals* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 37-38, 100-06.

37. Ibid. 1.10.13-19.

38. Ibid. 1.11.

39. Ibid. 1.12.

40. Ibid. 1.13.2-8.

41. Ibid. 1.13.11, 1.14.3.

42. Ibid. 1.13.12-1.14.55.

Persians were by asserting that it was remarkable in part because the Romans had not defeated the Persians in open battle for a long time. Likewise, Procopius described the three other major campaigns fought before the "Endless Peace" of 532, the invasion of Roman Armenia defeated at Satala in 530,[43] the invasion up the Euphrates that culminated in the battle of Callinicum in 531,[44] and the invasion of Mesopotamia and siege of Martyropolis in 531,[45] as events in which the initiative still lay with Persia while Justinian still sought a negotiated peace. This was only made possible by Kavadh's death and the succession of Khusro.[46]

Procopius also presented the initiative for the resumption of hostilities in 540 as resting firmly with Persia. He noted at the very outset of Book 2 that Khusro, motivated in part by Justinian's successes in the west, was bent upon war and directed the Lakhmid king al-Mundhir to find him a pretext for breaking the Endless Peace.[47] Only after this did Procopius concede that Khusro might have had cause for complaint because of Roman meddling with Persia's Lakhmid allies and the Huns,[48] and that both the Goths and Armenians were urging the king to action against Justinian for their own purposes.[49] When Khusro did commit to war in 540 it was at the worst possible moment for the

43. Ibid. 1.15.

44. Ibid. 1.17.26-1.18.56.

45. Ibid. 1.21.4-27.

46. Ibid. 1.16, 1.21.1, 1.21.17-1.22.19.

47. Ibid. 2.1.1-11.

48. Ibid. 1.1.12-15. Anthony Kaldellis, *Prokopios: The Wars of Justinian* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2014), 74 n.175 regards this charge as confirmed by Proc. *SH* 11.12, but this depends on an uncomplicated acceptance of Procopius' veracity in the *Secret History*.

49. Proc. *Wars* 2.2, 2.3.31-57.

Romans, who were unprepared and reacted poorly. Justinian was either unable or unwilling to send sizeable reinforcements to the east other than his cousin Germanus with a mere three hundred soldiers, while simultaneously directing his officials John the son of Rufinus, and Julian, an *a secretis*, to forbid the unprepared and undefended cities of the east from ransoming their safety. The climax of the campaign was the sack of the great city of Antioch as well as the cities of Sura, Beroea, and the extortion of money from Apamea, Chalcis, Edessa, Constantia, and Dara.[50] In the end, Khusro only withdrew after a false promise of a truce.

Procopius' account of the following years of campaigning in the east is no more suggestive of imperial initiative or general competence vis-à-vis Persia. In 541 Khusro shifted his main line of operations to the north in order to take advantage of the disaffection the Lazi had begun to feel with Roman rule, receiving the obeisance of the king, Gubazes, and taking the Roman bastion of Petra.[51] The Roman riposte in Mesopotamia, led by Belisarius freshly returned from his Italian victories, petered out after accomplishing little. Despite the capture of the fortress of Sisauranon, the Roman army was debilitated by the cross-purposes of various commanders, an outbreak of fever, and insubordination, although Khusro did feel it necessary to return to Persia after establishing a garrison at Petra.[52]

---

50. Ibid. 2.5-13.

51. Ibid. 2.15, 17.

52. Ibid. 2.16, 18-19

If the narrative of Belisarius' activities and Khusro's invasion of 542 is more complimentary, it is not because the empire had seized the initiative, won a famous victory, or even had the troops to spare for anything like an equal engagement. It was rather because Belisarius was able to bluff Khusro into departing from Roman territory without doing too much damage other than the destruction of Callinicum.[53] Likewise, according to Procopius, Khusro had also planned an invasion in the north that was prevented by the outbreak of the plague in Persarmenia,[54] while an imperial attempt to take advantage of this situation, led by no less than fourteen commanders, came to nothing with a bloody repulse at the fortress of Anglon.[55]

The following year, Khusro retook the initiative with the object of making war not only on the Romans, but "particularly upon the very God whom the Christians worship" (ἐπὶ τὸν θεὸν ὅνπερ Χριστιανοὶ σέβονται μόνον), and determined to destroy Edessa because, and in spite, of its supposed special protection by Christ.[56] Although Procopius included a dramatic account of the desperate siege which followed, and was eventually lifted in exchange for five hundred pounds of gold,[57] his account is again pessimistic regarding Justinian's power in the east. He gave absolutely no sign of any broader imperial agency, other than the garrison of Edessa itself. There were no reinforcements, no

53. Ibid. 2.20-21.

54. Ibid. 2.24.1-11.

55. Ibid. 2.24.9-2.25.34.

56. Ibid. 2.26.1-4. For the king's desire to take Edessa on account of Christ's supposed protection, and his earlier failed attempt upon it see 2.12.6-34.

57. Ibid. 2.26-27.

counterattacks elsewhere, and no embassies to the Persian king other than from Edessa until after the fact, when the emperor's representatives finally convinced Khusro to agree to a five-year truce in exchange for 2,000 pounds of gold in 545.[58]

Procopius recorded a more active Roman policy when war resumed in Lazica in 547, but even here, he portrayed Justinian as reactive and sometimes dithering while the decisions of eastern monarchs drove events. When Khusro attempted to solidify his control of Lazica and have Gubazes assassinated three years after the truce of 545, the Laz king naturally begged Justinian to reinstate the old Roman alliance and to send assistance.[59] Only now, a full six years since the debacle at Anglon, did Procopius record the large-scale introduction of new Roman forces to the east. Justinian sent a young *magister militum,* Dagistheus, with eight thousand Roman and allied troops who besieged Petra.[60] Even so, Justinian was far from actively engaged. He had promised to send Gubazes money to buy support from the Huns, but "although the emperor Justinian intended to fulfill this request, some business having intervened, he did not send the money at the proper time."[61] Hardly a ringing endorsement of imperial involvement and effectiveness. Equally damning was the emperor's choice of general, who, "being a young man and in no wise able to carry on the Persian

58. Ibid. 2.28.1-11.

59. 2.28.17-2.29.10.

60. 2.29.10-11.

61. 2.29.32. βασιλεὺς δὲ Ἰουστινιανὸς ἐπιτελέσειν μὲν διενοεῖτο τὴν αἴτησιν, ἐπιγενομένης δέ οἱ ἀσχολίας τινὸς οὐκ ἔπεμψε τῷ καθήκοντι χρόνῳ τὰ χρήματα.

war, did not handle the present situation suitably."[62] Despite Gubazes' advice, Dagistheus failed to properly garrison a key pass into Lazica or to press home the siege of Petra with the result that a Persian relief force frightened him off and arrived in time to resupply and reinforce the garrison which had shrunk to only 150 able-bodied troops.[63] Dagistheus' inconstancy was in marked contrast to Gubazes' steadiness. The king refused to panic despite these turns of events and maintained his guard on the critical northern passes into Lazica, for he knew that the Persians would not be able to cross the Phasis river.[64] Only now did reinforcements arrive and Justinian send the promised funds to the Lazi and the Huns.[65]

Nevertheless, Justinian did not immediately relieve Dagistheus, who, despite working well enough with Gubazes to win some important victories in the field in 549,[66] never regained the confidence of the Lazi. Only after he had begun to have some success did the emperor hearken to the slanders of the Lazi who accused the general of treason and incompetence. Justinian had him arrested and replace him with Bessas.[67] Even then, Procopius did not describe a situation in which the Roman central government had a great deal of control over events in the Caucuses. Not only were there continued Persian incursions in

62. 2.29.33-34. ἦν γάρ τις νεανίας πόλεμόν τε διενεγκεῖν Μηδικὸν οὐδαμῇ ἀξιόχρεως τοῖς παροῦσιν οὐκ ἐπιτηδείως ἐχρῆτο.

63. Ibid. 2.29.27-2.30.33.

64. Ibid. 2.30.23-24.

65. Ibid. 2.30.28-29.

66. Ibid. 2.30.34-48, 8.8.

67. Ibid. 8.9.1-4.

550, but the Abasgi revolted because of Roman mistreatment, and the Apsili because they had not received sufficient support from either the Lazi or the Romans against the Persians.[68] Only after dealing with these issues could Bessas return to beleaguer Petra in 551. Even here it was only through the inventiveness of the Sabir Hun auxiliaries in deploying a new type of ram and the heroism of Bessas and his men that the city fell.[69]

After this great victory however, the Persians regained the initiative. The energetic Persian commander, Mermeroes, led his army of cavalry and elephants from Iberia into northern Lazica through treacherous mountain passes, which Bessas had neglected to garrison. He established a fortified base at Skanda, ran the Roman field army off across the Phasis river, and brought Archaeopolis under siege with the Sabirs now in Persian employ.[70] Lest there be any doubt in his audience's mind about the Persians' capacity to wage war, Procopius commented that "someone might rightly admire the inventiveness and hard work of the Persians in wars."[71] The garrison of Archaeopolis managed to drive off the Persians through a desperate sortie and the Lazi and Romans continued to hold out in the mountains and various strongholds, but the Persians still generally had the run of the country and were using the peace negotiations with Justinian as an opportunity to extort cash payments from Justinian that

68. Ibid. 8.9.1-8.10.7.

69. Ibid. 8.11.11-8.12.35.

70. Ibid. 8.13.

71. Ibid. 8.13.5. ὥστε εἰκότως ἄν τις Περσῶν τὴν ἐς τοὺς πολέμους ταλαιπωρίαν τε καὶ ἐπιτέχνησιν ἀγασθείη

certainly looked like tribute when Procopius concluded his coverage of the wars in the east.[72]

External Constraints and the Western Periphery

Turning to Justinian's western conquests, an additional model of imperial expansion jibes well with Procopius' narrative in the *Wars*. What is known as the pericentric view of imperialism contends that imperial powers are often drawn to impose direct rule, regardless of their own preferences, by events and decisions outside their control.[73] If peripheral states are either too weak to ensure an imperial power's interests or too strong for an imperial power to dictate its will, the metropolitan polity may find itself subject to strong interventionist pressures. The role of indigenous collaborators is also critical. If they prove unable or unwilling to mediate and further the interests of an imperial power in the local political environment, or if an imperial power should be unwilling or unable to provide its collaborators with enough cards to play to maintain their positions, the imperial metropole will find itself faced with a dilemma. If it cannot find suitable replacements, it must impose direct rule, presumably through military action, or give up its hegemonic pretensions either willingly or under the pressure of indigenous resistance. The moment of crisis may come when a collaborationist

72. Ibid. 8.14-17.

73. John Gallagher and Ronald Robinson, "The Imperialism of Free Trade," *Economic History Review* 6 (1953): 1-15; idem, "The Partition of Africa," in *Imperialism: The Robinson and Gallagher Controversy*, ed. Wm. Roger Louis (New York: New Viewpoints, 1976), 73-127; Ronald Robinson, "Non-European Foundations of European Imperialism: Sketch for a Theory of Collaboration," in *Imperialism: The Robinson and Gallagher Controversy*, ed. Wm. Roger Louis (New York: New Viewpoints, 1976), 128-151; Doyle, *Empires* 21, 25-26.

regime and its imperial backers find themselves faced with indigenous opposition motivated precisely by the collaborators' perceived subordination to an external power and interests. Although imperial powers retain significant agency in this model, their options are circumscribed by dynamic events far outside their immediate control and their perceived need to act to preserve their interests in threatening situations. Imperial powers viewed through the lens of pericentrism are not supremely powerful forces advancing their own interests and ideologies for good or ill, and no matter what. They are no more than one of the more significant players on the international stage, but still subject to the actions of others and required by the pressures of the system to act in defense of their interests as they perceive them.

It may be helpful to bear in mind one of the classic test cases for this analytical perspective, the British intervention in Egypt following the Arabi Revolt in 1882. In brief, a nationalist revolt imperiled foreign interests which had heretofore been seen to by a pliant khedive. What began as an intervention to restore the previous arrangement became, despite Gladstone's misgivings, the imposition of direct rule once it was evident that no combination of indigenous collaborators still possessed the necessary legitimacy to maintain their position, let alone ensure Britain's interests.[74] Having rushed in, the British now felt they could not rush out. The opening stages of both the Vandal and Gothic Wars, as Procopius describes them, might serve equally well as examples of this line of thinking.

---

74. Robinson and Gallagher, "Partition," 78-82.

It should be noted however, that to suggest that Procopius' analysis of the outbreak of conflict in the *Wars* – when understood carefully – might have much to recommend it is somewhat problematic. Cameron has argued that Procopius, despite an interest in the causes (*aitiai*) of conflict, "is not very good at reasons and causes," and argues that Procopius tends to see personality or supernatural fate as the driving force of political causation, with "many built-in failings by modern requirements" due to his limited reference to the political or economic contexts of military affairs.[75] In her estimation, if Procopius sought a human cause for events, rather than falling back on fate or chance, he sought it in human virtue, wickedness, or incompetence. This seems to me to be too pessimistic an assessment on two counts. First, although there may be philosophical and historiographical debate on this point, personalities, virtue, wickedness, and incompetence do drive the course of events, particularly in military history.[76] Second, I hope to show that Procopius' account of the outbreak of Justinian's wars in the west was not bereft of a broad political context.

It is true that, despite a note in the preface of the *Secret History* in which he says he will deal with *aitiai* which he had been forced to conceal in the *Wars*,[77] Procopius does not include a formal methodological discussion of the causation of comparable to Thucydides' *alethestate prophasis* (truest cause), as opposed

75. Cameron, *Procopius*, 50, 142-151, 229.

76. A point that seems to me undeniable for those who have lived through the United States' foreign adventures in the first decade of the twenty-first century.

77. Proc. *SH* 1.3.

to mere public *aitiai* and *diaphoroi* (disputes), or Polybius' discussion of an *aitia*, versus a *prophasis* (pretext) and *arche* (beginning) of a conflict.[78] However, if Procopius' use of the term *aitia* is somewhat lacking in the technical specificity of Thucydides or Polybius, he does demonstrate a greater degree of sophistication than might be supposed. Similar to Polybius' *prophases*,[79] for Procopius an *aitia* might be a legitimate grievance that could lead to war but was also susceptible to diplomatic intervention and resolution,[80] something to be discovered or fabricated to justify aggression,[81] dispensed with altogether in the case of unprovoked aggression,[82] or invoked rhetorically by a speaker arguing that they had been attacked "without cause."[83] That is, the narrative of the *Wars* includes distinctions between more or less objectively legitimate *aitia* as well the subjective judgments of the parties involved in conflicts.

---

78. Thuc. 1.23; Polyb. 3.6, 3.32.5-6, 22.18.

79. On Polybius' vocabulary of causation, see F.W. Walbank, *Polybius* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 158-59; Kenneth Sacks, *Polybius on the Writing of History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 123-24

80. Proc. *Wars* 1.10.18 (Anastasius' fortification of Dara contrary to treaty), 1.11.6 (Persian suggestion that Justin's adoption of Khusro would end both the war and the "causes" of war), 1.16.10 (Kavadh suggests that he could be bribed to drop the causes of war), 2.4.17 (Justinian's peace proposal to Khusro suggests that causes for war could be overcome by diplomacy), 2.10.16 (Khusro enumerates causes of war afforded by Justinian, some of which were legitimate, and others fabricated), 2.15.1-35 (Romans' mistreatment of the Lazi was the cause of their inviting Persian intervention), 8.20.1-25 (repudiation of betrothal leads to war between the Varni and Angili).

81. Ibid. 2.1.3 (Khusro directed al-Mundhir to provide causes for war), 2.4.22-25 (Justinian accuses Khusro of manufacturing causes for war where none exist).

82. Ibid. 3.5.25 (Geiseric's depredations), 4.8.9 (the Moorish revolt), 6.14.13 (Herul attack on the Lombards), 6.14.27 (Gepid attack on the Heruls), 6.14.37-15.36 (Herul revolt following the murder of their king).

83. Ibid. 1.14.3 (Belisarius and Hermogenes to the Persians), 1.16.1 (Rufinus to Kavadh), 2.4.22-25 (Justinian accuses Khusro of fabricating pretexts), 4.6.27 (Gelimer accuses Justinian of attacking without cause).

The *Wars* do, however, include extended historical introductions in each of their three major sections on the Persian, Vandal, and Gothic Wars. It is these introductions which indicate Procopius' understanding of the events and motives which underpinned the conflicts in the respective theaters,[84] and, particularly in Books 3 and 5, there is a strong element of pericentrism drawing Justinian to intervene in the west. We may decide that Procopius was in error, but it would be a mistake to dismiss his analysis as too facile. In his account of the reconquest, at the outset of Justinian's reign, the regimes in both the Vandal and Ostrogothic kingdoms were friendly to Roman interests. It was internal revolutions in both kingdoms that brought new dynamics to the fore, without which it is hard to conceive of the reconquests occurring as they did, if at all.

Regarding the Vandal kingdom, Procopius gives his readers a résumé of Roman-Vandal relations beginning in the early fifth century, carrying events from the Vandals' arrival in Spain through the reign of Geiseric, with discussion of the invasion of Africa and the consolidation of their kingdom, the sack of Rome in 455, Geiseric's depredations against the Romans, and the spectacular defeat of the eastern expedition sent against them in 468.[85] However, Procopius also notes that Geiseric and Zeno came to a peace agreement which was respected until his own day.[86] Despite the persecution of the Catholic population of Africa in the reigns of Huneric (477-484) and Gunthamund (484-496), relations with

---

84. Berthold Rubin, *Prokopios von Kaisareia* (Stuttgart: Alfred Druckenmüller Verlag, 1954), 85-86.

85. Proc. *Wars* 3.3-7.

86. Proc. *Wars* 3.7.26-30. Cf. Malchus fr. 5 (Blockley); Merrills and Miles, *The Vandals*, 123.

Constantinople improved in the reigns of Thrasamund (496-523) and Hilderic (523-530). Procopius tells us that Thrasamund had enjoyed the particular friendship of Anastasius, while Hilderic and Justinian were not only personally close, but enjoyed a guest-friend relationship and gave each other large sums of money.[87] On a less personal level, the Vandals were also bringing themselves more into line with Roman policy. They had not only called off the active persecutions of their predecessors,[88] but Procopius also described a Vandal regime that was, by the reign of Hilderic, increasingly militarily and diplomatically constrained. The Vandals were ever less successful militarily against the Moors,[89] and, in the reign of Hilderic, an unwarlike king,[90] they dramatically repudiated their alliance with the Ostrogoths. Amalafrida, the widow of Gunthamund and sister of Theoderic found herself imprisoned and her Gothic entourage slaughtered.[91] The result must surely have been to the liking of Constantinople. Faced with the hostility of both the Moors and the Ostrogoths, Hilderic had nowhere to turn but to Justinian. This may have been a quiet diplomatic revolution, but it was a revolution nonetheless. Procopius was clear. Without lifting a finger Justinian found the lords of the richest province in the west in a subordinate position to the eastern empire.

---

87. Proc. *Wars* 3.8.8-14, 3.9.1-5

88. Ibid. 3.8.9-11; 3.9.1.

89. Ibid. 3.8.5, 3.8.14-29; 3.9.3.

90. Ibid. 3.9.1-2. We should also note that, although Procopius does not emphasize this point, as the grandson of Valentinian III, Hilderic was as much the scion of western emperors as he was the king of the Vandals.

91. Ibid. 3.9.3-5. For the angry Gothic reaction, cf. Cassiod. *Var*. 9.1.

That the Vandals themselves were aware of this changed relationship is borne out by Procopius' account of the sequel. The disgruntled Vandal heir apparent, Gelimer, garnered the support of the Vandal nobility for a coup by asserting that Hilderic was betraying the kingdom into the emperor's hands.[92] Thus, Hilderic and his nephews, Hoamer and Oageis, found themselves imprisoned. Suddenly the Vandal regime that had seemed so friendly to Constantinople had been overthrown by a regime whose rallying cry was independence from Roman influence.

However displeased Justinian must have been at this turn of events, Procopius' description of the imperial response was far from an immediate seizure of a *casus belli*. The emperor resorted to diplomacy, offering friendship, and called merely for the aged Hilderic's restoration as a figure-head with Gelimer as the power behind the throne. Even after Gelimer spurned this offer and blinded Hoamer, Justinian merely demanded that Hilderic and his nephews be sent to Constantinople, and only now threatened war if this demand were not met.[93] Gelimer responded defiantly, arguing that the Vandals had dethroned Hilderic because he was a traitor to the house of Geiseric, that his own elevation to the throne was perfectly legitimate, and that Justinian would do well to look to his own affairs rather than meddling in the kingdoms of others.[94] Only after diplomacy had failed and he was confronted by a hostile regime, did Justinian decide upon war in Africa and begin making preparations by securing peace with

92. Ibid. 3.9.6-9.

93. Ibid. 3.9.10-19.

94. Ibid. 3.9.20-23.

Persia and recalling Belisarius.[95] Such a contest of resolve and coercive diplomacy leading to war would not have surprised Thucydides or Polybius.[96]

Even so, Procopius was clear that the prospect of war in the west was not welcomed by Justinian's ministers and soldiers.[97] They had not forgotten the disaster of 468. It was at this moment that John the Cappadocian made his remarkable speech in the consistory, counseling caution and emphasizing the risks, nearly dissuading Justinian from war.[98] Only the intervention of an eastern bishop, who claimed that the emperor would have God's favor in an undertaking to protect the Catholic Christians of North Africa from a tyrant, steeled Justinian's resolve.[99] This point would have had a special salience since there was both a preexisting community of miraculously talkative African refugees in Constantinople,[100] as well as new émigrés entreating aid on Hilderic's behalf,[101] and eastern merchants who were dissatisfied with the change in Vandal regime.[102] The geostrategic considerations in favor of war were now reinforced by religious and humanitarian concerns driven by the knowledge of previous

---

95. Ibid. 3.9.24-26.

96. On the prevalence of such contests of resolve in Classical and Hellenistic history, see Eckstein, *Mediterranean Anarchy,* 60-2, 175, 242, 296. On the belligerent tone of ancient diplomacy, see J.R. Grant, "A Note on the Tone of Greek Diplomacy," *CQ* 15 (1965): 261-66.

97. Ibid. 3.10.1-6.

98. Ibid. 3.10.7-18. For similarities to the "wise adviser" trope in Herodotus, see above, 127-29. As discussed in Chapter 4, Procopius may have rhetorically embellished the event, but there is no reason to disbelieve that there were factions in the consistory opposed to this foreign adventure.

99. Ibid. 3.10.18-21.

100. Ibid. 3.8.1-5. Cf. *Cod*. 1.27.1.4.

101. Ibid. 4.5.8.

102. Ibid. 3.20.5.

Vandal persecutions and fear of their renewal stoked by African émigrés. Roman policy was being pulled along, despite the misgivings of its best and brightest, by the actions, both real and imagined, of those on the imperial periphery.

Once he was committed to military action, Justinian still sought for collaborators in the African periphery. Whether or not he seriously contemplated Hilderic's actual restoration is impossible for us to determine. However, we should not assume that his aims did not evolve as the campaign progressed. Procopius does tell us that he sent the expedition off with a letter to the Vandals emphasizing that his intent was not the destruction of the kingdom, but the overthrow of the tyrant who had violated the succession laid down by Geiseric.[103] This may have simply been a cynical exercise in psychological operations that came to nothing, but it is an indication that Justinian was still angling for Vandal quislings. We do know that Gelimer apparently took the threat Hilderic and his intimates represented to his regime seriously enough to order their execution as soon as he caught wind of Belisarius' approach.[104] Likewise, Belisarius also sought collaborators among the Roman Africans[105] and the Moors.[106]

As Procopius unfolded his account, even before his catalog of Belisarius' expeditionary force, events on the periphery continued to run ahead of the ability of Justinian and his ministers to control them. The Vandal kingdom itself began

---

103. Ibid. 3.16.12-15. Of course, in the end, Hilderic's family was not restored, but Procopius does note that Justinian did make a point of pensioning off the descendants of Valentinian III, 4.9.13.

104. Ibid. 3.17.11-12.

105. Ibid. 3.16.3-8, 3.16.9-11, 3.17.6, 3.20.17-25, 3.21.9-10.

106. Ibid. 3.25.8-9.

to fractionate, with new actors coming to the fore, each with his own claim on imperial support. A certain Pudentius raised revolt in Tripolitania and appealed to Justinian for aid. In response the emperor duly sent a small force to aid the rebels and secure the province.[107] Meanwhile, Godas, the Vandal governor of Sardinia, also sought imperial assistance in his own rebellion against Gelimer. Here, despite a flurry of embassies, Godas proved a bit too independent-minded and Justinian just a bit too slow to commit imperial troops.[108] Events were spinning out of control in the west, presenting both crises and opportunities, and the emperor and his ministers had to grapple with how to manage the conduct of affairs that they might attempt to influence, or turn to their advantage, but were clearly not of their own making. The delicate dance of regime collapse and regime change required the fraught picking and choosing of which rebels to support and which to neglect.

Procopius emphasized the impression that the imperial government was not in control of events, with the almost absurd story of the officers Valerian and Martin, who were to precede Belisarius' expedition into Greece.[109] After they had sailed Justinian summoned them back in order to impress some forgotten point upon them. However, the emperor then thought better of delaying his troops. Therefore, he sent out heralds to call out to the ships that they were forbidden to either return to the emperor or to disembark. Some took this as an ill omen, or an unintentional curse fulfilled by the later fate of the rebel Stotzas. Procopius

107. Ibid. 3.10.22-24.

108. Ibid. 3.10.25-34, 3.24.19.

109. Ibid. 3.11.24-31.

declined to opine on whether or not the incident had any actual supernatural relevance, but the inclusion of the story shows the hesitant imperial war machine and the emperor's decisions in an all too fallible and human light. It is not at all the impression of either divine or infernal efficacy that would be consonant with either the regime's propaganda or the *Secret History*.

As Procopius' account of the Vandal War continues, the Roman strike force was plagued by logistical problems,[110] restive troops of dubious loyalty and discipline,[111] lack of control over a hostile environment, [112] and, above all, the anxiety and difficulties of the unknown.[113] Despite the apparent ease of victory in hindsight, Procopius described it as a near run thing and emphasized the role of *Tyche* as critical to the Roman victory.[114] Even after the final Vandal defeat at Tricamarum, Gelimer's surrender, and Belisarius' triumph,[115] Procopius continued his narrative with accounts of serious mutinies among the troops posted to Africa and conflicts with the Moors that dragged on for over a decade. The African periphery was clearly not finished imposing itself on the Roman metropole.

---

110. Ibid. 3.13.12-20 (rotten bread), 3.13.23-24 (water).

111. Ibid. 3.12.8-22 (Massagetae at Abydos), 3.16.1-8 (theft from African orchards), 3.20.11-12 (disobedience of the sailors), 4.1.4-11, 4.3.7 (uncertain loyalty of Huns), 4.4.1-8 (troops cannot be brought to order after Tricamarum)

112. Ibid. 3.13.5-9 (had a wind arisen at Malea the fleet might have been destroyed),

113. Ibid. 3.12.3-5 (Procopius' own fears assuaged by dream), 3.14.1-3 (Belisarius' anxiety over the Vandal fleet), 3.15.2-17 (Archelaus' expresses the uncertainities inherent in landing at Caput Vada), 3.17.14 (Gelimer's presence unknown to the Roman until the clash of scouts at Grasse)

114. Ibid. 3.18.1-5, 3.19.25-33, 3.21.7-9; 4.7.18-21 (see ch. 4 above).

115. Ibid. 4.3.1-28, 4.7.1-17,

Turning to the Gothic War, Procopius' analysis of the conflict's outbreak is more complicated, but not dissimilar from the case in Africa. Again, we have a substantial historical preface detailing the dissolution of the western imperial office, the Ostrogoths' conquest of Italy, and the establishment of Theoderic's kingdom.[116] As with the Vandals, Procopius presented Gothic rule in Italy before the events leading to war as relatively benign and congenial to Roman interests. Other than the wrongful deaths of Symmachus and Boethius,[117] he made no mention of mistreatment that might inflame tensions between Ravenna and Constantinople in the reign of Theoderic. Procopius was also clear that Theoderic's successor, the queen-regent Amalasuntha, was also respectful of the rights of the Italian Romans and was inclined to raise her son, Athalaric, in good Roman fashion.[118] In fact, Procopius' description of Constantinople's relationship to the Gothic kingdom in the early years of Justinian's regime is one, as was the case with the Vandals, in which the emperor could take a fair degree of satisfaction. Justinian knew he could push Theoderic's successors and he did so, but the degree of influence that the emperor sought only slowly evolved from being substantial, but relatively indirect, to outright military conquest over the course of convoluted events. Furthermore, Procopius presented the actions that precipitated the Roman imperialist project as originating in Italy as often as Constantinople.

---

116. Ibid. 5.1.1-31.

117. Ibid. 5.1.32-39.

118. Ibid. 5.2.4-6. Cf. Cassiod. *Var*. 8.12 for Eutharic's adoption as Justin's son in arms and the relatively good state of relations between Ravenna and Constantinople on the accession of Athalaric in 526.

Procopius did describe some legitimate points of diplomatic dispute such as the provocative actions of certain Gothic commanders in sheltering deserters from the Roman army, disputes over the Romans' right to the Vandal possession of Lilybaeum, and the maltreatment of the Roman town of Gratiana during a Gothic conflict with the Gepids.[119] His presentation however also indicated that Justinian had reason to be pleased with Amalasuntha's good offices. In his account of the Vandal War, Amalasuntha is described as carefully cultivating the emperor's friendship, paying heed to him, and providing logistical support to Belisarius.[120] Even in the points of legitimate dispute, despite some sternly worded letters to Belisarius, Amalasuntha ended by stating that she would submit the matter of Lilybaeum to the emperor for arbitration. Procopius was also clear that subsequent missives between the emperor and queen on the disputed points were merely a smokescreen for secret correspondence, not a sign of strain between the two regimes.[121] It is hard to imagine this being a situation that would have unduly upset Justinian.

What Procopius did describe as a source of concern was the apparent weakness of Amalasuntha's hold on power. Much like Hilderic before her, she found herself confronted by members of the Gothic nobility who regarded excessive *romanitas* with hostility and suspicion. They succeeded in overturning the queen's pedagogic arrangements for her son in favor of a Gothic education of wine, women, and song; weakened her influence with the sickly young king; and

119. Ibid. 4.5.11-25, 5.2.6-7, 5.3.15-16.

120. Ibid. 3.14.5-6.

121. Ibid. 4.5.18-25, 5.3.15-29.

openly plotted against her.[122] This was a volatile situation and, on two occasions, Amalasuntha turned to Justinian as her court of last resort.[123] In the second instance, Procopius described her as willing to hand over the kingdom of Italy to Justinian, which he was naturally eager to accept.[124] However, Procopius was clear that this was an act of desperate self-preservation on Amalasuntha's part, driven by internal Gothic dynamics. These plans did not originate in Constantinople but with a queen whose reign and life were in danger because of internal factors which threatened to install a new regime that might be far less palatable to the emperor.

