



PROCOPIUS OF
CAESAREA
THE PERSIAN WARS

A Historical Commentary



GEOFFREY GREATREX

PROCOPIUS OF CAESAREA:
THE PERSIAN WARS

Procopius was the major historian of the reign of Justinian and one of the most important historians of Late Antiquity. This is the first extensive commentary on his *Persian Wars* since the nineteenth century. The work is among the most varied of the author, incorporating the history and geography not only of Mesopotamia and the Caucasus, but also of southern Arabia and Ethiopia, Iran and Central Asia, and Constantinople itself. Each major section is introduced by a section on the history of the events concerned and on the treatment of these events by Procopius and other sources. The volume is equipped with an introduction, three appendices, and numerous maps and plans. All sections of the work that are commented on are translated. The book will therefore be of use to specialists and the general reader alike. A complete translation of the work, with lighter annotation, is being published separately.

GEOFFREY GREATREX is a Professor in the Department of Classics and Religious Studies at the University of Ottawa and President of the Canadian Committee of Byzantinists. He has spent the past thirty years in research on the late Roman eastern frontier, much of it concerned with the work of Procopius, and has published extensively on the subject.

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For Liz and Globe

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Preface

This commentary originates in an Oxford DPhil thesis submitted and defended in 1994, which limited itself to the first book of *The Persian Wars* (and not even all of that). I remain indebted to James Howard-Johnston for his inspirational supervision; he has continued since then to provide useful advice and learned offprints. A large part of the thesis was published as a monograph in 1998 (Greatrex 1998a), while a chapter that was omitted from it appeared as an article on the Nika riot in 1997 (Greatrex 1997); several other pieces on Procopius appeared in various journals around this time. I then turned aside from this source, expecting that someone else – such as Henning Börm, whose excellent study of Procopius and Persia appeared in 2007 – would produce a commentary on the work. Since nothing had appeared by 2011, however, I determined to return to the text and to attempt to provide a commentary to a work that has attracted increasing attention in recent years. With the assistance of a grant from SSHRC (the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada) and two years of sabbatical at Robinson College, Cambridge (2013–14, 2018–19), I have at last, after ten years' work, been able to complete the project.

Such an enterprise as this, which spans a geographical area from the Caucasus to Ethiopia and Southern Arabia and from the Balkans and Constantinople to eastern Iran, would be inconceivable without the assistance of many learned colleagues. I am most grateful to the following people for their willingness to answer questions on a wide range of topics: Rhiannon Ash, Ghuzal Badamshina, Jonathan Bardill, Franco Basso, Christoph Begass, Albrecht Berger, Yann Le Bohec, Henning Börm, Michael Jackson Bonner, Wolfram Brandes, Gunnar Brands, Jan Bremmer, Dariusz Brodka, Theo de Bruyn, Richard Burgess, Marie-Pierre Bussi  res, Averil Cameron, Giorgi Cheishvili, Juan Signes Codo  ner, Ian Colvin, Simon Corcoran, Dominique C  t  , Brian Croke, Simon Davies, Eleanor Dickey, Jitse Dijkstra, Jan Willem Drijvers, Hugh

Elton, Jeffrey Featherstone, Denis Feissel, Luise Frenkel, Jaakko Hämeen-Anttila, Catharine Hof, Mélanie Houle, James Howard-Johnston, Robert Hoyland, Emanuele Intagliata, Simon James, Sylvain Janniard, Anthony Kaldellis, Doug Lee, Toni Lefkowitz, Hartmut Leppin, Sam Lieu, Chris Lillington-Martin, Cyril and Marlia Mango, Lucas McMahon, Andy Marsham, Laura Mecella, Mischa Meier, Raymond Mercier, Fergus Millar, Ekaterina Nechaeva, Peter van Nuffelen, Robin Osborne, David Parnell, Maxime Petitjean, Rob Phenix, Pierluigi Piovaneli, Philomen Probert, Philip Rance, Steven Rapp, Christian Robin, Christian Sahner, Catherine Saliou, Benet Salway, Alexander Sarantis, Peter Sarris, Teresa Shawcross, Nicholas Sims-Williams, Hans Teitler, Kamilla Twardowska, Étienne de la Vaissière, Nigel Westbrook, Mary Whitby, Michael Whitby, Josef Wiesehöfer, Philip Wood and Constantin Zuckerman. I should also like to express my thanks to Barbara Docherty for her attentive copy-editing and to Michael Sharp at Cambridge University Press for his faith in the project over its long duration. Naturally I should add that the mistakes that undoubtedly remain are mine rather than theirs; I apologise equally to those whose name I may have omitted by inadvertence from this list. My doctoral student JaShong King prepared most of the maps and deserves a special mention for his assistance. I must also thank one of our former students in the department in Ottawa, Caroline Bélanger, for preparing the index locorum as well as spotting various inconsistencies in references, as also Scott Winges for his work on the other indices.

This is the first extensive commentary on a work of Procopius in any language for over a century. The only recent competitor in terms of scope would be Denis Roques' 2011 translation and commentary on the *Buildings*, but even its notes are quite limited. Berthold Rubin's commentary on all Procopius' works, published both as a separate volume and in Pauly's *Realencyclopädie* is a remarkable achievement, but inevitably relatively cursory. The first commentary on *The Persian Wars* was produced in 1876–80 by Gabriel Destunis in St Petersburg; the accompanying translation was the work of his brother, Spyridon. It is a lengthy, erudite and detailed work, published in two volumes, which features three separate layers on certain pages, the top being a translation, the middle providing notes, while the bottom consists of footnotes to the notes; yet it has left little trace in subsequent scholarship.¹ Modern translations, discussed briefly below, naturally provide only brief notes. There is now, however, a

¹ Even the new Russian translation of A. Chekalova does not appear to mention it. On Russian work on Procopius, see Nechaeva 2022.

flurry of publications on Procopius. Commentaries on nearly all the works are in progress; I have been fortunate to have been able to consult that being prepared by Rene Pfeilschifter and Johann Thesz in Würzburg on the *Anecdota*. Once this appears, they intend to move on to the *Vandalic* and *Gothic Wars*; the latter may also be dealt with by Dariusz Brodka (Cracow). Meanwhile a team in Mainz under Marietta Horster is devoting itself to the *Buildings*. At last Procopius is receiving his due.

This Commentary will be published at the same time as a separate translation of the whole of *The Persian Wars*, which constitute the first two volumes of Procopius' *Wars*, the first new translation in English for over a hundred years, one might say, since Dewing's Loeb translation (vol.1) appeared first in 1914. But in fact such an assertion would not be strictly accurate for two reasons. First, Averil Cameron published in 1967 a paperback translation of significant extracts from the *Persian* and *Gothic Wars*, the *Anecdota* and the *Buildings*. With her kind permission I have used this translation as the basis of my own; it is a great shame that it was never widely available because the press that published it disappeared soon afterwards. Second, Anthony Kaldellis in 2014 brought out a one-volume translation of the *Wars* which, while ostensibly a revision of Dewing's, is almost a new work in itself. Naturally I have taken it into account, as also the German translation of Veh, the Spanish one of García Romero, and the Polish one of Brodka; I have equally been fortunate to be able to consult a forthcoming new French translation by Janick Auberger. All translations in the present volume are naturally drawn from the full translation published concurrently with this Commentary.

This work is deliberately subtitled *A Historical Commentary*: its focus is squarely on the events narrated by Procopius, seeking to clarify them and to put them in context, rather as my commentary to Pseudo-Zachariah of Mytilene did for this unusual chronicle (or church history). As an undergraduate and later I have frequently turned to commentaries to elucidate a text, e.g. Gomme, Andrewes and Dover's five-volume commentary on Thucydides and F.W. Walbank's three-volume commentary on Polybius. I am therefore well aware of the high standards that have been attained in this genre of classical scholarship by scholars of an erudition that I cannot hope to match. I have tried nonetheless to include also discussions on stylistic and literary elements which, I hope, will encourage further work on Procopius' style; already graduate students are beginning to examine his work from a more literary perspective. I have undertaken this task not so much because I believe I am the

most qualified person to do so but rather because it seemed to me such an obvious *desideratum* in Procopian studies. As Tony Woodman has observed, commentaries are too often looked down upon when hiring decisions are made, as also in research assessment exercises; younger scholars are therefore justifiably hesitant to embark on such enterprises.² As for whether what I have produced does indeed render a useful service to the field, ‘Let each person say as he thinks fit about it’, as Procopius would put it.³

² Woodman 2012, 395–9.

³ Quotation from ii.22.5, though I have changed ‘man’ to ‘person’ here. The final touches to the Commentary were made in early January 2021, but inevitably some bibliography will have escaped my notice.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful, as noted in the Preface, to Averil Cameron for her permission to adapt and complete her translation of 1967. This was published by the Washington Square Press, which is an imprint of Simon and Schuster, it should be noted, but has long been unavailable.

I should like to express my gratitude also for permission to adapt several plans:

- Elif Keser-Kayaalp and Nihat Erdoğan for the plan of Dara (fig. 28)
- Grégoire Poccardi and Catherine Saliou for the plan of Antioch (fig. 27)
- John Watt and Liverpool University Press for the plan of Edessa, which is based on map IV in J. Watt and F. Trombley, *The Chronicle of Joshua the Stylite* (Liverpool, 1999) (fig. 29)
- Fig. 9 is adapted with permission from Christopher Lillington-Martin.
- Fig. 10 is adapted with permission from Andrew Brozyna.
- Figs. 11–16 and 20 are adapted with permission from Maxime Petitjean.

The work of producing and adapting the maps was carried out for the most part, as noted above, by JaShong King, but I must also thank Catharine Hof for her adaptation of the city plans of Amida, Antioch, Dara and Edessa. Ross Burns kindly provided fig. 26, which shows the road network in the Roman East, while Jonathan Bardill likewise prepared fig. 22, the map of Constantinople at the time of the Nika riot.

Abbreviations

References to ‘See under primary sources’ are to the Bibliography, pp. 687–772.

<i>AASS</i>	<i>Acta Sanctorum</i> , 71 vols. Paris and Brussels, 1863–1940.
<i>ACO</i>	<i>Acta Conciliorum Oecumenicorum</i> , ed. E. Schwartz et al., 4 vols. Berlin and Leipzig, 1922–74; ser.2, ed. R. Riedinger. Berlin, 1984–.
<i>ANRW</i>	H. Temporini and W. Haase, eds., <i>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt</i> . Berlin, 1972–97.
Asheri, <i>CH</i>	D. Asheri, A. Lloyd and A. Corcella, ed. O. Murray and A. Moreno, <i>A Commentary on Herodotus</i> , vol.1. Oxford, 2007.
<i>BDAG</i>	F. Montanari, <i>Brill’s Dictionary of Ancient Greek</i> . Leiden, 2015.
<i>BNJ</i>	I. Worthington, ed., <i>Brill’s New Jacoby</i> . Leiden, 2017 (on-line).
Brodka	D. Brodka, tr., <i>Prokopiusz z Cezarei. Historia Wojen</i> , vol.1. Cracow, 2013.
<i>CAHX</i>	A. Bowman, E. Champlin and A. Lintott, eds., <i>The Cambridge Ancient History</i> ² , vol.10. Cambridge, 1996.
<i>CAH XII</i>	A. Bowman, P. Garnsey and Averil Cameron, eds., <i>The Cambridge Ancient History</i> ² , vol.12. Cambridge, 2005.
<i>CAH XIV</i>	Averil Cameron, B. Ward-Perkins and M. Whitby, eds., <i>The Cambridge Ancient History</i> , vol.14. Cambridge, 2000.
<i>Caucaso</i>	<i>Il Caucaso: Cerniera fra culture dal Mediterraneo alla Persia in Settimane di Studio del centro Italiano di studi sull’ alto medioevo</i> 43, 2 vols., 1996.
CFHB	Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae.

- CGCG E. van Emde Boas, A. Rijksbaron, L. Huitink and M. de Bakker, *The Cambridge Grammar of Classical Greek*. Cambridge, 2019.
- CHGRW P. Sabin, H. van Wees and M. Whitby, eds., *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare*, 2 vols. Cambridge, 2007.
- CHr E. Yarshater, ed., *The Cambridge History of Iran*, vol.3. Cambridge, 1983.
- CIH *Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum*, Pars Quarta, *Inscriptiones himyariticas et sabaeas continens*, 3 vols. Paris, 1889–1929.
- CPW M. and M. Whitby, tr., *Chronicon Paschale 284–628 AD*, TTH. Liverpool, 1989.
- Craveri M. Craveri, tr., *Procopio di Cesarea: Le guerre*. Turin, 1977.
- CSCO Corpus Scriptorum Christianorum Orientalium. Louvain, 1903–.
- CSHB Corpus Scriptorum Historiae byzantinae. Bonn, 1828–97.
- Dewing See Proc. under primary sources.
- Dewing–Kaldellis See Proc. under primary sources.
- DHGE *Dictionnaire d'Histoire et de Géographie Ecclésiastiques*. Paris, 1912–.
- DRBE P. Freeman and D. Kennedy, eds., *The Defence of the Roman and Byzantine East*, 2 vols. Oxford, 1986.
- EAE S. Uhlig and B. Yimam, eds., *Encyclopaedia Aethiopica*, 5 vols. Wiesbaden, 2003–14.
- EP *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, 2nd edition, 11 vols. Leiden, 1960–2002.
- EIr E. Yarshater, ed., *Encyclopaedia Iranica*. London, 1985–.
- EME *Early Medieval Europe*.
- ERA Y. Le Bohec, ed., *The Encyclopedia of the Roman Army*, 3 vols. Oxford, 2015.
- FCH R.C. Blockley, ed. and tr., *The Fragmentary Classicising Historians of the Later Roman Empire*, 2 vols. Liverpool, 1981–3.
- FGrHist F. Jacoby et al., eds., *Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*. Berlin and Leiden, 1923–99.
- FHG *Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum*, vols.4–5. ed. C. Müller. Paris, 1851–70.

- FHN* T. Eide, T. Hägg, R.H. Pierce and L. Török, eds., *Fontes Historiae Nubiorum, Textual Sources for the History of the Middle Nile Region between the Eighth Century B.C. and the Sixth Century A.D.* vol.3, *From the First to the Sixth Century A.D.* Bergen, 1998.
- Fiey, SS J.M. Fiey, ed. L. Conrad, *Les saints syriaques*. Princeton, 2004.
- García F.A. García Romero, tr. and comm., *Procopio de Cesarea: Historia de las guerras, libros I–II, guerra persa*. Madrid, 2000.
- Romero
- Haury J. Haury, ed., Procopius, *De bellis*, vol.1, rev. G. Wirth. Leipzig, 1962.
- HCT* A. Gomme, A. Andrewes and K. Dover, eds., *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides*, 5 vols. Oxford, 1945–81.
- CT*
- Hornblower, S. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides*, 3 vols. Oxford, 1991–2008.
- Hoyland, R. Hoyland, *The 'History of the Kings of the Persians' in HKP Three Arabic Chronicles*, TTH. Liverpool, 2018.
- IGLS* *Inscriptions grecques et latines de la Syrie*, ed. L. Jalabert, P. Mouterde et al. Paris, 1929–.
- Lampe G.H.W. Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*. Oxford, 1961.
- LBG* *Lexikon zur byzantinischen Gräzität*, ed. E. Trapp, 2 vols. Vienna, 2001–17.
- LSJ* H.G. Liddell and R. Scott, rev. H.S. Jones, R. McKenzie et al., *A Greek–English Lexicon*. Oxford, 1996.
- MalKom *Historisch-philologischer Kommentar zur Chronik des Johannes Malalas*, ed. M. Meier et al., <https://malalas.hadw-bw.de/kommentar/18/1>.
- MGH AA* *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Auctores Antiquissimi*. Berlin, 1877–1919.
- OCD*⁴ S. Hornblower, A. Spawforth and E. Eidinow, eds., *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*, 4th edition. Oxford, 2012.
- ODLA* O. Nicholson, ed., *The Oxford Dictionary of Late Antiquity*. Oxford, 2018.
- OHLA* S.F. Johnson, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity*. Oxford, 2012.
- PB* *La Persia e Bisanzio* (Atti del convegno Lincei 201). Rome, 2004.
- PBE i* J. Martindale et al., *Prosopography of the Byzantine Empire (641–867)*, 2001, 2015, www.pbe.kcl.ac.uk.

- PCBE Asie* S. Destephen, *Prosopographie chrétienne du bas-Empire*, vol.3, *Diocèse d'Asie (325–641)*. Paris, 2008.
- PECS* R. Stillwell, W. MacDonald and M. McAlister, eds., *The Princeton Encyclopedia of Classical Sites*. Princeton, 1976.
- Pfeilschifter–Thesz R. Pfeilschifter and J.M. Thesz, *A Commentary on Procopius' Secret History*. Berlin, 2022.
- PG J.-P. Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series graeca*. Paris, 1857–1912.
- PJT Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite, tr. and comm. J. Watt and F. Trombley. See under primary sources.
- PL J.-P. Migne, ed., *Patrologiae cursus completus: Series latina*. Paris, 1841–64.
- PLRE* J. Martindale, ed., *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire*, vols.2–3. Cambridge, 1980–92.
- PO F. Nau and R. Graffin, eds., *Patrologia Orientalis*. Paris, 1907–.
- P. Petra IV* A. Arjava, M. Buchholz, T. Gagos and M. Kaimio, eds., *The Petra Papyri IV*. Amman, 2011.
- ProcBrAc Proceedings of the British Academy. London and Oxford, 1903–.
- PZ Pseudo-Zachariah of Mytilene. See under primary sources.
- PZT Pseudo-Zachariah of Mytilene, tr. and comm. G. Greatrex, R. Phenix and C. Horn. See under primary sources.
- Radt S. Radt, *Strabons Geographie*, 10 vols. Göttingen, 2002–11.
- RE* G. Wissowa et al., eds., *Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft*. Stuttgart, 1893–1980.
- RIÉth* E. Bernand, A.J. Drewes and R. Schneider, *Recueil des inscriptions de l'Éthiopie des périodes pré-axoumite et axoumite*, 3 vols. Paris, 1991–2000.
- RKOR* T. Lounghis, B. Blysidu and S. Lampakes, eds., *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches von 476 bis 565*. Nicosia, 2005.
- Rubin, *PvK* B. Rubin, 'Prokop von Kaisareia', *RE* XXIII.1, 1957: 273–599.
- SC Sources chrétiennes. Paris, 1942–.
- Smyth H.W. Smyth, rev. G. Messing. *Greek Grammar*. Cambridge, MA, 1956.
- SRA* A. Cameron, ed., *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East*, vol.3, *States, Resources, Armies*. Princeton, 1995.

<i>TIB</i> 15	K.-P. Todt and B.A. Vest, eds., <i>Tabula Imperii Byzantini</i> , vol.15, <i>Syria</i> , 3 vols. Vienna, 2014.
<i>TLG</i>	<i>Thesaurus Linguae Graecae</i> (on-line). Irvine, CA, 2001–.
<i>TPC</i>	B. Coulie, B. Kindt and Cetedoc, eds., <i>Thesaurus Procopii Caesariensis</i> . Turnhout, 2000.
<i>TRE</i>	<i>Theologische Realenzyklopädie</i> , 36 vols. Berlin, 1977–2004.
TU	Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur. Leipzig, 1882–.
Veh	O. Veh (tr. and comm.) <i>Prokop: Perserkriege</i> . Munich, 1970.
Walbank	F.W. Walbank, <i>A Historical Commentary on Polybius</i> , 3 vols. Oxford, 1957–79.
Wirth	<i>Addenda et Corrigenda</i> to Haury's edition of Procopius. See primary sources.

Tables of Names

The table below is also to be found in the full translation of *The Persian Wars* published simultaneously with the present volume. In the translation I have used the normal (Latin) versions of Greek/Roman names. This is not, I realise, a neutral choice: Anthony Kaldellis prefers to use the Greek version of a name, so that one refers to Ioannes rather than John and to Kappadokia rather than Cappadocia. He argues that to use the Latin or English forms is a distortion and a ‘redundant affectation’. On the other hand, it has been the norm not only in English, but also in (e.g.) French and German for centuries. As he correctly notes, consistency is almost impossible to maintain in any case, since he is prepared to refer to Justinian rather than Ioustinianos. For non-Roman people I have usually chosen a simple version of their name in the appropriate language, e.g. Khusro (Chosroes in Greek) and al-Harith (Arethas in Greek); I have deliberately tended to avoid diacritics in these names, preferring (e.g.) Abu Karib to Abū Karib for the Greek Abokharabos. Identifications that are not certain, e.g. of the Persians Seoses and Aniabedes, I have preferred to leave in Greek; likewise with complex names, such as Esimiphaeus (Sumūyafa‘ Ashwa‘). In essence, I have sought clarity rather than consistency. In the commentary I have tended to use the modern forms usually employed by scholars, e.g. Hīmyarites for Homerites, though often indicating the Greek form too in case of confusion. Because my efforts may well not have been successful, I give below a table of the names so that the Greek and non-Greek versions can be compared, following the model of Janick Auberger in the French translation of *The Gothic Wars* and now *The Persian Wars*.

There are a few inconsistencies likewise in the transcription of Greek in the commentary. The upsilon is often transcribed as ‘u’ while chi is usually ‘kh’, but in some cases, as with the word *tychē* (‘fortune’, ‘fate’) I have preferred a more traditional version (instead of *tukhē*).

(I) Names of People

Greek name (transliterated)	Name used in this translation	Other versions of the name
Abandanēs	Abandanes	
Abokharabos	Abu Karib	Abū Karib
Abramos	Abramus	Abraha
Akakios	Acacius	
Adergoudounbadēs	Adergudunbades	<i>Ādhargulbād</i>
Adolios	Adolius	
Adonachos	Adonachus	
Aeimachos	Aeimachus	
Aigan	Aigan	
Alamoundaros	al-Mundhir	
Alexandros	Alexander	
Amazaspēs	Amazaspes	Hamazasp
Ambazoukēs	Ambazuces	
Ambros	‘Amr	
Anastasios	Anastasius	
Anatolios	Anatolius	
Andreas	Andreas	Andrew
Aniabadēs	Aniabedes	? <i>ayēnbadh</i>
Antōnina	Antonina	
Apiōn	Apion	
Aratios	Aratius	
Arethas	al-Harith	al-Hārith
Arkadios	Arcadius	
Areobindos	Areobindus	
Argek	Argek	
Arsakēs	Arsaces	Aršak, Arshak
Artabanēs	Artabanes	Ardavan
Askan	Ascan	
Aspebedēs	Aspebedes	? <i>spābbad</i>
Augaros	Abgar	
Augoustos	Augustus	

Greek name (transliterated)	Name used in this translation	Other versions of the name
Azarethēs	Azarethes	Exarath, ? <i>hazārbed</i>
Baradotos	Baradotus	Bar-Hadad
Baresmanas	Baresmanas	? <i>marzban</i>
Basilidēs	Basilides	
Basileios	Basil	
Bassakēs	Bassaces	Vasak
Bassikios	Bassicus	Vasak
Belisarios	Belisarius	
Blasēs	Blases	Balash, Valash
Blēskhamēs	Bleschames	
Boēs	Boes	
Boraïdēs	Boraides	
Bouzēs	Buzes	
Bradoukios	Braducius	
Kabadēs	Kavadh	Cabades, Qubad, Qobad
Kaïsos	Qays	Caisus
Kandidos	Candidus	
Kaosēs	Kaoses	Kāwūs, Kayūs
Keler	Celer	
Khanarangēs	<i>kanarang</i>	<i>kanārang</i> , Kanārangiyān
Khosroēs	Khusro	Ḳosrow, Kisra, Xusro
Kōnstantianos	Constantianus	
Koutzēs	Cutzes	
Kyrillos	Cyril	
Kyros	Cyrus	
Dagisthaios	Dagisthaeus	
Dioklētianos	Diocletian	
Diogenēs	Diogenes	
Domnentiolos	Domnentiolus	

Greek name (transliterated)	Name used in this translation	Other versions of the name
Dorotheos	Dorotheus	
Eirenaios	Irenaeus	
Ephraimios	Ephraem	
Esimiphaios	Esimiphaeus	Sumūyafa‘ Ashwa‘
Eusebios	Eusebius	
Euaris	Euaris	Evaris
Phlorentios	Florentius	
Gabalas	Jabala	Gabala
Geōrgios	George	
Germanos	Germanus	
Glōnēs	Glones	Aglon
Godidisklos	Godidiscus	
Goubazēs	Gubazes	
Gourgenēs	Gurgenes	
Gousanastadēs	Gusanastades	Gushnaspdād
Hellesthaios	Hellesthaeus	Kālēb, ’Ella ’Aṣṣbeḥa
Hermogenēs	Hermogenes	
Honōrios	Honorius	
Hypatios	Hypatius	
Iphigeneia	Iphigenia	
Isaakēs	Isaac	
Isdigerdēs	Yazdgerd	
Isdigousnas	Yazdgushnasp	Iesdegousnaph, Iesdekes
Iakōbos	Jacob	
Iasōn	Jason	
Iēsous	Jesus	

Greek name (transliterated)	Name used in this translation	Other versions of the name
Iōannēs	John	
Ioulianos	Julian	
Ioustinianos	Justinian	
Ioustinos	Justin	
Ioustos	Justus	
Libelarios	Libelarius	
Longinos	Longinus	
Loukas	Luke	
Markellos	Marcellus	
Martinos	Martin	
Mebodēs	Mebodes	Māhbōdh
Mermeroēs	Mihr-Mihroe	
Mirranēs	Mirranes	Mihran
Molatzēs	Molatzes	
Moundos	Mundus	
Nabedēs	Nabedes	Nabed
Narsēs	Narses	
Nikētas	Nicetas	
Odonathos	Odenathus	
Olybrios	Olybrius	
Orestēs	Orestes	
Origenēs	Origen	
Osroēs	Osrhoes	
Pakourios	Pacurius	
Patrikiolos	Patriciolus	
Patrikios	Patricius	
Paulos	Paul	

Greek name (transliterated)	Name used in this translation	Other versions of the name
Peranios	Peranios	
Perozēs	Peroz	Fīrūz
Petros	Peter	
Phabrizos	Vahriz	
Pharesmanēs	Pharesmanes	Farzman
Pharsansēs	Pharsanses	
Philemouth	Philemuth	
Phokas	Phocas	
Phoubelis	Phubelis	
Pityaxēs	Pityaxes	<i>bdeashkh, bidaxš</i>
Pompeios	Pompey	
Probos	Probus	
Proklos	Proculus	Proclus
Prokopios	Procopius	
Pyladēs	Pylades	
Rhekinarios	Rhecinarius	
Rheikithangos	Rhecithangus	
Roufinos	Rufinus	
Senekios	Senecius	
Seosēs	Seoses	Siyāvush
Sergios	Sergius	
Silbanos	Silvanus	
Solomōn	Solomon	
Stephanakios	Stephanacius	
Stephanos	Stephanus	
Stratēgios	Strategius	
Soummos	Summus	
Sounikas	Sunicas	
Symeōn	Symeon	

Greek name (transliterated)	Name used in this translation	Other versions of the name
Tatianos	Tatian	
Theoktistos	Theoctistus	
Theuderikhos	Theoderic	
Theodōra	Theodora	
Theodōros	Theodore	
Theodōsios	Theodosius	
Timostratos	Timostratus	
Traïanos	Trajan	
Tribounianus	Tribonian	
Tribounos	Tribunus	
Balerianos	Valerian	
Ouararanēs	Bahram	Vahram
Ouarramēs	Varrames	Bahram, Vahram
Bēros	Verus	
Bitalianos	Vitalian	
Ouittigis	Vitigis	Wittigis
Zaberganēs	Zabergan	
Zamēs	Zames	Zham, Jāmāsp
Zēnōn	Zeno	
Zēnobia	Zenobia	

(2) Names of Places and Peoples

Name in Procopius' Greek	Name used in this translation	Other name(s)
Aborrhās (river)	Khabur	
Ailas	Aelas	Aqaba
Amida	Amida	Diyarbakır
Ammodios	Ammodius	Amuda, 'Amudīn
Antinoou (<i>polis</i>)	City of Antinous	Antinoë, Antinoöpolis

Name in Procopius' Greek	Name used in this translation	Other name(s)
Antiocheia	Antioch	Antakya
Apameia	Apamea	Afamia
Arkhaiopolis	Archaeopolis	Nokalakevi
Arsinos (river)	Arsinus	Arsanias, Murat Su
Artakē	Artace	Erdek
Arzamōn	Arzamon	Tell Harzem
Arzanēnē	Arzanene	
Attakhas	Attachas	Attachae
Auxōmis	Auxomis	Axum, Aksum, Ethiopia
Auxōmitai	Auxomites	Axumites, Aksumites, Ethiopians
Barbalissos	Barbalissus	Eski Meskene
Batnai	Batnae	Batnan, Serug
Beroia	Beroea	Aleppo, Halab
Blemyes	Blemmyes	? Beja
Bōlon	Bolum	Bolberd
Bosporos	Bosporus	Panticapaeum, Kertch
Boulikas	Bulicas	
Byzantion	Byzantium	Constantinople, Istanbul
Kadisēnoi	Kadiseni	
Kaisareia	Caesarea	
Kallinikon	Callinicum	ar-Raqqa
Kappadokia	Cappadocia	
Karrhai	Carrhae	Harran
Kaspiai Pylai	Caspian Gates	
Kassandraia	Cassandraia	Potidaea
Kaukasos	Caucasus	

Name in Procopius' Greek	Name used in this translation	Other name(s)
Kelesēnē	Kelesene	
Khersōn	Cherson	Sevastopol
Kherronēsos	Chersonese	
Khorzianēnē	Khorzianene	
Kilikia	Cilicia	
Kirkēsion	Circesium	
Kitharizōn	Citharizon	
Kolkhis	Colchis	Lazica, (Western) Georgia
Komana	Comana	
Kommagēnē	Commagene	
Kōnstantina	Constantia	Viranşehir
Ktēsiphōn	Ctesiphon	
Kyzikos	Cyzicus	
Daphnē	Daphne	
Daras	Dara	Anastasiopolis
Doubios	Dvin	
Elephantinē	Elephantine	
Ephthalitai	Hephthalites	Abdelai
Erouloi	Heruls	
Aithiopiai	Ethiopians	
Euphratēsia	Euphratesia	Euphratensis
Europos	Europus	Carchemish, Jerablous
Pontos Euxeinos	Euxine Sea	Black Sea
Gabboulon	Gabbulon	Usually found as Gabboulōn
Gorgō	Gorgo	Gorgān, Gurgān
Hebraioi	Jews	Hebrews

Name in Procopius' Greek	Name used in this translation	Other name(s)
Homeritai	Homerites	Ḥimyarites
Ounnoi	Huns	
Ibēres	Iberians	Georgians
Illyrioi	Illyricum	
Iōtabē	Iotabe	
Isauroi	Isaurians	
Istros	Danube	
Hierosolyma	Jerusalem	
Lazika	Lazica	(Western) Georgia
Libanos	Lebanon	
Libyoi	Libyans	Africans
Ligouroi	Ligurians	
Lykaones	Lycaonians	
Makedōnoi	Macedonians	
Maddēnoi	Maddemi	Maʿadd
Massagetai	Massagetae	Huns
Mēdoi	Medes	Persians
Melitēnē	Melitene	Malatya
Mindouos	Minduos	
Mokhērēsis	Mokheresis	? Mourisius
Maurousioi	Moors	
Mopsouestia	Mopsuestia	Yakapınar
Neilos	Nile	
Noubatai	Nobatae	Noubades

Name in Procopius' Greek	Name used in this translation	Other name(s)
Nymphios	Nymphius	Batman-su
Obbanē	Obbane	
Oinokhalakōn	Oenochalakon	
Orokasias	Orocasias	
Orontēs	Orontes	Asi
Osrhoēnē	Osrhoene	
Palaistina	Palestine	
Phonikōn	Palm Groves	
Peloponnēsioi	Peloponnese	
Pelousion	Pelusium	
Persai	Persians	
Petraī	Petra	Al-Batrā
Pharangion	Pharangium	Īspir, Sper
Philai	Philae	
Phisōn	Phison	
Phoinikē	Phoenice	Phoenice Libanensis
Pitios	Pityus	Bichvinta, Pitsunda
Pontos	Pontus	
Potidaia	Potidaea	
Erythra thalassa	Red Sea	
Rhizaion	Rhizaeum	Rize
Rōmaioi	Romans	
Roufinianai	Rufinianae	
Sabeiroi	Sabirs	

Name in Procopius' Greek	Name used in this translation	Other name(s)
Sarakēnoi	Saracens	Arabs
Saros	Sarus	Sarız
Skanda	Scanda	
Seleukeia	Seleucia	
Sisauranōn	Sisauranon	Sisarbanon
Sophanēnē	Sophanene	
Sounitai	Sunitae	Siwnik'
Soura	Sura	Suriya
Sykai	Sycae	
Tauroi	Taurians	
Tauros (mountains)	Taurus	
Theodosiopolis	Theodosiopolis	Erzerum, Erzurum
Thermopylai	Thermopylae	
Thessalia	Thessaly	
Thilasamōn	Thilasamon	
Thrakia	Thrace	
Trapezous	Trapezus	Trebizond, Trabzon
Trētos	Tretus	
Tzanoi	Tzani	
Bandiloi	Vandals	
Leukosyroi	White Syrians	
Zēkhoi	Zekhi	
Zēnobias	Zenobia	Halabiyya

Cross-References and Conventions in the Commentary

Cross-references in the Commentary and Introduction to notes elsewhere are indicated with an 'n' after the reference, e.g. i.21.1n, referring to the note on i.21.1. For the more general notes on larger sections, often divided into two sections, one on history, the other on historiography, I have employed the abbreviations h and g. Thus a reference to i.19–20h would be to the section on 'History' for i.19–20, while i.19–20g would be for that concerning 'Historiography' for that same section. There are also notes on many of the speeches and on various subsections of the work. The indices at the end all refer to sections in the text rather than to the commentary itself.

The commentary refers to Procopius' works as *Wars*, *Aed.* (*De Aedificiis*, 'On Buildings') and *Anecd.* (*Anecdota* or 'Secret History') at the risk of accusations of inconsistency: the three terms seem to me to be the most convenient abbreviations for the relevant works. I have also tended to number the books of the *Wars* i–viii consecutively rather than distinguishing the separate works, viz. *The Persian Wars*, *The Vandalic Wars* and *The Gothic Wars*.

Introduction

Such is the wealth of publications now being brought out about Procopius that an extensive introduction is not required: the reader may find guidance on many aspects of the writer's works and career in recent contributions, some of them available freely on-line.¹ Nonetheless it will be helpful to discuss a few aspects of *The Persian Wars* here in order to set the work in context and to draw attention to various general tendencies that may be perceived in it.

(1) Procopius

What little is known of Procopius' life emerges from his own writings. As he tells us at the very start of *The Persian Wars*, he was born in Caesarea, Palestine. A prosperous port city with a sizeable diverse population, it was also the seat of the governor of Palaestina Prima, parts of whose *praetorium* have been uncovered by archaeologists. The nearby city of Gaza was renowned as a centre of learning, both pagan and Christian, several of whose citizens produced works that still survive – Choricus (of Gaza) and Procopius (of Gaza), to name but two. It is worth noting here that the works of Thucydides were particularly prized at Gaza. Whether our Procopius studied there, however, is uncertain.²

Having trained in the law, perhaps at Berytus (Beirut), he was appointed as the legal adviser or *assessor* (Greek *symbolos*) of the *dux*

¹ E.g. Greatrex 2014a, but cf. also Greatrex 2019–22, both associated with the journal *Histos*. Meier and Montinaro 2021 is an invaluable resource; the contribution of Rance in particular is relevant to this Introduction. I have inserted pagination for the contributions to this volume, but I have left the date as 2021, though the work appeared in 2022.

² See Greatrex 2021a for a short biography of Procopius. More detail on Caesarea in his day may be found in Greatrex 2018a; on possible connections with Gaza, *ibid.* 25 with Greatrex 1996b, 2014b, 79–82. See also Averil Cameron 1985, 5–7, 38–9, Treadgold 2007a, 176–84. Haury 1896, 10–14, finds interesting parallels between Procopius' works and those of members of the 'Gaza school', such as Choricus and Aeneas.

Belisarius in 527.³ He remained in the general's entourage for the following thirteen years at least, serving with him first in the East, where he witnessed his victory at Dara in 530 and defeat at Callinicum in 531, then his remarkable triumphs first in North Africa against the Vandals (in 533–4), then in Italy against the Ostrogoths (535–40). It is likely that these successes, overcoming considerable odds, inspired him to write up Belisarius' achievements in the *Wars*. He may well have accompanied the general subsequently when he returned to the East in 541–2, but he was back in Constantinople later that year, where he observed the ravages wrought by the plague, described at *Wars* ii.22–3. For the most part, it is believed that he remained in Constantinople thereafter, working on the (first seven books of the) *Wars* and the *Anecdota* (or *Secret History*), both of which were completed by 550/1.⁴ As he composed his history, he grew increasingly disenchanted with the way in which the Emperor Justinian conducted his wars, which had led to uprisings and setbacks in Italy and North Africa and to the sack of Antioch, the most important city near the eastern frontier, in 540. A change of tone is perceptible in later passages, e.g. at ii.30.17, but it does not seem as though he attempted to rewrite sections written earlier; it is therefore difficult to pin down the historian's views, which evidently varied over time.⁵

While the *Anecdota*, Procopius' blazing indictment of the misdeeds of Justinian, Theodora and their ministers naturally remained concealed, the first seven books of the *Wars*, so the historian tells us, enjoyed considerable success. He therefore produced an eighth book in 552/3 that extended his narrative of events in the East, in Lazica in particular, and in Italy, where he reported Narses' final defeat of the Ostrogothic leaders Totila and Teias.⁶ At some point in the 550s, probably c. 554, the *De Aedificiis* or *Buildings* was also published, a work that relates, in glowing terms, the various building projects initiated by the Emperor Justinian throughout the empire (apart from Italy). Two versions of the work have been transmitted, one longer, the other shorter; it was generally supposed

³ On this post see i.1.3n.

⁴ See Greatrex 2014b, 97, for the dating of *Wars* i–vii, cf. (e.g.) Treadgold 2007a, 184–7. In Greatrex 2016b I countenanced the possibility that ii.28.12–14 might have been added somewhat later, after June 554, but this is probably unduly speculative, cf. the note *ad loc.* and i.20.13n. On the *Anecdota* see Greatrex 2014b, 100, cf. Averil Cameron 1985, 49–53, Treadgold 2007a, 187–9. Some scholars continue to prefer a later date, 558/9, however, e.g. Croke 2005. Signes Codoñer 2017 (published 2018) offers an interesting consideration of the relation of all three of Procopius' works to one another and their dating.

⁵ See Averil Cameron 1985, 137, 236–8, cf. Greatrex 2014b, 92–3, Rance 2021.

⁶ See Greatrex 2014b, 97, cf. *idem* 2003, 54–7, on this date.

that the latter is an abridgement of the former, but Federico Montinaro has suggested instead that the shorter version was later expanded. According to his hypothesis, the first edition appeared in 550, the second, expanded one, in 554.⁷

Nothing further is known of the historian. A certain Procopius rose to the post of city prefect in 562 and in this role was called upon to investigate a supposed plot by Belisarius against the emperor; but there are no grounds for identifying him as our author.⁸

(2) The Composition and Structure of *The Persian Wars*

The Persian Wars comprise the first two books of Procopius' *Wars*. The following two books, *The Vandalic* (or *Vandal*) *Wars*, cover the reconquest of North Africa from the Vandals and the subsequent struggle to maintain control. The next three books, v–vii, cover the war to recover Italy from the Ostrogoths, while the last book (viii), which was added later, surveys all the theatres of war, concentrating on Lazica and Italy; all four books are referred to as *The Gothic Wars*. Such at any rate are the modern conventions. Procopius himself refers to his 'books on the wars', while other writers allude to a 'history'; sometimes Belisarius features in the title as well as (or instead of) Justinian, as at Evagr. *HE* iv.12. The geographical divisions are also used on occasion.⁹

The decision to divide his material geographically is an interesting one; it is a division that he applies equally to his survey of Justinian's building work in the *De Aedificiis*.¹⁰ In the second century A.D. the historian Appian had employed just such a geographical division for his narrative of the Roman conquest of the Mediterranean. His work is alluded to by Evagrius later in the sixth century, so that it is possible that Procopius was aware of it and chose to follow his example.¹¹ The decision to partition his work by theatre of war may have come late in the day, which would

⁷ See Montinaro 2011 with Greatrex 2014b, 102. Some still prefer to date the work to 559, however, e.g. Roques 2011, 52–9.

⁸ See Greatrex 2021a, cf. *PLRE* iii, Procopius 3.

⁹ Cf. Rubin, *PvK*, 358, Averil Cameron 1985, 134 and n.3, Koehn 2018a, 192 (citing Cedrenus), Croke 2019, 5–7, Rance 2021.

¹⁰ Cf. Dahn 1865, 89.

¹¹ See Rance 2021, 91–2, noting Evagr. *HE* v.24. Bury 1923, 422, believes Appian to have been Procopius' model. Parts at least of Appian's work were also known in the tenth century, cf. Manafis 2020, 55–9, and were mined by the compilers of the Constantinian *Excerpta* (on which see n.71 below). They were also known to Photius in the ninth century, cod.57, cf. Németh 2018, 174. Possible Appianic influence may be found at i.1.17, 17.40, ii.13.22, 25.33, with the notes *ad loc*.

explain some of the awkward transitions, notably towards the end of *Persian Wars* i, where the insertion of internal Roman and Persian events breaks up the chronological sequence.¹² There is, moreover, a perceptible difference between the enthusiastic accounts of the battles of Dara and Satala in 530 and the more critical handling of Roman failures in fending off the Persian King Khusro in the 540s, especially during his extensive invasion of 540. By this point, as Averil Cameron observed, Procopius' 'anger is rising'; he is prepared to criticise explicitly certain commanders, such as Buzes (ii.6.7) and Dagisthaeus (ii.29.33), as well as corrupt officials such as Acacius (ii.3.5–7) and John Tzibus (ii.15.9–11). A similarly jaded outlook, in large measure a response to the incompetence and venality of Roman commanders, pervades *Wars* vii, which describes Totila's rebuilding of Ostrogothic power in Italy in the 540s.¹³ A few indications of when Procopius was composing certain parts of the *Wars* may be found: at i.25.43, for instance, he states that he is writing in the third year after John the Cappadocian's banishment to Egypt, which probably took place in 544. He would therefore have been drawing up this account in 546/7; two years later he would conclude his narrative about John at the end of *Wars* ii (30.48–54), bringing the narrative up to 548–9.¹⁴

Given the very different circumstances of *Wars* i and ii, it would be surprising to be able to discern an overarching theme to these two books, the more so because there is little sign that Procopius ever tidied up or adjusted earlier sections in his writings.¹⁵ Anthony Kaldellis, however, has argued that the entire work is an indictment of Justinian's policies, whether through the criticisms of his minister John the Cappadocian, or through the speeches of foreign envoys, such as those of the Goths (ii.2.4–11), the Armenians (ii.3.32–53), and the Lazi (ii.15.14–30); he also perceives critical comments on Christianity in the destruction of cities of the East despite the intervention of their bishops. According to his interpretation, the opening chapters of the work, covering the fifth and early sixth centuries, illustrate the decline in virtue of the rulers of both Rome and Persia. Behind Kaldellis' theories, as Averil Cameron has noted, lie certain premises regarding Byzantine history and literature

¹² So Averil Cameron 1985, 153, cf. Greatrex 1995a for more detail on the last chapters of *Wars* i, Kaldellis 2010, 255.

¹³ Quotation from Averil Cameron 1985, 152, cf. 237–8, Greatrex 2014b, 92–3, *idem* 2018b, 337, Rance 2021. See also Bury 1923, 420–1 with n.11.

¹⁴ See Averil Cameron 1985, 236–7, Treadgold 2007a, 186–7, Greatrex 1995a, 4–9, Rance 2021, 92–4, and the Commentary below *ad loc.* There are further instances in other parts of the *Wars*, of course.

¹⁵ So Averil Cameron 1985, 238, cf. Greatrex 2014b, 96 with references; *contra*, Kaldellis 2010b, 255–6, but without any evidence adduced.

more generally, and in particular the enduring presence of pagans in society, whose traces he detects in the works of Procopius, John the Lydian and other authors. This is not the place to enter into a detailed refutation of Kaldellis' approach, which has undoubtedly served to stimulate Procopian studies. The issue of the structure of the work nonetheless deserves some consideration.¹⁶

'Now war and imperial power are generally agreed to be the greatest things in the world.'¹⁷ So declares the otherwise unknown senator Origen during a debate among figures opposed to Justinian during the Nika revolt in January 532. As Felix Dahn long ago observed, these are also the themes of Procopius' work: the *Wars* are above all a political and military history, following the established pattern of classical historiography.¹⁸ It was perhaps Belisarius' initial success at Dara, followed by his remarkable triumph in North Africa, that fired Procopius' enthusiasm to set about composing his work. The central section of book i reflects the writer's admiration for his superior: his defeat at Callinicum is portrayed as a pyrrhic Persian victory, while the forces' insubordination is blamed for the debacle.¹⁹ Events of the 540s, on the other hand, necessarily required a change in tone. Other commanders struggle to ward off the enemy; things improve only when Belisarius reaches the front, and even then he is able to accomplish little because of his meagre resources. *Wars* vii provides a similarly bleak narrative of the course of the war in Italy in the 540s, where Belisarius' presence could likewise do little to compensate for the lack of resources and the mediocrity of the local commanders. Procopius perhaps hoped that the truce of spring 545 would provide a satisfactory end point to his account, but hostilities continued in Lazica nonetheless. There is therefore no clear resolution at the end of the work, save perhaps in John the Cappadocian's inability to return to power.²⁰

There are certain elements in these two books that set them apart from the rest of the *Wars*, in particular the greater focus on domestic events, viz. in Constantinople. The Nika riot (i.24) and the Justinianic plague (ii.22–3) are both literary *tours de force*; the latter exercised a considerable

¹⁶ See Averil Cameron 2018 on Kaldellis' views, cf. Whitby 2018, 33–4. Greatrex 2021b offers detailed arguments against those of Kaldellis 2004; Kaldellis 2010b offers a more general analysis of the two books of the *Persian Wars*.

¹⁷ *Wars* i.24.26.

¹⁸ Dahn 1865, 27, cf. Vasconcelos Baptista 2018, 99.

¹⁹ Mal. 18.60 offers a useful alternative account of the battle at Callinicum, perhaps reflecting an official report into the Roman defeat.

²⁰ Averil Cameron 1985, 169, on the unsatisfactory ending, cf. Treadgold 2007a, 194–5, Rance 2021, 93–4. See also ii.30.49–54n.

influence on subsequent accounts of plagues, just as Thucydides' had on Procopius. Even if the events described take place in Constantinople, they are nonetheless concerned with 'war and imperial power': the riot, which nearly unseated Justinian, had to be suppressed with brutal force. And the commander who played the key role in securing the regime was Belisarius, even if it is unlikely that Procopius was in his entourage during these fervid days. The plague, on the other hand, brought the capital to its knees. Not only did Justinian himself fall ill, but 'in the city that held the sovereignty over the whole Roman empire everyone was wearing clothes befitting private citizens and staying quietly at home'. The plague also, he notes in the following sentence, afflicted the Persians and other foreign peoples, thereby impacting on the war on the eastern front.²¹

It must have been a challenge for Procopius to impose a structure on his account of war on the eastern front. A brief and selective survey of relations between Rome and Persia in the fifth century (i.1–6) was a natural introduction, offering his reader some intriguing tales that he or she would not have found elsewhere. Such was also his procedure at the start of his *Vandalic Wars*, and, to a lesser extent, *Gothic Wars*.²² A few chapters then suffice to report the war during Anastasius' reign (i.7–9), conspicuous for its lack of military success in his account, and then to describe tensions over the defection of the Iberian king and the proposed adoption of Khusro by Justin I (i.10–12). The pace then slows as the campaigns of 530 and 531 are narrated in much greater detail with a few digressions, e.g. on the subjugation of the Tzani (i.13–18): Procopius is now able to draw on his own experiences for his reportage. Following a lengthy excursus on southern Arabia, Ethiopia and Egypt (i.19–20), he concludes his account of the first Persian war of Justinian with the negotiations leading up to the Eternal Peace (i.21–2). This was the natural concluding point for the first book; and it is possible that at an earlier point he envisaged a transition from here to the opening of *Wars* iii (i.e. *Vandalic Wars* i).²³ But with the breaking of the Eternal Peace in 540 and the events that followed, it became necessary to rethink the architecture of the whole account. Thus, in the mid 540s, as we have seen, he was

²¹ See Averil Cameron 1985, 153, 158–9, underlining the importance of Belisarius' role in quelling the Nika riot, though contrast Kruse 2013, 854–5. Cf. Vasconcelos Baptista 2018, 99–101, on the magnitude of these two events. The quotation is from ii.23.20, cf. 24.5, 12, on the plague's impact on Persia.

²² See Greatrex 2021b for detailed argumentation.

²³ So Greatrex 1995b, 3, cf. ii.30.49–54n.

inserting i.25, a chapter devoted to the downfall of John the Cappadocian; the account of the Nika riot (i.24) is likely to have been completed around the same time.²⁴ Procopius adroitly manages to incorporate this material by drawing parallels between Roman and Persian events: he relates that both Khusro and Justinian were the targets of plots in the wake of the Eternal Peace, then goes on first to report the plot and subsequent developments in Persia (i.23). The chronological sequence is not accurate, since the Nika riot occurred *before* the conclusion of the peace, while the events in Persia described took place over the 530s and 540s. Clearly he has subordinated chronology to structure here, as likewise at i.25.²⁵ The final chapter (i.26) reports an attempted coup at Dara in 537. It is worth noting that although the geographical structure of the work is undoubtedly Procopius' own, the division into books need not be. In the present case, the opening of the second book is quite undramatic: there is no sudden change in tone, while already towards the end of book i there are indications of what will follow.²⁶

The second book opens with events and omens leading up to Khusro's invasion of the Roman East of 540; he is encouraged to open hostilities by delegations from the Ostrogoths and the Armenians (ii.1–4). The course of the offensive is narrated in some detail, leading up to the fall of Antioch, the opening of negotiations, and Khusro's treacherous withdrawal to his own territory (ii.5–13). While Belisarius is appointed to an eastern command (ii.14) Khusro, encouraged by complaints from the Lazi, decides to invade their territory in the following year; the Romans, meanwhile, under Belisarius, launch an offensive into Persian Mesopotamia with limited success (ii.15–19). In 542, returning to the front, the Roman general succeeds in inducing the king to retreat (ii.20–1), perhaps in part because of the arrival of the plague, whose impact on life in Constantinople is reported in detail (ii.22–3). Procopius goes on to describe a lacklustre Roman campaign into Persarmenia later in 542

²⁴ See p. 4 on i.25. Procopius' blaming of John for the Nika revolt reflects the official attitude after John's fall in 541, cf. Greatrex 1997, 83 and i.24.11n.

²⁵ See also Greatrex 2021b on similar inaccuracies in his account of fifth-century western history, perhaps the result of a comparable process, trying to make a point even at the expense of chronological accuracy, cf. Treadgold 2007a, 215 n.156, for these instances. See further below on Procopius' attitude to dates. At i.11.1 Procopius likewise links events in the two empires, cf. the note *ad loc.* In the present case case, he may have broken with the chronological sequence in order not to have to adjust any of his existing account (up to the end of i.22, the conclusion of the Eternal Peace).

²⁶ Teuffel 1889, 251–2, on the book division, which was, however, present by Photius' day, *cod.* 63. The links between the end of book i and the opening chapters of book ii noted by Kruse 2013 are also relevant in this context.

(ii.24–5), followed in the next year by a further attempt to seize Edessa by Khusro, thwarted in part by vigorous local resistance (ii.26–7). The final three chapters of the book are rather more disparate. A truce is concluded in 545, but warfare continues among the Arab allies of both parties; meanwhile Khusro attempts to capture Dara by stealth and to secure his grip in Lazica. Procopius ties these last two strands together by associating them with two brothers, each entrusted with a mission by the king. Although the Roman general Dagisthaeus fails to recapture Petra, the book concludes with a Roman and Lazic victory, followed by a brief update on the fate of John the Cappadocian (ii.28–30).

As has just been observed, the transition from the first to the second book – a division for which Procopius was probably not responsible – is unremarkable: the opening words of book ii are simply the standard formula ‘not long afterwards’. Marion Kruse has argued, rather like Kaldellis, for an underlying programme in the final chapters of book i and the first ones of ii: he sees the author as seeking to compare the two rulers, not only in the plots they faced, but also in their approaches to the insurrections. While there is little doubt that Procopius was interested in comparing Justinian and Khusro, Kruse’s theories face the same difficulties as Kaldellis’: these chapters have not been incorporated smoothly into the final work, and hence it is problematic to assign them too subtle a role. As has been recognised, the chronological joins seem awkward, e.g. at i.26.1, where John’s coup at Dara is said to have taken place ‘then’ or ‘at that time’, which cannot fit with the concluding sections of i.25, which take place in the 540s. There are signposts forward in the last chapters of the first book (explicitly at 23.12), so that it is reasonable to suppose that there could be underlying themes here, linking the two books, but further argumentation is necessary.²⁷

(3) Procopius’ Style

Much work remains to be done on Procopius’ style: far more attention has been lavished, for instance, on that of Ammianus Marcellinus. It will be best here therefore to discuss only briefly some features that any reader will notice in *The Persian Wars* and in other Procopian works rather than to attempt a more detailed literary analysis.

²⁷ Kruse 2013, 853–6, argues the case for extensive links and criticism of Justinian (e.g. in the Nika riot) in contrast to Khusro. See Greatrex 1995b, 6, with i.26.1n. See further section (7), pp. 28–9, on the book divisions.

Procopius writes in a version of Attic Greek, emulating Thucydides in particular, but incorporating certain elements that had appeared in the historical genre already in Hellenistic times. It should be stressed that Thucydides' influence is perceptible at various levels, not merely in the style and diction employed, but also in his perception and portrayal of events. At the same time, however, his sentence structure differs from that of his predecessor, tending towards the more Hellenistic practice of accumulating phrases and participles rather than Thucydides' elaborate use of subordinate clauses. Other late antique historians, such as Priscus in the fifth century, or even other writers, such as Choricus of Gaza, were likewise indebted to the Athenian author. In Procopius' case, it no doubt encouraged him to include a description of a plague, just as Thucydides recounted that which had struck Athens in 430 B.C. In the past scholars called into question some of the events reported by Procopius or other classicising authors, such was their similarity to those described by their illustrious predecessor. Such a sceptical approach has now rightly been discarded, but differences remain in how to interpret Procopius' steadfast adherence to the Thucydidean template. While some see in it an implicit rejection of the sixth-century Roman empire and some of its characteristics, such as Christianity and, if not the monarchic system itself, then at least the current emperor, others perceive it rather as a choice to align himself with a certain tradition even though it entailed some obstacles in describing the contemporary world.²⁸

In the following subsections, various aspects of Procopius' writing are explored in a little more detail. As emerges very clearly, the impact of Thucydides in particular is everywhere palpable. Given that, as was noted in the previous section, the *Wars* focus on military and political affairs primarily, the reader should not be surprised to find an abundance of set-piece accounts of battles and sieges. But other elements could also give rise to a set-piece description, such as the account of a plague (ii.22–3) or

²⁸ Averil Cameron 1985, 36–46, remains a very valuable discussion of Procopius' style and relation to Thucydides, with references to earlier work, such as Braun 1885 and Duwe 1885. See also Rubin, *PvK*, 310–11, Browning 1978, 106, Treadgold 2007a, 216–17, García Romero, 9 (whose translation helpfully indicates many Thucydidean allusions), Whately 2016, 46, Whitby 2018, 30, 35–6, Zali 2019, Rance 2021, 110–19. There are inconsistencies in his Attic forms, cf. e.g. Rance 2019, 402 n.67, but these may be due to manuscript transmission rather than Procopius himself. Roques 2000 sought to revive scepticism in Procopius' account because of his emulation of Thucydides and Herodotus, but cf. Greatrex 2014b, 91–2. C. Pazdernik has devoted several articles to Procopius' allusions to Thucydides, cf. e.g. Pazdernik 2006. Kaldellis 2004, e.g. ch.1, sees 'esoteric allusions' (p. 36) in Procopius' references to Thucydides and other authors; *contra*, Whitby 2018, 33–4. The influence of Herodotus should not be neglected: see Teuffel 1889, 262–3, cf. Braun 1894.

of a riot that nearly overthrew the emperor (i.24). Speeches of generals and digressions, usually geographical, are also hallmarks of the genre and will be explored briefly in the following subsections (a) and (b). In deploying these elements in his work Procopius will undoubtedly have applied his education in rhetoric and the exercises (*progymnasmata*) that he will have undertaken during this training. Manuals or handbooks in rhetoric have survived that offer students guidance on composition in which, once again, the influence of Thucydides is very strong.²⁹ As just pointed out, this does not call into question the accuracy of his account: the fact that his sieges resemble earlier ones, such as that of Plataea during the Peloponnesian War, is due as much to the common features of siege warfare as to imitation of earlier authors.³⁰ As throughout the *Wars*, Belisarius occupies a special place in the narrative: his victory at Dara is underlined by the fact that it is the first Roman victory recorded, while his defeat at Callinicum is strongly downplayed. Although the Persian King Khusro dominates book ii, rather as Totila comes to the fore in *Wars* vii, Belisarius still shines in his encounter with the king in 541 (ii.20–1).³¹

(a) *Speeches*

Three aspects of the Thucydidean, or more broadly classicising, dimension of Procopius' work deserve further discussion. The *Wars* as a whole contain 120 speeches and 45 letters; the speeches are often in pairs, with opponents, generally before battle, rallying their troops and explaining their tactics. Berthold Rubin divided them into three categories: (1) those designed to fit the situation, (2) those that reflected the author's own opinions and (3) formal rhetorical exercises.³² But even if it were possible to operate such a crude division, it would still be necessary to examine this aspect of the text more closely. There is no doubt that the genre of

²⁹ Gibson 2004 offers a useful survey of their instructions, cf. Patillon 2008, 65–9 (on Aphthonius, an author of the fourth century), 65–9. See also section (a), p. 11. Aphthonius 12.1 emphasises the importance of descriptions (e.g. of sieges) to historiography, cf. Gibson 2004, 115, noting that the earlier rhetorician Theon specifically held out Thucydides' account of the plague in Athens as a model, Patillon 2008, 92–7, Whately 2016, 15–18.