In fact, Justinian was confronted by just such a regime in the person of Theodahad, who staged a palace coup against his cousin, killed her supporters, and imprisoned her in 534.[125] Even so, as in the case of the Vandals, diplomatic relations between the emperor and the new monarch were not immediately broken off. Theodahad was made of less stern stuff than Gelimer, and Procopius indicated that a negotiated settlement might have been possible. There was a flurry of embassies. Theodahad sent a delegation under the senators Opilio and Liberius to smooth things over with the emperor, while Justinian's immediate response was to send Peter the Patrician as his ambassador to Italy, with a

---

122. Ibid. 5.2.18-22. Contra Cameron, *Procopius*, 199, It seems to me that the account of Athalaric's education goes well beyond discussion of stereotypes of Roman and barbarian manners. It was a question of whether and to what degree Roman soft power would be allowed to influence the young prince. We need look no further than the examples of Hilderic and Gelimer for the differences in policy that might result from a more or less "Romanized" monarch.

123. Ibid. 5.2.23-29, 5.3.10-30.

124. Ibid. 5.3.12, 5.3.28-29.

125. Ibid. 5.4.12-15.

message of public support for the queen.[126] Complicating matters for all sides, as Procopius made clear, Theodahad's senatorial delegation was divided in the degree of its support for the new king. Despite the full-throatedly mendacious advocacy of Opilio, Liberius was entirely forthright regarding the new king's spotty character and activities.[127] Contradictory intelligence and Amalasuntha's subsequent murder, despite Theodahad's protestations of innocence, could only have confirmed the worst fears of the imperial court.[128] The deposition and death of a reliable friend might be overlooked if her successor was an amenable and effective supporter of Roman policy, but Theodahad proved to be neither.

According to Procopius, the response was not long in coming. Peter bluntly informed Theodahad and the Goths that the queen's murder was an act that that would result in truceless war.[129] Even so, Procopius described a prudent and measured military response. Justinian set forces in motion on two fronts in 535, ordering Mundo to move against Dalmatia and Belisarius against Sicily, but there was to be no immediate strike against Italy itself.[130] Belisarius' orders were so tentative as to allow him only to make a trial of the island if, in his judgment, it might be reduced with minimal effort. Otherwise, he was to give out

126. Ibid. 5.4.15-23. Cf. Cassiod. *Var*. 10.20-26, 11.13 for continued warm diplomatic correspondence between the two courts.

127. Ibid. 5.4.23-25.

128. Ibid. 5.4.25-31. Whether or not we accept the tale of *SH* 16.1-5, implicating both Peter and Theodora in Amalasuntha's murder, Procopius' analysis in the *Wars* is unambiguous in placing responsibility on the queen's domestic enemies and more likely reflects the understanding of the Roman court in the prelude to war.

129. Ibid. 5.4.30.

130. Ibid. 5.5.1-7.

the story that this was a mere stop-over on the way to Africa. In the event, both expeditions prospered. Theodahad was pressured in both the east and south, while imperial envoys sought to mobilize the Franks against him in the west.[131]

All the while diplomacy continued. Peter pressed the weak-willed Theodahad for a settlement that would be acceptable to the empire. Notably, the proposed terms were personally generous to Theodahad. The first proposed settlement would have left him on the throne as a subordinate of the emperor and the ruler of what would clearly be a client kingdom.[132] Fearing this would not be sufficient to save him from the hazards of war, Theodahad then recalled Peter and proposed a secret codicil by which he would abdicate in Justinian's favor, much as Amalasuntha had proposed, in exchange for a generous pension.[133] Procopius presentation of Justinian's response is illuminating. Theodahad was to be assigned the Gothic royal estates.[134] King or not, Procopius implied that Justinian was looking to leave Theodahad in place as his man in Italy.[135] The quest for useful collaborators on the imperial periphery continued.

However, imperial policy remained at the mercy of events and decisions made by actors on the periphery. A Gothic riposte in Dalmatia killed Mundo and

---

131. Ibid. 5.5.11-19.

132. Ibid. 5.6.1-5.

133. Ibid. 5.6.6-27.

134. Ibid. 5.6.26.

135. On this point, although I agree with Wolfram that Justininian was "clearly little interested in making the acquaintance of the Amal philosopher," the royal domains of Italy represent far too large a sinecure to be handed over just so the emperor could spare himself the distasteful task of ever dealing with Theodahad in person. Cf. Herwig Wolfram, *History of the Goths* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), 340.

forced the Roman evacuation of Salona.[136] Theodahad found some reserve of reckless courage, repudiated his arrangements with Justinian, and imprisoned the emperor's envoys.[137] Only now did Procopius describe a resort to a purely military policy. Justinian ordered a new army under Constantianus into Dalmatia and Belisarius to cross over into southern Italy.[138] Theodahad's disregard for the diplomatic niceties must have placed a chill on any further Roman inclination for diplomacy and the emperor's patience with the Gothic court had apparently reached its limit. The war for Italy began in earnest.

Even here, Procopius' account of Theodahad's eventual fate is instructive. Frustrated by his inactivity while Constantianus maneuvered the Gothic army out of Dalmatia and Belisarius moved inexorably northward, taking Naples by bloody storm, the Goths began to suspect him of plotting exactly the sort of secret settlement with Justinian that he had repudiated. Leaving aside the king's own duplicitous nature, the suspicions of the Goths are understandable. As with the Vandals after Gelimer's coup, Procopius painted a picture of the Gothic kingdom as a fractionated polity. The Goths living in Dalmatia rallied to Constantianus, and Theodohad's own son-in-law, Ebrimud, deserted to Belisarius along with the garrison of Rhegium.[139] Theodahad learned too late that he had a tiger by the tail. He had shown himself too untrustworthy and too little concerned with

---

136. Proc. *Wars* 5.7.1-10.

137. Ibid. 5.7.11-25.

138. Ibid. 5.7.26-37

139. Ibid. 5.7.36, 5.8.3-4. Cf. later defections as Belisarius advanced. 5.14.4-14 (city of Rome), 5.15.1-2 (half of the Goths of Samnium), 5.15.3 (Apulia and Calabria), 5.16.1-4 (Tuscany).

Justinian's priorities to be a useful collaborator, while simultaneously alienating his own people over his ties to Constantinople. Unsurprisingly, no one came to his defense when he was overthrown in favor of Vitigis in 536.[140]

Procopius described the new Gothic regime sweeping to power on a platform against collaboration with Constantinople. Lest Justinian entertain any doubt, not long into the siege of Rome Vitigis ordered the execution of a number of Senatorial hostages he held in Ravenna.[141] It would be nearly a year of hard fighting and futility before the walls of Rome before the Goths were again ready to seriously entertain negotiations with the emperor, but by then the situation had changed, and Belisarius was ready to move back to the offensive. Despite the possibility of a settlement in 540, the wind appeared to be at the Romans' back and Belisarius had decided there was no substitute for victory.[142] The tragic result was more than a decade of further devastation before the Romans' final exhausted triumph.

The fact that Procopius, who had no love for Justinian, could include such elements in his analysis of events is suggestive. Despite Cameron's influential and relatively pessimistic view that Procopius was merely "an excellent reporter rather than a historian,"[143] his narrative, in which he described the empire and its environment as subject to events well outside of imperial control, implies that a

---

140. Ibid. 5.11.1-9.

141. Ibid. 5.26.1-2.

142. Ibid. 6.6, 6.22.21-24, 6.29. For Vitigis' belated peace overtures to Justinian, cf. Cassiod. *Var*. 10.32-35.

143. Cameron, *Procopius*, 151.

he was capable of a greater degree of sophisticated historical reasoning than is sometimes thought. In his account of both the Vandal and Gothic Wars Procopius stressed events on the imperial periphery, in which friendly client kingdoms might become unreliable, or openly hostile, with little to know warning, and require an imperial response. In such an environment the expenditure of blood and treasure, as is often still the case, did not come at the time and place of the emperor's choosing but in the rush of events amidst imperfect information and the hazards of contingency. The soldiers and officials in Procopius' audience would have done well to take this lesson, and the prudence it suggests, to heart in the face of external difficulties beyond their control. This was all the more important since Procopius' narrative makes clear that the imperial response, when it came, would be debilitated by a number of internal limitations.

Internal Constraints - Roman Leaders and Forces in the Field

The *Wars* also cut against imperial propaganda and ideology with their account of Roman leaders and forces in the field, and how little concerned with, or competent at, achieving the emperor's objectives they could actually be. Procopius depicted both officers and men, as often as not, as, at best, squabbling over how to actually pursue a given objective, and, at worst pursuing their own private agendas to the active detriment of imperial policy. Given the primitive bureaucratic and communications mechanisms of the day, it might seem a simple truism to note that central control of forces in the field could only be limited. However, this disconnect between ideology and reality in the military

sphere was in an area where illusions could have deadly consequences. The *Wars* show how the emperor's truculent officials and disorderly armies[144] were not necessarily the efficient and obedient servants of a supremely powerful emperor, but often found themselves, through their own actions, working at cross-purposes with the emperor and each other, and at severe disadvantages in numbers, leadership, and preparation against dynamic enemies on several fronts. As we shall see, Procopius illustrated this fact for his readers through his presentation of the emperor, the Roman army commanders and officials, and the rank and file of the polyglot armies. Anyone in Procopius' readership must have come away with an appreciation for the difficulties inherent in coordinating political and military policies.

The Emperor Undermining his Own Cause

Justinian himself is a problematic figure in the *Wars.* Procopius depicted him, in his infrequent appearances, as often as not, working at cross purposes with imperial strategy by issuing directives without local knowledge, providing uncertain support to his forces in the field, or supporting leaders he knew were flawed.

The first of these issues, although problematic, was not necessarily a criticism of Justinian specifically. It could be an issue that affected any leader who must necessarily rely on irregular and uncertain reports that might be out of

144. Proc. *Wars* 1.18.24-26 (the army at Callinicum); 1.24.11-16 (John and Tribonian); 2.6.7-8 (Bouzes); 2.15.9 (John Tzibus); 4.22.1-5 (Sergius); 4.25.28 (Gontharis).

date before he ever read them.[145] Procopius put a recognition of this reality into a speech of Belisarius during his Mesopotamian campaign of 541. Belisarius noted the need for frank discussions on the part of the officers with better local knowledge given that neither he nor the emperor had perfect knowledge of the situation.[146] In Belisarius' estimation this lack of local knowledge could be rectified in his council of war, while the emperor must remain ignorant "for he, having been left far behind by things being done here, is not able to adapt his actions to the critical moments."[147] Procopius presented a number of instances in which the emperor proved this inescapable fact, by creating inadvertent complications for Roman policy. Justinian directed that fortresses in eastern Lazica be garrisoned by Roman troops despite the impossibility of supplying them, with the predictable result that they were abandoned to the Persians.[148] He compounded this mistake by allowing John Tzibus, his general in Lazica (535-41), to establish the fortress city of Petra as a monopoly port of entry into the country and quarter his troops upon the local populace which drove them to defect to Persians in 541.[149] Likewise, when the Armenians revolted in 538/9, he pushed his brother in law, Sittas, to adopt harsh measures rather than allow him attempt to effect a reconciliation with the rebels, a policy that resulted in Sittas'

---

145. A point no less true in our own day. For Clausewitz' pessimistic analysis of intelligence in war see Clausewitz, *On War* 1.6.

146. Proc. *Wars* 2.16.6-15.

147. Ibid. 2.16.10. ὁ μὲν γὰρ μακράν που ἀπολελειμμένος τῶν πρασσομένων οὐκ ἔχει τοῖς καιροῖς ἁρμόσαι τὰς πράξεις.

148. Ibid. 1.12.14-19.

149. Ibid. 2.15.10-12.

death and drove the Armenians to harden their position and seek Persian aid.[150] During Khusro's invasion of 540 his envoys forbade the cities of the east to ransom their safety despite the fact that there was no imperial force in the area capable of confronting the Persians.[151] In the west, as Justinian became aware of the growing Gothic resistance in Italy under Totila in 541/2, he began to hector his generals for results, but he neither appointed a new overall commander to replace the departed Belisarius nor sent substantial reinforcements.[152] In at least one instance, only the bravery and initiative of the commander on the spot was able to overcome ill-judged imperial orders. In 551 John the nephew of Vitalian, although forbidden to leave Salona by Justinian, sailed to the relief of Ancon on his own initiative, considering the situation more important than imperial commands.[153] The result, according to Procopius, was a critical victory that helped facilitate Narses' grand campaign the following year.

The *Wars* also illustrate a number of instances of Justinian's uncertain or indecisive support for his own commanders in active theaters of war, failure to match means to ends in the pursuit of imperial policy, and, sometimes, plain disinterest. In 545 Belisarius entrusted John the nephew of Vitalian with a message to Justinian apprising the emperor of the desperate situation in Italy and the need for reinforcements and money, but, despite marrying into the

150. Ibid. 2.3.8-57.

151. Ibid. 2.7.14-17

152. Ibid. 7.3.1.

153. Ibid. 8.23.7-42.

imperial family, John was unsuccessful in this mission.[154] When Justinian finally sent reinforcements in 547 they were relatively meager and under commanders, such as Sergius, who did not have impressive résumés. He then wrote to Belisarius, claiming to have sent a large army with which he should unite in Calabria, not knowing that the bulk of the reinforcements had decided to winter on the eastern shore of the Adriatic.[155] Following the fall of Rome, Tarentum, and Ariminum to the Ostrogoths and Totlia's moves against Sicily in 550, Justinian finally decided to respond. He temporarily raised Roman hopes by appointing his nephew Germanus to overall command in the west, but he managed to frustrate useful action through his own indecision.[156] As with the confusion during the countermanded recall of Martin and Valerian during the departure of the Vandal Expedition, the emperor again caused confusion and delay by substituting the aged western patrician Liberius as commander in Germanus' stead. Despite his energetic preparations, Liberius' departure was delayed in turn by the emperor's continued dithering until the fall of Rhegium and the ravaging of Sicily. Even then he dithered, sending Artabanus to replace Liberius in Sicily and finally reappointing Germanus as over-all commander in the west -- who then died suddenly before ever reaching Italy. Finally, we have already seen how despite his promise to Gubazes that he would provide money

154. Ibid. 7.12.1-11. SH 5.7-13 claims this failure was in part due to John's fear of assassination in Italy at the hands of Theodora's agents.

155. Ibid. 7.27.1-3, 12-13.

156. Ibid. 7.37.24-28, 7.39.1-40.9.

to pay Hunnic allies in 548, Justinian was distracted and did not send the money in time.[157]

Likewise, Procopius described Justinian on more than one occasion as simply uninterested in focusing on military affairs. In 549, after Belisarius' return from his ineffectual second tour of duty in Italy, Justinian promised to bring affairs to a satisfactory conclusion in response to the entreaties of Pope Vigilius and the other Italians in Constantinople, such as the patrician Cethegus. Procopius was clear, however, that the emperor was more interested in trying to settle Christian doctrinal disputes than in seeing through the war.[158] Lest there be any doubt, Procopius made a similar comment in the following chapter. Justinian had begun to make plans to send another army to relieve Rome and that such a move would have won the war if it had been pursued energetically, "but later, some other business having arisen, he lost interest."[159] This was a theme to which Procopius returned in Book 8 when he described the preparations for Narses' victorious expedition.[160] Justinian finally provided money to pay the troops in Italy, a matter about which he had been delinquent for quite some time. According to Procopius, Justinian had prosecuted the war very carelessly in the past, and only now did he make suitable preparations, but even this was only

157. Ibid. 2.29.29-32.

158. Ibid. 7.35.9-11.

159. Ibid. 7.36.4-6. μετὰ δὲ ἀσχολίας οἱ ἴσως ἐπιγενομένης ἑτέρας τινὸς τὴν προθυμίαν κατέπαυσε.

160. Ibid. 8.26.5-9.

because Narses declared he would not lead the expedition without adequate force and preparation.

Finally, Procopius was also clear on more than one occasion that Justinian too often left officials and officers in positions of authority for which he knew them to be ill-suited. Despite being apprised of Sergius' deficiencies as a commander in Africa, Justinian maintained him in office despite the fact that he was provoking the enmity of the Moors with disastrous results.[161] Procopius was even more explicit in Book 8, after outlining Bessas' flaws, "for the emperor Justinian was accustomed for the most part to forgive his commanders who did wrong, and because of this they proved criminal to the greatest extent both in their way of life and toward the republic."[162]

Roman Commanders Undermining the Imperial Cause Through Disunity

This aspect of Procopius' judgement of Justinian's commanders and officials is further reinforced by his larger narrative. Throughout the *Wars* the emperor's various unscrupulous and incapable subordinates undercut imperial efforts in a variety of ways. Corruption, cowardice, and incompetence were often present and debilitating, but even more common, and often more serious, was disunity of commanders in a given area of operations. This disunity occurs early in Book 1. Procopius described the army Anastasius sent to relieve and then retake Amida in 503-4 as being commanded by four generals with a number of

161. Ibid. 4.21-24.

162. Ibid. 8.13.14. εἰώθει γὰρ Ἰουστινιανὸς βασιλεὺς ἐπιχωρεῖν τὰ πολλὰ τοῖς ἄρχουσιν ἁμαρτάνουσι, καὶ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ ἔς τε τὴν δίαιταν καὶ τὴν πολιτείαν ἐκ τοῦ ἐπὶ πλεῖστον παρανομοῦντες ἠλίσκοντο.

other notable officers along to further muddy the lines of authority. The result was delay and lack of coordination, a bloody reverse during pursuit of the Persian field army, and an overlong siege of Amida only concluded by a large payment to the Persian garrison.[163]

As the *Wars* continued, even Belisarius had to deal with fractious and insubordinate officers repeatedly. These is perhaps clearest during his invasion of Mesopotamia in 541, at the height of his fame for his victories in the west. The commanders from Phoenicia and Syria, Rhecithancus and Theoctistus, were hesitant to leave their provinces vulnerable to a riposte by the Lakhmid Arabs, and Belisarius could only convince them to campaign with him for sixty days.[164] Other officers, Peter and John ignored Belisarius' orders, camped too close to Nisibis, and did not keep their forces in readiness, with the result that they were routed by a surprise attack.[165] Things did not get any better as the army advanced. The Ghassanid phylarch al-Harith, after leading a large portion of the army on a *razzia* into Assyria, simply did not return and sent no word while Belisarius waited at the fortress of Sisauranon.[166] Meanwhile the officers remaining with Belisarius became truculent and demanded he lead them back to Roman territory, bringing the entire campaign to an abortive end.[167] Likewise,

163. Ibid. 1.8-9.

164. Ibid. 2.16.16-19.

165. Ibid. 2.18.16-26

166. Ibid. 2.19.26-30.

167. Ibid. 2.19.35-46.

the disaster of Anglon in 542, discussed above, was caused in part by a lack of any cohesion amongst the multiple commanders.

Belisarius also dealt with problems of disunity and insubordination in Africa and Italy. In 534, despite trouble with the Moors, Belisarius found it necessary to return from Africa to Constantinople in order to defend himself against other officers' slanderous charges of treason.[168] Similarly, it was the slander of other officers as well as war in the east, which prompted Justinian to recall Belisarius in 540 at a critical moment in which Gothic resistance was stiffening.[169] In 538 John the nephew of Vitalian, who Procopius generally portrayed as brave and competent but occasionally rash, disregarded Belisarius' instructions to evacuate Ariminum and was forced to endure a desperate siege.[170] The continued tensions between Belisarius, Narses, and John made coordination of the Roman armies in Italy difficult in 538-9.[171] Even a letter from the emperor confirming Belisarius' supreme command was insufficient, since Narses only felt bound to obey commands "in the interest of our republic" as he interpreted them.[172] These tensions and divided command frustrated the relief of Milan, which fell to the Goths in 539. They razed the city, put its men to death,

168. Ibid. 4.8.1-8.

169. Ibid. 6.30.

170. Ibid. 6.11.21-12.25.

171. Ibid. 6.18-22.

172. Ibid. 6.18.29 ἐπὶ τῷ συμφέροντι τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ πολιτείᾳas.

and enslaved its women.[173] Only now did Justinian recall Narses, although he still refrained from punishing anyone for this fiasco.[174]

After Belisarius' recall from Italy in 540 the perils of fractiousness increased. Echoing Thucydides' view on the successors of Pericles, Procopius suggested that one of the problems for his successors in Italy, in addition to being more interested in their own profits and oppressing the population than the military requirements of the situation, was that they "were more equal with one another."[175] This was not simply a clever reference to Thucydides. Procopius identified here the very real problem of divided leadership and strategic incoherence that was no less problematic than it had been in the Peloponnesian War. There was no overall commander to bring order and organize a coherent response to the resurgent Goths. Procopius made this clear in his accounts of the string of Roman defeats by Totila in 542 at Verona,[176] at the Po,[177] and at Florence.[178] In the aftermath of this last defeat, all coordination between the Roman commanders in Italy ceased and each prepared for siege in their own strongholds while Gothic strength rejuvenated. Procopius then described the situation in 543, after the fall of Naples to Totila, in which the Roman officers were more interested in enriching themselves than in any form of coordinated

---

173. Ibid. 6.21.

174. Ibid. 6.22.1-5.

175. Ibid. 7.1.23. ἴσοι μᾶλλον αὐτοὶ πρὸς ἀλλήλους ὄντες. Compare Thuc. 2.65.10.

176. Ibid. 7.3.15-22.

177. Ibid. 7.4.1-9.

178. Ibid. 7.5.1-18.

action against the Goths, and were ever less able to either protect the Italians from the Goths or control their increasingly insubordinate troops.[179] The only concession Procopius made in regard to the commanders' minimal competence is that Constantianus sent a pessimistic letter outlining these issues to Justinian, with the other officers' indorsement.

This state of affairs did not improve in the final decade of the Gothic War despite Belisarius' return (544-549). Even officers in precarious positions could simply go their own way. While Bessas was in command of the garrison of Rome in 546 and under desperate siege, he refused on multiple occasions to sortie in coordination with forces based in Portus.[180] In one instance this resulted in a relief column being wiped out in an ambush. As the siege continued, Belisarius hoped to have the support of John the nephew of Vitalian to attempt to relieve the city, but John kept his own counsel and remained in Apulia.[181] When Belisarius attempted to run supplies into the city himself, he was frustrated not only by the willful inactivity of Bessas, but by the disobedient impetuosity of his subordinate Isaac who fell into an ambush, and put the Roman basecamp in danger.[182]

Procopius referred to this problem of divided command a final time on the eve of the final campaign in Italy. He discussed why Justinian might have named Narses overall commander for the war in 551, and suggested that it might have

179. Ibid. 7.9.1-6.

180. Ibid. 7.15.1-8, 7.19.13-14

181. Ibid. 7.18.24-29.

182. Ibid. 7.19.23-34.

been because the emperor was concerned that the other officers would not consent to be subordinate to a commander such as John the nephew of Vitalian and that their mutual envy and cross-purposes would have a bad effect.[183] Narses seems to have commanded greater respect, or at least been the object of less animosity. Procopius' account of this grand final campaign in the west was not plagued by the insubordination that was endemic through the previous portions of the *Wars*. After giving his readers a series of negative examples, Procopius provided a positive, practical lesson to his readers regarding the importance of having a unified command to provide strategic direction to a campaign.

In this context, we might also mention Belisarius' own role in the Italian false dawn of 540. Here, Procopius' readers might even reasonably see Belisarius as part of the problem of truculent officers whose divergent views on imperial policy were problematic. As Procopius described it, Jusintian sent ambassadors to negotiate a peace in Italy that would leave Vittigis in power and the Gothic kingdom intact north of the Po. Although fraught with potential problems of its own, such an agreement would have brought the conflict to an end and would allow a strategic pivot to the east to deal with Khusro who was on the verge of breaking the "endless" peace. Belisarius, instead, decided there was "no substitute for victory" and took Ravenna by ruse.[184] Despite Procopius' glowing description of events, it is hard to miss the fact that Belisarius' stratagem

183. Ibid. 8.21.6-19.

184. Ibid. 6.29.

left the Goths both disaffected and with the wherewithal to continue the war for more than a decade. In fact, Procopius specifically opened Book 7 with the comment that, when Belisarius left Italy, despite his brilliance to this point "events hung in the balance" (τῶν πραγμάτων ᾐωρημένων).[185]

Roman Commanders Undermining the Imperial Cause Through Corruption and Incompetence

To this problem of disunity must then be added the more traditional problems of corruption, inactivity, and incompetence which could be serious enough on their own, but could compound other issues. Again, these were issues that Procopius presented early and often. He attributed Sittas' failure in 531 to relieve the siege of Martyropolis to fear of open battle. The Romans then resorted to diplomacy and deception, and even so, the decisive factor influencing the Persians to raise the siege was the uncertainty surrounding the death of their king.[186] Had Procopius wished to give a better account of the Roman force, other narratives were current which emphasized Roman combativeness and Persian fear.[187] Likewise there was incompetence during the Persian invasion of 540.[188] At the outset the Roman commander, Buzes, proposed what appeared to be useful plans for the defense of Hieropolis. Rather than putting them into

185. Ibid. 7.1.1.

186. Ibid. 1.21.3-27.

187. Malal. 18.65-66; Pseudo Zach. *HE* 9.5-6.

188. Proc. *Wars* 2.6.1-8.

effect, however, he in fact fled with the best of the army and was nowhere to be found as Khusro's great invasion progressed through the east.

The dearth of competent leadership in the northeastern frontier regions is a recurrent theme in the *Wars*. Acacius, Justinian's appointee as governor of Armenia Prima, provoked the revolt of 538-9 by the imposition of heavy taxes.[189] After the rebels killed the *magister militum*, Sittas, his successor, Buzes, treacherously slew one of the Armenian chiefs, ending any immediate hope for peaceful reconciliation.[190] Likewise, the generals in Lazica, Peter and John Tzibus, quartered soldiers on the local population and set up a trade monopoly in Petra, provoking the antipathy of the Lazi who defected to Khusro.[191] Things did not improve with the appointment of Dagistheus to command in Lazica in 548. Procopius judged him both young and unqualified. His ineptitude led to the failure of the siege of Petra, and he lost the confidence of the Lazi, who accused him of medizing and incompetence.[192] By 550 the actions of the Roman officers in the region had been so problematic that the Abasgi restored their kings and revolted despite having deposed them in favor of a Roman alliance only a few years earlier.[193] Despite Bessas' famous victory at Petra in 551, he subsequently neglected his military responsibilities in order to enrich himself,[194] and the Lazi began to regret going over to the Romans, not because of any affection for the

189. Ibid. 2.3.1-7

190. Ibid. 2.3.28-31.

191. Ibid. 2.15.6-13.

192. Ibid. 2.29.33-30.11, 8.9.1-4

193. Ibid. 8.3.21, 8.9.10-30.

194. Ibid. 8.13.11-14.

Persians, but because they were alienated by their treatment by the soldiers in general and officers in particular.[195]

Nor were matters any better in Africa. Here, according to Procopius, Roman incompetence had a long tradition. Looking back to the expedition against the Vandals in 468, he described its commander, Basiliscus, as deliberately mishandling the expedition either through treachery or cowardice, which led to a costly disaster.[196] In Procopius' own day, Belisarius' Vandal expedition was endangered almost before it began in 533. That paragon of venality, the praetorian prefect John the Cappadocian, supplied it with improperly baked bread that spoiled and sickened the soldiers.[197] After the Roman victory over the Vandals, the tax assessments of Justinian's officials Tryphon and Eustratios were perceived by the inhabitants as neither equitable nor bearable.[198] Despite the successes of Belisarius and Solomon, the Roman position in Africa was endangered in the 540s in large part because of the fecklessness of the commander, Sergius.[199] In 543-544 he provoked hostility and revolt amongst the Moors by his treacherous conduct. This included oath-breaking and killing attendees at a meeting to discuss the Moors' grievances. Despite being informed of his bad character and the hostility he had provoked among the Moors and his own troops, Justinian maintained him in office. Among other things, his

195. Ibid. 8.16.1-3.

196. Ibid. 3.6.10-26.

197. Ibid. 3.12.1-20.

198. Ibid. 4.8.25.

199. Ibid. 4.21-24.

failure to support a Roman force under John the son of Sisiniolus led to its commander's death and the rout of the army by the Moors.

The Roman cause in Italy likewise labored under the twin millstones of corruption and incompetence. Despite the apparent victory of 540, the Roman position was almost instantly hobbled by Alexander the Logothete's arrangement of financial matters. He proceeded to alienate the Italians with burdensome exactions and the army by stingy compensation.[200] As we have seen, Procopius also described Belisarius' sucessors in Italy as more interested in profiting from their positions than dealing with the present military emergency.[201] Nor did things improve after Belisarius' return. Bessas' career in Italy was no less erratic than in the east. Although Procopius had characterized him as a reliable subordinate of Belisarius in the 530s, his penchant for corruption and profiteering during his command of the garrison of Rome in 545-6 with Conon was deadly for both the imperial cause and the populace of the city, since he ignored the military necessities of the siege in favor of trafficking in grain.[202] His colleague in corruption, Conon, apparently learned nothing from the affair and was killed by his own men in 548 for similar malfeasance.[203]

Procopius also recorded instances in which officers made serious errors due to a simple lack of self-possession or care, leading to recklessness, overconfidence, or, to the contrary, paralysis. Mundo lost his life and

---

200. Ibid. 7.1.28-33.

201. Ibid. 7.9.1-6.

202. Ibid. 7.17.10-16, 7.19.13-15, 7.20.1-3, 10-12, 26.

203. Ibid. 7.30.7.

endangered the Roman position in Dalmatia when he recklessly pressed an attack after the death of his son left him grief-stricken.[204] Likewise Conon, when commanding the garrison of Ancona in 538, "made a demonstration of an illogical mind" in choosing to meet a superior Gothic army in the open field, costing the lives of a number of his troops and nearly losing the fortress.[205] Isaac's rash desire for battle in 546, described by Procopius as "madness" (μανία), led to an inopportune attack, costing him his life and thwarting an attempt to run supplies into Rome.[206] In early 548 overconfidence after a victorious skirmish near Croton led to the destruction of a cavalry force under Phazas and Barbation by a Gothic riposte.[207] According to Procopius, this was especially disheartening as it was one of the more elite portions of Belisarius' army. Likewise, a Herul officer, Verus, nearly destroyed his army through his own reckless daring near Brundisium, and then lost not only his own life, but also many of his men's in battle near Ravenna in 550.[208] Again, Procopius was honing in on a real problem that would not have surprised Polybius:[209] the penchant for overconfident attack and headlong charge, particularly on the part of cavalry forces. This was not a

204. Ibid. 5.7.1-9.

205. Ibid. 6.13.8-15. ἐπίδειξιν πεποίηται ἀλογίστου γνώμης.

206. Ibid. 7.19.24-34.

207. Ibid. 7.28.5-17.

208. Ibid. 7.27.4-11, 7.37.28.

209. Polyb. 3.82-84.

mere literary trope, but a danger that the *Strategikon* counseled commanders and officers to guard against.[210]

According to Procopius, Belisarius himself was occasionally susceptible to the opposite problem. That is, paralysis in the face of battlefield reversals. When his attempt to resupply Rome in 546 led to a debacle, he was so overcome he took to his sickbed, with no further attempt to interfere with Totila's siege and capture of the city.[211] Likewise, in 548 he took the defeat of his cavalry so badly he simply abandoned the field and retreated to Sicily.[212] When Procopius described Belisarius' recall the following year he gave the impression that Belisarius was a spent force. He returned home from Italy "in no sort of order" (οὐδενὶ κόσμῳ), and was so eager to be quit of Italy that he simply abandoned Perugia which the Goths then took by storm.[213] Again, the author of the *Strategikon*, would have recognized these issues of inconstancy as a real, practical problem. He commented in his general instructions for commanders that "A healthy mind is not unduly elated by success nor overly depressed when things are not going well."[214] Likewise, he included the maxim that "it is well for the general to exercise self-control at all times, but especially during war."[215]

---

210. *Strategikon* 2.15, 3.5, 3.15, 8.2.11, 11.2.

211. Proc. *Wars* 7.20.32-33.

212. Ibid. 7.28.18.

213. Ibid. 7.35.1-2.

214. *Strategikon* 8.1.6. Τὸ μήτε ἐπαίρεσθαι ἐν ταῖς ἐπιτυχίαις, μήτε καταπίπτειν ἐν ταῖς δυσκολίαις ἐῤῥωμένου ἐστὶ λογισμοῦ.

215. Ibid. 8.2.66. Ἐν παντὶ μὲν καιρῷ κρατεῖν ἡδονῆς, ἐν δὲ πολέμῳ μᾶλλον χρήσιμον στρατηγῷ.

Indiscipline, Rebellion, and Treason

An additional recurring problem in Procopius' account, that could range from simple insubordination to conspiracy, treason, and all-out revolt, is the unreliability of the Roman troops and their propensity to disregard or bully their commanders and to simply mutiny, with predictable results for imperial policy.[216] This was a challenge emperors and soldiers had confronted since the early Principate and a theme of imperial historians at least as far back as Tacitus.[217] Procopius' concern with indiscipline and insubordination is a long-recognized facet of the *Wars*,[218] and Whately has recently noted that this concern was shared by other sixth century works, including the histories of Agathias and Theophylact Simocatta and the military manuals attributed to Syrianus Magister and Maurice.[219] In the case of the *Wars*, at least, this was no mere literary trope, but another deadly serious aspect of governance and war making. The danger of military insubordination and its potential consequences is especially clear during the Nika Riot. Justinian found out how few friends he had in the regular Constantinopolitan garrison. Most of the troops in the capitol stayed aloof, awaiting the outcome of events, and the emperor was only able to rely on the

---

216. For a general account of the issue of military unrest cf. Walter Kaegi, *Byzantine Military Unrest 471-843: An Interpretation* (Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1981), esp. 41-66.

217. On the problem of military mutinies in Tacitus' *Histories*, see Rhiannon Ash, *Ordering Anarchy: Armies and Leaders in Tacitus'* Histories (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1999), 70-72, 167-69.

218. E.g. J.A.S. Evans, *Procopius* (New York: Twayne Inc., 1972), 56-8, 65-7, 72-4.

219. Conor Whately, "Indiscipline in the Sixth Century Historiography of Generals," in *Beyond the Battlefields: New Perspectives on Warfare and Society in the Graeco-Roman World*, eds. Edward Bragg, Lisa Irene Hau, and Elizabeth Macauley-Lewis (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2008), 241-58.

troops from the frontiers under Mundo and Belisarius to put down the insurrection.[220]

In the field, undisciplined soldiers could endanger the outcome of a campaign or the safety of a province. Again, there is no evidence that these instances were literary inventions rather than deadly serious object lessons in the danger of allowing commanders' hold on their men to slip. In some cases, the troops could simply not be restrained from battle, however imprudent. Belisarius tarnished the fame of his debut victory at Dara when he submitted to his troops' insolent demands to fight a needless and disastrous battle at Callinicum in 531.[221] Likewise, in the Spring of 537 during the siege of Rome, Belisarius yielded to the demand of his troops for a general engagement against his better judgement. The result was a bloody repulse with the Romans driven back into the city.[222] Nor was Belisarius the sole victim of the soldiery's wish for precipitate battle. In 551 the Roman army that confronted a Slav host near Adrianople forced its generals into an inopportune engagement when its soldiers became impatient for battle.[223]

In other cases, the troops' disorder and lack of enthusiasm simply frustrated operations. One problem was the soldiers' simple desire for plunder. In the aftermath of the battle of Tricamarum in 533, Belisarius was unable to restore order to the army whose discipline had completely disintegrated while

---

220. Proc. *Wars* 1.24.39-45.

221. Ibid. 1.18.24-50.

222. Ibid. 5.28-29.

223. Ibid. 7.40.34-45.

looting the Vandal camp, precluding immediate pursuit of Gelimer.[224] During Belisarius' negotiations for the surrender of the Gothic garrison of Auximus in 539, his soldiers complicated things by refusing to allow the barbarians to retain their property while the general was keen to finish the siege and move on to Ravenna during the moment of opportunity.[225] After the capture of Sisauranon in 541, the troops became insubordinate over fears of being cut off deep in enemy territory with camp sickness spreading, and forced the abandonment of the campaign.[226] The author of the *Strategikon* would not have been surprised by such instances of indiscipline, and, in fact touched twice on the need to ensure that the troops' desire for plunder not interfere with military priorities.[227]

The problem of maintaining good order and ensuring that the soldiers not abuse the local civilian population, both out of a concern for justice and in order to retain local loyalty and support, was also common. Early in Book 1 Procopius included a speech by a Roman double agent to the Persian commander at Amida in which he plausibly claimed to have been assaulted and robbed by Roman troops who were constantly "doing violence to the miserable country folk," and whose custom it was "to fear the Persians and to beat the farmers."[228] In the balance of the *Wars*, this is a recurrent fact of Procopius' understanding of Roman military operations. On the way to Africa in 533 Belisarius had to impale

224. Ibid. 4.4.1-8.

225. Ibid. 6.27.31-34.

226. Ibid. 2.19.44-46.

227. *Strategikon* 7.1.14, 7.2.17.

228. Proc. *Wars* 1.9.7-8.

two Hun soldiers for murder and had to address murmurs of discontent.[229] Once in Africa, he had to use the threat of corporal punishment to keep the soldiers from stealing from the Africans.[230] During the bloody storming of Naples in 536 Belisarius had difficulty restraining his soldiers from atrocities.[231] This remained a problem throughout the Gothic war. In 546 an influential Italian landowner, Tullianus, informed John the nephew of Vitalian that the Italians of Lucania and Bruttium had sided with the Goths because of their mistreatment at the hands of imperial troops, while assurances of the army's good behavior in the future might bring those regions over to the Roman cause.[232]

In addition to alienating the local population, such acts of indiscipline also had the potential to create dissension within the Roman army, should commanders try to curb the excesses of their troops. Perhaps the most famous petty crime committed by a Roman soldier against a local civilian in the *Wars* was "the affair of the daggers." In 537 one of Belisarius' senior officers, Constantine, stole a pair of richly adorned daggers from a certain Presidius, a wealthy Roman refugee. After a series of complaints to Belisarius led to verbal remonstrance but nothing substantive, Presidius publicly demanded of Belisarius whether the emperor's laws allowed suppliants fleeing from the barbarians to be robbed. Shamed into action, Belisarius once more enjoined Constantine to return the daggers and summoned his guards to enforce his will. At which point

229. Ibid. 3.12.8-22.

230. Ibid. 3.16.1-8. Cf. 3.17.6, 3.20.2.

231. Ibid. 5.10.29-34. Cf. Jordanes *Rom*. 370; Marcellinus Comes *Chron.* 536.

232. Ibid. 7.18.20-23.

Constantine attacked Belisarius, was restrained, imprisoned, and eventually executed.[233] Leaving aside his comments in the *Secret History* that Constantine would have been acquitted but for the enmity of Belisarius' wife Antonina,[234] Procopius was critical of both parties' actions in this instance in the *Wars*. He referred to Belisarius' uncharacteristic lack of clemency as his "only unholy deed" and "unworthy of his character."[235] Likewise, Constantine had taken the daggers "for no good reason," and repeatedly chose to mock Presidius rather than clear himself "of an unjust deed and dishonorable reputation."[236] Here, the mistreatment of the local population not only risked disaffection, but created serious dissension within the Roman officer corps that eventually caused not only embarrassment to the commanding general, but deprived the army of an officer who hitherto had proven himself an able and energetic commander on multiple occasions.[237]

Even such talented commanders as Belisarius and Solomon might lose control of their soldiers entirely and face outright rebellion. At the end of the first book of the *Wars* Procopius acquainted his readers with an abortive rebellion at Dara in 537.[238] A soldier named John attempted to lead a military revolt at the keystone of imperial defenses in northern Mesopotamia before being

---

233. Ibid. 6.8.

234. Proc. *SH* 1.24-30.

235. Proc. *Wars* 6.8.18. τοῦτο Βελισαρίῳ εἴργασται μόνον οὐχ ὅσιον ἔργον καὶ ἤθους τοῦ αὐτοῦ οὐδαμῶς ἄξιον.

236. Ibid. 6.8.3, 6-7.

237. Ibid. 5.16.1-7, 5.22.15-25, 6.1.4-10.

238. Ibid. 1.26.5-12.

assassinated by a cabal led by the local bishop, one of the local aristocrats, and some soldiers -- or perhaps a brave sausage vendor. As the reader proceeds through the *Wars* such incidents become more serious, particularly in Book 4 in which a series of large-scale mutinies in the west essentially resulted in civil war. The first large-scale mutiny of Roman troops in Africa broke out under Stotzas in 536, caused in part by ham-fisted imperial policies transferring Vandal lands to imperial estates and anti-Arian policies, disadvantaging the families of soldiers who had married Vandal women.[239] Although Belisarius was able to stabilize the situation, he was prevented from truly resolving the problem because he had to return to Sicily when yet another mutiny broke out among the army that was to serve as his strike force for the attack on Italy.[240] The African revolt proved so intractable that Justinian had to send his cousin Germanus to restore matters, but even after putting down Stotzas' revolt, he had to nip yet another mutiny in the bud in Africa led by a certain Maximinus.[241] A third African mutiny led by Gontharis in 545 was only brought to a relatively quick conclusion by the prompt action of the Armenian officer, Artabanes, who assassinated the rebel leader at a banquet.[242]

Equally problematic, and often times more so, were Roman soldiers' outright treason and collusion with the emperor's foreign enemies. In some cases, the result was simple indifference towards the imperial cause and general

239. Ibid. 4.14-18.

240. Ibid. 4.15.48-49.

241. Ibid. 4.16-18.

242. Ibid. 4.25-28.

unreliability. Procopius noted that in the interval between the fall of Carthage and the final victory over the Vandals, the Arians and, more particularly, the Huns in Belisarius' army were unreliable and susceptible to being moved to treason by the Vandals. Ultimately the Huns refrained from joining battle at Tricamarum until the Roman victory was assured.[243] Likewise, in 539, Narses' Herul auxiliaries refused to remain with Belisarius when their general was recalled from Italy. On their way home they sold all their slaves and animals to the Goths and swore never again to wage war against them.[244] In a similar vein, in 548 the troops of the garrison of Rome murdered their commander, Conon, whom they rightly accused of trafficking in grain, and sent envoys to the emperor to demand amnesty and the back pay they were owed -- with the threat that they would turn the city over to the Goths if they were not satisfied.[245]

Outright desertion to the enemy and bearing arms against the emperor sometimes occurred when Roman troops were brought to bay by superior forces, were motivated by personal pique, or simply found it expedient. In 540 the majority of the garrison of Beroea, although they were free to go, deserted to the Persians after surrendering the acropolis.[246] Similarly Procopius observed that, during his restoration of Gothic fortunes, Totila won over many of his prisoners

243. Ibid. 4.1.4-2.16.

244. Ibid. 6.22.5-8.

245. Ibid. 7.30.7-8.

246. Ibid. 2.7.37.

with good treatment, who then voluntarily served against their erstwhile Roman comrades.[247]

The loyalty of the troops might also simply be bought, with apparently little quibbling over the fact that the direct result was not only harm to the emperor's cause, but the betrayal and death of comrades. In 545 Totila was able to bribe one of the officers of Cyprian, commander at Perugia, to assassinate him.[248] In 546, and again in 550, Isaurian soldiers betrayed the gates of Rome to Totila in exchange for large sums of money, allowing him to take the city.[249] Likewise, of the roughly seven-hundred soldiers who either held out in the tomb of Hadrian or in various sanctuaries when Rome fell to the Goths in 550, almost all agreed to take service with Totila rather than surrender their arms and return to Constantinople.[250] Some, such as Indulf, an officer of Belisarius, simply turned cloak for no particular reason apparent to Procopius, but he was sufficiently enthusiastic for the Gothic cause to carry out murderously successful raids in Dalmatia, and to refuse to surrender even after the defeat at Mons Lactarius.[251] Similarly, in 545 the Roman officer Herodian not only surrendered Spoleto and his force to Totila, but entered Gothic service and was still helping to garrison Cumae even after Busta Gallorum.[252] Procopius' only explanation is that

247. Ibid. 7.5.19.

248. Ibid. 7.12.19-20.

249. Ibid. 7.20.4-21, 7.36.7-15.

250. Ibid. 7.36.24-28.

251. Ibid. 7.35.23-27; 8.35.37.

252. Ibid. 7.12.12-20, 8.34.19

Herodian was motivated in part by animus against Belisarius, and, if the reader is in any doubt about the gravity of such betrayals, he recounted the contemporaneous bravery of Sisifrid, a Goth in imperial service, who died with his men in a vain defense of Assisi,[253] and the steadfastness of the garrison of Perugia despite the assassination of their commander, Cyprian.[254]

Strong and charismatic leadership by talented commanders in the field could mitigate some of these problems temporarily, but rarely overcome them entirely. Thus, the roots of the problem of imperial weakness operate at two intersecting levels in Procopius' description. On the one hand, there is the problem of human nature and the lack of constant interest or ability in curbing the various species of venality, inefficiency, and incompetence as well as the ability to judge the proper moment and method to strike against a dangerous opponent. These are areas that were susceptible to some degree of imperial intervention through the careful oversight of troops and commanders in the field and judgment regarding the initiation and conclusion of hostilities. Proper attention to detail and selection of talented subordinates could be markedly successful while disinterest in affairs or miscalculations in appointments could have disastrous consequences.[255]

On the other hand, the power of certain impersonal forces could be beyond the ability of any commander or emperor to forestall. If *Tyche* set her face against the Roman cause, not even the cunning of Belisarius was sufficient

253. Ibid, 7.12.17.

254. Ibid. 7.12.20.

255. Ibid. 7.36.4-6.

to overcome the obstacles she would raise. The outcome might simply rest "on the lap of God,"[256] and be invulnerable to human efforts, plans, or analysis. Thus, in Procopius' analysis, a leader had an obligation not only to plan carefully and well, but to recognize, before embarking on a particular struggle, the possibility of entirely unforeseeable risks that might not be surmountable. If this falls short of an esoteric crypto-pagan critique of Justinian's regime, it is a more sophisticated position than the notion of literary *mimesis* would suggest. There were no easier answers in late Roman international relations than there are in our day.

In the final analysis, and in contrast to modern references to Justinian's regime as "totalitarian" or "Stalinist," Procopius confronted his readers with an emperor whose power was actually limited in the face of serious problems and threats. Whatever the regime's ideology and Justinian's aspirations, in the *Wars*, at least sometimes, Procopius drew back the veil of propaganda and ideology, giving their audience a glimpse of the practical realities on the ground. Procopius, like Tacitus before him, could discuss "the reality of empire and disregard its empty show."[257] He knew that, "it was the disgraceful name, and not the facts, from which men are wont as a general thing to be ashamed,"[258] and that awkward and embarrassing imperial failures might be elided by euphemisms.

---

256. Ibid. 3.10.13.

257. Tacitus, *Annals* 15.31.

258. Proc. *Wars* 7.15.7.

The *Wars*, on the other hand, represent themselves as an attempt to get at the facts as Procopius understood them. History need not be couched in the terms of invective to be a substantial critique of a regime. It need not even, necessarily, dwell on a regime's crimes. It may also simply and matter-of-factly indicate areas of poor decision-making, ill-success, inefficiency, and impotence that bedevil all regimes and military adventures. The *Wars* show us an emperor with a relatively short reach beyond the walls of Constantinople, subject to events that were not of his own design, an emperor who was unable to prop up Hilderic and Amalasuntha effectively because of their own weaknesses. In consequence he had to scrape together his armies of reconquest, and set them to operate on a shoestring or else endure the practical negative consequences of non-intervention. These might be not only militarily or economically adverse, but also result in a relative loss in status as perceived by other international actors or the Roman people.[259] Rapid success, without a stable coalition of indigenous collaborators then led to years of hard fighting to establish direct imperial rule. Procopius made clear Norman Cantor's point that Justinian's empire could, at best, be totalitarian in spirit, but not in practice.[260]

---

259. On the importance of honor and "face" cf. J.E. Lendon, *Empire of Honour: The Art of Government in the Roman World* (Oxford 1997), 173. Susan Mattern, *Rome and the Enemy: Imperial Strategy in the Principate* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 171-194, 221-222.

260. Norman Cantor, *The Civilization of the Middle Ages: A Completely Revised and Expanded Edition of Medieval History* (New York, Harper Collins, 1993), 47.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

This dissertation has attempted to show that an overly literary approach to Procopius' *Wars,* either as an exercise in genre or an esoteric critique of a Stalinist regime, runs the risk of obscuring their relationship to, and didactic lessons regarding, certain brute military and political realities. It suggests that we do well not to lose sight of the *Wars* as didactic *pragmatike historia* in the tradition of Thucydides and Polybius.[1] That is, Procopius was concerned with military and political history and its practical utility, addressing pragmatic concerns of the late Roman military and political elite in a serious way. Although Procopius' programmatic comments in his introduction, that readers who found themselves in analogous situations might find his work useful, and that he was committed to truth rather than cleverness or inventiveness, are conventional, they should nevertheless be taken seriously. They should not be too readily glossed over as either a literary *topos* devoid of any real meaning, or a self-conscious pose intended to disguise his true purposes. This is not to deny the literary aspects of the *Wars*. Nevertheless, it has been argued here that it would be a mistake to regard the work as bloodlessly literary or academic with a purpose disconnected from its subject-matter.

The conventional understanding of Procopius' career as primarily legal in character, along with the clearly rhetorical character of the *Secret History* and the

1 F.W. Walbank, *Polybius* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972), 56-7, 66-96. Although Procopius did not use the exact phrase, in at least two instances he referred to ἱστορία πραγμάτων, Proc. *Wars* 4.14.2; 8.1.13.

Buildings, has, contributed to the tendency to focus on the more literary aspects of his *Wars*. As we have seen, neither the notion of "Procopius the lawyer," nor a unified approach to his works is necessary or particularly desirable. Procopius' career, much like many of his predecessors and contemporaries, was a product not only of the imperial bureaucracy, but of its establishment in active theaters of war and diplomacy. Procopius clearly possessed the "sheer, vulgar experience" that Paul Fussel suggested was an aid in a visceral understanding of war.[2] He had served with the Roman army in Mesopotamia, at Constantinople during the Nika Revolt, in Sicily and Africa against the Vandals and then during military mutinies, and in Italy during the first half of the Gothic War in which he had experienced not only the first siege of Rome, but the subsequent imperial drive on, and occupation of, Ravenna. Throughout this portion of his narrative he noted the death and maiming of several Roman officers, with whom he was undoubtedly personally acquainted.[3] In addition to the general hazards and

---

2. Paul Fussel, *Thank God for the Atom Bomb and Other Essays* (New York: Summit Books, 1988), 18. For discussion of the trauma associated with combat, the death of comrades and the trauma of killing, see Jonathan Shay, *Achilles in Vietnam:Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character* (New York: Scribner, 2003), 39-68; Dave Grossman, *On Killing: The Psychological Cost of Learning to Kill in War and Society* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2009), 43-98.

3. A quick list of death notices and maimings of notables with whom Procopius was likely acquainted include Proc. *Wars* 1.18.38 (Ascan), 2.3.20-27 (Sittas), 2.28.13 (a son of Arethas), 4.4.17-25 (John the Armenian), 4.10.3-11 (Aigan and Rufinus), 4.15.7-8 (Joseph, *grammateus* of the emperor's guards), 4.15.50-59 (Marcellus, Cyril, Barbatus, Terentius, and Sarapis), 4.22.26-8 (Solomon), 4, 4.24 (John the son of Sisiniolus, John the brother of Artabanes), 5.7.5 (Mundus), 5.18.14 (Maxentius), 5.29.39-44 (Pincipius and Tarmutus), 6.1.21-34 (Chorsamantis), 6.2 (fatal maiming of Cutilas and Bochas, and disfiguring of Arzes), 6.5.24-27 (maiming of Trajan), 6.8.17 (execution of Constantine), 6.12.35 (Fidelius), 6.14.14-15 (maiming of Ulimuth and Goulbougoudou), 6.27.14-15 (maiming of Unigastus), 7.5.21-29 (Artabazes), 7.15.8 (Valentinus and Phocas), 7.20.34 (Isaac), 7.30.7 (Conon). Note also Procopius' grief at the sack of Antioch, Proc. *Wars* 2.10.4-5, Procopius' comment on Areobindus being unacquainted with the sight of killing, and being unable to endure it, Proc. *Wars* 4.26.16, likewise his comment on the praetorian

privations of campaigning and siege,[4] on at least two occasions his life would have been directly endangered, only narrowly escaping the mutiny in North Africa in 536,[5] and slipping through the Gothic siege of Rome in 537.[6] Likewise, he ran all the risks of engaging in espionage in foreign territory in Sicily in 533,[7] and he was an eyewitness to the horrors of the outbreak of the plague in Constantinople in 542.[8] These were the brutal realities that, unless we think him a sociopath, must have affected Procopius no less deeply than anyone else privy to more than a decade of campaigning and carnage.[9] Such experiences would have provided a powerful sense of both the potential benefits of pragmatic history and the potential consequences of an inaccurate or misleading narrative. Procopius and his comrades would have known that it might literally be a matter of life and death.

To suggest such a pragmatic outlook for Procopius is not to make him a particularly unique figure among the secular historians of Late Antiquity. If he was somewhat atypical as a military man, imperial service of some sort,

---

prefect, Maximinos, whose inexperience of war led to both cowardice and delay, Proc. *Wars* 7.6.12.

4. Proc. *Wars* 3.13.12-24 (the problem of short and suspect rations provided by John the Cappadocian, and suspect water supplies), 6.4.1-20 (Procopius' own experience in gathering supplies for the besieged garrison of Rome)

5. Ibid. 4.14.30-42.

6. Ibid. 6.4.1-4.

7. Ibid. 3.14.

8. Ibid. 2.22-23.

9. For discussion of the susceptibility to neuropsychiatric trauma of nearly all who endure extended and sustained combat, see Grossman, *On Killing*, 43-45.

however, and the wide travel across the empire it entailed, was rather more common than not among Procopius' predecessors of the late fourth and fifth centuries as well as his sixth century near contemporaries. Although their literary skill and classicism are undeniable, they should not blind us to their practical interests and insights. Seeing Procopius in this way suggests that his *Wars* were not necessarily a work of unique genius,[10] but has the virtue of placing him in a plausible context. If the other secular historians of his era were often men of affairs no less interested in reasonably accurate and utilitarian historical narrative than their classical forebears, it is not outrageous to suggest the same of Procopius. This is not to suggest that interpretations of Procopius and the other historians of Late Antiquity that focus more on their literary qualities are invalid -- only that such qualities should not dominate our field of vision to the extent that they crowd out their more pragmatic qualities.

This suggestion is reinforced by consideration of Procopius' audience. Rather than a unitary readership made up exclusively of literary connoisseurs of genre or critics both inclined and capable of appreciating his learned and esoteric references, it is reasonable to suggest that he wrote for multiple audiences. That is, Procopius wrote, at least in part, to address men not unlike himself and many of the other historians of Late Antiquity, Roman aristocrats with wide-ranging military and diplomatic interests and experience. It is also reasonable to suppose that he also wrote for the no less aristocratic, but perhaps less literarily

10. Contra Warren Treadgold, *The Early Byzantine Historians* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 176, "the greatest Byzantine historian, and one of the greatest writers of all time."

sophisticated military men of even relatively junior ranks, with whom he would have served and been acquainted during his long years on campaign.[11] It follows, in turn, that he did not merely adopt the style and phraseology of his classical forebears, but that, like Thucydides and Polybius before him, he dealt with issues of practical importance to such men in a serious way.

Given this premise regarding Procopius' audience, certain aspects of the *Wars* take on a different color. Viewed from the perspective of soldiers and statesmen, Procopius' use and discussion of *Tyche* throughout the *Wars* becomes an exploration of one of the most fundamental problems in military affairs and foreign relations, the practical importance of chance and contingency and the necessity both for prudence and decisive action. In acknowledging that soldiers and statesmen were at the mercy of a power that was not susceptible to human analysis, Procopius did not counsel fatalism. Instead the *Wars* illustrate that the most useful course of action was not to despair, or to remain paralyzed by indecision. Commanders and their men must have the *sophrosyne* to act prudently, but decisively, and not allow the opportunities *Tyche* might present to go past, as they might not recur. As such, the *Wars* provide a series of object lessons on this point.

In Procopius' narrative, this need for prudence applied not only to generals and soldiers on the battlefield, but to the highest levels of government, including

11. On the militarization of the late Roman aristocracy, see Conor Whately, "Militarization, or the Rise of a Distinct Military Culture? The East Roman Ruling Elite in the 6th Century A.D." in *Warfare and Society in the Ancient Eastern Mediterranean: Papers Arising from a Colloquium Held at the University of Liverpool, 13 June 2008*, eds. Stephen O'Brien and Daniel Boatwright (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013), 49-57.

the emperor himself. As John the Cappadocian counseled, and as even modern policy-makers are inclined to forget, when the outcome of events is obscure, resting "on the knees of God,"[12] prudence is required of strategic decision makers before going to war and setting armies in motion. Once the die is cast, the possible attendant costs in blood, treasure, and time may not only be unpredictable, but also, as the Persian campaign of 540 through Syria would show, entail unforeseen vulnerabilities and opportunity costs.

Once in the field, commanders had to be self-possessed enough to retain the power of decision in the face of reverses and crises. Hesitation or paralysis in the face of surprise or grief could allow victory to slip from one's fingers. Procopius was clear that the defeat of the Vandals was due in large part to Gelimer's unsteady response to his brothers' deaths. In contrast, the Romans' decisive and persistent action in moments of opportunity and danger were necessary to their victories in Africa. In his narrative of the Gothic War Procopius stressed the variations in fortune that could alternately raise up and then dash the hopes of either side. Unreasonable hope, fear, and anger led Theodahad and Vittigis to disaster, while Belisarius retained, for the most part, a clear understanding of his forces' asymmetric advantages in the early stages of the war in Italy, and how to exploit them well enough to take Ravenna by ruse.

Leaders do well to remember that *Tyche*'s power sometimes tests the mental fortitude of even the most capable commanders. If circumstances rob

12. Proc. *Wars* 3.10.7-18.

them of their power of decision they will be able neither to seize opportunities nor manage crises. Belisarius himself was a case in point. Hobbled by insufficient and unreliable forces, he could not overcome the adverse power of fortune in his second sojourn in Italy. So formidable were the problems of the war against Totila that Procopius' narrative shows Belisarius' self-possession wearing away. The general suffered a temporary break-down after his failure to relieve Rome in 546,[13] and returned to Constantinople in 549 "in complete disorder" (οὐδενὶ κόσμῳ), with the imperial cause in Italy in disarray.[14] Inversely, even inferior commanders who maintained the ability to think clearly and act decisively, as Bessas did at Petra,[15] might still serve productively in the field.

These were (and are) far from academic issues. They often involved fraught choices of life and death for those involved. Tragically, the need to cope with the vicissitudes of *Tyche* went beyond professional soldiers and statemen planning campaigns abroad. The difficult position of cities in war zones comes across frequently in the *Wars*. When communities found themselves confronted by the armies of either the Empire or its opponents, they faced the difficult decision of picking sides, choosing whether or not to provide material support, to pay ransom, or to resist the army at their gates. These were not easy decisions with much room for error. Resistance to the Persians at Amida and Antioch brought disaster. In Italy, cities such as Naples, Rome, and Milan suffered for

13. Proc. *Wars* 7.19.32-33.

14. Ibid. 7.35.1.

15. Ibid. 8.11.39-62.

too readily resisting or inopportunely supporting the imperial cause. The notables in the various cites often found themselves confronted by a Hobson's choice of competing dangers with no guarantees and the full knowledge that, like soldiers on campaign, to put a foot wrong might be to risk physical annihilation not only of oneself, but one's friends and loved ones as well. Thucydides had noted this dilemma of small states a millennium earlier,[16] and it was no less true in the sixth century.

This assertion of Procopius' serious didactic intent is strengthened by a comparison with the Roman *ars militaris* of Late Antiquity, as well as the practical instruction of the contemporary military manuals. Procopius' narrative was neither inconsistent with his contemporary reality, as we understand it, nor without important points of contact with the military manuals, particularly the *Strategikon*. If the *Wars* were occasionally imperfect, his deficiencies should no more obscure their qualities any more than the reverse.[17] While Procopius was not so impolitic a subject of an absolute monarch as to treat his readers to the sort of in-depth constitutional analysis that was the hallmark of Polybius' Book 6, he was a clear-eyed observer of and participant in the emperor's military operations in the east and west.

Focusing on these practical aspects of Procopius' narrative in the *Wars* in this way, presenting the difficulties inherent in campaigning and thus implying real limits on the emperor's power, is, however, problematic in two ways. First,

16. E.g. Thuc. 3.35-50 (Mytilene), 3.52-68 (Plataea), 4.84-88 (Acanthus), 5.116 (Melos).

17. Contra Cameron, *Procopius*, 148.

such realism was at odds with the imperial ideology of victory and the regime's propaganda as well as the contrasting hysterical denunciations of the regime, including Procopius' *Secret History*. On the one hand, this is unsurprising given that any even marginally sober didactic account of events would tend to shy away from either set of extremes. On the other hand, the simple practice of pragmatic analytical history carries with it certain implications for our understanding of the Justinianic regime and its critics. Most obviously, the analytical historian of military and political events must necessarily set himself up as a judge of the decisions and actions of those in power, without flinching from reporting even "wicked deeds" (τὰ μοχθηρὰ) "accurately" (ἀκριβολογούμενος).[18] More subversively, such an approach also illuminates the limits of a regime's power by a clear-eyed presentation of decisions and events that may run counter to public ideology and propaganda.

Secondly, such an understanding of Procopius' approach stands in opposition to anachronistic understandings of Justinian's regime as "totalitarian," or somehow to be compared with Hitler or Stalin. As we have seen, however, the use of such modern analogies for a premodern polity such as the East Roman Empire is problematic. Instead, Procopius depicted a regime in the *Wars* that was hardly all-powerful and eternally victorious, but was hobbled by the international environment, events and decisions made by actors on the imperial

18. Proc. *Wars* 1.1.5. Echoed in *SH* 1.10. Those inclined to take the *Secret History* rather than the *Wars* at face value would argue that Procopius was being disingenuous on this point. For arguments against this view, see Chapter 1.

periphery, and internal weaknesses that limited the effectiveness of imperial forces in the field and the emperor's orders.

Such structural limitations and challenges are hardly unique to the Eastern Roman Empire.[19] If, however, they are ignored or masked by notions, ancient or modern, of imperial victory, power, or totalitarianism, soldiers and statesmen are likely to adopt mistaken policies, strategies, and tactics, while modern historians may elide certain nuances of the Late Antique regime that Procopius served. It is to his credit that the *Wars* could serve as a corrective for both ancient and modern readers.

19. Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1979), 96-7, "States are alike in the tasks that they face, though not in their abilities to perform them."