³⁰ See further i.7.12–32n, cf. Blockley 1972 (on earlier imitators of Thucydides), Adshead 1990, esp. 98, Whately 2016, 2, 16, 53.

³¹ See Whately 2016, 105–13, on the confrontation between Belisarius and Khusro. On Procopius' portrayal of Totila see Averil Cameron 1985, 139, 201–2, cf. Brodka 2004, 124–6: it is clear that he is more sympathetic towards the Gothic king than towards Khusro.

³² Rubin, *PvK*, 358, cf. Dahn 1865, 86–104, Averil Cameron 1985, 142–3, Rance 2021, 112, (from whom I draw the numbers). Taragna 2000 offers more detailed statistics.

work to which Procopius' *Wars* belonged required such an element, as indeed the second-century sophist Lucian noted. Handbooks on rhetoric offered advice on the composition of speeches for various purposes, often in a military context.³³ Rhetoric, moreover, was a very important element in Graeco-Roman culture: its influence extends not just to the speeches present in Procopius' work but also to his handling of narrative and description. It might be tempting at first to dismiss the speeches and letters as mere embellishments to the work, set-pieces in high style to please his audience. Yet, as already Dahn realised, the speeches do offer Procopius the chance sometimes to express criticism of imperial policy or of certain individuals. On other occasions, as before battles, they serve to outline what is at stake and how the general intends to bring about victory. As Conor Whately points out, such speeches need not be pure creations of the author: soldiers' morale did require stiffening before combat, after all. Some of Belisarius' speeches may therefore reflect in some measure what he actually said to his soldiers, although those of Persian and other non-Roman individuals, e.g. at the Persian court, must be inventions.³⁴

It is worth considering the speeches in a little more detail. In Antiquity they were categorised according to their purpose: whether advisory, hortatory (or, alternatively, military) or diplomatic. Procopius' work contains examples of all these categories. As already noted, they often come in pairs; normally they are in direct (rather than indirect) speech. They typically open with a maxim or gnomic saying of some kind upon which the speaker then elaborates, seeking to make his (or her) point; the maxims are often rather banal and platitudinous. As in the case of Thucydides, the speakers may answer one another even if, in most cases, each speaker cannot have heard the other's address. They can draw out wider points about the circumstances of a negotiation or battle, but they can equally serve to illustrate the character of the speaker: Belisarius is praised, for instance, for his successes and (implicitly) for his willingness to listen to advice (ii.19.36–43, cf. iii.15.2), while he himself articulates on various occasions his approach to warfare, e.g. in not engaging the enemy when it is not necessary (i.18.17–23). It is this didactic aspect that has been the focus of a recent study by Conor Whately, and which

³³ Taragna 2000, 1 (citing Lucian, *De hist. conscr.* 26), cf. 72. Handbooks, e.g. Aphthonius (late fourth century), cf. *Rhet. Mil.* Taragna's work is a valuable study of this aspect of classicising historiography.

³⁴ Whately 2016, 13–20, 77–80, with a useful discussion of Thucydides' influence, cf. Dahn 1865, 90–103. Herodotus, notably at the start of book vii, frequently reports speeches at foreign courts.

appears to have been appreciated by later audiences.³⁵ Speeches and letters attributed to foreign rulers give Procopius the chance to express criticism of Roman policies, notably in the complaints addressed to Khusro by the Goths, the Armenians and the Lazi. Such had always been the practice in the genre: already in Herodotus' work the Persian general Mardonius criticises the Greeks for various practices, while Tacitus attributes (e.g.) to the Caledonian leader Calgacus a stinging indictment of Roman imperialism.³⁶ Some of the sentiments voiced by these deputations may reflect Procopius' views, particularly when it comes to the maladministration of certain imperial appointees, but it would be imprudent to interpret them as part of a wide-ranging critique of the regime. On one occasion, after all, he actually intervenes to defend Justinian from the accusations levelled against him for his ambition, pointing out how his imperialist designs are worthy of predecessors such as Cyrus the Great and Alexander.³⁷

(b) Digressions

The two remaining aspects of the influence of his classical predecessors require less discussion. Both Thucydides and Herodotus, as well as their many successors, had included in their work digressions, usually ethnographical or geographical; there is much more of this in Herodotus, of course, than in his more sober Athenian successor. They were likewise recommended by Lucian in his *How to Write History* and feature quite extensively in Ammianus Marcellinus' history of the fourth century.³⁸ It is

³⁵ Taragna 2000, 56–61, on the threefold division: I have translated the Greek terms συμβουλευτικός, *symbolēutikos*, παρακλητικός, *paraklētikos*, πρεσβευτικός, *presbeutikos*. She prefers the term στρατιωτικός, *stratiōtikos*, 'military' to 'hortatory', 61. On the opening maxims see Dahn 1865, 92–5, Taragna 2000, 84–6 (giving the example of al-Mundhir's address at i.17.30–9, but one could equally cite Origen's speech, quoted above, i.24.26), Rance 2021, 112. Aphthonius (and others) devote some attention to *gnōmai* (maxims), 4 (117–20). Taragna 2000 also discusses the paired speeches, 85–108. Whately 2016, 80–4, analyses the letters and speeches before the battle of Dara (i.1–14); see further i.14.12n on what link they may have to what generals may have actually said. On the characterisation found in speeches, see Taragna 2000, 126–34. See Whately 2016, 228–31, on the didactic aspect of the work.

³⁶ See text to n.16, pp. 4–5, on the speeches (and Kaldellis' interpretation). Hdt. vii.9 on Mardonius, Tacitus, *Agricola*, 30–2, on Calgacus. Dahn 1865, 210–12, is more subtle in his approach to what can be inferred from speeches to Procopius' own views, cf. 297–302 on his criticism of officials. See also Treadgold 2007a, 213–14.

³⁷ Averil Cameron 1985, 142–3 on the criticisms, which she finds simplistic. Although Kaldellis 2010b, 261, finds Procopius' defence of Justinian weak, Dahn 1865, 102–3, sees in it signs of the historian's ambivalent attitude to the emperor and his projects.

³⁸ Lucian, *De hist. conscr.* 57 with Nobbs 2018, 164, cf. Averil Cameron 1985, 207–8 (where the reference to Emmett, forthcoming, is to Nobbs' article). Digressions of moderate length were also

not surprising therefore to find numerous such excursuses in *The Persian Wars*, e.g. on the habits and environment of the Tzani (i.15.20–6), the sources of the Euphrates and Tigris, leading into a discussion of temples of Iphigenia (i.17.4–20), or a lengthy one on southern Arabia, Ethiopia and Justinian's ambitions in the region (i.19–20). His readers no doubt expected such trappings; indeed, it may have been partly in reaction to a perceived lack of such elements that he incorporated such an extensive geographical digression on the Black Sea area at the start of book viii.³⁹ The information in these sections is derived sometimes from earlier written sources (notably in *Wars* viii, where he actually names some), sometimes from autopsy (e.g. i.17.17), and sometimes presumably from reports, e.g. i.19–20: we know of various diplomatic missions to southern Arabia during this period.⁴⁰ Most of these digressions have a bearing on the war between Rome and Persia, however tangentially. Nearly always they have a geographical component: Procopius was a keen traveller himself, hoping even to reach Britain, and appreciated the importance of orientating his reader for him or her to grasp the environment in which campaigning took place.⁴¹ It is prudent, moreover, to bear in mind the context of the excursus. Not only may this affect its content, e.g. in the portrayal of a particular people, but its positioning may also be significant: it has been suggested, for instance, that the lengthy digression on southern Arabia, Ethiopia and Egypt at i.19–20 is inserted immediately after Belisarius' defeat at Callinicum in part to distract attention from this setback.⁴²

(c) *The Presence of Christianity*

The last significant consequence of Procopius' debt to Thucydides lies in his treatment of the contemporary world. The sixth-century eastern Roman empire, needless to say, was a very different milieu from fifth-century B.C. Athens. Yet, like his classicising predecessors such as

recommended by Theon, a writer on rhetoric, cf. Gibson 2004, 120. Matthews 1989, 20–9, briefly discusses Ammianus' digressions, cf. Kulikowski 2018, 155–6, who finds them more erudite than Procopius', which he characterises as clichéd and more given to folkloric motifs (e.g. at i.4.14–29).

³⁹ Cf. Treadgold 2007a, 189, with Greatrex 2018c, 978–9. Manafis 2020, 224–6, notes the later popularity of these sections. Revanoglou 2005 offers a detailed treatment of these digressions.

⁴⁰ See Appendix 3 for a translation and commentary of Nonnosus' account of his family's missions to the region. On Procopius' sources see also Averil Cameron 1985, 216–18.

⁴¹ Proc. vi.15.8 on Britain; viii.1.7 on the importance of geographical orientation (concerning Lazica and the surrounding area).

⁴² See Averil Cameron 1985, 213, who insisted that these sections are 'complex, subtle and varied'. On the southern Arabian digression see i.19–20g with Averil Cameron 1985, 147.

Eunapius, Olympiodorus or Priscus, he eschews ecclesiastical affairs as far as possible: his gaze remains focused resolutely on political and military history, as we have seen. Some scholars initially drew the conclusion that he was therefore a pagan, like his classical forebears, especially since he refers here and there to the operation of *tychē*, ‘destiny, fate’. As Alan and Averil Cameron demonstrated more than fifty years ago, however, this classical façade cannot be taken at face value. When scrutinised more closely, his text betrays the attitude of a typical Christian of the time, whether in his description of the holy man Jacob (i.7.5–11), or of bishop Baradotus of Constantia (ii.13.8–15), or in his perplexity at the sack of Antioch in 540 (ii.10.1–5). Although Anthony Kaldellis has sought to revive the view that sees the author as a pagan, his theories have gained few adherents.⁴³ It is noteworthy that Christianity impinges rather more in book ii than in book i: it is the bishops who strive to save their cities, while the Roman army is conspicuous by its absence. They can do no more than entreat the Persian king to behave with clemency and to promise ransoms for their flock – promises not always fulfilled, as Procopius reports (ii.20.1–16). For Kaldellis this is an indicator of the historian’s scepticism towards Christianity, but Procopius’ handling of the story of Abgar of Edessa (ii.12.6–30) and the supposed divine protection accorded to the city, combined with the success of the defenders in 543 (ii.26–7) in repelling Khusrō’s attack, described as a war on God (ii.26.2), points rather to his adherence to Christianity.⁴⁴

(d) *Historical Analysis*

Much more could be said about Procopius’ literary style, but this work is intended primarily to focus on historical and historiographical issues. It must therefore suffice to mention briefly a few remaining characteristics that the reader may notice in the work. It is striking, for instance, that he is vehement in his judgements, deploying superlative adjectives on an impressive scale. As Averil Cameron has pointed out, his analysis of

⁴³ Cameron and Cameron 1964, cf. Browning 1978, 109, Averil Cameron 1985, 113–33. There are good recent discussions of Procopius’ treatment of Christianity in Scott 2013, Conterno 2018, Stickler 2021. See Kaldellis 2004, 165–221, for a pagan Procopius, Dahn 1865, 159–217, remains a nuanced and useful treatment of Procopius’ attitude to God and fate, viewing the historian as sceptical (in general), yet at the same time willing to accept many miraculous tales; see also Brodka 2004, 40–56, Treadgold 2007a, 222–5, van Nuffelen 2018, 44–6.

⁴⁴ Kaldellis 2010b, 264–73, but see Brodka 2013 (on the Abgar legend), cf. Averil Cameron 1985, 116, Stickler 2021. We have left to one side the issue of whether Procopius intended to write a (separate) work on church history, on which see Kaldellis 2009, *contra*, Signes Codoñer 2017, 17–19.

problems often comes down to praise or blame for certain individuals: his diatribe against John the Cappadocian (i.24.12–15) stands out in this regard, but he has harsh words for other administrators, such as John Tzibus (ii.15.9–11). Although this is a departure from the Thucydidean model, later classicising authors, such as Eunapius, give vent to just such sentiments: it should not therefore be seen as an innovation on his part.⁴⁵ Procopius thus does not hesitate to make clear judgements, even if they can tend towards the clichéd, e.g. Adergudunbades is ἀγαθὸς τὰ πολέμια ‘good at warfare’, while Abū Karib (Abokharabus) is δραστήριος, ‘energetic’.⁴⁶ His account is certainly more vivid for the sections that he witnessed himself, e.g. the battles of Dara (i.13–14) and Callinicum (i.18–19), as it is for the narratives of the defeat of the Vandals and the opening phase of the Gothic war; Averil Cameron has thus been inclined to characterise him more as a reporter than as a serious analyst of events. Yet while she is right that he does not possess the same rigour as Thucydides or Polybius in his analysis of causation, others are inclined to a more generous assessment: as the heroic accomplishments of Belisarius were eroded over the 540s, he pursued his narrative nonetheless, giving rise to a more nuanced treatment of the various campaigns, notably in Italy, where Totila is sympathetically portrayed. As can be seen in his perplexity over the fall of Antioch (ii.10.4–5) or in determining the origins of the plague (ii.22.2), Procopius found himself unable to comprehend the course of events, something that he openly acknowledges.⁴⁷

(e) *Lexical Preferences*

Various scholars, notably H.B. Dewing, have explored the unusual accental rhythm preferred by Procopius; it must be left to others to pursue this aspect of his work further.⁴⁸ In the late nineteenth century Johannes

⁴⁵ See Rubin, *PvK*, 346, on the superlatives, cf. Dahn 1865, 445–7. Vasconcelos Baptista 2018, 97, 101, argues that the superlatives, at least in some cases, are connected to the historian's ‘axiological principle’, underlining the magnitude of the events described (cf. i.1.6–7). Averil Cameron 1985, 142–5, was harsh in her analysis of Procopius’ failure to develop ‘a theory of historical causation or of explaining individual events’; van Nuffelen 2018 is more sympathetic, as was Dahn 1865, both of whom perceive the author as struggling to understand the role of chance and justice in the unfolding of events. On personal criticism in classicising works see Greatrex 2000, 217–18.

⁴⁶ See below, i.6.16n and i.19.11n, cf. Averil Cameron 1985, 143, 231.

⁴⁷ Averil Cameron 1985, 241, for her verdict, tempered by Whitby 2018 and van Nuffelen 2018. Dahn 1865, 218–52, on Procopius’ scepticism and fatalism, esp. 226–7 on his bafflement at the workings of fate.

⁴⁸ Dewing 1910, 448–66, which concentrates on the *Persian Wars*, cf. Maas 1912, Averil Cameron 1970, 69, eadem 1985, 35, Croke 2021, 33–4. On the more general issue of prose rhythm see

Scheftlein devoted a useful short monograph to his use of prepositions, which demonstrates significant differences between his prose and that of classical authors, e.g. in the use of the prepositions ἀμφί, *amphi*, ‘around, about’ (not found in Thucydides or Polybius) or πρὸς, *pros*, with the genitive for ‘by’.⁴⁹ Various scholars have picked up on his extensive use of periphrasis, that is his tendency to employ circumlocutions, not only (e.g.) for Christian elements, but also for its own sake, e.g. in saying τοῖόνδε ξυνηνέχθη γενέσθαι, ‘such a thing happened to occur’ rather than just ‘such a thing occurred’.⁵⁰ A similar tendency may be observed with other verbal phrases, often with very common verbs, such as εἶναι, *einai*, ‘to be’, γίγνεσθαι, *gignesthai*, ‘to become, to be’, and ἔχειν τι, *ekhein ti*, ‘to have something’ (e.g. in mind), which are combined with a noun and preposition when one other, more specific, verb would have sufficed.⁵¹ The formulae used by Procopius and his judgements may seem repetitive to the modern reader; on the other hand, his style is less abstruse and ornate than some of his successors in the late sixth and early seventh centuries, such as Agathias and Theophylact Simocatta.⁵² As will be clear from remarks in the commentary, verbal allusions to both Thucydides and Herodotus abound; in his own turn, Procopius was then emulated by later Byzantine historians.⁵³ A frustrating feature in his work is his lack of interest in chronological precision, save for the course of military events of his own time, above all in Italy, the close of whose campaigning seasons is carefully recorded. Elsewhere he all too frequently falls back on formulae such as ‘Not much later’ or ‘Around this time’. This can allow him to reorder his material without overt falsification, e.g. in his insertion of his excursus on southern Arabia, but he may also have shared Eunapius’ contempt for accurate time-reckoning, felt perhaps to be the preserve of chronicles rather than high-brow histories.⁵⁴

Valiavitcharska 2013 and Hutchinson 2015, neither of which, however, concerns Procopius; Rance 2020b, ciii, also draws attention to the dearth of work on this aspect of Procopius in recent studies.

⁴⁹ Scheftlein 1893, 42–6, 48. The former is found in Herodotus, but is far more frequent in Procopius than in classical historians.

⁵⁰ *Wars* i.12.1, cf. Teuffel 1889, 262, with other good examples; Thuc. had used this expression just once, i.23.1.

⁵¹ So Scheftlein 1893, 4–7, cf. Averil Cameron 1985, 35.

⁵² Cf. Bury 1923, 430, Averil Cameron 1985, 35, 43.

⁵³ See (e.g.) i.12.24, ii.25.9 (echoes of Thucydides), i.14.36, ii.5.26 (echoes of Herodotus). See section (5), pp. 19–21 on Procopius’ later influence.

⁵⁴ Vague formulae, e.g. at i.3.1, i.23.12. The digression on southern Arabia opens at i.19.1 with a vague τότε, *tote*, ‘then’, ‘at that time’, cf. i.19–20g. See further Rubin, *PvK*, 356. For Eunapius’ views on chronology, see his frg.1.

(4) Procopius' Sources

In the last twenty years a number of important studies concerning Procopius' sources have appeared, many the fruit of painstaking work by the Polish scholar Dariusz Brodka. Most of these are focused on his treatment of western events, above all in the period leading up to the wars of reconquest waged there by Belisarius.⁵⁵ In this section we shall naturally concentrate, however, on the historian's sources for *The Persian Wars*. Since many of the issues are dealt with either in the Commentary or in other recent work, we shall restrict ourselves to a brief treatment here.

It is possible to divide Procopius' sources into several categories.

(a) Written Historical Sources

Only one written source is actually named by Procopius, the rather enigmatic 'History of the Armenians', a work to which he also alludes in the *Buildings*. It evidently has some connection to an Armenian work known today as the *Epic Histories*, but it is unclear how exactly he came across it.⁵⁶ Naturally he must have consulted other earlier work for his cursory survey of fifth-century history, whether Priscus of Panium, for instance, or Eustathius of Epiphaneia (or both); the latter is likely to have abridged the former's work.⁵⁷ Priscus and Olympiodorus may also have furnished material on southern Egypt, where they are known to have served.⁵⁸ His account of the siege of Amida at i.7 bears some similarity to that of the Syriac source attributed to Zachariah of Mytilene, but both may derive from local traditions.⁵⁹ Some written source presumably underlies his report concerning Yazdgerd's guardianship of the young Theodosius II (i.2.1–10); he may also have consulted Edessene works concerning the correspondence of the legendary king Abgar with Christ.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ See (e.g.) Brodka 2007, 2012, 2013a, 2013b, 2016.

⁵⁶ See i.5.9–40n.

⁵⁷ See (e.g.) Treadgold 2007a, 215–16, Mecella 2021. More generally on Priscus and Procopius see Brodka 2007, 2013b. The attempts of Treadgold 2007b to pin down the work of Eustathius, identifying it (more or less) with Malalas' work, have not generally been accepted. See (e.g.) Greatrex 2015a, Brodka 2017.

⁵⁸ See Mecella 2021, 187, with i.19.27–37n. On Olympiodorus' and Priscus' presence in Egypt see (e.g.) Treadgold 2007a, 91, 98–9.

⁵⁹ See Greatrex 2010 with i.7g.

⁶⁰ See i.2.1–10n, for which Theophanes seems to have a fuller version. On Edessa see ii.12.20–30n with Brodka 2013a and Mecella 2021, 185–6.

(b) Oral Sources

On the one hand, Procopius, having served in Belisarius' staff for well over a decade, was undoubtedly familiar with many of the protagonists of his work. Even once he had taken up residence in Constantinople in the 540s, he could have called upon a wide network of serving and former soldiers and commanders to provide details of campaigning on all fronts. In a recent article, Dariusz Brodka has sought to pinpoint some of these sources, among them (e.g.) Belisarius' confidant George, who saves Dara from Yazdgushnasp's ruse at ii.28.31–7.⁶¹ His own travels in the East, on the other hand, as well as his acquaintances at court, will have yielded further potential sources: Kavadh, the grandson of the Persian King Kavadh, who sought refuge in Constantinople, is an obvious instance, so likewise Peranius, the son of the Iberian king Gurgenes, who joined the Roman army.⁶² Through such oral sources he may have picked up stories about Peroz's campaigns against the Hephthalite and Kavadh's adventures in Persian and Hephthalite territory (i.3–6); his account bears some resemblance to traditions found also in Perso-Arabic sources although, unlike Agathias, he does not appear to have had access to any written history of the Persian kings.⁶³

(c) Reports from the Front

In order to direct Roman strategy on a range of fronts, Justinian and his advisers in Constantinople, like earlier emperors, relied upon despatches from commanders in the field. In light of Procopius' contacts in the military, and no doubt at court, it seems reasonable to infer that he could have consulted at least some of these reports. Such is the attractive hypothesis formulated by Ian Colvin, of which the final sections of book ii provide a good instance: the language is somewhat repetitive with typical elements on victories and defeats, plunder seized and so forth. It appears as though Procopius tried to leaven this element with occasional digressions, e.g. on geography, not entirely satisfactorily.⁶⁴

⁶¹ Brodka 2016, 118–20; he likewise suggests Marcellus as a potential informant, 112–18, cf. i.25.24n. See also Goltz 2018, 296–7, on Procopius' familiarity with the army.

⁶² On Kavadh, i.23.4n. On Peranius, i.12.11n.

⁶³ See Appendix 1, pp. 665–73 on the Perso-Arabic sources, cf. Greatrex 2021b.

⁶⁴ See Colvin 2013 and Greatrex 2021c with ii.29.1–30.48g.

(d) Autopsy

As he proudly announces at the outset, the historian had been present as an eye-witness at many of the events he recounts (i.1.4). If he began writing in 540, then his claim was no idle boast, but as the decade wore on, his contact with events diminished. The central core of book i, the battles of Dara and Callinicum, were clearly events witnessed by Procopius at first hand (i.13–15, 18). It is likely that he was at Constantinople during the Nika riot (i.24), although he was probably not in the palace with Belisarius.⁶⁵ It seems plausible that the historian accompanied Belisarius again to the East in 541 for the Sisauranon campaign (ii.16, 18–19) and perhaps again in 542, a campaign cut short by the plague (ii.20–1); he was present in Constantinople also in that year, where he observed at first hand the dreadful consequences of the pandemic (ii.22–3).⁶⁶

(5) The Transmission of *The Persian Wars*

It is clear that Procopius' *Wars* was a work well known and appreciated by his successors: Agathias praises his erudition, while Menander Protector modestly refuses to compete with his achievement. The boom in history-writing in the late sixth century, the products of which survive only in fragments, may be due in part to his success.⁶⁷ The church historian Evagrius, writing in the 590s, incorporated parts of *The Persian Wars* into his work while adding in some local knowledge of his own, e.g. on the wood of the Cross exhibited by the bishop Thomas at Apamea.⁶⁸ The patriarch Photius in the mid ninth century had access to all eight books of the *Wars*, although he summarises only the first one and a half; it would seem that the Persian material was of greater interest to him than the remainder.⁶⁹ Theophanes, on the other hand, writing at the start of the ninth century, abridged *The Vandalic Wars* extensively while including just one extract from *The Persian Wars* and none at all from *The Gothic*

⁶⁵ So Brodka 2018, 52, cf. i.24g.

⁶⁶ See section (1), pp. 1–3. on Procopius' career, cf. Averil Cameron 1985, 163, accepting a return to the East.

⁶⁷ Agath. *pr.* 22–32, Men. Prot. frg. 14.2. For a full catalogue of references see Haury, lxi–lxiii, cf. Kalli 2004, 3–4. See Whitby 1992, 25–6; on the boom of historiography after Procopius cf. Treadgold 2007a, 279–310.

⁶⁸ See Brodka 2017, 166–7, on Evagrius' use of Procopius. See *Wars* ii.11.14–23 on the wood of the Cross, cf. Evagr. *HE* iv.26.

⁶⁹ Photius, *Bibliotheca*, cod. 63, cf. Croke 2019, 5.

Wars.⁷⁰ In the tenth century the *Wars* was extensively mined for the encyclopaedic project of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, in the context of which extracts from numerous authors were arranged in collections on particular themes. Of these only a few have survived; in the excerpts concerning embassies, both Roman and foreign, a good many passages from *The Persian Wars* have been preserved. Because they represent an early witness to Procopius' text, they are particularly important and can help determine what is likely to be the preferable reading of a word in cases where later manuscripts vary.⁷¹ Among later authors Zonaras and Cedrenus in the eleventh century, Michael Glykas and John Cinnamus in the twelfth and Nicephorus Callistus Xanthopoulos in the fourteenth all mention the historian. Of course, others may also have used him without explicitly noting it.⁷²

The first surviving manuscripts of the work date from the fourteenth century. The *Wars* circulated in two blocks of four books: the first tetrad comprised the *Persian* and *Vandalic Wars*, which were often referred to together as *The Persian Wars*, while the second was known as *The Gothic Wars*. The fourteenth-century Byzantine historian Nicephorus Gregoras, the author of a historical work of his own, copied the work himself and owned a version of it.⁷³ In the late Byzantine period, as indeed earlier, Procopius' work was highly regarded for its elevated style; this may help to explain its transmission intact, whereas those of his fifth-century predecessors survive just in fragments, most drawn from the Constantinian *Excerpta*.⁷⁴ Three fourteenth-century manuscripts have

⁷⁰ Theoph. 219–22 derived from Proc. ii.20.17–21.29.

⁷¹ On the *Excerpta* of Constantine, see Treadgold 2013, 153–65, Kaldellis 2015, 38–41, Németh 2018, cf. Croke 2019, 6, rightly inferring that the imperial library must have had Procopius' work; on Procopius' extracts, Németh 2018, 78–83. See Haury xxiii, liii, cf. Németh 2018, 9, on the importance of the *Excerpta*. See also Németh 2018, 159–61, on Leo the Deacon's appropriation of Procopian passages in the tenth century: the military expansion of the Byzantine empire in the period may have attracted interest in Procopius' account of warfare on the eastern front, where the same cities were now the focus of military campaigns, cf. *ibid.*, 189–93 with 85 fig.2.1. See further Treadgold 2013, 236, 243, on Leo's use of Procopius.

⁷² See Kalli 2004, 4, for these authors, cf. Haury, lxi–lxiii, García Romero, 18. Glykas seems to have used Procopius only indirectly, so Treadgold 2013, 406. On John Cinnamus see also Treadgold 2013, 415, who appears to have had access only to the second half of the *Wars*, i.e. the second tetrad. Croke 2019, 8 n.22, notes that Nicetas Choniates also used Procopius' work (but only the first four books), cf. Treadgold 2013, 448.

⁷³ Cf. Croke 2019, 4.

⁷⁴ See Kalli 2004, 161–2, cf. Whately 2016, 15, noting the praise accorded Procopius by the thirteenth-century author on rhetoric Joseph Rhakendytes. See also Treadgold 2013, 477, on the popularity of the *Wars* among later authors, cf. Croke 2019, 11–12. Browning 1978, 128, sees Procopian influence in the fifteenth-century works of Laonikos Chalkokondyles and Critobulus of Imbros.

transmitted most, if not all, *The Persian Wars*: G (Vaticanus graec. 1001), which lacks the opening chapters, P (Parisinus graec. 1702), where some gaps have been filled in by a later hand, and V (Vaticanus graec. 152), which has all eight books of the *Wars*, albeit with lacunae, followed by Agathias' *Histories*.⁷⁵

(6) Rome and Persia in the Sixth Century

Procopius opens his account of *The Persian Wars* with a surprising anecdote: the Persian king Yazdgerd I (399–420) accepted to act as the guardian of the young Theodosius II (408–50) at the request of his father Arcadius (395–408). Evidently for the historian collaboration between the two great powers was not only feasible but also not without precedent. Given the extent to which conflict became endemic in the sixth century – the Eternal Peace of 532 lasted only eight years, the next treaty, concluded in 561/2, just over ten – this perspective is significant. Before a brief survey of Romano-Persian relations over the fifth and sixth centuries, it would be helpful to follow Procopius' lead and to underline the extent to which the two empires could influence and compete with one another.

Peter the Patrician, Justinian's long-serving *magister officiorum*, whose diplomatic activity in Italy is reported by Procopius in *The Gothic Wars*, described, in a speech attributed to a Persian envoy, Rome and Persia as the 'two eyes' or 'lamps' of the world, which each should illuminate the other.⁷⁶ Despite the bloody wars that marked the third century, as the Sasanian dynasty established itself and demonstrated its power by ravaging the Roman East, a *modus vivendi* emerged over the fourth century as it became clear that neither party could gain a decisive advantage over the other. Embassies regularly passed between Constantinople and Ctesiphon; with the abatement of persecutions in the late fourth century, churchmen from Roman territories collaborated with their Persian counterparts to organise the Persian church, whose first council took place in Seleucia-Ctesiphon in 410.⁷⁷ Other individuals also crossed

⁷⁵ Full details concerning the MSS in Haury, xxviii–xl, useful information in García Romero, 19–20, Croke 2019, 9–11. The article of Croke offers an excellent survey of Procopian scholarship through to 1850.

⁷⁶ Petr. Patr. frg.13 (Müller) = 201 in Banchich. Cf. Th. Sim. iv.11.2–3 with Dignas and Winter 2007, 238–40, Canepa 2009.

⁷⁷ See (e.g.) Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 32–5, Greatrex and Amanatidis-Saadé 2022, noting the role played by the Roman bishop Marutha. On the emergence of the 'Church of the East' see (e.g.) Wiesehöfer 1996, 204, Dignas and Winter 2007, 221–5.

the frontier, whether pilgrims from Persia visiting holy sites in Palestine, gold miners from Roman territory working in Persarmenia, or traders visiting markets (e.g.) in Batnae.⁷⁸ Craftsmen also crossed borders: mosaics from Bishapur testify to the presence of deported Roman artisans, while certain motifs, such as a beribboned lion, testify to Persian influence among the mosaicists at Antioch and elsewhere. Palmettes and 'semi-vegetal geometric material' to be found decorating churches in Constantinople or on consular diptychs further attest the reach of Sasanian motifs, as do also a few silk garments to have survived.⁷⁹ As the analogy of the eyes indicates, the influence was reciprocal. The Persians admired Roman medical skill: emperors often sent doctors as diplomats, while Procopius specifically notes Khusro's request to have the physician Tribunus sent to him (ii.28.8). They also valued Roman craftsmen, as some of the infrastructure erected by prisoners captured in the third century, notably the Band-e Kaisar at Shushtar, attests. In the sixth century, of course, Khusro constructed his own 'better Antioch' with the prisoners deported from the captured city (ii.14.1–4). In this Antioch the king even constructed an entire hippodrome, whose charioteers received a salary from the royal treasury. It is in this broader context that Khusro's holding of races in Apamea in 540 (ii.11.31–5), which he rigged to ensure the defeat of the Blues, Justinian's favoured faction, must be viewed: it was not only through war and conquest that the two rulers vied with one another, but through a whole spectrum of diplomatic and cultural demonstrations of prestige.⁸⁰

It remains to survey briefly the ebb and flow of Romano-Persian relations in the fifth and sixth centuries (fig. 1). The peace that was concluded in 363 after the defeat of Julian's invasion of Persia, ceding various territories to the Sasanians, proved durable. Nisibis entered Persian hands and remained a frontier bastion for them henceforth; it was only towards the end of the Anastasian war (502–6) that the

⁷⁸ Amm. Marc. 14.3.3 on markets at Batnae in the fourth century, with Matthews 1989, 70, cf. *Proc. Wars* ii.25.3 on Dubios (Dvin). On contacts across the frontier see (e.g.) Greatrex 2014c, 164–5, *idem* 2020c. The city of Sergiopolis (Resafa) was an important pilgrimage site for Arabs from both sides of the frontier: see Key Fowden 1999, 65–100, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 134, Hof 2020, 97–100.

⁷⁹ Cf. Gonosová 2000, Canepa 2009, 208–23, Greatrex 2020b, 44–6.

⁸⁰ Canepa 2009 is an excellent broad treatment of this topic, cf. Greatrex 2020b with *idem* 2014c. See also Payne 2013, who puts Persian incursions into Roman territory, including that of 540, into a still broader context, as the Sasanians sought to affirm the tributary status of the Romans partly as a reaction to failures in the East.



Figure 1 The Eastern Roman Empire in 527

Romans finally built their own new frontier fortress at Dara (Proc. i.10.13–19). It remains a subject of dispute among modern scholars whether the Romans at some point, perhaps already in 363, perhaps somewhat later, agreed to make annual payments to the Persians to compensate them for the need to garrison the ‘Caspian Gates’ (cf. Proc. i.10.7–12), a label normally applied to the Darial pass through the Caucasus mountains, leading south from the steppes into Iberia. It is certain that the Romans made occasional payments to the Persians, claiming that these were gifts. The dangers lurking beyond the Caspian Gates had been demonstrated by a wide-ranging Hunnic invasion in 395, which struck both Roman and Persian territory. After the Persian king repatriated Roman prisoners seized by the Huns, the stage was set for a rapprochement between the two powers. The Persian church held its first council in 410; Yazdgerd, the Persian king, took part and underwrote its decisions.⁸¹ Although relations subsequently deteriorated, leading to all-out war in 421, a peace treaty was quickly concluded that banned the construction of fortresses along the frontier (cf. Proc. i.2.15) – perhaps in reaction to Roman work at Theodosiopolis in Armenia and Martyropolis.⁸² A brief Persian invasion in 440 was swiftly deflected by an opportune Roman payment.⁸³

From then until Kavadh’s invasion, described by Procopius at i.7–9, the two powers remained at peace. Both had more urgent matters to attend to: the Persians, having at last defeated the Kidarite Huns in Central Asia, were then faced by their redoubtable successors, the Hephthalite Huns. Peroz lost his life in 484 fighting the Hephthalites, while Kavadh, his son, was obliged to turn to them to restore him to the throne in 498/9.⁸⁴ There were also uprisings in Persian Armenia (Persarmenia) in the 450s and 480s to which the Romans refused to send aid.⁸⁵ The aftermath of the controversial Council of Chalcedon in 451, coupled with the presence of Gothic peoples in the Balkans released after the death of Attila, sufficed to keep the east Roman government occupied. The Emperor Zeno was even briefly ousted from power in 475,

⁸¹ Greatrex 1998, 10–13, for an overview of this period, cf. Greatrex 2005, 479–80, more detail in Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 1–36, cf. Blockley 1992, 24–56, Dignas and Winter 2007, 34–6. On Yazdgerd’s position on the church see McDonough 2008, cf. Greatrex and Amanatidis-Saadé 2022.

⁸² See Greatrex and Amanatidis-Saadé 2022 on this building work, cf. Greatrex 2008a, 87–90 and i.2.15n. On the war, see Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 36–43, cf. Dignas and Winter 2007, 135–8 (on the treaty that concluded it).

⁸³ Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 44–5, on this war, cf. Greatrex and Amanatidis-Saadé 2022.

⁸⁴ See i.3–4h, cf. (e.g.) Bonner 2020, 135–40, 144–7.

⁸⁵ See Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 5–6, 59–60, cf. Bonner 2020, 116–17, 133–4

although he overthrew the usurper Basiliscus in the following year. Only during the reign of Anastasius (491–518) did the situation stabilise, and even then the emperor's increasing opposition to the council provoked disturbances in Constantinople and the Balkan provinces. No Roman emperor seems to have displayed any inclination to provoke hostilities with Persia, although Anastasius reacted vigorously in the wake of Kavadh's incursion.⁸⁶

There are differing interpretations of the rise in tensions between Rome and Persia in the 520s. The defection of the Lazic king Tzath to the Romans in 521/2 testifies to increasing Roman influence in the Caucasus. King Kavadh (488–496/7, 498/9–531) nonetheless was prepared to have his son Khusro adopted by Justin I (518–27) around 525. Only Procopius (i.11) describes these negotiations on the frontier, which broke down mainly through the actions of hawks in both groups of envoys, as Henning Börm has argued.⁸⁷ The defection of the Iberian ruler Gurgenes around this time (Proc. i.12) further stoked tensions, leading to a Persian take-over of the kingdom and conflict between the two powers, mainly through proxies, in the Caucasus more generally; it was in this context, no doubt, that Justin sent Probus to raise troops in the vicinity of the Crimea (Proc. i.12.6–9). A foray into Persarmenia by Belisarius and Sittas (i.12.20–4), probably around the same time, may have sought to relieve pressure on Iberia.⁸⁸ The build-up to all-out war continued unabated from 527, when Justinian (527–65) took over from his uncle: while Justinian restructured the eastern command, especially in Armenia, Arab allies of Kavadh, under the leadership of the Naṣrid ruler al-Mundhir, raided the Roman eastern provinces. Roman forces attempted to riposte in the vicinity of Nisibis and further south, at Thannuris (cf. Proc. i.13.1–8).⁸⁹ Meanwhile the Roman eastern provinces, and Antioch in

⁸⁶ Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 45–52, covers developments along the frontier in the second half of the fifth century, where tensions did flare up from time to time, e.g. with Arab raids c. 500. On the rather tumultuous political history of the eastern empire in this period see (e.g.) Mitchell 2015, 121–32 and Kulikowski 2019, 231–59 (a good survey of Roman and Persian affairs). Haarer 2006 and Meier 2009 both discuss Anastasius' reign in detail.

⁸⁷ Börm 2007, 313–25, on 'hawks' and 'doves', cf. *idem* forthcoming; the negotiations reported by PZ at viii.5a took place later. On Tzath's defection see Greatrex 1998, 132–3, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 79–80. Heather 2018, 91–8, however, believes that Justinian wanted to provoke war with Persia early in his reign.

⁸⁸ Cf. Greatrex 1998, 139–48, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 82, Leppin 2011, 86–7.

⁸⁹ See Greatrex 1998, 148–59, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 84–7, Leppin 2011, 87–8. Koehn 2018a, 62–7, cf. *idem* 2018b, 220–5, suggests that Justinian held an Armenian command in the 520s and was thus personally involved in the Roman build-up here; Colvin 2018 argues that Procopius deliberately obscures Roman provocations in the Caucasus.

particular, were seriously damaged by earthquakes, first in 526, then in 528; there was also a serious fire in Antioch in 525.⁹⁰

In 530, in the wake of further unsuccessful talks, a Persian invasion force crossed the frontier near Dara and was resoundingly defeated by the new *magister militum per Orientem* Belisarius and the *magister officiorum* Hermogenes in June (Proc. i.13.9–14.55); meanwhile, a further Persian invasion was beaten back by the *magister militum praesentalis* Sittas and the new *magister militum per Armeniam* Dorotheus just outside Satala in Roman Armenia (i.15). Further negotiations proved fruitless, and in spring 531 a new Persian force proceeded up the Euphrates towards Roman Syria, an invasion route untried for many years. Although Belisarius was able to intercept the army before it got near Antioch and to force it to double back, his soldiers insisted on engaging it in battle; the result was the narrow Roman defeat at Callinicum in April (i.17–18). Soon afterwards, following the death of Kavadh and the accession of his son Khusro (531–79) and a few clashes in Armenia, an agreement was concluded. By the terms of the so-called ‘Eternal Peace’ the Romans handed over 11,000 pounds of gold, moved the base of the *dux* of Mesopotamia back to Constantia from Dara, and returned the two fortresses they had gained in Persarmenia. They received in return two fortresses in Lazica, near the Iberian border, which the Persians had seized (i.21–2); the money was destined to pay for the upkeep of the Caucasus defences (i.22.5). Neither the Nika riot in Constantinople in January 532 (i.24) nor a plot against Khusro soon after his accession (i.23.1–6) derailed the talks. For a few years, the frontier zone enjoyed a respite; a potentially dangerous coup at Dara was nipped in the bud in 537 (i.26). Meanwhile, Justinian’s attempts to cultivate links with the Ḥimyarites in southern Arabia and the Ethiopians yielded little result (i.19–20).

In the wake of the Eternal Peace, some Roman forces were redeployed to the western front, where imperial armies enjoyed striking successes, first in North Africa against the Vandals, then in Italy against the Ostrogoths. Khusro, informed of these events, and encouraged by embassies from Armenians and Goths, decided to take advantage of the situation (ii.1–4).⁹¹ In March 540 he crossed the frontier and swept across the eastern provinces, seizing Apamea and Antioch, before agreeing to return

⁹⁰ See (e.g.) Downey 1961, 519–30, cf. Leppin 2011, 143, Begass 2018, 127.

⁹¹ Koehn 2018a, 173–5, 229, insists that the East was not denuded to reconquer the West, but it is clear from Procopius’ account that Roman forces were few in number and poorly organised in 540 (so, e.g., Dignas and Winter 2007, 39). Stein 1949, 485–92, offers a good narrative of this campaign, cf. Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 102–8, Meier 2003a, 313–19, Leppin 2011, 223–5.

in exchange for a further Roman payment (ii.5–13). While Belisarius was quickly then despatched to the East (ii.14), Khusro set about regaining Lazica from the Romans with the assistance of the Lazi themselves. The new city of Petra soon fell into his hands (ii.15, 17). Belisarius, meanwhile, undertook an invasion of Beth 'Arabaye, capturing a fort at Sisauranon but then quickly retiring to Roman territory as his army suffered from the heat; a scouting force sent deeper into Persian territory with Roman and Jafnid forces under al-Harith accomplished little (ii, 16, 18–19).⁹² Khusro again invaded Roman territory in 542, but soon withdrew, whether deterred by Belisarius' forces, who put on a show of nonchalance to impress the king's envoy or, more likely, because of news of the plague (ii.20–1). Despite the ravages of the pandemic in Constantinople (ii.22–3) Justinian then embarked on an offensive in Persarmenia, which concluded in an abject defeat at Anglon (ii.24–5).⁹³ 543 saw a renewed attempt by Khusro to capture Edessa, again without success (ii.26–7). Negotiations ensued, which led to the conclusion of a truce in spring 545 (ii.28.1–11).

From this point onwards the war in the East was confined to the Caucasus, although whether the truce actually excluded the region or not at this stage is not entirely clear. Warfare of varying intensity continued there throughout the late 540s and up to 556 (ii.28–30, viii.1–17, Agathias, ii.18–iv.20); for the most part the Romans had the upper hand, retaking Petra in 551.⁹⁴ Following a further five-year truce in 557, negotiations led by Peter the Patrician on the Roman side and Yazdgushnasp on the Persian brought about a definitive treaty in late 561, the terms of which are reported by Agathias' continuator Menander Protector (fig.6).⁹⁵ Unsurprisingly, the terms of the treaty stipulated annual Roman payments to the Persians. Justinian's nephew and successor, Justin II (565–78), balked at continuing to hand over even the relatively modest sum prescribed, a little over 400 pounds of gold per year, and initiated a war for which his troops were ill prepared in 572. There followed nearly twenty years of hostilities, brought to an end only by internal instability in Persia.⁹⁶ When Khusro's grandson, Khusro II (590–628), was obliged

⁹² See Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 108–11, 115–16, cf. Stein 1949, 492–6. *Proc. Anecd.* 2.22–5 covers the same events in more critical fashion.

⁹³ Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 116, on the Anglon campaign, cf. Stein 1949, 498–500, Leppin 2011, 253.

⁹⁴ Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 116–22, 130–3. Colvin's forthcoming thesis will be a valuable treatment of this dimension of the war; I have been able to consult some draft chapters of this work.

⁹⁵ Details in Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 131–3, cf. Dignas and Winter 2007, 138–48.

⁹⁶ On which see Whitby 1988, 250–304, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 135–71.

to flee to Roman soil, the Roman Emperor Maurice (582–602) gave him military backing to retake the throne. Once restored, Khusro granted the Romans a generous peace in 591 – but then, exploiting Roman disarray with the overthrow of Maurice and take-over of the Emperor Phocas (602–10), he launched a war of his own – ‘the last great war of antiquity’.⁹⁷ His initial spectacular successes, overrunning the whole Roman Near East, were eventually, in the 620s, swept aside by the Emperor Heraclius (610–41), who precipitated Khusro’s fall from power by invading Persia itself.⁹⁸

(7) The Structure of this Commentary

The Commentary seeks to offer the reader an elucidation of Procopius’ text, touching on matters both historical and historiographical. I have often accordingly separated my Introduction to larger sections of the work, discussing initially the events in question, then Procopius’ handling of them in comparison to that of other sources. There are also remarks on some literary or philological points in the text; I am in no doubt, however, that these could be multiplied and improved by those with greater expertise in this domain. The Commentary makes frequent references to certain later works that cite the text, notably the *Suda* – on which de Boor’s articles of the early twentieth century remain fundamental – and the Constantinian *Excerpta de legationibus*;⁹⁹ building on late nineteenth-century work, it signals allusions to Herodotus and Thucydides in particular while equally drawing attention to later historians that were influenced by Procopius.¹⁰⁰ Frequent references are made to modern reference works where the reader may find more details, notably the *Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire* (PLRE), *Regesten der Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches von 476 bis 565* (RKOR) and the *Oxford Dictionary of Late Antiquity* (ODLA).

It is worth pointing out that the book, chapter and section divisions used in this Commentary and the accompanying translation do not go back to Procopius’ day. Book divisions are given in some manuscripts,

⁹⁷ See Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 172–87, cf. Dignas and Winter 2007, 44–5, 240–1.

⁹⁸ On the war, see Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 182–228. Howard-Johnston 1999 offers a good overview of the war, now treated in detail in Howard-Johnston 2021.

⁹⁹ See de Boor 1912, 1914–19. On the *Excerpta* and the *Suda* see Németh 2018, Manafis 2020, 22–3, 40 and p. 20 above.

¹⁰⁰ See Braun 1885, 1894, Duwe 1885. Naturally the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (TLG) is also invaluable for this purpose.

but the chapters and subdivisions within them are the work of modern editors, in particular of Jakob Haury at the start of the twentieth century.¹⁰¹

Three appendices may be found at the end of the work. Appendix 1 aims to give an overview of the Perso-Arabic sources that cover Sasanian history of the fifth and sixth centuries. As will be seen from the Commentary, Procopius appears to have made use on occasion of traditions that find parallels in these oriental sources. The short survey will allow the reader better to gauge Procopius' account and to relate it to these traditions, in particular to the *Khwadāynāmag* or 'Book of Lords', a work said to date from the Sasanian period. Appendix 2 discusses Procopius' stade, his normal unit of measurement, which is almost certainly based on the Roman mile. Appendix 3 offers a translation and commentary of the brief summary of Nonnosus' work preserved in Photius' *Bibliotheca*: it is particularly relevant in the context of i.19–20 of *The Persian Wars*.

¹⁰¹ See Croke 2019, 8–9, cf. p. 7, n.26. Treadgold 2007a, 185, makes some speculative suggestions as to how Procopius may have originally divided up his work. Holcroft 1653 divided up the chapters somewhat differently.

Commentary on Book I

i.1 Introduction

History/Historiography

Procopius' opening chapter divides into two sections. He begins (1–5) by introducing himself and justifies his project. He vaunts the importance of what is recounted and insists on his qualifications for composing the work. He insists, furthermore, on the accuracy of what he reports, and promises not to conceal the failures of those close to him. Much of this derives, sometimes *verbatim*, from Thucydides and Herodotus, with echoes also of other historians; Koehn 2018a, 179 n.104, detects interesting parallels with Polybius. The second part (6–17) is an extended plea for the merits of what has been accomplished in his own day, a refutation of those who find fault with the Roman army of the sixth century and its reliance on archers in particular. Procopius' preface is short: those of Agathias and Theophylact Simocatta are considerably longer and more elaborate, the latter incorporating a dialogue between History and Philosophy. Other absences should be noted: unlike Agathias, pr.11, or Menander, frg.1.1, Procopius refers to no patron or dedicatee, cf. Cesaretti 2008, 155–6. There is no overview of his work nor table of contents. Nor does Procopius emphasise the massive upheavals that the period witnessed (unlike Agathias, pr.10 or Herodian i.1.4–5), restricting himself to highlighting the remarkable Roman victories; at *Anecd.* 18, however, he does cover this ground, cf. Kaldellis 2010a, xxxix.

Bibliography: Lieberich 1900, 1–2, Earl 1972, Averil Cameron 1985, 36–7, Maltese 1995, 362–3, Cesaretti 2008, esp.156–7, Kruse 2017, Whately 2017, 693–4, Basso and Greatrex 2018, Greatrex 2018c, Koehn 2018a, 176–88, Zali 2019, 28–31.

i.i-5 The Preface

Procopius presents his grounds for composing his history. The whole section contains reminiscences of the opening lines of both Herodotus and Thucydides while fulfilling the requirements laid out by Lucian, *De hist. conscr.* 52–3; it is also in line with the practice of other classicising historians, such as Agathias. A useful passage for comparison, often overlooked, is the preface of John of Epiphania's history (covering 572–91), *FHG* iv.273, tr. in Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 177, which refers to Procopius' work and invokes the same grounds for composition. See *PLRE* iii, Ioannes 162 and Treadgold 2007a, 308–10, on John. Dahn 1865, 33, rightly emphasises that this section constitutes the preface to the entire *Wars*, not just *The Persian Wars*, cf. Basso and Greatrex 2018, 69–70.

1.1 Προκόπιος Καισαρεύς τοὺς πολέμους ξυνέγραψεν οὗς Ἰουστινιανὸς ὁ Ῥωμαίων βασιλεὺς πρὸς βαρβάρους διήνεγκε τοὺς τε ἔξωους καὶ ἐσπερίους, 'Procopius of Caesarea has written the history of the wars which Justinian, the Roman Emperor, waged against barbarians in the East and West.' The first two words spell out the author's name and place of origin, Caesarea (in Palestine, cf. *Anecd.* 11.24–5). This was standard practice, cf. Wheeldon 1989, 45–50, ever since Hecataeus the Milesian (*FGrHist* 1 F1a = *BNJ* 264 F1a), whose lead was followed by Herodotus the Halicarnassian (i.pr.) and Thucydides the Athenian (i.i.1), cf. Lucian, *De hist. conscr.* 15, mocking a would-be historian of the second century A.D.

Procopius follows Thuc. i.i.1 here, who uses the same verb for writing up his work (on which see Hornblower, *CT* i, 5). Thucydides likewise explains immediately that he will describe the war between the Athenians and the Spartans; as Earl 1972, 843, points out, for a historian 'it was obligatory to set out his subject in the very first sentence'. The reference to barbarians east and west is the only allusion in the preface to the later parts of the *Wars*, viz. iii–iv, known as *The Vandal Wars* and v–vii, known as *The Gothic Wars*; *Wars* viii was added subsequently (see Introduction (1), p. 2). Given that there is no proper preface to either of these other sections of the *Wars*, i.e. iii–iv and v–vii, it is surprising that Procopius does not explain the structure and ordering of his work, especially as a geographical (rather than a chronological) division of the subject was unusual: Appian (pr.13–15), who likewise adopts a geographical division, outlines his approach in the preface, cf. Marincola 1997, 42. Procopius

remedies this to some degree at viii.1.1–2, cf. *Anecd.* 1.1 (almost the same text, see Kaldellis 2010a, xxvii–xxviii). He starts with the Persian wars no doubt mainly on chronological grounds, since this is where he first witnessed Belisarius’ generalship, but as Roques 2000, 16, notes, it also endows the work with a more Herodotean flavour.

1.1 ὥς μὴ ἔργα ὑπερμεγέθη ὁ μέγας αἰὼν λόγου ἔρημα χειρωσάμενος τῇ τε λήθῃ αὐτὰ καταπρόηται καὶ παντάπασιν ἐξίτηλα θῆται, ‘so that immensely great deeds might not go unrecorded and that the vast progression of time might not overwhelm them, consign them to oblivion, and wipe them wholly from sight’. As Braun 1894, 5, notes, Procopius follows Herodotus i.pr., who expressed his aim to preserve remarkable deeds (ἔργα, *erga*) in case they should lack renown and be forgotten; the term ἐξίτηλα (*exitēla*, ‘obscure’, ‘evanescent’) is also used by Herodotus, cf. Asheri, *CH*, 8–9, 72–3. This became a commonplace: see Lucian, *De hist. conscr.* 54, Joh. Epiph. 1, p. 573, and note Strasburger 1982/72, 1065–6/12–13, Fornara 1983, 63, on the Homeric origins of the notion of preserving great deeds for posterity.

1.1 ὥνπερ τὴν μνήμην αὐτὸς ᾤετο μέγα τι ἔσεσθαι καὶ ξυνοῖσον ἐς τὰ μάλιστα τοῖς τε νῦν οὔσι καὶ τοῖς ἐς τὸ ἔπειτα γενησομένοις, εἴ ποτε καὶ αὐθις ὁ χρόνος ἐς ὁμοίαν τινὰ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἀνάγκην διάθοιτο, ‘deeds whose record he thought would be something great and highly beneficial both to the present generation and to those to come, if ever time should place men in the same kind of crisis again’. A formulation reminiscent of Thucydides, who had begun his work at the start of the Peloponnesian war, expecting that it would be great, μέγαν τι ἔσεσθαι (i.1.1); he later (i.22.4) expressed the hope that his work would be useful, should similar circumstances arise, as he believed they would. Cf. Lucian, *De hist. conscr.* 42 with Avenarius 1956, 22–3, Marincola 1997, 43. Brodka 2004, 18, detects a pessimistic tone in the reference to ‘a similarly critical position’, which is not present in Thucydides. Procopius, like Thucydides, insists on the utility of his work to future generations; the following section (1.2) expands on this utilitarian aspect. Diod. Sic. i.1 starts off in the same vein, but moves on to the moral value of history in providing worthy examples to posterity, another *topos* of prefaces in the later period: see Fornara 1983, 112–20, who traces its origins to Polyb. 12.25b, 30.6.4 and note Th. Sim. pr.13–15 and cf. Roques 2000, 16. That Procopius shared this view is clear from *Anecd.* 1.6–8, which echoes many of the terms employed here, cf. Avenarius 1956, 159–61, on praise and

blame in histories. See further Hedrick 2000, 130–3, Kaldellis 2004, 19. The phrase, ἐς τὰ μάλιστα, *es ta malista*, ‘extremely, highly’, is a favourite expression of Procopius, found already in Herodotus (e.g. i.20), Thucydides (e.g. vi.104.2), and frequently in Dio Cassius: see Scheftlein 1894, 18.

1.2 ἡ τῆς ἐμφεροῦς ἱστορίας ἐπίδειξις, ‘the exposition of a similar story’, reminiscent of Herodotus’ ἱστορίας ἀπόδειξις ἦδε, ‘this publication of an enquiry’, cf. Asheri, *CH*, 72.

1.2 ἀποκαλύπτουσα μὲν ὅποι ποτὲ τοῖς προγεγενημένοις τὰ τῆς ὁμοίας ἀγωνίας ἐχώρησεν, αἰνισσομένη δὲ ὁποῖαν τινὰ τελευτὴν τοῖς γε ὡς ἄριστα βουλευομένοις τὰ παρόντα, ὡς τὸ εἶκος, ἔξει, ‘by revealing how the struggle went for earlier contenders, and by offering some idea of what outcome the present situation will probably have, at least for those who plan most wisely’. Bjornlie 2013, 106, sees in the second part of the sentence an oblique allusion to the negative consequences of Justinian’s campaigns, cf. e.g. iv.28.52. Haury 1934, 11–12, cf. Fatouros 1980, 522, is probably right to suppose that Procopius composed the preface to the *Wars* and *Anecdota* just before the works were completed. He may well therefore be referring to *Anecd.* 18, in which the baleful consequences of Justinian’s wars are underlined; cf. i.5n.

1.3 ὅτι δὲ αὐτῷ συμβούλῳ ἡρημένῳ Βελισαρίῳ τῷ στρατηγῷ σχεδόν τι ἅπασι παραγενέσθαι τοῖς πεπραγμένοις ξυνέπεσε. ‘(It so happened) that he was chosen as adviser by the general Belisarius and was present with him at nearly everything that happened’. Already Thuc. i.22.2, cf. v.26.5, mentions his presence at certain events which he records, cf. Polyb. 3.4.13, Joh. Epiph. 1, p.273; Polybius insists on the importance of experience in the field, 12.25g, which Procopius is also adducing here, cf. Lucian, *De hist. conscr.* 37. See further Avenarius 1956, 35–8 (with more examples), Marincola 1997, 67–8, 72–3, Greatrex 1998b, 33–7 (on the late antique context). Ross 2018 analyses in detail Procopius’ references to himself in his work, including this passage, discussed at 77.

The Greek σύμβουλος (*xymboulos*, ‘adviser’) refers to the post of *assessor* or *consiliarius* in Latin: Procopius recounts his appointment at i.12.24, when Belisarius was made *dux* of Mesopotamia, cf. *PLRE* iii, Procopius 2. On the nature of this post, which normally required a legal training, see Greatrex 1998b, 37–44, Wieling 2000, Gorla 2005, 173–4, cf.

Lillington-Martin 2018, 158–62, Laniado 2019, 430. Other historians of the period likewise wrote up the events they had witnessed in post, such as Priscus in the fifth century (see Greatrex 2001, 150–2, Treadgold 2007a, 96–9) or John of Epiphania in the late sixth or early seventh century, cf. Treadgold 2007a, 308–10.