APPENDIX A: ROMAN SOLDIERS

Name	Work	Citation	Function	Note
Adegis	Wars	6.7.27	Soldier	Soldier of Belisarius
Adolius	Wars	2.3.10; 2.21.2-20; 2.24.13; 2.25.35	Soldier	Officer in Armenian theater
Adonachus	Wars	2.12.2	Soldier	Commander at Chalcis
Aeschmanus	Wars	5.16.1	Soldier	Soldier of Belisarius
Aigan	Wars	1.13.20; 1.14.39,44; 3.11.7-9; 4.3.4; 4.10.4-10; 4.11.22	Soldier	Hunnic chieftan in Roman army
Althias	Wars	3.11.6; 4.3.4; 4.13.2-17	Soldier	Officer in Africa
Aluith	Wars	6.13.18; 6.22.8	Soldier	Commander of Herul foederati
Amalafridas	Wars	8.25.11-14	Soldier	commander
Ansilas	Wars	8.29.22	Soldier	
Anzalas	Wars	8.31.13-15	Soldier	Soldier of Narses
Apollinarius	Wars	4.5.7-9	Soldier	against Vandals
Aquilinus	Wars	6.5.18-19	Soldier	Soldier of Belisarius
Aratius	Wars	1.12.21-22; 1.15.31;6.13.17; 6.13.17; 6.16.18-21; 6.18.6; 6.20.3; 6.27.16; 6.29.29; 7.13.20; 7.34.40; 7.40.34; 8.19.3-4; 8.25.11; 8.27.13	Soldier	Persian who deserts and becomes Roman officer, brother of Isaac and Narses
Areobindus	Wars	4.24-26; 7.31.3	Soldier	General overthrown by Gontharis
Argek	Wars	2.26.26-27	Soldier	Soldier at Edessa
Arimuth	Wars	8.27.13	Soldier	Commander in Illyricum
Arsaces 4	Wars	2.5.11	Soldier	Commander in Sura
Artabanes	Wars	2.3.25; 4.24-28; 7.23.1; 7.31-32; 7.39-40; 8.8.25-27; 8.24-25	Soldier	Arsacid officer in Roman service
Artabanes 2	Wars	8.8.21-24	Soldier	Romans
Artabazes	Wars	7.3-4	Soldier	Armenian Roman officer
Artasires	Wars	7.2.10; 7.9.37; 7.13.2-4	Soldier	Guardsman of Belisarius
Artasires 2	Wars	4.27-28	Soldier	Guardsman of Artabanes
Arufus	Wars	7.26.23, 28	Soldier	Herul commander
Aruth	Wars	8.26.13	Soldier	Herul in Narses' army
Arzes	Wars	6.2.16-29	Soldier	Guardsman of Belisarius
Asbadus	Wars	7.38.4-9	Soldier	Officer defeated by Slavs
Ascan	Wars	1.13-14, 18	Soldier	Hunnic chief with Belisarius at Dara
Asclepiades	Wars	4.18.3-4	Soldier	Betrays conspiracy of Maximinus
Athenodorus	Wars	5.29.20-21	Soldier	Guardsman of Belisarius
Babas	Wars	8.9.5; 8.13-14	Soldier	Roman commander in Lazica
Balas	Wars	3.11.12	Soldier	Leader of Huns in Roman service
Barbation	Wars	7.11.37; 7.13.2-4; 7.28.5, 17	Soldier	Soldier of Belisarius
Barbatus	Wars	3.11.7; 4.3.4.; 4.15.50; 4.15.59	Soldier	Roman cavalry officer in Africa
Belisarius	Wars	passim; (SH: passim); (B: 1.10.16)	Soldier	General
Bessas	Wars	passim	Soldier	Officer active in east and west
Bochas	Wars	6.2.10, 20-23, 32, 36	Soldier	Hunnic guardsman of Belisarius
Bonus	Wars	7.10.14-18	Soldier	Commander of garrison in Genoa
Boriades	Wars	3.16.9	Soldier	Guardsman of Belisarius
Bouzes	Wars	1.13.5, 19, 25-31; 1.21.5; 2.3.28-31; 2.6.1-8; 2.13.6; 2.14.16; 2.20.20-28; 7.32.41-45; 7.34.40; 7.39.3; 8.9.5; (SH: 4.4-12; 17.1)	Soldier	General in east
Burcentius	Wars	6.26.3-26	Soldier	Soldier in Italy
Kavadh son of Zames	Wars	1.23.4-24; 8.26.13	Soldier	Nephew of Khosro, led Persian deserters in Roman service
Calonymus	Wars	3.11.14; 3.17.16; 3.20.16-25	Soldier	Roman admiral
Celer	Wars	1.8.2, 21; 1.9.1, 24; 2.15.7	Soldier	Roman general in east
Chalazar	Wars	7.30.6; 7.30.20-21	Soldier	Guardsman of John the nephew of Vitalian
Chilbudius	Wars	7.13.26; 7.14.1-6	Soldier	Roman commander on the Danube
Chorsamantis	Wars	6.1.21-33	Soldier	Hunnic guardsman of Belisarius
Chorsomanus	Wars	5.16.1	Soldier	Hunnic guardsman of Belisarius
Claudian	Wars	7.35.27	Soldier	Commander at Salona
Coccas	Wars	8.31.12-16	Soldier	Roman deserter

Conon	Wars	6.5.1-3; 6.11.5; 6.13.8-15; 7.6.2-7.8.9; 7.17.2-10; 7.20.12; 7.22.1; 7.27.16; 7.30.7	Soldier	Officer in Italy, commanded garrisons in Naples and Rome
Constantianus	Wars	2.24.3-4; 2.28.2-11	Soldier	Commander in east and envoy to Khusro
Constantianus 2	Wars	5.7.26-36; 5.15.15; 5.16.14-15; 6.30.2; 7.2.8-9; 7.3.2-4; 7.6.8; 7.9.5; 7.32.41-45; 7.34.40; 7.40.34-45	Soldier	Commander in Balkans and Italy
Constantine 2	Wars	5.5.3; 5.16.1-7; 5.17.1-3; 5.19.16; 5.22.15-25; 6.1.4-10; 6.8.1-17; (SH: 1.24)	Soldier	Officer of Belisarius, executed over affair of daggers
Coutzes	Wars	1.13.5-8	Soldier	Brother of Bouzes
Cteanus	Wars	Theodorus 3.11.7	Soldier	Infantry commander under Solomon
Cutilas	Wars	6.2.10-31	Soldier	Guardsman of Belisarius
Cyprian 2	Wars	3.11.6; 4.3.4; 4.7.11; 6.23.2; 6.24.18; 6.27.26; 7.5.4; 7.6.8; 7.12.18-20; 7.23.6; 7.25.21; 8.33.10-12	Soldier	Roman officer in Africa and Italy
Cyril	Wars	1.13.21; 3.11.1-6; 3.24.19; 4.5.2-4; 4.15.50-59	Soldier	Roman officer at Dara and Africa
Cyrus 2	Wars	4.21.1,16,19	Soldier	Roman officer in Africa
Dagaris	Wars	1.15.6; 1.22.18-19	Soldier	Soldier sent to spy on Persians
Dagistheus	Wars	2.29.10-2.30.48; 8.8.16,29; 8.9.1-3; 8.11.11-15; 8.26.13; 8.31.4; 8.33.21-24	Soldier	Roman officer in east and Italy
Damianus	Wars	6.7.26; 6.11.22; 8.33.2	Soldier	Officer in Italy
Demetrius 2	Wars	5.5.3; 6.23.2; 7.6.13-25; 7.7.3-10	Soldier	Roman officer who failed to relieve Naples
Diogenes	Wars	2.21.2,18-20; 3.23.5-18; 5.27.11-12; 6.5.9; 6.9.9; 7.36.1-15; 7.37.9-17; 7.39.25-26	Soldier	Roman officer in Italy
Domnentiolus	Wars	2.24.15; 7.39.3	Soldier	Officer in east and Sicily
Dorotheus	Wars	1.13.21	Soldier	Officer at Dara
Dorotheus 2	Wars	1.15.3-17; 3.11.5; 3.14.14	Soldier	Commander in Armenia
Eirenaeus	Wars	1.12.14; (SH: 29.16)	Soldier	Soldier in east
Ennes	Wars	5.5.3; 5.10.1-13; 5.28.23; 5.29.42; 6.7.27.40	Soldier	Isaurian officer
Florentius	Wars	1.15.15-16	Soldier	Soldier at Satala
George 3	Wars	5.29.20-21	Soldier	Soldier in Martin's service
Gezon	Wars	4.20.12-16	Soldier	Scaled the fortress at Toumar
Gilacius	Wars	7.26.24-27	Soldier	Armenian officer killed by Goths
Godidisclus	Wars	1.8.3	Soldier	Goth In Roman army
Gontharis 2	Wars	6.4.8	Soldier	Officer in Italy
Gontharis 3	Wars	4.19-28	Soldier	Officer in Africa, leader of mutiny
Goulbougoudou	Wars	6.13.14-15	Soldier	Hun in Valerian's service at Ancona
Gregorius	Wars	4.27.10-4.28.16	Soldier	Nephew of Artabanes, helped assasinate Gontharis
Gudilas	Wars	7.30.6,19	Soldier	Roman officer
Gundulf/Indulf	Wars	7.35.23-29; 8.23.1-2,12.38; 8.35.37	Soldier	Soldier of Belisarius who deserted to Totila
Heracleius	Wars	3.6.9; 3.6.25	Soldier	General who liberated Tripolitania
Hermogenes	Wars	1.13.10-35; 1.14.1-53; 1.16.10; 1.18.16; 1.21.1,10,23; 1.22.16; (SH: 17.32)	Soldier	General in east
Herodian	Wars	5.5.3; 5.14.1; 6.16.21; 7.1.1; 7.6.10; 7.7.3-7; 7.12.12-16; 7.13.3; 7.21.15-16; 8.34.19 (SH: 5.5-6)	Soldier	Officer who surrendered to Totila at Spoletium
Himerius	Wars	4.23.3-17; 7.37.20; 7.39.5	Soldier	Officer in Africa and Italy
Ildiger	Wars	2.24.13; 4.8.24; 4.15.49; 4.176,19; 6.7.15; 6.8.16; 6.9.13-14; 6.11.4-22; 6.16.22; 6.18.1-3,24; 7.1.1	Soldier	Officer of Belisarius, son in law of Antonina
Innocentius	Wars	5.5.3; 5.17.17; 7.15.1-7	Soldier	Roman officer in Italy
Isaac	Wars	1.15.32-33; 2.24.14; 2.25.24; 7.13.20; 7.18.1; 7.19.7,24-34	Soldier	Armenian officer in Italy, captured and executed instead of guarding Portus
John the Armenian	Wars	3.17.1-3; 3.18.3-10; 3.19.30-33; 4.2.1; 4.3.5-13; 4.4.9-24	Soldier	Officer of Belisarius in Africa, killed while pursuing Gelimer
John, brother of Artabanes	Wars	4.24.2,15	Soldier	Arsacid officer in Roman service, killed in Africa

John 7	Wars	3.11.6; 4.3.4; 4.5.4	Soldier	Commander of auxilliaries in Africa
John of Epidamnus	Wars	3.11.8; 4.16.2	Soldier	Infantry commander on Vandal expedition
John the Glutton	Wars	2.19.15,28; 2.24.15; 6.23.3-5; 7.13.23; 7.40.34; 8.26.13; 8.31.4; (SH: 4.4)	Soldier	Officer in the east and Italy
John Guzes	Wars	2.30.4; 8.8.15,30,38; 8.9.13,20-30; 8.10.7; 8.11.57-64	Soldier	Commander in Lazica
John the Hunchback	SH	6.5-9	Soldier	
John, son of Lucas	Wars	1.17.43-44	Soldier	Officer captured by al-Mundhir
John 19	Wars	2.14.12; 2.18.16	Soldier	Officer in Mesopotamia
John, son of Nicetas	Wars	1.13.21; 2.19.36; 2.24.15	Soldier	Officer in east
John, brother of Pappas	Wars	4.17.6,16; 4.28.45-51; 8.17.20-21; 8.24.33	Soldier	Commander in Africa
John, son of Sisiniolus	Wars	4.19.1; 4.22.3-4; 4.23.2-5,32; 4.24.6-16; (SH: 5.31)	Soldier	General in Africa, killed Stotzas
John, nephew of Vitalian	Wars	passim	Soldier	
John 30	Wars	4.5.6	Soldier	Officer Belisarius sent to Pillars of Heracles
John 31	Wars	4.25.3; 4.27.7,25-27; 4.28.5,39-40	Soldier	Mutineer in Africa
John 32	Wars	1.26.5-12	Soldier	"Tyrant" at Dara
Justinian, son of Germanus	Wars	7.32.17; 7.39.17; 7.40.10,27; 8.25.11	Soldier	
Justin 2	Wars	6.13.17; 6.18.6; 6.19.21; 6.21.14-23; 6.23.2; 6.24.18; 6.27.26; 7.5.1-6; 7.6.8; 7.13.19; 8.28.1-4	Soldier	General in Illyricum and Italy
Justin, son of Germanus	Wars	7.32.14-44; 7.39.17; 7.40.34; 8.25.11	Soldier	
Justus	Wars	1.24.53; 2.20.20-28; 2.24.15-20; 2.25.35; 2.28.1	Soldier	Nephew of Justinian, general in east
Lazarus	Wars	7.35.22	Soldier	Defeated by Ildiges
Leonianus	Wars	8.27.13-17	Soldier	Officer in Illyricum
Leontius, son of Zaunas	Wars	4.19.1; 4.20.19	Soldier	Officer in Africa
Libelarius	Wars	1.12.23-24	Soldier	Officer in east
Longinus	Wars	1.18.7; 6.10.19-20	Soldier	Isaurian officer
Magnus	Wars	5.5.3; 5.10.1-13; 6.4.7,15; 6.28.1; 7.11.19,26	Soldier	Cavalry officer in Italy
excubitorum	Wars	1.25.24-29; 7.32.22-50	Soldier	Germanus with thwarting
Marcellus 3	Wars	1.13.21; 3.11.6; 4.3.4; 4.15.50-59	Soldier	Commander of auxilia in east and in Africa
Marcentius	Wars	4.27.5-6,31; 6.5.1	Soldier	Commander in Byzacium and Italy
Marcian 2	Wars	3.11.7	Soldier	Infantry officer
Martinianus	Wars	7.23.1-7	Soldier	Soldier in Italy
Martin	Wars	1.21.7; 2.13.16; 2.14.9; 2.24.10-19; 2.25.17; 2.26.25-46; 2.27.5-6,45-46; 3.11.6,24,29; 3.13.9; 4.3.4; 4.14.37-40; 4.19.2; 5.24.18-20; 5.27.1,22-23; 5.29.20; 6.2.8,19-24; 6.4.6,14; 6.5.4; 6.11.4,8-22; 6.16.23; 6.17.20; 6.21.1-42; 6.23.3-5; 6.25.14-19; 6.26.1; 6.28.33; 7.1.1; 8.17.12; (SH: 4.13)	Soldier	Officer who served in east, Africa, and Italy
Mauricius	Wars	5.7.2-13	Soldier	Son of Mundus
Maxentiolus	Wars	6.8.3-13	Soldier	
Maxentius	Wars	5.18.14	Soldier	
Maximinus 2	Wars	4.18.1-18	Soldier	Mutineer in Africa
Meligedius	Wars	8.33.10-12	Soldier	Roman deserter
Mindes	Wars	7.36.26	Soldier	
Molatzes	Wars	2.8.2,17-19	Soldier	Commander in Lebanon
Mundilas	Wars	5.17.11-12; 6.4.3-4; 6.5.15; 6.10.19; 6.12.27,35-40; 6.21.27-39	Soldier	Guardsman of Belisarius

Mundus	Wars	1.24.40-52; 5.5.2-11; 5.7.1-12; 7.1.36; 8.26.13	Soldier	General in Illyricum
Narses	Wars	passim	Soldier	Eunuch general
		1.12.21-22; 1.15.31; 1.19.37; 2.24.12-14; 2.25.20-24; 6.13.17; 6.16.21; 6.18.6; 6.26.3;		Persarmenian who became
Narses 2	Wars	6.27.16; 6.29.29	Soldier	Roman officer
Nazares	Wars	7.11.18; 7.40.34	Soldier	Illyrian commander
Odolgan	Wars	7.23.6	Soldier	Hun officer
Odonachus	Wars	8.9.5; 8.13.8; 8.14.1-44	Soldier	Officer in Lazica
Oilas	Wars	5.27.13	Soldier	Guardsman of Belisarius
Pacurius, son of				
Peranius	Wars	7.27.2; 8.26.4; 8.34.9-15	Soldier	Officer in Italy
Palladius	Wars	8.25.24	Soldier	Commander of Croton
Pappus	Wars	3.11.7; 4.3.4; 4.17.6; 4.28.45	Soldier	Cavalry officer in Africa
Pasiphilus	Wars	4.27.21-38; 4.28.3,39	Soldier	Mutineer in Africa
Patricius	Wars	1.8.2-19; 1.9.5-18	Soldier	Officer in the east
Paucaris	Wars	5.9.17-21	Soldier	Guardsman of Belisarius at Naples
Paulus 3	Wars	5.5.3; 5.23.2; 6.12.27,40	Soldier	Officer in Italy
Paulus 4	Wars	6.5.1-3; 6.7.12-22	Soldier	Officer in Italy
Paulus 5	Wars	6.21.3-11	Soldier	Courier of Mundilas
Paulus 5	Wars	7.36.16-28	Soldier	Officer in Italy
Paulus 6	Wars	8.29.22-28	Soldier	Soldier commended by Narses
		1.12.11; 2.24.15; 2.25.35; 2.26.25-42; 2.28.1; 5.5.3; 5.23.13; 6.1.11; 6.19.1; 6.20.4; 7.6.10;		
Peranius	Wars	7.27.2; 8.26.4	Soldier	Iberian prince in Roman army
Peter the Thracian	Wars	4.28.3-33	Soldier	Soldier of Solomon, involved in assasination of Gontharis
		1.12.9-14; 1.18.6,42; 2.15.6-8; 2.16.16; 2.18.16-26; 2.24.13-18; 2.25.17; 2.26.25-38; 4.1.6 (SH:		
Peter 4	Wars	4.4)	Soldier	Officer in east
Phanitheus	Wars	6.13.18; 6.19.20; 6.22.8	Soldier	Herul commander
		1.13.19-27; 1.14.32-39; 3.11.11; 4.4.28-31;		Herul commander who captured
Pharas	Wars	4.6.1-3,15-30; 4.7.6-10,31-34	Soldier	Gelimer
Phazas	Wars	7.6.10; 7.7.3-7; 7.28.5-15	Soldier	Iberian soldier in Italy
Philegagus	Wars	8.8.15,30	Soldier	Officer in the east
		2.24.14-18; 4.22.8; 7.13.22; 7.34.42; 7.39.10;		
Philemuth	Wars	8.26.13; 8.33.19; 8.34.22-24	Soldier	Herul chief and soldier
Phocas 3	Wars	7.15.1-8	Soldier	Guardsman of Belisarius
		5.5.5; 5.10.5-20; 5.18.18; (SH: 1.31-34; 2.1-14;		
Photius	Wars	3.2-29; 4.41; 5.25; 17.1)	Soldier	Stepson of Belisarius
Principius	Wars	5.28.23-29; 5.29.39-41	Soldier	Guardsman of Belisarius
Rhecithangus	Wars	2.16.17-19; 2.19.33-34; 2.30.29; 8.277.13	Soldier	Officer in east and Illyricum
Ricilas	Wars	7.11.19-25	Soldier	Guardsman of Belisarius
Rufinus of Thrace	Wars	3.11.7; 4.10.3-11; 4.11.22	Soldier	Standard bearer of Belisarius
Rufinus 3	Wars	4.19.1; 4.20.19	Soldier	Officer in Libya
Sabinianus	Wars	7.11.19-34	Soldier	Guardsman of Belisarius
Sarapis	Wars	3.11.7; 4.15.50,59	Soldier	Infantry officer
Scholasticus	Wars	7.40.35	Soldier	Eunuch general
Senecius	Wars	1.21.27	Soldier	Bodyguard of Sittas
		4.21.1-19; 4.22.1-11; 4.23.20-21,32; 4.24.4-16;		
Sergius 3	Wars	4.25.1; 4.27.2; (SH:5.28-33)	Soldier	General in Africa
Severianus	Wars	4.23.6-9,17	Soldier	Cavalry officer in Africa
Simmas	Wars	1.13.21; 1.14.44	Soldier	Hun officer
Sinthues	Wars	6.4.7,15	Soldier	Guardsman of Belisarius
Siphilas	Wars	5.7.34	Soldier	Soldier of Constantianus
		1.12.20-22; 1.15.3-24; 1.21.3-27; 2.3.8,25-26;		
Sittas	Wars	4.27.17; (B:3.6.6)	Soldier	Officer in the east
		3.11.5-9; 3.24.19; 4.8.4-24; 4.10-14; 4.15.9; 4.19-21; 4.227-11; 4.26.17; 7.27.2; 7.28.46;		
Solomon 2	Wars	(SH:5.30)	Soldier	Eunuch general
Solomon 3	Wars	4.21.19; 4.22.12-17; (SH:5.29-38)	Soldier	Nephew of Solomon 2
Stephanacius	Wars	1.18.7	Soldier	Isaurian officer
		3.11.30; 4.15-17; 4.19.3; 4.22.5; 4.23.1-31;		
Stotzas	Wars	4.24.6-14; 4.25.3; 7.39.12	Soldier	Mutineer in Africa

APPENDIX A: ROMAN SOLDIERS

Summus	Wars	2.1.9-11	Soldier	Brother of Julian
Sunicas	Wars	1.13.20; 1.14.39-50	Soldier	Hun officer
Suntas	Wars	6.7.27	Soldier	Guardsman of Belisarius
Tarmutus	Wars	5.28.23-29; 5.29.39-44	Soldier	Isaurian officer
Tattimuth	Wars	3.10.23; 4.5.10	Soldier	Officer sent to Tripolitania
Terentius	Wars	3.11.7; 4.15.50	Soldier	Infantry officer
Theoctistus	Wars	2.8.2,17-19; 2.16.17; 2.19.33-34; 2.24.13	Soldier	Commander in Lebanon
Theodoriscus	Wars	5.29.20-21	Soldier	Soldier of Martin
Theodorus 3	Wars	4.12.17; 4.14.35	Soldier	Officer killed by mutineers in Africa
Theodorus the Cappadocian	Wars	4.8.24; 4.14.32-41; 4.15.6,49; 4.17.6,19; 4.18.4	Soldier	Officer in Africa
Thomas 2	Wars	6.28.29-33	Soldier	Officer in Italy
Thomas Guzes	Wars	2.30.5; 8.8.15,38; 8.9.13; 8.10.7; 8.11.57,64	Soldier	Commander in Lazica
Thurimuth	Wars	7.11.11-34; 7.37.20; 7.39.1-5	Soldier	Officer in Italy
Timostratus	Wars	1.17.43-44	Soldier	Officer captured by al-Mundhir
Trajan 3	Wars	2.19.15-28; 5.27.4; 6.4.6-14; 6.5.4-10,21-27	Soldier	Officer who survived arrowhead in his head
Uliaris	Wars	3.19.23-24; 4.4.15-25	Soldier	Guardsman of Belisarius who accidentally killed John the Armenian
Ulifas	Wars	7.12.19-20; 8.33.10-12	Soldier	Soldier who murdered his commander at Perusia and deserted to Goths
Uligagus	Wars	8.9.5-20; 8.13.9	Soldier	Herul officer in Lazica
Ulimuth	Wars	6.13.14-15	Soldier	Guardsman of Belisarius
Ulitheus 2	Wars	4.25.8-19; 4.6.32-33; 4.27.20-25; 4.28.19-34	Soldier	Henchman of Gontharis
Unigastus	Wars	6.27.14	Soldier	Guardsman of Belisarius
Ursicinus	Wars	5.5.3; 5.23.3	Soldier	Cavalry officer
Valentinus 2	Wars	7.10.6-12; 7.15.1-8	Soldier	Officer in Balkans and Italy

Total = 197
Total in *Wars* = 196
Total only in *SH* = 1

APPENDIX A: EMPERORS AND ARISTOCRATS

Name	Work	Citation	Function	Note
Anatolius of Ascalon	SH	29.17-24	Roman Aristocrat	Proteuon of Ascalon
Cyrillus	SH	17.32	Roman Aristocrat	Father of bride of Saturninus
Damianus 2	SH	29.32-33	Roman Aristocrat	Senator from Tarsus
Demosthenes	SH	12.5	Roman Aristocrat	"Testator" of Justinian
Diogenes 2	SH	16.23-28	Roman Aristocrat	One of Theodora's "victims"
Dionysius	SH	12.6	Roman Aristocrat	"Testator" of Justinian
Evangelus	SH	30.18-19	Roman Aristocrat	Rhetor of Caesarea
Hilara	SH	12.5	Roman Aristocrat	"Testator" of Justinian
Hypatius 3	SH	9.35	Roman Aristocrat	Notable slain by factions
Joannina	SH	4.37; 5.22	Roman Aristocrat	Daughter of Belisarius and Antonina
Justina	SH	5.8-10	Roman Aristocrat	Daughter of Germanus
Mamilianus of Caesarea	SH	29.17-22	Roman Aristocrat	Aristocrat whose wife was cheated of her legacy
Mammianus	SH	28.3,6	Roman Aristocrat	Patrician of Emesa
Saturninus	SH	17.32-37	Roman Aristocrat	Forced to marry Chrysomallo
Tatianus 2	SH	12.5	Roman Aristocrat	"Testator" of Justinian
Theodorus 5	SH	16.25-27	Roman Aristocrat	Despite torture refused to provide perjured testimony
Theodosius 4	SH	1.15-42; 2.3-17; 3.3-20	Roman Aristocrat	Paramour of Antonina
Antiochus	Wars	5.8.21	Roman Aristocrat	Syrian Neopolitan who favored Romans
Antonina	Wars	Passim (SH)	Roman Aristocrat	Wife of Belisarius
Arsaces 5	Wars	7.32.1-51	Roman Aristocrat	Armenian noble plotting against Justinian
Asclepiodotus	Wars	5.8,10	Roman Aristocrat	Neapolitan notable who opposed surrender to Belisarius
Augarus	Wars	2.12.8-28	Roman Aristocrat	Toparch of Edessa
Basilius	Wars	7.20.18	Roman Aristocrat	Patrician who fled Rome with Bessas
Basilius 2	Wars	2.21.27 (SH: 12.6)	Roman Aristocrat	Father of John of Edessa
Boethius	Wars	5.1.32-34; 5.2.5; 7.20.27-29	Roman Aristocrat	Roman senator
Catellus	Wars	7.10.22	Roman Aristocrat	Killed by Goths in capture of Tibur
Cethegus	Wars	7.13.12	Roman Aristocrat	Senator at Rome
Chanaranges 2	Wars	7.32.11-51	Roman Aristocrat	Persarmenian conspirator against Justinian
Clementinus	Wars	7.26.13	Roman Aristocrat	Patrician who handed over a stronghold to Totila
Decius	Wars	7.20.18	Roman Aristocrat	Patrician of Rome
Deopheron	Wars	7.30.6,19	Roman Aristocrat	Italian notable
Euphemia 2	Wars	1.25.13	Roman Aristocrat	Daughter of John of Cappadocia
Gothigus	Wars	7.35.10	Roman Aristocrat	Patrician who urged Justinian to intervene in Italy
John, son of Basilius	Wars	2.21.27-33; (SH: 12.6-10)	Roman Aristocrat	Notable of Edessa
John, son of Pompeius	Wars	7.31.14	Roman Aristocrat	Nephew of Hypatius
Marcian 3	Wars	7.3.6	Roman Aristocrat	Prominent citizen of Venetia
Mary, wife of Hypatius	Wars	1.24.23-24	Roman Aristocrat	
Maximus 3	Wars	5.25.14-15; 7.20.19; 8.34.6	Roman Aristocrat	Western senator
Nicetas	Wars	1.13.21; 2.19.36; 2.24.15	Roman Aristocrat	Father of officer, John
Olybrius 2	Wars	7.20.19	Roman Aristocrat	Senator
Opilio	Wars	5.4.15-25	Roman Aristocrat	Envoy of Theodohad
Orestes 3	Wars	7.20.19; 7.26.13	Roman Aristocrat	Western senator
Origenes	Wars	1.24.26-30	Roman Aristocrat	Eastern senator, took part in Nika Revolt
Passara	Wars	7.39.14	Roman Aristocrat	Wife of Germanus
Pastor	Wars	5.8.22-41; 5.10.38-47	Roman Aristocrat	Neapolitan notable who opposed surrender to Belisarius
Peroz 3	Wars	2.3.3	Roman Aristocrat	Father of the murderers of Symeon
Phredas	Wars	4.26.8-9	Roman Aristocrat	Friend of Areobindus
Presidius	Wars	6.8.2-18; (SH: 1.28)	Roman Aristocrat	Wealthy citizen of Ravenna involved in affair of the daggers
Proba	Wars	3.2.27	Roman Aristocrat	Noblewoman of Rome
Pudentius	Wars	3.10.22-24; 3.11.22; 4.21.3; 4.5.10; 4.21.3, 13-15	Roman Aristocrat	Leader of revolt in Tripolitania

APPENDIX A: EMPERORS AND ARISTOCRATS

Rusticiana	Wars	7.20.27-30	Roman Aristocrat	Daughter of Symmachus, wife of Boethius
Sergius 2	Wars	2.24.3-11; 2.28.3-11	Roman Aristocrat	Rhetor of Edessa and envoy to Khusro
Silvanus	Wars	1.11.24; 1.16.4	Roman Aristocrat	Father of Rufinus the envoy to Kavadh
Stephanus 2	Wars	5.8.7-25; 5.9.23-29; 5.10.40-43	Roman Aristocrat	Neapolitan notable who favored surrender to Belisarius
Symmachus	Wars	4.16.2; 4.19.1	Roman Aristocrat	Senator, went to Africa with Germanus
Symmachus 2	Wars	5.1.32-34; 5.2.5; 7.20.27-29	Roman Aristocrat	Western senator, executed by Theoderic
Theodora 2	Wars	8.9.7-8	Roman Aristocrat	Wife of Opstes of Lazica
Theodorus 10	Wars	7.21.28	Roman Aristocrat	Roman orator sent as envoy to Justinian
Theodosius 3	Wars	6.28.8	Roman Aristocrat	Envoy of Belisarius to Vittigis
Theudimund	Wars	7.1.36	Roman Aristocrat	Son of Mauricius, grandson of Mundus
Tullianus	Wars	7.12.2-6; 7.18.20-22; 7.22.21; 7.30.6	Roman Aristocrat	Landowner who tried to marshal peasants against Goths
Venantius	Wars	7.18.20	Roman Aristocrat	Father of Tullianus
Vergentinus	Wars	5.26.2; 6.21.41	Roman Aristocrat	Roman senator
Zaunas	Wars	4.19.1; 4.20.19	Roman Aristocrat	Father of soldiers Leontius and Rufinus
Anastasia	SH	9.3	Roman Emperor/F	Sister of Theodora
Anastasius grandson of Theodora	SH	4.37; 5.20-22	Roman Emperor/F	Grandson of Theodora
Comito	SH	9.3; 9.9	Roman Emperor/F	Sister of Theodora
Euphemia/Lupicina	SH	6.17; 9.47-49	Roman Emperor/F	Wife of Justin
John, son of Theodora	SH	17.17-23	Roman Emperor/F	Theodora's bastard
Sabbatius	SH	12.18	Roman Emperor/F	Father of Justinian
Anastasius	Wars	Passim (SH, B)	Roman Emperor/Family	
Boraïdes	Wars	1.24.53; 7.31.17; 7.32.18	Roman Emperor/F	Nephew of Justinian
Germanus	Wars	passim	Roman Emperor/F	Nephew of Justinian
Hypatius	Wars	1.8.2-19; 1.11.24-39; 1.24.19-56; 7.31.14	Roman Emperor/F	Nephew of Anastasius
Justinian	Wars	passim	Roman Emperor/Family	
Justin I	Wars	1.8.3; 1.11.1-10, 39; 1.12.5-24; 1.13.1; 2.15.7; 3.7.27; 3.9.5-8;(B: 1.3.3; 1.4.29); (SH: 6.1-19; 8.2-3; 9.50-54; 11.5; 12.29; 19.1-8; 24.18)	Roman Emperor/Family	
Marcellus, nephew of Justinian	Wars	2.28.2	Roman Emperor/F	nephew of Justinian and brother of Justin II
Pompeius	Wars	1.24.19-21; 1.24.53-58; 7.31.14	Roman Emperor/F	Nephew of Anastasius
Preiecta	Wars	4.24.3; 4.26.18; 4.27.20; 4.28.43; 7.31.2-4,11-14	Roman Emperor/F	Widow of Areobindus; niece of Justinian
Probus	Wars	3.2.27	Roman Emperor/F	Nephew of Anastasius
Theodora	Wars	passim; (SH: passim)	Roman Emperor/F	Empress of Justinian
Vigilantia	Wars	4.24.3	Roman Emperor/F	Sister of Justinian, mother of Preiecta

Total = 82
Total in Wars = 59
Total only in SH = 23

Aristocrats = 64 (47/17)
Emperors = 18 (12/6)

APPENDIX A: MYTHOLOGICAL/HISTORICAL FIGURES

Name	Work	Citation	Function	Note
Andrew	Buildings	1.4.18,21	Mytholgical/Historical	Apostle
Apollodorus of Damascus	Buildings	4.6.13	Mytholgical/Historical	Master Builder
Byzas	Buildings	1.5.1	Mytholgical/Historical	Eponymous hero of Byzantium
Ceroessa	Buildings	1.5.1	Mytholgical/Historical	Mother of Byzas
Cosmas	Buildings	1.6.5-8; 2.9.4; 5.9.37	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint from Syria
Damian	Buildings	1.6.5-8; 2.9.4; 5.9.37	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint from Syria
Eugenius	Buildings	3.7.1	Mytholgical/Historical	Martyr for whom acqueduct was named
George	Buildings	3.4.13	Mytholgical/Historical	Martyr for whom church was named
Gregory	Buildings	5.9.2	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint for whom monastary was named
John the Apostle	Buildings	5.1.5; 5.9.31(SH: 3.3)	Mytholgical/Historical	
John the Baptist	Buildings	1.8.15-16	Mytholgical/Historical	
Leontius 4	Buildings	5.9.26	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint with shrine in Damascus
Luke	Buildings	1.4.18-21	Mytholgical/Historical	Apostle
Virgin Mary	Buildings	B: 1.3.1-11; 1.6.3; 1.8.20; 5.9.8	Mytholgical/Historical	
Menaeus	Buildings	1.9.16	Mytholgical/Historical	Martyr
Menas	Buildings	1.9.16	Mytholgical/Historical	Martyr
Nicholas	Buildings	1.6.4	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint for whom shrine was named
Nicocles	Buildings	1.1.7	Mytholgical/Historical	Father of Themitocles
Phocas	Buildings	5.9.24	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint
Plato	Buildings	1.4.27	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint
Pompey	Buildings	3.4.6	Mytholgical/Historical	Pompey the Great
Praxiteles	Buildings	1.11.7	Mytholgical/Historical	Sculptor
Priscus	Buildings	1.6.4	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint
Agathonicus	Buildings	1.4.30	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint for whom church was named
Anne	Buildings	1.3.11	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint with shrine in Deuteron
Anthimus	Buildings	1.6.9	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint with shrine in Constantinople
Bacchus	Buildings	1.4.3	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint for whom church was named
Conon	Buildings	5.9.35	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint for whom poor-house was named
Cyril 2	Buildings	4.7.16	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint for whom fortress was named
Donatus	Buildings	4.4.3	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint for whom fortresses were named
Elissaeus	Buildings	5.9.9	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint for whom monastery was named
Lawrence	Buildings	1.6.2	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint with shrine in Constantinople
Panteleemon	Buildings	5.9.3	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint for whom monastery was named
Prima	Buildings	6.5.9	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint with shrine near Carthage
Romanus 2	Buildings	5.9.27	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint for whom poor-house was named
Sabianus	Buildings	4.4.3	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint for whom fortress was named
Sabinus	Buildings	4.4.3	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint for whom fortress was named
Samuel	Buildings	5.9.15	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint for whom monastery was named
Stephen	Buildings	4.4.3	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint for whom fortress was named
Thalelaeus	Buildings	5.9.1	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint for whom monastery was named
Theodore 2	Buildings	1.4.28; 4.11.20	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint for whom fortress was named and with sanctary ay Rhesium
Trajan 2	Buildings	4.11.20	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint for whom fortress was named

APPENDIX A: MYTHOLOGICAL/HISTORICAL FIGURES

Theodote	Buildings	1.4.28	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint with shrine at Hebdomum
Samson	Buildings	1.2.14-16	Mytholgical/Historical	
Thecla	Buildings	1.4.28	Mytholgical/Historical	Martyr with shrine in Constantinople
Themistocles	Buildings	1.1.7	Mytholgical/Historical	
Theodotus	Buildings	5.9.32	Mytholgical/Historical	Namesake of monastery
Thyrsus	Buildings	1.4.28	Mytholgical/Historical	Martyr for whom shrine was named
Timothy	Buildings	1.4.18-21	Mytholgical/Historical	Apostle
Tryphon	Buildings	1.9.15	Mytholgical/Historical	Martyr for whom shrine was named
Xenophon	Buildings	1.1.13	Mytholgical/Historical	Historian
Xerxes	Buildings	5.3.8	Mytholgical/Historical	Achaemenid king
Zebinus	Buildings	5.9.32	Mytholgical/Historical	Namesake of monastery
Alexander Severus	Buildings	3.1.5	Mytholgical/Historical	Emperor
Constantius II	Buildings	1.4.19	Mytholgical/Historical	
Helena	Buildings	5.2.1-2	Mytholgical/Historical	Mother of Constantine
Julia Mamea	Buildings	3.1.5	Mytholgical/Historical	Mother of Alexander Severus
Illus	Buildings	3.1.25-26	Mytholgical/Historical	Isaurian general/rebel
Leontius 3	Buildings	3.1.25-26	Mytholgical/Historical	Rebel against Zeno
Sardanapalus	SH	1.9	Mytholgical/Historical	Assyrian king
Semiramis	SH	1.9; (B: 1.1.53)	Mytholgical/Historical	Queen of Babylon
Zachariah	SH	3.27	Mytholgical/Historical	Prophet
Domitian	SH	8.13-21	Mytholgical/Historical	
Nero	SH	1.9	Mytholgical/Historical	
Dityvistus	SH	6.2	Mytholgical/Historical	Companion of Justin
Zimarchus	SH	6.2	Mytholgical/Historical	Companion of Justin
Evaris	Wars	2.11.7	Mytholgical/Historical	Builder of church of St. Michael near Antioch
Sisiniolus	Wars	4.19.1; 4.22.3	Mytholgical/Historical	Father of John, killer of Stotzas
Bassicius	Wars	1.5.17, 28	Mytholgical/Historical	Friend of King Arsaces
Ataulf	Wars	3.2.37	Mytholgical/Historical	Visigothic King
Alaric 1	Wars	3.2.7-37	Mytholgical/Historical	Visigothic King
Arsaces 2	Wars	1.5.10-40	Mytholgical/Historical	Armenian king confined to prison of oblivion
Arsaces 3	Wars	2.3.35 (B: 3.1.8-15; 3.5.2)	Mytholgical/Historical	Armenian King who cedes portion to Romans
Attila	Wars	3.4.24-30; 5.1.3 (B: 4.5.6)	Mytholgical/Historical	
Genzon	Wars	3.5.11; 3.6.24; 3.8.1-8;3.9.6	Mytholgical/Historical	Son of Gaiseric
Gaiseric	Wars	3.passim	Mytholgical/Historical	Vandal king
Godigisclus	Wars	3.3.2,23; 3.22.3-5	Mytholgical/Historical	Vandal king, father of Gaiseric
Gontharis	Wars	3.3.23-33	Mytholgical/Historical	Vandal king, brother of Gaiseric
Gundamund	Wars	3.8.6-8	Mytholgical/Historical	Vandal king
Huneric	Wars	3.4.13-14; 3.5.6-11; 3.8.1-5; 3.9.1; 3.21.19	Mytholgical/Historical	Vandal king
Yazdegerd	Wars	1.2.7-10	Mytholgical/Historical	Perian shah, "guardian" of Theodosius II
Odoacer	Wars	5.1.6-28; 5.12.20-21; 6.6.15-23	Mytholgical/Historical	King of Italy
Odonathus	Wars	2.5.5-6; (B:2.8.8)	Mytholgical/Historical	Ruler of Palmyra
Pacurius	Wars	1.5.10-30	Mytholgical/Historical	Persian shah
Peroz	Wars	1.3.1-1.4.14	Mytholgical/Historical	Persian shah
Theodorus	Wars	3.5.11	Mytholgical/Historical	Son of Gaiseric
Tigranes	Wars	3.1.8-13	Mytholgical/Historical	Armenian king
Thrasimund	Wars	3.8.8-14,29	Mytholgical/Historical	Vandal king
Vararanes	Wars	1.2.11-15	Mytholgical/Historical	Persian shah A.D. 421-438
Eusebius	Wars	1.3.8-13	Mytholgical/Historical	Ambassador to Peroz
Aeetes	Wars	8.2.31	Mytholgical/Historical	Mythical King of Colchis
Aeneus	Wars	5.15.9; 8.22.7-16, 31	Mytholgical/Historical	
Aeschylus	Wars	8.6.15	Mytholgical/Historical	
Agamemnon	Wars	1.17.11; 8.22.27-28	Mytholgical/Historical	
Alexander the Great	Wars	1.10.9; 2.2.15; (B: 3.1.5; 6.2.16)	Mytholgical/Historical	
Anchises	Wars	5.15.9; 8.22.31; (B: 4.11.1)	Mytholgical/Historical	
Antaeus	Wars	4.10.24	Mytholgical/Historical	Libyan king/wrestler
Apsyrtus	Wars	8.2.12-14	Mytholgical/Historical	Brother of Medea
Aristotle	Wars	8.6.20	Mytholgical/Historical	Philosopher

APPENDIX A: MYTHOLOGICAL/HISTORICAL FIGURES

Arrian	Wars	8.14.48	Mytholgical/Historical	Historian
Arsaces	Wars	2.3.32 (B: 3.1.6)	Mytholgical/Historical	Progenitor of Arsacid kings of Armenia
Atreus	Wars	8.22.27	Mytholgical/Historical	
Camillus	Wars	8.29.4	Mytholgical/Historical	Early Roman General
Circe	Wars	5.11.2	Mytholgical/Historical	
Cyprian	Wars	3.21.17-25	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint in Africa
Cyrus	Wars	2.2.15; (B: 1.1.12-15; 2.11.2)	Mytholgical/Historical	Achaemenid king
Dido	Wars	4.10.25	Mytholgical/Historical	
Diomedes	Wars	5.15.8-10	Mytholgical/Historical	
Hannibal	Wars	7.18.19; 7.22.24	Mytholgical/Historical	
Heracles	Wars	4.10.24	Mytholgical/Historical	
Herodotus	Wars	8.6.12-15	Mytholgical/Historical	Historian
Homer	Wars	1.1.9-11; 5.11.2-4; 8.22.21 (B:1.1.15)	Mytholgical/Historical	
Iphegeneia	Wars	1.17.11-18; 8.5.23; 8.22.27	Mytholgical/Historical	
Jason	Wars	2.17.2; 8.2.12-15,31	Mytholgical/Historical	
Jesus Christ	Wars	2.11.14; 2.12.22-25; 3.6.26; 5.19.4; (B:5.7.3-6); (SH:13.4-7; 27.28	Mytholgical/Historical	
Joshua	Wars	4.10.13-14,22	Mytholgical/Historical	
Julian, saint	Wars	2.10.8; (B:4.11.20)	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint for whom church was named at Antioch and fort in Haemimontum
Lysippus	Wars	8.21.12-13; (B: 1.11.7)	Mytholgical/Historical	Sculptor
Medea	Wars	2.27.2; 8.2.12-15,31; 8.11.36,61	Mytholgical/Historical	
Meleager	Wars	5.15.8	Mytholgical/Historical	
Moses	Wars	4.10.13; (B: 5.8.8)	Mytholgical/Historical	
Myron	Wars	8.21.14	Mytholgical/Historical	Sculptor
Numa	Wars	5.24.31	Mytholgical/Historical	Roman king
Nun	Wars	4.10.13,22	Mytholgical/Historical	Father of Joshua
Odysseus	Wars	5.11.2; 5.15.9; 8.22.21-23	Mytholgical/Historical	
Orestes	Wars	1.17.11; 8.5.24	Mytholgical/Historical	Son of Agamemnon
Osroes	Wars	1.17.24	Mytholgical/Historical	King of Edessa
Paul	Wars	6.4.3,9-11; 7.36.7,10; (B:1.4.1) 5.19.4; 5.22.21; 5.23.5; 6.9.17; 7.20.22; 7.36.17; (SH: 26.29);	Mytholgical/Historical	Apostle
Peter	Wars	(B: 1.4.1)	Mytholgical/Historical	Apostle
Pheidias	Wars	8.21.12-13; (B: 1.11.7)	Mytholgical/Historical	Sculptor
Pylades	Wars	1.17.11	Mytholgical/Historical	
Pancratius	Wars	5.18.35	Mytholgical/Historical	Saint for whom a gate at Rome was named
Sergius	Wars	2.5.29; (B: 1.4.3; 2.9.3; 5.9.20-25)	Mytholgical/Historical	Eastern saint for whom Sergiopolis was named
Sallust	Wars	3.2.24	Mytholgical/Historical	Historian
Solomon	Wars	4.9.7; 5.12.42; (B: 6.2.22)	Mytholgical/Historical	Jewish king
Strabo	Wars	8.3.6	Mytholgical/Historical	Geographer
Tynnichus	Wars	8.22.29	Mytholgical/Historical	Sculptor
Utigur	Wars	8.5.2	Mytholgical/Historical	Progenitor of the Utigur Huns
Cutrigur	Wars	8.5.2	Mytholgical/Historical	Progenitor of the Cutrigur Huns
Zenobia	Wars	2.5.5; (B: 2.8.8)	Mytholgical/Historical	Queen of Palmyra
Attalus	Wars	3.2.28-36	Mytholgical/Historical	Puppet of Alaric
Basiliscus, son of Harmatus	Wars	3.7.21-23	Mytholgical/Historical	briefly Caesar to Zeno
Anthemius	Wars	3.6-7; (SH: 12.1)	Mytholgical/Historical	Emperor of the west
Arcadius	Wars	1.2; 3.1-3; (B: 1.2.17)	Mytholgical/Historical	Emperor of the east
Ariadne	Wars	3.7.2, 18	Mytholgical/Historical	Empress of Zeno
Romulus Augustus	Wars	3.7.15; 5.1.2,7; 6.6.16	Mytholgical/Historical	Augustulus
Augustus	Wars	2.12.8-19; 5.12.10; 5.17.11	Mytholgical/Historical	
Verina	Wars	3.6.2; 3.6.26	Mytholgical/Historical	empress of Leo
Constantine I	Wars	1. 24.9, 24; 3.1.3; 5.15.14; (B:1.4.19, 27; 1.10.3; 4.7.7; 5.2.1-2)	Mytholgical/Historical	
Constantine III	Wars	3.2.31-37	Mytholgical/Historical	British usurper
Constantius III	Wars	3.3.4-5	Mytholgical/Historical	

APPENDIX A: MYTHOLOGICAL/HISTORICAL FIGURES

Diocletian	Wars	1.19.29-35; (B:2.6.2-4; 2.8.7); (SH:26.41)	Mytholgical/Historical	
Eudocia	Wars	3.5.3-6	Mytholgical/Historical	Princess captured by Gelimer and married to Huneric
Eudoxia	Wars	3.4.15,20,36-39; 3.5.3,6	Mytholgical/Historical	Wife of Valentinian III, daughter of Theodosius II
Glycerius	Wars	3.7.15	Mytholgical/Historical	Western emperor A.D. 473-474
Honorius	Wars	1.2.4; 3.1.2; 3.2.1-37; 3.3.2-4	Mytholgical/Historical	Western emperor
Leo I	Wars	3.5.7; 3.6.1-27; 3.7.2	Mytholgical/Historical	
Leo II	Wars	3.7.2-3	Mytholgical/Historical	
Majorian	Wars	3.7.4-14	Mytholgical/Historical	Western emperor
Marcian	Wars	3.4.2-11,39; 3.5.7	Mytholgical/Historical	Eastern emperor
Maximus	Wars	3.4.16	Mytholgical/Historical	Western usurper A.D. 383-388
Maximus 2	Wars	3.4.16-3.5.2; 5.25.15	Mytholgical/Historical	Western usurper A.D. 455
Nepos	Wars	3.7.15	Mytholgical/Historical	Western emperor A.D. 474-5
Olybrius	Wars	1.8.1; 3.5.6; 3.6.6; 3.7.1	Mytholgical/Historical	Western emperor A.D. 472
Aelia Galla Placidia	Wars	3.3.4-36; 3.4.15	Mytholgical/Historical	Western Augusta
Theodosius I	Wars	3.1.2; 3.4.16	Mytholgical/Historical	
Theodosius II	Wars	1.2.1-15; 2.3.35; 3.2.32-33; 3.3.5-8; 3.4.2,10,15,39; (B: 2.1.5; 3.1.11-12; 3.5.2-5)	Mytholgical/Historical	
Titus	Wars	4.9.2-5	Mytholgical/Historical	
Trajan	Wars	4.6.6-11; 4.9.2; 6.14.32; 8.2.16; (B: 3.4.17)	Mytholgical/Historical	
Valentinian III	Wars	3.3.5-12; 3.4.13-36; 3.5.3; 3.6.6; 4.9.13; 5.25.15	Mytholgical/Historical	
Vespasian	Wars	4.9.5; (SH: 8.13)	Mytholgical/Historical	
Zeno	Wars	1.3.8; 3.7.2-26; 5.1.10; (B: 3.1.25-26; 5.7.5); (SH: 24.17)	Mytholgical/Historical	
Aetius	Wars	3.3.13-29; 3.4.24-28	Mytholgical/Historical	Western MVM
Ardaburius	Wars	3.3.8; 3.6.27	Mytholgical/Historical	Son of Aspar
Aspar	Wars	3.3-6	Mytholgical/Historical	Eastern MVM
Basiliscus	Wars	3.6; 3.7.18-25	Mytholgical/Historical	General and usurper
Boniface	Wars	3.3.14-36; 3.21.16	Mytholgical/Historical	Roman general in Africa
Armatus	Wars	3.7.20-23	Mytholgical/Historical	General who revolted against Zeno
John 8	Wars	3.6.22-24	Mytholgical/Historical	One of Basiliscus' generals in A.D. 468
John, western usurper	Wars	3.3.5-9	Mytholgical/Historical	
Marcellianus	Wars	3.6.7-8,25	Mytholgical/Historical	Commander in Dalmatia and Sardinia in 5th C.
Orestes 2	Wars	5.1.2-5	Mytholgical/Historical	Western generalissimo, father of Augustulus
Patriciolus	Wars	1.8.3	Mytholgical/Historical	Father of Vitalian
Pharesmanes	Wars	1.8.3; 4.19.1; 4.20.19	Mytholgical/Historical	Father of Zaunas
Ricimer	Wars	3.7.1	Mytholgical/Historical	Western generalissimo

Total = 185
Bldgs = 59
SH= 7
Wars= 119

APPENDIX A: ROMAN OFFICIALS

Name	Work	Citation	Function	Note
Anthemius of Tralles	Buildings	1.1.24-70; 2.3.7	Imp. Official	Master Builder
Chryses	Buildings	2.3.2-23	Imp. Official	Master Builder
Isidore of Miletus	Buildings	1.1.24,50,70; 2.3.7	Imp. Official	Master Builder
Isidore of Miletus II	Buildings	2.8.25	Imp. Official	Nephew of the master builder
John of Byzantium	Buildings	2.8.25	Imp. Official	Master Builder
Procopius of Edessa	Buildings	5.7.14	Imp. Official	Prefect in Samaria
Theodorus the Silentiary	Buildings	4.8.24	Imp. Official	
Addaeus	SH	25.7-10	Imp. Official	Harbormaster in Const.
Amantius	SH	6.26	Imp. Official	Chief of eunuchs
Bassus	SH	21.6-7	Imp. Official	Praetorian Prefect
Callinicus	SH	17.2-3	Imp. Official	Governor of Cilicia II
Constantine 4	SH	20.20-23	Imp. Official	Quaestor
Eudaemon	SH	29.4-12	Imp. Official	Consular adminsitrator of imperial estates
Faustinus	SH	27.26.27	Imp. Official	Samaritan/Christian governor of Palestine
Hecebolus	SH	9.27; 12.30	Imp. Official	Early paramour of Theodora
Hephaestus	SH	26.35-44	Imp. Official	Prefect of Alexandria
John Laxarion	SH	29.1-9	Imp. Official	Prefect in Egypt
John of Palestine	SH	22.33-36	Imp. Official	Comes sacrarum largitionum
Junilus	SH	20.17-20	Imp. Official	Quaestor
Leo the Cilician	SH	14.18-22; 16.16-17; 17.32; 29.28-36	Imp. Official	Corrupt referendarius
Malthanes	SH	29.28-38	Imp. Official	Son-in-law of Leo the Cilician
Peter Barsymes	SH	22.3-38; 23.14; 25.20-22	Imp. Official	Praetorian prefect
Priscus 2	SH	16.7-10	Imp. Official	Secretary of Justinian
Quadratus	SH	4.24-26	Imp. Official	Messenger of Theodora
Rhodon	SH	27.3-18	Imp. Official	Prefect of Alexandria
Theodotus 2	SH	9.37-43; 12.2-6	Imp. Official	Praetorian prefect
Zeno 3	SH	12.1-3	Imp. Official	Governor of Egypt
Acacius 1	Wars	2.3.4-7; 2.21.2	Imp. Official	Governor of Armenia
Alexander 1	Wars	1.22.1; 5.3.13, 16, 29; 5.6.26	Imp. Official	ambassador to Persia and the Goths
Alexander the Logothete	Wars	7.1.28-33; 7.3.2, 4; 7.9.13; (SH: 24.9; 26.29-33, 34)	Imp. Official	"Psalidios"
Amazaspes	Wars	2.3.3-5	Imp. Official	Armenian governor
Anastasius of Daras	Wars	1.26.8; 2.4.15-16; 2.4.26.2.5.27; 2.9.10	Imp. Official	Envoy to Khusro
Apion	Wars	1.8.5	Imp. Official	Financial officer of army
Archelaus	Wars	3.9.17; 3.15.2-17; 3.17.16; 3.20.11	Imp. Official	Treasurer of Vandal expedition
Athanasius	Wars	4.24-28; 5.6.25-26; 5.7.24; 6.22.23-24; 6.29.30; 7.23.34; 8.24.11	Imp. Official	Prefect and envoy of Justinian
Basilides	Wars	1.24.18	Imp. Official	Quaestor
Demetrius of Philippi	Wars	5.3.5,13,29	Imp. Official	Envoy of Justinian to Ostrogothic Italy
Demetrius of Cephallenia	Wars	7.6.20-26	Imp. Official	Governor of Naples
Domnicus	Wars	4.16.2; 4.17.4; 4.19.1; 6.29.1.7	Imp. Official	Senator, soldier, envoy
Eulogius	Wars	3.10.32-34	Imp. Official	Envoy to Godas on Sardinia
Euphratas	Wars	8.3.19; (SH: 29.13)	Imp. Official	Palace eunuch and envoy to Abasgi
Eustratius	Wars	4.8.25	Imp. Official	Official sent to assess taxes in Africa
Euthalius	Wars	6.2.1-7,24	Imp. Official	Paymaster of army in Italy
Fidelius	Wars	5.14.5; 5.20.19-20; 6.12.27-35	Imp. Official	Praetorian Prefect of Italy 537-8

APPENDIX A: ROMAN OFFICIALS

George 2	Wars	2.19.22-23; 2.28.33-37	Imp. Official	Role is unclear, but was in Belisarius' service at Sisauranon and ensured safety of Dara
John the Cappadocian	Wars	1.24.11-17; 1.25.1-44; 2.30.49-54; 3.10.7-17; 3.13.12-20; (SH: 1.14; 2.15-16; 17.38-44; 21.5; 22.1; 23.14	Imp. Official	Praetorian prefect
John, son of Rufinus	Wars	2.7.15; 2.9.1; 2.10.10,18	Imp. Official	Ambassador to Khusro
John Tzibus	Wars	2.15.9-11; 2.17.5-16; 2.29.21	Imp. Official	Governor of Lazica
Joseph	Wars	4.15.7-8	Imp. Official	Envoy to Stotzas
Julian, brother of Summas	Wars	1.20.9; 2.1.10; 2.7.15-16	Imp. Official	Envoy to Ethiopians and Himyarites, envoy to Khusro
Leontius, son in law of Athanasius	Wars	7.32.34-44; 8.24.11-30	Imp. Official	Envoy to Theudibald
Liberius	Wars	5.4.15-24; 7.36.6; 7.37.26-27; 7.39.6-8; 7.40.12-18; 8.24.1; (SH: 27.17-19; 29.1-10)	Imp. Official	Envoy of Theodohad, Roman commander, prefect
Maximinus	Wars	6.29.1-7; 7.6.9-12; 7.7.1-3	Imp. Official	Envoy to Vittigis, praetorian prefect of Italy
Peter the Patrician	Wars	5.3.30; 5.4.17-31; 5.6.1-26; 5.7.22-24; 6.22.23-24; 8.11.2; (SH: 16.2-5; 24.22-23)	Imp. Official	Envoy to Theodohad and Khusro; magister officiorum
Phocas 2	Wars	1.24.18; (SH: 21.6-7)	Imp. Official	Praetorian prefect
Proclus	Wars	1.11.11-21; (SH: 6.13; 9.41)	Imp. Official	Quaestor
Reparatus 2	Wars	5.26.2; 6.21.40	Imp. Official	Praetorian prefect
Rhecinarius	Wars	2.27.24-25	Imp. Official	Envoy to Khusro
Rufinus	Wars	1.11.24,38; 1.13.11; 1.16.1-10; 1.22.1-16; 1,17.44; 2.7.15	Imp. Official	Envoy to Khusro
Strategius	Wars	2.1.9-11	Imp. Official	Treasury official
Tatianus	Wars	2.10.1-2	Imp. Official	Actuarius or optio at Antioch
Theodorus of Dara	Wars	2.13.26	Imp. Official	Engineer at Dara
Theodorus 8	Wars	2.23.6	Imp. Official	Referendarius
Thomas 3	Wars	1.12.1	Imp. Official	Envoy to Khusro
Tribonian	Wars	1.24.11-17; 1.25.1-2; (SH:13.12; 20.16-17)	Imp. Official	Quaestor
Tryphon	Wars	4.8.25	Imp. Official	Official sent to assess taxes in Africa

Total = 66
Only in Bldgs = 7
Only in SH = 20
Total in Wars = 39

APPENDIX A: FOREIGN SOLDIERS

Name	Work	Citation	Function	Note
Albilas	Wars	6.11.1; 6.20.14	Foreign Soldier	Gothic commander of Orvieto
Ambazouces	Wars	1.10.10-12	Foreign Soldier	Hunnic commander of Caspian Gates
Ambrus	Wars	2.20.10,14	Foreign Soldier	Christian Arab in Persian service
Aniabedes	Wars	2.17.4,11	Foreign Soldier	Persian officer
Asinarus	Wars	5.7,16	Foreign Soldier	Gothic commander in Dalmatia
Azarethes	Wars	1.17-18; 2.27.41	Foreign Soldier	Persian general
Baresmanas	Wars	1.13.16; 1.14.32, 45-50	Foreign Soldier	Persian commander
Bersabus	Wars	8.15.8-11	Foreign Soldier	Persian noble captured in battle
		2.19.3, 24; 7.3.11 (SH: 2.28)		
Bleschames	Wars	(B: 2.4.8)	Foreign Soldier	Commander of the Persians at Sisauranon
Boes	Wars	1.12.10	Foreign Soldier	Persian general
Chanaranges	Wars	1.21.4-27	Foreign Soldier	Persian general
Chilbudius 2	Wars	7.14.7-36	Foreign Soldier	Barbarian who impersonated Chilbudius
Chorianes	Wars	8.1.4; 8.8.1-35	Foreign Soldier	Persian commander
		4.10.6; 4.25.2-21; 4.27.24-27;		
Coutzinas	Wars	4.28.50; 8.17.21	Foreign Soldier	Moorish leader
Ebrimud	Wars	5.8.3	Foreign Soldier	Son-in-law of Theodohad
Esdilasas	Wars	4.10-6-11; 4.12.26-29	Foreign Soldier	Moorish chief
Gibal	Wars	8.23.1-12	Foreign Soldier	Gothic commander
Gibamundus	Wars	3.18.1-19; 3.19.18-19; 3.25.15	Foreign Soldier	Nephew of Gelimer and leader of Vandal troops
Gibimer	Wars	6.11.1	Foreign Soldier	Gothic commander
Glones	Wars	1.7.33; 1.9.4-18	Foreign Soldier	Persian commander at Amida
Goar	Wars	8.27.5-18	Foreign Soldier	Goth captured by Romans, escaped to Gepids with Ildigisal
		3.10.25-34; 3.11.22-23;		
		3.14.9; 3.24.1-3; 3.25.11;		
Godas	Wars	4.2.27	Foreign Soldier	Usurper in Sardina
Gripas	Wars	5.7.1; 5.7.27-36	Foreign Soldier	Gothic commander in Dalmatia
Hoamer	Wars	3.9.2-17; 3.17.12	Foreign Soldier	Nephew and general of Hilderic
Iourphouthes	Wars	4.10.6; 4.11.15	Foreign Soldier	Moorish chief
Julian, son of Savarus	SH	11.27	Foreign Soldier	Samaritan rebel
Leuderis	Wars	5.11.26; 5.14.13-15	Foreign Soldier	Goth left in command of Rome
Marcias	Wars	5.13.15,29; 5.16.7; 5.19.2,12	Foreign Soldier	Gothic commander in Gaul
		2.30.1-33; 8.13.1-30; 8.14.3-		
Mermeroes	Wars	53; 8.16.4-31; 8.17.10-17	Foreign Soldier	Persian general
Moras	Wars	6.11.2; 6.19.10; 8.26.4	Foreign Soldier	Gothic commander
		2.18.9,19; 2.24.6; 2.25.6-35;		
Nabedes	Wars	8.9.6-7; (SH: 2.28)	Foreign Soldier	Persian commander
Optaris	Wars	5.11.6-9	Foreign Soldier	Murderer of Theodohad
Osdas	Wars	7.19.20	Foreign Soldier	Gothic commander
Peroz 2	Wars	1.13.16; 1.14.1-28; 1.17.26	Foreign Soldier	Persian general defeated by Belisarius at Dara
		2.28.16-17; 2.29.2-9; 2.30.32;		
Phabrizus	Wars	8.10.19	Foreign Soldier	Persian commander
Pissas	Wars	5.16.5-7	Foreign Soldier	Gothic commander
Pityaxes	Wars	1.13.16; 1.14.32-38	Foreign Soldier	Persian officer at Dara
Pitzas	Wars	5.15.1-2	Foreign Soldier	Gothic commander
Ragnaris	Wars	8.26.4; 8.34.9-15	Foreign Soldier	Gothic commander of Tarentum
Rhecimundus	Wars	7.28.26-28	Foreign Soldier	Gothic commander in Bruttium
Ruderic	Wars	7.5.1; 7.19.25-34	Foreign Soldier	Goth commander killed by Isaac
Scipuar	Wars	8.23.1,12,22-25	Foreign Soldier	Gothic commander
Sisifridus	Wars	7.12.12,17	Foreign Soldier	Goth commander at Asise
Sisigis	Wars	6.28.30-33	Foreign Soldier	Goth commander
Solomon 4	Wars	2.3.27	Foreign Soldier	May have killed Sittas
		3.11.23; 3.24.1-4; 3.25.10-24;		
Tzazon	Wars	4.2.23-32; 4.3.1-14; 4.5.2-4	Foreign Soldier	Brother of Gelimer
Uliaris 2	Wars	5.3.15; 7.5.1	Foreign Soldier	Goth in command at Naples
Uligisalus	Wars	5.16.8-16; 6.11.1	Foreign Soldier	Goth commander in Dalmatia