1.4 πρέπει τε ἡγεῖτο ῥητορικῇ μὲν δεινότητα, ποιητικῇ δὲ μυθοποιῖαν, συγγραφῇ δὲ ἀλήθειαν. ‘He considered cleverness suitable for rhetoric, the telling of myth for poetry, but for history, truth.’ Lucian, *De hist. conscr.* 8, also draws a contrast between poetry and history, cf. Polyb. 2.56.11–12 (with drama rather than poetry), Eunap. frg.1, with Avenarius 1956, 16–17, Maisano 1985, 330; Porciani 1997, 84, suggests that Ephorus was the first to praise history as a distinct genre. Maisano notes how this contrast was subsequently taken up by Leo Diac. i.1 (p. 5.12–14) and Nic. Chon. pr., 3.49–50 (pr.5), cf. Lieberich 1900, 22, 29. Taragna 2000, 71–2 with n.15, rightly rejects Lieberich’s proposed parallel with Diod. Sic. 1.2.7, which looks superficially similar; see also Taragna 2000, 82–3 on ἀλήθεια (*alētheia*, ‘truth’). Agathias, on the other hand, took a somewhat different approach: see Kaldellis 1997.

Haury 1937, 2–4, perceives criticism of John the Lydian here, who was commissioned by Justinian to compose an account of the battle of Dara (*De Mag.* iii.28.5), cf. i.12.24n.

1.5 ταῦτά τοι οὐδὲ του τῶν οἱ ἐς ἄγαν ἐπιτηδείων τὰ μοχθηρὰ ἀπεκρύψατο, ‘Accordingly, he did not conceal the failings even of any of his closest associates.’ As Haury 1934, 11–12, long ago realised, Procopius surely alludes to what he later included in the *Anecd.*, where, at 1.10, he indicates that he will proceed to recount the μοχθηρὰ (*mokhthēra*, ‘shameful deeds’, ‘failings’) first of Belisarius, then of Justinian and Theodora, cf. Greatrex 2000, 216, Kaldellis 2004, 20. In the *Wars*, shameful behaviour on the part of both John the Cappadocian and Tribonian – neither of them, however, associates of Procopius – is reported (i.24.11–16); most contemporary histories, from what Agath. pr.16–19 declares, were thoroughly partisan and apt to inflate the achievements of contemporary figures, cf. Lucian, *De hist. conscr.* 7, Eunap. frg.66.1. Lieberich 1900, 6, detects echoes of Polyb. 1.14.4, 7, who likewise insists on the need to set aside friendships. Classicising history as a genre undoubtedly tolerated a fair amount of criticism, although generally it was aimed at dead or discredited individuals. See Greatrex 2000, 216–18.

1.6–17 A Defence of Contemporary Achievements

Procopius begins a detailed and vigorous rejection of the views of conservatives of his day, who poured scorn on the achievements of the horse-archers that then comprised the élite of the Roman army: hence the reference at 1.6 to ‘judging truthfully’, i.e. impartially. Three schools of thought exist as to how his comparison of Homeric and contemporary bowmen should be interpreted:

- (1) It is a humorous reworking of Thucydides, who had declared that the Peloponnesian war was greater than the Trojan; indeed, all the opening chapters of the *Wars* are ‘enjoyable light reading’, which poke fun at their classical models. So Scott 1981, 73.
- (2) Not only is it mocking its classical antecedents but it is undermining ironically ‘the pretentious ideology that surrounded Justinian’s wars’ by the absurd comparison with a bygone era. According to this view, the historian was dismayed by the barbarisation of Roman forces and deliberately never refers to the horse-archers as Roman. So Kaldellis 2004, 21–4, *idem* 2004–5. Kruse 2017, drawing on Pindar, *Olympian Odes*, 2.83–6, pushes this notion further, arguing that the reference to horse-archers signals Procopius’ intention of delivering oblique criticism of his own government. Although such an interpretation of ‘figured speech’, discussed by Kruse 2017, 402–6, cannot be refuted, it remains unclear how such insinuations could have been missed by other contemporaries, such as Justinian’s learned courtier, Peter the Patrician, cf. Greatrex 2018c, 66.
- (3) The conventional view takes the comparison at face value: Procopius was a genuine admirer of this (relatively) new type of soldier and, as elsewhere, exudes an enthusiasm for developments in military technology. See Kaegi 1990, esp. 69–73, Breccia 2004, Syväne 2004, 43–6, Rance 2005, 467, *idem* 2007a, 355–7. Petitjean 2014 refutes Kaldellis’ arguments convincingly, cf. Basso and Greatrex 2018, Koehn 2018a, 115–18, esp. 117 n.359, 181–2, esp. 181 n.110.

That there is nothing unusual in referring back to Homer in a historical preface is clear from Lucian, *De hist. conscr.* 14, cf. Diod. Sic. 1.1.2: see Strasburger 1982/72 on his influence on historians generally, cf. Hornblower 2007, 49. The sixth-century *De pol. sci. dial.* iv.10 (2/126) likewise quotes Homer while discussing contemporary warfare. Koehn 2018a, 181–8, plausibly suggests that Procopius was engaging in a long-standing debate about the merits of archers and horse-archers in

particular, pointing to a similar discussion in a work probably from the Second Sophistic that seeks to compare Alexander the Great's horse-archers favourably to Homeric bowmen. See Köchly and Rüstow 1855, vol.2.2, 215–16 with Rance 2020b, xcv and n.3. Cf. Petitjean 2014, 259, noting Julian's favourable comparison of the Emperor Constantius to Pandarus, Teucer and Meriones in the *Iliad*, *Or.*2.52d–53c.

Procopius furthermore expresses himself in strong terms, accusing the conservatives of lacking experience and being lazy in their reasoning, 1.8. It is clear that there was a debate in the sixth century about the relative merits of infantry and cavalry, with traditionalists preferring the former: see *De sci. pol. dial.* iv.28–53 (6–10/130–6) with Bell 2009, 23–4, 130 n.31, 132 n.37. Most scholars see Procopius as a progressive in this debate, so Greatrex et al. 2005, 70–3, Petitjean 2014, Basso and Greatrex 2018, Greatrex 2018c, Koehn 2018a, 176–88, *contra*, Kaldellis 2004–5, 195–204, though it is generally agreed that the bulk of the Roman army was still primarily composed of infantry: see Kaldellis 2004–5, 204–5, Rance 2005, 427–43. Although Procopius was not to know it, Arab horse-archers in Roman service are attested on the Rhine frontier already in the mid first century A.D., but their tombstones show that they were otherwise minimally armed and drew the bow back only to the chest: see Selzer 1988, 158 nos. 90–1.

1.6 Κρεῖσσον δὲ οὐδὲν ἢ ἰσχυρότερον τῶν ἐν τοῖσδε τοῖς πολέμοις τετυχηκότων τῷ γε ὥς ἀληθῶς τεκμηριοῦσθαι βουλομένῳ φανήσεται, 'One who really wishes to judge will find nothing greater or more mighty than what happened in these wars.' It is customary for historians to magnify the importance of the events they related, a practice known as αὐξησις (*auxēsis*): thus Thuc. i.1.2 emphasises the grand scale of the Peloponnesian war, cf. Lucian, *De hist. conscr.* 53 with Earl 1972, 842–3, Marincola 1997, 34–9, for further examples. In the sixth century, both Agath. pr.10 and Joh. Epiph. 1, p.273, underline the magnitude of events of their own day. See Basso and Greatrex 2018, 64–70, arguing that Procopius is underlining the *qualitative* difference of the events of the sixth century from those of earlier times: they were greater in the sense of being amazing or marvellous (the term used just below, at 1.7), and throughout the whole of the *Wars* he underlines the feats of valour (ἀρετή, *aretē*, mentioned at 1.8) performed by the Roman forces, notably the horse-archers. See also Whately 2016, 177–88, Vasconcelos Baptista 2018, 93–5.

1.7 πέπρακται γὰρ ἐν τούτοις μάλιστα πάντων ὧν ἀκοῇ ἴσμεν θαυμαστά οἶα, ‘In them were done the greatest marvels of any that we know by report’, echoing Hdt. i.1.1, ἔργα ... θαυμαστά (‘amazing deeds’) and Thuc. i.4.1, where he refers to Minos being the most ancient ruler of the sea ὧν ἀκοῇ ἴσμεν (‘of whom we have heard’, lit. ‘know by hearing’), cf. Polyb. 1.63.4, taken up also by Joh. Epiph. 1, p.273. Procopius again underlines the importance of his chosen subject. See Basso and Greatrex 2018, 65–6 and cf. ii.29.25n. Dahn 1865, 134, points out that the closing chapter of the *Wars* recounts just such an amazing episode, where Procopius describes the courage of the Gothic king Teias, viii.35.20–30, perhaps to recall this preface.

1.8 τοξότας, *toxotas*, ‘bowmen’ or ‘archers’. At *Il.* 11.385 Diomedes uses the word as a term of abuse, calling Paris, who has just wounded him in the foot with an arrow, τοξότα, λωβητήρ, ‘bowman, slanderer’, the only time that the word is used in the poem; as van Nuffelen 2018, 42–3, points out, Procopius assumes a familiarity with Homer among his readers. On the other hand, as is noted by Kaldellis 2004, 23, archers, such as the Greek Teucer and the Trojan Pandarus, play an important role in the *Iliad*, as do Odysseus’ feats with the bow in the *Odyssey*, cf. Kruse 2017, 398–9. Homer’s attitude to archers, like that of the Greeks more generally, was thus somewhat ambivalent: see Sutherland 2001, Lendon 2005, 33–4, Hornblower 2007, 40–2, Davis 2013, 236–46 (in greater detail). Later commentators discussed archery in Homer, notably a certain Neoteles, who, Schissel von Fleschenberg 1942, 55–6, speculatively suggested, indirectly influenced Procopius. See further 1.6–17n.

1.8 ἀγχεμάχους δὲ καὶ ἀσπιδιώτας, “‘hand-to-hand fighters” and “shield-bearers””, both Homeric words, the former certainly used as a term of praise, cf. Lendon 2005, 34 (citing instances). Procopius uses the term again at *Aed.* iv.7.3. Koehn 2018a, 183–8, finds in the term a connection to earlier debates about the place of bowmen, noting, 183 n.114, its use in Strabo 10.1.12 (a passage some consider an interpolation) concerning types of warfare, cf. Köchly and Rüstow, vol.2.2, 215 (on which see 1.6–17n). In the interpretation of Kruse 2017, 396, the hand-to-hand fighters allude to Thucydides and Herodotus, historians who could openly express criticism of their contemporaries.

1.8 ἀταλαίπωρόν γε καὶ τῆς πείρας ἀπωτάτω τὴν περὶ αὐτῶν ποιούμενοι δόξαν, ‘but their opinion is superficial and without basis in

fact’, literally ‘very far removed from experience’. There is an echo of Thuc. i.20.3, cf. Duwe 1885, 5 and note Proc. viii.6.9. See also Basso and Greatrex 2018 and cf. Vasconcelos Baptista 2018, 96–7. Kruse 2017, 397–8, who attaches significance to the reuse of the word ἀταλαίπωρον, *atalaipōron* at i.11 (in its adverbial form), argues that it here means rather ‘without experience’.

i.9 ἀποκεκρύφθαι δὲ αὐτοῖς ἦν ἀναγκαῖον, ἐταίρου του ἐκλεγομένοις ἄσπινδα ἢ στήλη ἐπὶ τύμβῳ τινὶ κεκλιμένοις, ‘(They) had to hide themselves, choosing a comrade’s shield or leaning against the stone on some grave.’ Procopius alludes first to *Il.* 8.267, where Homer describes how the archer Teucer sheltered behind the shield of his brother Ajax, then (almost verbatim) to *Il.* 11.371, where Paris supports himself on a pillar on a grave. Cf. Proc. v.27.27, a description of the Gothic infantry archers, concealed behind their heavily armed colleagues, with Julian, *Or.* 2, 53ab. Kruse 2017, 396–7, considers Procopius to be referring to earlier historians who could rely on protection from a patron or on the fact that the object of their criticisms was dead.

i.11 ὥστε πελάσαντες τῷ σφετέρῳ μαζῷ τὴν νευρὰν εἶτα τὸ βέλος ἀφίεσαν κωφὸν τε καὶ οὐτιδανὸν εἰκότως τοῖς δεχομένοις ἐσόμενον, ‘that they would draw the bowstring to their own breast and then let fly the arrow weakly and naturally with no effect on their target’. Procopius again quotes Homer almost verbatim, alluding initially to *Il.* 4.123 (Pandarus stretching his bow), then *Il.* 11.390, part of Diomedes’ retort to Paris, mocking the feebleness of his effort.

i.12 οἱ δὲ γε τανῦν τοξόται ἴασι μὲν ἐς μάχην τεθωρακισμένοι τε καὶ κνημίδας ἐναρμοσάμενοι μέχρι ἐς γόνυ. ‘But today’s archers go into battle with corselets and greaves fitted as far as the knee.’ Procopius starts his admiring description of the *hippotoxotai* (horse-archers) of his own day, emphasising their extensive protection, unlike the Homeric bowmen, i.9. Procopius is describing élite soldiers: not all carried spears, see Rance 2005, 428 and n.15, and most specialised in one weapon or the other, cf. Petitjean 2017, vol. 2, 227–9. Koehn 2018a, 115–18, offers a detailed discussion of the *hippotoxotai*, convincingly refuting the scepticism of Kaldellis 2004–5, 190–204, as to whether they existed in the form Procopius describes, see esp. 117 n.359 and cf. 196–7 and n.156. He further argues, 141–5, that what was new in Procopius’ day – the τανῦν, *tanun*, ‘now’ – was the prominence now accorded to these units of horse-archers.

Maur. *Strat.* i.1–2 offers a comparable list of equipment, noting that the spear was carried on the soldier's back, cf. Agath. ii.8.1, Corip. *Ioh.* ii.441–5. As Koehn 2018a, 123, observes, the cavalrymen of the *Strat.* are more heavily armoured than Procopius', reflecting a growth in the flexibility of their capabilities. See also now Whately 2021, 8–12, on the emergence of Procopius' horse-archers.

Tabari 964/262–3 offers a comparable list of equipment for a Sasanian cavalryman. Woollen greaves or leggings from Antinoöpolis in Egypt have been found which, in one instance at least, depict a battle between horse-archers and infantry: see Demange 2006, nos. 110–13 (esp. 112), 167–9. In general, see Haldon 1975, 18–21, Kolias 1988, 70–1, Ravegnani 1988, 48–50, Kaldellis 2004–5, 190–1, Syvänne 2004, 43–6, Rance 2007a, 355–7.

1.13 βραχεῖα τις ἐπὶ τῶν ὤμων ἀσπίς ὀχάνου χωρίς, 'and a short shield on the shoulders without a shield strap', i.e. attached to the body without the wearer needing to hold it on his arm, which would detract from his ability to fire the bow. Syvänne 2004, 44 n.3 argues that this shield nonetheless offered substantial protection, citing iii.23.16, v.18.13, cf. Kolias 1988, 122 n.179; others argue that what is referred to is more of a face-guard, Haldon 1975, 18 n.33, Coulston 1986, 67. Agath. ii.8.1 refers to small shields hanging at the side of cavalrymen, cf. Koehn 2018a, 116. The portrait of the (Sasanian) horseman at Taq-i-Bostan, who carries a full shield, a lance and a quiver, may be an ideal type. The protection for the face and neck, mentioned also by Procopius here, was limited, as the wounds to these regions suffered by Arzes (vi.2.16) and Trajan (vi.5.24) attest, cf. Kolias 1988, 221.

1.14 οὐ χαλεπῶς ἐντείνειν οἳοί τε εἰσιν ἐφ' ἑκάτερα καὶ διώκοντάς τε βάλλειν τοὺς πολεμίους καὶ φεύγοντας, 'and they are able to draw the bow in either direction without difficulty and to hit the enemy whether he is pursuing or fleeing'. Kaldellis 2004–5, 192–3, sees this phrase as echoing earlier criticisms of archers, citing Plato, *Laches*, 191a; it is doubtful, however, whether the dialogue should thus be interpreted, so Petitjean 2014, 257. The same reference to an enemy pursuing or fleeing also occurs in the short treatise on archery appended to *Peri Strat.* at 44, p.128. This work dates probably to the sixth century (so Schissel von Fleschenberg 1941, 110); whether it derives from an earlier introductory work of the second century A.D., which also influenced Procopius, is more doubtful, despite Schissel von Fleschenberg 1942, 44–5, 55–6. Procopius elsewhere

reports remarkable feats by such horse-archers, e.g. at iv.13.14–16 (a duel on horseback), 24.11, and vi.1.6–10, where he singles out the accuracy of the Hunnic horse-archers even when riding fast. See further Kolias 1988, 230–1, 234. Kruse 2017, 396–7, interprets Procopius as referring to imperial historians, firing off their criticisms of emperors from a distance, wary of expressing themselves directly.

1.15 ἔλκεται δὲ αὐτοῖς κατὰ τὸ μέτωπον ἢ νευρὰ παρ' αὐτὸ μάλιστα τῶν ὤτων τὸ δεξιόν, 'The string is pulled towards their forehead, beside the right ear', which makes for a much more powerful shot, as Procopius confirms elsewhere in much the same terms, i.18.31–4, noting the penetration of the Roman arrows: see Kaegi 1990, 72, Rance 2007a, 357, but cf. Kolias 1988, 221. Bivar 1972, 286, suggests that the Roman bow was heavier, increasing the power of their shots; see also *De pol. sci. dial.* iv.66 (12/139) with Bell 2009, 139 n.57. The treatise on archery, *Peri Strat.* 44, p.128, recommends drawing the string back to the ear as producing the most powerful shot; cf. Bivar 1972, pl. 23, for an illustration (from a Persian bowl) and Demange 2006, no. 26 (84–5). The short work on Alexander's forces in Köchly and Rüstow 1855, vol. 2.2, 215–16, likewise stresses the stretching back of the string to the forehead.

1.17 λελέξεται δὲ πρῶτον ἀρξαμένοις μικρὸν ἄνωθεν ὅσα Ῥωμαίοις ξυνηνέχθη καὶ Μήδοις πολεμοῦσι παθεῖν τε καὶ δρᾶσαι, 'What the Romans and the Persians did and experienced in their war will be told first. I shall begin a little way back.' Procopius echoes Thucydides again in the conclusion to his introduction, who uses the participle ἀρξάμενος (*arxamenos*, 'starting') at i.1.1, while insisting on the 'very noteworthy' nature of the war he records, ἀξιολογώτατον, cf. Proc.'s ἀξιολογώτατα (*axiologōtata*) at i.16. There is also an echo of Appian, *Hann.* 1.1, 'Ὅσα δὲ Ἀννίβας ὁ Καρχηδόνιος ἐξ Ἰβηρίας ἐς Ἰταλίαν ἐσβαλὼν ἑκκαίδεκα ἔτεσιν, οἷς ἐπέμεινε πολεμῶν, ἔδρασέν τε καὶ ἔπαθεν ὑπὸ Ῥωμαίων, 'What Hannibal the Carthaginian, after invading Italy from Iberia, undertook and experienced at the Romans' hands in the seventeen years of warfare that he spent [there]'; the availability and influence of this author are attested by a closer imitation in Joh. Epiph. 1, p. 573, cf. Lieberich 1900, 13 n.3 and p. 3 above. Procopius uses the term 'Mede' interchangeably with 'Persian', a standard convention since Herodotus' day, cf. Priscus frg. 11.2.598/8.139 (p. 41), Th. Sim. i.12.1 with Destunis 1876, 9 n.3, Schmitt 2004, 671.

i.2–6 Persian History and Romano-Persian Relations in the Fifth Century

History

Sasanian rulers in the fifth century had as many problems to contend with as their Roman counterparts; not coincidentally, the period constituted a high water-mark in relations between the two powers. Although Yazdgerd I (399–420) receives a very favourable press both in Procopius and in Christian sources, his reputation in the Persian tradition was low. He was succeeded, not without a struggle, by his son Bahram V (420–38), a king whose good relations with the Zoroastrian priests and the nobility ensured that he went down in the official tradition as a good ruler. Soon after ascending the throne, partly as a result of tensions with the Christian community in Iran, which had enjoyed official toleration under Yazdgerd, Bahram invaded Roman territory only to be repulsed with some effort. His son and successor, Yazdgerd II (438–57), also undertook an invasion, but was apparently quickly persuaded to withdraw. Yazdgerd II faced both a major uprising in Armenia, provoked by attempts to promote Zoroastrianism in the region, and increasing pressure from the Kidarite Huns on the north-eastern frontier. A civil war broke out upon his death, in which his son Peroz (457–84) defeated his rival Hormizd III (457–9). He proved unequal to the challenges with which he was confronted – further instability in the Caucasus, in both Armenia and Albania, as well as the more powerful successors of the Kidarites, the Hephthalites, in the north-east. He suffered various reverses before finally being killed in battle against the Hephthalites in 484, some of which are recounted by Procopius. His brother and successor, Balash (484–8), failed to restore Sasanian fortunes and was ousted from the throne by the nobility, to be succeeded by Peroz's son Kavadh (488–96/7; 498/9–531). Kavadh sought to strengthen his position by a programme of important reforms to the state; he was consequently removed from the throne in 496/7 and imprisoned. He escaped and returned to power with the help of the Hephthalites, ousting the brief-reigned Zamasp (496/7–498/9).

Bibliography: Christensen 1944, 269–315, Greatrex 1998, 43–52, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 36–45, Mazza 2004, Dignas and Winter 2007, 34–7, Daryaee 2009, 22–7, Jackson Bonner 2015b, Börm 2016, 624–33, Jackson Bonner 2020, 146–219.

Historiography

Most ancient historians, from Herodotus and Thucydides onwards, felt the need to open their work with an account of the events that led up to their main theme. It is not surprising therefore that Procopius here, as in both the *Vandalic* and *Gothic Wars*, attempted to sketch out the earlier history of relations between Rome and its adversary. As will emerge quite clearly, his survey is superficial and anecdotal. Part of his aim, as at i.7–9 (cf. i.7–9g), may be to emphasise Roman weakness in contrast to Belisarius' success in 530.

The cursory nature of Procopius' account of Persian history and Romano-Persian relations in the fifth century is immediately apparent: already in i.2 he conflates two wars, while in general he provides few chronological indicators and devotes more attention to anecdotes about pearl-fishing and imprisoned Armenians than to actual history. Several explanations are possible. Kaldellis 2004, 62–93, cf. *idem* 2018, 267, has argued forcefully that Procopius presents a tableau of the degeneration of the Sasanian monarchy, culminating in the unscrupulous Kavadh and his still more ruthless son Khusro and mirroring a similar development in the Roman empire; the account starts with the generous Yazdgerd, but his successors fail to live up to his example. Yet as Börm 2007, 296 and n.3, points out, such an approach underestimates the accuracy of what he does report, however partial it may be; it is unclear, moreover, what Procopius' attitude to Kavadh is, cf. Greatrex 2014b, 94. It is more fruitful to note, with Börm 2007, 229, that Procopius emphasises the generally peaceful relations between the powers, for which the guardianship episode sets the scene, anticipating Kavadh's adoption attempt at i.11. In his idiosyncratic survey, Procopius consciously chooses to highlight the most sensational and entertaining elements of Persian history of which he had knowledge, giving precedence (as with the adoption of Theodosius at i.2) to little-known episodes that would therefore intrigue his readers all the more; sober accounts of diplomatic relations were in any case readily available to his readers in the works of Priscus, Malchus and (perhaps) Eustathius of Epiphania. Like Polybius (1.1.3–4), he did not propose to retread ground already covered by others, preferring to unearth and embellish romantic episodes, such as one he found in the 'History of the Armenians', and another in an unidentified source that was later exploited by Cedrenus (see i.4.14–31n); Polybius likewise emphasises (1.1.3) how unexpected events captivate the public. 'Not ...

much real history' and 'a fair amount of literary dressing' (Averil Cameron 1985, 156, cf. Kaldellis 2004, 64), to be sure, but, despite (e.g.) Goffart 1980, 63–6, Howard-Johnston 1995, 175–7, the broad outlines are correct, as too his discussions of Persian practices and offices.

Bibliography: Kaldellis 2004, 62–93, Mészáros 2014 (= Mészáros 2015, in Hungarian, on which see Kovács 2019), who both see a subtext to these opening chapters, Greatrex 2021b, *contra*.

2.1–10 The Guardianship of Yazdgerd I Over Theodosius II

Agath. iv.26.3–4 notes that the story of Yazdgerd's guardianship of Theodosius was well known and popular at the time he was writing, although he could find it only in Procopius. Agathias clearly thought it implausible and condemned Procopius for approving of Arcadius' willingness to entrust his son to the care of a pagan ruler (26.5–7); his praise of Procopius' erudition in this context may be ironic, cf. Treadgold 2007a, 286. Dignas and Winter 2007, 94–7, translate Agathias and Procopius with commentary. Later chroniclers also relate the guardianship, sometimes with further details, e.g. Theoph. 80.8–19 (A.M. 5900), who reports the despatch of a eunuch, Antiochus, to the court at Constantinople to protect the young emperor. Cedr. 361, p.575 (586) adds the payment of 1000 pounds of gold by the Romans. Barheb. *Chron.* 69/66, Manasses, *Chron.* 2515–32, Nic. Call. xiv.1 (PG 146, 1057), Zonaras xiii.22 (p.236), all likewise recount the episode. See Luther 2016, 647–8, on the sources.

There are some verbal similarities between Procopius and Theophanes noted by Rubin, *PvK*, 319–20, which may point to a common source; *contra* Haury 1896, 21 n.1, this can hardly be PZ. Priscus is more likely: see Rubin, *PvK* 361, cf. Greatrex 2008a, 87. The fuller details in Theophanes and Cedrenus show that they cannot have been relying exclusively on Procopius. A dim reflection of the episode may be present in the oriental tradition in Ḥamza on which see Bardill and Greatrex 1996, 173 n.9; Rubin 2008a, 39 n.57, rejects the account. Márkus 1987, in a detailed treatment of the oriental traditions, argues that they reflect oral versions that emerged in both empires, cf. Luther 2016, 655–6, Hämeen-Anttila 2022. For Kaldellis 2004, 65–7, cf. Mészáros 2014, 163–4, 172, the story illustrates the apogee of great power relations, when both empires were governed by virtuous monarchs; *contra*, Greatrex 2021b, section 1.

Despite the scepticism of numerous scholars (such as Heil 2006, 70–4, cf. Sauerbrei 1905; for bibliography see Averil Cameron 1969–70, 149,

Greatrex 2008, 85–7), there is no reason to doubt the historicity of the episode, so also Luther 2016, cf. already Haury 1906a. Procopius is not the only source to report it, even if he is the earliest; much of the work of the fifth-century historians is of course lost. They may in any case have preferred to omit it, given the outbreak of hostilities in 421; Procopius, however, had reason to include it, since it anticipates the proposal of Kavadh in the 520s that Justin I adopt his son Khusro (i.11.6–30). See Bardill and Greatrex 1996, 176, cf. Maas 2016, 183–4. There is also independent confirmation of the generally amicable relations between the two powers at this time: Soz. *HE* ix.4.1 refers to the conclusion of a peace treaty, while in 408/9 a law was passed (*C.J.* 4.63.4) to regulate cross-border trade between Rome and Persia, which would naturally require collaboration. See Pieler 1972, 410–11, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 32–4, Börm 2007, 308–11, cf. Canepa 2009, 295 n.31. Luther 2016, 649–50, finds further confirmation of the adoption in Yazdgerd's declaration at the first council of the Persian church in 410 that 'East and West form a single power, under the dominion of my majesty', cf. Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 34, on this episode, and 2.7n.

2.1 Ἡνίκα τὸν βίον Ἀρκάδιος ὁ Ῥωμαίων βασιλεὺς ἐν Βυζαντίῳ τελευτᾶν ἤμελλεν (ἦν γάρ οἱ παῖς Θεοδοσίος οὐπω τοῦ τιτθοῦ ἀπαλλαγείς), 'When Arcadius, the Roman Emperor, was near to death in Byzantium he worried about his son and the empire (for his son Theodosius was not yet weaned).' Theodosius was born on 10 April 401; already on 10 January 402 he was elevated to the rank of Augustus. See *PLRE* ii, Theodosius 6. Arcadius did not die until May 408, however, cf. *PLRE* i, Arcadius 5. Hence Theodosius was over seven years old when he became sole ruler – scarcely an unweaned child. The confusion (also to be found in Soz. *HE* ix.1, who claims he had only recently been weaned) may arise because Procopius or his source has conflated his elevation to the rank of Augustus (in 402) with the moment when he took over from his father (in 408). See Bardill and Greatrex 1996, 172–4, cf. Börm 2007, 309, offering an early date for Arcadius' decision and the arrival of the emissary Antiochus; but Pfeilschifter 2013, 131 n.21, argues that Antiochus, although already at court from an early stage, was only later appointed to take on the responsibility of protecting the young emperor after his father's death. Procopius uses a similar expression at iii.3.5, where he notes that the young Valentinian III, born in July 419, had recently left his wet-nurse at the moment when the usurper John seized power in the West in late 423. The similarity of the expression, together with an

equally confused chronology (at iii.3.7, John is said to have reigned for five, rather than two, years) points to use of an unreliable source on Theodosian history. See also Greatrex 2021b, ‘The texture’, for a comparison of the introduction to *Wars* iii with these chapters.

In 913 the patriarch Nicholas Mysticus brought up the story in a letter to the Bulgarian tsar Symeon; he claims that Theodosius was three when his father died, but then adds that the Persian king was called Khusro, *ep.* 5, p.32.128–43. See Baldwin 1988, Leszka 2015.

Lucarini 2005 perceives parallels between Procopius’ account here and Herodian, i.3.5, describing Marcus Aurelius’ entrusting of his son Commodus to his close advisers.

Procopius uses the name ‘Constantinople’ for the imperial capital only in the *Buildings*; otherwise he always prefers the traditional ‘Byzantium’, cf. Averil Cameron 1985, 15.

2.3 ἐπεὶ οὐδένα ἐν Βυζαντίῳ συγγενῇ εἶχεν, ὅστις ἂν αὐτῷ ἐπίτροπος εἴη, ‘who had no relative in Byzantium to be his guardian (*epitropos*)’. Since an emperor was legally *sui iuris*, he could not strictly have a guardian; but the term could also mean a legal executor by the sixth century, the equivalent of the Latin *curator*, the word actually used by Theophanes in this context, 80.10, for Yazdgerd: see Pieler 1972, 416–20. Cf. Joh. Ant. frg.213, who refers to Stilicho and Rufinus as the *epitropoi* of the young Honorius and Arcadius. Some prefer to see the arrangement as a loose one, but Pieler, followed by Blockley 1992, 197 n.36, regards Yazdgerd as Arcadius’ veritable executor. In Theophanes’ account, the actual *epitropos* is the eunuch Antiochus, who appears to have arrived in Constantinople already in 402 and to have become prominent by 404–5, cf. Bardill and Greatrex 1996, esp.176–7. See further Luther 2016, 657–8 with 657 n.49 on Sasanian conceptions of guardianship.

2.4 πονηρῶν ἤδη τῶν Ἰταλίας πραγμάτων ὄντων, ‘for things were now bad in Italy’. In the early fifth century there were several invasions of the peninsula, notably by Alaric and Radagaisus: see (e.g.) Blockley 2000, 118–23, Halsall 2007, 200–17.

2.6 βουλευέται βουλήν, ‘(he) thought of (or planned) a plan’: both Greek words derive from the same root. Homer once uses the two words together, referring to the wise Nestor, who knew how to devise the best plans. But it is common also in Christian authors, often commenting on Isa. 8:10, cf. Ezek. 11:2, where the same idiom is found.

2.7 ἐπίτροπον δὲ αὐτῷ κατεστήσατο Ἰσδιγέρδην τὸν Περσῶν βασιλέα, ‘(He) made Yazdgerd, the Persian king, his guardian.’ Yazdgerd I (399–420) receives a good press in western sources, especially Christian authors; the Persian church held a council at Seleucia-Ctesiphon in 410 and, until the end of the 410s, diplomatic relations between Rome and Persia were very good, thanks in particular to the role of bishop Marutha of Maipherqat (Martyropolis). The Persian tradition is more hostile, probably as a consequence of continuing power-struggles between the crown and the nobility. See Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 31–6, McDonough 2008, Mosig-Walburg 2009a.

2.8 θείας τινὸς ἐπιπνοίας αὐτῷ γενομένης, ‘at the prompting of a divine inspiration’. The expression is as frequent in pagan sources (Plato, *Rep.* 499c1, Polyb. 10.2.12) as in Christian (Euseb. *Dem. Evang.* 8.2.57, Cyr. Scyth. *V. Euthym.* 45 [66.27]). Th. Sim. v.5.1 describes how a speech by the bishop Domitian instilled a ‘divine inspiration’ in the Roman army during its march into Persia in summer 591. Procopius uses a very similar formulation for an idea that came to Justinian in a dream for resolving construction problems at Dara: at *Aed.* ii.3.8 he refers to θείας δηλονότι ἐπιπνοίας αὐτῷ γενομένης τινός, where the term ἐπίνοια (*epinoia*) refers to an ‘idea’, rather than ‘inspiration’ (*epipnoia*), although Dewing translates it as ‘inspiration’.

2.8 ὢν καὶ πρότερον ἐπὶ τρόπου μεγαλοφροσύνη διαβόητος ἐς τὰ μάλιστα, ‘who was even before this extremely famous for the magnanimity of his nature’. The words ἐπὶ τρόπου (*epi tropou*), meaning ‘in (this) way’, seem gratuitous; the idiom is used almost exclusively by philosophers, e.g. Aristot. *Post. Anal.* A.23 (p.147, 85a10–11), ἐπὶ δὲ τοῦ τρίτου τρόπου, ‘in the case of the third way’, tr. Barnes, p.35. Given that the adjective διαβόητος (*diaboētos*) is generally used with the preposition ἐπὶ (*epi*), it is possible that τρόπου (*tropou*) has been inserted by mistake, perhaps as a result of a confusion with the word ἐπίτροπος (*epitropos*, guardian: see 2.3n). Procopius employs a similar expression to describe John, the nephew of Vitalian, at vi.10.9, διαβόητος καὶ τὸ πρότερον ὢν, ‘being already famous’.

2.8 ἀρετὴν ἐπεδείξατο θαύματος τε πολλοῦ καὶ λόγου ἄξιαν, ‘(Yazdgerd) displayed a remarkable and noteworthy virtue.’ Procopius signals already an instance of a remarkable deed – ‘worthy of wonder’, as he puts it here – that deserves to be recorded, cf. 1.7 above with Basso and Greatrex 2018, 69.

2.9 εἰρήνη τε ἀφθόνῳ χρώμενος διαγέγονεν ἐς Ῥωμαίους τὸν πάντα χρόνον καὶ Θεοδοσίῳ τὴν ἀρχὴν διεσώσατο, ‘(he) kept complete peace with Rome for the whole period and preserved the throne for Theodosius’. From Theophanes’ very similar description of relations, εἰρήνη ἀφθόνῳ πρὸς Ῥωμαίους χρησάμενος Θεοδοσίῳ τὴν βασιλείαν διεσώσατο, ‘he pursued a policy of unstinting peace with the Romans and preserved the kingdom for Theodosius’, one may infer that both were drawing on a common source, as was Nic. Call. xiv.1 (PG 146, 1057), who uses the same phrasing but inserts a reference to a one hundred-year peace, perhaps taken from Soz. *HE* ix.4.1. See Bardill and Greatrex 1996, 178 and 2.1–10n.

2.11–15 The Abortive Invasion of the Persian King Bahram

Procopius offers here a vague account of an invasion by Yazdgerd’s successor, Bahram V, who was swiftly persuaded by a solo mission of the *magister militum per Orientem* Anatolius to return to Persian soil. It is likely that he has conflated two conflicts, the war of 421–2, in which Bahram V invaded Roman territory but was repulsed after several battles, and that of 440 (or 441, cf. Mazza 2004, 59), in which Bahram’s son Yazdgerd II was indeed dissuaded from pursuing his offensive by Anatolius, although the general was obliged to offer a financial inducement to the king; it is possible that there was also a brief confrontation already in 416/17, as argued by Luther 2014. The confusion, which may be due to Procopius or his source, arose probably partly because of the sequence of Persian kings, viz. Yazdgerd (I) – Bahram – Yazdgerd (II), and partly as a result of the involvement of Anatolius in both conflicts: in the war of 421–2 it is likely that he was in Armenia, where he saw to the fortification of Theodosiopolis (Erzerum), while in 440 other sources confirm that he was *magister militum* and concluded a peace treaty with Yazdgerd. Veh 1970, 459, suggests instead that Procopius deliberately combined the two wars in order to streamline his account. It is also true that it suits Procopius’ emphasis on Belisarius’ victory at Dara to pass over the successes won by Roman forces in 421–2, cf. Börm 2007, 228, Greatrex 2021b, section 2. The section is cited in *Exc. de legat. Rom.*, 90.9–24.

Bibliography: Blockley 1992, 61, Greatrex 1993, Luther 1997, 103–8, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 38–45, 53–4 (with trs. of other sources), Garsoïan 2004, Dignas and Winter 2007, 135–8, Greatrex 2008, Mészáros 2014, 164, 172, Jarosz 2017, 431–3, Greatrex and Amanatidis-Saadé 2022.

2.11 Ἐπεὶ δὲ Θεοδοσίος μὲν ἀνὴρ τε ἐγεγόνει καὶ ἡλικίας πόρρω ἀφῖκτο Ἰσδιγέρδης δὲ νοσήσας ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἠφάνιστο, ‘But when Theodosius had grown up and reached maturity, Yazdgerd fell ill and vanished from the world of men.’ Certain eastern sources refer to a headache that caused the king’s death, Mari, 29, *Chr. Seert*, i.74, PO 5 (1910), 332. The official tradition, resolutely hostile to him, refers to him being kicked in the heart by a magical horse on the north-east frontier; some have seen in this the cover-up of an assassination. See Tabari 849–50/73, Eutych. §232 (92/76–7) and xiii.13 (176/233), Firdausi, v, 418, with Christensen 1944, 273, Averil Cameron 1969–70, 150, and Pourshariati 2008, 66–7.

The expression ‘was taken from the world of men’ or (more literally) ‘disappeared from among men’ is a common circumlocution for death, used on several occasions by Isocrates (e.g. *Paneg.* 95), Diod. Sic. (e.g. 2.14.3) and others; Procopius employs it more than sixty times. See Roques 2000, 16. Rubin, *PvK*, 311, unnecessarily considers it to indicate Semitic influence.

2.11 ἐπῆλθε μὲν ἐς Ῥωμαίων τὴν γῆν Οὐαραράνης ὁ Περσῶν βασιλεὺς στρατῷ μεγάλῳ, ‘Bahram, the king of Persia, attacked Roman territory with a large army.’ The reference is probably an error for Yazdgerd II, who succeeded his father Bahram V in 438. The Armenian historian Elishe (7/61–2, tr. in Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 45) describes a brutal invasion in the second year of his reign that was brought to an end by Anatolius’ willingness to accede to all his demands. Procopius refers to the king as Ouararanēs (Wararanēs), the same form used by Agath. iv.26.2, cf. Evagr. i.19. Socr. *HE* vii.18.21 has Barabanēs (or Bararanēs), Thdrt. *HE* v.37.7 Gororanēs. It is worth noting that, as throughout the wars, it is the foreign king that leads his army, while the Roman emperor remains in Constantinople, cf. Kaldellis 2004, 68–9, Börm 2007, 93; Tabari, however, 872/108, relates that the Persian army was led rather by Mihr Narses.

2.11 ἔδρασε δὲ οὐδὲν ἄχαρι, ἀλλ’ ἄπρακτος ἐπανῆλθεν εἰς τὰ οἰκεία τρόπῳ τοιῷδε, ‘He did no harm, however, and returned to his own country in the following manner without achieving anything.’ The last words, ‘in the following manner’ are a Herodotean expression, introducing an explanation, as at i.67.1, used also by Thucydides (e.g. i.89.1), and later by Zosimus (e.g. v.7.3). Procopius adopted it with enthusiasm,

deploying it more than fifty times, cf. Braun 1894, 7–8. So likewise is the reference to doing no harm, cf. Hdt. i.108.5 with Braun 1894, 35. The whole sentence is quoted by Suda, A4673, probably relying on a lost book (perhaps on military affairs) of the Constantinian *Excerpta*: so de Boor 1914–19, 9, cf. *idem* 1912, 389.

2.12 Ἀνατόλιον τὸν τῆς ἑω στρατηγὸν Θεοδοσίος ὁ βασιλεὺς πρεσβευτὴν ἐς Πέρσας μόνον αὐτὸν ἐτύγχανε πέμψας, ‘The Emperor Theodosius happened to send Anatolius, the *magister militum per Orientem*, alone to the Persians.’ There is some dispute about the career of Anatolius: the Armenian source Mos. Khor. iii.57–9 (322–8), places him at Theodosiopolis in Armenia during the war of 421–2, where he could well have exercised the role of *magister militum per Orientem*. Some scholars doubt the reliability of Moses’ account: see Garsoïan 2004, 184–6, cf. *PLRE* ii, Anatolius 10, Blockley 1992, 200 n.31; *contra*, Greatrex 2008, 88–9. He undoubtedly held the office in 440, however, and it is to this occasion that Procopius refers. Jarosz 2017 offers a detailed examination of his career, arguing, 433, that he was involved in negotiations at the end of the war of 421–2.

The use of τυγχάνω (*tynkhanō*, ‘I happen’) with the aorist participle (πέμψας, *pempsas*, ‘having sent’) is rare, although found in some of Justinian’s *Novels* (e.g. *Novj.* 22.43): it is more commonly used with the present or perfect participles. While the imperfect tense of the verb is used by both Thucydides (e.g. viii.5.5) and Herodotus (e.g. vii.61.3), Procopius adopts it on a large scale (over 160 uses), cf. Rubin, *PvK*, 311. In all its various tenses it is used to underline the chance nature of an event, cf. *LSJ*, 1833; it need not in every case fit into an overarching Procopian theory of the role of *tychē* (chance) in history on which see (e.g.) Dahn 1865, 220–53, Averil Cameron 1985, 117–19, Brodka 2004, 40–56.

2.12 ὃς ἐπειδὴ ἄγχιστα ἐγγόνει τοῦ Μήδων στρατοῦ, ‘When he came to the Persian (Medic) army.’ The expression ἄγχιστα γίγνομαι, *ankhista gignomai*, ‘I become very near to’ with the genitive is common in Procopius but not found in earlier authors.

2.15 ἐφ’ ᾧ μέντοι μηδέτεροι ἐν χωρίῳ οἰκίῳ ἐν γειτόνων τοῖς τῶν ἑτέρων ὁρίοις ὄντι ὀχύρωμα νεώτερόν τι ἐργάζονται, ‘The terms were that neither side should build any new fortress in their own territory adjacent to the other’s borders.’ Procopius refers to this agreement in

almost the same terms at *Aed.* ii.1.5, cf. Destunis 1876, 18 n.7. It is generally thought that this stipulation must have been agreed in the aftermath of the war of 421–2, during which Anatolius was involved in strengthening the fortifications of Theodosiopolis (Erzerum). See Blockley 1992, 57–8, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 42–3, Dignas and Winter 2007, 137–8; *contra*, Garsoïan 2004, 184–92.

On the expression ἐφ' ᾧ (*eph' hō*, 'on the condition that' or 'the terms were that'), much prized by Procopius, here used with the indicative, see Schefflein 1893, 55, cf. Rubin, *PvK*, 311.

i.3–4 Peroz's Campaigns Against the Hephthalites

History

The region to the north-east of Iran, known in Persian literature as Turan, was a constant source of menace to the Sasanians. Nomadic peoples often dominated the steppe-lands to be found here, on occasion extending their rule southwards into Afghanistan and the Hindu Kush, and sometimes threatening Persian territory to the west. The history of this region and of Persian involvement in it is the subject of much recent work, as increasing numbers of Bactrian documents come to light and are interpreted. There remain difficulties, however, in reconciling literary sources – both Roman and Chinese – and documentary sources, in particular the coinage issued by the various peoples in the region.

Between approximately 360 and 370 there was a significant migration of nomadic Huns from the Altai mountains to the south and west. Among them were the Hephthalites, who rose to prominence, however, only in the second half of the fifth century. In the early fifth century, the Kidarites, whom some have identified with the Chionites of Ammianus (16.9.4, cf. 19.1–2), appear to have united certain Hunnic peoples under their rule (if they were not actually Huns themselves) and came to represent an important threat to the Persian north-eastern frontier as their power expanded. This led to wars during the reigns of Bahram V (420–38) and Yazdgerd II (438–57), in which it appears that the Sasanians had the upper hand. Early in the reign of Peroz (457 or 459–84), the Persians decisively defeated the Kidarites, capturing the city of Balkh (Balaam in Priscus' report, frg.51.1/41.3 [p.78]); gold coins minted here by Peroz attest to the restoration of Persian control. Bactrian documents from Rōb, south-east of Balkh, show an increased Persian presence during Peroz's reign. But the destruction of the Kidarites paved the way for the dramatic

growth of Hephthalite power; it is likely that they had intervened already in the civil war between Peroz and his brother Hormizd III from 457 to 459, giving their backing to the former. From their original power-base in the Hindu Kush or eastern Bactria they entered into contact with China already in 457, defeated Peroz on more than one occasion, and took over the important trading state of Sogdia to the north by 509. Whether they extended their power into Gandhara and the Punjab to the south is disputed, since the coins found here bear the name Alkhan/Alchon, a people that may (but need not) be linked to the Hephthalites, and who may have temporarily fallen under their dominion. The numismatic evidence shows clearly, however, that the Hephthalites took over the city of Balkh, identified explicitly on their coins; the cessation of the Sasanian mint at Merv from its brief reopening under Peroz until 522 confirms the loss of Persian control of its eastern frontier.

Bibliography: Litvinsky 1996b, 138–41, Grenet 2002, Alram 2003, de la Vaissière 2003, Schindel 2006a, Sims-Williams 2008, 98, Alram and Pfisterer 2010, Cribb 2010, de la Vaissière 2012, Xiang 2012, 282–6, Kim 2013, 36–7, 184 n.190, Payne 2013, 15–17, Pfisterer 2013, 24–5, Vondrovec 2014, 45–8, Payne 2015, de la Vaissière 2015 (a good synthesis), Rezakhani 2017, 88–146, Potts 2018, 291–7, Jackson Bonner 2020, 123–5, 135–8, Sims-Williams 2020, 237–9, 242, Haarer 2022, 93–6. Alram et al. 2012, an exhibition held at the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna, is a valuable on-line resource (in English and German). Balogh 2020 is a useful source-book on Huns in Asia.

Historiography

Procopius' account can partly be corroborated by other sources, at any rate for the disastrous final defeat of Peroz against the Hephthalites in 484. Such was the impact of his failed campaigns that they are reported in Armenian, Syriac and Arabic sources. Other parts of his narrative, however, are less well attested, e.g. his description of Peroz's first unsuccessful campaign and the advice of the Roman ambassador Eusebius. Kaldellis 2004, 69–75, rightly notes parallels with Herodotus' description of Darius' Scythian campaign (iv.118–42) – another struggle between the Persians and a nomadic enemy – but is inclined to suppose that some elements at least are Procopius' own invention. As will emerge from the Commentary, there are no grounds for such an inference. The opening part of i.3, sections 2–7, represents the first ethnographical digression in Procopius' work, derived perhaps from the report of the ambassador Eusebius (3.8) or oral reports; it paints a remarkably positive picture of

the Hephthalites. As Mészáros argues, there is a Herodotean feel to Procopius' description of the Hephthalites, the Persians' neighbours; he also rightly notes that, having started by recounting Romano-Persian relations, Procopius now turns to relations between Persians and Hephthalites before focusing exclusively on the Persians (i.5–6).

Bibliography: Kaldellis 2004, 69–75, Revanoglou 2005, 225–31, Börm 2007, 152, 207–8, Mészáros 2014, 171–3, Greatrex 2021b, section 3.

3.1–22 Peroz's First Unsuccessful Campaign against the Hephthalites

While most sources report two unsuccessful campaigns by Peroz, the second of which led to his death in 484 (4.1–13), Ps.-Josh. 10 relates two initial campaigns, in both of which Peroz was captured. In the first case, Zeno helped to ransom him, while in the second the king was obliged to give his son Kavadh as a hostage until he had paid the full sum of the ransom. Some accept Joshua's version (Kurbanov 2010, 166–7, cf. PJT 10 n.42, hesitant) while others suppose that he has created a doublet (so Szaivert 1987, 165, Schindel 2004a, 415); see also Luther 1997, 116–21, who fails, however, to distinguish Kidarites and Hephthalites. In either case, the date of the campaign here described by Procopius is uncertain. Dates for Peroz's penultimate campaign vary widely: Szaivert 1987, 166–7 (cf. Rubin 2000, 642), places it as early as 465/7, during Leo's reign, but Procopius' explicit reference to the Emperor Zeno makes this highly unlikely; moreover, Peroz had seized Balkh after defeating the Kidarites in 467/8 (reported by Priscus, frg. 41.3/33 [pp.71–3], an episode not to be conflated with Procopius' account, cf. Errington 2007, 101, *contra* Bivar 2003, 199). Procopius' campaign must then be placed after the victories over the Kidarites. Procopius' mention of Zeno makes 469 equally implausible, *contra* Frye 1984, 322, Schippmann 1990, 44, Kim 2013, 37. Schindel 2004a, 396–8, 415–16, argues strongly for 474, citing Sid. Apoll. *ep.* 8.9.45–54, a panegyric for the Visigothic king Euric, which refers to the Parthian king Arsaces hoping to return to Susa as a tribute-paying ally (presumably of the Hephthalites); the letter dates from 477, so Harries 1994, 18. Cf. Alam and Pfisterer 2010, 23, who also favour 474, Alam et al. 2012, showcase 10, Payne 2015, 287, Meier 2019, 738.

3.1 Χρόνῳ δὲ ὕστερον Περόζης ὁ Περσῶν βασιλεὺς πρὸς τὸ Οὐννων τῶν Ἐφθαλιτῶν ἔθνος, οὕσπερ λευκοὺς ὀνομάζουσι, πόλεμον περὶ γῆς ὀρίων διέφερε, 'Later Peroz, the Persian king, was waging a war

about land boundaries against the people of the Hephthalite Huns, whom they call “White”.

The Hephthalite/Ephthalite Huns were a confederation of various peoples who rose to prominence in the second half of the fifth century in Central Asia (fig. 2). The name Hephthalite is a Greek version of the Bactrian $\eta\beta\omicron\delta\alpha\lambda\omicron$ (probably pronounced *ēvdal*), i.e. Abdelai: PZ xii.7k and Th. Sim. vii.7.8 refer to them by both names, cf. Bivar 2003, 199, Sims-Williams 2007, 213; see also Haussig 1953, 323–7, Miyakawa and Kollautz 1969, 88–93, Rezakhani 2017, 134–5, on their name. Their nationality is a vexed question. De la Vaissière 2003, 124, argues convincingly that they should be seen as a mixture of political and clan relationships rather than as an ethnic or linguistic entity, although Pohl 2018, 193–7, is willing to take seriously Procopius’ assertion at 3.2 that the Hephthalites were Huns by race, cf. Rezakhani 2017, 136. See also Tremblay 2001, 183–8, Grenet 2002, 210, Kim 2013, 38 and 186 n.220, cf. Börm 2007, 207 n.4. They are labelled ‘White Huns’ not just by the Roman sources, but also by the Indians and Persians; Cosmas Indic. xi.20 refers to White Huns north of India, though Errington 2007, 98, is doubtful whether this refers to the Hephthalites. Procopius explains, at 3.4, that the whiteness refers to their skin colour, but this is unlikely to be the case, cf. Sinor 1990c, 300–1, Revanoglou 2005, 226, although Yu 2011, 78, 81, regards this as a possibility, as a result of intermarriage with another tribe. See Miyakawa and Kollautz 1969, 93–7, Litvinsky 1996b, 136–8, Pulleyblank 2000, 92–3, Grenet 2002, 205, Bivar 2003, 199, Ghose 2003, 145–6 with 155 n.2, Kurbanov 2010, 9–11.

The reference to a war over frontiers recalls the end of the previous chapter, in which the Romans and Persians had agreed not to build up defences on their own borders (2.15). Recent work east of the Caspian Sea has established that a fortified wall was erected in the fifth century, most likely under Peroz, in order to protect the kingdom from nomads issuing from the steppe (fig. 3). See Sauer et al. 2013, 593–9, Howard-Johnston 2014, 155–7. Tabari likewise refers to boundary markers (864/96, cf. 878–9/118).

The phrase $\chi\rho\acute{o}\nu\omega\ \delta\grave{\epsilon}\ \upsilon\sigma\tau\epsilon\rho\omicron\nu$, *khronō de husteron*, ‘later’, ‘at a later time’, derived from Herodotus (cf. Braun 1894, 11) is frequently used by Procopius. See i.20.8n. The opening five sections of this chapter are translated and commented on by Dignas and Winter 2007, 97–8.

3.2 ἀλλὰ προσοικοῦσι μὲν Πέρσαις πρὸς βορρᾶν ἄνεμον, οὗ δὴ πόλις Γοργῶ ὄνομα πρὸς αὐταῖς που ταῖς Περσῶν ἐσχατιαῖς ἐστίν, ‘but

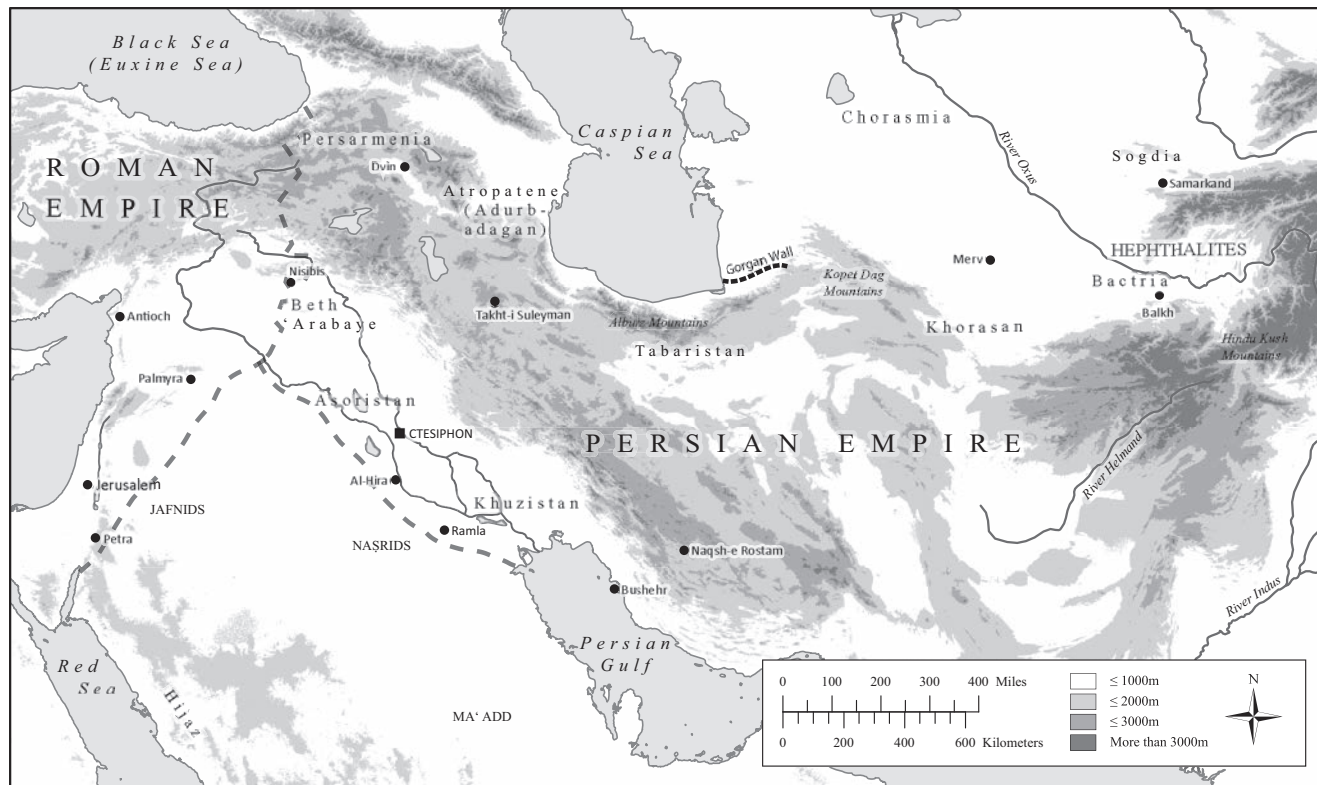


Figure 2 The Persian Empire

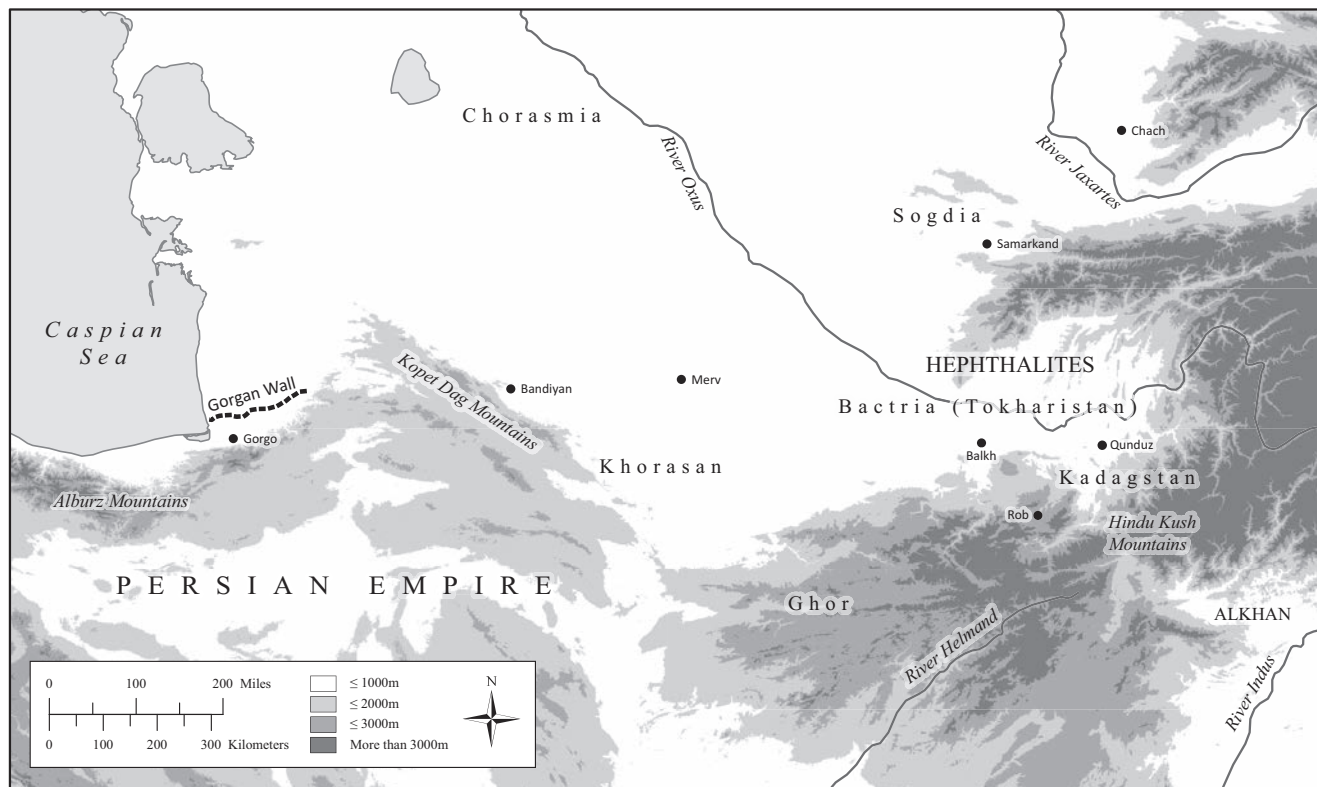


Figure 3 The Persian Northeastern Frontier

(they live) next to the Persians towards the north, where the city called Gorgo is situated, on the very border of Persia'. Gorgo is generally identified with Gorgān, to the east of the Caspian Sea, near modern Gonbad-e Qābus, which is indeed to the north of the Persian kingdom and just to the south of the Gorgān wall; Priscus' Gorga, frg.41.3/33 (p.73), presumably refers to the same place, so also Joh. Lyd. *De Mens.* iv.118 (156), albeit in the unlikely context of Julian's campaign against Shapur, cf. Hooker, 152 n.43. See Börm 2007, 204–5, Sauer et al. 2013, 597. One version of Tabari, 880/120, refers to Jurjān on the border between the Persians and Hephthalites, though in the context of a spurious campaign; Nöldeke 1879, 131 n.1, identifies it with Gorgān and Gorgo. See also Gyselen 1989, 50, 84 and fig.10, on the province of Gorgān.