APPENDIX A: FOREIGN SOLDIERS

Ulitheus	Wars	6.10.2	Foreign Soldier	Uncle of Vittigis, defeated and killed by John the nephew of Vitalian
Unilas	Wars	5.16.5-7	Foreign Soldier	Goth commander in Tuscany
Uraias	Wars	6.12.37;6.18.19; 6.21.1; 6.22.6; 6.23.4; 6.24.20-22; 6.26.9; 6.28.31-35; 6.30.4-12; 7.1.37-49	Foreign Soldier	Nephew of Vittigis and leader of renewed war
Usdrilas	Wars	8.28.2-11; 8.29.3	Foreign Soldier	Goth in command at Ariminum
Vacimus	Wars	6.13.5-8	Foreign Soldier	Goth commander sent against Ancon
Vacis	Wars	5.18.39-41	Foreign Soldier	Goth officer in siege of Rome
Valaris	Wars	7.4.21-28	Foreign Soldier	Goth monomachist
Velas	Wars	7.1.43-47	Foreign Soldier	Goth, killer of Hildibad
Visandus Vandalarius	Wars	5.18.29-33; 6.11.2	Foreign Soldier	Goth with amazing recuperative powers
Bleda	Wars	7.5.1	Foreign Soldier	Goth officer

Total = 58
War = 57
SH = 1

APPENDIX A: FOREIGN ARISTOCRATS AND ROYALTY

Name	Work	Citation	Function	Note
Bassaces	Wars	2.3.29-31; 2.21.34	Foreign Aristocrat	Armenian envoy/noble
Arsacid	Wars	2.3.25-31	Foreign Aristocrat	Father of Artabanes, Armenian noble
Pharsanses	Wars	2.29.4-7	Foreign Aristocrat	Prominent among the Lazi
Phoubelis	Wars	2.30.22	Foreign Aristocrat	Prominent among the Lazi
Savarus	SH	11.27	Foreign Aristocrat	Father of Julian, the Samaritan rebel
Theophobius	Wars	8.16.4-13	Foreign Aristocrat	Lazic notable who betrayed Uthimereos
Ulias	Wars	6.7.13	Foreign Aristocrat	Goth notable given as hostage
Abochorabus	Wars	1.19	Foreign Royalty	Arab Phylarch
Abramus	Wars	1.20.3-13	Foreign Royalty	Himyarite King
Alamundaras	Wars	1.17; 1.18; 2.1.3; 2.1.13; 2.18.12-14; 2.3.47	Foreign Royalty	Arab ally of Persia
Alaric 2	Wars	5.12.22,33-43	Foreign Royalty	Visigothic King
Amalaberga	Wars	5.12.22; 5.13.2	Foreign Royalty	Gothic princess
Amalafrida	Wars	3.8.11-12; 3.9.45.3.1; 5.12.22; 8.25.11	Foreign Royalty	Sister of Theoderic
Amalaric	Wars	5.12.43-46; 5.13.4-11	Foreign Royalty	Visogothic King
Amalasuntha	Wars	5.passim	Foreign Royalty	Ostrogothic Queen
Ammatas	Wars	3.17-21, 25	Foreign Royalty	Brother of Gelimer
Anasazodas	Wars	8.10.8-10, 8.10.17-8.11.1	Foreign Royalty	Son of Khusro
Antalas	Wars	3.9.3; 4.12.30; 4.21-28; 8.17.21	Foreign Royalty	Moorish chief in Byzacium
Aordus	Wars	6.15.29; 7.34.44-45	Foreign Royalty	Brother of Herul king
Arethas	Wars	1.17.47-48; 1.18.7-35; 2.1.3-7; 2.16-19; 8.11.10; (SH: 2.23,28)	Foreign Royalty	Arab phylarch
Aspebedes	Wars	1.9.5, 24; 1.21.4; 1.23.6 3.14.5-6; 5.2-14; 7.21.12; 7.39.15;	Foreign Royalty	Uncle of Khusro
Atalaric	Wars	8.21.11	Foreign Royalty	Ostrogothic King
Auduin	Wars	7.35.17-20; 8.18.7; 8.25-27	Foreign Royalty	Lombard king
Blases	Wars	1.5.2; 1.6.17	Foreign Royalty	Brother of Kavadh
Kavadh	Wars	1.passim	Foreign Royalty	Shah
Cabaon	Wars	3.8.-28; 4.11.17	Foreign Royalty	Moorish chieftan
Caïsus	Wars	1.20.9-10	Foreign Royalty	Exiled son of Himyarite phylarch
Caoses	Wars	1.11.3; 1.21.20-22; 2.9.12;	Foreign Royalty	Son of Kavadh
Chinialon	Wars	8.18.15; 8.19.3	Foreign Royalty	Leader of the Cutrigurs
Khusro	Wars	passim	Foreign Royalty	Shah
Cloadarius	Wars	5.13.27	Foreign Royalty	Frankish chief
Elemundud	Wars	8.27.19, 26	Foreign Royalty	Gepid king
Eraric	Wars	7.2.1-18, 7.3.1	Foreign Royalty	One of the Rugi, briefly king of Goths
Esmiphaeus	Wars	1.20.1-9	Foreign Royalty	Himyarite King
Euageës	Wars	3.9.9,14; 3.17.12	Foreign Royalty	Nephew of Hilderic
Gabalas	Wars	1.17.47	Foreign Royalty	Father of Arethas
Geilaris	Wars	3.9.6	Foreign Royalty	Father of Gelimer
Gelimer	Wars	3 and 4 passim	Foreign Royalty	Vandal king
Giselic	Wars	5.12.43-46	Foreign Royalty	Bastard of Alaric briefly the Visigothic king
Gourgenes	Wars	1.12.4-13; 2.15.6; 2.28.20 2.17.2; 2.28.30; 2.29.2-31; 2.30.28,39-48;	Foreign Royalty	Iberian king
Gubazes	Wars	8.8.1-29; 8.9.7-9; 8.10.2-7; 8.16.2-32; 8.17.13-14	Foreign Royalty	King of Lazica
Hellestheaeus (Kaleb)	Wars	1.20	Foreign Royalty	Ethiopian king
Hermegisclus	Wars	8.20.11-21	Foreign Royalty	Ruler of the Varni
Hermenifridus	Wars	5.12.22; 5.13.1-2; 8.25.11	Foreign Royalty	Ruler of the Thuringians
Iaudas	Wars	4.12. 29; 4.13.1-21; 4.17.8; 4.19.5-21; 4.20.21; 4.25.2; 8.17.21	Foreign Royalty	Moorish ruler
Hilderic	Wars	3.9.1-17; 3.17.11-12; 4.5.8; 4.9.13	Foreign Royalty	Vandal king
Hildebad	Wars	6.29.41; 6.30.14-29; 7.1.1,25-49; 7.2.4-11; 7.4.12; 6.30.15; 7.2.7	Foreign Royalty	Ostorgothic king
Hildibert	Wars	5.13.27	Foreign Royalty	Frankish chief

APPENDIX A: FOREIGN ARISTOCRATS AND ROYALTY

Ildigisal/Ildiges	Wars	7.35.16-22; 8.27.1-29	Foreign Royalty	Lombard prince, fugitive from Audouin
Massonas	Wars	4.13.19	Foreign Royalty	Moorish chief
Mastigas	Wars	4.20.31	Foreign Royalty	Moorish chief
Mastinas	Wars	4.13.19	Foreign Royalty	Moorish chief
Matasuntha	Wars	5.11.27; 6.10.11; 6.28.26; 7.39.14	Foreign Royalty	Ostrogothic queen
Medisinissas	Wars	4.10.6-11	Foreign Royalty	Moorish chief
Mephanias	Wars	4.13.19	Foreign Royalty	Moorish chief
Ochus	Wars	6.14.38	Foreign Royalty	Herul king
Opsites	Wars	8.9.11,29	Foreign Royalty	Ruler of the Abasgi
Opsites 2	Wars	8.9.7	Foreign Royalty	King of Lazica
Ortaias	Wars	4.13.19,28; 4.17.8; 4.18.29	Foreign Royalty	Moorish chief
Radigis	Wars	8.20.12-41	Foreign Royalty	King of the Varni
Risiulfus	Wars	7.35.13-16	Foreign Royalty	Lombard prince, fugitive from Vaces
Rodolphus	Wars	6.14.11-22	Foreign Royalty	Herul king, killed in battle with the Lombards
Saccice	Wars	1.17.1	Foreign Royalty	Mother of Alamundaras
Sandil	Wars	8.18.23; 8.19.8-22	Foreign Royalty	Leader of the Utigurs
Sceparnas	Wars	8.9.11-14	Foreign Royalty	Ruler of the Abasgi
Sinnion	Wars	3.11.12; 8.19.7	Foreign Royalty	Cutrigur chief, allied with the Romans
Suartuas	Wars	6.15.32-36; 8.25.11	Foreign Royalty	Herul king
Teias	Wars	8.26.21-24; 8.29.1; 8.33-35	Foreign Royalty	Gothic king
Theodahad	Wars	4.14.1; 5.3.1-9,29; 5.4; 5.6; 5.7.11-25; 5.8.3; 5.9.1-7; 5.11.1-10; 5.13.2,14-15,24; 6.30.5; 7.8.21; (SH: 4.43; 16.5)	Foreign Royalty	Gothic king
Theodegisclus	Wars	5.11.10	Foreign Royalty	Son of Theodahad
Theodenanthe	Wars	5.8.3	Foreign Royalty	Daughter of Theodahad
Theoderic	Wars	1.8.3; 3.8.11-13; 3.9.3-5; 3.14.6; 4.5.21; 5.1; 5.2.1-23; 5.3.1; 5.4.6; 5.11.5,26-27; 5.12.21-54; 5.13.1-6; 5.16.2; 5.20.11; 5.24.22-25; 5.29.8; 6.6.16-23; 6.30.5; 7.1.3-4,32; 7.2.2; 7.9.10; 7.16.17; 7.20.29; 7.21.12,23; 7.39.14-15,21; 8.5.14; 8.21.118.25.11; (B: 3.7.13); (SH: 24.9,23; 26.27-28)	Foreign Royalty	Gothic king
Theodichusa	Wars	5.12.22,43	Foreign Royalty	Daughter of Theoderic
Theudibald	Wars	8.24.11-29; 8.34.17	Foreign Royalty	Frankish king
Theudibert	Wars	5.13.4-12,27; 6.12.38-39; 6.25.2-24; 6.26.1-12; 8.20.11,41; 8.24.6-15,26 3.24.7-16; 4.4.34; 5.12.50-54; 5.13.13;	Foreign Royalty	Frankish king
Theudis	Wars	6.30.15	Foreign Royalty	Visigothic king
Thorisin	Wars	7.34.4; 8.18.3-8; 8.27.19-25	Foreign Royalty	Gepid king
Totila	Wars	5-8.passim	Foreign Royalty	Gothic king
Ustrigothus	Wars	8.27.19-29	Foreign Royalty	Gepid king
Vaces	Wars	6.22.11-12; 7.35.13-17	Foreign Royalty	Lombard king
Valdarus	Wars	7.35.17	Foreign Royalty	Lombard king
Vittigis	Wars	2.4.13; 2.14.10; 5-6.passim; 7.1.1-2; 7.11.32; 7.25.7; 7.39.14; 8.25.12; (SH: 4.32-34,43)	Foreign Royalty	Gothic king
Zames	Wars	1.11.4; 1.23.4-6; 2.9.12; 8.26.13	Foreign Royalty	Son of Kavadh

Total = 83
Wars = 82
SH = 1

APPENDIX A: FOREIGN OFFICIALS

Name	Work	Citation	Function	Note
Adergoudounbades	Wars	1,6.15-18; 1.23.7.21	Foreign Official	"Chanaranges"
Albis	Wars	5.20.7	Foreign Official	Gothic envoy to Belisarius
Braducius	Wars	2.28.41; 8.11.8-9	Foreign Official	Persian envoy/interpreter
Caballarius	Wars	7.2.16	Foreign Official	Envoy of Eraric to Justinian
Fuscias	Wars	3.24.7-18	Foreign Official	Envoy of Gelimer to Spain
Gothaeus	Wars	3.24.7-18	Foreign Official	Envoy of Gelimer to Spain
Gousanastades	Wars	1.5.4; 1.6.18	Foreign Official	Kavadh's death
Isdigousnas	Wars	8.17.9	Foreign Official	Persian ambassador to Justinian
Leudardus	Wars	8.24.30	Foreign Official	Frankish envoy to Justinian
Mebodes	Wars	1.11.25-31; 1.21.17-22; 1.23.25-29 2.6.22-23; 2.7.5; 2.8.4-7;	Foreign Official	Persian official
Paulus 7	Wars	2.12.1,33; 2.26.14; 2.27.24,45;	Foreign Official	Interpreter for Khusro
Seoses	Wars	1.6.4-19; 1.11.25-37	Foreign Official	Friend and official of Kavadh
Spinus	Wars	7.40.20-29	Foreign Official	Quaestor of Totila
Stephanus 3	Wars	7.37.6	Foreign Official	Ambassador of Totila
Symeon	Wars	1.15.27-29; 2.3.1-3	Foreign Official	defector to Romans
Theodorus 9	Buildings	3.2.6-9	Foreign Official	Satrap of Sophanene
Varrames	Wars	1.23.10-22 1.23.25-26; 2.8.30; 2.26.16-19;	Foreign Official	Persian official
Zaberganes	Wars	(SH:2.32-33)	Foreign Official	Persian envoy
Abandanes	Wars	2.21.1-14	Foreign Official	Secretary of Khusro

Total = 19

Wars = 18
Blds = 1

APPENDIX A: CIVILIANS

Name	Work	Citation	Function	Note
Acacius 3	SH	9.2	Civilian	Father of Theodora
Aegisthus	Wars	6.17.9-11	Civilian	Child raised by goat
Aeimachus	Wars	2.11.8-12	Civilian	Butcher of Antioch
Andreas of Byzantium	Wars	1.13.30-39	Civilian	Winner in single combat with Persians
Areobindus 2	SH	16.11	Civilian	Servant of Theodora
Arsenius	SH	17.6-19	Civilian	Samaritan favorite of Theodora
Asterius	SH	9.5	Civilian	Dancing master of Greens
Boniface 2	Wars	4.4.33-41	Civilian	Libyan scribe entrusted with Gelimer's treasure
Calligonus	SH	3.2, 5, 15; 5.27	Civilian	Eunuch of Photius and Antonina
Chrysomallo	SH	17.33-34	Civilian	Dancing girl
Chrysomallo 2	SH	17.34	Civilian	Dancing girl
Elpidius	Wars	5.1.38	Civilian	Physician of Theoderic
Eugenius 2	SH	1.27	Civilian	Slave of Antonia
Euphemia 3	Wars	2.5.28	Civilian	Woman of Sura taken captive by Khusro
Indaro	SH	17.34	Civilian	Dancing girl
Laurus	Wars	4.1.8	Civilian	Carthaginian impaled by Belisarius
Macedonia	SH	1.21-27; 2.12	Civilian	Slave of Antonia
Macedonia 2	SH	12.28-30	Civilian	Dancer in Antioch
Pegasius	Wars	2.22.14-16; (SH: 5.33-35)	Civilian	Doctor, friend of Solomon the Younger
Priscus 3	SH	28.1-15	Civilian	Forger
Stephanus	Wars	2.26.31	Civilian	Physician who interceded with Khusro
Theoctistus	Wars	6.2.26	Civilian	Physician in Rome
Tribunus	Wars	2.28.8; 8.10.11-16	Civilian	Physician
Vasianus	SH	16.18-21	Civilian	Green, victim of Theodora

Total 24

Appendix A: Clergy

Name	Work	Citation	Function	Note
Acacius 2	Wars	3.7.22	Clergy	Patriarch of Constantinople
Andreas	SH	3.4	Clergy	Bishop of Ephesus
Augustus 2	Wars	2.30.53-54	Clergy	Priest in Constantinople
Baradotus	Wars	2.13.13-15	Clergy	Priest of Constantina
Candidus	Wars	2.5.31; 2.20.2-16	Clergy	Bishop of Sergiopolis
Datius	Wars	6.7.35	Clergy	Priest from Milan
Ephraemius	Wars	2.7.16-17	Clergy	bishop of Antioch
Epiphanius	Wars	3.12.2	Clergy	bishop who blessed fleet of Vandal expedition
Eusebius 2	Wars	1.25.37-38	Clergy	Bishop of Cyzicus
Eutyches	Wars	3.7.22	Clergy	Heretic
Hypatius 2	Wars	5.3.5,13,29	Clergy	Priest of Ephesus
Jacob	Wars	1.7.5-11	Clergy	Syrian holy man
John, Abbot of Bethlehem	Buildings	5.9.13	Clergy	
John II Patriarch of Constantinople	SH	6.26	Clergy	
Mamas	Wars	1.26.8	Clergy	Priest at Dara
Megas	Wars	2.6.17-2.7.1; 2.7.14-2.8.1	Clergy	Bishop of Beroea
Paulus	Wars	4.23.18-29	Clergy	Priest of Hadrumetum
Paulus 2	SH	27.3-24	Clergy	Patriarch of Alexandria
Pelagius	Wars	7.16.5-7.17.1; 7.20.23-25; 7.21.17-18; (SH:27.17-24; 29.2)	Clergy	Apocrisarius to Constantinople, priest in Rome, envoy to Justinian, later Pope
Psoes	SH	27.14-15	Clergy	Deacon in Alexandria
Reparatus	Wars	4.26.23-31	Clergy	Priest of Carthage
Romanus	Buildings	5.9.11	Clergy	Abbot
Rusticus	Wars	5.6.13-14	Clergy	Roman priest
Silverius	Wars	5.11.26; 5.14.4; 5.25.13; (SH:1.14,27)	Clergy	Pope A.D. 536-537
Terebinthius	Buildings	5.7.5	Clergy	Bishop attacked by Samaritans
Thomas of Apamea	Wars	2.11.16-30	Clergy	Bishop of Apamea
Valentinus	Wars	7.15.13-15	Clergy	Bishop mutilated by Totila
Vigilius	Wars	5.25.13; 5.26.2; 7.15.9; 7.16.1; 7.35.9; (SH:27.17-24)	Clergy	Pope A.D. 537-555
Zacharias	Buildings	5.9.16	Clergy	Abbot

Total = 29

APPENDIX B: PROCOPIUS' REFERENCES TO *TYCHE*

200 total references to *Tyche* in the *Wars*.

1 Reference to Goddess in innocuous sense
Wars 5.15.11.
Reference to temple of Fortune as a location in a digression about statue of Athena.

54 Basically innocuous references, "by chance" or reference to meeting some "fate" or "condition"
Wars 1.3.13.
Eusebius did not reveal to shah the fortune of the Persian army.

Wars 1.5.8.
If anyone is cast into the Prison of Oblivion by fortune, no mention is to be made.

Wars 1.5.34.
Arsaces and Armenian in Prison of Oblivion bewail hard fortune.

Wars 1.13.21.
Belisarius' dispositions at Dara, "in case the forces of John should by chance be driven back."

Wars 1.17.43.
Al-Mundir's craftiness. If by chance his pursuers should catch him he would suddenly turn and rout them.

Wars 1.25.4.
John the Cappadocian slandered Theodora, not blushing before her fortune.

Wars 1.25.15 .
Antonina pretended to lament the fate upon her to John's daughter Euphemia.

Wars 2.11.11.
Aeimachus the Antiochene butcher who killed Persian noble escaped pursuit either by fortune or knowledge of the ground.

Wars 2.11.33.
When by chance the Blues were winning Khusro ordered them to hold up so Greens might win.

Wars 2.12.19.
Abgar returns to Edessa and hints to the citizens about the fortune of the hippodrome Augustus promised.

Wars 2.12.21.
Abgar attacked by gout dismissed physicians and bewailed fate upon him.

Wars 2.19.36.
John the Son of Nicetas to Belisariusnever been such a general as you either in fortune or valor.

Wars 2.19.39.
John the Son of Nicetas to Belisarius re. Arethas and the troop sent across the Tigris from Sisauron. "they found themselves in such a "plight.""

Wars 2.21.29.
Khusro departs Roman territory after confronted by Belisarius. Either through fear of fortune, of B's valor, or because deceived.

Wars 3.7.15.
Glycerius suffered a similar fortune to Nepos. (Dying shortly after becoming emperor.)

Wars 3.8.10.
If Gundamund caught any orthodox guilty either by chance or intent he would offer pardon if they became Arians.

Wars 3.10.8.
While everyone else bewailed the fortune upon them, John confronted Justinian over risks of war in Africa.

Wars 3.17.7.
Roman army passed night in either in a city by chance or in camp.

Wars 3.24.4.
Tzazon to Gelimer that the Roman invaders should meet the same fortune as their ancestors.

Wars 4.4.35.
Gelimer's plan for Boniface and his treasure should the "forune of war" be adverse.

Wars 4.11.13.
Moors' letter to Solomon, - we have, by chance, up to fifty wives so our offspring will never fail.

Wars 4.12.25.
No Romans wounded by Moors in battle at Bourgaon. Either by the enemies or by chance (accident?).

Wars 4.13.12.
Battle of champions with Moors. If by chance the moors should win they should drink at spring.

Wars 5.14.13.
Leuderis remains in Rome while Goths escape. Ashamed by fortune in which he found himself.

Wars 5.20.3.
A wolf appeared by chance and the boy impersonating Vittigis was left hanging from a tree until he died.

Wars 5.23.11.
By chance Goth was hit by ballista bolt and pinned to tree.

Wars 5.23.15.
By chance, the wall at the Vivarium had crumbled and was vilnerable to Gothic assault.

Wars 5.23.24.
The same fortune at the Salarian Gate. Two successful Roman sallies.

Wars 6.4.6.
Belisarius sends Antonina to Naples to await in safety the fortune of the Romans.

Wars 6.4.26.
When by chance there is a strong wind, the ashes from Vesuvius rise to a great height.

Wars 6.12.34.
By chance Fidelius' horse stumbled and he fell near the fortifications of Ticinum and the Goths killed him.

Wars 6.13.15.
By chance Ulimuth and Gouboulgoudoe were at Ancon to defend the walls.

Wars 6.23.20.
Wheels that the Goths rolled down hill missed Romans by chance.

Wars 6.27.13.
Missile fired at Belisarius either by chance or intent, blocked Unigastus.

Wars 7.4.27.
Although he killed Gothic champion Valaris, by some chance the spear of the dead man pierced the artery in Artabazes' neck.

Wars 7.5.8.
Roman generals cast lots and await decision of fortune to see who should lead their vanguard against the Goths.

Wars 7.5.14.
By chance untrue report circulates in Roman Army that John was killed and they were unwilling to hold position.

Wars 7.10.10.
Romans plundering country around Dryus encounter enemy by chance.

Wars 7.13.19.
Belisarius wrote letter from Epidamnus to Justinian reporting current situation.

Wars 7.17.25.
Decimation of Romans Senate- To such a pass had come the fortune of the Roman people.

Wars 7.23.8.
Belisarius goes up to deserted Rome to see into what fortune it had fallen.

Wars 7.24.23.
When Goths assault Rome, standard bearer of Totila killed by some chance.

Wars 7.26.6.
By chance John's rescue mission to save Roman Senate arrives at Capua at same time as Gothic cavalry.

Wars 7.29.10.
Porphyrios the whale appeared not continuously but by chance.

Wars 7.31.13.
After Artabanes had become famous by his deeds and great by fortune, his wife went to Theodora demanding her husband back.

Wars 7.32.8.
Arsaces haranguing Artabanes against Justinian "I pity you for the fortune you have suffered."

Wars 7.39.13.
Events in Italy had come to such a pass that Germanus wanted to win glory by restoring the situation.

Wars 8.6.23.
Charybdis swallows whoever chances to be in the strait.

Wars 8.11.22.
"By chance" there were Sabiri at Petra with Bessas. But is was they who came up with innovative rams to assault Petra.

Wars 8.16.20.
Gubazes spent winter in Lazic mountains and found consolation for present fortune, as men are wont to do, by looking for a better day (i.e. hoping for help from Romans).

Wars 8.18.7.
Auduin, king of Lombards, whose army fled, did not know that Gepid enemies shared the same fortune.

Wars 8.27.6.
Goar the Goth "being an impetuous and active fellow was in contant rebellion against his fortune."

Wars 8.32.21.
After Busta Gallorum - all the Goths "who had the fortune" neither to perish or be captured fled.

Wars 8.32.24.
Youth from Totila's household angered by the present fortune.

27 References in pre battle harangues
Wars 1.14.22.
Belisarius to troops before victory at Dara. "Although the "adversities of fortune" are not to be set right by σπουδή (effort, zeal), wisdom is the physician for self-inflicted ill."

Wars 1.18.17.
Belisarius trying to dissuade troops before Callinicum – Fortune has already given them victory without bloodshed.

Wars 4.1.18.
Belisarius before Tricamarum – Fortune once seen to be bad enslaves the spirit of those who have fallen in her way.

Wars 4.1.23.
Ibid. Don't let the opportune moment run past. When the fortune of war is postponed its nature changes. The daimonion is accustomed to bring retribution on those who abandon good fortune of present.

Wars 4.2.10.
Gelimer before Tricamarum- "our fortune has come to such a pass" we must win or be enslaved.

Wars 4.2.16.
Gelimer before Tricamarum- We only lost Ad Decimum because of obstacles interposed by fortune. But it is the nature of fortune to change.

Wars 4.2.26.
Tzazon before Tricamarum, when men struggle for dominance of their rule are defeated by fortune…

Wars 4.2.29.
Ibid. Those who have failed are dismayed by previous fortune…

Wars 4.2.32.
Ibid. "men who triumph with those who have previously met with misfortune claim the better fortune as their own."

Wars 4.11.44.
Moors before battle with Solomon, the scales of war are turned by the valor of the commander or by fortune. (And Belisarius is gone now).

Wars 4.12.15.
Solomon to troops- reduce the Moors to the same fortune as the Vandals.

Wars 4.20.6.
Solomon to troops at Toumar. "The turning of the scales of human affairs depends on the moment of opportunity; but if a man by willful cowardice is a traitor to fortune, he cannot justly blame it, having by his own action brought the guilt on himself."

Wars 6.21.31.
Mundilas to troops at Milan advocating sortie (unsuccessfully)- Having entered life all men have the same fortune (fate) – to die at the appointed time.

Wars 6.21.36.
Ibid. "Let us make glorious the fortune that has fallen on us."

Wars 6.21.37.
Ibid. "Either fortune will have wrought success for us or we, in achieving a happy end, will rid ourselves of present troubles with fairest fame"

Wars 6.23.31.
Before battle with Procopius's trumpet signals. Belisarius to troops- Those who get into trouble without looking around and escape by chance are still to be convicted of folly.

Wars 7.4.10.

Totila to Goths at river crossing. They were entering battle not equally as regards advantages of fortune since Gothic defeat would be the end for them but Romans could recover.

Wars 7.25.4.
Totila to Goths at siege of Perusia who were not eager to follow his orders be cause of temporary loss of Rome. "You bitterly resent the adversity of fortune." But it is the nature of human affairs that failure must come at times. This is a fact that must be accepted.

Wars 7.25.6.
Ibid. Men must accept the necessity that fortune lays on them.

Wars 7.25.17.
If it was some fortune that bestowed earlier success on you, you should show reverence rather than vexation.

Wars 7.25.19.
Ibid. If you capture Perusia, "Fortune will again smile on you."

Wars 7.25.21.
Ibid. You will capture Perusia without trouble because the Roman commander Cyprian has been put out of the way by fortune coupled with planning (Totila bribed a guard to murder him.

Wars 8.14.18.
Odonachus and Babas exhorting troops for sally at Archaeopolis. In a battle at a distance (i.e. defending the walls in a siege) the outcome is determined by fortune, but in a hand-to-hand struggle, valor and enthusiasm are more likely to prevail.

Wars 8.23.14.
John the nephew of Vitalian to troops on attempt to relieve Ancon. Consider that the outcome of the whole war was at issue because fortune would inline to the winner, because war depends on logistics and Ancon was the last Roman stronghold between Dryus and Ravenna and would be landing point for army coming from east.

Wars 8.23.28.
Goths to men before sea fight at Dryus. "The Romans have not become better men since last fight and will achieve same fortune."

Wars 8.30.12.
Totila before Busta Gallorum – Fortune, having demolished everything else has preserved only hope for this day.

54 References in other direct discourse (Wise advisors, etc.)
Wars 1.17.30.
Al-Mundir's advice to Kavadh – Everything should not be entrusted to fortune, and no one should believe all wars will be successful.

Wars 1.17.32.
Ibid. Since men do not always have confidence in fortune, they resort to stratagems rather than straightforward battle.

Wars 1.17.34.
Ibid. Do not make a trial of fortune but adopt safer strategy by invading Syria.

Wars 1.24.28.
Origenes' speech at the Nika riot counseling caution over rash action. "We shall either fall down and worship fortune or reproach her altogether."

Wars 1.24.29.
Ibid. Those things whose issue is quickly decided fall under the sway of fortune.

Wars 2.15.14.
Laz ambassadors to Khusro – brought back by the kindness of fortune to previous alliance.

Wars 2.18.12.
Belisarius on defenders of Nisibis. If the struggle is close the city and by chance the defenders should have success against the Romans they will be confident and in case of reverse they will escape harm.

Wars 3.10.10.
John the Cappadocian to Justinian on Vandal Expedition- If by chance I offend, my loyalty will be made clear in the future.

Wars 3.10.16.
Ibid. - "any reversal of fortune will bring harm to what is well established."

Wars 3.12.12.
Belisarius to army on importance of justice – Those who do not understand the fortunes of such struggles think the outcome of war lies in the strength of arm alone.