Bivar 2003, 199, followed by Schindel 2004a, 159 n.731, proposed an identification rather with Gorgānj in Chorasmia, further to the north-east, which corresponds less well to Procopius' description, given the flatness of the terrain, although it is true that the wars between the Persians and Hephthalites took place over a broad swathe of territory from Gorgān eastwards. Tabari, 875/114, cf. Tha'alibi, 578, refers rather to deserts in his second version concerning Peroz's defeat, which might support this identification. See Sauer et al. 2013, 625 n.45. Enoki 1959, 5–6, cf. 28–9, identifies Gorgo with Ghōr, the Chinese Hua, south-west of Balkh, where the name is applied to a whole region; Czeglédý 1980, 215, rightly argues against this.

Grenet 2002, 214–16, discusses a later Hephthalite centre at a place referred to in Chinese sources as Huolu, cf. Czeglédý 1980, 215–16, which he proposed to interpret as a second *Ghūr and to identify with Qal'a-i Ghūrī near Pul-i Khumri, south-east of Balkh, but more recently it has been suggested that Chinese Huolu rather represents Bactrian Warlu, cf. Yoshida 2003, 158, accepted by Grenet 2006, 147, Sims-Williams 2008, 98, *idem* 2020, 238. On a more general level see Rezakhani 2017, 126–7, 143. I am indebted to Nicholas Sims-Williams for assistance on this point. See further i.4.1–14n.

Procopius' language is ambiguous here as regards the city's location: he situates the city πρὸς (*pros*, 'near') the Persian boundaries, while at 4.10 he uses the preposition ἐν (*en*, 'on'). In light of the second reference, it is likely that he conceived of it as lying in Persian territory, cf. Sauer et al. 2013, 597 and 625 n.45, *contra* Kaldellis 2004, 71. Whether there is any significance in the city being a homonym of γοργός (*gorgos*) meaning 'fierce' or 'vigorous' may be doubted, despite Kaldellis 2004, 71 and 244 n.28; Priscus, after all, gives nearly the same name (as noted above).

Procopius' reference to the north, πρὸς βορρᾶν ἄνεμον, literally 'towards the north wind', is a Herodotean touch, cf. e.g. ii.28.3, similarly Appian, *Hann.* 6.34. Procopius uses the expression very frequently.

3.3 οὐ γὰρ νομάδες εἰσὶν ὥσπερ τὰ ἄλλα Οὐννικά ἔθνη, 'They are not nomads like the other Hunnic peoples', an opinion echoed by Men. Prot. frg.10.1.76–8, but not strictly correct; he is probably accurate, however, in categorising them as Huns, like those under Attila, since they came from the same region and displayed similar social systems, so Kim 2013, 38, cf. de la Vaissière 2005, 21–2 and n.40. Like the Huns who moved into Europe, the Hephthalites were initially nomadic at the time they migrated into Bactria and the adjacent regions; they then gained control over the various indigenous peoples, who were sedentary for the most part. Probably under the influence of these peoples, the Hephthalites gradually underwent a process of sedentarisation: a mid sixth century Chinese source, the *Zhoushu*, reports that 'Its king [i.e. of the Hephthalites] has his capital in the walled city of Badiyan, which means something like "the walled city in which the king resides".' Visitors will also have tended to conflate the habits of indigenous peoples with those of nomadic immigrants, while nomads themselves do settle for longer periods in certain places. Another Chinese source, the *Weishu*, on the other hand, describes the Hephthalites (Yeda) as lacking walled cities and towns, although the king remained in one place for the winter at least: see Balogh 2020, I.035/A, p.56. See de la Vaissière 2003, 123, 126 (for the citation from the *Zhoushu*), cf. Miyakawa and Kollautz 1969, 111–12, Matthews 1989, 341, Grenet 2002, 210, Yu 2011, 96–7, Kim 2013, 41–2, de la Vaissière 2015, 183–4, Payne 2016, 15; *contra* Kaldellis 2004, 71–2. The quotation may also be found in Balogh 2020, I.030, p.49. Badiyan is identified with Balkh, so de la Vaissière in Balogh 2020, 49, cf. 42.

3.4 ταῦτά τοι οὐδέ τινα ἐσβολὴν πεποιήνται πώποτε ἐς Ῥωμαίων τὴν γῆν, ὅτι μὴ ξὺν τῷ Μήδων στρατῷ. 'For this reason they have never invaded Roman territory except with the Persian army.' Procopius anticipates 7.8, where he reports Hephthalites as serving in the army that Kavadh led into Roman territory late in 502, cf. Ps.-Josh. 48 and elsewhere.

3.4 καὶ οὐκ ἄμορφοι τὰς ὄψεις εἰσὶν, '(they are) not hideous to look at', contrast Amm. Marc. 31.2.2–11 on the Huns, cf. Claud. *In Ruf.* i.325–8, Jord. *Get.* 24.127, with Maenchen-Helfen 1973, 13–17, 360–4, Sinor 1990b, 202. The coins of the Alkhan/Alchon, who some have iden-

tified with the Hephthalites (see i.3–4h), display evident cranial deformation in the depiction of the ruler: see Grenet 2002, 210, Alram 2003, 351, Kurbanov 2010, 129–32, Alram et al. 2012, showcase 6. Procopius' statement therefore favours the distinction of the two groups. On the question of the Huns' whiteness, mentioned here, see 3.1n. Despite this characterisation of the Huns in Europe, Procopius in general is less hostile towards them than earlier writers: see Greatrex 2018b, 339.

3.5 ἀλλὰ καὶ πρὸς βασιλέως ἐνὸς ἄρχονται καὶ πολιτείαν ἔννομον ἔχοντες ἀλλήλοις τε καὶ τοῖς πέλας ἀεὶ ὀρθῶς καὶ δικαίως ξυμβάλλουσι, Ῥωμαίων τε καὶ Περσῶν οὐδέν τι ἥσσον, 'They are rather ruled by one king and have a lawful government and deal in an upright and just way with each other and with their neighbours, just like Romans and Persians.' Procopius contrasts the nomadic way of life of the Huns known in Europe, which the Romans, like the Greeks, regarded as uncivilised, with that of the Hephthalites. See 3.3n on the issue of the way of life of the Hephthalites, cf. Hartog 1988, 193–206 on classical views of nomads generally. Kaldellis 2013a, 17–19 (cf. *idem* 2004, 73–4) considers Procopius to be criticising Justinian's reign obliquely, since he cannot have believed either the Hephthalites or the Persians to be lawful states, but see Greatrex 2018b, 330–1, for a rebuttal of this interpretation, cf. Meier 2019, 737–8.

3.7 ἐπειδὴν δὲ τῷ αὐτοῦς ἐταιρισαμένῳ τελευτῆσαι ξυμβαίη, τούτους δὴ τοὺς ἄνδρας ζῶντας ξύν αὐτῷ ἐς τὸν τάφον ἐσκομίζεσθαι νόμος. 'When the man who made them his comrades dies, it is the custom for these men to be taken alive with him to his tomb.' No doubt a shocking practice for Procopius' readership, so Kaldellis 2004, 71; cf. Hdt. iv.71.4, reporting on servants of kings of the Scythian Gerrhoi slain and buried with them (with Ivantchik 2011, 91–2, for confirmation, and Asheri, *CH*, 633). Frye 1984, 350, sees the burial of a chief's followers in a *kurgan* as a typical feature of steppe nomads, cf. Amm. Marc. 19.1.10, the burning of ten effigies alongside the son of king Grumbates in 359 with Matthews 1989, 61–2. Kurbanov 2010, 123–9, compares Procopius' account to Chinese sources, suggesting that Procopius is describing practices based on early Scythian burial traditions, cf. *ibid.* 47–8, Grenet 2002, 210, on burial vaults found at Ferghana, which may be from the Hephthalite period, although they do not provide evidence for the simultaneous burial of a group. Note also Schlumberger 1964 (omitted by Kurbanov), a Hephthalite burial site at Shakh Tepe, 20 km south of Qunduz,

comprising a series of mounds of varying heights, in which individuals and their animals and possessions were buried, including a gold coin of Anastasius (thus dating the site to this period), cf. Pyatnitsky 2006, 219–20. De la Vaissière 2007, 81–5, argues that the close association of the king and these followers may be connected to the Sogdian *chākar*, bodyguards who kept close company with their ruler, a practice that survived later under the Uighurs.

Chinese sources report the use of burial vaults for the wealthy, while poor people made do with holes in the ground; in either case, their possessions were buried with them. The Chinese sources likewise confirm the rule of a king and note the severity of the punishments meted out to wrongdoers. See de la Vaissière 2003, 124–5, Börm 2007, 207–8.

3.8 Εὐσέβιος ὄνομα, ‘Eusebius by name’, Eusebius 19 in *PLRE* ii, noting two possible identifications with others of this name. Börm 2007, 304, accepts the identification with the *magister officiorum*, Eusebius 18, cf. Veh, 459, but Clauss 1980, 154, thinks it unlikely, despite *ibid.*, 64–7, on the role of *magistri militum* in diplomatic missions with Blockley 1992, 134–6. Priscus frg.41.3/33 (pp.71–3) reports the presence of a high-ranking envoy, Constantius (*PLRE* ii, Constantinus 22), with Peroz during a war with the Kidarites, see i.3–4h; he too accompanied the king for a time before returning to Roman territory. It is thus quite plausible that a Roman dignitary accompanied Peroz on this expedition. PZ vii.3a reports the presence of a ‘crafty merchant from Apamea’, Eustathius, among the Hephthalites who, like Eusebius, offered wise advice, perhaps during the reign of Zeno: see PZT 232 n.26.

3.9 ἤεσαν δρόμῳ ἐς χῶρόν τινα, ὅνπερ ὄρη ἀπότομα πανταχόθεν ἐκύκλουν, συχνοῖς τε καὶ ἀμφιλαφείσιν ἐς ἄγαν καλυπτόμενα δένδροις. ‘(They) made at a run for a place encircled all around by precipitous mountains which were entirely covered by numerous trees with thick foliage’. The feigned flight was a staple of steppe nomads, cf. Golden 2002, 134–6 with Maur. *Strat.* ii.1.46–9 (112), xi.2.53–4 (364); in the latter case Maur. notes both the feigned flight practised by nomads and their penchant for encircling the enemy. The terrain described, on the other hand, seems ill suited for nomadic cavalymen. Sauer et al. 2013, 597, suggest that the Alburz mountains of north-east Iran would fit Procopius’ description, but this would imply that the Hephthalites, far from retreating, had advanced beyond the Gorgān wall and penetrated Persian territory, while Gumelev 1967, 97, locates the battle in the Kopet Dag mountains.

3.12 αὐτοὶ μὲν δέει τῷ ἐκ Περόζου τὰ παρόντα σφίσιν ἐν σιωπῇ εἶχον, ‘and while keeping quiet themselves about the situation through terror of Peroz’, a slightly unusual phrase in Greek, meaning literally ‘fear of that from Peroz’, cf. ii.24.12, where it refers to Khusro’s fear of the plague. The only obvious precedent is Aelian, *Var. Hist.* ii.4, where it refers to fear of the sixth-century B.C. tyrant Phalaris. See Scheftlein 1893, 16. The fact that Peroz, unlike his successor Kavadh, was able to remain on the throne uncontested, despite the defeat here described, implies a strong grip on power, cf. Schindell 2004a, 419.

3.13 ὁ δὲ Περόζη ἐς ὄψιν ἔλθων, ‘He went to see Peroz’ or ‘Having come into the presence of Peroz’. The Greek refers to the ‘sight’ of Peroz; the expression is particularly common in Herodotus, cf. e.g. v.106.1, generally in relation to a king, cf. Priscus frg.11.1.392/8.90 (p.33).

3.13 ἀρξάμενος δὲ μυθοποιῆας, ‘he began with a parable’. As van Dijk 1994 has noted, this typical folk-tale is not otherwise attested in the Greek tradition, although parallels exist in other cultures (cf. Thompson 1955–8, vol.4, 335 K735). The vocabulary, the context (seeking not to anger a ruler), the use of an example from the animal kingdom, and the style (indirect speech) are all hallmarks of a fable. See also Rodríguez Adrados 2003, 913–14, S177. Börm 2007, 127 and n.3, proposes a Persian source for the story, noting that according to the *Letter of Tansar*, a Persian work usually dated to the sixth century, ‘if the people could not tell the King of kings a matter plainly, they would invent fictitious anecdotes and tales out of their own heads, and relate them’ (tr. Boyce, 55). Fables were also a genre discussed and recommended by Theon, a writer on rhetoric, in the context of historiography: see Gibson 2004, 109, Patillon 2008, 62–5.

3.14 μένων δὲ αὐτοῦ τὰ παρόντα ἐν βουλῇ ἐποιοῖτο. ‘He remained there and thought about their position’. The last part of the phrase is an idiom found only in Procopius and used several times elsewhere, as at vi.22.9; cf. Scheftlein 1893, 7.

3.16 καὶ οἱ Πέρσαι τότε δὴ λαμπρῶς ἡσθημένοι οὐ ἦσαν κακοῦ ἐν συμφορᾷ ἐποιοῦντο τὰ παρόντα σφίσι, ‘The Persians, realising then clearly what a bad situation they were in, regarded the position as disastrous for them.’ Another unusual idiom, ἐν συμφορᾷ ποιοῦμαι, ‘regard as a disaster’, found otherwise only at Zon. xiv.10 (p.287.24–5), where it describes Justin II’s reaction to the incompetence of the general Marcian

(referred to as Martin) at the outbreak of war with Persia in 572 (and may thus go back to a sixth-century source). The repetition of the words τὰ παρόντα (*ta paronta*, ‘position’ or ‘present circumstances’) and the middle form of the verb ποιέω (*poieō*, ‘I do, make’) is striking and seems rather careless.

3.17 ὁ δὲ τῶν Ἑφθαλιτῶν βασιλεύς, ‘the Hephthalites’ king’, who is called Akhshunwār in the Arabic tradition, e.g. Tabari 874/113, Khushnawāz by Firdausi, vi, 97–105, Xashnawāz in the Bundahishn, see Cereti 2010, 69–70, now also in Balogh 2020, III.002, p.125, cf. Kurbanov 2010, 170. See Christensen 1944, 294 n.1, Brunner 1984, Bosworth 1999, 113 n.291, Kurbanov 2010, 228–9, Rezakhani 2017, 126–7, 137. Theoph. Byz. 3, *FHG* iv, 270, gives the king’s name as Hephthalanus; the tribe thus took its name from him, which Yu 2011, 77, argues, is corroborated by one Chinese source (referring to the name Yida, on which cf. Thierry 1993, 118, Grenet 2002, 214). The ruler is referred to in some sources as the *yabghu*: see Vondrovec, 2014, 405, Rezakhani 2017, 134–5.

3.17 ἀφ’ οὗ δὴ αὐτόν τε καὶ τὸ Περσῶν γένος κόσμῳ οὐδενὶ διαφθείρειν, ‘as a result of which he would indeed have destroyed recklessly both himself and the Persian race’. The expression κόσμῳ οὐδενί, *kosmō oudeni* (‘in no order’), here translated as ‘recklessly’ is a favourite of Procopius’, used over forty times. Usually, as with earlier authors, including Thucydides and Herodotus, it is in a military context, often for troops fleeing in panic. Here, however, as more often in *Anecd.* (e.g. 8.4, 9.17), it refers to a senseless action, without justification (used critically).

3.18 μάγων τοῖς παροῦσι κοινολογησάμενος, ‘he consulted with the magi who were with him’. Herodotus notes magi in the royal entourage on several occasions (e.g. i.120.1, vii.37.2–3), whose advice is usually confined to the interpretation of dreams, however. In general, see Börm 2007, 189–93, on their role in Procopius’ account.

3.20 εἶναι γὰρ αὐτοῖς νόμον τὰς τοῦ ἡλίου ἀνατολὰς προσκυνεῖν ἡμέρᾳ ἐκάστῃ, ‘For, they said, they had a custom whereby every day they did obeisance (*proskynēsis*) to the rising sun.’ *Proskynēsis* generally refers to prostration as a sign of submission (and worship); the subjects of the Persian kings (and the later Roman emperors) were expected to perform *proskynēsis* before their rulers (cf. e.g. *Anecd.* 30.22–4, criticising Justinian

and Theodora for requiring this of senators). See Börm 2007, 103 n.4, *idem* 2008b, 437 n.106, for the form it took, which may have varied. Khusro II required that Heraclius perform *proskynēsis* to the sun as a sign of surrender in 615, Theoph. 301.24, cf. Kaldellis 2004, 128–9, on the practice in Persia.

Pourshariati 2008, 384, suggests that Procopius refers here to an invocation of Mihr (Mithras), identified with the sun, as an arbiter of the dispute between the two rulers (described by Firdausi and others); cf. PJT 10 n.44. Altheim 1960, 125–66, discusses *proskynēsis* in detail; *ibid.* 130, 142–3, on performing it before the sun, practised by a variety of peoples, 275, on the Hephthalites and the Persians. Kurbanov 2010, 235–6, notes Chinese evidence that the Hephthalites worshipped the sun each morning, cf. Boyce 2001, 119, Börm 2007, 181–2, on Persian sun-worship. The king was himself associated with the sun, so Panaino 2004, 566, 569–70. If both peoples venerated the sun at dawn – and Zoroastrianism was widespread in Central Asia, so Grenet 2014, §18 – the plausibility of the ruse diminishes, even if it is founded on actual practices.

The ruse suggested by the magi recalls the expedient found by the Theban envoy Ismenias at the court of Artaxerxes, reported by Plut. *Art.* 22.8.4, who dropped a ring to the ground before performing *proskynēsis*, thus preserving his dignity by picking it up again at the same time (and justifying his doing obeisance); see Börm 2007, 104 n.2. Note also Hdt. i.216.4 on the Massagetae (often equated with the Huns, see i.13.20n) worshipping the sun. As Canepa 2018a, 64–5, suggests, the Hephthalites were doubtless aware of the symbolism of Peroz's *proskynēsis*; the story of the ruse was circulated to mitigate the impact of the gesture.

3.22 Περόζης μὲν οὖν ἀμφὶ τε τῇ εἰρήνῃ τὰ πιστὰ ἔδωκε καὶ τὸν πολέμιον προσεκύνησε, καθάπερ τῶν μάγων ἡ ὑποθήκη παρήγγελλεν, ἀκραιφνεῖ δὲ παντὶ τῷ Μήδων στρατῷ ἐπ' οἴκου ἄσμενος ἀνεχώρησε. 'So Peroz gave the pledges for the peace and did obeisance to his enemy as the magi advised him, and gladly retired home with the whole Persian army intact.' As Ps.-Josh. 10 reports, cf. Sid. Apoll. *ep.* 8.9.45–54, it is clear that the Hephthalite ruler exacted a financial price for the invasion: see Schindel 2004a, 395–7, 415–17, noting a change in the representation of Peroz's crown on coins that probably coincides with his return as well as an increase in the volume of coin production, cf. Errington 2007, 101, Sauer et al. 2013, 598.

4.1–14 Peroz's Defeat and Death at the Hands of the Hephthalites

History

Procopius describes how Peroz broke his oath and launched another campaign against the Hephthalites. Again he was outwitted by the Hephthalite king, who dug trenches to protect his army. Lured on again by a feigned flight, Peroz and his army charged forwards and fell into the concealed trenches. Procopius' account is confirmed by Łaz. P'arp. 85 (156/215), Ps.-Josh. 11 and Tabari 873–9/110–19 (three versions), cf. Firdausi, vi, 97–103 (who mentions the Jayhūn river, i.e. the Oxus, the city of Chach, i.e. Tashkent, and Samarkand), Dinawari, 61/344, Bal'ami ii.25 (p.139), mentioning Balkh and Tokharistan, Masudi, *Prairies d'or*, vol.2, ch.24, p.195 (referring to Merv). The versions of Maur. *Strat.* iv.3 (194–6) and Agath. iv.27.3–4 both seem independent of Procopius, cf. Averil Cameron 1969–70, 153–4. On the sources of Tabari and Dinawari see Rubin 2005, 67–8, Jackson Bonner 2015a, 41–3, 50–3: caution must be exercised in inferring connections to the *Khvadhāynāmagh*, the 'Book of Kings' compiled late in the Sasanian period, on which see Appendix 1. See further Luther 1997, 122–4, Rezakhani 2017, 128.

The campaign took place in July or August 484, perhaps in the vicinity of Gorgān (cf. 4.10): Łaz. P'arp. 85 (155/214) refers to troops assembling at Vrkan (= Gorgān) for the campaign. So Sauer et al. 2013, 595, cf. Sanspeur 1975–6, 142, Schindel 2004a, 418, Kurbanov 2010, 170. But a site further to the east cannot be excluded, cf. 3.2n above (Gorgo) and note the places mentioned in the eastern sources just mentioned; Christensen 1993, 315 n.133, considers this to be possible, while Dignas and Winter 2007, 98, assume that the confrontation took place in Afghanistan. Although nearly all the sources are unequivocal in their condemnation of Peroz and his obstinacy in pursuing the campaign, despite his oaths and the strength of the Hephthalites, it is possible that he had sound strategic reasons for returning to the fray: the recently found documents from Bactria testify to Persian involvement there and to the waxing power of the Hephthalites: they may have been raising taxes here already in 483/4. So Schindel 2011, but see Sims-Williams and de Blois 2018, 36, cf. Sims-Williams 2020, 233, arguing that the population here may have been obliged to pay levies to both Persians and Hephthalites even before the defeat of Peroz. See further Schindel 2004a, 415–16, 435 n.1920, Schindel 2006a, 682–3, Sims-Williams 2008, 94, Alram and Pfisterer 2010, 32, Alram et al. 2012, showcase 10. It is possible, more-

over, that the campaign enjoyed some initial success: the Sasanian mint at Merv reopened in 484 with a new (third) crown type in Peroz's coinage. So Schindel 2004a, 418. See also Loginov and Nikitin 1993, 274, on copper coins deposited here presumably just before this final campaign, cf. Grenet 2014, §8; some may even have come from Khorasan, cf. Schindel 2004, 407, *idem* 2006a, 682–3. Khonsarinejad and Khorashadi 2021 argue that the whole account of the ruse of the ditch, in Procopius and other sources, is implausible given the Persians' awareness of steppe nomad tactics and suggest that it was invented as an excuse for the humiliating defeat.

Historiography

It has been observed that the battle between Peroz and the Hephthalites anticipates themes that will recur throughout *The Persian Wars*, most obviously in the case of the ditches employed by the latter to defeat the former: Belisarius likewise makes use of trenches at the battle of Dara (see the note on 4.7). The attitudes of the commanders on either side also resemble those of later protagonists: like the Hephthalite king, Belisarius is cautious and well organised, while the Persian king is impetuous and overconfident. Thus the result of Dara is prefigured by this battle. See Whately 2016, 70–2, who notes other parallels.

4.1 Χρόνω δὲ οὐ πολλῷ ὕστερον, 'Not long afterwards', in contrast to 3.1, where he describes the first campaign as taking place 'long afterwards'. Procopius is generally vague on chronology in his digressions, as (e.g.) at i.19–20; Hdt. iii.126.1 uses the same expression, as Braun 1894, 18, notes. Cf. Eunap. frg.1.42–88 for a justification of such an approach, in which he declares that a dating by imperial reign is sufficient; in line with this, Procopius has already (3.8) mentioned Zeno. See also p. 16 above.

4.2 τῶν παίδων ἓνα μὲν Καβάδην ὄνομα μόνον ἀπολιπὼν (τηνικαῦτα γὰρ ἤβηκῶς ἔτυχε), τοὺς δὲ λοιποὺς ἀπαντας ἐπαγόμενος τριάκοντα μάλιστα, 'leaving behind only one of his sons, Kavadh by name, who was just a youth at the time, and taking all the rest with him, some thirty in number'. Mal. 18.68 puts Kavadh's age at his death in September 531 at 82, in which case in 484 he would have been in his mid 30s, cf. Firdausi, vi, 155, placing his death at age eighty. See Luther 1997, 120, cf. Jackson Bonner 2015a, 84. But Schindel

2004a, 446, more developed in *idem* 2012, argues that Kavadh's coins, which depict him initially as a young beardless man at the start of his reign, imply that Procopius is correct here, cf. Crone 1991, 30, Schindel 2013a, 137.

Since the Persian kings (and the nobility) practised polygyny, there were generally many princes at court: Kavadh II murdered eighteen brothers at his accession in 628, cf. *PLRE* iii, Cavades *qui et Siroes*. See Börm 2007, 187–8.

On the Greek form of Kavadh's name (which varies between sources) see Luther 1997, 134 n.139, cf. more generally Bosworth 1999, 128 n.329.

4.4 ξὺν γέλωτι, 'he laughed' or, literally, 'with a laugh' – of confidence, of course, like Belisarius at v.22.2, when he observed the Gothic preparations for the siege of Rome; like the Hephthalite king, he holds his soldiers back until the right moment. The Romans, like the Hephthalites, were worried about their situation, but in both cases their leader has greater knowledge that allows them to calm their followers and prevail. See Brodka 2004, 135–6, on Procopius' tendency to concentrate on leaders and their direction of the masses, cf. van Nuffelen 2007, 70.

4.7 τάφρον εἰργάσατο βαθεῖάν τε καὶ εὖρους ἱκανῶς ἔχουσιν, 'making a broad, deep trench', more literally 'having sufficient breadth'. Procopius' account of the trenches foreshadows Belisarius' use of them at the battle of Dara (i.13.13): its accuracy was consequently doubted by Rubin 1960, 254. His version has also been called into question on account of its similarity to Herodotus' description (viii.28) of the victory of the Phocians over the Thessalians in 480 B.C., cf. Braun 1894, 44. But other traditions confirm Procopius, as noted above, 4.1–14h. Tabari's second version (876–7/115–16) resembles Procopius', cf. his third (879/118–19): Akhshunwār digs a trench, complains at Peroz's faithlessness, then lures the Persians to their doom. Bal'ami, ii.25 (p.139), claims it was filled with water. Maur. *Strat.* iv.3.1–20 (194–6) describes the same tactic and gives some precise dimensions for the trench; it is unclear, however, whether the dimensions are what is recommended or an account of those specifically used against Peroz, named only at the end. Łaz. P'arp. 58 (215/156) oddly attributes the building of the trench to Peroz himself, who vainly threatens to fill it with the corpses of the Hephthalites. Cf. also Tha'alibi, 579–83, Eutychius, xvi.8 (188/275).

4.8 ἐς ὀλίγους σφᾶς ξυναγαγόντας, ‘they were to draw themselves together into a narrow column’. Kallenberg 1916a, 247, argues that the reading ἐς ὀλίγον (*es oligon*) of manuscript G is to be preferred to Haury’s ἐς ὀλίγους (*es oligous*), in that the troops are concentrated into a smaller space (hence the neuter singular) rather than being fewer in number; likewise at 4.11, cf. i.18.46 and elsewhere.

4.9 τοὺς δὲ ἄλας ἄκρου σημείου τοῦ βασιλείου ἀπεκρέμασεν, ἐς οὓς τὸν ὄρκον Περόζης ὤμοσε πρότερον. ‘And he hung from the top of the royal standard the salt upon which Peroz had earlier sworn the oath.’ Tabari similarly reports that the Hephthalite king hung the document sealing the former treaty from his lance, 877/116–17. Salt was often used by the Persians (and other societies, cf. Chekalova 2001, 379 n.30, Moinier 2012, 46–55) in the swearing of oaths: see Ps.-Sebeos, 74/16, cf. *Epic Histories* iv.53 with Garsoïan 1989, 301 n.2, eadem 2009, 111, Adontz 1970, 355, Nechaeva 2014, 50. García Romero 44 n.33 notes further Greek parallels. Börm 2007, 156, draws attention to a comparable written guarantee given to the population of Edessa by Khusro, ii.27.46. See also Pourshariati 2008, 380–4, who discusses the emphasis placed on Peroz’s oath-breaking in the Persian tradition. Whately 2016, 71–2, points out that the violation of oaths is a recurrent theme in the *Persian Wars*, e.g. at i.15.18 and, most notably, in Khusro’s invasion of 540.

4.14 ἐν οἷς καὶ Περόζης ἦν ξὺν παισὶ τοῖς αὐτοῦ ἅπασιν, ‘Among them was Peroz with all his sons.’ Tabari’s first version (873/110) reports the death of four sons and four brothers of the king; Łaz. P’arp. 85 (156/215) is vaguer, reporting the death of the king and his sons. Procopius’ version is an exaggeration, in that another son of Peroz, Zamasp, survived to take Kavadh’s place briefly (496/7–498/9), while Łaz. P’arp. 94 (171/232–3) refers to another son called Zareh (otherwise unknown). Probably Ps.-Seb. 67/5, cf. Firdausi, vi, 103, should be preferred, who states that seven of Peroz’s sons perished with him, so Schindel 2004a, 418, Kurbanov 2010, 170. Tabari’s third version (879–80/119–20) is more interested in a daughter of Peroz, Perozdokht, captured by the Hephthalites, but then rescued, according to a tendentious tradition that attributes to a noble called Sukhra (Zarmihr in other sources) a victory that avenged Peroz’s defeat and Persian honour, on which see Averil Cameron 1969–70, 153–4, Kurbanov 2010, 171, Payne 2015, 291–2. Rezakhani 2017, 128–30, takes the story more seriously.

4.14–31 The Tale of Peroz's Pearl

Procopius devotes a remarkably lengthy excursus to the pearl earring of Peroz, which became a byword for an object of great value in later Byzantine sources: Nicetas Choniates alludes to it directly at 485.95 (xv.13.7). Christidis 1996, 101 and n.1, offers a full list of instances. Cedrenus recounts the story in briefer form, 390 (623–4), but adds details not present in Procopius: he states that it was the Emperor Justinian that tried to buy the pearl from the Hephthalites, for instance, offering 100 pounds of gold, but they preferred to keep the object as a testament to Peroz's folly. It is likely therefore that both Procopius and Cedrenus drew their accounts from an earlier source, although what this may have been is obscure, cf. Rubin, *PvK*, 362. The *Nihāya*, 282 (tr. Browne, 225, just a summary), attributes to an Indian princess a fable she recounts to the victorious King Balash, Peroz's successor, concerning a pearl-diver who dives for an exceptionally large pearl but is later unable to prize it entirely free of the shell; the same source, 116 (tr. Browne, 213), refers to the Achaemenid King Darius III giving Alexander the Great a pearl, among other objects, which the Macedonian king interprets as representing his kingdom. The Persian kings certainly wore earrings, which are frequently found represented on coins, seals and rock faces, cf. e.g. Tanabe 2006, 588–9 (on Peroz).

The lengthy treatment of the episode has given rise to various interpretations. Kaldellis 2004, 75–80, argues that the tale demonstrates the degeneration of the Persian monarchy, with an implicit condemnation of Justinian's regime: not only does Peroz behave like a tyrant, consumed by longing for the pearl (4.21), but the description of the shark's love (ἔρως, *erōs*) for the pearl has parallels with Justinian's love for Theodora and its catastrophic consequences for the empire, cf. Murray 2018, 109. At *Anecd.* 3.16 Theodora, when restoring Antonina's lover Theodosius to her, describes him as a pearl. The attribution of human sentiments to animals has a precedent in Herodotus' tale of Arion's rescue by a dolphin at i.24, which is apparently brought about by his singing. Mészáros 2014, 175–6, like Kaldellis, perceives behind the tale an indication of the decline that has occurred in Persia: Peroz, rather like Herodotus' Croesus, is more interested in material wealth than human beings. It is possible, however, that the episode was included simply because it reflected Roman perceptions of the Persian court and its opulence, cf. Greatrex 2021b, section 2(c). Kulikowski 2018, 156, more prosaically considers the account to be 'a sort of shaggy-dog story' based on folkloric motifs.

The pearl had significance in the Christian tradition, in which it represented wisdom, an aspect that hardly seems appropriate here. See Carter 2012, 23, Walker 2016, 170–5, cf. Moon 1987 more generally; the *Hymn of the Pearl*, which survives both in Syriac and in Greek, features the theft of a pearl guarded by a snake, §§12–13 with Ferreira 2002, 70 n.29. Whether this is related to Procopius' story, as Ciancaglini 2001, 118, supposes, is not clear, cf. Jackson Bonner 2015a, 56, *idem* 2020, 137 n.72. Pearls were certainly coveted and prestigious objects at the Sasanian court: see Walker 2018, who also discusses Persian interest in the pearl trade. Philip Wood suggests (pers. comm.) that the pearl might equally represent the king's *xwarrah* or 'divine victorious fortune' that he has forfeited through his defeat. On the notion see (e.g.) Canepa 2009, 425, Gnoli, *Elr* 9 (1999), 'Farr(ah)'; in iconography, however, it is associated rather with the globe above the ruler's head, cf. Canepa 2009, 193.

There are parallels too with Herodotus' tale (iii.41–2) of Polycrates and his ring, his most prized possession, which he threw into the sea in order to avert ill fortune; it was soon brought back to him by a fisherman. Mészáros 2014, 175–7, finds similarities also with Herodotus' account of Solon's visit to Croesus, i.29–33, though the parallels are more tenuous, cf. Zali 2019, 31, on Herodotean echoes here generally. Averil Cameron 1985, 154 n.20, sees the story as 'basically folkloric'.

Photius, in his summary of Procopius' text here, *Bibl.* cod.63, p.65, offers a brief aside on the Greek terms for a pearl, noting that the normal word used in Greek is μαργαρίτης, *margaritēs*, whereas Proc. prefers μάργαρον, *margaron*. Byzantine scribes were intrigued by the story and wondered whether the pearl was identical with one incorporated into an icon of the Theotokos (God-bearer) that existed in Iberia in their day. Haury, xxiii, reports their annotations, noting that they were present already quite a long time before the first surviving (fourteenth-century) manuscripts. They may perhaps date from the eleventh or twelfth century, since two identifications from this period are possible: the *catholicos*/patriarch Melchizedek of Georgia adorned an icon of the Virgin Mary with pearls, while the Khakhuli triptych features an icon of the Theotokos Hodegetria in the centre. See Enekidze et al. 1984, 23, 56 (the latter a reference in King David's will from 1123/4).

4.14 ἐμοὶ μὲν οὐ πιστὰ λέγοντες, 'But their report does not seem credible to me.' A Herodotean touch, cf. iv.25.1, v.86.3, which only Procopius among later historians picks up. But unlike Herodotus he explains his reasons for disbelief. See Braun 1894, 13.

4.16 ὅπερ ὁ Ῥωμαίων βασιλεὺς τότε πρίασθαι πρὸς τῶν Ἑφθαλιτῶν ἐν σπουδῇ ποιησάμενος ἥκιστα ἴσχυσεν, ‘The Roman emperor then sought eagerly to buy the pearl from the Hephthalites, but with absolutely no success.’ Cedr. 390, p.608 (624) reports that the emperor in question was Justinian, that he offered 100 pounds of gold, and that the Hephthalites preferred to keep the pearl; as noted above, 4.14–31n, he thus seems to have access to the same source as Procopius. It follows from their notices that the pearl was of interest to the Romans and that they failed to obtain it – whether already in the 480s or later.

4.17 ὅσα δὲ ἀμφὶ τῷ μαργάρῳ τούτῳ Πέρσαι λέγουσιν, εἰπεῖν ἄξιον· ἴσως γὰρ ἂν τῷ καὶ οὐ παντάπασιν ἄπιστος ὁ λόγος δόξειεν εἶναι. ‘But it is worth recounting what the Persians say about this pearl, for perhaps the story may not seem wholly incredible to some.’ Kaldellis 2004, 77, compares this with Arr. *Anab.* pr.3, καὶ οὐ πάντῃ ἄπιστα, ‘not wholly unbelievable’, referring to sources on Alexander other than Aristobulus and Ptolemy. While he is correct in noting Arrian’s influence on sixth-century writers, this parallel seems tenuous. Procopius scrupulously distances himself from the tale by recounting it all in indirect speech; Börm 2007, 105 n.1, suggests that the story does derive from an eastern source, cf. *ibid.* 55. Dahn 1865, 77–8, supposes that Procopius was prepared to believe the story.

4.18 ἐν θαλάσσῃ, ἥ ἐν Πέρσαις ἐστὶ, ‘in the sea that borders the Persian coast’, literally, ‘which is among the Persians’. As elsewhere in his introductions, Procopius is studiously vague, although the reference must be to the Persian Gulf. Cedr. 390, p.607 (623) offers greater precision: ἐν τῷ Περσικῷ κόλπῳ τῷ πρὸς βορρᾶν κειμένῳ τῆς ἐρυθρᾶς θαλάσσης τρέφονται μαργαρίται ὑπὸ κτενῶν, οὓς τινες ζάμβακας ὀνομάζουσι, ‘In the Persian Gulf lying to the north of the Red Sea pearls are raised by oysters, which some call *zambakai*.’ The Persian Gulf was well known in Antiquity for its pearls, and among the Christian communities, e.g. at Bushehr in Iran or in the vicinity of modern Bahrain, there were active pearl-divers, which might account for the transmission of the story to Roman sources. See Potts 1990, 142–9, Carter 2012, 14–15, 21–7, who gather the ancient evidence.

4.18 ἐκ τοῦ παντός χρόνου, ‘in the whole of history’, or, more literally, ‘from all time’, an emphatic expression favoured by Procopius, often in reported speech, e.g. at ii.3.47, vii.34.19.

4.19 κύνα δὲ θαλάσσιον ὑπερφυᾷ τε καὶ δεινῶς ἄγριον ἐραστὴν τοῦ θεάματος τούτου γενόμενον, ‘A shark of great size and fierceness became enamoured of this sight.’ The Greek term for a shark is a ‘sea dog’ (cf. Aelian, *Nat. Anim.* i.55), Latin *canis marinus*. Amm. Marc. 23.6.85–7 (cf. Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 9.55.110) also associates sharks with pearls, alleging that oysters deliberately sought them out to avoid pearl-fishers, cf. den Boeft 1998, 232–3. Shark attacks on pearl-fishers are infrequent in the Persian Gulf, however, cf. Carter 2012, 228.

4.19 αὐτίκα δὴ μάλα, ‘as quickly as possible’, ‘forthwith’, a favourite turn of phrase of Procopius, cf. e.g. i.21.11. The expression is common in Demosthenes, e.g. *In Midiam* 19.4. It is also frequent in Cyril of Alexandria’s works, e.g. *Comm. in Isa.*, PG 70.461D.

4.20 τινὰ γριπέων, ‘a fisherman’ or, literally, ‘one of the fishermen’. Procopius in this story seeks to impress his readership with his varied terminology for fishermen: here he uses the noun γριπεύς (*gripeus*) then ἄσπαλιεύς (21, *aspalieus*), and finally σαγηνευτής (29, *sagēneutēs*), all of which are very seldom used in classical literature. Cf. i.18.52n, where Procopius likewise employs three somewhat recondite words in a short passage.

4.21 ἃ δὴ τῷ Περύζῃ ἀκούσαντι πόθον φασὶ τοῦ μαργάρου γενέσθαι μέγαν, ‘They say that when Peroz had heard it (the story) he conceived a great longing for the pearl.’ As Kaldellis 2004, 76, notes, *pothos* (‘longing’) is a strong word. It may be, as he suggests, that Procopius is attempting to stress the king’s obsession and disregard for his subjects; alternatively, one might suppose that it fits the logic of the story. Persian kings are at any rate known for their predilection for pearls, as can be seen on representations of them and in literary accounts: see Donkin 1998, 94, Carter 2012, 24–5 and 4.14–31n.

4.22–6 The Fisherman’s Address to Peroz

This is the first instance of direct speech in the *Wars* and is clearly conceived as a display piece; the language becomes more elevated, the syntax more complicated (e.g. in the elaborate conditionals of 4.24). It opens with a typically general, gnomic statement from which it builds a case to ensure that the king rewards the fisherman’s children. See Dahn 1865, 91, Averil Cameron 1985, 155.

4.24 βασιλέων βασιλέα, ‘king of kings’, the Middle Persian *Shāhān shāh*. As Schmitt 2004, 674, notes, Procopius alone among Greek sources mirrors the Iranian word order, writing ‘of kings [the] king’, rather than the more natural ‘king of kings’, cf. Börm 2007, 149–50. The title appears on Sasanian coins of the fourth century but disappears after Bahram V: see Huyse 2006, 186–7. It was not used by the Romans themselves in their dealings with the Persians, since it might imply rule over their own emperor; Procopius uses it only in speeches attributed to Persian subjects (also at i.14.18 and i.17.33), cf. Huyse 2006, 198, Börm 2007, 103.

4.24 καὶ ἐμοὶ ἀποχρήσει, καίπερ οὐδέν, ἂν οὕτω τύχοι, κεκομισμένῳ, τὸ δεσπότην εὐεργέτην τοῦ ἐμοῦ γεγενῆσθαι. ‘And it will be enough for me, even if it should happen that I gain no reward, that I have been the benefactor of my master.’ The Lazic noble Theophobius nurtured similar hopes of being enrolled among the king’s benefactors (*euergētai*) in 551, cf. viii.16.5 with *PLRE* iii, Theophobius. Hdt. viii.85.3 describes this institution in Achaemenid Persia, on which see M. Dandamayev, *EIr* vi (1993), ‘Courts and Courtiers i. In the Median and Achaemenid periods’.

4.25 εἰ δὲ ἐμὲ δεῖ τῷ θηρίῳ τούτῳ ἀλῶναι, σὸν δὴ ἔργον ἔσται, ὦ βασιλεῦ, τοὺς παῖδας τοὺς ἐμοὺς θανάτου τοῦ πατρῶου ἀμείψασθαι. ‘But if it is my fate to be caught by this beast, it shall be your task, O King, to requite my sons for their father’s death.’ Procopius does not report whether Peroz carried out his side of the bargain, but Cedr. 390.22, p.608 (624.16) uses the same verb, the middle form of ἀμείβω (*ameibō*) to report that the king did reward the fisherman’s children. Procopius may have taken this point as read or (following Kaldellis 2004, 76) be trying to underline Peroz’s faithlessness.

4.31 τῇδε, ἥπερ ἐρρήθη, ‘in the way in which it has been told’. An idiom used only by Procopius, cf. i.5.40, a similar context. But as Braun 1894, 11, notes, the final phrase with which Procopius concludes the digression and returns to his main thread, ἐγὼ δὲ ἐπὶ τὸν πρότερον λόγον ἐπάνειμι, ‘But I return to my former narrative’, is Herodotean, cf. Hdt. i.140.3, vii.137.3. It is used only in *Wars* i (also at 9.19, 17.20, 19.37) and viii (20.58, 32.30), always in this identical formulation. In the thirteenth century it appears to have been picked up by a hagiographer in an account of the miracles of the apostle Mark, *Mir. sancti apostoli Marci* §9, line 30.

4.32 Οὕτω μὲν Περόζης τε διεφθάρη καὶ ξύμπασα ἡ Περσῶν στρατιά. ‘In this way Peroz and all the Persian army were destroyed’, cf. Cedr. 389.12–13, p.607 (623.13–14), almost the same phrasing. Photius, *Bibl.* cod.63, p.65, combines Procopius’ account here with Agathias’, placing the king’s death in the 24th year of his reign. See i.4.2n, 4.14n, concerning the fate of Peroz’s children. For a full list of sources on Peroz’s death see Luther 1997, 123 and n.90. Ps.-Josh. claims that his fate was uncertain, cf. PZ vii.3a.

4.33 καὶ ἅπ’ αὐτοῦ νόμος τέθιται Πέρσαις μὴ ποτε σφᾶς ἐν γῇ πολεμίᾳ ἐλαύνοντας δίωξιν ποιεῖσθαί τινα, ‘And after this a law was made in Persia that while advancing in enemy territory they should never engage in pursuit.’ There is no other evidence that such a measure was introduced, but it was a principle of which the Romans were certainly aware, cf. Maur. *Strat.* viii.2.11 (280). The same late sixth-century manual refers to Persians pursuing in close order, xi.1.78–85 (358–60), which implies that they had not given up the practice, since they often operated on Roman soil; they are said, however, to advance slowly, unlike Peroz. Th. Sim. iii.14.11 (cf. Evagr. *HE* v.15, Joh. Eph. *HE* vi.9) refers to Khusro I similarly establishing a rule that Persian kings should no longer take the field, following his defeat at Melitene in 576. Already Herodotus was interested in laws or customs established after a victory or defeat, i.82.7–8: see Whitby 1994, 228–9, cf. Börm 2007, 97, on other such measures in Procopius. As Schmitt 2004, 676, notes, Procopius is generally interested in Persian laws or customs, referred to as νόμος or θέμις (*nomos* or *themis*), cf. Traina and Ciancaglini 2002, 412 and n.68, and 5.2, 6.13.

4.34 οὗτοι δὲ βασιλέα σφίσι Καβάδην εἵλοντο τὸν νεώτατον Περόζου υἱόν, ‘(they) chose as king Kavadh, the youngest son of Peroz’. Procopius is quite mistaken here, for Peroz was succeeded rather by his brother Balash (484–8), whom Procopius (5.2) calls Blases and confuses with Zamasp, Kavadh’s brother, who replaced him briefly on the throne from 496/7 to 498/9. Joh. Ant. frg.237.9 puts one year between Peroz’s death and Kavadh’s accession. See Averil Cameron 1969–70, 155, Luther 1997, 120–1, Schindel 2004a, 433. On the nobles’ role in the selection of kings see i.21.20n.

4.35 τότε δὲ Ἐφθαλίταις κατήκοοι ἐς φόρου ἀπαγωγὴν ἐγένοντο Πέρσαι, ‘And then the Persians became tribute-paying subjects of the Hephthalites.’ Procopius adds that this situation continued until Kavadh

had established his reign securely (cf. 6.19n), yet states in the final sentence of this chapter that the barbarians (i.e. the Hephthalites) ruled the Persians for two years, cf. Cedr. 389.12–13, p.607 (623.14–15), which may well be a confusion for the period that Kavadh spent at the Hephthalite court as a hostage, so Nöldeke 1879, 119 n.1, cf. Gariboldi 2006, 67 n.196; Schindel 2011, 6 n.51, believes that Kavadh's period with the Hephthalites was much shorter, however. A possible interpretation is that Procopius envisaged an extended period of tribute-paying, while direct Hephthalite control lasted only two years. A bigger output from the mint in Gorgān has been observed during Kavadh's first reign, which may be linked to tribute payments, so Schindel 2004a, 448, Potts 2014, 148.

Peroz's crushing defeat led to a period of decades in which the Hephthalites held the upper hand, controlling much territory that had once belonged to the Sasanians, and exacting tribute payments; the Kidarites had similarly extorted money from the Persians, so Priscus frg.41.3/33 (p.78), although there are doubts as to the text here, cf. Schindel 2004a, 415 n.1831. The Hephthalites may well have captured the court mint in their victory, since the coins they produced subsequently are very closely based on some of Peroz's emissions, on which see Schindel 2004a, 154–5, 407–8, *idem* 2006, 683–4, *idem* 2009, 35–6, Vondrovec 2014, 400; already during Peroz's reign, Persian coins were reaching China, borne by Hephthalite-sponsored trade, cf. Alram and Pfisterer 2010, 32, Potts 2014, 143, Payne 2016, 12–13. Khorasan fell into Hephthalite hands; destruction has been detected at Bandiyān, Dargaz, east of the Caspian Sea, so Rahbar 2008, 21–2, cf. Schindel 2004a, 189. See also Vondrovec 2014, 225 (with a useful map) on the Hephthalite take-over of Bactria and the city of Balkh, where they minted coins (cf. *ibid.* 405) and may have entrusted the governing of the eastern part of the region to the Alkhan, on whom see *ibid.* 220–3, cf. Potts 2014, 147–8, Payne 2016, 8–9, 12. On the extent of Sasanian control in the east in the sixth century generally see Gyselen 2003.

It was not until the 24th year of Kavadh's reign (512) that the minting of coins resumed at Merv: see Loginov and Nikitin 1993, 275, Schindel 2004a, 498–9, *idem* 2005, 49–50, Payne 2015, 285. This may mark the end of their tributary status, so Schindel 2004a, 435 n.1921; Gariboldi 2006, 147 n.55, suggests that certain coins of Kavadh, including a special gold emission, may mark a victory over the Hephthalites already between 501 and 507, cf. Gyselen 2004, 62–3, Schindel 2004a, 490. Hephthalite countermarks on Sasanian coins are sometimes perceived as linked to this

tributary status, but see Vondrovec 2014, 402, who argues that the countermarks are not of Hephthalite origin and that they were destined rather to permit both Sasanian and Hephthalite coins to circulate freely in a single region. The countermarks occur almost exclusively on Peroz's coins; only two have been found on Kavadh's. Certain scholars believe that tribute payments continued as late as the 540s, so Christensen 1944, 297, Masson and Romodin 1964, 204, cf. Gariboldi 2006, 67. See also Rezakhani 2017, 139–40, on Hephthalite countermarks and the circulation of Sasanian coins. One Bactrian document attests the continuing payment of tax to Hephthalite overlords: see Sims-Williams 2008, 95 (dating it to late 517), Schindel 2011, 6 (dating it to 522), Vondrovec 2014, 405, Payne 2015, 285–6, Sims-Williams in Balogh 2020, 134.

The phrase ἐξ φόρου ἀπαγωγὴν ἐγένοντο Πέρσαι, *es phorou apagōgēn egenonto Persai*, 'the Persians became tribute-paying subjects of the Hephthalites' recalls Hdt. i.6.2, cf. Braun 1894, 39. See also Proc. vi.29.2 where it refers to Italy south of the Po: the Goths become, like the Persians here, tribute-paying subjects of the Romans, though cf. now Cristini 2021.

i.5–6 The Ousting and Return to Power of Kavadh

History

The resounding defeat of Peroz in 484 ushered in a tumultuous phase in Persian history. His immediate successor was his brother Balash (or Valash), who sought to shore up his position by adopting a tolerant attitude towards the Christians of his kingdom, notably in Armenia. Although he was able to overcome a rival to the throne with the help of the Armenians, he struggled to satisfy the Persian nobility and lacked the financial resources necessary to maintain his army. He was therefore removed from the throne in 488 and blinded; his replacement was his nephew Kavadh, whose contacts with the Hephthalites may have attracted support. The new king may already at this point have had links with a popular religious movement, associated with a certain Mazdak, as well as ties to members of the nobility willing to work with the Hephthalites. Yet he in turn was ousted in 496/7 and replaced by his brother Zamasp, who retained the throne for just two years before Kavadh, having escaped imprisonment and sought refuge at the Hephthalite court, returned and swiftly regained control of the kingdom. It is clear that the Persian nobility remained powerful during this period, making and unmaking kings as factions won or lost influence. Once back

on the throne in 498/9, however, Kavadh established his power on a much firmer footing.

Bibliography: Christensen 1944, 292–9, 336–51, Greatrex 1998a, 47–51. See further Luther 1997, 128–51, Schindel 2004a, 433–5, 446–9, 459–60, 481–3, Dignas and Winter 2007, 98–9, Jackson Bonner 2020, 138–47. See also i.2–6h.

Historiography

Procopius' account shows an awareness of Perso-Arabic accounts, on which in general see Appendix 1, p. 665. On the other hand, he confuses Balash and Zamasp and has only a superficial notion of the Mazdakites. The rivalries and disputes he describes at the Persian court (5.2–6) are reflected also in other sources, such as the work of the Armenian historian Łazar P'arpec'i (87–94 [157–71/217–34]) and that of the Syriac author known as Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite (18–24), cf. Tabari (882–8/126–39). He spends as much time on his digression on the 'Prison of Oblivion' as on events of the more recent past: there can be little doubt that he is trying to entertain his readers with romantic and wonderful Persian tales, featuring spells of the magi and a beautiful wife, rather than in providing background information to the Persian wars of his own day. Whether he is also aiming to chart the decline in moral standards of the Persian monarch, on the other hand, may be doubted.

Bibliography: Kaldellis 2004, 80–93, Börm 2007, 229–33, Mészáros 2014, 70–5, Jackson Bonner 2015b, Greatrex 2021b.

5.1–9 The Ousting From Power of Kavadh and his Imprisonment

As just noted, Procopius' account of Persian history in the 480s and 490s is cursory; the identity of Balash, Peroz's successor, is confused with that of Zamasp, who replaced Kavadh briefly in the late 490s. Despite this, he preserves valuable and often accurate information, e.g. on the office of *kanarang* and the ousting of Kavadh. How he obtained it is uncertain. Oral sources must remain a possibility, either through Kavadh's grandson Kavadh, who defected to the Romans under Justinian (see i.23.4n), or through other intermediaries; it is surely significant that he devotes more space to the family of the *kanarang* Gusanastades than any other (save that of the Sasanian kings themselves). The confusion between Balash

and Zamasp exists also in the Perso-Arabic tradition, one version of which has Kavadh flee upon Balash's accession and return with Hephthalite aid (e.g. Tabari, 883–5/126–30), and it is possible that it was circulating already in Procopius' day: see Christensen 1925, 94 n.1. In general see Börm 2007, 148–51, 230, 242–6, to be preferred to the more minimalist approach of Averil Cameron 1985, 155, 224.

5.1 Μετὰ δὲ Καβάδης ἐπὶ τὸ βιαιότερον τῇ ἀρχῇ χρώμενος ἄλλα τε νεώτερα ἐς τὴν πολιτείαν εἰσήγε καὶ νόμον ἔγραψεν ἐπὶ κοινὰ ταῖς γυναιξὶ μίγνυσθαι Πέρσας· ὅπερ τὸ πλῆθος οὐδαμῇ ἤρεσκε. 'Later, however, Kavadh became more autocratic in his government and introduced among other innovations in the constitution a law providing that the Persians should be able to have intercourse with any of their women without distinction – which by no means pleased the people.' This is the element in the programme associated with the religious leader Mazdak that most shocked and fascinated the Roman sources: it is mentioned by Ps.-Josh. 20 (who refers to a certain Zaradusht, the originator of some of Mazdak's ideas, who lived in the third century, rather than Mazdak) and Agath. iv.27.7 (on which see Averil Cameron 1969–70, 154–7), Joh. Diak. 557 (p.157), cf. *Chr. Seert* ii.12, PO 7 (1911), 125 (= Hoyland, *HKP*, 146). Mal. 18.30 and Theoph. 169–70 refer, as do Arabic sources, to the suppression of a radical movement associated with Mazdak in the late 520s and early 530s, a full generation after the unseating of Kavadh. It has plausibly been suggested therefore that Kavadh's willingness to liberalise sexual unions between men and women, a policy with significant repercussions for a society in which patrilineal descent was important for issues of heredity and thus nobility, was a separate initiative, which alienated both the aristocracy and the people and precipitated the king's downfall; some scholars doubt whether it represented such a radical change from Zoroastrian practices as Procopius implies, so Christensen 1925, 105–6, Crone 1991, 24–5, de Blois 2012, 22–3. It is doubtful whether one should interpret the reference to τὸ πλῆθος (*to plēthos*, 'the people') too precisely: Pigulewskaja 1963, 212, took it as referring to the nobility, cf. Christensen 1925, III, Börm 2007, 142, while Crone 1991, 23, argues that it shows a lack of popular support for Kavadh. As Averil Cameron 1969–70, 156–7, notes, Agathias refers to dissatisfaction among the nobility (iv.28.1); Tabari 886/132 refers to 'the people' (*al-nās*, referring to the élite, so Bosworth, *ad loc.*, cf. Gariboldi 2006, 128 and n.98) suffering while the common people benefited from the Mazdakite programme. Neither Procopius nor Agathias was necessarily well informed about the

details, and in the following sections in Procopius' account the initiative lies clearly with the nobles, so Börm 2007, 137–9.

On the Mazdakites generally the bibliography is extensive. See Yarshater 1983, Crone 1991, Rubin 1995a, 230–1, *idem* 1995b, 179–84, Wiesehöfer 1996, 173, 208–10, Luther 1997, 137–41, Gnoli 2004 (a useful summary of earlier scholarship), Gariboldi 2006, 90–151, Börm 2007, 139–42, 230–3, Wiesehöfer 2009, de Blois 2012, *idem* 2015, Rezakhani 2015. See also Jackson Bonner 2015a, 86–90, who offers refreshingly sceptical analysis of the *Khvadhāy-nāmāgh* tradition.

Kavadh also eliminated the powerful noble Sukhra (called Zarmihr in some sources) in this period, no doubt to strengthen his own position, which may be reflected in Procopius' reference to violent rule; Tha'alibi, 589, considers this the prime reason for Kavadh's expulsion, cf. Dinawari, 65/349. See Tabari 885/131–2 with Christensen 1925, 94 n.1, *idem* 1944, 294, 336, Luther 1997, 147–8, Börm 2007, 322 n.2. See also 6.1–9n.

The term νεώτερα (*neōtera*, 'new things', i.e. 'radical' or 'revolutionary') is undoubtedly a negative one: Procopius associates it both with Khusro (i.23.1) and Justinian (*Anecd.* 11.2, cf. *Wars* ii.2.6). So rightly Kaldellis 2004, 81–3, but there is no need to see a reference here to Plato's *Republic* (v.7, 457cd): Ps.-Josh., like Procopius, also mentions only this measure of Kavadh. Nonetheless, as Pugliese Carratelli 1971, 600–3, observes, Procopius is less overtly hostile towards Kavadh and Mazdakism than Agathias.

Theoph. 123.13–18 follows Procopius (as for the preceding section), although he gives the form Walas for the ruler whom Kavadh replaced, cf. Th. Sim. iv.6.6, Cedr. 391, p.608 (624–5), Nic. Call. xvi.36 (PG 147, 196–7), the last two also very close to Procopius.

5.2 καὶ βασιλέα μὲν σφίσι Βλάσῃν τὸν Περόζου ἀδελφὸν εἶλοντο, 'They made Peroz's brother Blases their king', Procopius' rendering of Balash or Valash; on the name see Luther 1997, 128 n.117, noting that it is a later form of the name Vologaeses, Schindel 2004a, 433. As noted above, Procopius appears to have confused Balash, Kavadh's uncle, with Zamasp, his brother. It follows that he is also in error in affirming just after this that Kavadh was the only son of Peroz to survive the defeat of 484, cf. 4.14n above. The eastern tradition puts Kavadh's overthrow after ten years of rule (Tabari, 885/132, cf. Dinawari 67/349–50 and Agath. iv.28.1), which was rather when he was restored, so Averil Cameron 1969–70, 157. It was once thought that Kavadh might have reigned briefly in

484, which would fit this chronology better, but this view has been discredited: see Luther 1997, 130 n.123, Schindel 2004a, 436–7.

5.2 Πέρσαις δὲ οὐ θέμις ἄνδρα ἐς τὴν βασιλείαν καθίστασθαι ἰδιώτην γένους, ὅτι μὴ ἐξιτήλου παντάπασι γένους τοῦ βασιλείου ὄντος. ‘The Persians cannot lawfully make king a private citizen unless the royal house is utterly extinguished’. Procopius accurately reports Persian practice here: Bahram Chobin, at the end of the sixth century, was the only person of non-Sasanian lineage to usurp the throne in all the four centuries of the Sasanian kingdom: see Huyse 2009, 147, citing the *Test. Ardashir*, tr. Grignaschi, 63–4/81, probably a sixth-century Persian document, which underlines the importance of the dynasty.

5.4 ἔνθα δὴ πολλοὶ μὲν ἐλέχθησαν γνώμαι ἐφ’ ἑκάτερα φέρουσαι. ‘Many views favouring different conclusions were expressed.’ Cf. Thuc. iv.58.1, noted by Braun 1885, 182; Procopius employs similar phrasing at ii.3.55 (almost identical, again referring to deliberations at the Persian court), cf. i.24.33 (discussions among Justinian’s advisers during the Nika riot), iii.15.2. As Börm 2007, 137, remarks, Procopius clearly saw analogies between the Persian and Roman courts.

5.4 Γουσαναστάδης, χαναράγγης δὲ τὸ ἀξίωμα, ‘Gusanastades, with the rank of *kanarang*’, the governor in charge of the eastern provinces adjoining Hephthalite territory: see Pigulewskaja 1963, 212, Schmitt 2004, 674, Alemany 2006, 46, Börm 2007, 145. Ciancaglini 2001, 111–20, sees the word as a Bactrian creation (from Iranian elements) meaning, ‘he who defends the frontiers’, which goes back to pre-Sasanian times; in the recently found Bactrian documents (Sims-Williams 2012b, G4 and H5, p.43) the word is written *καναραγγο* (*kanarango*, *καραλραγγο*, *karal-rango* in others); see further Khurshudian 1998, 72–5, Huyse 2002, 217. *Kanārang* could also be a personal name (cf. Gignoux 1986, no.488, Khurshudian 1998, 73–4), and Pourshariati 2008, 266–71, argues that the *Kanārangīyān* were a family that had hereditary control over the eastern provinces. See further 6.13n and 6.15n. The office (or name) appears also at PZ vii.4a, referring to one of the Persian commanders besieging Amida in late 502, cf. *Hist. Mar Abba*, ch.12 (14/16) with Jullien 2015, 16 n.101.

Given his office, it is not surprising to find Gusanastades taking a hard line against the pro-Hephthalite Kavadh, cf. Börm 2007, 321, *idem* 2018, 36–7. The name of Gusanastades is generally thought to be Procopius’ rendering of the (Middle) Persian *Gushnaspadā*, referring to

the holy fire Gushnasp, but Ciancaglini 2001, 114, prefers an etymology ‘chosen by the Kushan’. He is to be identified with the Nixor Všnaspdat (so Christensen 1944, 295, 348–9, cf. Justi 1895, 219, 354) who is praised in Łaz. P’arp. 88 (159/219), enjoyed good relations with the Armenians, 163/223, and was critical of Peroz, 165–6/226–7.

5.7 οἱ δὲ κτεῖναι ἄνδρα τοῦ βασιλείου αἵματος οὐδ’ ὅλως ἔγνωσαν, ‘But they would not decide actually to put to death a man of royal blood’, cf. Tha‘alibi, 590. Likewise, Blases/Zamasp, once deposed, was not killed, but rather blinded, as recounted at 6.17. Note the Persian reluctance even to kill an Arsacid Armenian king, 5.29. See Börm 2007, 104, 136. Mészáros 2014, 174, underlines the contrast between Blases/Zamasp and his followers, who respect Persian customs, and Kavadh, who is prepared to break the law. Pourshariati 2008, 298–300 notes that, according to a thirteenth-century history by Ibn Isfandīyār, Zamasp retired to Armenia.

5.7 ἐν φρουρίῳ καθεῖρξαι ὅπερ τῆς Λήθης καλεῖν νενομίκασιν, ‘(they decided) only to keep him in the prison called “Oblivion”’. Joh. Ant. frg.237.9 reports the imprisonment of Kavadh following a coup, as do Agath. iv.28.1, Th. Sim. iv.6; the latter two specifically mention the name of the fortress, probably derived from Procopius. The prison is also attested in the *Epic Histories* (iv.54, where it is called Anuš), Mos. Khor. iii.35 (288), iii.55 (318) as in Theophylact (iii.5.2–3) and various later works; Ammianus Marcellinus refers to it, albeit not by name, at 27.12.3. Tabari, 886/133, refers to Kavadh’s imprisonment in ‘a place to which only they (sc. the nobles who had deposed him) had access’, cf. Eutyech. xvi.10 (206/276). It was situated in Khuzistan (Susiana), near Giligerda. See Kettenhoffen 1988, Garsoïan 1989, 443, Traina and Ciancaglini 2002. The last two discuss in detail the forms and etymology of the name; the Armenian form corresponds closely to the Greek. Traina and Ciancaglini prefer a variant name, the ‘Unmentionable fortress’, *ibid.* 410 n.58.

The ban on naming the fortress (5.8) is referred to in the *Epic Histories*, v.7, but is unlikely to have been a written statute; it depended rather on the will of the king, which was held to have the force of law. See Traina and Ciancaglini 2002, 410–14, cf. 4.33n. It emerges from the following story, moreover, that the law could be broken; Börm 2007, 216, argues that the exception made for the faithful servant ought to have lifted it entirely, so that there is a minor contradiction here.

5.9–40 The Story of Arsaces and the Prison of Oblivion

Procopius regales his reader with another fabulous story, this time drawn from what he initially calls a ‘History of the Armenians’ (5.9), later a ‘Composition of the Armenians’ (5.40); he also cites it in *Aed.* iii.1.6 when referring to the origins of the Arsacid dynasty in Armenia during Parthian rule in Persia. This work is *BNJ* 679 and this extract F3, equipped with a useful commentary by I. Madreiter. By the term ‘history’ (*historia* in Greek) Procopius generally ‘means a written tradition which he uses as a source for his own narrative’, so Traina 2001, 409. In the case of the present story, it is related also in an Armenian work known as the *Epic Histories*, once attributed to a Faustus of Byzantium, P’awstos Buzand in Armenian, at iv.20, iv.54 and v.7. Although this work concerns Armenian history of the fourth century, it appears to have been compiled in the second half of the fifth century by a churchman. Traina 2001, 410–12, argues, on the basis of Łaz. P’arp. 3 (3–4/36–7), that the compiler of the *Epic Histories* incorporated legendary (i.e. epic) elements into a more sober chronicle-like account and that it was to the first that Procopius had access, whether in Armenian or Greek, cf. Garsoïan 1989, 6–8, on the question of language, 35–41, on the work’s composition. Among the epic elements are accounts that highlight the valorous deeds of both the Arsacids and the Mamikoneans, two leading Armenian families, as Garsoïan 1989, 32–5, shows.

The story related by Procopius here concentrates on the former; likewise, as just noted, his allusion in *Aed.* concerns the same family. It is likely therefore that Procopius had access to this strand at least of the *Epic Histories*, a work that focused positively on the role of the Arsacids in Armenia from Parthian times onwards; this would no doubt also be the source of *Aed.* iii.1.7–14, which concentrates on the Arsacid heirs to the throne in relating the partition of Armenia in 387. The portrayal of Arsaces in Procopius’ account here is noticeably more favourable than that of the *Epic Histories*, omitting inglorious elements like his flight from Shapur (iv.20) or his reluctance to obey the king’s summons (iv.53); this might be the result of Procopius’ shaping of material, but it might also reflect the more partisan nature of the ‘Aršakuni Geste’, as Garsoïan 1989, 32, puts it. It is significant, moreover, that Procopius is generally favourable to the two commanders named Arsaces whom he mentions (one at ii.5.11, the other at vii.32), as also to their relative Artabanus; both the last two were associated with a plot against Justinian in 549 (in which Angold 1996, 23–4, suggests Procopius was involved). See *PLRE*

iii, Arsaces, Artabanus 2. On Procopius' treatment of the Arsacids see also Traina 2015, 224–8, *idem* 2018, 177–9.

The pretext for the inclusion of the digression relates to the ban on mentioning the prison: Procopius displays his learning by citing an instance when the ban had been broken (5.9). Kaldellis 2004, 88–92, perceives latent criticism of Kavadh's violation of Persian laws (6.12–17) and the fact that this is reported only by the Armenians, not the Persians. The sheer length of the excursus, combined with its epic flavour, make it more likely that it is included rather to intrigue the reader, as with the tale of Peroz's pearl (4.14–31), cf. Greatrex 2021b, section (5).

Photius, *Bibl.* cod.63, p.66, expresses scepticism at the story of the Prison of Oblivion.

5.10 Πόλεμός ποτε Πέρσαις τε καὶ Ἀρμενίοις ἀκήρυκτος γέγονεν εἰς δύο καὶ τριάκοντα ἔτη ἐπὶ Πακουρίου μὲν Περσῶν βασιλεύοντος, Ἀρμενίων δὲ Ἀρσάκου Ἀρσακίδου ἀνδρός. 'There was once a truceless war of thirty-two years between the Persians and Armenians during the reign of Pacurius of the Persians and Arsaces, a man of the Arsacid (dynasty), of the Armenians.' At *Aed.* iii.1.6 Procopius uses similarly vague terms, including the word ποτε (*pote*, 'once') when mentioning the appointment of an Arsacid to the throne of Armenia, also attributed to the 'history of the Armenians'; see the preceding note. The *Epic Histories* varies in the length it ascribes to the war: at iv.50 it gives a figure of 34 years, while at iv.20 it puts it at 'over thirty years'. The period concerned is roughly from 338 to 368, as Armenia was caught up in the struggle between Constantine and his successors and Shapur II, then largely abandoned by the Romans in the wake of the humiliating peace concluded by Jovian in 363. See Garsoïan 1989, 291 n.19; Peeters 1920, 23–6 (= 1951, 67–70), attempts to reconcile the varying figures. In the period from 363, when Rome and Persia were officially at peace, Shapur continued to exert pressure on Armenia and to conduct sporadic raids until he succeeded in luring Arsaces to a banquet, a period that might be described as a 'truceless war' (a term Procopius takes over from Hdt. v.81.2). See Amm. Marc. 27.12.1–3.

No Sasanian king bore the name Pacurius, although several Parthian rulers did. Procopius may have chosen the name as a suitable generic one; Garsoïan 1989, 302 n.8, notes that it means in Persian 'god's son'. Peeters 1920, 21 n.5 (= 1951, 66 n.1), suggested that the name Shapur could have been corrupted into Pacurius if it came through a Syriac source, although there is no reason to suppose that there was a Syriac interme-

diary for the story. The Arsaces to whom he refers is Arsaces (Aršak) II/III (?338–367/8), who generally tried to remain neutral in his relations between Rome and Persia, on whom see Garsoïan 1989, 291 n.18, 352–3, cf. Hewsen 1978–9, 107–14, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 20–1, Dignas and Winter 2007, 182–5, on the context.

5.II ἐν τούτῳ δὲ Πέρσας τετύχηκε πόλεμον πρὸς ἄλλους βαρβάρους τινὰς οὐ πόρρω Ἀρμενίων ὠκημένους διενεγκεῖν. ‘Meanwhile, it happened that the Persians waged a war against certain other barbarians, who lived not far from the Armenians.’ The barbarians are in fact the Romans in *Epic Histories* iv.20: Procopius is adjusting the story to fit his own purposes, one of which is clearly to incite pity for Arsaces. So Peeters 1920, 22 (= 1951, 66); Kaldellis 2004, 92, sees the reference to Romans as barbarians as a deliberate criticism of the empire of Procopius’ day. It is uncertain, however, whether the victory recounted in the following sections has a historical basis: see Garsoïan 1989, 290 n.8.

5.I2 ἐν σπουδῇ ἔχοντες, ‘(they) were keen’. This sort of periphrasis, using a verb and noun with a preposition, often ἐν, *en*, ‘in’ (in this case literally, ‘having in eagerness’), is typical of Procopius, cf. e.g. i.8.7, 12.1 and elsewhere. See Scheftlein 1893, 4–5, p. 16 above.

5.I3 ἀπροσδόκητοί τε αὐτοὶ ἐπιπесόντες σχεδόν τι ἅπαντας ἡβηδὸν ἔκτειναν, ‘They fell on them unexpectedly and killed nearly all of them, from the youngest to the oldest.’ The word ἡβηδὸν (*hebēdon*, literally ‘from the youth upwards’) is found first at Hdt. i.172.2 (cf. Braun 1894, 19) but becomes quite common in Diodorus Siculus and Appian; it is generally used in the context of a massacre, as here. The *Epic Histories* (iv.20) also insist on the spectacular slaughter wreaked by the Armenians.

5.I4 καὶ ἐπεὶ παρ’ αὐτὸν Ἀρσάκης ἀφίκετο, τῆς τε ἄλλης αὐτὸν φιλοφροσύνης ἤξιωσε καὶ ἅτε ἀδελφὸν ἐπὶ τῇ ἴσῃ καὶ ὁμοίᾳ ἔσχε. ‘When Arsaces reached him, he treated him as worthy of every kindness and even held him as a brother on an equal and level footing.’ The expression ἐπὶ τῇ ἴσῃ καὶ ὁμοίᾳ, *epi tē isē kai homōia*, ‘on an equal and level footing’ is found at Thuc. i.27.1 and often in Procopius, e.g. at iii.3.25. Haury 1896, 4–5, discussing the work of Braun 1885, Duwe 1885 and Brückner 1896, notes other Herodotean and Thucydidean parallels in this episode, but rightly argues that this does not of itself discredit Procopius’ account.

5.16 Χρόνῳ δὲ οὐ πολλῷ ὕστερον διέβαλον τὸν Ἀρσάκην τινὲς ὡς δὴ πράγμασι νεωτέροις ἐγχειρεῖν βούλοιτο. ‘A little later, certain people slandered Arsaces, alleging that he wished to undertake a revolution.’ The *Epic Histories* (iv.20–50) offers more detail, accusing a disloyal Armenian magnate, Andovk of Siwnik, of fomenting hostility to Arsaces at the Persian court, leading to a lengthy period (eight years is given at iv.21) of intermittent conflict; it also describes the flight of Arsaces from Shapur’s court as a result of the slander. As elsewhere (e.g. i.20.1), Procopius has no interest in offering chronological precision, cf. Rubin, *PvK*, 356; nor does he devote any attention to factional strife in Armenia.

5.17 καὶ ὃς οὐδέν τι μελλήσας ἐς αὐτὸν ἦλθεν. ‘Without hesitation, he (Arsaces) went to him (Pacurius),’ i.e. Shapur. The *Epic Histories*, iv.53 and Mos. Khor. iii.34–5 (287–8) present the Armenian king as departing very reluctantly, on the other hand, and only after securing pledges from Shapur.

5.17 Βασσίκιον, ὅσπερ αὐτῷ στρατηγὸς τε καὶ ξύμβουλος ἦν, ‘Bassicius, who was his general and adviser’, i.e. Arsaces’ second-in-command. Bassicius is the Armenian Vasak, a member of the illustrious Mamikonean house, who also features prominently in the *Epic Histories*. See Garsoïan 1989, 426.

5.18 εὐθύς οὖν ὁ Πακούριος ἄμφω, τὸν τε Ἀρσάκην καὶ Βασσίκιον, πολλὰ ὀνειδίζων ἐκάκιζεν, εἰ τὰ ὁμωμοσμένα ἡλογηκότε οὕτω δὴ τάχιστα ἐς ἀπόστασιν ἴδοιεν. ‘Immediately Pacurius blamed them both, Arsaces and Bassicius, reproaching them because they had disregarded their oaths and so quickly envisaged seceding.’ The use of the verb κακίζω (*kakizō*) with the conjunction εἰ (*ei*, ‘if’) is not frequent, but the latter can be used to mean ‘because’, cf. Jos. *A.J.* 2.242, *B.J.* 2.118 with *LSJ*, εἰ, V, Smyth §2247; the verb ἴδοιεν, *idoien*, is in the optative to reflect the indirect speech (for Pacurius’ accusation). Procopius deploys a rare dual form in the perfect participle ἡλογηκότε (*ēlogēkote*, ‘having disregarded’), an archaising touch. He refers to the oaths at 5.15, cf. *Epic Histories* iv.20 (Garsoïan 1989, 151).

5.19 ἔπειτα δὲ τῶν μάγων ἀνεπυνθάνετο ὃ τί οἱ ποιητέα ἐς αὐτοὺς εἶη. ‘Then he enquired of the magi what he ought to do about them.’ Cf. 3.18 above for a king consulting the magi; *Epic Histories* iv.54 attributes the advice to ‘magicians and astrologers’. Börm 2007, 192, finds confirmation

of the judicial role of the magi in a Persian source, cf. the Chinese source, the *Weishu* (102, tr. Thierry 2007, 145, with comments at 148), and Syriac sources discussed by Gignoux 1980, 196, though Agath. ii.26.5–6 exaggerates their role in the running of the state. See further Stausberg 2002, 257, on the role of the religious hierarchy at court.

5.21 τὸ γὰρ τῆς βασιλικῆς σκηνῆς ἔδαφος κόπρῳ καλύπτειν ἐκέλευον, ἥμισυ μὲν ἐκ τῆς Περσῶν χώρας, θάτερον δὲ ἥμισυ ἐκ τῆς Ἀρμενίας. ‘They bade him cover over the floor of the royal tent with soil, half of it from the land of the Persians, the other half from Armenia.’ *Epic Histories* iv.54 has the same details. The tent that the king used when on campaign is amply attested, e.g. in Ps.-Seb. 80/24, 82–3/26–7, cf. Sauer et al. 2012, 345 for further references. Greenwood 2019, 68, underlines the importance of Armenian soil in this story, cf. Sarris 2018b, 238.

5.23 αὐτίκα γοῦν ὁ Πακούριος τὸν Ἀρσάκην μεταπεμψάμενος διαύλους ἐν τῇ σκηνῇ ξὺν αὐτῷ ἐποιεῖτο, ‘Immediately then Pacurius summoned Arsaces and walked up and down with him in the tent.’ The expression διαύλους ποιοῦμαι means ‘to do double-courses’, i.e. one length (e.g. of a racing track, as at Olympia) and then back again. It is not attested before the fourth century A.D., Joh. Chrys. *In sanctum Julianum martyrum*, PG 50, 669; Procopius uses it for Justinian at *Anecd.* 21.6, applying it to the ghostly pacing up and down of the (apparently) headless emperor. See also Suda, Δ806.

Procopius’ account of Arsaces’ shifts in mood corresponds to that in the *Epic Histories*, which adds a banquet scene at the end, at which Arsaces, whose couch is placed on Armenian soil, defiantly promises to return to Armenia and to avenge himself on Shapur. As Garsoïan 1989, 302 n.8, observes, the story owes something to the story of Heracles’ encounter with Antaeus, whose strength depended upon contact with the earth.

5.26 ἐνταῦθα γὰρ πάλιν ὥσπερ τινὰ παλινωδίαν ᾄδων, ‘Then, as though he were reciting some recantation.’ The Greek refers to the singing of a palinode, i.e. a retraction. On this expression, which goes back to Stesichorus, see Plato, *Phaedrus*, 243ab, García Romero, 53 n.48.

5.28 Πακούριος δὲ Βασιλικίου μὲν τὸ δέρμα ἐκδείρας ἀσκόν τε αὐτὸ πεποιημένους καὶ ἀχύρων ἐμπλησάμενος ὅλον ἀπεκρέμασεν ἐπὶ

δένδρου τινὸς ὑψηλοῦ λίαν. ‘Pacurius stripped the skin from Bassicius, made it into a sack, filled it with chaff, and hung the whole thing from a very tall tree.’ This grisly practice attracted the attention of Agathias, who relates that it was applied to the disgraced Persian commander Nakhoragan after his defeat and flight in 556; he attributes its origins to Shapur I and describes how the king inflicted it on the captured Roman emperor Valerian, iv.23.1–7, noting the earlier parallel of Apollo’s treatment of Marsyas (cf. Xen. *Anab.* i.2.8, Hdt. vii.26.3). On Valerian see Petr. Patr. frg.13 (Banchich frg.201, p.134) with Reiner 2006 and Smith 2016, 40 and n.80; cf. Isaac 1995, 128 (= *idem* 1998, 440–1). As Peter notes with some revulsion, it appears to have been customary to display the flayed skin, now made into a bag, as an example. Mal. 12.35 (cf. *Chr. Pasch.* 510) reports that Numerian (or Carinus in *Chr. Pasch.*) suffered the same fate, cf. Epiphanius, *Panarion*, 66.12.2 on Mani (ed. Holl/Dummer, vol.3, p.33.13), Amm. Marc. 23.6.80 with den Boeft et al. 1998, 221–2. *Contra* Agathias, the practice is attested in the Achaemenid period and earlier, cf. Cameron 1964, 51 n.86, citing Hdt. v.25.1, Reiner 2006 (for Assyrian precedents). Note also *Book of Government*, v.12 (p.39, a flaying ordered by Khusro).

5.30 Χρόνῳ δὲ ὕστερον τῶν τις Ἀρμενίων τῷ τε Ἀρσάκῃ ἐν τοῖς μάλιστα ἐπιτηδείων καὶ οἱ ἐπισπομένων ἐς τὰ Περσῶν ἦθη ἰόντι, Πέρσαις ἐπὶ τι ἔθνος ἰοῦσι βαρβαρικὸν ξυνεστράτευσεν. ‘At a later point, a certain Armenian, who was among the closest associates of Arsaces and had followed him to the lands of the Persians, participated in a campaign of the Persians against a barbarian people.’ The *Epic Histories* calls this person Drastamat, meaning ‘welcome’ in Middle Persian; his historicity has been doubted, cf. Garsoïan 1989, 369–70. They further specify that he saved Shapur’s life in his campaign against the Kushans (Chionites) in the East, perhaps in the late 360s or early 370s; in this case, they are the ‘barbarian people’ to which Procopius refers here. See Christensen 1944, 239, de la Vaissière 2015, 183–4.

5.33 ὅπως μέντοι παντάπασιν ἀληθίζονται, ‘So that he might nonetheless continue to speak completely truthfully.’ As Hdt. i.136.2 reports, truth-telling was an important aspect of Persian life; Procopius uses the same verb, ἀληθίζομαι (*alēthizomai*), to refer to Justinian’s incapacity to tell the truth at *Anecd.* 29.12, and just below, at 6.14–15, for Kavadh’s desire not to infringe the law.

5.34 ἄμφω δὲ ἀλλήλοιν περιβαλόντε ἐθρηνεσάτην τε ἡδύν τινα θρῆνον, ‘They threw their arms around each other and sang a sweet lament.’ Procopius uses dual forms here and in the remainder of the sentence, which adds to the heroic feel, as does the repetition of the root θρην- (from which the English word threnody is derived) for both the noun and verb, i.e. literally ‘lamenting a lament’. The expression is found only in Christian sources before Procopius, notably in the Septuagint, 2 Kings 1:17 (David mourning for Saul), cf. Thr. (Lam.) 1:pr., and later commentators on these passages. The *Epic Histories* mentions no embrace, preferring to describe how Drastamat removed the chains that had encumbered Arsaces.

5.35 ἐπὶ στιβάδος ἀνέκλινεν, ‘(he) had him recline on a bed of straw’. Hdt. iv.71.4 refers to the Scythians laying the body of a dead king on just such a bed, cf. García Romero 54 n.50. MS G has the less plausible reading παστάδος, meaning rather ‘a porch’. On the Armenian terms used for the couch in the *Epic Histories* see Garsoïan 1989, 515.

5.36 ἐνταῦθὰ τε τοὺς παρόντας Ἀρσάκης βασιλικῶς εἰστία ἤπερ εἰώθει τὰ πρότερα. ‘Then Arsaces entertained those present in royal fashion, as had been his custom previously.’ Garsoïan 1989, 54, cf. 313 n.6, argues that the focus on the banquet here represents an Iranian element in the tale, cf. eadem 1981, 54–64, eadem and Mahé 1997, 15–24, in more detail; she favours an oral source in the first instance, focusing on the *topos* of the faithful retainer.

5.37 πολλὰ δὲ ἄλλα ἐς μέσον ἦλθεν, ‘many other things were revealed’ or ‘came to the fore’, literally ‘came into the middle’, an expression used literally by Procopius at 13.35, when Andreas, the bath-attendant, surges forward to the space between the two armies assembled at Dara. Cf. Nonnus, *Dionysiaca* 37.508.

5.37 καταβεβρεγμένοι τῇ εὐπαθείᾳ, ‘overcome with happiness’, literally ‘drenched’ or ‘soaked’, the perfect participle of καταβρέχω (*katabrekhō*). Procopius is the first author to use this participle metaphorically and does so on several occasions, e.g. at iv.4.3; he also uses it literally, ii.27.4, cf. Galen, *De compositione medicamentorum secundum locos*, iii, vol.12, p.653.2, the only other attestation of the participle before Procopius.

5.39 καὶ ταῦτα εἰπόντα μαχαίρα ἑαυτὸν διαχειρίσασθαι, ἥνπερ ἐν τῇ θοίνῃ ἐξεπίτηδες κεκλοφῶς ἔτυχεν, οὕτω τε αὐτὸν ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἀφανισθῆναι. ‘So saying, he killed himself with a dagger, which he happened deliberately to have stolen during the banquet, and thus was taken from the world of men.’ Cf. *Epic Histories* v.7. Börm 2007, 71 n.4, suggests that this reference to a dagger (μαχαίρα, *makhaira*) may pick up the early mention of a dagger (for killing Kavadh) by Gusanastades at 5.4. On the final expression see i.2.II n.

5.40 τὰ μὲν οὖν κατὰ τοῦτον δὴ τὸν Ἀρσάκην ἢ τῶν Ἀρμενίων συγγραφὴ λέγει ταύτη, ἥπερ ἐρρήθη, κεχωρηκέναι. ‘The account of the Armenians reports that matters concerning Arsaces took place in the manner in which the story has been told’, cf. 4.31 for a similar formulation and see 5.9–40 n above on the ‘account’ or ‘composition’.

6.1–9 Kavadh’s Escape from Prison

Procopius’ romantic tale of Kavadh’s escape from the Prison of Oblivion is paralleled in Arabic accounts that may well derive from Persian sources, though Hoyland, *HKP*, 149, discussing the *Chr. Seert*, cautions that similarities among Arabic sources may reflect common use of an early Arabic, rather than a Persian, source. In the eastern traditions, the woman who assists the king is his sister; his helper is called Zarmihr. It is possible, as Christensen suggests, that in an initial version Kavadh’s wife was his sister, since such relationships were common in the royal family. There is considerable confusion in the eastern versions between two people, Zarmihr and Sukhra: the latter was executed by Kavadh before his imprisonment, while the former, sometimes said to be his son, then helped the king escape. Such loyalty seems inherently implausible, however, and it is likely that Procopius’ Seoses (normally equated with the Persian Siyāvush), who was likewise executed by Kavadh later in his reign, should not be confused with Zarmihr/Sukhra. Jackson Bonner 2015a, 81–4, nonetheless argues that Zarmihr was the father of Sukhra, whom he identifies with Procopius’ Seoses, cf. Schindel 2004a, 447 n.1969. Agath. iv.28.3–7 gives a similar account, alluding to Procopius, as does Th. Sim. iv.6.6–11.

Bibliography: Justi 1895, 294, Christensen 1925, 94 n.1, 112 n.4, *idem* 1944, 349 n.4, Luther 1997, 149, Schindel 2004a, 484 n.2110, Börm 2018, 36–7. Comparable versions may be found in Tabari, 883/128, 886–7/135, Yā’qubi, 185/115 (Hoyland) = 459–60 (Gordon et al.), *Chr.*

Seert ii.14, PO 7 (1911), 127–8 (= Hoyland, *HKP*, 147), Eutych. xvi.10 (206/276), *Nihāya*, 296 (tr. Browne, 226), Dinawari, 67/350. Joh. Ant. frg. 237.9 records briefly Kavadh's expulsion from power, his seeking of refuge with the 'Cadisenian' Huns, and the execution of his opponents upon his return.

6.1 ἦν γὰρ τὴν ὄψιν ἐς τὰ μάλιστα εὐπρεπής, 'for she was remarkably attractive to behold', a formula that Procopius employs elsewhere, at ii.5.28 and viii.10.5, in both cases for women who also attract the attention of a Persian man.

6.2 ὁ τοῦ φρουρίου ἄρχων ἠράσθη τε αὐτῆς ἔρωτα ἐξαίσιον οἶον, 'The jailer (commander of the prison) ... fell very passionately in love with her', cf. ii.5.28n, where again a woman's beauty provokes a violent love, and *Anecd.* 9.30, referring to Justinian's excessive love for Theodora. Kaldellis 2004, 84, notes that Kavadh's instruction to his wife to sleep with the commander of the prison represents an ironic application of his measure to hold women in common.

6.3–4 ἦν δέ τις τῶν ἐν Πέρσαις λογίμων Σεόσης ὄνομα, Καβάδης ἐς τὰ μάλιστα φίλος, ὃς ἀμφὶ τὸ φρούριον τοῦτο διατριβὴν εἶχε, 'There was a man of high standing among the Persians called Seoses, a great friend of Kavadh, who spent all his time (or "had business") near this prison. The expression διατριβὴν ἔχω (*diatribēn ekhō*) is used by Procopius with various senses, e.g. at vii.40.3, where it refers to Germanus' task of fending off Slavs in the Balkans, while at vii.40.21 it seems to just mean that Spinus was spending time in Catania, an instance similar to that here, cf. also Soz. *HE* iii.14.4. On Seoses' identity see i.6.1–9n.

6.8 καὶ ποτε νυκτὸς ἐπιλαβούσης ἀνέπεισε τὴν γυναῖκα Καβάδης ἐσθῆτα μὲν αὐτῷ τὴν οἰκείαν δοῦναι, 'One night Kavadh persuaded his wife to give him her own clothing.' Schäfer 2006, 278, suspects that Procopius is employing a classical *topos* here which, according to Börm 2007, 248, implies a certain femininity on the part of the Persians. It remains possible, however, that the story originated in Persia: see the next note on one Persian version.

6.9 ἐς τὸ ἀκριβὲς οὐκ ἔχω εἰπεῖν. οὐ γὰρ ὁμολογοῦσι Πέρσαι ἄλλήλοις. 'I cannot tell for certain, for the Persians do not agree about it', i.e. about the fate of Kavadh's wife, once her deception came to light.

In the eastern tradition, e.g. Tabari 887/135, she escaped with him, having rolled him up in a carpet which, she claimed to the jailer, had been sullied with her menstrual blood; they were thus permitted to leave the prison without being searched. Given the variations in the tale, it is not surprising that Procopius found unanimity difficult to obtain; his claim to be using Persian sources deserves to be taken seriously, cf. 6.1–9n above with Börm 2007, 55, 149. Agath. iv.28.3 seems to show awareness of another version, cf. Averil Cameron 1969–70, 157–8, Jackson Bonner 2015a, 87. On the formula οὐκ ἔχω εἰπεῖν, *ouk ekhō eipein*, ‘I cannot tell, I am unable to say’ see ii.1.15n.

6.10–19 Kavadh’s return to power, the execution of Gusanastades and the promotion of Adergudunbades

Procopius remains close to eastern accounts of Kavadh’s period at the Hephthalite court and return with their ruler’s backing. The notion that the king momentarily forgot the need to assign the office of *kanarang* to a member of Gusanastades’ family is, however, highly implausible and not found elsewhere; he is also in error in supposing Adergudunbades to have been the only holder of the office of *adrastadaran salanes* (*arteshārān sālār*). His interest in Persian titlature is nonetheless evident, as is a certain admiration for Kavadh’s effectiveness as a ruler. See Christensen 1925, 115 n.2, *idem* 1944, 351 n.2, Börm 2007, 145–6, *idem* 2018, 26–31.

6.10 καὶ αὐτῷ τὴν παῖδα γυναῖκα ὁ βασιλεὺς γαμετὴν δίδωσιν, ‘The king gave him his daughter (literally, ‘woman child’) in marriage’: Procopius does not use the standard Greek word for ‘daughter’ here, as also at *Anecd.* 29.24.

Ps.-Josh. 24 likewise reports that Kavadh married a daughter of the Hephthalite king; according to him, she was the king’s daughter by the wife he had captured after Peroz’s defeat, i.e. Peroz’s daughter and Kavadh’s own sister, cf. Tabari 884/129. Agath. iv.28.4 follows Procopius’ account, cf. Joh. Ant. frg.237.9 (an allusion to Hephthalite support, here called Kadiseni). The eastern sources are generally more interested in a legendary account of the conception of Khusro, Kavadh’s successor, while the king was fleeing to the Hephthalites. See Nöldeke 1879, 145 n.4, Christensen 1925, 113 n.2, *idem* 1944, 350 n.1. As Ps.-Josh. 10 notes (cf. *Chr. Seert* ii.14, PO 7 [1911], 128 [= Hoyland, *HKP*, 147–8 and n.26] with Luther 1997, 148 n.191), Kavadh was familiar with the Hephthalite court, having spent time there following his father’s first defeat (see 3.1–22n).

It should be noted that the tactics here employed by the Hephthalites, backing one claimant to the throne against another to strengthen their own control, are also attested in the Chinese sources for their dealings in this period with the Gaoju (Gaoche): having defeated and killed Ch'ung-ch'i (Qiong Qi), the southern khan of the 'High Carts' (Gaoju), c.498, they placed his son Mi-o-tu (Mi'etu) in charge of the kingdom and supplied him with forces to impose himself in the north. See Thierry 1993, 116–17, Pulleyblank 2000, 86–7, Kim 2013, 39, Balogh 2020, 1.058, pp.76–7.

6.13 ἐπεὶ νόμος αὐτὸν ἐσῆει, ὃς δὴ οὐκ ἔῃ Πέρσαις ἐς τοὺς ἀλλοτρίους τὰς ἀρχὰς φέρεσθαι, ἀλλ' οἷς ἡ τιμὴ ἐκάστη κατὰ γένος προσήκει, 'since he remembered a law that forbids offices among the Persians to be conferred on others than those to whom each belongs by descent'. Although Procopius' anecdote about Kavadh's rash promise is implausible (see i.6.10–19n), his assertion about the hereditary nature of offices is correct, cf. Th. Sim. iii.18.7–9: see (e.g.) Wiesehöfer 1996, 172, Huyse 2002b, 208–9 and n.36, Schmitt 2004, 676, Börm 2007, 127, 131–2, Huyse 2015, 207–8, discussing this passage, *contra* Kaldellis 2004, 84–5. See also 5.4n on Gusanastades. Kaldellis, *loc. cit.*, observes that Procopius uses the term νόμος (*nomos*, 'law', 'custom') here and in the next two sentences; he sees in it criticism of the king's lawlessness, for it is only chance that allows him not to break it, so also Mészáros 2014, 174–5. Pugliese Carratelli 1971, 600, sees rather a deliberate contrast between the law-abiding Kavadh and the faithless Khusrō, while Börm 2018, 34, interprets it as a reference to Persian practice.

6.15 ἔτυχε γὰρ πρῶτος Ἀδεργουδουνβάδης ἐς αὐτὸν ἦκων, νεανίας ἀνὴρ, συγγενὴς τε ὦν τῷ Γουσαναστάδῃ καὶ διαφερόντως ἀγαθὸς τὰ πολέμια. 'For the first to come to him chanced to be Adergudunbades, a young man related to Gusanastades, and particularly good in warfare.' Khurshudian 1998, 74, suggests that Adergudunbades represents the Middle Persian Ādhargulbād, cf. Pourshariati 2008, 267–8, but see also Justi 1895, 4. Pourshariati 2010b, 361–4, finds a parallel genealogy of this family, the Kanārangīyān, in the preface of the *Shāhnāmah-i Abū Manṣūrī*, a prose version of the *Shāhnāmah*, in which Adergudunbades' son Bahram (Procopius' Varrames, i.23.10) also appears. See further i.23.10n.

Procopius' description of Adergudunbades' military prowess is one he applies to a number of figures; the whole expression ('remarkably good at warfare') occurs five times in *Wars* i alone, cf. Cresci 1986, 274 n.121, on this and other frequent formulae. Hdt. vii.238.2 uses part of it, 'good at

warfare’, in noting that the Persians above all honoured courageous fighters, cf. Syrianus, *Rhet. Mil.* 25a.1, 51.1. As Averil Cameron 1985, 44, observes, it does not actually tell us much about the individual concerned.

6.16 ὅς δὴ δεσπότην τε προσεῖπε Καβάδην καὶ βασιλέα προσεκύνησε πρῶτος, ἐδεῖτό τέ οἱ ἅτε δούλῳ ὃ τι βούλοιτο χρῆσθαι. ‘He was the first to call Kavadh his master and do obeisance to him as king and to ask him to use him like a slave for whatever he wished.’ Already Herodotus (e.g. vii.8γ3) had observed this aspect of Persian society, i.e. that all alike were slaves of the king, their δεσπότης (*despotēs*, ‘master’); as Börm 2007, 133–5, remarks, it reflects Sasanian society of his own day, although the institution was more reciprocal – some characterise it as feudal – than the word ‘slave’ implies. The *Letter of Tansar*, 27–8, emphasises the importance of humility towards the kings, cf. Wood 2016, 409. See also Widengren 1976, 252–63, esp. 263, Börm 2018, 30. At *Anecd.* 30.21–30 Procopius criticised the extension of such tendencies to the Roman empire, cf. Kaldellis 2004, 128–42 and Pazdernik 1997, 83–93, 228–32. Procopius later reports Khusro’s irritation at the disobedience of his slave Adergudunbades, for which he executed him, i.23.7–24. On *proskynēsis* see 3.20n.

6.17 ἐν τοῖς βασιλείοις οὐδενὶ πόνῳ γενόμενος, ἔρημόν τε Βλάσῃ τῶν ἀμυνομένων λαβὼν ἐξετύφλωσε, ‘So Kavadh reached the royal palace without difficulty and seized Blases, abandoned by his defenders, and blinded him.’ The eastern tradition (e.g. Dinawari, 67/351, Tha’alibi, 593–4) confirms the ease with which Kavadh retook the throne. It is likely that Kavadh did spare him, as Procopius claims, which was unusual in Sasanian court politics. See Christensen 1944, 350–1, Gariboldi 2006, 102 n.37, noting that Dinawari, *loc. cit.*, and other eastern sources, report that he was similarly clement towards the aristocracy. Agath. iv.28.7 likewise states that he retired, cf. Jackson Bonner 2020, 146. On Procopius’ relation to the Perso-Arabic traditions see Appendix 1, p. 665.

Christensen 1925, 114, cf. *idem* 1944, 350–1, insists that Procopius’ description of Blases’ blinding refers to Balash, not Zamasp, although the evidence is inconclusive. Balash was certainly blinded, cf. Ps.-Josh. 19, Theoph. 123, *Chr. Seert* ii.12, PO 7 (1911), 124 (= Hoyland, *HKP*, 145), though aware of two versions, with Averil Cameron 1969–70, 155 and Luther 1997, 134. Blinding a rival was a way of ensuring his ineligibility for the throne, as Procopius notes at i.11.4 (cf. viii.10.22 and Tabari, 833/42) in the context of the one-eyed Zames: see Luther 1997, 134 n.138, Börm 2007, 104, cf. *idem* 2008b, 433, Huyse 2009, 149,

Wiesehöfer 2017, 165–6. He clearly had an interest in Persian techniques of mutilation, since at viii.10.20–1 he describes how a similar method, using a heated iron needle, was employed to damage the eyelids of Khusro's son Anasozadus, cf. Veh 1970, 462, who suggests that he was also seeking to gain his readers' attention. Cf. Th. Sim. iv.6.5 for a similar account, relating the blinding of the deposed Hormizd IV with the categorisations of Lascaretos and Makaretos 1992, 135. As they note, 138–40, the technique here described by Procopius later became common practice in the Byzantine empire.

On the term τὰ βασιλεία, *ta basileia*, 'the royal palace', see i.19.20n.

6.17 καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν ἐν φυλακῇ εἶχεν ἄρξαντα Περσῶν ἐνιαυτοὺς δύο, '(Kavadh) kept him afterwards under guard. His reign lasted for two years.' Zamasp (Jamasf) had reigned for about two years (496/7–498/9), cf. Luther 1997, 150, Schindel 2004a, 459–60, while Balash ruled for four (484–8). Procopius' figure fits the former better, but it remains unclear to which of the two he is referring in this passage. Pourshariati 2008, 298–300, discusses information in Ibn Isfandīyār, a later source associated with Tabaristan in eastern Iran, that claims that Zamasp subsequently went to Armenia.

6.18 Γουσαναστάδην κτείνας τὸν Ἀδεργουδουνβάδην ἀντ' αὐτοῦ κατεστήσατο ἐπὶ τῆς τοῦ χαναράγγου ἀρχῆς, τὸν δὲ Σεόσην ἀδρασταδάραν σαλάνην εὐθύς ἀνείπε, 'Kavadh put Gusanastades to death and appointed Adergudunbades to the office of *kanarang* in his place, and immediately proclaimed Seoses as *adrastadaran salanes*.' On the (hereditary) office of *kanarang* see i.5.4n. As Börm 2007, 145–6, notes, Procopius is broadly correct in what he says of Seoses' office, which in the Middle Persian form is *artēshtārān sālār*, 'head of the warriors'; Tabari, 869/104, confirms that it was one of the highest ranks in Iran. But contrary to what Procopius claims (6.19), one other holder of the post is known, Kārdār, son of Mihr-Narseh, in the early fifth century, although Seoses was probably the first after him. See Christensen 1944, 131–2, Sundermann 1987, Huyse 2002, 209, Schmitt 2004, 174–5, Gariboldi 2006, 102 n.36, Börm 2007, *loc. cit.* The title may simply have been an honorific one for the supreme commander, the *Ērān-spāhbed*, so Shahbazi 1987, 498, Tafazzoli 2000, 9–10.

Changes were being made to offices during the reigns of Kavadh and Khusro, such as the abolition of the position of *Ērān-spāhbed* and the division of the army high command among four commanders, each

responsible for one of the four quadrants: see Howard-Johnston 1995, 214–24, Rubin 1995a, 227–34, Gyselen 2001, 5–6. On the general issue of Procopius' awareness of these reforms see Börm 2007, 239–42.

6.19 τήν τε βασιλείαν ὁ Καβάδης ἐκρατύνατο καὶ ξὺν τῷ ἀσφαλεῖ διεφύλαξεν, 'And Kavadh strengthened his rule and maintained it in safety.' At i.4.35 Procopius uses a similar expression, referring to Kavadh 'strengthening his rule', which may refer to the same period as that alluded to here, i.e. in the wake of his return to the throne in 498/9. At 4.35 Procopius refers to Kavadh's ἀρχή (*arkhē*, 'rule', 'power' or 'realm'), while here he uses the word βασιλεία (*basileia*, 'kingdom' or 'monarchy'). In both cases there is an ambiguity as to whether Kavadh's personal power is meant, i.e. his grip on the throne, or the Persian kingdom itself. It is likely that he means rather the former, cf. iii.6.4, where Aspar fears the consequences of the Emperor Leo establishing his βασιλεία very securely, cf. v.2.29 (Amalasuintha), iii.8.11 (Geiseric, a more ambiguous case); Procopius often uses the middle of the verb κρατύνω (*kratunō*, 'I strengthen') in this context, commonly with a form of the adjective ἀσφαλής (*asphalēs*, 'safe').

6.19 ἦν γὰρ ἀγχίνους τε καὶ δραστήριος οὐδενὸς ἥσσον, 'For he was second to none in ingenuity and energy.' Both of these adjectives are used sparingly by Procopius, almost always applied to non-Romans: both Geiseric, iii.4.6 and Cabaon, iii.8.15 are said to be ingenious (while Arcadius, i.2.6, is said not to have been). Those said to be vigorous are the praetorian prefect Apion (i.8.5), the Arab chiefs al-Mundhir (i.17.40) and Abu Karib (i.19.12), and various unspecified Persians (i.23.3). Leo Diac. i.5 (p.10.5–6) and vi.1 (p.94.8) applies the same combination of adjectives as Procopius.

There are grounds for supposing, with Christensen 1925, 107 and Pugliese Carratelli 1971, 600, that Procopius holds Kavadh in high regard, cf. Greatrex 2014b, 94–5 (*contra* Kaldellis 2004, 86). See further i.21.22n.

i.7–9 The Anastasian War

History

The Persian king Kavadh had much to gain from a swift and lucrative war with the Romans. When the Emperor Anastasius refused his repeated

demands for subsidies, he enlisted his new allies, the Hephthalites, and the fractious peoples that had been revolting on his western borders – the Qadishāyē (near Nisibis, Proc.'s Kadiseni at i.14.38), the Tāmōrāyē (location uncertain), as well as the Armenians – and quickly seized Theodosiopolis in Armenia Interior in August 502. Turning south, he received the surrender of Martyropolis, then, after a bitter three-month siege, captured Amida (modern Diyarbakır) in January 503. The Romans responded vigorously: Anastasius despatched three high-ranking commanders to the front, Areobindus, the *magister militum per Orientem*, and the two *magistri militum praesentales*, Hypatius, his own nephew, and Patricius. Perhaps in part because of their lack of military experience, they proved unable to co-ordinate their riposte: Areobindus enjoyed some success in Mesopotamia, but was forced back by Kavadh's superior numbers. His two colleagues tried to recapture Amida, but abandoned their attempt in order to come to his aid, only to be soundly defeated by the Persian army.

Anastasius remedied the situation by relieving Hypatius of his command and by sending out the *magister officiorum* Celer as the supreme commander. Already in late 503 the Romans were counter-attacking into Persian territory; the emperor further boosted morale by remitting the taxes of the frontier provinces. In 504 the Romans prosecuted the war with greater effectiveness, although their attempts to retake Amida were thwarted. The Persian king, meanwhile, had been obliged to divert his attention to other conflicts. He was therefore willing to agree to hand over the city to the Romans in exchange for a payment.

Bibliography: Greatrex 1998, 76–118, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 62–77, Haarer 2006, 47–65, Crow 2007, Lenski 2007, Meier 2009, 174–216, Petersen 2013, 123–35, Begass 2018, 333–4, 364, Meier 2019, 742–53.

Historiography

We are better informed about the Anastasian war than any other conflict between the great powers after Julian's expedition of 363. The narrative of Pseudo-Joshua the Stylite, a detailed and chronologically arranged account of the war and of the events that led up to it, shows the degree to which Syriac history-writing could approach classical models such as Thucydides and Herodotus. The author, a contemporary of the war based in Edessa, offers precise dates and troop figures; his account is preserved in the eighth-century *Chronicle* attributed to Pseudo-Dionysius of

Tel-Mahre, also known as the *Zuqnin Chronicle*. See Luther 1997, Watt 1999, Trombley and Watt 2000. John the Lydian, in his *De Magistratibus*, and Marcellinus *comes*, in his *Chronicle*, report the war, both in rather unfavourable terms: the former castigates the cowardice and incompetence of the three generals initially sent out, while the latter refers to the lack of courage of the Roman forces. It is surely not a coincidence that these two sources, like Procopius, were writing under a new imperial dynasty and thus had no interest in extolling the accomplishments of its predecessors. Procopius displays the same tendencies, stressing Roman defeats and unpreparedness, the more to contrast with the reversal of fortune brought about by Belisarius. The chronicler Malalas, on the other hand, offers only a cursory account of the war without any obvious bias. See Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* iii.53, Marc. *com.* a.502–4, Mal. 16.9, with Rubin, *PvK*, 364.37–45, Greatrex 1998, 75–6.

Pseudo-Zachariah of Mytilene (PZ), relying on a contemporary local source, gives a detailed account of the siege of Amida and its aftermath. There are notable similarities between his account and that of Procopius, as has long been noticed. These are sometimes attributed to a common dependence on the *Chronological epitome* of Eustathius of Epiphania, but, since this work seems to have terminated in 502/3, this can at best be just a partial explanation of their resemblance. It is most likely that both PZ and Procopius drew on a common source whose identity must remain uncertain. Eustathius' work – and, perhaps, a continuation of it – seems to underlie the remarkably detailed narrative of the ninth-century chronicler Theophanes. Both PZ and Theophanes are more upbeat in their assessment of the Roman performance. Later Syriac and Byzantine chronicles add nothing of substance to these sources; in the later Syriac tradition the fall of Amida took on the status of a morality tale, illustrating the pernicious consequences of overconfidence. The contemporary *memrē* of Jacob of Sarug, now ed. and tr. Debié 2018, laments the city's fate and the consequences of the Persian capture. See PZ vii.3–4, Haury 1896, 20–7, Greatrex 1998, 73–4, Debié 2003, Treadgold 2007a, 114–19 (on Eustathius), Meier 2009, 200, Greatrex 2010, 244–8, *idem* 2015, Debié 2018, 36–40.

Procopius' account offers no more than a superficial and partial overview of the war, concentrating on particular highlights – notably the fall of Amida (7.12–32), as also the capture of the Persian commander Glonas (9.5–19) – for which he evidently had a local source (see p. 17). As with his other introductory material, his aim is more to entertain than to inform his readers, who could consult other sources (e.g. Eustathius) for a more thorough treatment of the war. See Börm 2007, 236.

7.1–4 The Outbreak of War

Procopius establishes very briefly that the Persians started the war because of the Emperor Anastasius' unwillingness to lend them some money. He then passes almost immediately to the siege of Amida, omitting the king's capture of Theodosiopolis in Armenia and the surrender of Martyropolis, and thereby emphasising the suddenness of his arrival at Amida and the surprising resolution of the city's defenders.

7.1 Ὀλίγω δὲ ὕστερον, 'a little later'. Procopius passes from his anecdotes about internal Persian history to the outbreak of war on the Roman eastern frontier (fig. 4). He makes no effort to date precisely the events he relates, preferring instead this frequent vague formula (which can stretch from a period of days [e.g. i.7.33, ii.24.20] to years [e.g. ii.11.28]). Thucydides employs the phrase ὀλίγω ὕστερον, *oligō hysteron*, just once (4.101.3), while Plutarch invariably prefers to insert δέ (as Procopius does here, though his usage varies).

From Ps.-Josh. 47 we know that Kavadh actually crossed the frontier on 22 August 502; his request must clearly have preceded this by one or more months. The first three sections are quoted in *Exc. de legat. gent.* 489.7–20 (with no significant textual differences).

7.1 χρήματα Καβάδης τῷ Ἐφθαλίτων βασιλεῖ ὤφειλεν, 'Kavadh owed money to the king of the Hephthalites.' Kavadh had only regained his throne with the military backing of the Hephthalites (cf. i.6.10n) and therefore remained beholden to them for a considerable period: a tribute continued to be paid probably until late in his reign (see i.4.35n).

The Persian treasury was under severe strain in the closing decades of the fifth century. Peroz's failed campaigns against the Hephthalites had led to substantial tribute payments (cf. i.4.35n). As Ps.-Josh. 18 relates, Peroz's successor Balash proved unable to restore the kingdom's finances. Tabari 883/127, cf. 873–4/111–12, confirms this picture and records a long drought under Peroz, which may be connected to a shifting of the course of the lower Tigris; this may in turn have led to the desertification of lands that had adjoined the river and to the formation of marshes near its new course. See Le Strange 1905, 27, Pigulewskaja 1963, 206, Morony 1982, 31, Christensen 1993, 73, Morony 1995, 76. On the social instability in Persia in this period see 5.1n.

Although the Sasanian kingdom was thus suffering significant economic difficulties at this time, Börm 2008a, 335–9, has argued that



Figure 4 The Roman East During the Anastasian War

Kavadh's request for money was motivated more by issues of prestige than by financial necessity: Ps.-Josh. 19 refers to Persian requests for gold (but cf. Proc. i.9.24), while the annual payments that were made on occasion were also in gold, despite the fact that the Persian currency, the dirham, was silver, cf. *Elr* 7 (1996), 425, s.v. 'Dirham'. The Sasanian coins that have been found with a Hephthalite overstrike are likewise silver (see i.4.35n). Börm therefore suggests that the Roman sources (such as Procopius and Pseudo-Joshua) sought to mask the political implications of the Roman payments (esp. at Ps.-Josh. 8) by exaggerating the extent of Persian economic problems; Schindel 2004a, 468, notes abundant silver issues under Kavadh. Rubin 1986, 685–6, argues that the loan sought by the king was an advance payment to be added to the regular payments owed to the Sasanians for the defence of the Caspian Gates in the Caucasus (on which see i.10.4n), cf. Synelli 1986, 74–6, 113 (suspicious of Procopius' account) and Haarer 2006, 53.

7.1–2 Ἀναστάσιον τὸν Ῥωμαίων αὐτοκράτορα ἤτει ... οὓς δὴ ἐς ἀλλήλους συγκρούειν ὅτι μάλιστα ἄμεινον εἶναι, 'he asked Anastasius, the Roman Emperor ... it would be better to stir them up against each other as much as possible'. Undoubtedly Kavadh asked Anastasius (here mentioned for the first time by Procopius) for subsidies, probably on more than one occasion: Ps.-Josh. 19, 23, refers to earlier requests, one during the Isaurian war (491–8), the other immediately after Kavadh regained his throne (498/9): see Greatrex 1998, 51–2, 76, Schindel 2004a, 485 n.2130, Börm 2007, 235–6. According to Joh. Diak. 552 (156.12–14), followed by Theoph. 144.21–4 (cf. Pouderon 2015, 308–9), Kavadh asked for money, but Anastasius responded by offering a loan, cf. Ps.-Josh. 23. This provoked the king to war. Procopius may therefore have telescoped events, cf. Greatrex 1998, 76 and n.15. Nic. Call. xvi.36 (PG 147, 197C), who follows Proc. i.6 in this chapter and then turns to the passage from Joh. Diak. just noted, inserts the following statement: καὶ εἰς ἔτη ἕνδεκα τοῦ λοιποῦ τῇ ἀρχῇ διαρκέσας, τὰ μὲν πρῶτα Ῥωμαίοις ἐσπένδετο, 'Having lasted on the throne for eleven years, then for the first time he concluded a peace with the Romans', which implies a treaty in 499/500, since Kavadh's reign began in 488. It is uncertain what Nicephorus Callistus Xanthopoulos' source was here (cf. Gentz 1966, 162), and other sources (*Chron. Arbela* 19 [p.101], cf. John of Ephesus, *Lives*, PO 17 [1923], 143) imply that Kavadh initiated a persecution of anti-Chalcedonian Christians in his kingdom around this very time; see Schindel 2004a, 484, on the varying accounts of Kavadh's relations with the Christians of

Persia. Since Theoph. 141.1–6 also reports a raid on Roman territory by Persian-allied Arabs in 500, Nicephorus Callistus Xanthopoulos' reference to a peace carries little plausibility. Cf. Börm 2007, 236 and n.1.