Wars 3.15.5.
Archelaus on landing in Africa. Giving advice to men on perilous enterprise brings no benefit because they attribute success to their own judgment or to fortune.

Wars 3.25.9.

Belisarius' Huns help neither Vandals not Romans, but await the fortune of war.

Wars 3.25.13.
Gelimer to Tzazon. "That which fortune has decreed, is now known by the outcome."

Wars 3.25.14.
Ibid. Valor departed from the Vandals taking good fortune with her.

Wars 3.25.18.
Ibid. "Either recover our previous fortune or gain advantage of bearing together hard fate."

Wars 4.6.23.
Pharas to Gelimer on Mt. Papua – Now for these miseries Fortune has brought you…

Wars 4.6.24.
Ibid., Fortune sends inevitable miseries but also occasional admixture of good (i.e. surrender and accept gifts and offices from Justinian). Don't rebel against fortune when she changes.

Wars 4.6.26.
Ibid. "Refrain from rebelling against fortune when she changes."

Wars 4.6.27.
Gelimer's reply to Pharas. I am reduced to this fortune.

Wars 4.6.30.
Ibid. Present fortune has robbed me of my thoughts.

Wars 4.7.8.
Gelimer to Pharas – I cannot resist fortune further.

Wars 5.8.15.
Belisarius to Stephanos- Those who fight for freedom have double good fortune. Victory also brings freedom. Defeat brings the consolation they have not submitted willingly.

Wars 5.8.33.
Pastor and Asclepiodotus to the Neapolitans, "no man is competent to guarantee the decision of fortune."

Wars 5.8.37.
Ibid. If Belisarius by chance should win, will be prone to forgive.

Wars 5.9.27.
Belisarius to Stephanos that he pities Naples' fortune if they do not surrender before his final assault.

Wars 5.9.28.
Ibid. If they don't surrender, they will not have fortune to blame but their own judgement.

Wars 5.10.45.
Ascepiodotus to Stephanos- "You should their fortunes (i.e. the Romans') not prosper as before, would readily listen to the overtures of their assailants.

Wars 5.13.18.
Vittigis to the Goths – "It is inexpedient to go on with present arrangements disregarding necessity or fortune.

Wars 5.24.5.
Belisarius to Justinian, "Some chance snatched us from ruin."

Wars 5.24.6.
Ibid. "Whether it has been due to fortune or valor, what we have achieved has been for the best." But send reinforcements!

Wars 5.24.9.
Ibid. One ought not trust everything to fortune since fortune is not given to following the same course forever.

Wars 5.28.25.
Principius and Tarmutus to Belisarius on not leaving the infantry out of fight. Infantry commanders on horseback generally don't consider the fortunes of war shared by all but flee by themselves before the battle begins.

Wars 6.3.13.
Romans to Belisarius – "We were not prepared for the fortune which has overtaken us."

Wars 6.3.17.
Ibid. Our fortune must be the apology for our rashness (bitching at the general).

Wars 6.16.11.
Narses to Belisarius on relieving Arminium. If the Goths take Ariminum at this juncture it will be of such weight as to determine the fortune of war.

Wars 6.16.11.
Ibid. The adversity of fortune has taken away the Goths' confidence."

Wars 6.26.11.
Vittigis' letter to Goths besieged in Auximus- "Things which are beyond human power confer boon of being free from blame, since fortune draws the charge upon herself."

Wars 6.29.8.
Belisarius to generals and Justinian's envoys during siege of Ravenna, "I am not alone in knowing that the fortune of war is by no means fixed and firm, but I think each of you share this belief with me."

Wars 6.29.12.
Ibid. "It would be a thing most monstrous to be silent concerning the better course and then, surveying the outcome decreed by fortune, bring accusations."

Wars 6.30.12.
Uraias to Goths – I should not be king because men believe kinsmen share like fortunes (he was a relative of Vittigis.

Wars 6.30.21.
Hildebad at Verona after becoming king of the Goths. When they allowed Vittigis to surrender they "bowed before the adversities of fortune."

Wars 6.30.23.
Ibid. Fortune or a change of heart have a way of setting most things right.

Wars 7.4.4.
Artabazes to Romans – Don't despise the resurgent Goths, when fortune has reduced a man to despair it leads him to extraordinary daring.

Wars 7.7.15.
Totila to Neapolitans- the unreasonable events of life are due to chance and contrary to expectation.

Wars 7.8.21.
Totila to Goths on not pardoning Gothic rapist – When we were lawless under Theodahad God was not propitious to us and our fortune came to this.

Wars 7.8.24.
Ibid. The fortune of war is decreed according to the life of individual man.

Wars 7.9.14.
Totila in letter to Senate notes that bad conduct of Imperial army and officials has brought them to their current fortune.

Wars 7.16.23.

Totila to Pelagius on why Rome must fall, when men fall into the same reverse a second time, it is “no adversity of fortune, but in all likelihood a proof of folly.”

Wars 7.17.2.
Romans to garrison commanders (Bessas and Conon), - The present fortune upon us is such that if we actually had the power to commit an unholy deed against you, the crime would bring no reproach.”

Wars 7.22.14.
Belisarius to Totila to stop him from razing Rome. “If you experience the worse fortune, in saving Rome you would have gratitude of victor. If you destroy it, there will be no mercy.”

Wars 8.12.4.
Bessas to Persians urging surrender, it is not inglorious to live by falling in with the situation chance has wrought.

Wars 8.19.16.
Envoys of Utigurs to Justinian on treachery of Kotrigurs, no incentive to be friends to Romans because even if they win by gift of fortune, Rome’s enemies will fare better than her friends.

Wars 8.19.20.
Ibid. Envoys of Utigurs note that they, through hazards, had rescued Romans from the fortune of enslavement by the Kotrigurs.

Wars 8.20.17.
King of the Varni on his approaching death, discusses plan to be executed with “good fortune.”

7 instances in indirect discourse
Wars 4.7.15.
Friends of Gelimer on his laughter when he surrendered to Pharas. Had experienced all the gifts of fortune, good and bad.

Wars 5.27.24.
It seemed to the Goths that fortune was against them since they were constantly worsted in the sallies at the siege of Rome. Belisarius goes on to explain it was because they had good mounted archers.

Wars 6.8.9.
Presidius to Belisarius on daggers stolen by Constantinus asked whether it was legal to rob suppliants fleeing from barbarians of whatever they had by chance.

Wars 7.13.23.
Heruls encounter and defeat a Slav invasion by chance.

Wars 7.14.12.
Chance brought Roman slave into possession of kindly master where he hatches Chilbudius plot.

Wars 6.27.28.
Belisarius to Gothic garrison at Auximus – surrender, whether you resist or not you will come to same fortune as Fisula.

Wars 7.28.17.
Barbation after destruction of advanced cavalry flees to Croton and announces present fortune.

57 observations in Procopius' own voice
Wars 1.6.15.
By some chance Kavadh was able to keep his word to appoint the first Persian to offer service to him as chanaranges and keep law that it should be a relative of the current office holder.

Wars 1.7.21.
Kavadh favored by fortune at Amida. Critical tower was defended by sleeping monks.

Wars 1.24.41.
Mundus happened by chance to be present with Heruls during Nika riot.

Wars 2.3.16.
By chance Sittas' messengers get lost and don't reach Aspetiani so instead of helping him they end up attacking Romans.

Wars 2.9.13.
P. on Khusro – when Fortune wishes to make a man great she does what she has decided upon with no standing against her will.

Wars 2.17.16.
By chance John is hit in neck by arrow (since it was fated that Petra be captured by Khusro).

Wars 2.23.16.
Whether by chance or some providence the plague spared the worst men.

Wars 3.2.32.
Honorius watched events in Gaul and held ships in readiness awaiting the fate of Africa (whether it would revolt to Attalus and Alaric).

Wars 3.2.34.

Honorius was awaiting outcome of events (Alaric, Constantine III, etc.) was "tossed among the billows of uncertain fortune" but "God is accustomed to succor those who are neither clever, nor able to devise anything for themselves, and to lend them assistance, if they be not wicked."

Wars 3.4.13.
Geiseric after defeating eastern expedition displayed foresight worth recounting and made his good fortune secure by moderations (making treaties) fearing that in another war the Vandals might not enjoy the same fortune (since human affairs are wont to be overturned by the Gods and to fail by reason of men's bodies.

Wars 3.5.10.
Gaiseric's ripping down city walls now seen as folly since as fortunes change men are accustomed to change judgments of things planned in past.

Wars 3.10.27.
Godas, when sent to Sardinia by Gelimer, could not endure the "prosperity sent by fortune."

Wars 3.11.6.
Solomon was not a eunuch by man's devising, but some chance befell him in swaddling clothes.

Wars 3.18.2.
P's musing on opening of Ad Decimum. Men know not whether they have failed succeeded (whether they counsel aright or no), but God's purpose is that a path is laid out for Fortune who presses on to what has been foreordained. Combination of Belisarius' order of march and Ammatas' untimeliness.

Wars 3.21.7.
Reflections eating Gelimer's lunch. Fortune makes display of the fact that all things are hers and nothing is the private possession of man.

Wars 3.25.23.
Reflection on reunion of Gelimer and Tzazon. Even an enemy spectator would have felt pity for the Vandals and the Fortune of mankind.

Wars 3.25.25.
Ibid. No asking about Sardinia because present fortune had prostrated them and caused them to reckon previously important things as negligible.

Wars 4.4.15.
John the Armenian did not capture Gelimer because of an obstacle contrived by fortune. I.e. Uliaris accidently killed him.

Wars 4.6.34.
When Pharas heard about Gelimer he lamented the fortune of men.

Wars 4.7.19.
Things to great to be hoped for will recur as long as the fortunes of men are the same.

Wars 4.7.21.
Whether defeat of Vandals was due to chance or valor, one should marvel at it.

Wars 4.13.31.
Solomon began ascending Mt Aurasium thinking he would have it out with the Moors according as fortune should wish.

Wars 4.19.24.
At Zerboule, by some chance, all the leaders of the Moors were hit by missiles and died.

Wars 4.20.11.
At Toumar, Solomon gave harangue and then chance provide way for enterprise as follows (Gezon begins ascent alone but is followed by army.)

Wars 4.23.5.
By chance the Roman messengers were captured and their forces did not unite in face of Moors and Stotzas.

Wars 5.5.19.
Happy chance befell Belisarius that he marched in to Syracuse on last day of consulship.

Wars 5.7.11.
Theodahad not steadfast, but present fortune always brought him to terror or unspeakable boldness.

Wars 5.18.15.
By chance, Belisarius was unwounded in fierce battle that centered around him (white faced horse).

Wars 6.8.1.
Envy of fortune was swelling against the Romans – Contantinus executed because of affair of the daggers.

Wars 6.28.2.
Romans take barges on Po – they met with fortune that made clear she was detgermining course of events for both sides.

Wars 6.29.41.
Hildebad does not submit to Belisarius like other Goths. Fortune brought him to situation I shall now describe.

Wars 7.13.16.
Analysis of Belisarius 2d sojourn in Italy, for those whom fortune favors success is guaranteed and those under the ban of fortune must fail however good their plans.

Wars 7.13.18.
Ibid. Even if he plans well, Fortune perverts his wise purpose.

Wars 7.19.22.
Not the will of fortune that Belisarius' relief column should reach Rome. Some envious spirit interposed.

Wars 7.19.32.
Belisarius at Portus is overcome by sorrow at the adversity of fortune.

Wars 7.24.28.
It is human nature to judge events by current of fortune. When Totila was successful he was reverenced by the Goths, but they inveighed against him when he met a reverse.

Wars 7.27.9.
When Verus and his army were on the verge of being taken prisoner by Totila, fortune came to their aid. Totila saw Roman ships and withdrew.

Wars 7.40.9.
By some chance Germanus reached the end of his life and died.

Wars 7.40.21.
By chance Totila's adviser Spinus fell into Roman hands at Catana.

Wars 8.8.35.
Persian commander Chorianes killed because some chance guided arrow, giving victory to Romans.

Wars 8.11.1.
Anasozadus' fortune and character led him to defeat and disfigurement when he revolted against Khusro.

Wars 8.12.34.
Meditation after success of Bessas at Petra. Human affairs are governed by power of God that men are wont to call fortune.

Wars 8.12.35.
Ibid. Fortune is the name given to anything that appears contrary to reason.

Wars 8.14.38.
Siege of Edessa, Romans used pig to distract elephant, - omission due to thoughtlessness of Romans made good by chance.

Wars 8.17.13.
Because of a certain chance, the Persians did no harm to the Romans or Lazi in this instance.

Wars 8.21.16.
By chance a Tuscan was passing when steer mounted statue of bull and prophesied that a eunuch would undo the ruler of Rome.

Wars 8.21.20.
On prophecy that a eunuch would overthrow the ruler of Rome and appointment of Narses, either emperor's judgment penetrated the future or fortune ordained the inevitable thing.

Wars 8.23.8.
John the Nephew of Vitalian takes initiative to relieve Ancon "considering the conditions brought about by chance more weighty than imperial commands."

Wars 8.23.35.
Sea battle at relief of Ancon. Goths gave up the struggle against the adversities of fortune and the errors they had made. [Tyche plus actions!]

Wars 8.23.36.
Ibid. Goths came to a perilous pause having left all to chance.

Wars 8.28.10.
Narses' Herul bodyguards encounter Usdrilas (garrison commander at Ariminum) during reconnoiter and sortie and kill him. Romans see this as sign that God is hostile to Goths.

Wars 8.31.6.
Busta Gallorum- Narses put barbarians at center of line and on foot so if by chance they turned coward they would not be too eager to flee.

Wars 8.32.29.
Reflections of death of Totila – Fortune was disporting herself and tearing human affairs to shreds – Had endowed Totila with prosperity but now smote him with cowardice and destruction.

Wars 8.32.34.

Some chance directed fatal arrow at Totila.

Wars 8.33.24.
Reflections on how Fortune makes sport of human affairs – Bessas in Lazica, Dagistheus at Rome.

Wars 8.33.25.
But these things will always be as long as the same fortune rules over men.

Wars 8.35.29.
By chance Teias fatally wounded while exchanging shields.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ancient Sources – Editions and translations

Ammianus Marcellinus
Gardthausen, V. ed. *Ammiani Marcellini Rerum Gestarum Libri Qui Supersunt*. Stuttgart: Teubner, 1967.
Rolfe, J.C. ed. and trans. *Ammianus Marcellinus.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1935-40.

Agathias
Keydell, R. ed., *Agathiae Myrinaei Historiarum Libri Quinque*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1967.
Frendo, Joseph D. ed. and trans. *The Histories*. New York : de Gruyter, 1975.

Evagrius
Bidez, J. and L. Paramentier. eds. and trans. *Historia Ecclesiastica*. London: Methuen, 1898
Whitby, Michael. ed. and tran. *The Ecclesiastical History of Evagrius Scholasticus.* Liverpool : Liverpool University Press, 2000.

John Lydus
Wuensch, R. ed. *De Magistratibus.* Stuttgart: Teubner, 1967.
Bandy, A.C. ed. and trans. *On powers, or the Magistracies of the Roman State*. Philadelphia : American Philosophical Society, 1983.

Malalas
Thurn, J. ed. *Chronographia*. Berlin: de Gruyter, 2000.
Jeffreys, E., M. Jeffreys, and R. Scott, et al. eds. and trans. *The Chronicle of John Malalas*. Melbourne: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1986.

Marcellinus Comes
Brian Croke, *The Chronicle of Marcellinus: A Translation and Commentary*. Sydney: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1995.

Maurice
Dennis, George T., and Ernst Gamillscheg, eds. *Das Strategikon Des Maurikios*. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1981.
Dennis, George T., ed. and trans. *Maurice's Strategikon*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1984.

Procopius

Haury, J., ed., G. Wirth, rev. *Procopii Caesariensis Opera Omnia*. Leipzig: Teubner, 1962.
Dewing, H.B., and Glanville Downey, eds. and trans. *Procopius*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1914-40.
Kaldellis, Anthony, ed. and trans. *Prokopios: The Secret History with Related Texts*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2010.
Dewing, H.B. and Anthony Kaldellis, eds. and trans. *Prokopios: The Wars of Justinian.* Indianapolis: Hackett, 2014.
Roques, Denis, ed. and trans. *Procope de Césarée: Constructions de Justinien Ier*. Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso, 2011.
Williamson, G.A. and Peter Sarris, eds. and trans. *Procopius: The Secret History*. New York: Penguin, 2007.

Peri Strategias
Dennis, George T., ed. and trans. *Three Byzantine Military Treatises*. Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1985.
Erck, T.H., ed., *Anonymi Byzantini Peri Strategikes*. Ph.D. diss. University of Illinois, 1937.

Photius
Henry, R. ed. *Bibliotheca*. Paris: Société d'édition Les Belles lettres, 1959-1991.

Suda
Adler, A. ed. *Lexicon*. Leipzig: Teubner, 1928-1935.

Theophanes
De Boor, C. ed. *Chronographia*. Leipzig: Teubner, 1883.
Mango, C.; R. Scott; and G. Greatrex. Eds. and trans. *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Theophylact Simocatta
De Boor, C. ed. *Theophylacti Simocattae Historiae*. Stuttgart: Teubner, 1967.
Whitby, Mary and Michael Whitby. *The History of Theophylact Simocatta*. New York : Oxford University Press, 1986.

Vegetius
Reeve, Michael D. ed. *Epitoma rei militaris*. Oxford Medieval Texts. Oxford, 2004.
Milner, N.P. *Vegetius: Epitome of Military Science*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1996.

Zosimus
Paschoud, F. ed. and trans. *Histoire Nouvelle*. Paris: Budé, 2003.

Ridley, R.T. ed. and trans. *Zosimus*. Canberra: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1982.

Fragments

Blockley, R.C. *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire: Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus, and Malchus*. Liverpool: Francis Cairns, 1981-83.

———. *The History of Menander the Guardsman: Introductory Essay, Text, Translation and Historiographical Notes*. Liverpool: Francis Cairns, 2006.

Müller, K. ed. *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum* IV. Cambridge University Press, 2010.

Modern Scholarship

Acosta López de Mesa, Juliana. "Plotinus, Aristotle, and the Origin of Free Will." *Revista Disertaciones* 3 (2012): 32-50.

Adams, J. N. "The Poets of Bu Njem: Language, Culture and the Centurionate." *JRS* 89 (1999): 109-34.

Adshead, Katherine. "Thucydides and Agathias." In *History and Historians in Late Antiquity,* edited by Brian Croke and Alanna M. Emmet, 82-87. New York: Pergamon Press, 1983.

———. "Procopius' Poliorcetica: Continuities and Discontinuities." In *Reading the Past in Late Antiquity*, edited by Graeme Clarke, 93-115. Elmsford: Pergamon Press, 1990.

———. "The Secret History of Procopius and its Genesis." *Byzantion* 63 (1993): 5-28.

———. "Procopius and the Samaritans." In *The Sixth Century: End or Beginning?* Edited by Pauline Allen and Elizabeth Jeffreys, 35-41. Brisbane: Byzantina Australiensia, 1996.

Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism.* New York: Verso, 1991.

Arendt, Hannah. *The Origins of Totalitarianism*. New York: Harcourt, 1973.

Austin, M. M. "Hellenistic Kings, War, and the Economy." *CQ* 36 (1986): 450-466.

Bagnall, Roger. *Egypt in Late Antiquity.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.

Banchich, Thomas M. *The Lost* History *of Peter the Patrician: An Account of Rome's Imperial Past from the Age of Justinian*. New York: Routledge, 2015.

Barber, Benjamin R. "Conceptual Foundations of Totalitarianism." In *Totalitarianism in Perspective: Three Views*, edited by Carl J. Friedrich, Michael Curtis, Benjamin R. Barber, 3-52. New York, Praeger, 1969.

Barker, John W. *Justinian and the Later Roman Empire.* Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1966.
Barnes, Timothy D. “The Date of Vegetius.” *Phoenix* 33 (1979): 254-257.
———. *Ammianus Marcellinus and the Representation of Historical Reality.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998.
Barnish, Sam, A.D. Lee, Michael Whitby, “Government and Administration,” *CAH* (2) XIV, 164-206.
Beck, H.-G. “Zur byzantinische ‘Mönchschronik,’” in *Speculum historiale. Geschichte im Spiegel von Geschichtsschreibung und Geschichtsdeutung*, edited by Clemens Bauer, Johannes Spörl, Laetittia Boehm, and Max Müller, 188-97. Freiburg and Munich: Alber, 1965.
Bell, Peter. *Social Conflict in the Age of Justinian: Its Nature, Management, and Mediation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.
Bendix, Reinhard. *Max Weber: An Intellectual Portrait*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977.
Berger, Adolf. *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Roman Law*. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1953.
Bivar, A.D.H. “Cavalry Equipment and Tactics on the Euphrates Frontier.” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 26 (1972): 271-91
Blockley, R.C. “Dexippus and Priscus and the Thucydidean Account of the Siege of Plataea.” *Phoenix* 26 (1972): 18-27
———. *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire: Eunapius, Olympiodorus, Priscus, and Malchus*. Liverpool: Francis Cairns, 1981-83.
———. *East Roman Foreign Policy: Formation and Conduct from Diocletian to Anastasius*. Leeds: Francis Cairns, 1992.
———. “Ammianus and Cicero on Truth in Historiography.” *AHB* 15 (2001): 14-24.
———. “The Development of Greek Historiography: Priscus, Malchus, Candidus.” In *Greek and Roman Historiography in Late Antiquity*, edited by Gabriele Marasco, 289-316. Leiden: Brill, 2003.
———. *The History of Menander the Guardsman: Introductory Essay, Text, Translation and Historiographical Notes*. Liverpool: Francis Cairns, 2006.
Börm, Henning. *Prokop und die Perser*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2007.
Bowman, Alan K. “The Roman Imperial Army: Letters and Literacy on the Northern Frontier.” In *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World*, edited by Alan K. Bowman and Greg Woolf, 109-125. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
Bowersock, G.W. *The Throne of Adulis: Red Sea Wars on the Eve of Islam.* New York, Oxford University Press, 2013.

Braun, Hermann. “Procopius Caesariensis Quatenus Imitatus Sit Thucydidem.” Ph.D. diss. Erlangen, 1885.
———. *Die Nachahmung Herodots Durch Prokop*. Nürnberg, 1894.
Brodka, Dariusz. “Prokopios von Kaisareia und Justinians Idee ‘Der Reconquista.’” *Eos* 86 (1999): 243-255.
———. *Die Geschichtsphilosophie in der spätantiken Historiographie*. New York: Peter Lang, 2004.
———. “Zum Wahrheitsbegriff in den *Bella* des Prokopios von Kaisereia,” *Klio* 89 (2007): 465-76.
Brooker, Paul. *Non-Democratic Regimes: Theory, Government and Politics*. New York: St. Martin’s, 2000.
Brown, Peter. *Augustine of Hippo: A Biography*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1967.
———. *Through the Eye of a Needle: Wealth the Fall of Rome, and the Making of Christianity in the West, 350-550 A.D.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012.
Browning, Robert. *Medieval and Modern Greek*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983.
———. *Justinian and Theodora.* Piscataway: Gorgias Press, 2003.
———. “Education in the Roman Empire,” *CAH* (2) XIV, 855-83.
Brubaker, Leslie. “Sex, Lies and Textuality: The Secret History of Prokopios and the Rhetoric of Gender in Sixth-century Byzantium,” in *Gender in the Early Medieval World: East and West, 300-900*, edited by Leslie Brubaker and Julia M. H. Smith, 83-101. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
Brückner, Max. *Zur Beurteilung Des Geschichtschreibers Procopius von Cäsarea*. Ansbach, 1896.
Buck, D.F. “Dexippus, Eunapius, Olympiodorus: Continuation and Imitation.” *AHB* 1 (1987): 48-50.
Burrowes, Robert. “Totalitarianism: The Revised Standard Version.” *World Politics* 21 (1969): 289-294.
Burton, Paul. “George Orwell and the Classics.” *Classical and Modern Literature* 25 (2005): 53-75.
Bury, J.B. *History of the Later Roman Empire*. New York: Dover, 1958.
Cameron, Averil. “The ‘Scepticism’ of Procopius.” *Historia* 15 (1966): 466-82.
———. *Agathias*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970.
———. *Literature and Society in the Early Byzantine World*. London: Variorum, 1985.
———. *Procopius and the Sixth Century*. New York: Routledge, 1985.
———. *The Mediterranean World in Late Antiquity*. New York: Routledge, 1993.
———. “Remaking the Past.” In *Late Antiquity: A Guide to the Post Classical World*, edited by Glen W. Bowersock, Peter Brown, and Oleg Grabar, 1-20. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999.

———. Review of *Procopius of Caesarea: Tyranny, History and Philosophy at the End of Antiquity,* by Anthony Kaldellis. *AHR* 109 (2004): 1621.
———. “Justin I and Justinian.” *CAH* (2) XIV, 63-85.
———. “Vandal and Byzantine Africa,” *CAH* (2) XIV, 552-69.
Cameron, Averil, and Alan Cameron. “Christianity and Tradition in the Historiography of the Late Empire.” *CQ* (1964): 316-328.
Cameron, Averil, Bryan Ward-Perkins, and Michael Whitby, *The Cambridge Ancient History XIV, Late Antiquity: Empire and Successors, A.D. 425-600.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000.
Campbell, Brian. “Teach Yourself How to be a General.” *JRS* (1987): 13-29.
Canovan, Margaret. “The Leader and the Masses: Hannah Arendt on Totalitarianism and Dictatorship.” In *Dictatorship in History and Theory: Bonapartism, Caesarism, and Totalitarianism*, edited by Peter Baehr and Melvin Richter, 241-60. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
Cantor, Norman. *The Civilization of the Middle Ages: A Completely Revised and Expanded Edition of Medieval History*. New York, Harper Collins, 1993.
Carr, E.H. *What is History?* New York: Knopf, 1962.
Cataudella, M.R. “Historiography in the East.” In *Greek and Roman Historiography in Late Antiquity*, edited by Gabriele Marasco, 391-448. Leiden: Brill, 2003.
Cavallo, Guglielmo. “La circolazione libraria nell’età di Giustiniano.” In *L’imperatore Giustiniano: storia e mito*, edited by G.G. Archi, 201-36. Milan: A. Giuffrè, 1978.
———. “Between Volumen and Codex: Reading in the Roman World.” In *A History of Reading in the West*, edited by Guglielmo Cavallo and Roger Chartier, 64-89, Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 1999.
———. “L’altra Lettura. Tra Nuovi Libri e Nuovi Testi.” *Antiquité Tardive* 9 (2001): 131-8.
Cesa, Maria. “La Politica di Giustiniano Verso L'Occidente nel Giudizio di Procopio.” *Atheneum* 59 (1981): 389-409.
Chadwick, Henry. *Augustine: A Very Short Introduction.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.
———. *Augustine of Hippo: A Life*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
Chesnut, Glenn F. *The First Christian Historians: Eusebius, Socrates, Sozomen, Theodoret, and Evagrius.* Macon: Mercer University Press, 1986.
Clausewitz, Carl von. On War. Translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1976.

Clover, Frank M. *Flavius Merobaudes: A Translation and Historical Commentary*. Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1971.
Ian Colvin, “Reporting Battles and Understanding Campaigns in Procopius and Agathias: Classicising Historians’ Use of Archived Documents as Sources.” In *War and Warfare in Late Antiquity: Current Perspectives* II edited by Alexander Sarantis and Neil Christie, 571-597. Boston: Brill, 2013.
Conner, Elizabeth Mattingly. “Mapping a Late Antique Republic of Letters.” Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Maryland, 2014.
Connolly, Peter and Carol van Driel-Murray. “The Roman Cavalry Saddle.” *Britannia* 22 (1991): 33-50.
Connor, W. Robert. *Thucydides.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984.
Conybeare, F.C. “Ananias of Shirak (A.D. 600-650), On Easter.” *BZ* 6 (1897): 574-84.
Cornell, T.J. Review of *Clio’s Cosmetics* by T.P. Wiseman. *JRS* 72 (1982): 203-6.
Cosentino, S. “Syrianos' Strategikon - a 9th Century Source?” *Bizantinistica* 2 (2000): 262-80.
Coulston, J.C. “Roman Parthian and Sassanid Tactical Developments.” In *The Defence of the Roman and Byzantine East*, edited by P. Freeman and D.L. Kennedy, 59-75. Oxford: BAR, 1986.
Cribiore, Raffaella. *Gymnastics of the Mind: Greek Education in Hellenistic and Roman Egypt.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001.
Croke, Brian. “Justinian and the Ideology of Reconquest.” *Byzantine Studies in Australia Newsletter* 4 (1980): 1-2.
———. “Dating Theodoret’s *Church History* and *Commentary on the Psalms*,” *Byzantion* 54 (1984): 59-74.
———. “Malalas: The Man and his Work.” In *Studies in John Malalas* edited by Elizabeth Jeffreys, Brian Croke, and Roger Scott, 1-25. Sydney: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1990.
———. *Count Marcellinus and His Chronicle*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.
———. “Procopius’ Secret History: Rethinking the Date.” *GRBS* 45 (2005): 405-31.
———. “Uncovering Byzantium’s Historiographic Audience.” In *History as Literature in Byzantium*, edited by Ruth Macrides, 25-53. Burlington: Ashgate, 2010.
Curtis, Michael. “Retreat from Totalitarianism,” in *Totalitarianism in Perspective: Three Views*, edited by Carl J. Friedrich, Michael Curtis, Benjamin R. Barber, 53-122. New York, Praeger, 1969.
Dagron, Gilbert. *Emperor and Priest: The Imperial Office in Byzantium*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Dahn, Felix. *Procopius von Caesarea. Ein Beitrag Zur Historiographie der Völkerwanderung und Des Sinkenden Römerthums*. Berlin: Mittler, 1865.
Dain, Alphonse. “Les Stratégistes Byzantins.” *Travaux et Mémoires du Centre de Recherche d'Histoire et Civilisation Byzantines* 2 (1967): 317-392.
Delbrück, Hans. *History of the Art of War II: The Germans.* Westport: Greenwood Press, 1980.
Diehl, Charles. *Études Byzantines.* New York: B. Franklin, 1905.
Dignas, Beate, and Winter Engelbert, eds. *Rome and Persia in Late Antiquity: Neighbors and Rivals*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
Downey, Glanville. “The Composition of Procopius, De *Aedificiis*.” *TAPA* 78 (1947): 171-183.
———. “Paganism and Christianity in Procopius.” *Church History* 18 (1949): 89-102.
———. *Constantinople in the Age of Justinian* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1960)
———. *Gaza in the Sixth Century.* Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963.
Doyle, Michael. *Empires*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986.
Eadie, John W. “The Development of Roman Mailed Cavalry,” *JRS* 57 (1967): 161-73
Eckstein, Arthur. "The Classical Heritage of Airstrip One." In *The Revised Orwell*, edited by J. Rose, 97-116. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1992.
———. *Moral Vision in the Histories of Polybius*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.
———. *Mediterranean Anarchy, Interstate War, and the Rise of Rome*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006.
———. “Conceptualizing Roman Imperial Expansion Under the Republic: An Introduction.” In *A Companion to the Roman Republic*, edited by Nathan Rosenstein and Robert Morstein-Marx, 567-589. Malden: Blackwell, 2006.
Edmunds, Lowell. *Chance and Intelligence in Thucydides.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1975.
Elferink, M.A. “TÝXH et Dieu Chez Procope de Césarée.” *Acta Classica* 10 (1967): 111-34.
Elton, Hugh. *Warfare in Roman Europe 350-425.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996.
———. “Military Forces.” In *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare II: Rome from the Late Republic to the Late Empire*, edited by Philip Sabin, Hans Van Wees, and Michael Whitby, 270-309. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.