Interpretations vary as to how to take Anastasius' decision not to accede to Kavadh's request. Bury 1923, ii, 11 and n.1, Stein 1949, 93, Blockley 1985a, 68 n.19, suppose the emperor and his counsellors to have been attempting to snub the king. Given that Anastasius was aware of Persian preparations for war (cf. Lee 1993a, 115, Börm 2007, 235–6), it is unlikely that he deliberately sought a confrontation: earlier in the 490s, during an uprising of the Persian Armenians against Kavadh, he had refused to intervene. See Ps.-Josh. 21, Greatrex 1998, 77. But as Börm 2007, 321–2, 327 and n.1, points out, anti-Persian elements at the Roman court seem to have been in the ascendant at this point.

It is possible that the king made his request in the summer and that Anastasius calculated that any Persian retaliation would not follow until the following spring, the normal start of the campaigning season (Lee 1993a, 91–2); in the end, however, Kavadh defied expectations and crossed the frontier on 22 August (Ps.-Josh. 47, cf. Greatrex 1998, 79). Anastasius had meanwhile despatched Rufinus with some money for Kavadh, which he intended to hand over, provided that the king had not crossed the frontier; but when he heard of the invasion, Rufinus proceeded without the gold and was kept as a hostage by Kavadh. See Ps.-Josh. 50, 54.

Procopius here uses Anastasius' official title, αὐτοκράτωρ (*autokratôr*) rather than βασιλεύς (*basileus*, king), although at 1.1 and 3.8 he referred to Justinian and Zeno, respectively, as *basileus*. See i.1.1n. It is likely that he prefers the formal title to *basileus* in this context because he has just referred to the Hephthalite ruler as king. Cf. Börm 2007, 102.

7.1 ὁ δὲ κοινολογησάμενος τῶν ἐπιτηδείων τισίν, '(Anastasius) consulted with some of his courtiers', cf. the insertion in Polyb. 8.7.3, καὶ τοῖς μὲν ἐπιτηδείοις πρὸς τὴν ἀνάβασιν ... ἐκοινολογεῖτο, referring to Claudius Marcellus' explanation to (rather than consultation with) the appropriate soldiers (the ἐπιτηδείοι, *epitēdeioi* in this context) of his plans to scale the walls of Syracuse in 212 B.C. Walbank ii, 113, notes that this phrase is an insertion into Polybius' text.

7.3 διὸ (δι' οὗ) δὴ Καβάδης ἐξ αἰτίας οὐδεμιᾶς ἔγνω ἐπὶ Ῥωμαίους στρατεύεσθαι, 'And so Kavadh decided, without reason, to make war on the Romans.' Rubin, *PvK*, 363.53, unnecessarily sees an echo of Hdt. i.1

in the reference to an αἰτία (*aitia*, 'cause'). The phrase (or its equivalent, ἅπ' οὐδεμιᾶς αἰτίας) is rather a way of saying 'for no good reason', i.e. without justification: Procopius therefore often applies it to treacherous barbarians, e.g. at iii.5.25 or vi.14.27, or to criticise Justinian (*Anecd.* 6.26, 8.29, cf. Evagr. *HE* iv.30, p.512.21–2). It is not to be found in classical historians, perhaps more interested in causation than Procopius, cf. (e.g.) Averil Cameron 1985, 145, 236, on this aspect; it is very frequent, however, in Joh. Cantac., e.g. at i.55 (vol.1, p.282.9). Procopius is at any rate overtly critical of the king's unprovoked aggression and thus implicitly excuses the unpreparedness of the Roman defences.

Altheim and Stiehl 1954, 33, 37, cf. *idem* 1957, 39, grossly misinterpret this passage, taking it as referring to a discussion between Kavadh (rather than Anastasius) and his advisers and inserting an ἄλλης after οὐδεμιᾶς, which would thus make the financial motive the sole cause of war.

7.3 αὐτάγγελος, 'without prior warning', lit. 'self-announcing'. Procopius means that Kavadh arrived in Armenia before any messenger could bring word of his advance: the king was thus his own messenger. In Procopius' usage it has the overtone of surprise, in particular of an attack in contravention of an agreement, as at *Aed.* ii.10.1, cf. *Wars* viii.29.10, although at vii.18.27 it refers to a Roman army.

7.3 ἐξ ἐπιδρομῆς, 'without notice' or 'suddenly', here 'in a lightning campaign'. An ἐπιδρομή (*epidromē*) is an incursion, an overrunning, but here, associated with the participle ληισάμενος ('having plundered'), the expression should be interpreted rather as 'suddenly', cf. Hdt. i.6.3, several instances in Dio and Hesychius, *Lexicon*, E3726; similarly at Proc. i.17.38.

7.3 ἐκ τοῦ αἰφνιδίου, 'suddenly', a common expression of Procopius, used 57 times according to *TLG*. In Dio (e.g. 38.2.4, 49.12.1) it is used more literally to mean 'suddenness' (τὸ αἰφνίδιον, *to aiphnidion*, being a substantive adjective, Smyth §1023), whereas in Procopius it has become adverbial. It is often used thus among the later historians Nicephorus Gregoras, e.g. 25.19 (vol.3, p.44.19) and John Cantacuzenus.

Procopius exaggerates the unexpectedness of Kavadh's incursion. Persian preparations had been known to the Romans, Ps.-Josh. 50, cf. Lee 1993a, 115, PJT 53 n.255. By merely mentioning Armenia (rather than reporting the fall of Theodosiopolis, cf. Ps.-Josh. 48, Mal. 16.9 with Greatrex 1998, 79–80) and omitting the surrender of Martyropolis (recounted at *Aed.* iii.2.4–8, proof that Procopius has chosen to be selec-

tive here) he further emphasises the suddenness of Kavadh's arrival at Amida. See also Greatrex 1998, 83.

7.3 ἥς δὴ χειμῶνος ὥρᾳ ἐς πολιορκίαν καθίστατο, 'to which (Amida), although it was winter, he laid siege'. Kavadh arrived before Amida on 5 October 502, Ps.-Josh. 50, hence in autumn rather than winter. The Persians were normally loath to undertake siege operations so late in the campaigning year: apart from the dearth of supplies that could then be foraged, their equipment was ill suited to withstand the colder weather, as PZ vii.3c explicitly notes. See Greatrex 1998, 83 and n.33, 86, Meier 2009, 197, cf. Amm. Marc. 19.9.1.

There are echoes of Thuc. i.44.2 in this whole section. Thucydides there describes Athenian preparations for the Peloponnesian war – ἐς πόλεμον καθιστῶνται – and uses the phrase συγκροῦν ὅτι μάλιστα (cf. Proc. i.7.2 with Duwe 1885, 23) to refer to the Athenians seeking to stir up trouble between Corinth and her allies.

7.4 Ἀμιδηνοὶ δὲ στρατιωτῶν μὲν ... οὐ παρόντων σφίσι, 'The people of Amida had no soldiers present to aid them', σφίσι being a dative of advantage, Smyth §1481. It is likely that Procopius is exaggerating the perilous position of the Amidenes and thus underlining just how unexpected (παρὰ δόξαν, *para doxan* – contrary to expectation, cf. i.2–6g and Polyb. 1.1.4) their resistance was. Ps.-Josh. 50, 53 describes sophisticated artillery used by the defenders, which Trombley and Watt 2000, 54 n.260, rightly take as proof that at least some soldiers were present, cf. Greatrex 2007c, 93 and n.28 (retracting Greatrex 1998, 84) and PZ vii.6f (a reference to a soldier named John). No military commander, on the other hand, is mentioned in Procopius or any other source.

7.4 καὶ ἄλλως δὲ ἀπαράσκευοι παντάπασιν ὄντες, 'and were in other respects totally unprepared'. John of Ephesus, *Lives*, PO 19 (1925), 218–19, reports that monks from at least one nearby monastery had taken shelter within the city, however, cf. Greatrex 1998, 83. Procopius continues to stress the unpreparedness of the defenders.

7.4 ὁμῶς τοῖς πολεμίοις ὡς ἥκιστα προσχωρεῖν ἤθελον, 'Nonetheless, they were certainly not willing to defect to the enemy.' προσχωρέω has the sense of defecting or of going over to, cf. *LSJ*, 1532 (rather than 'yield' or 'surrender'), Proc. i.12.5, iv.5.2. The term is appropriate here in light of the

defection of Constantine, the commander at Theodosiopolis, who took up a command in Kavadh's army, or that of Theodore, the satrap at Martyropolis. On the former see Greatrex 1998, 79–81, Begass 2018, 110, on the latter Greatrex 1998, 81. Both are now discussed in detail in Nechaeva 2020.

7.4 παρὰ δόξαν ἀντεῖχον, 'they withstood ... with unexpected determination', an expression unique to Procopius, employed on several occasions, ii.22.23, ii.30.16, v.10.26, vi.20.13.

7.5–11 The Intervention of the Holy Man Jacob

Jacob is known only from Procopius' account; he is not to be identified with Jacob the Recluse, a fifth-century holy man (Fiey, *SS*, no.227) who founded a monastery at Ṣalaḥ in the Ṭur 'Abdin. See Bell and Mango 1982, 43, 91 n.115; Delcogliano 2006, 333–4, follows Bell's mistaken identification. His feast day is placed on 6 August in the *AASS*, vol.36, Aug. ii, 161–2 (the same day as his approximate contemporary, Pope Hormisdas). Although John of Ephesus came from this very region and was born around this time, he does not refer to any holy man of this name. Cf. Palmer 1990, 53, putting this episode in a wider context. The miracle story is clearly Christian, even if Procopius seeks to give the impression of being a disinterested observer, cf. Averil Cameron 1985, 29, Candau Morón 1996, 161–2, Börm 2007, 190. Börm 2007, 252 n.5, suggests a local Syriac source for the episode.

7.5 Ἦν δὲ τις ἐν Σύροις ἀνὴρ δίκαιος, 'There was among the Syrians a just man.' The formula ἦν δὲ τις (*ēn de tis*, 'there was') goes back to Homer for introducing a new character, often followed by a relative clause (as here): see Hainsworth 1993, 186, on *Il*.10.314. Cf. Polyb. 3.98.2, who likewise indicates the ethnicity of the individual involved, Abilyx, a Spaniard, with Walbank i, 432, and elsewhere in Procopius (e.g. at i.6.3).

The reference to Syrians is loose. In the Hellenistic period the Syrians had come to be associated with the Aramaeans who formed the majority of the population in the broad region of Syria (including Upper Mesopotamia). Thus the term came to include not just the inhabitants of one of the two Roman provinces of Syria, well to the west of the environs of Amida, but also the wider community of Syriac-speakers, as here. See Dillemann 1962, 86–7, Millar 2006, 385–7 with Thdr̄t. *Quaestiones in Iudices*, PG 80, 505–7 and *ep*.146 (ed. Azéma, vol.3, p.190).

The expression, ἀνὴρ δίκαιος, *anēr dikaios*, ‘a just man’, is found in both pagan and Christian authors (including the New Testament). Procopius likewise applies it both to holy men, such as Baradotus (ii.13.13), and to secular figures, such as Theodosius I (iii.1.2) and the quaestor Proculus (i.11.11), cf. Dahn 1865, 182.

7.5 ὥ τὰ ἐς τὸ θεῖον ἐς τὸ ἀκριβὲς ἡσκητο, ‘who was far advanced in religious knowledge and practice’, or, more literally, ‘by whom matters relating to the divine were practised with precision’, a pluperfect passive periphrastic with dative of agent, cf. Smyth §§1488, 1490. Procopius uses non-specific words such as τὸ θεῖον (the divine) to avoid referring directly to Christianity, holy men or monks, cf. iv.26.17 (almost the same phrase, referring to monks), iv.11.6; the circumlocutions seem awkward, given their presence in a specifically Christian episode. See further Averil Cameron 1985, 34–5.

7.5 Ἐνδιήλων, ‘Endielon’, described as one day’s journey from Amida, perhaps to be identified with the Agēl (Ingilene) of Ps.-Josh. 50, cf. Dillemann 1962, 87 n.1. The variant in MS G Βενδῖλων (Bendilōn) is less plausible. According to Markwart 1930, 107 n.2, the form Ἐνδιήλων arises from a correction of Ἐνδῆλων, which he associates with Georg. Cypr. 929, a reference to κάστρον Σπήλαιον Ὁδῆλον (*kastron Spēlaion Hodēlon*). See further Honigsmann 1935, 36 and n.3. Thierry 1993, 195–6, wrongly places Jacob’s enclosure at the site of a monastery at Seert, over 100 km east of Amida (in Persian territory), cf. Greatrex 1998, 87 n.43.

7.6 δρυφάκτοις, ‘a fence’ or ‘latticed partitions’, a word used only here by Procopius, but to be found in Aristophanes, e.g. *Vesp.* 386, 552, 830, referring to the railings of the courts in Athens, cf. Hesychius, *Lexicon*, Δ2445. Procopius’ contemporary John the Lydian uses it in the sense of ‘wooden’ at *De Mag.* i.7.1, iii.35.2: see vol.2, 166 n.133. Theodoret of Cyrrhus appears to describe something like this shelter at *Questions on the Octateuch*, Exodus 60.4, p.320.99, as at *Hist. Phil.* 9.2 (where the word may refer, however, to a balcony projecting from a tomb, cf. Canivet and Leroy-Molinghen, vol.1, 412 n.4). In the latter passage, the holy man Peter’s way of life is described in terms very similar to those used of Jacob by Procopius: the same verb is used for enclosing him (καθείρω/καθείργνυμι), and the limited nature of their diets is stressed.

7.8 πᾶσι δὲ ἀκίνητοι αἱ χεῖρες γεγонуῖαι τὰ τόξα ἐνεργεῖν οὐδαμῇ εἶχον, ‘But all their hands were fixed and could not work their bows.’ The freezing of the hands of a person or group wishing to attack a holy man is a common motif in Christian literature, as Maenchen-Helfen 1973, 240 and n.250 remarks. John Moschus, *Pratum Spirituale*, ch.131, PG 87, 2996D–2997A, tells of a pagan Arab frozen by a holy man near Clysma for two days, cf. John of Ephesus, *Lives*, PO 17 (1923), 20–1, where Z’ura freezes a Hun about to strike him, *V. Sym. Styl.* 27 (p.64/229), where the soldier Julian’s hand freezes when he tries to shoot at Symeon the Stylite. In Soz. *HE* vii.26.8 a holy man and his companions are protected from Huns by becoming invisible.

Little is known of the arms of the Hephthalites. Ps.-Josh. 62 refers to use of a *pruna*, meaning a thong, or perhaps a lasso: see Payne Smith 1903, 458 with PJT 81 n.387, noting other possible readings. PZ vii.3a refers to bows and swords. Gumilev 1967, esp.94, argues implausibly that the Hephthalites were a mountain people who campaigned on foot, wielding axes and clubs; Altheim 1960, 18, 269, sees them rather as cavalry but notes little use of bows, cf. i.3.9n.

7.9 αὐτόπτης γενέσθαι, ‘to see for himself’ or, more literally, ‘to become an eye-witness’, more commonly used of the historian himself (as at vi.15.8, *Anecd.* 18.7), but Dio 61.14.2 refers to Nero’s desire to behold his mother’s body in person. On the other hand, Damascius, *Phil. Hist.*, frg.21, describes approvingly the philosopher Isidore’s desire to travel and to witness marvels for himself (αὐτόπτης, *autoptēs*). Kallenberg 1916a, 247, notes that the second reference to Kavadh in this sentence, just after these words, is probably a later insertion, since it is clearly unnecessary.

7.9 ἐν θάμβει μεγάλῳ, ‘with great wonder’, an expression otherwise found only in (overtly) Christian writers, e.g. Ignat. Diac. *ep.* 64.28. Cf. Palmer 1990, 53, citing the *Life of Simeon*, ch.19 (p.xlii) on the awe inspired by a holy man on the frontier in the early fifth century, supposedly deterring Persian raids.

7.10 νεανιευσάμενος, ‘rashly promised’, literally ‘having acted like a hot-headed youth, wilfully’, so *LSJ*, 1163, usually in a negative sense, cf. i.5.26, viii.13.25, but sometimes with positive connotations, as at i.24.33 (perhaps), viii.8.6. Kavadh’s undertaking is expressed in almost the same terms as that made by the Persian king Pacurius at 5.31.

7.11 ταῦτα δὲ ὥδε πη ἔσχε, ‘This is how it was’ or ‘these things occurred thus’, a common formulation of Procopius at the end of such an anecdote or digression (e.g. at iv.13.29, v.7.8). The penultimate word, which normally includes an iota subscript, i.e. πη, means ‘in some way’ (*LSJ*, 1399), overlapping therefore with ὥδε (‘thus’), cf. already *Il.* 24.373, οὕτως πη. Eusebius employs a similar idiom (adding πρὸς λέξιν, ‘literally’, *Praep. Evang.* 14.17.10) before citing a source, cf. (Ps.)-Didymus Caecus, *De Trinitate*, PG 39, 780B, where the verb ἔχω (‘I have’) makes more sense (referring to the author quoted). In Procopius’ formulation it appears that ταῦτα (these things) is the subject of the verb rather than the object, even if the matter remains ambiguous; although he mentions no source for the story, it is just possible that he is alluding to an earlier (unspecified) account here.

7.12–32 The Siege and Capture of Amida (October 502–January 503)

The siege of Amida began on 5 October and ended on 12 January after a fierce struggle (fig. 5). As noted above (i.7–9g), the siege is described in great detail by PZ vii.3–4, while Ps.-Josh. 50–3 adds some important elements. Procopius highlights the more spectacular episodes without any chronological precision, as throughout his introductory chapters. The vocabulary for the prosecution of the siege is indebted to Thucydides, in particular to the siege of Plataea (ii.75–8), but this does not call his accuracy into question, since many details are corroborated by PZ. Sieges were, of course, a staple of classical and classicising historians, which could be fashioned into vivid set-pieces. That of Amida is the first in the *Wars* and incorporates various typical motifs of the genre, setting the scene for further sieges throughout the work, cf. Whately 2016, 72–5. See Greatrex 1998, 85 and n.38, *idem* 2010, 244, Petersen 2013, 126–9, 487 and cf. ii.26.24n. Gregory 1997, ii, 59–65, offers an overview of the site, cf. Gabriel 1940.

7.12 κριὸν τὴν μηχανήν, ‘the machine (called) the ram’, i.e. a battering-ram. Probably one ram, rather than several (*contra* Dewing–Kaldellis, Veh). PZ vii.3c uses the same term, cf. Greatrex 2010, 229. On the use of battering-rams in general, see Petersen 2013, 283–6. Amm. Marc. 20.11.11 describes the Roman re-use of a century-old Persian ram at the siege of Bezabde in 360.

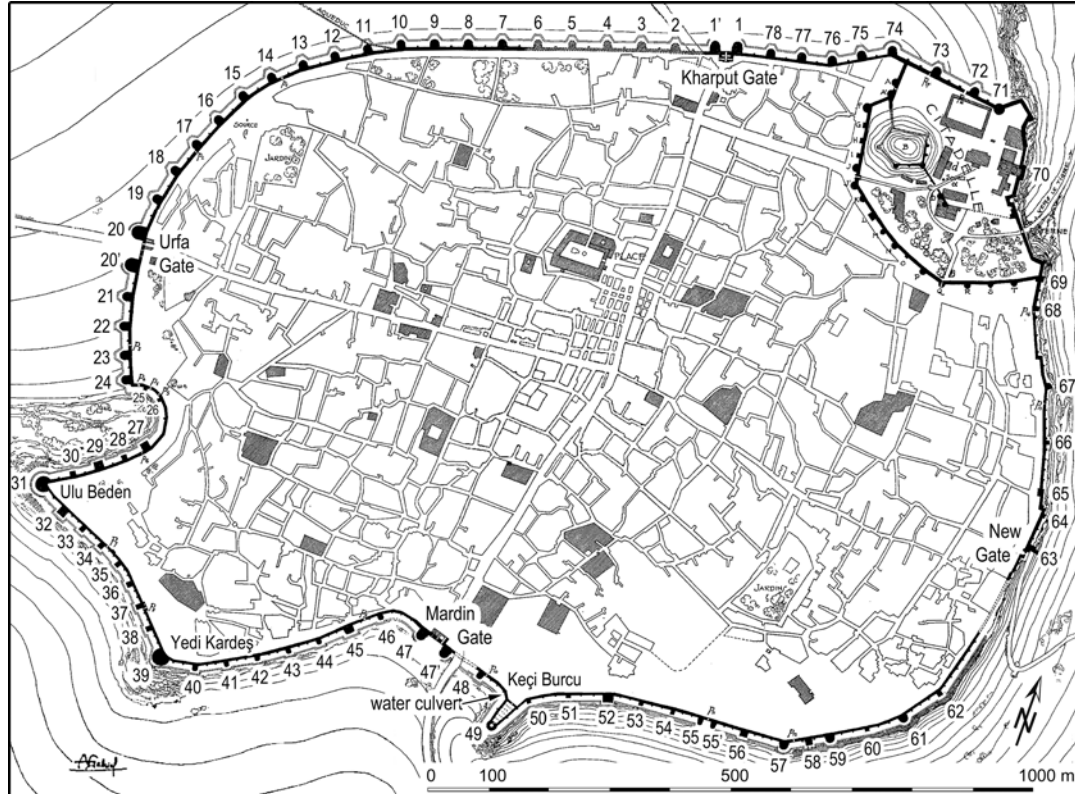


Figure 5 Amida

7.12 πανταχόσε τοῦ περιβόλου, ‘every part of the circuit wall’. The περίβολος (*peribolos*) is the wall that surrounds the city, cf. e.g. Thuc. i.89.3, 93.2, with Hornblower, *CT*, i, 136, 138. Proc. *Aed.* ii.1.16–27 describes the strengthening of the *peribolos* of Dara; some cities, among them Amida, were protected by a further layer of defence, the *proteichisma*, ‘outwork’. See Gregory 1997, i, 132, 174–5, ii, 62 (on Amida), iii, C.1–4 (plans), cf. Proc. *Aed.* ii.3.27, mentioning the *proteichisma* that was restored by Justinian, with Gabriel 1940, 161–2. It seems likely therefore that the *peribolos* should refer here to this outer wall, which lay 5–12m beyond the main wall and was protected by a ditch; see Gabriel 1940, 97–9, on this ‘fausse-braie’ with the figures at 101, 106.

7.12 καὶ Ἀμιδηνοὶ μὲν τὴν ἐμβολὴν αἰεὶ δοκοῖς τισὶν ἐγκαρσῖαις ἀνέστελλον, ‘The people of Amida each time repelled the attack with transverse beams.’ Procopius uses the terminology of Thuc. ii.76.4, where the defenders’ tactics are more precisely described: they suspended heavy beams on chains from poles that projected from the walls. When the ram approached, they let the beam fall, thus breaking off the head of the ram (referred to as an ἐμβολή [*embolē*]). PZ vii.3c describes a similar technique, whereby the defenders blunted the force of the rams by suspending bundles of reeds. Procopius could as easily be describing this as the more vigorous measures taken by the Plataeans, for the term *embolē* can refer both to the physical object (so Dewing and García Romero), the tip of the ram, or (as we have translated it, cf. Veh) the act of battering. See Greatrex 2010, 230 n.9; Petersen 2013, 126 n.93, suggests that Procopius may have misunderstood something in the source he shared with PZ and proposes a further alternative, viz. that the beams were vertical (rather than horizontal), but at an angle to the walls, with the lower part further away, thus absorbing the shock of the blows.

Amm. Marc. 20.11.15 describes the use of ropes that were lowered to entangle the Roman ram at Bezabde in 360 (cf. den Boeft et al. 1987, 268–9); see also Veget. iv.23, *Peri Strat.* 13.121–35, Maur. *Strat.* x.3.12–16 (344), for theoretical discussions of how to deal with rams. In general see Greatrex 1998, 85 and n.39, Lenski 2007, 223, Petersen 2013, 289–90.

7.13 οὕτως ἀσφαλῶς ἡ οἰκοδομία τοῖς δειμαμένοις τὸ παλαιὸν εἴργαστο, ‘so securely had the edifice been fashioned long ago by its builders’. Not so long ago, in fact: the city’s defences were built during the reign of Constantius II, then expanded and strengthened by Valens in

the wake of the city's capture in 359. See Gabriel 1940, 175–82, Dillemann 1962, 283, Greatrex 1998, 101 n.82, Lenski 2007, 220.

7.14 λόφον τινά χειροποίητον, ‘an artificial hill’, a technique already used by the Persians in the third century to capture Dura Europus: see Leriche 1993, 86 with 97 fig.11. At ii.26.23–6 Procopius refers to such a hill or ramp as an *agesta*, from the Latin *agger* (‘mound’), cf. Amm. Marc. 20.11.20 (an *aggestus*); see also *Aed.* ii.1.12. On Persian expertise in siege warfare generally see Börm 2007, 169–70, Petersen 2013, 128, 364–5, Farrokh 2017, 243–72.

7.14 λάθρα ἐνθένδε τὸν χοῦν ἐκφοροῦντες, ‘secretly removing the earth from there’ and propping up the mound by pieces of wood, as PZ vii.3c relates, cf. Thuc. ii.76.2, a further indication of the presence of soldiers with training in siege warfare. The defenders needed to proceed with caution to avoid their digging being noticed by the Persians, as happened at Edessa in 543, ii.27.2, cf. Lenski 2007, 234. Mines and counter-mines were also used at Dura: see Leriche 1993, 85–6, James 2011, cf. Petersen 2013, 128–9, drawing attention to the role of craftsmen among the defenders (subsequently deported to Persia, PZ vii.4f). Ps.-Josh. 50 states that a battering-ram was used from the ramp, which is possible. See Greatrex 1998, 86.

7.15 τοῦ δὲ ὁμίλου δρόμῳ ἐπιρρέοντος ἐμπεσῶν ὁ λόφος ἐκ τοῦ αἰφνιδίου σχεδόν τι ἅπαντας ἔκτεινε, ‘But as the crowd climbed up it at a run, the hill suddenly collapsed and killed nearly all of them.’ PZ vii.3c is again more precise: the defenders deliberately set fire to the wooden supports beneath the mound at the moment when Kavadh launched an assault on the city. The Persians used wooden boards to bridge the gap remaining between the ramp and the wall. Meanwhile, the Romans made the planks slippery by pouring oil on them and fought off the Persians until, after six hours, the fire took hold and abruptly caused the mound to collapse. PJT 55 n.262 suggest that the collapse took place in early November, not long before Kavadh sent out some forces and his Arab allies on a plundering expedition westwards (recounted by Ps.-Josh. 51); following a victory at Tell Beshme, some penetrated as far as Edessa, Ps.-Josh. 52. See further Greatrex 1998, 87–9.

7.17 πολλὰ τοὺς βαρβάρους ξὺν γέλῳτι ἀπὸ τοῦ περιβόλου ἐτώθαζον, ‘they (the defenders) greatly mocked and laughed at the barbarians from the circuit walls’. PZ vii.3c, who notes the scorn poured on the Persians

by the populace, attributes this indiscipline to the death of bishop John just previously; he goes on, vii.4a, to relate how the city leaders refused a demand from Kavadh for a small sum in exchange for withdrawing and instead demanded compensation. Procopius, as usual in the introduction, prefers the sensational to the prosaic. Such taunting was a common feature of sieges, cf. Proc. ii.27.13 with Petersen 2013, 318–19.

Among those taunting the king were prostitutes who exposed themselves to him (7.15). As Whately 2016, 74, observes, the women's exhibitionism serves several literary functions, viz. to anticipate the sack of the city (explained below), to signal the importance of morality in determining the outcome of sieges and to explain the decision of the Persians to pursue the siege; Procopius recounts similar mockery before the fall of Antioch in 540, ii.8.6, cf. Whately 2016, 102–3, noting the emphasis placed in both cases on the unruliness of the population. The Berber women's mockery of the Romans at Mt Aurasium likewise precedes the capture of the fort, *Wars* iv.20.26, cf. Whately 2016, 133. See also Dahn 1865, 148. Treadgold 2013, 243 and n.70, finds a later echo of this passage in Leo Diac. ii.6 (24–5), where he describes how a Cretan woman exposed herself on the walls to Nicephorus Phocas during the siege of Chandax in 961. Although there are no obvious verbal parallels, in both cases the woman (or women) target(s) the ruler in particular, and both cities do fall.

Procopius (and PZ) appear to have omitted another attempt to capture the city, for Ps.-Josh. 53 recounts further siege-works erected by Kavadh, which were thwarted by the defenders' construction of a stone-throwing *onager* or scorpion, cf. Greatrex 1998, 89, Petersen 2013, 127, 419–20. According to Ps.-Josh. 53, 50,000 Persians perished in the various attempts to capture the city.

7.19 **ξυμβαλεῖν ἰσχυριζόμενοι τῷ γεγονότι**, 'insisting that they inferred from what had happened'. **ξυμβαλεῖν** (*xymbalein*) is the aorist infinitive of **ξυμβάλλω** (*syμβállō*), here, as often in Procopius (cf. 8.17), meaning 'to infer'. The perfect participle **γεγονότι** (*gegonoti*) is a dative of cause, Smyth §1517. In Herodotus the king usually seeks the advice of the magi; they do not take the initiative. See e.g. Hdt. vii.37.3 for the magi interpreting events; cf. Börm 2007, 189–90. Whether Procopius had access to a Persian source here, as PJT 55 n.263 suggest, is doubtful: more likely it is Herodotean colouring, linked to the morality tale of the hybris of the defenders (cf. i.7–9g). According to *Chr. Seert* ii.12, PO 7 (1911), 124 (=

Hoyland, *HKP*, 146), Kavadh was particularly versed in the affairs of the magi.

7.19 οὐκ ἐς μακράν, ‘soon’ or ‘not long (afterwards)’, an expression much favoured by Dio, e.g. 42.3.4, Procopius, and then Agathias, e.g. v.3.8.

7.20 ἄγχιστα τῶν πύργων τινὸς ἐκβολὴν ὑπονόμου παλαιοῦ εἶδεν, ‘(a Persian) saw near the towers the exit of an old tunnel’. Procopius maintains the Thucydidean tone: at ii.76.2 Thucydides uses the term ὑπόνομος (*hyponomos*, ‘tunnel’) for the passage dug by the Plataeans to undermine the besiegers’ mound. PZ vii.4a identifies the Persian as a certain Kanarak the Lamē and puts the tower(s), referred to as the Tripyrgion (‘three towers’) on the western side of the city; he adds that Kanarak was alerted to this passage by the sorties of a certain city resident called ‘the Qutriga’. See Greatrex et al. 2011, 238 nn.55–6 on these names. The location of the tunnel is uncertain, although Hof 2016, 402–3 identifies it with water culverts by a triangular tower (no.49, modern Keçi Burcu, the ‘goat tower’) just east of the Mardin gate on the south side of the city, where water culverts have been uncovered, cf. eadem 2010, 244–5. See also PZT, 237 n.53 and fig. 5, p. 107. Assénat and Pérez 2017, 67–8, unaware of Hof’s work, associate the Tripyrgion with the *castellum divisorium* on the northwest side of the city.

7.22 τὸν πύργον, ὃς δὴ τοῦ ὑπονόμου ἀγχοτάτω ἐτύγγανεν ὦν, φυλάσσειν τῶν Χριστιανῶν οἱ σωφρονέστατοι ἔλαχον, οὗσπερ καλεῖν μοναχοὺς νενομίκασι, ‘The guarding of the tower which was nearest to the tunnel had fallen to the lot of those of the Christians who are the most strict, whom they call monks.’ Procopius writes as though his readers were unfamiliar with monks, unlike at *Aed.* v.8.4: here, in the *Wars*, he seeks to maintain the classicising façade, cf. Averil Cameron 1985, 95, 115, 128–9 and p. 9 above. The monks belonged to the monastery of John of the Urtāyē, Beth Urtāyē being a region north of Amida; their abbot was a Persian, which led to rumours of a betrayal of the city. See Ps.-Josh. 53, PZ vii.4a with Greatrex 1998, 91 n.52, PZT, 238 n.54, Nechaeva 2020, 52 n.91. It was not unusual for monks to take part in the defence of a city: see PJT 61 n.293.

7.22 ἑορτὴν τινα, ‘a festival’, the identity of which is uncertain; the night was that of Friday 10 January 503, Ps.-Josh. 53, cf. Greatrex 1998, 91 n.53.

7.23 ἐπεὶ τε ἡ νύξ ἐπεγένετο, ‘When night fell’, cf. Thuc. iv.25.3, as Duwe 1885, 23, notes, an echo found also (e.g.) at vi.2.24.

7.23 ὕπνον τινὰ ἡδύν τε καὶ πρᾶον ἐκάθευδον, ‘(they) were sleeping a sweet and peaceful sleep’, an echo of a fragment of the play *Kitharistēs* (*The Lyre Player*) of the playwright Menander, ἡδύν δὲ καὶ πρᾶόν τινα ὕπνον καθεύδειν, ‘(I thought) their sleep (i.e. of the wealthy) was sweet and gentle’, tr. Arnott, vol.2, 135 (frg.1). As Arnott notes *ad loc.*, the extract is cited by both Plutarch, *De tranquillitate animi*, 466b (174–5) and by Stobaeus, *Ecl.* 4.34.52; a papyrus of the extract may have been used as a school exercise. Procopius’ allusion probably reflects the popular nature of the citation rather than implying that the ease of the monks’ life was comparable to that of the rich, although Downey 1949, 96, sees criticism in the portrayal of the monks’ carelessness; cf. ii.27.19 for another reference to ‘sweet sleep’, likewise in the context of a siege assault; *contra*, Dahn 1865, 183 n.4. Lenski 2007, 229, evokes the exhaustion that will have afflicted the defenders. Whately 2016, 74, finds parallels with the Trojan war, in which the Greeks were able to take advantage of the Trojans’ unpreparedness in the wake of the celebrations surrounding the bringing of the wooden horse into the city. The link seems tenuous, though it is worth noting that Ammianus clearly alludes to the Trojan war in his account of the siege of Amida of 359, cf. Kelly 2008, 59–61.

7.26 καὶ τῶν Ἀμιδηνῶν οἱ ἐν πύργῳ τῷ ἐχομένῳ ἐφύλασσον, ‘The citizens of Amida on guard in the next tower.’ PZ vii.4b–d offers a vivid picture of the prolonged desperate resistance of the defenders, who contained the Persians within a limited area for two days: Procopius is here telescoping events, cf. PJT 61 n.295.

7.27 καὶ τοῦ ἀπεῶσθαι τὸν κίνδυνον οὐ μακρὰν που ἐγένοντο, ‘and they came very near to beating off the danger’. Procopius employs the same expression at vii.38.16 and viii.11.44, cf. Dio 77.8.5 (for warding off a danger). This middle aorist infinitive form of ἀπωθέω, *apōtheō*, ‘I push back’, is found first at Thuc. ii.39.3.

7.28 ἀλλὰ Καβάδης αὐτὸς τὸν ἀκινάκην σπασάμενος καὶ αὐτῷ αἰεὶ δεδισσόμενος ἐς τὰς κλίμακας ὁρμῶν οὐκ ἀνίει τοὺς Πέρσας, θάνατός τε ἦν ἡ ζημία τοῖς ἐνθένδε ἀναστρέφειν τολμῶσι. ‘But Kavadh himself drew his sabre, rushed to the ladders, and kept terri-

fying the Persians with it; and death was the punishment for those who dared to retreat from there.’ The ἀκινάκης (*akinakēs*, sabre) adds colour, since the word itself is Persian (*LSJ*, 50), cf. Hdt. iii.118.2, where the Persian Intaphernes likewise draws his sabre (at the Persian court); Procopius uses it more generally, however, e.g. at ii.11.9, for a Roman of Antioch. See Braun 1894, 37. Holcroft 1653, 8, uses the evocative word ‘scimitar’ here.

The present participle δεδισσόμενος is rare, found only in Procopius and Jos. *B.J.* 4.224; in the present case it refers to the act of intimidating, cf. v.6.1, a similar context. The verb δειδίσσομαι (*deidissomai*, later δεδίσσομαι, *dedissomai*) can mean ‘scare’ or ‘fear’: see ii.26.16n, cf. *BDAG*, 458. Procopius uses it in the latter sense at *Aed.* ii.5.1.

PZ vii.4c confirms Kavadh’s presence at the front and the threats issued. Cf. Hdt. vii.212.1, viii.86–9; Procopius offers a similar picture of a hectoring Khusro menacing his forces at Edessa in 543, ii.27.38. Whitby 1994, 240, considers the morale-boosting effect such royal interventions could have, cf. Whately 2016, 72–3. See PZT 239 n.60, cf. Lenski 2007, 226, on the dangers of the assault phase (with Amm. Marc. 20.11.12).

7.29 κατὰ κράτος ἡ πόλις ἦλω ὀγδοηκοστῇ ἀπὸ τῆς πολιορκίας ἡμέρᾱ, ‘The city was taken by storm on the eightieth day from the beginning of the siege.’ *Chr. Ede.* 80 (AG 814) puts the siege’s length at 97 days, cf. Elias Nis. a.814, confirmed by the dates in Ps.-Josh. 50, 54 (5 October to 10 January, when the first tower was taken); Lenski 2007, 224 n.22, reckons the length at 99 days, since it took a further day and a half, i.e. until 12 January, for the Persians to gain control fully. *Chr.* 724, a.814 (149.27/115.29) puts the fall on 24 December, cf. Marc. *com.* a.502, which is closer to Procopius’ 80 days. See Greatrex 1998, 92 n.57.

7.30 φόνος τε Ἀμιδηνῶν πολὺς ἐγγέγονει, ‘There was a great slaughter of the Amidenes.’ John of Ephesus, *Lives*, PO 19 (1925), 219–20, provides a vivid account of the massacre, obtained from an eye-witness. PZ vii.4d claims that an Albanian prince (from the Caucasus) secured protection for those who had sought refuge in the church of the Forty Martyrs; the slaughter of the inhabitants, according to his account, lasted three days. The Syriac sources claim that 80,000 people died, Ps.-Josh. 54, PZ vii.4e, cf. Greatrex 1998, 93 n.59, assessing the plausibility of the figure, with PZT 240 n.65. Börm 2007, 249, notes other instances of Persian massacres in Procopius.

7.30 τῶν τις Ἀμιδηνῶν γέρων τε καὶ ἱερεὺς, ‘an old man from among the Amidenes, a priest’. The term ἱερεὺς, *hiereus*, is used with various senses in Procopius: it can refer to pagan priests (i.19.34, i.25.10), Christian priests (i.25.31, ii.2.1) or Christian bishops (i.26.8, ii.20.2), a sub-category of the wider group of priests (iii.10.18). Since we know that the bishop of Amida had died before the siege (i.7.17n), it must here refer to a (Christian) priest. The exchange between king and priest is not reported by any other source; PZ vii.4e instead recounts Kavadh’s claim that it was Christ himself, an image of whom he subsequently remarked in a church in Amida, who bade him pursue the siege, cf. *Chr. Seert* ii.17, PO 7 (1911), 132–3 (= Hoyland, *HKP*, 148), Debié 2003, 619–21, Jackson Bonner 2021. It is worth noting Kavadh’s openness to the priest’s petition, impressed by his repartie, cf. van Nuffelen 2010, 236; in book ii, Khusro is portrayed as far less receptive to pleas from churchmen.

Theoph. 145.10–12 is the only source to report that Kavadh entered the city upon an elephant, a detail that could go back to a contemporary source, cf. Greatrex 1998, 93.

7.31 θυμῷ ἔτι ἐχόμενος, ‘still gripped by anger’, an expression not found in other authors, although Braun 1894, 32, suggests that it may be based on Hdt. iii.50.3, where a variant reading has περὶ θυμῷ ἐχόμενος, *perithumō ekhomenos*, describing the tyrant Periander of Corinth in much the same terms; this is the reading retained by Medaglia in Asheri 1997. The idiom is a favourite of Procopius frequently with the adjective πολλῷ, *pollō* (‘much’), cf. e.g. i.4.12; it is often used for barbarians, such as Khusro (i.23.27), but it is applied even to Belisarius himself (vi.8.12) when faced with insubordination. PZ vii.4f reports that Kavadh’s soldiers insisted nonetheless that one-tenth of the population be killed to avenge deaths in their own ranks.

7.32 ἀλλὰ τὰ τε χρήματα λήιζεσθαι Πέρσας ἐκέλευε καὶ τοὺς περιόντας ἐν ἀνδραπόδων ποιεῖσθαι λόγῳ, καὶ αὐτῷ ἐξελεῖσθαι ἅπαντας αὐτῶν τοὺς δοκίμους ἐπέστειλεν, ‘but (Kavadh) told the Persians to plunder the riches and make slaves of the survivors, and to choose out for himself all those of high rank’. Confirmed by PZ vii.4f, who relates that the king also humiliated the leading councillors who had earlier demanded compensation from him; the plundered goods were shipped down the Tigris to Persia. On the expression for enslavement see ii.5.26n.

7.33 Ὀλίγω δὲ ὕστερον χιλίους ἐπὶ τῇ φυλακῇ ἐνταῦθα λιπὼν ἄρχοντά τε αὐτοῖς ἐπιστήσας Γλώνην, ‘A little later, after leaving a thousand men to garrison the place, and putting Glones in charge.’ PZ vii.4f states that Kavadh spent the rest of the winter in Amida and left Aglon (i.e. Glones) in charge with 3000 men; he also gives the name of two councillors left in charge of the remaining populace. See Börm 2007, 161, on the garrison, suggesting that the thousand men comprised one unit of the Persian army, a *gund*; see also *PLRE* ii, Glones. Pourshariati 2008, 103 n.501, believes him to have been a *spāhbad*, i.e. a general, and associates him with the Mihrān family. Justi 1895, 116, finds other instances of the name, e.g. at Theoph. 175.17 (for a Hunnic leader c.528); an Eglōnos is also attested in 512 on a church mosaic at Hazor-Ashdod, cf. Ovadiah and Ovadiah 1987, 67 no.93.

7.34 χρόνου γὰρ ὀλίγου εἰς τὰ οἰκεῖα ξύμπαντας ἀφῆκεν ἰέναι, τῷ δὲ λόγῳ ἀπέδρασαν αὐτὸν. ‘For in a short time he allowed them all to go home, though the official version was that they had escaped from him.’ Procopius evokes Thuc. i.128.5 (cf. Braun 1885, 174–5), where Pausanias is said (in the same terms) to have permitted the return of Persian prisoners, cf. Jos. *A.J.* 14.104; PZ vii.5e alludes briefly to the return of exiles. Procopius is thus generous here in his portrayal of Kavadh, cf. Börm 2007, 252, 105, 109 with Schindel 2004a, 492 and n.2182, Greatrex 2014b, 94–5. Procopius’ reference in the first part of the sentence to Kavadh’s *philanthrōpia* (‘humanity’) reflects an aspect of Sasanian kingship, cf. Börm 2007, 285, who cites *De sci. pol. dial.* iv.68 (12/140), an anecdote concerning Peroz’s *philanthrōpia*. See further Azarnouche and Petitjean, forthcoming, comm. *ad* 26.5A, a passage of the Denkard that stresses the importance of good conduct towards the civilian population.

Despite Procopius’ claim, the Iranian tradition preserves a record of a new city founded (or refounded) with the deportees of Amida, Veh-az-Amid-Kawād (‘Fairer than Amida is [the city] of Kavadh’, also known as Rām Kavādh), in south-east Khuzistan, 1.5 km north-west of modern Behbahān, so Miri 2012, 81. Coins were minted there already in 505/6. See Tabari 888–9/137–8, Luther 1997, 183–4, Morony 2004, 171–2, Schindel 2004a, 485 n.2124, Börm 2007, 171–2, Gyselen 2008b, 288–9, Gyselen 2010b, 138, Pourshariati 2010a, 209. Others, as PZ xii.71 reports, were sold to Huns and ended up in the Caucasus, from where a few returned subsequently to Amida; see PZT 452 n.223. In general see Greatrex 1998, 93, Kettenhoffen 1996, 300–1 (noting other deportations from this campaign).

7.35 φόρους τε γὰρ τοὺς ἐπετείους ἐς ἔτη ἑπτὰ ξύμπαντας ἀφῆκε τῇ πόλει, ‘for he remitted the city of all its yearly taxes for seven years’. PZ vii.5e gives the same figure, likewise emphasising Anastasius’ generosity to the city. Ps.-Josh. more plausibly reports decisions on a year-by-year basis, the first of which fell in December 503: see ch.66, 99 with PJT 83 n.401, 117 n.544.

8.1–5 A Catalogue of Commanders Despatched to the Front

Procopius’ list of commanders here is similar to that provided by Theophanes at 145.17–146.6; since both contain elements omitted by the other, it is likely that they each drew independently on the same source, cf. Veh 463, Greatrex 1998, 94 n.66 and *idem* 2015, 270. The order for mobilisation is *RKOR* 280.

8.1 Τότε δέ, ‘At the time of which I was speaking’, literally ‘then’. According to Ps.-Josh. 54, Kavadh released the Roman envoy Rufinus after the capture of Amida, who returned to Constantinople with the news and a demand for money. But the emperor will have been apprised already in the autumn of the invasion and siege and thus Procopius’ statement is plausible. The two praesental armies were based near Constantinople and required time to be deployed to the east, while the eastern field army no doubt needed to be mobilised at Antioch. While these forces were being assembled, detachments may already have been despatched to shore up defences, so PJT 64 n.305. Cf. Greatrex 1998, 96 n.67, Haarer 2006, 57 and i.8.6n. On other accounts of Roman operations and the competence of the commanders despatched, see i.7–9g.

8.1 ἄρχοντες δὲ ἦσαν μὲν κατὰ συμμορίαν ἐκάστων, ‘There were officers in charge of every company.’ The term συμμορία (*symmoría*, ‘company’) is unusual and untechnical; Procopius (or the copyists) inconsistently atticise(s) the word, referring elsewhere (e.g. i.15.13) to a ξυμμορία, *xymmoria*, cf. Rance 2019, 402 n.67. It may refer to a *numerus* of about 500 men, as the context there implies, cf. Grosse 1920, 274, Greatrex 1998, 189 n.50.

8.1 Ἀρεόβινδός τε, Ὀλυβρίου κηδεστής, ‘Areobindus, the son-in-law of Olybrius’, referring to *PLRE* ii, Areobindus I, whose wife, Anicia Juliana, was the daughter of the short-lived western emperor Olybrius (472): Procopius places his reign ‘not long before’ this, a typically vague formu-

lation, cf. i.5.16n, 7.1n with Destunis 1876, 87 n.2 (on 88). His noble lineage, rather than any military command, appears to have earned him his command, so Begass 2018, 333, 366. As *magister militum per Orientem* Areobindus was based closer to the theatre of war than the other commanders mentioned.

8.2 καὶ τῶν ἐν παλατίῳ ταγμάτων ἀρχηγὸς Κέλερ, ‘Celer, the chief of the palace guard’, *PLRE* ii, Celer 2, Anastasius’ long-serving *magister officiorum*; Procopius alludes to this Latin title in what follows, cf. Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* iii.17.3, who emphasises his closeness to the emperor, as does Theoph. 148.6–11. In fact, however, he was despatched subsequently and reached the front only late in 503 (as Procopius notes at 8.10): see Greatrex 1998, 108 n.98, *RKOR* 283. Once arrived, he acted as the supreme commander of the Roman forces; Procopius and PZ overlook this, probably because they wrongly suppose that he was sent at the same time as the other generals. So Meier 2009, 207 and 398 n.203.

8.2 Πατρίκιός τε ὁ Φρύξ καὶ Ὑπάτιος ὁ βασιλέως ἀδελφιδοῦς, ‘Patricius the Phrygian and Hypatius, the Emperor’s nephew’, *PLRE* ii, Patricius 14 and Hypatius 6, both *magistri militum praesentales* at this time. On the careers of Areobindus, Celer and Patricius, see Greatrex 1996a, 125–8, Begass 2018, nos.33, 50 and 163; Greatrex 1996a, 136–40 on Hypatius, cf. Begass 2018, no.106.

8.3 ξυνῆν δὲ αὐτοῖς καὶ Ἰουστῖνος, ‘Justin was with them too’, *PLRE* ii, Iustinus 4, who succeeded Anastasius in 518 and reigned until 527, cf. i.11.1. At this stage he was a *comes* (count). The other commanders mentioned are *PLRE* ii, Patriciolus, Vitalianus 2 (= Begass 2018, no.218, on whose rebellion against Anastasius in the Balkans in 514 see Haarer 2006, 164–79, Laniado 2015, Elton 2020); Pharesmanes 3 (a *comes*), described in stock terms (see i.6.15n); Godidisclus, Bessas, the latter of whom enjoyed a lengthy career under Justinian. Procopius describes them as Goths left in Thrace after Theoderic the Amal was persuaded by Zeno to invade Italy in 488, although Bessas’ ethnic affiliation is variously described: see Amory 1997, 364–5, Laniado 2006, 269 with n.12. He offers a very similar portrait of Bessas at *Wars* v.16.2, as Destunis 1876, 92 n.9, notes.

Pharesmanes’ name is attested already in the first century A.D. as that of an Iberian king, e.g. at Tac. *Ann.* xi.8; he need not therefore, as Debié 2018, 39 n.47, suggests, be a defector from the Persians, even if the name may be Iranian (cf. Gignoux 1986, no.385).

8.4 στράτευμα γὰρ τοιοῦτό φασιν οὔτε πρότερον οὔτε ὕστερον ἐπὶ Πέρσας Ῥωμαίοις ξυστῆναι. ‘It is said that the Romans never mustered such an army against the Persians either before or afterwards.’ Ps.-Josh. 54 gives a total of 52,000 men and details of the bread supplied to them; Marc. *com.* has just 15,000. Since at ii.24.16 Procopius refers to an army of 30,000 in Armenia, he must envisage a total larger than this. It will undoubtedly have been the largest force assembled in the East since Julian’s invasion of Persia in 363. See Greatrex 1998, 96 and n.69. Vasconcelos Baptista 2018, 97, sees an echo of Procopius’ preface in the insistence on the unprecedented size of the Roman force; even if it achieved little, it illustrated the greatness of the events described, though cf. Basso and Greatrex 2018.

8.4 ἀλλ’ αὐτὸς ἕκαστος τοῖς κατ’ αὐτὸν στρατιώταις ἐξηγεῖτο ἐπὶ τοὺς πολεμίους, ‘But each one led his own troops individually against the enemy.’ There were clearly serious problems of co-ordination in the campaigns, as Procopius’ account (and others) show; this also emerges as a theme in the Gothic wars. See 8.20.

8.5 καὶ αὐτὸν βασιλεὺς κοινωνὸν τῆς βασιλείας ἐν γράμμασιν ἀνεῖπεν, ὅπως οἱ ἐξουσία εἴη τὰ ἐς τὴν δαπάνην ἢ βούλοιο διοικήσασθαι. ‘The emperor in a written statement declared him partner in the imperial power so that he might have the authority to direct the finances as he wished.’ On Apion, see *PLRE* ii, Apion 2, Sarris 2006, 16, Begass 2018, no.29: he belonged to one of the leading noble families of Egypt. The term κοινωνός τῆς βασιλείας (*koinōnos tēs basileias*, ‘a partner in the imperial power’) is more usually used for a co-emperor, often a potential successor, e.g. Herodian, i.8.3, Zos. iv.24.4. In this case, however, the measure was confined to the financing of operations: Apion acted as the praetorian prefect for the assembled army, gathering and distributing supplies, rather as Archelaus did for Belisarius’ expeditionary force to North Africa in 533, Proc. iii.11.17, who is, like Apion, termed a *chorēgos*; PJT 88 n.422 note other parallels, cf. 65 n.312. See also Stein 1949, 95 n.2 (noting a precedent at *C.J.* 12.8.2), Begass 2018, 334–5, and cf. Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* iii.17.3, using similar terminology. Apion’s appointment is *RKOR* 281.

8.6–20 Roman Campaigns in 503

Procopius concentrates on the setbacks suffered by the Roman commanders, omitting some successes, e.g. by Areobindus in an incursion into Persian territory. See i.7–9g on this tendency to play down the Roman performance in this war.

8.6 Ὁ μὲν οὖν στρατὸς οὕτως χρόνῳ τε ξυνελέγοντο καὶ σχολαίτεροι ἐπορεύοντο. ‘This army was mustered with some delay and advanced but slowly.’ See Smyth §2148 for the plural σχολαίτεροι (*skholaiteroi*, ‘slower’), qualifying a singular noun – the army – which of course is plural in sense; cf. vi.11.9 for the phrase and i.8.20 for a collective noun with a plural verb. Agath., e.g. ii.1.3, v.20.8, expresses the same notion rather by an adverb, σχολαίτερον (*skholaiteron*, ‘more slowly’). Ps.-Josh. 54 refers to the commanders being sent in May, although Areobindus, as the eastern commander, may have arrived at the front sooner; having mustered at Edessa and Samosata, the forces were ready for operations in May or June. See Greatrex 1998, 94–6.

8.6 αὐτίκα δὴ ἐς τὰ πάτρια ἦθη ἀνεχώρησαν ξὺν πάσῃ τῇ λείᾳ. ‘(The Persians) had immediately afterwards retreated to their own country with all the plunder.’ Theoph. 145.13–15 is more specific: while Kavadh withdrew to Nisibis (cf. 8.8 below), the main Persian base on the frontier, his forces remained in Roman territory between Constantia and Amida; Ps.-Josh. 53, cf. 55, places them in the Jebel Sinjar to the south, on the other hand, and they may well have dispersed for ease of supply. See Greatrex 1998, 94.

8.7 τῶν δὲ στρατηγῶν οὐδεὶς ἐς πολιορκίαν τῶν ἐν Ἀμίδῃ ἀπολελειμμένων ἐν τῷ παρόντι καθίστασθαι ἤθελε, ‘None of the generals wanted to start a siege against those who had been left in Amida for the moment.’ Procopius is not interested in the botched attempt to besiege Amida undertaken by Hypatius and Patricius, which is related by PZ vii.48, Ps.-Josh. 55–6, cf. Greatrex 1998, 97–8.

8.8 ἀλλὰ χωρὶς ἀλλήλων στρατοπεδεύόμενοι ἐπορεύοντο, ‘as they advanced, they camped separately from each other’. Cf. Polyb. 3.103.8, reporting dangerous divisions among Roman commanders facing Hannibal and note Proc. ii.18.16: two generals encamp separately from Belisarius during an invasion of Persian territory with almost fatal consequences.

8.10 οἱ μὲν οὖν ἀμφὶ Ἀρεόβινδον ἐστρατοπεδεύσαντο ἐν χωρίῳ Ἀρζάμων, ἀπέχοντι Κωνσταντίνης πόλεως δυοῖν ἡμέραιν ὁδόν, οἱ δὲ ἀμφὶ Πατρίκιον καὶ Ὑπάτιον ἐν χωρίῳ Σίφριος, ὅπερ Ἀμίδης πόλεως οὐχ ἥσσον ἢ πεντήκοντα καὶ τριακοσίους σταδίους ἀπέχει. ‘Areobindus’ force was encamped in a place called Arzamon, two days’ journey from Constantia, and Patricius’ and Hypatius’ in a place called

Siphrios, no less than 350 stades from Amida.' Procopius passes over Areobindus' successful inroad into Persian territory: he pushed as far as Nisibis before being forced back by superior Persian numbers in July 503. See PZ vii.5a, Ps.-Josh. 55, Theoph. 146.9–20 with Greatrex 1998, 97. Procopius is thus misleading in attributing the withdrawal to faulty intelligence (8.9). He may also have telescoped events by placing the rout of Hypatius and Patricius (8.17–19) immediately after Areobindus' precipitate withdrawal (8.11–12): Ps.-Josh. 55–6 indicates that Hypatius and Patricius refused to break off their siege of Amida when Areobindus sought their help during his retreat. Only later, in August, did the Persian forces concentrate at Apadna, forcing the abandonment of the siege and leading to the disastrous confrontation described by Procopius. See Ps.-Josh. 57. Greatrex 1998, 100, argues that Procopius refers here to a co-ordinated advance by the *magistri militum*, with Areobindus returning eastwards after his initial flight, cf. Haarer 2006, 59–60, Meier 2009, 203–4; but it is just as likely that Procopius has stitched together two only loosely connected incidents and that there was no return eastwards to Arzamon by Areobindus.

PZ vii.5a also mentions Arzamon ('Harzem in Apadana') as the place from which Areobindus fled; it may be identical with Apadna/Opadna, today's Tell Harzem, 40 km west of Dara along the likely Roman retreat route; as Procopius notes (8.11), he hastened westwards to Constantia from Arzamon. See Dillemann 1962, 159, Luther 1997, 187, 191 and n.145, Greatrex 1998, 100 and n.78, PJT 70 n.330, Comfort 2017, 208. Siphrios is Ashparin at Ps.-Josh. 57, cf. Marc. *com.* a.503, who refers to a Syficum castellum, where one manuscript gives Syfream. See Luther 1997, 192, Greatrex 1998, 101 n.81; Comfort 2017, 213–15, suggests a possible identification of the site with the modern Rabat. For the translation of *χωρίον* (*khōrion*) as 'place' or 'village', note Sarris 2011a, 260. Although the manuscripts have the form Constantina, we refer to it consistently as Constantia, following other sources; Syriac authors call it Tella. It was founded by the Emperor Constantius II in the 330s or 340s. See Burgess 1999, 277–82 (discussing its foundation and its location in Mesopotamia, rather than Osrhoene), Mosig-Walburg 2009b, 219–21. Comfort 2017, figs.7 and 9 at 192, 194, offers useful maps, cf. fig. 4, p. 98 above.

It is odd that Procopius gives the distances in two different units, perhaps reflecting two different sources, not to mention potential difficulties of co-ordination between the Roman generals. See Greatrex 2015a, 275, noting parallels with Theophanes. 350 stades is the equivalent of fifty Roman miles, cf. Appendix 2, p. 675, the equivalent of

about 74 km; in Dillemann 1962, fig.31, the distance is closer to 62 km. At iii.1.17 Procopius puts the distance from Athens to Megara at 210 stades and a day's journey (cf. Hdt. iv.101.3, who prefers 200 stades to the day); this would imply a distance from Arzamon to Constantia of some 420 stades, i.e. 70 Roman miles or 104 km; see further i.19.27n. In Dillemann 1962, fig.38, the distance is some 90 km, but given that the route crosses the Tur Abdin, this figure is clearly an underestimate. It follows that Procopius' figures are not far off the mark; he may have lacked a figure in Roman miles for the distance from Constantia to Arzamon and preferred therefore a vaguer unit of measure. Dillemann 1962, ch.2, analyses the Roman itineraries in detail; see esp. fig.20, from which it is clear that Arzamon did not lie on the main east–west route. Hence no convenient mileage figure would have been available.

8.13 οἱ δὲ ἀμφὶ Πατρίκιον καὶ Ὑπάτιον Ἐφθαλίταις ἐντυχόντες ὀκτακοσίοις, οἱ τοῦ Περσῶν στρατοῦ ἔμπροσθεν ἦσαν, σχεδόν τι ἅπαντας ἔκτειναν. 'Patricius' and Hypatius' men met with eight hundred Hephthalites, who were ahead of the Persian army, and killed nearly all of them.' Ps.-Josh. 55 mentions Arab and Hun reinforcements, no doubt referring to the Hephthalites, cf. PJT 66 n.316; they were under the command of the renegade Roman commander from Theodosiopolis, Constantine (*PLRE* ii, Constantinus 14). See Greatrex 1998, 100.

8.14 τὰ γούν ὄπλα καταθέμενοι ἄριστον σφίσιν ἡτοίμαζον. ἤδη γὰρ τῆς ἡμέρας ὁ καιρὸς ἐνταῦθα ἦγε. 'They put down their arms and prepared their lunch, for it was now that time of day.' As at 8.9 above, a failure of intelligence, this time allied with a fatal complacency; see i.7–9g on negative reporting of this war. The ἄριστον (*ariston*, 'lunch') refers to the mid-day meal, cf. Hesychius, *Lexicon*, A7252, Suda A3923 and Thuc. iv.90.4. The stream to which Procopius refers (8.15) is the Arzamon, cf. Greatrex 1998, 100 n.80. A Roman army is likewise caught picnicking on the banks of a watercourse at the battle of Tricamarum, iv.3.1–2, although in this case it is able to beat off the assailants.

8.18 Ῥωμαῖοι δὲ οὐκ ἐνεγκόντες τὴν ἔφοδον ἐς ἀλκὴν μὲν τὸ παράπαν οὐκ ἔβλεπον, ἔφευγον δὲ ὡς ἑκαστός πη ἐδύνατο, καὶ αὐτῶν οἱ μὲν καταλαμβανόμενοι ἔθνησκον, οἱ δὲ ἀνιόντες εἰς τὸ ὄρος, ὃ ταύτῃ ἀνέχει, ἐρρίπτουν αὐτοὺς κατὰ τὸ κρημνῶδες ζύν φόβῳ καὶ θορύβῳ πολλῷ. 'The Romans could not withstand the attack, nor did they think

of defence; each fled as best he could. Some of them were caught and killed; others, who had climbed the mountain which stretches up there, flung themselves down the cliff in much panic and confusion.’ Ps.-Josh. 57 and PZ vii.5a describe a similar rout; the latter also mentions the casualties caused by the rough terrain. See Greatrex 1998, 100–1. PJT 70 n.331 note that the *Ain-nameh* (tr. Inostrancev 1926, 14) a Sasanian military manual, advises such strikes against an enemy that has just eaten; it is clear from i.14.34 that the Persians were aware of the Roman habit of eating around noon. Belisarius later takes advantage of this, ii.18.17, cf. Whately 2016, 133.

ἐς ἀλκὴν ... οὐκ ἔβλεπον (*es alkēn ... ouk eblepon*, ‘they did not think of defence’) is a Procopian expression, not found in other authors, cf. e.g. iv.17.20, viii.32.15. The description of the flight is likewise a typically Procopian formulation, cf. i 5.8, ii.8.2.

8.19 Οὐννων πολεμίων ἐς γῆν τὴν αὐτοῦ ἐσβεβληκότων, ‘for enemy Huns had invaded his (Kavadh’s) land’. Procopius here passes over entirely Kavadh’s penetration of Roman territory as far as Edessa, from which he unsuccessfully sought to extort money, before withdrawing in September 503. That this is deliberate is clear from the fact that he recounts some aspects of it at ii.13.8–15. See Ps.-Josh. 58–64, Greatrex 1998, 101–10.

It was probably early in 504 that Kavadh was obliged to direct his attention to the Caucasus: Procopius’ Huns are to be identified with the Sabirs, not with his allies, the Hephthalites, so Greatrex 1998, 110, Alemany 2006, 44–5, Börm 2007, 321 n.5, Kim 2013, 138–9, and cf. Schindel 2004a, 489, noting a reference in Baladhuri to a campaign by Kavadh against the Khazars (presumably therefore in the Caucasus). Schindel 2013a, 140, infers a conflict with the Hephthalites, however, on the grounds that Kavadh’s coins show that Khorasan was recovered by 512, cf. *idem* 2004a, 489–90. The two possibilities are not mutually exclusive, but one might have expected Procopius to specify the Hephthalites, should they have been Kavadh’s adversary in this case, and to place them to the east, rather than the north. Nothing further is known of the campaigns he waged there. At the same time, local unrest around Nisibis further hindered Persian operations. See Luther 1997, 202, Greatrex 1998, 110–11 and n.104, cf. PZ vii.6c.

8.20 ὅτι δὴ αὐτοκράτωρ τοῦ πολέμου κατέστη οὐδεὶς, ἀλλ’ ἴσοι πρὸς ἀλλήλους οἱ στρατηγοὶ ὄντες ἀντεστάτουν τε ἀλλήλων ταῖς

γνώμαις καὶ γίνεσθαι ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ οὐδαμῇ ἤθελον, ‘because there was no one in full command of the war; the generals were of equal rank and opposed each other’s wishes and would not agree’. A clear allusion to Pericles’ successors as described by Thuc. ii.65.10; in the following section he also notes how internal divisions in Athens led to disaster in Sicily (415–413 B.C.), cf. Hornblower, *CT* i, 347–8. Procopius uses the same terms in describing the mediocrity and lack of co-ordination of Belisarius’ successors in Italy after 540, vii.1.23. Ps.-Josh. 65 likewise notes Celer’s dissatisfaction with the performance of the Roman commanders thus far.

8.21 Κέλερ δὲ ζὺν τοῖς ἐπομένοις Νύμφιον ποταμὸν διαβάς ἐσβολὴν τινα ἐς τὴν Ἀρζανηνὴν ἐποιήσατο. ‘Celer crossed the river Nymphius with his men and made an incursion into Arzanene.’ Celer would thus have passed through the Roman district of Sophanene, in which lay the city of Martyropolis (see the next note) on his way eastwards into Arzanene. But Procopius’ account is awry here: Celer arrived at the front only in 504, taking up position at Theodosiopolis (Resaina) in Osrhoene and leading a raid into Beth ‘Arabaye in September, the region south of Nisibis. He may thus be referring instead to a raid led by Patricius into Arzanene mentioned by PZ vii.5a, so Greatrex 1998, 97 n.72, 110–13.

8.22 ἔστι δὲ ὁ ποταμὸς οὗτος Μαρτυροπόλεως μὲν ἀγχοτάτω, Ἀμίδης δὲ ὅσον ἀπὸ σταδίων τριακοσίων, ‘This river is very near Martyropolis, about 300 stades from Amida.’ Yet at 21.6 Procopius puts Martyropolis on the Nymphius, 240 stades north of Amida, while at *Aed.* iii.2.4 he puts the city just over one day’s journey from Amida. According to Gregory 1997, ii, 66, Martyropolis lies 75 km east-north-east of Amida and the Nymphius 20 km beyond it; Feissel 2002, 398, gives a figure of 89 km (to which 15 or 20 would need to be added, Googlemaps gives 80 km). 300 stades would equate to 63.5 km if we assume, cf. Appendix 2, p. 675, seven stades to the Roman mile. See further i.21.6n and Dillemann 1962, 235, fig.33.

9.1–25 The Death of Glones, the Hand-Over of Amida (January 505) and the End of the War

Procopius continues to focus on Amida, again relying on a local source similar (if not the same) as that used by PZ (who recounts the death of Glones at vii.5b); PZ (or his source) names the peasant who betrayed

Glones as Gadana of Akharē, cf. PZT 244 n.82. Kaldellis 2010b, 260, suggests that the Glones episode is an oblique way of criticising the Roman military, but cf. Greatrex 2014b, 98. See Merten 1906, 152 (on sources), Luther 1997, 188–9, Greatrex 1998, 98–9, Greatrex 2010, 240–4 and cf. Ps.-Josh. 56.

9.1 Μετὰ δὲ Ἀρεόβινδος μὲν ἐς Βυζάντιον ὡς βασιλέα μετάπεμπτος ἦλθεν, οἱ δὲ λοιποὶ ἐς Ἀμιδαν ἀφικόμενοι χειμῶνος ὥρα ἐς πολιορκίαν καθίσταντο. ‘Later Areobindus was summoned by the emperor and went to Byzantium. The rest arrived at Amida and laid siege to it in the winter season.’ Theoph. 146.21–3 reports that Areobindus had wanted to return to Constantinople when Patricius and Hypatius failed to support him during his withdrawal from Nisibis; he was dissuaded from doing so by Apion. This may lie behind Procopius’ erroneous report here, since in fact Anastasius recalled Apion and Hypatius in late 503; the former, however, was redeployed to Alexandria (Ps.-Josh. 70), no doubt to assist in logistical matters. Hypatius’ recall is reported by Mal. 16.9. See Greatrex 1998, 108–9, Haarer 2006, 62, Meier 2009, 207, *RKOR* 282.

Ps.-Josh. 66 recounts that Patricius (alone) in winter 503–4 moved from his winter quarters at Melitene to Amida, where the garrison left by Kavadh had grown complacent. He surprised many soldiers outside the walls, but was subsequently forced to retreat by the arrival of reinforcements sent by the king; he was then able to overcome these forces, however, and to invest the city, where the other commanders joined him in the spring (Ps.-Josh. 69). See Luther 1997, 203, Greatrex 1998, 109–11. Procopius has thus telescoped events again, preferring to concentrate on the closing stages of the Roman siege.

9.2 ἀλλ’ οἱ στρατηγοὶ οὐδὲν πεπυσμένοι ἀμφὶ τῶν πολεμίων τῇ ἀπορίᾳ, ἐπειδὴ τοὺς στρατιώτας τῇ προσεδρεΐᾳ καὶ τῷ χειμῶνι ἀχθομένους ἑώρων, ‘But the generals knew nothing of their enemies’ plight; and seeing that the soldiers were distressed by the siege and by the winter weather.’ The Persians were adept at concealing their weakness in such situations, as Maur. *Strat.* xi.1.9–12 (354) notes. Procopius himself reports the extraordinary resistance offered by the Persian garrison at Petra subsequently, ii.30.15–20, viii.12. See Börm 2007, 170–1. The winter to which Procopius refers here is that of 504–5, one year on from the winter of 9.1 and the start of the siege, cf. 9.20. The impression thus given is of an undue readiness to come to terms on the Romans’ part. On

the course of the year's siege, during which a mining operation nearly allowed the Romans to retake the city, see Ps.-Josh. 67, 71–3 with Greatrex 1998, 111–12, Petersen 2013, 133–5, 491.

Procopius' use of the preposition ἀμφί (*amphi*, 'about', 'of', with the dative) follows Herodotean usage, e.g. at 3.32.1, as well as late authors; Thucydides never uses it in this sense. See Scheftlein 1893, 43–5, *LSJ*, 89, and Introduction, p. 16.

9.4 γίνονται οὖν ἐν ἀμφοτέροις λόγοι, ἐφ' ᾧ δὴ Πέρσαι λίτρας χρυσοῦ χιλίας λαβόντες ἀποδώσουσι Ῥωμαίοις τὴν πόλιν. 'So both sides had talks, the condition being that the Persians would surrender the city to the Romans on receipt of a thousand pounds of gold.' Ps.-Josh. 80–1 describes how the Persians were brought to terms by the raids undertaken into their territory by some of the besieging forces, as well as the privations of the garrison; he also notes how the Roman forces began to disperse for the winter, rendering the prosecution of the siege almost impossible. The Persian negotiator was their commander, the *spāhbad*. PZ vii.5d gives the sum handed over as 1100 pounds of gold, while Theophanes gives 3 (or 30 in one manuscript) talents. See Luther 1997, 206–7, Greatrex 1998, 114–15.

Sections 3–4 are quoted in *Exc. de legat. gent.* 489.21–30.

9.4 Γλώνης γὰρ ἤδη ἐτετελευτήκει τρόπῳ τοιῷδε, 'For Glones had already died in the following way.' On Glones see 7.33.

9.5 ὄρνις, 'fowl', 'birds', an unusual accusative plural, cf. *LSJ* 1254. PZ vii.5b refers to 'partridges and doves'.

9.5 Πατρικίῳ τῷ στρατηγῷ ἐς ὄψιν ἔλθων, '(he) came before Patricius the general'. Merten 1906, 152, suggests that Procopius has inserted Patricius' name here, since PZ vii.5b fails to name the commander and associates Pharesmanes with the prosecution of the siege, cf. *PLRE* ii, Pharesmanes 3 and Greatrex 2010, 246.

9.5 ἢν τινος ἀμοιβῆς ἐλπίδα λαβὼν παρ' αὐτοῦ εἶη, 'if there was hope of some reward from him', a rare periphrastic use of the (aorist) participle λαβὼν (*labōn*, 'having taken') with the verb εἰμί (*eimi*, 'I am'). Merten 1906, 152, is right to see Procopius as deliberately working up an episode here, cf. Greatrex 2010, 246: the peasant's whole speech is in a high, dramatic style.

9.7 καὶ γὰρ που ἐς <τὰ> ταύτη χωρία κατ' ὀλίγους περιιόντες τοὺς οἰκτροὺς ἀγροίκους βιάζονται, 'for they go around the countryside in bands and oppress the poor farmers'. Ps.-Josh. 93–4 confirms the tensions between soldiers and civilians in Edessa, cf. PZ vii.5a on Pharesmanes' ambushes near Amida with Greatrex 1998, 116. Cf. Lee 2007, 163–75, on such problems generally; PZ vii.5b praises the protection afforded the villagers by the Persians when they came to Amida, cf. *De pol. sci. dial.* iv.63–9 (11–13/139–40) for similar praise, with Bell 2009, 138 n.54 and Börm 2007, 285.

9.7 καὶ πάντα ἀφελόμενοι οἱ λησταὶ ὥχοντο, 'and (they) went off with everything like thieves', reading οἷα (*hoia*, 'as, like', cf. *LSJ*, 1209, IV.3) rather than Haury's οἱ (*hoi*, the definite article, qualifying the thieves) following Kallenberg 1916b, 508–9, and MSS V and G, cf. v.2.21.

9.8 ἀλλ' ὅπως, ὦ δέσποτα, σαυτῷ τε καὶ ἡμῖν καὶ Πέρσαις ἀμύνης, 'But defend yourself, my lord, and us and the Persians.' The adverb ὅπως (*hopōs*, 'in order to') is used to introduce an admonition, a more pretentious variation on the imperative, here followed by a future indicative. See Smyth §2213, *CGCG*, 38.34, and *LSJ*, 1244, A.III.8, cf. Lucian, *Timon*, 48.

9.8 ἦν γὰρ ἐς τῆς πόλεως τὰ προάστεια κυνηγετήσων ἵης, θήραμά σοι οὐ φαῦλον ἔσται. κατὰ πέντε γὰρ ἢ τέτταρας οἱ κατάρτοι περιιόντες λωποδυτοῦσιν. 'If you go hunting to the outskirts of the city, you shall have a prey by no means to be despised, for the accursed men go about robbing in fours or fives.' Procopius consciously ends on a rhetorical note: first, the litotes ('by no means to be despised'), then the forceful term κατάρτος (*kataratos*, 'accursed'), more associated with drama (e.g. Eur. *Hecuba* 716, 1064) and elsewhere in Procopius always used in direct speech (e.g. ii.15.21); cf. *Chr. Pasch.* 728.18 (applied to the Persian king Khusro II). The final word, the verb λωποδυτέω (*lōpodyteō*, 'I steal [clothes]', cf. *LSJ*, 1069), is a rare term for stealing, found (e.g.) at Plato, *Rep.* 575b7, cf. Proc. *Anecd.* 7.15, Th. Sim. iii.7.19 (cited by Suda Λ734).

9.10 τοῦ δὲ μηδὲν ἀπροσδόκητον σφίσι ξυμβῆναι, 'But so that they should not be taken unawares by anything.' The peasant continues his high-flown rhetoric in indirect speech; here Procopius employs a genitive of purpose with the infinitive, for which see Smyth §§1408, 2032e.

9.11 Γλῶνης μὲν οὖν ἰππέας διακοσίους ἀπολεξάμενος τὸν ἄνθρωπον σφίσιν ἐξηγεῖσθαι ἐκέλευεν. ‘Glones therefore selected two hundred cavalry and told the man to lead the way.’ PZ vii.5b (cf. Ps.-Josh. 56) puts Glones’ force at 400 cavalry, setting forth to take on 100 Romans, who were looking after 500 horses (PZT 244 wrongly gives ‘cavalry’ rather than ‘horses’). PZ more plausibly has independent scouts (rather than the peasant himself) report this to Glones.

9.13 καὶ ὃς τῶν δορυφόρων τῶν αὐτοῦ δύο καὶ στρατιώτας χιλίους ξὺν αὐτῷ ἐπεμψεν. ‘Patricius sent with him two of his own bodyguard and a thousand soldiers.’ Ps.-Josh. 56 names the Roman commanders as Pharesmanes and Theodore (*PLRE* ii, Theodorus 53) but does not indicate the size of their force, although he may be referring to a separate episode (so PJT 68 n.324).

9.14 οὓς δὴ ἀμφὶ κώμην Θιλασάμων σταδίους τεσσαράκοντα Ἀμίδης δέχουσιν ἐν νάπαις τε καὶ χωρίοις ὑλώδεσιν ἔκρυψε, ‘He (the peasant) concealed them near the village of Thilasamon, forty stades from Amida, in glens and wooded places.’ Honigsmann 1935, map 1, places Thilasamon some 10 km south-west of Amida; PZ vii.5b situates the ambush at a place called ‘Shepherds’ fold’, *ἑpta ra’ēn*. See Greatrex 1998, 99.

9.15 ἐπειδὴ τε διέβησαν τὸν χῶρον, οὗ προλοχίζοντες Ῥωμαῖοι ἐκάθηντο, ‘When they had crossed the place where the Romans lay in ambush.’ We follow Haury’s text here, although MSS V and G have προλοχίζεσθαι (*prolokhizesthai*, the infinitive, ‘to lie in ambush’), an infinitive of purpose (Smyth §2008), rather than προλοχίζοντες (*prolokhizontes*, the present participle); little difference is made to the sense. He is certainly right to prefer προλοχίζοντες to MS P’s ἐλλοχίζοντες (*ellokhizontes*), which is very rarely used. Cf. Proc. ii.8.20 and elsewhere.

9.18 τῷ τε πλήθει παρὰ πολὺ ἐλασσούμενοι ἡσσήθησάν τε καὶ ξὺν τῷ Γλῶνῃ ἅπαντες διεφθάρσαν, ‘but being far outnumbered they were defeated and were all killed with Glones’. PZ vii.5b adds that his head was brought to Constantia. Ps.-Josh. 56 describes the taking alive of a Persian *marzban*, who promised to bring about the fall of the city, who was executed when he failed to do so; PJT 68 n.324 infer that this was a separate episode.

9.18 τὸν Συμεώνου νεὼν ἔκαυσεν, ἁγίου ἀνδρός, ἵνα δὴ ὁ Γλώνης κατέλυε. ‘(The son of Glones) burnt the church of the holy Symeon where his father lodged.’ Nothing further is known of this church. Procopius uses the standard Christian term for a holy man (or saint), ἅγιος, *hagios*, in referring to Symeon, cf. ii.5.29 (St Sergius), iii.21.17 (St Cyprian) and frequently in *Aed.*

The verb καταλύω (*kataluō*) has a wide range of meanings but here refers to taking up lodgings, cf. *LSJ*, 900, II.2 and Thuc. i.136.2. The generous verdict that follows (repeated at *Anecd.* 23.7) about Persian conduct is suspect: John of Ephesus, *Lives*, PO 19 (1925), 217, describes how Kavadh destroyed the monastery of Mar John to the north of the city in order to build siege engines. See Greatrex 1998, 85, Börm 2007, 270 and n.3. PZ vii.5b offers praise of the Persians after recounting Glones’ death as well, in his case highlighting the protection they afforded to the villagers who came to Amida to sell their goods (cf. 9.7n).

9.20 καὶ ἐπεὶ ἐν ταύτῃ ἐγένοντο, ἥ τε αὐτῶν ὀλιγωρία καὶ Περσῶν τὸ καρτερόν τῆς διαίτης ἐγνώσθη, ‘When they were in the city, their own negligence and the hardihood of the Persians were recognised.’ The more frequent meaning of ὀλιγωρία (*oligōria*) is ‘contempt’, but cf. Eunap. frg.65.3.10 with *LSJ*, 1216, for the sense here. On the doggedness of Persian resistance to sieges see 9.2n.

9.21 καίπερ Γλώνου τε καὶ τοῦ ἐκείνου παιδὸς ἐνδεστέρωσ ἢ κατὰ τὴν χρεῖαν πολλοῦ χρόνου ἐνδιδόντος τὰ σιτία Πέρσαις, ‘although Glones and his son had been giving grain to the Persians in quantities insufficient for their needs for a long time’, cf. iv.27.20, vi.20.13, *Anecd.* 22.17 for the idiom ἐνδεστέρωσ ἢ κατὰ τὴν χρεῖαν, ‘in quantities insufficient for their needs’. The translations of Dewing–Kaldellis (cf. García Romero) imply, on the contrary, that Glones and his son need not have been so frugal; in fact, the sense is rather that they had been sparing in their rations even before the siege, as is clear from the other passages cited.

9.22 οἳ δὴ ἐς βρώσεις ἀήθεις τὰ πρῶτα ἐλθόντες τῶν τε οὐ θεμιτῶν ἀψάμενοι πάντων, εἴτα τελευτῶντες καὶ ἀλλήλων ἐγεύσαντο. ‘These men had at first resorted to unaccustomed foods and then turned to every kind of unlawful thing, finally even to cannibalism.’ Procopius had mentioned these unfortunates, who had been retained in the city, at 7.33. PZ vii.5c reports that gangs of women took to eating their fellow-citizens, consuming five hundred of them; Ps.-Josh. 76–7

confirms this, relating that the men were confined within the city's amphitheatre, while the women received meagre rations. See Greatrex 1998, 111–12, Stathakopoulos 2004, no.81, Lee 2007, 134–5, Meier 2009, 209 (noting modern parallels).

Similar terms are used by Thuc. ii.70.1 on which see Hornblower, *CT* i, 356, cf. Nic. Chon. 164.54–5 (vi.3.11), 202.25–7 (viii.1.8) with Zorzi 2012, 243–4. Procopius returns to this grisly theme at vi.20.27–30 and vii.16.2–3.

9.23 καὶ τοῖς στρατιώταις τὴν ἀκрасίαν ὠνείδιζον, ὅτι δὴ ἀπειθεστέρους αὐτοὺς παρεχόμενοι σφίσι, ‘and they (the generals) reproached the soldiers for their weakness in showing themselves unruly’. Ps.-Josh. 81 relates how the soldiers preferred to disperse to winter quarters than to face the cold, despite the efforts of their superiors. See Greatrex 1998, 114–15. Ps.-Josh. 92–4, 96, confirms problems of discipline in the Roman army and tensions with the local population, cf. i.9.7n with Bell 2009, 138 n.54, Meier 2009, 212–15.

9.23 αἰσχός τε ἀνεδήσαντο μέγα, ‘(they) had incurred great disgrace’. The verb ἀναδέω (*anadeō*) in the middle has the sense of fastening to oneself, usually literally, *LSJ*, 103. Procopius uses it metaphorically with the word ‘disgrace’ also at *Anecd.* 2.9, 10.6.

9.24 ὕστερον δὲ Πέρσαι τοῦ πρὸς Οὐννους πολέμου σφίσι μηχανομένου ἐς σπονδὰς Ῥωμαίοις ξυνίασιν, αἵπερ αὐτοῖς ἐς ἑπτὰ ἔτη ἐγένοντο, Κέλερός τε τοῦ Ῥωμαίου καὶ Ἀσπεβέδου τοῦ Πέρσου αὐτὰς ποιησαμένων. ‘But later the Persians made a truce with the Romans, for the Hunnic war was dragging on. The truce was made by Celer the Roman and Aspebedes the Persian, and was for seven years.’ Kavadh was faced not only by the war against the (Sabir) Huns, but also unrest among the Tāmorāyē, perhaps in Iran, and the Qadishāyē (near Nisibis): see Luther 1997, 145–6, Greatrex 1998, 111, 115, PZ vii.6c with PZT 248 n.104. Theoph. 148.14–149.3 offers a favourable interpretation of both the negotiations and the hand-over of Amida.

The negotiations took place on the frontier in 505 and 506, interrupted by the appointment of a new *spābbad* after Celer's first interlocutor died, then by growing distrust. Only in November 506 was an agreement concluded. Its terms are uncertain, although it evidently entailed an end to hostilities. Whether Procopius' figure for the duration of the treaty is reliable is uncertain; the seven years recalls suspiciously the seven years of tax remissions noted at 7.33. It is likewise uncertain

whether the Romans agreed to regular payments to the Persians. See Ps.-Josh. 97–99, a much more detailed account, Blockley 1992, 91, Luther 1997, 213–16, Greatrex 1998, 115–18, Meier 2009, 212–15 and 399 n.229, *RKOR* 305.

Procopius' Aspebedes may refer to the Persian office of the *spāhbad* (cf. Ps.-Josh.'s *astabed*, 59, named Bawi), a general. So Luther 1997, 194–5, Börm 2007, 144, Gyselen 2008a, 108; Pourshariati 2008, 107, associates this commander with the Ispahbudhān family. But it is possible that it is a personal name (or a different office): see i.11.5n. It was standard practice for Celer, as *magister officiorum*, to undertake negotiations: see PJT 115 n.539, Blockley 1992, 158.

This section is quoted in *Exc. de legat. gent.* 490.1–4.

9.25 ἐρῶν ἔρχομαι, 'I shall proceed to relate', cf. Hdt. i.5.3 (and elsewhere), ἔρχομαι ἐρέων with *CGCG* 52.41 n.1. Despite Lucian's mockery of the expression, *De hist. conscr.* 18, Procopius frequently employs it, generally to signal a digression, as also (e.g.) at i.19.2, subsequently adopted by Joh. Cin. i.10 (23.3). See also Pfeilschifter–Thesz on *Anecd.* 1.10.

i.10 Anastasius' Policies in the East During the Rest of his Reign

Procopius summarises the remaining twelve years of Anastasius' rule (506–518). He is the only source to report the proposed hand-over of the Darial pass by a Hunnic ruler called Ambazuces to the Romans, the event to which he devotes the most attention. Many sources, on the other hand, describe the foundation of Dara. As hitherto in his introductory section, Procopius prefers to focus on more obscure and spectacular episodes, which here allows him to describe the wonders of the Caucasus mountain range (although he here refers to it rather as the Taurus) (fig. 6). Both issues – the defence of the Caspian Gates against enemies to the north and the construction of Dara – remained critical during the reign of Justinian: at i.16.4–8 Procopius attributes a speech to Kavadh, in which he complains at the lack of Roman financial contributions to the defence of the pass and the need imposed on him by the construction of Dara to maintain a garrison close by. It has been suggested that Procopius is being somewhat disingenuous in introducing the issue of the Caspian Gates at this relatively late stage, since, according to Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* iii.52–3, it had been the subject of negotiations between Rome and Persia already from the fourth century. See also Ecker forthcoming, who argues that the importance accorded to the Caspian Gates (and Ambazuces)

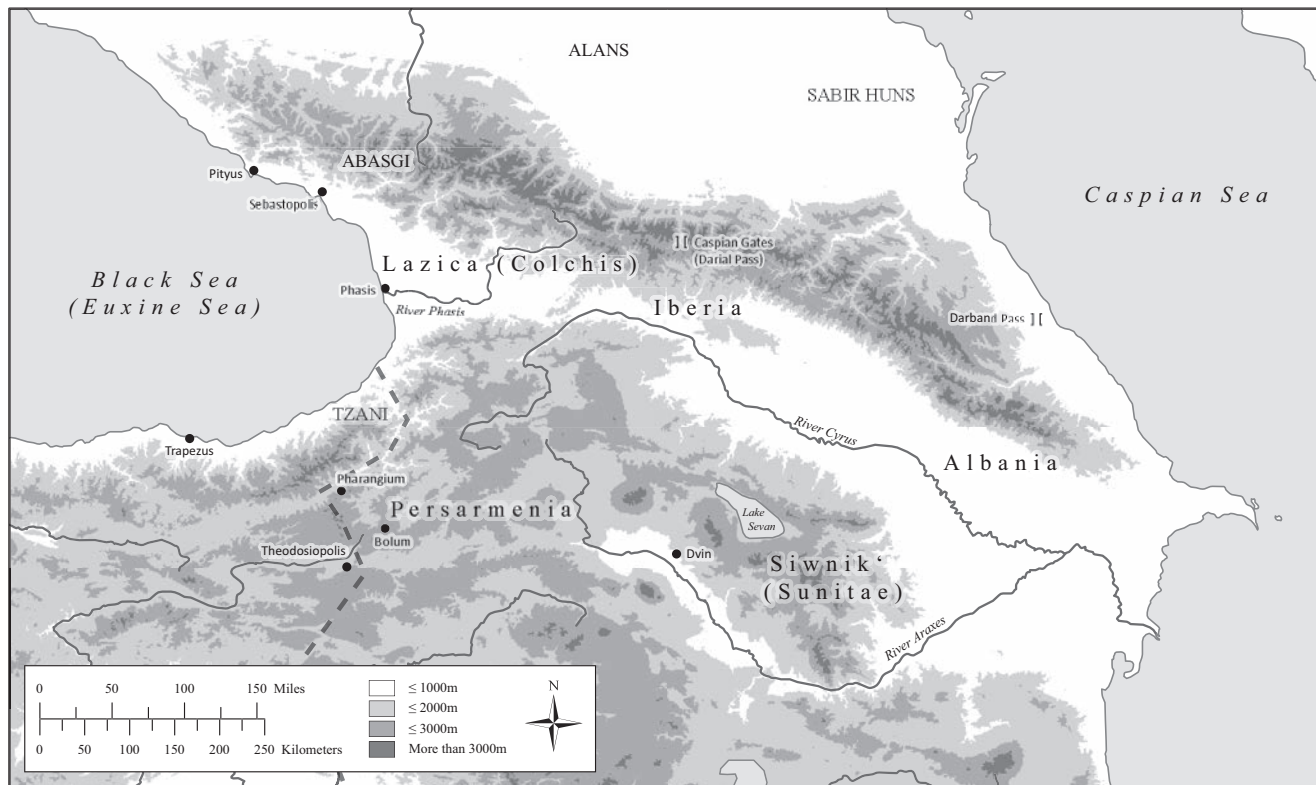


Figure 6 The Caucasus Region, c. 510

represents a narrative device of Procopius, since there is little evidence, he argues, that the Huns posed a real threat to either power.

Whether Procopius ever visited the region he here describes is doubtful; more likely he relied on reports from commanders who had served there, perhaps also from those who themselves originated there, such as Peranius, son of the Iberian king Gurgenes. See Averil Cameron 1985, 216, Greatrex 1998, 63, Börm 2007, 210, Colvin 2013, cf. Brodka 2016, 121 n.44.

Bibliography: Synelli 1986, 113, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 74–8, Haarer 2006, 50–3, 67–71.

10.1 Τὸ Κιλικῶν ὄρος ὃ Ταῦρος ἀμείβει μὲν τὰ πρῶτα Καππαδόκας τε καὶ Ἀρμενίους καὶ τῶν Περσαρμενίων καλουμένων τὴν γῆν, ἔτι μέντοι Ἀλβανούς τε καὶ Ἰβήρας, καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα ἔθνη αὐτόνομά τε καὶ Πέρσαις κατήκοα ταύτῃ ὥκηνται. ‘The Taurus mountains of Cilicia traverse first Cappadocia and Armenia and the territory called Persarmenia, then Albania and Iberia and the regions where other independent nations and those subject to the Persians live.’ For ancient writers, the Taurus range extended all the way up to the Caucasus (and beyond), although different terms came to be used for different parts of it. See *OCD*⁴, ‘Taurus mountain range’, with Strabo 11.8.1, 11.12.4, Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 5.27.97–9 and Anderson 1928, 149. Procopius uses the term Caucasus for the northern part at viii.3.1–4.

The land of the Persarmenians is Persarmenia, i.e. Persian Armenia, the lion’s share of Armenia, which had been partitioned between Rome and Persia in 387, described (rather inaccurately) by Procopius at *Aed.* iii.1.8–15, cf. Evagr. *HE* v.7 with Greatrex 2000, Hewsen 2001, 84 and map 65, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 28–30, 281 n.25. The term ‘Persarmenia’ became standard for Persian Armenia in the sixth century and is frequently used by both Mal. (e.g. 13.22–3) and Procopius.

Procopius refers also to the Albanians and the Iberians in the Caucasus: the Albanians were situated in Atropatene (Azerbaijan), to the west of the Caspian Sea, while the Iberians were situated in the central Caucasus (the region of Kartli in modern Georgia). Strabo 11.1.5 discusses the region, mentioning Albania, Iberia and Armenia, in the context of the border between Europe and Asia (a topic Procopius treats at viii.6). The Albanians were increasingly drawn within the Persian orbit in the fifth century, although there was serious unrest in the 480s. See Greatrex 1998a, 125–30, Bais 2001, 125–9, Greenwood 2012, 65. On the Iberians see 12.2–3n. Procopius discusses other peoples of this region, such as the Alans and the Abasgi, at viii.3–4.

10.2 προϊόντι δὲ αἰεὶ τὸ ὄρος τοῦτο ἐς μέγα τι χρῆμα εὐρους τε καὶ ὕψους διήκει, ‘and to one advancing along it, it appears consistently to reach a great height and breadth’. The participle προϊόντι, *proiōnti*, ‘to one advancing’ is a dative of relation, often used with verbs of motion to refer to the person observing something: see Smyth §1497. Procopius uses this dative several times in this geographical description. He uses χρῆμα, *khre̓ma* (‘thing’), and the genitive to refer to something extraordinary (cf. *LSJ*, s.v., II.3) in a similar fashion at *Aed.* ii.9.10 (referring to the height and breadth of the fortifications constructed at Hemerium).

10.3 ὑπερβάντι δὲ τοὺς Ἰβήρων ὄρους ἀτραπὸς τίς ἐστὶν ἐν στενοχωρίᾳ πολλῇ, ἐπὶ σταδίου πεντήκοντα ἐξικνουμένη, ‘As one goes beyond the borders of Iberia there is a path in a very narrow pass that extends for fifty stades.’ Fifty stades, assuming (see Appendix 2, p. 675) seven stades to the Roman mile, is approximately 10.5 km. In fact, the whole Dariali Gorge is rather longer, extending some 87 km in all, although there are a few valleys leading into it. See Sauer et al. 2020, 286, 399–401, with useful maps.

10.4 αὕτη δὲ ἡ ἀτραπὸς ἐς ἀπότομόν τινα καὶ ὅλως ἄβατον τελευτᾷ χῶρον. ‘This path culminates at a place that is cut off by cliffs and completely inaccessible.’ A phrase that recalls Strabo 12.6.5, also describing the Taurus region, albeit in the vicinity of Cremna in Pisidia; cf. Proc. viii.14.7 for the phrasing. Sauer et al. 2020, 935–40, show just how precipitous the cliffs above the Darial pass were before the modern era.

10.4 δίοδος γὰρ οὐδεμία τὸ λοιπὸν φαίνεται, πλὴν γε δὴ ὅτι ὥσπερ τινὰ χειροποίητον πυλίδα ἐνταῦθα ἡ φύσις ἐξεῦρεν, ἡ Κασπία ἐκ παλαιοῦ ἐκλήθη. ‘For there seems to be no way through at all, save for the fact that nature has here provided some sort of small gate, which appears man-made, known as “the Caspian Gate” from of old.’ The classic treatment on the peripatetic ‘Caspian Gates’ remains Anderson 1928, who shows how the term shifted from a series of passes leading from Media to Parthia, named after a neighbouring tribe (rather than the sea), to the two main passes through the Caucasus mountains, the Darial (north of Iberia) and the Darband (just west of the Caspian Sea). Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 6.15.40, already noted the error, insisting that the term ‘Caspian Gates’ refers to the Darband pass and is wrongly applied to the Darial pass, which should rather be called the Caucasian Gates, cf. Greatrex 2007d, 137–8, Dignas and Winter 2007, 188. PZ xii.7k(v) uses

the term Caspian Gates for the Darband pass, for instance. Here it is quite clear that Procopius is referring to the Darial pass, which followed the rivers Aragvi and Terki (or Tergi), and whose (modern) name, Dar-i-Alan, ‘Gate of the Alans’, evokes the tribe that lived to the north. For its precise location see Talbert 2000, 88C2 with Braund 2000a, 1256–7 and Sauer et al. 2020, 4–6, though see i.10.9n for uncertainty as to where exactly the Gates were situated in the pass. The term ‘Caspian Gates’ for the Darial pass is found in Procopius’ contemporaries Jordanes, *Get.* 7.50, Mal. 16.17, and Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* iii.51.6, cf. Anderson 1928, 152. The other Caucasian pass at Darband, sometimes referred to as the Caspian Gates, is referred to by Procopius as Tzur at viii.3.4. See Anderson 1928, 142, 151, Synelli 1986, 99–120, Braund 1994, 225–6, Braund 2000b, Börm 2007, 214–15, Mitford 2018, 12.

10.5 τὸ δὲ ἐνθὲνδε πεδία τέ ἐστιν ἵππήλατα, ‘From this point there are plains suited to horses.’ Standard terminology for good horse-rearing country (cf. *NovJ.* 25.1 [535] for the adjective ἵππόβοτος, *hippobotos*, ‘good for horse-grazing’, referring to plains in the mountainous province of Lycaonia). Procopius is referring to the steppes of the eastern Ukraine, stretching from the north Caucasus as far as the Sea of Azov (the Maeotic lake to which he refers at 10.6), cf. Sauer et al. 2020, 399.

The expression τὸ (δὲ) ἐνθὲνδε, *to (de) enthende*, using the adverb with the definite article, is common in Procopius, cf. i.4.24, i.15.27, v.12.4; it is rarely found earlier, though cf. Strabo 5.1.2; it can generally be translated as ‘thenceforth, from this point’, as Pollux, *Onomasticon*, 9.152 (vol.2, p.188), notes. See also Pfeilschifter–Thesz on *Anecd.* 4.28 on the idiom.

10.6 οὗ δὴ τὰ Οὐννων ἔθνη σχεδόν τι ἅπαντα ἵδρυται ἄχρι ἐς τὴν Μαιώτιν διήκοντα λίμνην, ‘Here almost all the Hunnic nations are established, reaching as far as the Maeotic lake.’ Procopius expands on this at viii.3–5, cf. i.12.5; there were other peoples alongside the Huns, notably the Alans (viii.3.4), on whom see Alemany 2000, 194–9. PZ xii.7k likewise offers an important excursus on the region in the mid sixth century, cf. PZT 446–51, to which add Kim 2013, 140–1. On the tribes inhabiting this region see Golden 1992, 92–108, Kazanski and Mastykova 2003, 131–46, with good use of archaeological evidence, Kazanski 2007.

10.7 ἀκραϊφνέσι τε τοῖς ἵπποις ἴασι, ‘they come with horses fresh’, i.e. not exhausted as they would have been, had they been obliged to take a

different route; alternatively, as Procopius notes at 10.8, they would have had to change horses on the way. ἀκραίφνης, *akraiphnēs*, means ‘pure, untouched’, but is used in a military context (for ‘undamaged’) by Thuc. i.52.2 and later writers, cf. Proc. vi.2.20, vii.26.5.

10.8 περιόδους τε γὰρ αὐτοὺς περιιέναι πολλὰς ἐπάναγκες καὶ ταύτας κρημνῶδεις. ‘For they are obliged to take many detours, which are also mountainous.’ Procopius notes that routes other than the Darial pass traverse the Caucasus, albeit circuitous and difficult of access. See Braund 1994, 44–6 (with a map), *idem* 2000a, 1257, *idem* 2000b, 39–40, Sauer et al. 2015, 886, Sauer et al. 2020, 893.

10.9 ὅπερ ἐπειδὴ ὁ Φιλίππου Ἀλέξανδρος κατενόησε, πύλας τε ἐν χώρῳ ἐτεκτήνατο τῷ εἰρημένῳ καὶ φυλακτήριον κατεστήσατο. ‘When Alexander, the son of Philip, realised this, he built gates at the aforementioned place and established a fortress there.’ As Anderson 1928, 130, 139–40, points out, the Alexander Romance, which exists in numerous versions, associated Alexander the Great with the Caucasus, linking the construction of the fort to an encounter with the Amazons beyond the mountains; already in the first century A.D. Strabo 11.5.5 noted the circulation of dubious stories on Alexander and the Caucasus, cf. Jos. *B.J.* 7.244–6, referring to gates erected by Alexander at the Darband pass. Clearly Procopius was drawing on legendary versions of Alexander’s campaigns, although in what language and tradition one cannot be sure. See Börm 2007, 211 n.2.

While the Romans had been involved in constructing defences in the Caucasus under Vespasian, on which see (e.g.) Mitford 2018, 556–8, their presence in the region had diminished in the fifth century. Negotiations between Rome and Persia to fund a Persian garrison at the Caspian Gates may have started as early as 363 but appear to have been inconclusive. Recent archaeological work suggests that the Persians built a new fortress just south of the Darial pass at the end of the fourth century, perhaps in response to the Hunnic raid of 395: see Greatrex and Greatrex 1999 on the raid, Sauer et al. 2016, 22–3, on the fort. The Persians intermittently sought funds from the Romans, as noted at i.7.1n, which on occasion they granted; but given their increasing dominance of the Caucasus, the defence of the Darial pass was more important to them than their neighbours, although the extensive Sabir raid of 515, reported by Mal. 16.13 and Th. Lect. 514 (= Theoph. 161–2), shows that the Romans could not afford to neglect the region. These

issues – collaboration in defending the passes and the Sabir raid – are both found in the Syriac legend of Alexander (Pseudo-Callisthenes), tr. Budge 1889, 144–58, which also associates Alexander with the Caspian Gates. See Czeplédy 1957, esp. 240–1, 245. The fortress is referred to by John the Lydian as Biraparach (iii.52.4) and by Priscus, frg. 41.1.10/31.2 (p.70.14), as Iureiopaach. See Chaumont 1973, 687–91, Blockley 1985, 63–6, Rubin 1986, 683–4, Braund 1994, 269–71, Luther 1997, 104–8, Greatrex 1998a, 124–8, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 20–1, 56–9, 78, Mazza 2003, 407–9, Schamp 2006, vol.2, xxviii–ix, Mitford 2018, 57, 615–20. On recent archaeological work on the defences of the pass see Sauer et al. 2015, Sauer et al. 2016, Sauer et al. 2020, esp. 876–94. The precise location of the fort eludes identification, though the remains at Dariali are dated to the late fourth or early fifth century: see Sauer et al. 2020, 872–6, cf. 239–40, 935–40 on the various defensive points in the pass. See also Howard-Johnston 2014, 150–3, about work, perhaps under Kavadh, on defending the Darband pass, which was protected by two series of walls, cf. Lawrence and Wilkinson 2017, 109–16.

10.9–12 are found also in *Exc. de leg. gent.*, 490.5–18.

10.10 Ἀμβαζούκης, Οὐννος μὲν γένος, ‘Ambazuces, a Hun by birth’. He is known only from this passage; Maenchen-Helfen 1973, 390, translates the name (from the old Iranian) as ‘having arms with power’; cf. Alemany 2006, noting its similarity to that of an Ossetian called Anbazuk in *Kartlis Tskhovreba*, 45–6/54–5. Howorth 1892, 614–15, considers him to have been a Sabir Hun and dates the offer here mentioned to c.508, cf. Kazanski and Mastykova 2003, 97. Sauer et al. 2020, place the offer after a Sabir raid in 504/5 (Proc. i.8.19) and note a suggestion that the ruler’s name might indicate that he was an Alan. See also *PLRE* ii, Ambazuces, Greatrex 1998a, 129, Schindell 2004a, 489. The date of his death is unknown.

10.11 δρᾶν γὰρ ἀνεπισκέπτως οὐδὲν οὔτε ἡπίστατο οὔτε εἰώθει, ‘who did not know how to act without due consideration and was unused to doing so’. An apparently critical comment, given that Procopius had referred at i.6.19 to Kavadh as remarkably δραστήριος, *drastērios*, ‘energetic’ or ‘active’, a word from the same root as δρᾶν, *dran*, ‘to act’. At *Anecd.* 19.5, however, Procopius characterises him as ‘most cautious’ or ‘most wary’ in building up the reserves of the treasury. This passage has therefore been variously interpreted: Kaldellis 2004a, 98, considers Procopius to be portraying Anastasius positively, while Isaac 1990, 230,

sees Procopius as critical of the emperor's decision, cf. Greatrex 2014b, 93–4.

Anastasius' reasoning for refusing Ambazuces' offer, as Procopius presents it, is sound: the Persians dominated the Caucasus at this point and had more to lose by Hunnic raids. But as noted above (on 10.9), the Sabir Huns were able to penetrate the pass and raid Armenia, Cappadocia and Mesopotamia in 515; one may surmise that this was after Kavadh had taken control of the passes from Ambazuces' sons and may have been part of an attempt to convince the Romans to help pay for their defences (cf. Kavadh's remarks to this effect at i.16.4). See Braund 1994, 269–71, Greatrex 1998a, 129–30. Kazanski and Mastykova 2003, 97–9, emphasise the build-up of Sasanian defences here under Kavadh and Khusro, cf. Dunlop 1954, 20–1, citing Baladhuri, 305–6, who reports defensive works built by Kavadh. See further now Sauer et al. 2020, 876–80.

Some confirmation for the Persian takeover comes from a silver coin of Kavadh dated to 529 found at Gveleti, just south of the fort guarding the pass, cf. Sauer et al. 2016, 20, Sauer et al. 2020, 879, 892; see also Bibikov 1996, 382, on the widespread circulation of coins – Roman, Sasanian and Georgian–Sasanian – in the region from the late fifth century. A silver plate with a stamp of Anastasius now in the Hermitage, found probably in Abkhazia, may offer an indicator of Roman interest here in this period: see Pyatnitsky 2006, 119–20, Colvin 2021, cf. Gavritukhin and Kazanski 2010, 134–6, on archaeological evidence for Roman contact with the northern Caucasus in the period.

The summary of Procopius' *Wars* by the patriarch Photius, which for this section (10.1–12) repeats his text almost *verbatim* down to 10.10, here diverges significantly. Having noted that Ambazuces was a friend of Anastasius and the Romans (10.10), he states instead ὃς καὶ ἐνεχειρίζεν Ἀναστασίῳ τὰς πύλας. Ὁ δὲ τῆς μὲν προθυμίας ἀπεδέχετο, οὐκ ἀνεδέχετο δὲ τὴν φροντίδα ('who entrusted the Gates to Anastasius. While he [Anastasius] was pleased with his [Ambazuces'] goodwill, he did not take upon himself the responsibility [sc. for guarding the Gates]'). It would appear that Photius has suppressed Ambazuces' offer and the emperor's refusal, perhaps because he found Procopius' portrayal of the episode too critical.

10.13 πόλιν ἐδείματο ἐν χωρίῳ Δάρας ὀχυράν τε ὑπερφυῶς καὶ λόγου ἄξιαν, αὐτοῦ βασιλέως ἐπώνυμον. '(Anastasius) built a city in the district of Dara, which was exceedingly strong and worthy of note; it

bore the name of the emperor himself.' In other words, the fortress was known as both Dara and Anastasiopolis, although the former name was more common. Extensive remains have survived at Dara; the details of its construction are recounted in Ps.-Josh. 90, PZ vii.6, Marc. *com.* a.518. At *Aed.* ii.1.4–10 Procopius emphasises the sloppiness of the work carried out under Anastasius, attributing it to the harassment of the Persian forces (cf. 10.15 here); this also allows him to emphasise the importance of the improvements made by Justinian. Work began in late 505 and, according to PZ vii.6d, was completed in 'two or three years'.

There has been much recent discussion of the foundation of Dara, which became a vital Roman strongpoint. See (e.g.) Mundell Mango 1975, Croke and Crow 1983, Whitby 1986b, esp. 751–2, 769–71, Gregory 1997, ii, 80–8, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 74–7, Haarer 2006, 68–70, Schamp 2006, vol.2, cxiv–v, PZT 247–51 (with further bibliography), Howard-Johnston 2013, 873–4, Petersen 2013, 136–9, Keser-Kayaalp and Erdoğan 2017, 153. The order to build the fortress is *RKOR* 297.

10.14 ἀπέχει δὲ αὕτη πόλεως μὲν Νισίβιδος σταδίου ἑκατὸν δυοῖν δέοντας, χώρας δὲ, ἥ τὰ Ῥωμαίων τε καὶ Περσῶν διορίζει, ὀκτὼ καὶ εἴκοσι μάλιστα. 'It is ninety-eight stades distant from the city of Nisibis and approximately twenty-eight from the place that divides the territories of the Romans and the Persians.' Both these figures are divisible by seven, strengthening the plausibility of Haury's arguments (1906) that Procopius equated 1 Roman mile with 7 stades. They would thus be the equivalent of 14 Roman miles (20.8 km) from Nisibis to Dara (actually 26 km) and 4 Roman miles (5.9 km) to the frontier (actually 10.4, according to Dillemann 1962, 228), whereas Georg. Cyp. 912, p.64, gives the distance as six (Roman) miles; although this figure is a late addition, cf. Honigsmann 1934, 213, it may reflect the sixth-century situation. Marc. *com.* a.518 puts the city 15 (Roman) miles west of Nisibis. Dillemann, *loc. cit.*, discusses Procopius' figures in detail, suggesting that he has here doubled the length of his stade, but his calculations are problematic. See Appendix 2, p. 675, and note Dillemann, 317 fig.40, for a detailed map of the area. Even modern estimates of the distances vary considerably: Schamp 2006, vol.2, cxiv, puts Dara 18 km from Nisibis, while Meier 2009, 212, rightly prefers 27 km. Much depends upon the route taken: at i.13.15 Procopius puts Ammodius, which lay on the main east-west road to Nisibis, at 20 stades (south) from Dara along the standard route between the two cities.

See Greatrex 2007d, 108–9, on the significance of the reference to a fixed frontier.

10.16 ἐπειδὴ τε αὐτὸν τάχιστα Καβάδης κατέλυσε, πέμψας παρὰ Ῥωμαίους ἡτιᾶτο πόλιν αὐτοὺς οἰκοδομήσασθαι ἄγχιστά που τῶν σφετέρων ὁρίων, ἀπειρημένον τοῦτο ἐν τοῖς Μήδοις τε καὶ Ῥωμαίοις συγκειμένοις τὰ πρότερα. ‘As soon as Kavadh had brought the war to an end, he sent a message to the Romans to accuse them of having built a city right on the Persian borderlands, even though this had been prohibited in the earlier treaties between the Persians (Medes) and Romans.’ Kavadh’s war was directed against the Sabirs in the Caucasus, see i.8.19n; PZ vii.6c confirms Kavadh’s engagement in foreign wars, cf. PZT 248 n.104.

Proc. *Aed.* ii.1.5–7 describes the building work in similar terms, stressing the difficulty of operations in the face of Persian resistance, cf. Whitby 1988, 213. The prohibition on the building of fortifications close to the frontier was noted at 2.15, cf. the note *ad loc.* It is curious that the Persians should have complained at this derogation from an earlier treaty, given that their invasion represented a yet clearer violation; Meier 2009, 399 n.229, presumes that the truce just agreed (9.24) reaffirmed the earlier terms. See Greatrex 1998a, 120 and i.7.1n.

Ps.-Josh. 81 reports gifts by Anastasius to Kavadh in connection with the truce that brought the war to an end (cf. Proc. i.9.24), including ‘a table-service entirely of gold’. Such presents may be those referred to here (10.17) by Procopius. See Greatrex 1998a, 120–1, *RKOR* 317.

10.18 καὶ πόλιν δὲ ἄλλην ταύτη ὁμοίαν ἐν Ἀρμενίοις ὁ βασιλεὺς οὗτος ἀγχοτάτω ἐδείματο τῶν Περσαρμενίας ὁρίων, ἥ κώμη μὲν ἐκ παλαιοῦ ἐτύγχανεν οὔσα, πόλεως δὲ ἀξίωμα μέχρι ἐς τὸ ὄνομα πρὸς Θεοδοσίου βασιλέως λαβοῦσα ἐπώνυμος αὐτοῦ ἐγεγόνει. ‘This emperor also built another city like this very close to the frontiers of Persarmenia. It had of old been a village, but it received the rank at least of city from the Emperor Theodosius and was even named for him.’ Procopius refers to the strengthening of Theodosiopolis (in Armenia) by Anastasius also at *Aed.* iii.5.4–8, although, as at Dara, he underplays the work carried out; cf. Croke and Crow 1983, 159, *RKOR* 307. In both works he emphasises the insignificance of the Theodosian foundation. Garsoïan 2004, esp. 184, argues that it was Theodosius I (379–95) who founded the city, although most scholars believe that it was rather his grandson, Theodosius II, so Greatrex 2008a, 87–91 (with bibliography). Crow 2017 discusses the foundation and lay-out of the city in detail.

Procopius reports Anastasius' attempt to endow this city too with his own name at *Aed.* iii.5.5 but notes that the new name failed to catch on.

μέχρι ἔς, *mekhri es*, 'up to', here, 'as far as (the name)', is a combination of prepositions much favoured by Procopius, found already at Hdt. iv.181.4, cf. Xen. *Anab.* vi.4.27 (μέχρι εἰς), Appian, *Bel. Civ.* iii.1.5 and over sixty times in Procopius, e.g. i.1.12. See Scheftlein 1893, 31.

10.19 ἐπιτειχίσματα γὰρ αὐτῶν τῇ χώρᾳ γέγονεν ἄμφω. 'For both places were bulwarks directed against their (the Persians') territory.' They thus became the focus of frequent Persian complaints, cf. i.16.4–8 below, chiefly focused on Dara. PZ vii.6b outlines the largely defensive reasons for the construction of Dara: the Roman generals pointed out the need for a forward base during hostilities with Persia as a place to mobilise and to store supplies. But the proximity to the frontier also allowed it to function as a potential springboard for offensive operations, thus presenting a serious danger to the Persians. The term ἐπιτειχίσμα, *epiteikhisma* ('stronghold placed on the enemy's frontier') is thus quite appropriate here; Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* iii.28.5, iii.47.4, describes how Dara was placed 'at the throat of the enemy' (tr. Carney), cf. Proc. *Aed.* ii.1.13 with Whitby 1988, 212, Greatrex 1998a, 120–1, Meier 2009, 212–13.

Procopius highlights the major building projects undertaken by Anastasius in the wake of the war, but these were only part of a wider and more ambitious programme, including work at (e.g.) Batnae and Euchaïta. Haarer 2006, 65–72, draws the evidence together conveniently, cf. Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 77–8, Howard-Johnston 2013, 872–84 (with good maps).

i.11.1–30 The Proposed Adoption of Khusro by Justin I and the Impact of its Failure

History

Probably in 524 or 525 the ageing Kavadh proposed to the Roman Emperor, Justin I, that he adopt his youngest son, Khusro, in order to ensure that his claims to the throne be upheld: he had two elder brothers, one of whom, Kaoses, was a plausible rival to succeed. The context was not entirely propitious, for the Lazic king Tzath had recently embraced Christianity and defected to the Romans; he had then been lavishly received in Constantinople and baptised. This had naturally soured great power relations. Justin's recruitment of the Hunnic king Zilgibi, perhaps

a Sabir Hun from north of the Caucasus, did nothing to improve the situation. But when this king then decided to shift his allegiance to Kavadh, Justin is said to have alerted the Persian king to the Hunnic ruler's unreliability. Kavadh promptly executed Zilgibi and, according to Mal. (17.9–10) and the *Chronicon Paschale* (613–16) who recount these events, proceeded to initiate talks with Justin through an emissary called Labroeus (cf. Joh. Nik. 90.35–46, Theoph. 167).

Although Procopius makes no mention of it here, continuing struggles at court between allies and opponents of Mazdak and Mazdakism may explain Kavadh's desire to ensure the succession of Khusro: Kaoses, the eldest son, is associated by Theoph. (169–70, cf. Mal. 18.30) with the Mazdakites. Seoses, who fell from power just after the negotiations failed, was also a prominent supporter of the Mazdakites, as can be inferred from his backing for Kavadh when he was ousted from power in 496/7. A definitive suppression of the sect took place soon afterwards, either in the late 520s or early 530s. See Christensen 1944, 353–4, 359–60, Crone 1991, 30–2, Hartmann 2005, Gariboldi 2006, 115, 118–19, Wiesehöfer 2009, 403–4.

Negotiations took place on the frontier to prepare the ground for the adoption, but in the end broke down. Neither of the leading envoys from each side, Hypatius and Seoses, appears to have been enthusiastic for the arrangement. The *quaestor sacri palatii* at Constantinople, Proculus (Proclus), also fiercely opposed the proposal, ostensibly on legal grounds, claiming that the adoption as Justin's son could entitle Khusro to succeed him to the Roman throne.

Bibliography: Stein 1949, 268–70, Vasiliev 1950, 265–8, Claude 1989, 32–4, Mango and Scott 1997, 255 n.2, Greatrex 1998a, 130–8, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 79–81, Tate 2004, 124–6, Börm 2007, 111–19, 311–17, Pazdernik 2015, 236–49.

Historiography

Two other sources report the adoption attempt, both of which may derive ultimately from Procopius. Theoph. 167–8 adds little to Procopius, although he claims that the senate was consulted on the issue, a detail that could indicate use of another source, perhaps the same as that on which Procopius drew; he inserts the adoption attempt after the Zilgibi episode reported also by the sixth-century chroniclers. Zon. xiv.5 (268) offers a very abbreviated account that briefly notes

Justin's refusal to become the *epitropos* (see 11.9n) of Khusro. Although some have doubted the historicity of the episode, it is generally now accepted. The negotiations referred to by PZ viii.5a, involving the Roman generals Hypatius and Pharesmanes, took place later, probably in 527, so PZT 298 n.69.