———. “Cavalry in Late Roman Warfare.” In *The Late Roman Army in the Near East from Diocletian to the Arab Conquest,* edited by A.S. Lewin and P. Pellegrini, 377-82. Oxford: BAR, 2007.
———. “Army and Battle in the Age of Justinian.” In *A Companion to the Roman Army*, edited by Paul Erdkamp, 532-550. Malden: Blackwell, 2011.
Evans, J.A.S. “Christianity and Paganism in Procopius of Caesarea.” *GRBS* 12 (1971): 81-100.
———. *Procopius*. New York: Twayne, 1972.
———. “The Attitudes of the Secular Historians of the Age of Justinian Towards the Classical Past.” *Traditio* 32 (1976): 353-58.
———. *The Age of Justinian: The Circumstances of Imperial Power*. New York: Routledge, 1996.
———. “The Dates of Procopius’ Works: A Recapitulation of the Evidence.” *GRBS* 37 (1996): 301-13.
Everett, Nicholas. “Literacy from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages.” In *The Cambridge Handbook of Literacy*, edited by David R. Olson and Nancy Torrance, 362-386. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
Fauber, Lawrence. *Narses: Hammer of the Goths*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1990.
Fatouros, Georgios. “Zur Prokop-Biographie.” *Klio* 62 (1980): 517-518.
Feldherr, Andrew ed. *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Historians.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
Finley, M.I. *Ancient History: Evidence and Models*. New York: Viking, 1986.
Fisher, Elizabeth A. “Theodora and Antonina in the Historia Arcana: History and/or Fiction?” *Arethusa* 11 (1978): 253-79.
Fitzpatrick, Sheila. “New Perspectives on Stalinism.” *The Russian Review* 45 (1986): 357-373.
Fornara, Charles. *The Nature of History in Greece and Rome*. Berkley, University of California Press, 1983.
———. “Studies in Ammianus Marcellinus I: The Letter of Libanius and Ammianus' Connection with Antioch.” *Historia* 41 (1992): 328-44.
———. “Studies in Ammianus Marcellinus: II: Ammianus' Knowledge and Use of Greek and Latin Literature.” *Historia* 41 (1992): 420-438.
Förster, Richard. “Studien zu den griechischen Taktikern.” *Hermes* 12 (1877): 426–471.
Frakes, Robert M. “Ammianus Marcellinus and his Intended Audience.” *Collection Latomus* 254 (2000): 392-442.
Frede, Michael. *A Free Will: Origins of the Notion in Ancient Thought*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011.
French, Peter A. *Cowboy Metaphysics: Ethics and Death in Westerns*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1997.

Friederich, C.J. and Z. K. Brzezinski. *Totalitarian Dictatorship and Autocracy*. New York: Praeger, 1961.
Fussel, Paul. *The Great War and Modern Memory*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1975.
Gador-Whyte, Sarah. "Procopius and Justinian's Propaganda." In Basilea: *Essays on* Imperium *and Culture in Honour of E.M. and M.J. Jeffreys*, edited by Geoffrey Nathan and Lynda Garland, 109-119. Brisbane: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 2011.
Gallagher, John and Ronald Robinson. "The Imperialism of Free Trade." *Economic History Review* 6 (1953): 1-15.
———. "The Partition of Africa." In *Imperialism: The Robinson and Gallagher Controversy*, edited by Wm. Roger Louis, 73-127. New York: New Viewpoints, 1976.
Geyer, Michael and Sheila Fitzpatrick. "Introduction: After Totalitarianism – Stalinism and Nazism Compared." In *Beyond Totalitarianism: Stalinism and Nazism Compared,* edited by Michael Geyer and Sheila Fitzpatrick, 1-37. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
Gibson, Craig A. "Learning Greek History in the Ancient Classroom: The Evidence of the Treatises on Progymnasmata." *CPhil*. 99 (2004): 103-129.
Gillett, Andrew. "The Date and Circumstances of Olympiodorus of Thebes." *Traditio* 48 (1993): 1-29.
Gilmer, James M. "Procopius of Caesarea: A Case Study in Imperial Criticism." *Byzantina Symmeikta* 23 (2013): 45-57.
Gleason, Abbott. *Totalitarianism: The Inner History of the Cold War.* New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
Goffart, Walter. "The Date and Purpose of Vegetius' '*De Re Militari.*'" *Traditio* 33 (1977): 65-100.
Grant, Michael. *Greek and Roman Historians: Information and Misinformation.* New York: Routledge, 1995.
Greatrex, Geoffrey. "The Two Fifth-Century Wars Between Rome and Persia," *Florilegium* 12 (1993): 1-14.
———. "The Dates of Procopius' Works." *BMGS* 18 (1994): 101-114.
———. "The Composition of Procopius' Persian Wars and John the Cappadocian." *Prudentia* 27 (1995): 1-13.
———. "Stephanus, the Father of Procopius of Caesarea?" *Medieval Prosopography* 17 (1996): 125-45.
———. "Flavius Hypatius, *Quem Vidit Validum Parthus Sensitque Timendum*, An Investigation of His Career." *Byzantion* 66 (1996): 120-142.
———. "Procopius the Outsider?" In *Strangers to Themselves: The Byzantine Outsider*, Dion Smythe, 215-28. Burlington: Ashgate, 1998.
———. *Rome and Persia at War*. Leeds: Francis Cairns, 1998.

———. “Lawyers and Historians in Late Antiquity.” In *Law, Society, and Authority in Late Antiquity*, edited by Ralph Mathieson, 148-61. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.
———. “Recent Work on Procopius and the Composition of Wars VIII.” *BMGS* 27 (2003): 45-67.
———. “The Date of Procopius’ Buildings in the Light of Recent Scholarship.” *Estudios Bizantinos* 1 (2013): 13-29.
———. “Perceptions of Procopius in Recent Scholarship.” *Histos* 8 (2014): 76-121.
Greatrex, Geoffrey and Samuel Lieu, eds. *The Roman Eastern Frontier and the Persian Wars Part II AD 363-630*. New York: Routledge, 2002.
Greatrex, Geoffrey, Hugh Elton, and Richard Burgess, “Urbicius’ *Epitedeuma*: An Edition, Translation and Commentary.” *BZ* 98 (2005): 35-74.
Gregory, Timothy E. *A History of Byzantium*. Malden: Blackwell, 2005.
Haldon, John. *Byzantine Praetorians: An Administrative, Institutional and Social Survey of the Opsikion and Tagmata, c. 580-900.* Bonn: Dr. Rudolf Habelt GMBH, 1984.
———. “Administrative Continuities and Structural Transformations in East Roman Military Organization c. 580–640.” In *State Army and Society in Byzantium,* V. Aldershot: Variorum, 1995.
———. “The *Ajnād* and the ‘Thematic Myth.’” In *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East III: States Resources and Armies,* edited by Averil Cameron, 379-423. Princeton: Darwin Press, 1995.
———. *War, State, and Society in the Byzantine World 565-1204.* London: UCL Press, 1999.
———. “Economy and Administration: How Did the Empire Work?” In *Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian*, edited by Michael Maas, 28-59. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
———. “Roman Frontiers and Foreign Policy in the East.” In *Aspects of the Roman East: Papers in Honour of Professor Fergus Millar FBA*, edited by Richard Alston and Samuel N.C. Lieu, 103-51.Turnhout: Brepols, 2007.
Halberstam, Michael. *Totalitarianism and the Modern Conception of Politics.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999.
Hannestad, Knud. “Les forces militaires d’après la Guerre Gothique de Procope.” *Classica et Mediaevalia* 21 (1960): 136-83.
Hardwick, Lorna and Christopher Stray. “Introduction: Making Connections,” in *A Companion to Classical Receptions*, edited by Hardwick and Stray. Malden: Blackwell, 2008.
Harris, William V. *Ancient Literacy.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989.
Haury, J. *Procopiana*. Augsburg: Haas and Grabherr, 1891.

———. *Zur Beurteilung Des Geschichtschreibers Procopius von Cäsarea*. Munich: H. Kutzner, 1896.
Heather, Peter. *The Goths*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1996.
_____. *The Fall of the Roman Empire: A New History*. London: Macmillan, 2005.
_____. *Empires and Barbarians: The Fall of Rome and the Birth of Europe.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.
_____. *The Restoration of Rome: Barbarian Popes and Imperial Pretenders*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.
Heuß, Alfred. “Das spätantike römische Reich kein «Zwangsstaat»? Von der Herkunft eines historischen Begriffs.” *Geschichte in Wissenschaft und Unterricht* 27 (1986): 603-618.
Hobsbawm, Eric. *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914-1991.* New York: Pantheon Books, 1994.
Holum, Kenneth G. “Pulcheria's Crusade A.D. 421-22 and the Ideology of Imperial Victory.” *GRBS* 18 (1977): 153-171.
_____. *Theodosian Empresses: Women and Imperial Dominion in Late Antiquity.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982.
_____. “The Classical City in the Sixth Century: Survival and Transformation,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian,* edited by Michael Maas, 87-112. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
Honore, Tony. *Tribonian*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978.
Howard-Johnston, James. “The Education and Expertise of Procopius.” *Antiquité Tardive* 8 (2000): 19-30.
Humphries, Mark. “International Relations.” In *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare II: Rome From the Late Republic to the Late Empire*, edited by Philip Sabin, Hans Van Wees, and Michael Whitby, 235-269. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
Hunger, Herbert. “On the Imitation (ΜΙΜΗΣΙΣ) of Antiquity in Byzantine Literature.” *Dumbarton Oaks Papers* 23/24 (1969/70): 15-38.
_____. *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner.* Munich: Beck, 1978.
_____. *Schreiben und Lesen in Byzanz: Die byzantinische Buchkultur.* Munich: C.H. Beck, 1989.
Hussey, J.M. *The Byzantine World*. New York: Harper, 1961.
Jeffreys, Elizabeth. “Malalas, Procopius, and Justinian’s Buildings.” *AnTard*. 8 (2000): 73-79.
_____. “The Beginning of Byzantine Chronography: John Malalas.” In *Greek and Roman Historiography in Late Antiquity*, edited by Gabriele Marasco, 497–527. Leiden: Brill, 2003.
Jenkins, Romilly. “The Hellenistic Origins of Byzantine Literature.” *DOP* 17 (1963): 37-52.

Jessup, John E. and Robert W. Coakley eds. *A Guide to the Study and Use of Military History*. Washington: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2004.

Jones, A.H.M. *The Later Roman Empire*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.

Jones, A. H. M., J. R. Martindale, and John Morris. *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*. Cambridge England: University Press, 1971-92.

Kaegi, Walter. *Byzantine Military Unrest 471-843: An Interpretation*. Amsterdam: Adolf M. Hakkert, 1981.

———. "Procopius the Military Historian." *Byzantinische Forschungen* 15 (1990): 53-85.

Kaldellis, Anthony. "Agathias on History and Poetry." *GRBS* 38 (1997): 295-305.

———. "Things Are Not What They Are: Agathias *Mythistoricus* and the Last Laugh of Classical Culture." *CQ* 53 (2003): 295-300.

———. "Classicism, Barbarism, and Warfare." *American Journal of Ancient History* 3 (2004): 189-218.

———. *Procopius of Caesarea: Tyranny, History, and Philosophy at the End of Antiquity*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.

———. "The Date and Structure of Procopius' *Secret History* and His Projected Work on Church History." *GRBS* 49 (2009) 585-616.

———. "Procopius' Persian War: A Thematic and Literary Analysis." In *History as Literature in Byzantium*, edited by Ruth Macrides, 253-73. Burlington: Ashgate, 2010.

———. *The Byzantine Republic: People and Power in New Rome*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015.

Kaster, Robert A. *Guardians of Language: The Grammarian and Society in Late Antiquity*. Berkely: University of California Press, 1988.

Kearney, James T. "Ammianus Marcellinus and his Roman Audience." Ph.D. Dissertation. University of Michigan, 1991.

Keegan, John. *The Face of Battle.* New York: Viking Press, 1976.

Kelly, Christopher. "Later Roman Bureaucracy: Going through the Files." In *Literacy and Power in the Ancient World*, edited by Alan K. Bowman and Greg Woolf, 161-176. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

———. *Ruling the Later Roman Empire*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004.

Kelly, Gavin. *Ammianus Marcellinus: The Allusive Historian*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

———. "Ammianus Marcellinus: Tacitus' Heir and Gibbons Guide." In *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Historians,* edited by Andrew Feldherr, 348-61. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009.

Kennedy, George Alexander. *Greek Rhetoric under Christian Emperors*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983.
Kenney, E.J., ed. *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature II, 5: The Later Principate*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1982.
Kershaw, Ian. *The Nazi Dictatorship: Problems and Perspectives of Interpretation.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
Kislinger, Ewald "Ein Angriff zu viel." *BZ* 91 (1998): 49-58.
Kotkin, Stephen. *Magnetic Mountain: Stalinism as a Civilization*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.
Kouroumali, Maria. "Procopius and the Gothic War." D.Phil. Thesis. Oxford University, 2005.
Krumbacher, Karl. *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur von Justinian bis zum Ende des oströmischen Reiches (527-1453)*. Munich: C.H. Beck, 1897.
Lattimore, Richmond. "The Wise Adviser in Herodotus." *CP* 34 (1939): 24-35.
Lee, A.D. *Information and Frontiers: Roman Foreign Relations in Late Antiquity.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
———. "The Empire at War." In *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian*, edited by Michael Maas, 113-33. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
Lemerle, Paul. *Byzantine Humanism, The First Phase: Notes and Remarks on Education and Culture in Byzantium from its Origins to the 10th Century*. Canberra: Australian Association for Byzantine Studies, 1986.
Lendon, J.E. *Empire of Honour: The Art of Government in the Roman World.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2002.
———. *Soldiers and Ghosts: A History of Battle in Classical Antiquity.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005.
———. "Historians Without History: Against Roman Historiography." In *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Historians*, edited by Andrew Feldherr, 41-61. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
Leroux, Georges. "Human Freedom in the Thought of Plotinus," in *The Cambridge Companion to Plotinus*, edited by Lloyd P. Gerson, 292-314. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
Liebeschuetz, J.H.W.G. *The Decline and Fall of the Roman City.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.
———. "Pagan Historiography and the Decline of Empire." In *Greek and Roman Historiography in Late Antiquity*, edited by Gabriele Marasco, 177-218. Leiden: Brill, 2003.
Linz, J.J. *Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes*. Boulder: Rienner, 2000.
Litsas, Fotios. "Choricius Of Gaza: An Approach to His Work." Ph.D. diss. University of Chicago, 1980.

Ljubarskij, Jakov N. “New Trends in the Study of Byzantine Historiography.” *DOP* 47 (1993): 131-38.
Louth, Andrew. “The Eastern Empire in the Sixth Century,” *CMH* (2) I, 91-117.
Luttwak, Edward N. *The Grand Strategy of the Byzantine Empire*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009.
Ma, John. *Antiochus III and the Greek Cities of Western Asia Minor*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
Maas, Michael. *John Lydus and the Roman Past*. New York: Routledge, 1992.
Maenchen-Helfen, Otto. *The World of the Huns: Studies in Their History and Culture.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973.
MacMullen, Ramsay. *Soldier and Civilian in the Later Roman Empire*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967.
Mango, Cyril. *Byzantine Literature as a Distorting Mirror*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975.
———. “Discontinuity with the Classical Past in Byzantium.” In *Byzantium and the Classical Tradition*, edited by Margaret Mullet and Roger Scott. Birmingham: Center for Byzantine Studies, University of Birmingham, 1981.
———. *Byzantium: The Empire of New Rome.* New York: Charles Scribener’s Sons, 1980.
Mann, Michael. *Fascists.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
———. *The Sources of Social Power 4: Globalizations 1945-2011*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
Marciniak, Premyslaw. “Byzantine Theatron – A Place of Performance?” In *Theatron: Rhetorische Kultur in Spätantike und Mittelalter/Rhetorical Culture in Late Antiquity and the Middle Ages*, edited by Michael Grünbart, 277-85. New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2007.
Marincola, John. *Authority and Tradition in Ancient Historiography*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997.
Marincola, John ed. *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography*. Malden: Blackwell, 2007.
Marincola, John ed. *Greek and Roman Historiography* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).
Mattern, Susan. *Rome and the Enemy: Imperial Strategy in the Principate*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.
Matthews, John. “Olympiodorus of Thebes and the History of the West (A.D. 407-425).” *JRS* 60 (1970): 79-97.
———.*The Roman Empire of Ammianus Marcellinus.* Ann Arbor: Michigan Classical Press, 2007.
Maxwell, Jaclyn L. *Christianization and Communication in Late Antiquity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006.

Mehl, Andreas. *Roman Historiography: An Introduction to its Basic Aspects and Development*. Malden: Blackwell, 2011.
Meier, Mischa. “Das späte römische Kaiserreich ein ‘Zwangsstaat’? Anmerkungen zu einer Forschungskontroverse.” *Electrum* 9 (2003): 193-213.
———. *Justinian: Herrschaft, Reich und Religion*. Munich: C.H. Beck, 2004.
Mellor, Ronald. *The Roman Historians.* New York: Routledge, 1999.
Merrills, Andy and Richard Miles. *The Vandals*. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.
Millar, Fergus. *A Greek Roman Empire: Power and Belief under Theodosius II 408-450.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006.
Mitchell, Stephen. *A History of the Later Roman Empire*. Malden: Blackwell, 2007.
Momigliano, Arnaldo. *The Conflict Between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963.
———. *Essays in Ancient and Modern Historiography*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1977.
———. “The Rhetoric of History and the History of Rhetoric.” *Comparative Criticism* 3 (1981): 259-269.
Mommsen, Theodor. *Abriss des römischen Staatsrechts*. Leipzig: Duncker and Humblot, 1893.
Moorhead, John. *Justinian*. New York: Longman, 1994.
———. “The Byzantines in the West in the Sixth Century,” *CMH* (2) I, 118-139.
Murray, Williamson. “Clausewitz Out, Computer In: Military Culture and Technological Hubris.” *National Interest* 48 (1997): 57-64.
Naudé, C.P.T. “Fortuna in Ammianus Marcellinus.” *Acta Classica* 7 (1964): 70-89.
Nicassie, M.J. *Twilight of Empire: The Roman Army from the Reign of Diocletian Until the Battle of Adrianople.* Amsterdam: J.C. Gieben, 1998.
O’Donnell, G. *Modernization and Bureaucratic Authoritarianism: Studies in South American Politics*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979.
O’Donnell, James. *Augustine: A New Biography*. New York: Harper Collins, 2005.
———. *The Ruin of the Roman Empire: A New History*. New York: Harper Collins, 2008.
Ober, Josiah. “Thucydides Theoretikos/Thucydides Histor: Realist Theory and the Challenge of History.” In *War and Democracy: A Comparative Study of the Korean War and the Peloponnesian War*, edited by David R. McCann and Barry S. Strauss, 273-306. Armonk: M.E. Sharpe, 2001.

Oman, C.W.C. *The Art of War in the Middle Ages, A.D. 378-1515*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1953.
Orwell, George. *Collected Essays*. London: Secker & Warburg, 1961.
Ostrogorsky, George. *History of the Byzantine State.* New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1969.
Paschoud, Francois. *Cinq etudes sur Zosime.* Paris: Belles Lettres, 1975.
Pazdernik, Charles. "A Dangerous Liberty and a Servitude Free from Care: Political *Eleutheria* and *Douleia* in Procopius of Caesarea and Thucydides of Athens." Ph.D. diss. Princeton, 1997.
———. "Procopius and Thucydides on the Labors of War: Belisarius and Brasidas in the Field." *TAPA* 130 (2000): 149–187.
———. "Justinianic Ideology and the Power of the Past." In *Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian*, edited by Michael Maas, 185-212. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
Perlmutter, Amos. *Modern Authoritarianism*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1981.
Phang, Sara Elise. "Military Documents, Languages, and Literacy." In *A Companion to Roman Army,* edited by Paul Erdkamp, 286-305. Malden: Blackwell, 2011.
Pitcher, Luke. *Writing Ancient History: An Introduction to Classical Historiography.* London: Tauris and Co, 2009.
Plass, Paul. *Wit & Writing of History: The Rhetoric of Historiography in Imperial Rome*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1988.
Rapp, Claudia. "Literary Culture Under Justinian." In *Cambridge Companion to the Age of Justinian*, edited by Michael Maas, 376-97. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
Rance, Philip. "The *Fulcum*, the Late Roman and Byzantine Testudo: The Germanization of Roman Infantry Tactics?" *GRBS* 44 (2004): 265-326.
———. "Narses and the Battle of Taginae (Busta Gallorum) 552: Procopius and Sixth-Century Warfare." *Historia* 54 (2005): 424-472.
———. "The Date of the Military Compendium of Syrianus Magister (formerly the Sixth-Century Anonymous Byzantinus)." *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 100 (2007): 701-737.
———. "Battle." In *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare II: Rome from the Late Republic to the Late Empire*, edited by Philip Sabin, Hans Van Wees, and Michael Whitby, 342-378. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
Rhodes, P.J. "In Defence of the Greek Historians." *Greece and Rome* 41 (1994): 156-171.
Richlin, Amy. *Rome and the Mysterious Orient: Three Plays by Plautus.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.
Ridley, Ronald T. "Zosimus the Historian," *Byzantinische Zeitschrift* 65 (1972): 277-302.

Rike, R.L. *Apex Omnium: Religion in the* Res Gestae *of Ammianus Marcellinus*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987.

Robinson, Ronald. “Non-European Foundations of European Imperialism: Sketch for a Theory of Collaboration.” In *Imperialism: The Robinson and Gallagher Controversy*, edited by Wm. Roger Louis, 128-151. New York: New Viewpoints, 1976.

Rocques, Denis. “Histoire et rhétorique dans l’oeuvre de Procope de Césarée: Procope est-il historien?” in *Categorie linguistiche e concettuali delle storiografia bizantina*, edited by U. Criscuolo and R. Maisano, 9-39 Naples: Associazione Italiana di Studi Bizantini, 2000.

Rohrbacher, David. *The Historians of Late Antiquity*. New York: Routledge, 2002.

———. “Ammianus’ Roman Digressions.” In *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography,* edited by John Marincola, 468-73. Malden: Blackwell, 2011.

Rosenqvist, Jan Olaf. *Die byzantinische Literatur: vom 6. Jahrhundert bis zum Fall Konstantinopels 1453.* New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2007.

Rostovtzeff, Michael. *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957.

Rubin, Berthold. *Prokopios von Kaisareia.* Stuttgart: Alfred Druckenmüller Verlag, 1954.

———. *Das Zeitalter Iustinians.* New York: De Gruyter, 1995.

Rubin, Ze’ev. “The Mediterranean and the Dilemma of the Roman Empire in Late Antiquity.” *Mediterranean Historical Review* 1 (1986):13-62.

Sabbah, Guy. “Ammianus Marcellinus.” In *Greek and Roman Historiography in Late Antiquity: Fourth to Sixth Century A.D.* edited by Gabriele Marasco, 43-84. Leiden: Brill, 2003.

Sarris, Peter. *Empires of Faith: The Fall of Rome to the Rise of Islam 500-700.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Schapiro, Leonard. *Totalitarianism*. New York: MacMillan, 1972.

Schumpeter, Joseph. “The Sociology of Imperialisms.” In *Imperialism and Social Classes*, edited by Paul M. Sweezy. New York: Augustus M. Kelley Inc., 1951.

Scott, Roger. “The Classical Tradition in Byzantine Historiography.” In *Byzantium and the Classical Tradition*, edited by Margaret Mullett and Roger Scott, 61-74. Birmingham: Centre for Byzantine Studies, 1981.

———. “Malalas, The Secret History and Justinian’s Propaganda.” *DOP* 39 (1985): 99-109.

———. “Justinian’s Coinage and Easter Reforms and the Date of the *Secret History*.” *BMGS* 11 (1987): 215-221.

———. *Byzantine Chronicles and the Sixth Century*. Burlington: Ashgate, 2012.

Shahid, Irfan. “Heraclius and the Theme System: New Light From the Arabic.” *Byzantion* 57 (1987): 391-406.
———. “Heraclius and the Theme System: Further Observations.” *Byzantion* 59 (1989): 208-243.
———. “Heraclius and the Unfinished Themes of Oriens: Some Final Observations.” *Byzantion* 64 (1994): 352-376.
———. “The Thematization of Oriens: Final Observations.” *Byzantion* 72 (2002): 192-249.
Signes Codoñer, Juan. “Prokops *Anecdota* und Justinians Nachfolge.” *JÖBS* 53 (2003): 47-82.
Southern, Pat and Karen Dixon. *The Late Roman Army.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996.
Soyter, G. “Die Glaubwürdigkeit des Geschichtschreibers Prokopios Von Kaisareia.” BZ 44 (1951): 541-545.
Spaulding, Oliver L. “The Ancient Military Writers.” *Classical Journal* 28 (1933): 657-669.
Spiro, Herbert J. “Totalitarianism.” In *The International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* Vol. 16, edited by David Sills, 106-113. New York: MacMillan, 1968.
Starr, Raymond J. “The Circulation of Literary Texts in the Roman World.” *CQ* 37 (1987): 213-23.
———. “Reading Aloud: *Lectores* and Roman Reading.” *CJ* 86 (1991): 337-43.
Stein, Ernest, *Histoire du Bas-Empire II: De la Disparition de l’Empire d’Occident a la Mort de Justinien (476-565)*. Amsterdam: Hakkert, 1968.
Strauss, Leo. “Persecution and the Art of Writing.” *Social Research: An International Quarterly of Political and Social Science* 8 (1941): 488-504.
Sullivan, Denis F. “Byzantine Military Manuals: Prescriptions, Practice, Pedagogy.” In *The Byzantine World*, edited by Paul Stephenson, 149-161. New York: Routledge, 2010.
Sumida, Jon Tetsuro. *Decoding Clausewitz.* Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 2008.
Syme, Ronald. *Tacitus*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1958.
———. *Ammianus and the Historia Augusta*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968.
Syvänne, Ilka. *The Age of Hippotoxotai: Art of War in Roman Military Revival and Disaster (491-636).* Tampere: Tampere University Press, 2004.
Talmon, J.L. *The Origins of Totalitarian Democracy.* New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1970.
———. *Political Messianism: The Romantic Phase.* New York: Praeger, 1960.
Thompson, E.A. “Priscus of Panium, Fragment I b,” *CQ* 39 (1945): 92-4.

———. *The Historical Work of Ammianus Marcellinus.* Groningen: Bouma's Boekhaus, 1969.
———. *Romans and Barbarians: The Decline of the Western Empire*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1982.
Treadgold, Warren. *Byzantium and Its Army, 284–1081*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1995.
———. "The Diplomatic Career and Historical Work of Olympiodorus of Thebes," *International History Review* 26 (2004): 709-33.
———. *The Early Byzantine Historians*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010.
Trigger, Bruce G. *Understanding Early Civilizations: A Comparative Study.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003.
Ure, P.N. *Justinian and His Age*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1951.
Veh, Otto. *Zur Geschichtsschreibung und Weltauffassung des Prokop von Caesarea*. Bayreuth: 1950/51.
Veyne, Paul. Introduction to *A History of Private Life: From Pagan Rome to Byzantium.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992.
Vitiello, Massimiliano. *Theodahad: A Platonic King at the Collapse of Ostrogothic Italy.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014.
Walbank, F. W. *Polybius*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972.
Waltz, Kenneth. *Theory of International Politics.* Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1979.
Whately, Conor C. "Indiscipline in the Sixth Century Historiography of Generals." In *Beyond the Battlefields: New Perspectives on Warfare and Society in the Graeco-Roman World*, edited by Edward Bragg, Lisa Irene Hau, and Elizabeth Macauley-Lewis, 241-58. Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2008.
———. "Descriptions of Battle in the Wars of Procopius." Ph.D. diss. University of Warwick, 2009.
———. "Militarization, or the Rise of a Distinct Military Culture? The East Roman Ruling Elite in the 6th Century A.D." In *Warfare and Society in the Ancient Eastern Mediterranean: Papers Arising from a Colloquium Held at the University of Liverpool, 13 June 2008,* edited by Stephen O'Brien and Daniel Boatwright, 49-57. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013.
———. "War in Late Antiquity: Secondary Works, Literary Sources and Material Evidence."In *War and Warfare in Late Antiquity: Current Perspectives*, edited by Alexander Sarantis and Neil Christie, 101-51. Boston: Brill, 2013.
———. *Battles and Generals: Combat, Culture, and Didacticism in Procopius'* Wars. Leiden: Brill, 2016.
Wheeler, Everett. "The Legion as Phalanx." *Chiron* 9 (1979): 303-318.
———. "Firepower: Missile Weapons and the 'Face of Battle.'" *Electrum* 5 (2001): 169–84.

———. “The Legion as Phalanx in the Late Empire, Part I.” In *L’Armée Romaine de Dioclétien à Valentinien Ier, Actes du IIIe congrès de Lyon sur l’armée romaine,* edited by Yann LeBohec, 309-358. Lyon: Centre d'etudes et de recherche sur l'Occident romain, 2004.
———. “The Legion as Phalanx in the Late Empire, Part II.” *Revue des Études Militaires Anciennes* 1 (2004): 147-175.
———. “Greece: Mad Hatters and March Hares.” In *Recent Directions in the Military History of the Ancient World*, edited by Lee L. Brice and Jennifer T. Roberts 53–104. Claremont: Association of Ancient Historians, 2011.
Whitby, Michael. “Justinian’s Bridge Over the Sangarius and the Date of Procopius’ *de Aedificiis*.” *JHS* 105 (1985): 141-147.
———. *The Emperor Maurice and His Historian: Theophylact Simocatta on Persian and Balkan Warfare*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1988.
———. “Recruitment in Roman Armies from Justinian to Heraclius (ca. 565-615).” In *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East III: States Resources and Armies*, edited by Averil Cameron, 61-124. Princeton: Darwin Press, 1995.
White, Hayden. *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1985.
White, Lynn. *Medieval Technology and Social Change.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962.
Wickham, Chris. *Framing the Early Middle Ages: Europe and the Mediterranean 400-800*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
Wiita, John. “The Ethnika in Byzantine Military Treatises.” Ph.D. diss. University of Minnesota, 1977.
Wilson, N.G. “Books and Readers in Byzantium.” In *Byzantine Books and Bookmen*, edited by Ihor Ševčenko and Cyril A. Mango, 2-15. Washington: Dumbarton Oaks, 1975.
———. *Scholars of Byzantium.* London: Duckworth, 1996.
Winsbury, Rex. *The Roman Book: Books, Publishing, and Performance in Ancient Rome.* London: Duckworth, 2009.
Wiseman, T.P. *Clio’s Cosmetics: Three Studies in Greco-Roman Literature.* Ottowa: Rowman and Littlefield, 1979.
Wittfogel, Karl A. *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957.
Wolfram, Herwig. *History of the Goths*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988.
Woodman, A.J. *Rhetoric in Classical Historiography*. Portland: Areopagitica Press, 1988.
Zuckerman, Constantine. “The Military Compendium of Syrianus Magister,” *Jahrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik* 40 (1990): 209-224.