Ian Colvin has suggested that Procopius' focus on the adoption issue, omitting the details of the defection of Lazica (about which he knew, as is clear from 11.28), represents an attempt to play down Roman responsibility for the renewal of hostilities in the late 520s; alternatively, it may be that the events in Lazica, which are widely reported by the chroniclers, were sufficiently well known that Procopius chose to omit them in this introductory section, which in general makes no attempt at completeness. It seems likely, given also the parallels with the guardianship of Yazdgerd over Theodosius II, that Procopius believed an opportunity had been missed when talks about the adoption failed, cf. Stickler 2018, 149.

Bibliography: Destunis 1876, 127 n.6, Wirth 1964, Pieler 1972, 402–3, Mango and Scott 1997, 255 n.5, Börm 2007, 311–12, Croke 2007, 43, Greatrex 2016a, 176–8, Maas 2016, 180–2, Colvin 2018, 204–7, Stickler 2018, 147–50.

11.1 Ἀναστασίου δὲ ὀλίγῳ ὕστερον τελευτήσαντος Ἰουστίνου τὴν βασιλείαν παρέλαβεν, ἀπεληλαμένων αὐτῆς τῶν Ἀναστασίου συγγενῶν ἀπάντων, καίπερ πολλῶν τε καὶ λίαν ἐπιφανῶν ὄντων.
 'Anastasius died shortly after this, and Justin took over the empire, beating off all Anastasius' relatives from the imperial power, although they were many and very distinguished.' Anastasius died in the night of 8–9 July 518: Procopius as usual makes no effort at any chronological precision, cf. Destunis 1876, 122 n.1. Evagr. *HE* iv.1 (cf. Nic. Call. xvii.1, PG 147.220) offers a similar assessment of the situation, but in fact none of Anastasius' three nephews were serious contenders; he had no legitimate children of his own. The eldest, Hypatius, had had an unsuccessful military career, both in the East and in the Balkans, where he was captured by Vitalian in 514; by his mistake at i.9.1 (see the relevant note) in claiming Areobindus, not Hypatius, was recalled during the Persian war, Procopius elides one of his failures, although his portrayal of his performance in the war is hardly favourable. The two other nephews, Pompey and Probus, had never obtained high office like Hypatius. See Greatrex 1996a, Whitby 2000a, 200 n.3, Haarer 2006, 247–9. Pfeilschifter 2013, 165, 175, rightly emphasises Anastasius' choice not to promote the interests of any of his nephews.

Procopius naturally passes over the doctrinal issues that clouded the issue of Anastasius' successor: they had no place in a classicising history. But the emperor's increasingly uncompromising opposition to the Council of Chalcedon had weakened his position, sparking Vitalian's uprising in the Balkans and riots in Constantinople. Hypatius, his eldest nephew, had once been an opponent of the council, although his attitude was wavering; Pompey had always favoured the council, while Probus consistently opposed it. The importance of this aspect of the succession emerges clearly from the acclamations of the people preserved among the acts of the Council of Constantinople (536): it was essential that the new emperor be a staunch Chalcedonian. Procopius alludes to this issue at *Anecd.* 6. See Vasiliev 1950, 131–44, Whitby 2000a, 201 n.4, Greatrex 2007a, 99–105.

Details on the process of the selection of Justin I, which was presided over by Celer, are preserved in *De Cer.* i.102 (i.93); see also PZ viii.1. For details see Vasiliev 1950, 68–82, Haarer 2006, 247–8, Greatrex 2007a, Pfeilschifter 2013, 165–75. See also the next note on the translation of this sentence.

11.2 τότε δὴ μέριμνά τις Καβάδῃ ἐγένετο, 'At this, the thought (or worry) came to Kavadh.' The throne had never been hereditary in the Roman empire, however, as was clear from Anastasius' own accession. See Bury 1923, i, 11–15 (a good general discussion), Claude 1989, 33, Haarer 2006, 247, Börm 2007, 315, Pfeilschifter 2013, 123–4, Börm 2015, 312. More likely, Procopius is using the brief reference to Justin's accession to allow him to expatiate on Persian history; as on other occasions (i.23–4), he deliberately draws parallels between the two courts, cf. Kaldellis 2004, 86–8, Börm 2007, 98 n.4. But whether this represents an attempt to underline the illegitimacy of Justin's succession is uncertain, despite Börm 2007, 267, 314–15: a literal translation of the relevant phrase is 'since all Anastasius' relatives had been sidelined from the throne', which need not implicate Justin in the manoeuvrings.

Procopius is the only contemporary source to report this significant development in relations between the two powers, which recalls that described at i.2.1–10. By 518 Kavadh was certainly no longer young, even if some sources overestimate his age (see i.4.2n). His adoption proposal was made several years later, most probably in 524 or 525; Theophanes' dating (to 520/1) cannot be given any credence. The link between Justin's accession and Kavadh's initiative is in effect a Procopian invention. See Greatrex 1998a, 137, Börm 2007, 315 n.5, Pazdernik 2015, 226, Börm 2021.

Procopius exaggerates the circumstances of Kavadh's decision. Even if he himself had previously been overthrown, there was little prospect of someone from outside the Sasanian house seizing the throne: see Börm 2007, 113–14. It is likewise doubtful whether there was a formal principle of primogeniture, as he rather trenchantly asserts at 11.3, even if other sources hold the same view: Zos. ii.27.2, discussing the fourth-century prince Hormisdas, also insists that the Persians practised primogeniture. Yet as Procopius reports himself, Balash had been chosen (5.2) to be king, cf. 21.22. There is thus some inconsistency in Procopius, as Börm 2007, 111–12, observes. A more elective system is indicated by the sixth-century *Letter of Tansar*, for which see Boyce 1968, 61–3, cf. Christensen 1944, 263, 353, Widengren 1976, 241–6, Huyse 2009, esp. 147 (bringing other sources to bear). Nonetheless, the eldest son generally did succeed, and so Procopius is not far off the mark, so Börm 2007, 117 and n.4, *contra* Kaldellis 2004, 86–7. See further i.21.20n.

11.3 τῶν γάρ οἱ παίδων τὸν πρεσβύτατον Κάοσην τῆς μὲν ἡλικίας ἔνεκα ἐς τὴν βασιλείαν ὁ νόμος ἐκάλει, ἀλλὰ Καβάδην οὐδαμῇ ἤρεσκεν. ἐβιάζετο δὲ τὴν τε φύσιν καὶ τὰ νόμιμα ἢ τοῦ πατρὸς γνώμη. 'The law destined his eldest son, Kaoses, for the throne, because of his birth, but Kavadh did not want this. The father's attitude conflicted both with nature and the law of succession.' On the issue of primogeniture, see the preceding note. It is generally remarked that Procopius shows some *parti pris* for Kaoses (Kāwūs or Kayūs), the eldest son, cf. Kaldellis 2004, 86, Börm 2007, 113. This may be the consequence of a legitimist mentality, opposing the violation of convention; but it may also stem from one of his likely sources, Kaoses' nephew Kavadh, who sought refuge at the Roman court in the 540s, see *PLRE* iii, Cavades. Zames, Kavadh's father, is highly spoken of (11.5), just as Kaoses is here. Procopius returns to Kaoses' and Zames' claims to the throne at ii.9.12–13: see Kaldellis 2004, 86 and below, i.23.4n. Such is Procopius' antipathy towards Khusro that he insists strongly on the weakness of his claim to the throne, even if he may have been aware that the first-born did not always succeed. See Brodka 2004, 120–4, Börm 2007, 111–15.

Kaoses is usually identified with the prince Phthasouarsan whose name is transmitted only by Theophanes (169–70) as the leader of the Mazdakite faction at court that was eliminated by Kavadh at the end of his reign. See Justi 1895, 335 no.7 (s.v. 'Usan'), 99 (s.v. Φθασουαρσάν), *PLRE* ii, Caoses, Crone 1991, 31, Mango and Scott 1997, 261 n.7, Pourshariati 2008, 288–9; Theophanes appears to have confused his

personal name with that of the region he governed, Tabaristan, cf. Gyselen 1989, 81. An identification of Malalas' Perozes (18.26), described as Kavadh's elder son, and Kaoses is unlikely: see Greatrex 1994, 140–1, cf. MalKom *ad loc.*

11.4 Ζάμην δὲ, ὃς τὰ δευτερεῖα ἐφέρετο, τοῖν ὀφθαλμοῖν τὸν ἕτερον ἐκκεκομμένον ἐκώλυεν ὁ νόμος, 'Zames, who was the second son, was kept by law from the throne because he had lost one of his eyes.' The bar to succession on those with any physical blemish is confirmed by the practice of mutilation, noted several times by Procopius (already at 5.7); Tabari 833/42 mentions the same rule, albeit in the context of a king, Hormizd I, who overcame the bar. See Börm 2007, 112, Huyse 2009, 149. Kavadh, son of Zames (Zham, a shortened form of Jāmāsp, cf. Gignoux 1986, no.471), subsequently became the focus of a plot to unseat Khusro, recounted by Procopius at i.23.1–6.

11.5 Χοσρόην δὲ, ὃς αὐτῷ ἐκ τῆς Ἀσπεβέδου ἀδελφῆς ἐγγόνει, ὑπερηγάπα μὲν ὁ πατήρ, 'The father was passionately devoted to Khusro, who had been born to him by Aspebedes' sister.' Procopius presumably refers to the Aspebedes that concluded the truce at 9.24, cf. the relevant note. Whether Aspebedes is a personal name or a title – and if the latter, which title – remains unclear. Pourshariati 2008, 110–11, argues that the reference is to a member of the Ispahbudhān house, one of the seven chief families that dated back to Parthian times, cf. Christensen 1944, 103–4, but see Gyselen 2009, 175–7, who suggests that the family name may be a later creation. Maksymiuk 2015a, 193 and n.52, identifies the Ispahbudhān family with that of the Surēn. See also Gyselen 2008a, 108, stressing the confusion between family name and title. If Aspebedes designates an office, then it might refer either to that of *spāhbad*, i.e. general, or to that of *asped*, a cavalry commander; similar uncertainty surrounds the *astābed* of Ps.-Josh. 59 and elsewhere. See Chaumont 1987a, 1987b. Gyselen 2001, 24–7, discusses nobles who held both these titles. An identification of Aspebedes with Shapur, the rival of Seoses/Siyāvush, seems unlikely, despite Marquart 1895, 637 n.6.

Procopius describes Kavadh's love for his son in strong terms, ὑπερηγάπα, *hyperēgapa*, 'he loved exceedingly'. John the Cappadocian's love for his daughter is similarly described (i.25.13), as is Belisarius' fondness for two infantry commanders (v.28.28); there is no criticism implied. The term appears also in Justinian's legislation on the legitimation of children born out of wedlock, *NovJ.* 74.1 (538), *NovJ.* 89.9 (539).

As noted at i.ii.1–30h, Kavadh's support for Khusro is likely to be connected to a determination to sideline his former allies, the Mazdakites, who backed Kaoses. But at ii.26.37 Procopius attributes the claim to the doctor Stephanus that he had advised Kavadh to pass the throne to Khusro, cf. *PLRE* iii, Stephanus 9 and the note *ad loc.* PZ ix.6d-7a claims that Khusro's mother was cured by a Christian holy man, Moses, near the frontier at Dara, during the reign of Kavadh; he goes on to state that it was Rufinus that recommended Khusro's succession. Neither claim can be substantiated, although it is clear that Rufinus enjoyed good relations with Kavadh: see i.ii.24n.

ii.5 ὁρῶν δὲ Πέρσας σχεδόν τι εἰπεῖν ἅπαντας τεθηπότας τὴν Ζάμου ἀνδρείαν (ἦν γὰρ ἀγαθὸς τὰ πολέμια) καὶ τὴν ἄλλην ἀρετὴν σέβοντας, 'but seeing that the Persians were one might almost say all besotted with Zames' bravery (for he was an excellent warrior), and honoured him for his prowess in other respects'. The participle τεθηπότας, *tethēpotas*, comes from the verb τέθηπα, *tethēpa*, 'to be amazed', common in Homer (e.g. *Il.* 21.29), subsequently in Late Antique authors (where it is used transitively). It is probably better to interpret ἀρετή, *aretē*, as 'prowess' or 'excellence' rather than 'virtue' (as do Dewing–Kaldellis), since there is no particular moral dimension here, cf. i.21.22n.

ii.6 ἔδοξεν οὖν αὐτῷ ἄριστον εἶναι τὸν τε πόλεμον καὶ τὰς τοῦ πολέμου αἰτίας διαλύσαι Ῥωμαίοις, ἐφ' ᾧ Χοσρόης παῖς ἐσποιητὸς Ἰουστίνῳ βασιλεῖ γένοιτο, 'He thought it best therefore to put a stop to the war against Rome and to its cause on condition that Khusro should become the adopted son of the Emperor Justin.' See the general note on this chapter on the date and circumstances of this proposal. Pieler 1972, 400, sees in the use of the term διαλύσαι, *dialysai*, 'to put an end to, reconcile', a reference to contemporary legal practice; but the word ἐσποιητός, *espoietos*, by contrast is not found in legal texts of the sixth century, *ibid.* 403.

This section, ii.6–24, is found also in *Exc. de leg. gent.*, 490.19–492.18, with a few minor differences. Dignas and Winter 2007, 104–5, translate 6–11 and 29–30; their dating of the episode to 522 is improbable, however, cf. Greatrex 1998a, 134–8.

ii.7 ἐγὼ δὲ ὑμῖν τὰ ἐγκλήματα πάντα ἀφεῖναι παντελῶς ἔγνωκα, 'but I have firmly resolved to forgive you all these wrongs'. The infinitive ἀφεῖναι, *apheinai*, 'to release from, to excuse' is used in Attic legal texts, on which Procopius may be basing his usage. So Pieler 1972, 400.

11.9 λέγω δὲ ὅπως ἂν Χοσρόην τὸν ἐμὸν, ὃς μοι τῆς βασιλείας διάδοχος ἔσται, εἰσποιητὸν παῖδα ποιήσαιο. ‘I mean that you should make my son Khusro, who will be the heir to my throne, your adopted son.’ The precise nature of this adoption is discussed in detail by Pieler 1972, who notes, 404–5, that in Sasanian law a father would adopt someone to act in a ward’s interests until their majority; hence one would expect Kavadh to adopt Justin according to this system. Naturally, for political reasons, it was more appropriate rather to ask the emperor to act as the adopter. As Pieler notes, 402–3, Zon. xiv.5 and Theoph. 167 both use the term *epitropos* to refer to Justin’s role, which can mean ‘tutor’ but also ‘testamentary executor’; he argues, 415–21, partly on the basis of the precedent of Yazdgerd’s protection of the young Theodosius II (see i.2.1–10), that this term more accurately reflects the Persian proposal.

11.10 Ταῦτα ἐπεὶ ἀπενεχθέντα Ἰουστίνος βασιλεὺς εἶδεν, αὐτὸς τε περιχαρὴς ἐγένετο καὶ Ἰουστινιανὸς ὁ βασιλέως ἀδελφιδοῦς, ὃς δὴ αὐτῷ καὶ τὴν βασιλείαν ἐκδέξασθαι ἐπίδοξος ἦν. ‘When the Emperor Justin had received and read this, he and Justinian, the emperor’s nephew, who was expected to succeed him on the throne, were overjoyed.’ As Croke 2007, 41–4, shows, Justinian was probably by this point (524/5) married to Theodora and holder of the title *nobilissimus*. He further suggests that this episode, and the issue of succession, may have prompted his elevation to the rank of Caesar in 525, cf. Pazdernik 2015, 224–6, on the political context in Constantinople.

The joy of the emperors is described in terms very similar to that of King Xerxes at Hdt. vii.215.1, as Braun 1894, 30–1, notes. Cf. the joy attributed to Justinian by Mal. 18.53, likewise in the context of a peace offer (in late 530).

11.11 καὶ κατὰ τάχος ἐς τὴν πρᾶξιν ἡπειγέσθην τὴν ἐσποίησιν ἐν γράμμασι θέσθαι, ἣ νόμος Ῥωμαίοις, εἰ μὴ Πρόκλος ἐκώλυσεν. ‘And they would have made all haste to comply, and to set down the adoption in writing according to Roman law, had not Proculus prevented them.’ It seems as though it was this written aspect that particularly concerned Proculus, cf. 11.22 below: the *adoptio in/per arma* was acceptable partly because it involved no document.

Roman law proposed two means of adoption, either by a writ from the emperor (*principale rescriptum*) in the case of an adoptee who was already *sui iuris*, i.e. freed from paternal authority, a practice known as ‘adrogation’, or by application to a magistrate in the case of applicants who

remained under their father's authority. It seems likely that Khusro would be treated as *sui iuris*, even if his father was still alive. Since the adoptee became thus fully integrated into the adopting family, there would be implications for his inheritance; one of the conditions for undertaking an 'adrogation' was the absence of existing children. Hence, one might argue, Khusro could lay a claim, although, as noted at 11.2n, the transmission of power in the empire did not proceed on the basis of filial succession. See *Inst.* i.11 with Buckland 1963, 121–8, esp. 125–7, Kaser 1975, §227, 207–11, O.F. Robinson in Metzger 1998, 24–6, cf. *C.J.* 8.47.10. Kaser 1975, 208–9, notes the use of written contracts in the eastern empire whose aim was to ensure that the adopted child was brought up by the adoptive father and that his property and inheritance were looked after by him. Although these contracts were not legally valid, they do correspond more closely to the sort of arrangement that Kavadh must have envisaged.

Procopius employs similar terminology, save that he refers to the law of the Christians, rather than the Romans, in describing Belisarius' adoption of Theodosius, *Anecd.* 1.16.

11.11 ὃς βασιλεῖ τότε παρήδρευε τὴν τοῦ καλουμένου κοιαίστωρος ἀρχὴν ἔχων, ἀνὴρ δίκαιός τε καὶ χρημάτων διαφανῶς ἀδωρότατος, 'He (Proculus) was then one of the emperor's attendants with the office of *quaestor*, an upright man, notoriously inaccessible to bribery.' Procopius' Proclus is the addressee of *C.J.* 12.19.13 (from between 522 and 526), where the name is given as Proculus, cf. *PLRE* ii, Proculus 5; he held the office of *quaestor sacri palatii* for much of Justin's reign; he died before mid 527. His uprightness is stressed by Procopius at *Anecd.* 9.41, cf. Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* iii.20.10 and *Anth. Gr.* xvi.48; his leading role under Justin is likewise noted at *Anecd.* 6.13. See also Schamp 2006, vol.1, dlxxxvii–viii, vol.2, cclxix–xx, and Pazdernik 2015. Pazdernik 2012, 107, notes interesting parallels between Procopius' portrayal of Proculus and Ammianus' of the *quaestor* Eupraxius, 27.6.14. Although the *magister officiorum* was generally the official most concerned with foreign policy, the *quaestor* might also play a part, cf. Nechaeva 2014, 30. The phrase χρημάτων διαφανῶς ἀδωρότατος, *khrēmātōn diaphanōs adōrotatos*, 'notoriously inaccessible to bribery', recalls Thuc. ii.65.8, where it is used to describe Pericles; cf. 11.33, where it is applied to the Persian Seoses.

This short section on Proculus (11–12) is found in the *Suda* (Π2474) as well as the *Exc. de leg. gent.* De Boor 1914–19, 44, argues that the compiler of the *Suda* systematically used the *Excerpta* rather than

Procopius' text for his entries, citing this passage among others. There are minor textual discrepancies here between the MSS of Procopius, the *Excerpta* and the Suda, although they do not affect the sense.

11.13–18 The Speech of the Quaestor Proculus

The advisory (*symbolleutikos*) speech is redolent of the conservative outlook of Proculus, already underlined at 11.12, an attitude of which Procopius no doubt approved, cf. Claude 1989, 33, Signes Codoñer 2003, 221, Börm 2007, 315. Yet the legal arguments advanced in the speech are unconvincing; the Roman imperial office was not capable of being bequeathed in this way, quite apart from obvious issues of *Realpolitik* that would have prevented a non-Christian foreign ruler from taking over the throne, *pace* Rubin 1960, 259–60. The speech is thus more likely Procopius' creation (cf. Solari 1948, 355–6), playing on stereotypes of Persian guile, although it may well reflect points made in the course of debates in Constantinople at the time. Pazdernik 2012, 107–10, argues that Procopius fashions the episode in such a way as to show how a conservative minister could exercise his influence over unsophisticated rulers, cf. *idem* 2015, 242–6. Maas 2016, 181–4, detects a more positive attitude on Procopius' part towards the initiative; Dahn 1865, 303, found it ambiguous.

Theoph. 168 indicates that there was widespread opposition to Kavadh's proposal in the senate, which Lounghis 2005, esp. 25–6, sees as part of a wider resistance to Justinian by high-ranking pagans; Börm 2007, 316–19, offers a more nuanced evaluation of elements at the court opposed to a détente with Persia. Colvin 2018, 206–7, argues that the adoption would have been accompanied by Roman payments to Persia, which provoked opposition. The notion that Khusro could be adopted in writing by Roman law (11.11) – rather than by arms (see 11.22n) – was unprecedented. Hard-line anti-Persians may have felt that such an adoption was unnecessarily generous to Kavadh, although an adoption by Justin implied at least some Roman superiority. As noted above (on 11.9), it may be that Kavadh was aiming at Justin acting rather as a testamentary executor than as an adoptive father. See Pieler 1972, 422–6, Claude 1989, 32–3.

11.15 οἱ γε οὐκ ἐγκρυφιάζοντες οὐδὲ παραπετάσμασι τισι χρώμενοι, 'They make no attempts to conceal or to veil their intentions.' The verb ἐγκρυφιάζω, *egkryphiazō*, is used by Ar. *Eq.* 822, meaning 'keep oneself hidden'; its next attested use is by Procopius, where it means 'hide',

sometimes transitively (*Anecd.* 1.36), sometimes absolutely (as here). Nic. Chon. 165.76 (vi.3.12, also a reported speech), contains a definite echo of this passage.

11.16 σὲ δὲ, ὦ στρατηγέ, ὅπως ἂν μὴ σαυτῷ ἐς τὴν βασιλείαν ἐμποδῶν γένοιο, ‘and you, General, that you might not damage your prospects of gaining the throne’. Justinian was *magister militum praesentalis* from 520, cf. *PLRE* ii, Iustinianus 7 and Croke 2007, 33. On his progress towards becoming Justin’s heir see Croke 2007 and 11.10n.

11.18 κυρίου ἀποφαίνουσι τοὺς παῖδας εἶναι τοῦ [τοῦ] πατρὸς κλήρου, ‘(all legal systems are united) in declaring that the sons are the possessors of their father’s estate’. Inheritance was a subject to which Justinian returned regularly in his legislation; it may also have been an issue of particular interest to Procopius, cf. Greatrex 2014b, 80–1. Heather 2018, 91–2, is correct in seeing this argument as highly tenuous: an emperor needed widespread support in society to secure the throne, not a specious legal claim.

Haurý, in his apparatus *ad loc.*, suggested a further modification of the printed phrase, where he merely removed a definite article, proposing instead τοῦ πατρῶου κλήρου, *tou patrōou klērou*, ‘of the paternal estate’.

11.19 βασιλεὺς δὲ καὶ ὁ βασιλέως ἀδελφιδοὺς τοὺς τε λόγους ἐνεδέχοντο καὶ τὸ πρακτέον ἐν βουλῇ ἐποιοῦντο. ‘The emperor and his nephew heard it (Proculus’ view) through and deliberated on their course of action.’ Justin and Justinian might appear naïve in their initial enthusiasm as a consequence; on the other hand, their willingness to take advice is evident. Both had extensive experience of affairs of state, and, as Claude 1989, 34, points out, the fact that Kavadh’s proposal was not immediately dismissed indicates that it was not obviously unreasonable.

11.20 ἄνδρας τε αὐτὸν στείλαι δοκίμους ἡξίου, ἐφ’ ᾧ τὴν εἰρήνην πρὸς αὐτὸν θήσονται, καὶ γράμμασι τὸν τρόπον σημῆναι καθ’ ὃν ἂν αὐτῷ τὴν τοῦ παιδὸς εἰσποίησιν θέσθαι βουλομένῳ εἶη, ‘... asking him to send some men of high rank to make peace with him and to tell him by letter how he wished to arrange the boy’s adoption’. Here ἐφ’ ᾧ, *eph’ hō*, has the sense of ‘with the aim of’, rather than ‘on condition that’, cf. Scheftlein 1893, 55. βουλομένῳ, *boulomenō*, ‘to/for him wishing’, is an ethical dative, involving a participle of inclination or aversion with the dative of the person interested, cf. Smyth §1487 and 6.3. The optative εἶη,

eiē, ‘it would be’ softens the force of the verb ‘wish’ or ‘want’, so Smyth §1827; here it is kept in the indirect speech.

11.22 διαρρήδην ἀποκρίνασθαι ὅτι δεῖ, ὡς βαρβάρῳ προσήκει, δηλῶν ὅτι οὐ γράμμασιν οἱ βάρβαροι τοὺς παῖδας <ἐσ>ποιοῦνται, ἀλλ’ ὀπλων σκευῇ. ‘(The envoys) would reply explicitly that it (the adoption) must be a barbarian one. He reminded them that barbarians do not adopt children by written enactments but by the panoply of arms.’ Proculus’ plan was thus first to settle the differences between Rome and Persia, paving the way for some sort of arrangement with Kavadh, and only then to make clear that the adoption would not be in writing (see 11.11n), but rather by an *adoptio in/per arma*, a ceremony already employed by eastern emperors. In this way Zeno had adopted Theoderic the Amal as his son, Jord. *Get.* 57.289, and Justin himself had adopted Theoderic’s grandson Eutharic in 519, Cassiod. *Variae* viii.1.3. The solution might have strengthened Khusro’s position, but it also risked giving the appearance that he was in some way beholden or inferior to the emperor; the fact that his grandson, Khusro II, does appear to have been adopted in this way by Maurice, confirms this, since his position was much weaker. See Pieler 1972, 427–9, 432–3, Claude 1989, 34–5, Greatrex 1998a, 135 and n.43, Gillett 2003, 253 n.153, Börm 2007, 317, Stickler 2017, 148 and n.21, Schwarcz 2018. See also Schilling 2008, 247–58, on Maurice and Khusro II, where the issue is complicated by spurious accounts of the Persian king’s baptism, cf. Payne 2015, 164.

Haury’s emendation of the MSS δῆ, *dē*, ‘in fact’, to δεῖ, *dei*, ‘it is necessary’ is clearly required. Wirth, in his revision of Haury’s text, 558, preferred a variant reading of the following section, producing instead ὅτι δεῖ, ὡς βαρβάρῳ προσήκει. δηλονότι, which would alter the sense of the second sentence of our translation slightly: ‘For obviously barbarians do not ...’.

11.24 καὶ Ῥουφῖνος ὁ Σιλβανοῦ παῖς, ἐν τε πατρικίοις ἀνὴρ δόκιμος καὶ Καβάδῃ ἐκ πατέρων αὐτῶν γινώριμος, ‘and Rufinus, the son of Silvanus, a leading patrician and known to Kavadh through their fathers’. There is a minor textual issue here: Haury emended αὐτῶ (αὐτῶ), *autō*, a dative of the pronoun (cf. *Exc. de legat. Rom.*, p.91.3), ‘for/to him’ or αὐτοῦ, *autou*, a genitive, ‘of him’ in the manuscripts to the genitive plural, *autōn*, ‘of them’, hence ‘their’. This seems logical, since the word πατέρων, *paterōn*, ‘of fathers’, would therefore refer to that of Rufinus and that of Kavadh. But the word can equally be used in the sense of

‘forefathers’, cf. ii.13.8n: hence the emendation is not strictly necessary. Rufinus’ family may then have been well connected to the Sasanian dynasty. But if Haury’s emendation is followed, Silvanus was acquainted with Peroz, Kavadh’s father. See *PLRE* ii, Rufinus 13, Silvanus 7, Lee 1993a, 47, Begass 2018, no.183. PZ ix.7a claims that Rufinus had suggested Khusro’s succession to Kavadh, cf. i.11.5n. Already in 502 he had been sent to Kavadh when Anastasius learnt of the Persian invasion: see 7.1–2n.

On Rufinus’ fellow ambassador, Hypatius, see i.8.2n. Despite an inglorious career during his uncle’s reign, he continued to hold high office under Justin. See Greatrex 1996a, 120–1, 139–40. Rufinus’ mission is *RKOR* 468.

This section, 11.24–31, is found also in *Exc. de leg. Rom.* 90.25–91.23.

11.25 ἐκ Περσῶν δὲ ἀνὴρ δυνατώτατός τε καὶ ἐξουσία πολλῇ χρώμενος, ὄνομα μὲν Σεόσης, ἀδρασταδάραν σαλάνης δὲ τὸ ἀξίωμα, καὶ Μεβόδης, τὴν τοῦ μαγίστρου ἔχων ἀρχήν, ‘On the Persian side was a man of great power and authority called Seoses, *adrastadaran salanes* in rank, and with him Mebodes, holding the office of *magister*.’ On Seoses (Siyāvush) see i.6.1–9n; on his position as *adrastadaran salanes* see i.6.18n. Mebodes (Māhbōdh) was a member of the Sūrēn family, another of the seven great houses of Sasanian Iran. Procopius refers to him as *magistros/magister*, i.e. the equivalent of the Roman *magister officiorum*. It is likely therefore that he held the office of *spāhbad*, i.e. general; he was also at some point promoted to the post of *sar-nakhvēragān*, perhaps following Seoses’ downfall. See Justi 1895, 185, Christensen 1944, 131, 355, *PLRE* iii, Mebodes 1, Börm 2007, 323 n.2, Pourshariati 2008, 60–5 (on the family in the early fifth century), Maksymiuk 2015b, 171–2. Huyse 2002, 213–14, shows that Procopius is here giving the name of a person, not the title *mōbad* (priest).

11.27 ὅπως, ἐπειδὴν τὰ ἐς τὴν εἰρήνην ἐκατέροις δοκῇ ὡς ἄριστα ἔχειν, αὐτὸς ἐς Βυζάντιον στέλλοιτο, ‘so that when each side had decided that the question of the peace was well settled, he could be escorted to Byzantium’. Had the young Khusro actually visited Constantinople before his accession, relations between the two powers might have been very different, as Gariboldi 2006, 118 n.1, remarks. But given that no reigning Persian or Roman monarch ever met his opposite number, cf. Canepa 2009, 129, Procopius’ assertion is open to doubt, even if at this stage Khusro was only the heir apparent.

11.28 καὶ γῆν δὲ τὴν Κολχίδα, ἣ νῦν Λαζική ἐπικαλεῖται, Σεόσης ἔλεγε Περσῶν κατήκοον τὸ ἀνέκαθεν οὔσαν βιασαμένους λόγῳ οὐδενὶ Ῥωμαίους ἔχειν. ‘Seoses claimed that the land of Colchis, which is now called Lazica, formerly subject to Persia, had been seized unjustly by Rome and was now held without any justification.’ Probably in 522 the Lazic king Tzath had come to Constantinople to be baptised, which had caused consternation at the Persian court: see i.11.1–30h, Wirth 1964, 379, Greatrex 1998a, 132–3. The anger of the Roman envoys at this mention of an issue that they must have presumed settled is unsurprising: it appeared that all the discussions thus far had been for nothing. On the problems posed by an adoption by arms, see 11.22n. The envoys of each side could thus offer a good reason for the breakdown of negotiations.

11.30 περιώδυνός τε ὢν τοῖς ξυμπεσοῦσι καὶ Ῥωμαίους εὐχόμενος τῆς ἐς αὐτὸν ὕβρεως τίσασθαι. ‘(Khusro was) greatly grieved at the way things had turned out, and swearing to have revenge on the Romans for their insult to him.’ Procopius anticipates the damage Khusro will do to the eastern empire in the 540s. The adjective περιώδυνος, *periōdunos*, here meaning ‘suffering great pain’ is strong, used mainly by medical writers, but it is one that Procopius favours, cf. *Anecd.* 1.24; see also i.21–2g on the theme of Khusro’s anger.

i.11.31–9 The Downfall of Seoses

Seoses’ fall took place at some point after the failure of negotiations: Procopius’ μετὰ δέ, *meta de*, ‘afterwards’ at 11.31 is vague, as usual. Bury 1923, ii, 81 n.3, suggested that it might represent a chronological digression, anticipating later events. His note is confused (so rightly Stein 1949, 272 n.2), but Börm 2007, 323, rightly remarks that his fall may have occurred even some years later, at the same time as the liquidation of the Mazdakites at the Persian court; cf. Winter and Dignas 2007, 105, who place his downfall in 528/9, so likewise Jackson Bonner 2015a, 84 (cf. 2015b, 114). See further i.11.1–30h. His execution was no doubt partially due to his association with the Mazdakites, cf. e.g. Gariboldi 2006, 117 n.76. Kaldellis 2004, 99–106, analyses this section in detail, drawing out numerous parallels between the accusations laid against Seoses, as Procopius describes them, and those that were put forward against Socrates at Athens. He sees in the section (and that which describes the execution of Boethius and Symmachus, v.1) oblique criticism of the administration under which Procopius was writing. Potential compari-

sons are blurred, however, in that Seoses is described in unflattering terms: it is clear that he was insufferably arrogant (11.33), even if this was an accusation also raised against Socrates. Kavadh appears guilty of ingratitude (11.37), but his insistence on following Persian laws is of a piece with his earlier conduct (cf. 6.13), even if at 11.3 Procopius insists that his preference for Khusro breached them. The concluding sections of the chapter show Justin (and, implicitly, Justinian) acting with greater circumspection: Hypatius is removed from his command, but no execution follows. This section also looks forward to i.23–4, the chapters in which, as a result of internal revolts, Justinian and Khusro do away with Hypatius and Mebodes. See also Börm 2007, 314 n.3.

The fateful consequences of the rivalry between two members of the highest aristocracy recall the accounts in the eastern tradition of the fall of Sukhra, on which see 6.1–9n. According to (e.g.) Tabari 885/131–2, Kavadh had Sukhra executed with the aid of his rival Shapur, a member of the Mihrān house. But as noted above, the chronology of these events is uncertain and they may have no bearing on the case described here by Procopius. See Pourshariati 2008, 74–81, on the Sukhra/Shapur confrontation and i.6.1–9n.

See Greatrex 2003, 65–6, Kaldellis 2004, 86–7, 99–106, Börm 2007, 313–14.

11.31 Ὑπατίῳ τε κοινολογησάμενος πρότερον, ὃς δὴ βασιλεῖ τῷ οἰκείῳ εὐνοϊκῶς ὡς ἥκιστα ἔχων τήν τε εἰρήνην καὶ τήν Χοσρόου ἐσποίησιν ἔργῳ ἐπιτελεῖ οὐκ ἐὼν γενέσθαι. ‘... after agreeing beforehand with Hypatius, who was by no means well-disposed to his own emperor and did not wish the peace and Khusro’s adoption to come into effect’. Further proof of a wider feeling in Constantinople that the proposal should not be accepted, cf. i.11.1–30h. Hypatius might hope to strengthen his position (and redeem his earlier failures) by a successful campaign on the eastern front. Heather 2018, 94, implausibly sees Hypatius as a dove, arguing that Justinian was keen to provoke war. Whether two such hawks, Mebodes and Hypatius, actually collaborated to this end seems doubtful. See Börm 2007, 314 n.4.

11.33 ἦν γὰρ ὁ Σεόσης χρημάτων μὲν ἀδωρότατος καὶ τοῦ δικαίου ἐπιμελητὴς ἀκριβέστατος, ‘Seoses was not open to bribery and was a most scrupulous guardian of justice.’ Seoses resembles Proculus, also described as χρημάτων ἀδωρότατος, *khreumatōn adōrotatos*, ‘not open to bribery’ (in the superlative), cf. 11.11 above. On the other hand, according to Procopius, he was intolerably haughty.

11.34 ἔλεγον δὲ οἱ κατήγοροι ταῦτά τε ἅπερ μοι προδεδήλωται καὶ ὡς ἤκιστα τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ βουλομένῳ εἶη ἐν τῷ καθεστῶτι τρόπῳ βιοτεύειν ἢ περιστέλλειν τὰ Περσῶν νόμιμα. ‘His accusers made the charges that I have mentioned, and they claimed besides that the man would not live according to established custom or uphold the Persian way of life.’ Kaldellis 2004, 100, finds an allusion to Socrates’ accusers in the use of the term κατήγοροι, *katēgoroi*, ‘accusers’, the term employed also for the prosecutors at Athens. The reference to not living according to established custom is rather a direct echo of Thuc. i.130.1, where it refers to the general Pausanias, who ended up defecting to the Persians, cf. Braun 1885, 175, Duwe 1885, 18, Whitby 2007, 74. Haury 1896, 11, notes how Chor. Or. 4.38 (p.80.18), the *Laudatio Summi*, cites the same phrase as Procopius. Herodotus uses the verb περιστέλλω, *peristellō*, ‘I maintain, uphold’ with ‘laws’ on several occasions, notably at iii.31.5, when the Persian king Cambyses exerts pressure on his judges to allow him to marry his sister; cf. Proc. *Anecd.* 27.27, *Wars* vii.8.17 for other Procopian uses.

11.35 καινὰ τε γὰρ αὐτὸν δαιμόνια σέβειν καὶ τελευτήσασαν ἔναγχος τὴν γυναῖκα θάψαι, ἀπειρημένον τοῖς Περσῶν νόμοις γῇ κρύπτειν ποτὲ τὰ τῶν νεκρῶν σώματα. ‘They said that he worshipped new gods, and that when his wife died recently he had buried her, although by Persian law it was forbidden ever to cover the bodies of the dead with earth.’ Socrates was likewise accused of introducing καινὰ δαιμόνια, *kaina daimonia*, to Athens, cf. Xen. *Apol. Socr.* 10, 12, Plato, *Apol.* 24c1 and elsewhere, though cf. Dio Cassius 52.36.2 for use of the phrase in a different context. The phrase is generally taken as referring to Seoses’ Mazdakite sympathies, on which see 11.31–9n, but cf. Schindel 2004a, 484 n.2112.

The burial of a corpse in the earth was forbidden by the Zoroastrian religion, but was not normally punishable by death, although apostasy, especially in a member of the aristocracy, was usually harshly punished. Bodies could be encased in stone, thus avoiding the contamination of the earth. Whether Seoses, as a Mazdakite, was following a variant practice, is uncertain. See Trümpelmann 1984, esp. 327, Grenet 1990, Russell 1990, Börm 2007, 185–6, Payne 2015, ch.1, Maskymiuk 2020, 109–10. See further i.12.4n. Kaldellis 2004, 92–3, argues that Procopius is here implying that Seoses had converted to Christianity, noting the reference (12.3–4) to the Christian practice of burying the dead.

11.36 οἱ μὲν οὖν δικασταὶ θάνατον τοῦ ἀνθρώπου κατέγνωσαν, ‘So the judges condemned him to death.’ The tribunal that judged Seoses was probably presided over by the chief priest of the Zoroastrian church,

the *mōbadan mōbad*, who had jurisdiction for cases of high treason. See Christensen 1944, 355–6, Börm 2007, 99, 193.

11.37 καίπερ ζωάγρια τῷ ἀνθρώπῳ ὀφείλων, ‘even though he owed the man his life’, an expression that goes back to Homer, *Od.* 8.462.

11.37 οὕτω μὲν ὁ Σεόσης καταγνωσθεὶς ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἠφάνιστο. ‘And so Seoses was condemned and vanished from among men.’ See 2.11n on the final phrase. The date of Seoses’ fall is uncertain: see i.11.31–9n.

11.38 ἕτερος γάρ τις ἀδρασταδάραν σαλάνης οὐδεὶς γέγονε, ‘for there was no other *adrastadaran salanes*’. On the post of *artēshtārān sālār* see 6.18n. Despite Procopius’ assertion, it is attested in the *Sirat Anūshirwan* under Khusro: see Rubin 1995, 260 and n.83. How much store should be set by this mention is uncertain, and Procopius’ supposition is generally held to be broadly correct, so Börm 2007, 145–6.

11.38 καὶ Ῥουφῖνος δὲ Ὑπάτιον ἐς βασιλέα διέβαλλε, ‘But Rufinus denounced Hypatius to the emperor.’ Hypatius was consequently deprived of his command, as Procopius notes in the following section, presumably immediately after the envoys’ return. He soon returned to favour, however, and was reappointed *magister militum per Orientem* in 527, just as hostilities with Persia were flaring up – the very outcome at which he had been aiming. In this more hostile climate, it is less surprising to find him once again engaged in talks on the frontier, as reported by PZ viii.5a. See Greatrex 1998a, 137–8, *PLRE* ii, Hypatius 6.

Rufinus may have visited the Persian court after the breakdown of negotiations, as *PLRE* ii, Rufinus 13, states, but PZ ix.6d–7a does not provide any evidence for this. See Börm 2007, 318–19.

12.1–19 Conflict in the Caucasus

History

When Kavadh strove to impose Zoroastrian practices on Iberia, he provoked the defection of the king Gurgenes to the Roman camp. As Procopius reports, the Iberians were Christians; their conversion had taken place already in the fourth century. Since the 480s the Caucasus had been racked by unrest: the Iberians had revolted in 482, followed by the Armenians. Although the Persian general Mihran enjoyed some success against the rebels, the destruction of King Peroz’s army during his

campaign against the Hephthalites persuaded his successor Balash to seek an accommodation. Kavadh's initiative, which may have begun already in the early 520s, was thus an attempt to claw back lost ground, no doubt spurred on by the defection of Lazica in 522.

Justin's reaction to Gurgenes' defection was cautious, even if he accepted it with alacrity. Rather than despatching Roman forces to the kingdom, which would have appeared extremely provocative to the Persians, he sought to recruit Hunnic forces in the Ukraine to defend his new ally. If Gurgenes' appeal was received at around the same time as the negotiations on the frontier, i.e. in 524/5, then Probus' mission to raise troops can be dated to 526. Since it proved unsuccessful, Justin sent Peter instead with other Huns. These forces turned out to be insufficient, however, and Gurgenes was obliged to flee his country – as king Vakhtang had been in the 480s – to seek refuge in Lazica. Peter was also recalled to Constantinople, probably in 527, and ordered to return to the Lazic–Iberian frontier to ensure that the Persians advanced no further; he was joined by the general Irenaeus. In 528, according to Mal. 18.4, three generals, Irenaeus, Gilderich and Cerycus, engaged the Persians in a bloody battle in the region from which neither side emerged victorious. Peter then returned to the front to sack them and undertake a withdrawal (cf. Proc. i.12.19).

Bibliography: Wirth 1964, 378, 382–3, Braund 1994, 281–4, Lordkipanidse and Brakmann 1994, esp. 36–7, Greatrex 1998a, 46–8, 139–47, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 59–60, 82–3, Croke 2007, 49, MalKom on 18.4.2, Leppin 2011, 87–8, Schleicher 2019.

Historiography

Procopius is the only source to report Gurgenes' defection. By contrast, Malalas and subsequent chroniclers offer full coverage both of Tzath's defection and of the fighting in Lazica in 528. It is possible, as Wirth suggests, that the baptism of the Lazic king in Constantinople and the subsequent stationing of Roman forces in his country were sufficient to eclipse similar accounts of events in a neighbouring Caucasian country with which the Romans were less familiar; given the Roman failure to defend the Iberians, on the other hand, Malalas and his successors may have preferred to omit this debacle. For his part, Procopius may have deliberately passed over the well-known details concerning Tzath to focus on a more exotic and less well-known episode. His knowledge of the Caucasus and Black Sea regions at this point seems limited and indirect; later, notably in *Wars* viii, he composed a much more detailed account of the area, albeit still derived from literary sources.

Bibliography: Wirth 1964, 383, Averil Cameron 1985, 216–18, Whitby and Whitby 1989, 109 n.337, Börm 2007, 215, Greatrex 2016a, 176–8, Colvin 2018, 204–6, Stickler 2019, 157–8.

12.2 Ἴβηρες, οἱ ἐν τῇ Ἀσίᾳ οἰκοῦσι, πρὸς αὐταῖς που ταῖς Κασπίαις ἵδρυνται πύλαις, αἵπερ αὐτοῖς εἰσι πρὸς βορρᾶν ἄνεμον. ‘The Iberians who live in Asia have established themselves at the very Caspian Gates, which are to their north.’ Procopius distinguishes the Iberians of the Caucasus from those of Spain. His description of their situation in the central Caucasus, between the Lazi to their west and Persian territory – in particular, the Caucasian Albanians – to their east, is accurate; he has already orientated the readers as to the location of the Caspian Gates, 10.4, where he mentioned Iberia in passing.

12.3 οὗτος ὁ λεῶς Χριστιανοὶ τέ εἰσι καὶ τὰ νόμιμα τῆς δόξης φυλάσσουσι ταύτης πάντων μάλιστα ἀνθρώπων ὧν ἡμεῖς ἴσμεν, κατήκοοι μέντοι ἐκ παλαιοῦ τοῦ Περσῶν βασιλέως τυγχάνουσιν ὄντες. ‘They are a Christian people and keep the customs of this religion more scrupulously than any other men known to us, even though they have long been subject to the king of Persia.’ Following the conversion of Iberia in the fourth century there had been attempts under Valens to partition the kingdom between Rome and Persia. In the fifth century there were links between the Roman and Iberian courts; king Busmerios II actually transferred his allegiance to the Romans during the reign of Theodosius II (408–450). His son, Nabarnugios, became a widely venerated holy man, known as Peter the Iberian; other Iberian nobles preferred to support the Sasanians. One of the factors that led to unrest in the Caucasus in the early 480s was the persecution of Christians; in Iberia, the wife of the governor Varsken, Shushanik, was martyred at this time. Procopius is thus broadly correct in affirming the long-standing Christian zeal of the Iberians and in noting their subjection to the Persians. See Fowden 1993, 104–6, Lordkipanidze and Brakmann 1994, esp. 40–57 on the Christianisation of the kingdom, Braund 1994, 246–61, 284–7, Horn 2006, 50–1, 114–21, Fährreich 2010, 122–7. Haas 2014, 40–4, discusses Vakhtang’s efforts to promote Christianity in the late fifth century following earlier persecutions.

Procopius describes the Lazi’s zeal for Christianity in very similar terms at ii.28.26.

12.4 τότε δὲ αὐτοὺς ἤθελε Καβάδης ἐς τὰ νόμιμα τῆς αὐτοῦ δόξης βιάζεσθαι. ‘At this time Kavadh determined to force them into the observance of his own religion.’ As noted above (12.1–19h), Kavadh had probably

been increasing pressure on the Iberians ever since the defection of the Lazi, cf. Wirth 1964, 383. Procopius is therefore referring generally to the period after 522; it is possible that the king's demands grew more stringent in the aftermath of the failed negotiations. See also Toumanoff 1949–51, 483.

It was predictable that attempts to forcibly convert Christians to Zoroastrianism would spark a reaction: this had been the outcome of persecutions in the early 480s, while in 449–51 a large-scale Armenian revolt had broken out during another period of forced conversions. Balash had therefore pacified the region by a policy of toleration. Kavadh had made some earlier attempts at regaining the lost ground, but now perhaps felt more confident, having gained control of the Caspian Gates. In Albania, a new capital was constructed at Partaw, while a *marzban* was installed in Iberia c.520. Kavadh's decision to resume persecutions may also represent an ongoing attempt to distance himself from the Mazdakites and thus ensure Khusro's succession. See Braund 1994, 281–3, Greatrex 1998a, 127–30, 139–4, Bais 2001, 129, Börm 2007, 193–7, Schleicher 2019, 86–8. Despite the king's hard-line stance in this case, other sources note evidence for a more tolerant attitude during his reign: see (e.g.) Mal. 18.30, Ps.-Josh. 24, with Schilling 2008, 32–6, 95–7, 232–3, cf. Schindel 2004a, 484.

12.4 καὶ αὐτῶν τῷ βασιλεῖ Γουργένη ἐπέστελλε τὰ τε ἄλλα ποιεῖν ἢ Πέρσαι νομίζουσι καὶ τοὺς νεκροὺς τῇ γῇ ὥς ἥκιστα κρύπτειν, ἀλλ' ὄρνισί τε ῥίπτειν καὶ κυσὶν ἅπαντας, 'He ordered their king Gurgenes to comply with Persian customs, including throwing all their dead to the birds and dogs instead of burying them in the ground.' So too Hdt. i.140.1 (cf. Braun 1894, 26) and Strabo 15.3.20, although both attribute the practice just to the magi (rather than all Persians); both mention birds and dogs, which also feature in the *Avesta*. Agath. iv.22.6–23.7 describes the custom at greater length and in more negative terms. See Averil Cameron 1969–70, 90–1, Schmitt 2004, 676, Börm 2007, 184–5, 248, and 11.35n. Even before their conversion to Christianity, the Iberians had practised inhumation, sometimes burying lavish grave goods with the deceased: see Fähnreich 2010, 111–15.

The Iberian king Gurgenes has frequently been identified with the Vakhtang Gorgasal ('Wolf's head') whose life is preserved in the *Kartlis Tskhovreba*, a heroic ruler who reigned from the mid fifth century until some point in the early sixth; this section of the work is likely to date from c.800, so Rapp 2003, 236. It is difficult to square this much later Georgian source with events described by contemporary sources, although his role in resisting Persian power in the 480s is confirmed by

Łaz. P'arp. 79–80 (146/205), cf. Martin-Hisard 1983, 211. According to the *Kartlis Tskhovreba*, the king undertook numerous successful campaigns and aligned himself in the later stages of his reign with the Romans. See Toumanoff 1949–51, 483 (favouring the identification), Martin-Hisard 1983, 210–15 (sceptical), Braund 1994, 282–4 (ambivalent), Lordkipanidze and Brakmann 1994, 36–7 (favourable), Greatrex 1998a, 142 and n.9, Rapp 2003, 208 (implicitly favourable), Settiani 2006, 417 (opposed), Fährreich 2010, 139 (implicitly opposed), Rapp 2014, 83–5 (favourable), Haas 2014, 35 (opposed); cf. *PLRE* ii, Gurgenes. Schleicher 2019, 81–3, rejecting the identification with Vakhtang Gorgasal, suggests that the name given by Procopius may rather represent a Greek rendering of the local district of Gogarene (cf. Theoph. Byz. 3, *FHG* iv, 271, tr. in Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 141).

Mal. 18.9 mentions an Iberian king Zamanazus (Zamanarzus in Theoph. 216) as a contemporary of Justinian (under the year 528). Schleicher 2019, 80, therefore suggests that the defection of Gurgenes may have been due to dynastic disputes rather than the persecution of Christians. Zamanarzus is later said to have visited Constantinople in 534/5, cf. i.22.16n.

12.5 τὰ τε πιστὰ ἡξίου λαβεῖν, ὥς οὐποτε Ἰβηρας καταπροήσονται Πέρσαις Ῥωμαῖοι, 'And (Gurgenes) asked to receive pledges that the Romans would never abandon the Iberians to the Persians.' Wirth 1964, 377 n.1, oddly takes the verb καταπροήσονται, *kataproēsontai*, the future of the middle verb καταπροῖμαι, *kataproiemai*, 'I abandon', as implying an earlier Roman pledge; there are no grounds for this (cf. *Anecd.* 1.21 for similar use of the verb, another pledge subsequently broken).

12.6 καὶ Πρόβον τὸν Ἀναστασίου τοῦ βεβασιλευκότος ἀδελφιδοῦν, ἄνδρα πατρίκιον, ξὺν χρήμασι πολλοῖς ἐς Βόσπορον ἐπεμψεν, ἐφ' ᾧ στράτευμα Οὐννων χρήμασιν ἀναπείσας Ἰβηρσι, 'and he (Justin) sent Probus, the nephew of the Emperor Anastasius, a patrician, with a large amount of money to Bosphorus to recruit a Hunnic army and send it to aid the Iberians'. Probus was the youngest nephew of Anastasius, the cousin of Hypatius and Pompey; he had been consul in 502. See *PLRE* ii, Probus 8. This is his first known mission, which is alluded to also by PZ xii.7n. PZ describes how Probus encountered deportee Romans in Hunnic territory north of the Caucasus, who were ministered to by a certain Qardust and three priests. Impressed by their piety, he gave them gifts and persuaded Justin to send further presents from a nearby city. Probus' generosity to the Christians may have distracted him from his

recruitment project; no doubt he was gratified that, like him, they opposed the Council of Chalcedon. His mission is generally dated to 526, although PZ's text is ambiguous, cf. PZT 452 n.223, 453 n.228. See Greatrex 1996a, 129, Greatrex 1998a, 143–4, *RKOR* 469.

12.7 ἔστι δὲ πόλις ἐπιθαλασσία ἢ Βόσπορος, ἐν ἀριστερᾷ μὲν ἑσπλέοντι τὸν Εὐξείνιον καλούμενον πόντον, Χερσῶνος δὲ πόλεως, ἡ γῆς τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἐσχάτη ἐστίν, ὁδῷ διέχουσα ἡμερῶν εἴκοσιν. 'Bosporus is a city by the sea, on the left as you sail into the so-called Euxine Sea, twenty days' journey from the city of Cherson, which is the last in Roman territory. The land between the two belongs to the Huns.' Bosporus, at the eastern tip of the Crimean peninsula, was an independent state, albeit with close ties to the Romans; the dynasty of the Tiberii Julii that ruled over the Goths there was closely associated with Rome, cf. Ajbabin 2011, 70–2. Also known as Panticapaeum (modern Kertch), it was an important centre of trade and production. It had maintained its independence despite the Hunnic take-over of most of the region, including the Crimea, in the late fourth century. Mal. 18.14 (cf. Theoph. 175–6) recounts how in 528 the neighbouring Hunnic king, Grod, converted to Christianity, but was then killed by opponents; his brother Mugel became king, captured Bosporus, but then fled when Justinian despatched substantial forces to take over the city. See Vasiliev 1950, 312–13, Vinogradov 1999, Khrushkova 2008, 82, Ajbabin 2011, 68, 80–90, Gandila 2018, 202. Moravcsik 1967, 19, suggests that Grod's Huns were Onogurs, while Engelhardt 1984, 86, proposes that it was with these Huns that Probus was in contact.

Cherson (modern Sevastopol), on the other hand, lay on the south-west side of the peninsula and had remained part of the empire; it was frequently used as a place of banishment for troublesome churchmen. See Vasiliev 1936, 70–1, Khrushkova 2008, 81–2, Ajbabin 2010. The name Cherson is first found in the sixth century, both here and in Jordanes, *Get.* 5.32, as in the contemporary *Peripl.*, cf. Diller 1952, 110. Procopius' calculation of twenty days' journey from one city to the other is a gross overestimate, perhaps the consequence of reliance on second-hand reports of the region or of the influence of Hdt. iv.101.2, where there is a reference to twenty days' journey from the Sea of Azov to the territory of the 'Black Cloaks' north of Scythia. Whether it is connected to the calculations of distances around the empire offered at iii.1.9–19 or those for the Black Sea region at viii.1–5 is uncertain; the estimate at viii.5.29 of a ten days' journey (i.e. some 2100 stades, cf. iii.1.17) from Cherson to the mouth of the Danube is remarkably low in comparison, since the

distance (by sea) is nearly 300 km and considerably more by land; for more detailed discussion see Pekkanen 1964, 41–2. Strabo 7.4.3–4 puts the distance from Bosphorus to Cherson at 1530 stades (by land, via Theodosia); Arrian, *Peripl.* 19.3–5 gives a total of 2200 stades by sea, cf. *Peripl.* 133 (131.3, section 56). The actual distance is some 250 km as the crow flies. The mileages on the leather parchment known as the ‘Dura shield’, which covers precisely this region, do not survive for this section: see Arnaud 1989, 378–9, cf. Salway 2004, 92–3.

Procopius also gives a general description of the region at *Aed.* iii.7.10–17, cf. *Wars* viii.5.26–28. See fig. 1, p. 23 above.

12.8 οἱ δὲ Βοσπορίται αὐτόνομοι μὲν τὸ παλαιὸν ὥκουν, Ἰουστίνῳ δὲ βασιλεῖ ἐναγχος προσχωρεῖν ἔγνωσαν. ‘The people of Bosphorus were formerly autonomous, but recently decided to go over to the Emperor Justin.’ See the preceding note on this development. It was in 528, under Justinian, that Roman troops took over the city (cf. ii.3.40 and the preceding note); yet the presence of a bishop of Bosphorus in Constantinople in July 518 (on which see Honigsmann 1950, 347) shows that ties were already strong before then. Rubin, *PvK*, 367, supposes that ἐναγχος, *enagkhos*, ‘recently’, betrays Procopius’ use of earlier material; it may rather be a slip, looking back from the 540s to the 520s, at a point when the distinction between uncle’s and nephew’s reigns had blurred (as the chronology of *Anecd.* implies).

12.9 Πέτρον στρατηγὸν σὺν Οὐννοῖς τισὶν ἐς Λαζικὴν βασιλεὺς ἐπέμψε Γουργένη ὅση δύναμις ζυμμαχήσονται. ‘The emperor sent the general Peter with some Huns to Lazica to fight alongside Gurgenes with all his might.’ Procopius subsequently offers a scathing portrait of this Peter, ii.15.7–9: having been captured in Arzanene by Justin during the Persian war at the start of the century, he owed his career to the emperor and proved remarkably venal, thus provoking the ire of the Lazi. He may have been selected for this mission because of his Armenian origins. He will have reached the Caucasus in late 526 or early 527. See *PLRE* ii, Petrus 27, Greatrex 1998a, 144–5.

The expression ὅση δύναμις, *hosē dunamis*, ‘all force’, in the nominative becomes common in late antique writers. The verb πάρεστι, *paresti*, ‘is present’, is probably understood; it is found at Homer, *Il.* 8.294, where it means (in context) ‘so far as might is in me’ (tr. Murray/Wyatt).

12.10 καὶ στρατηγὸν ἄνδρα Πέρσην, οὐαρίζην μὲν τὸ ἀξίωμα, Βόην δὲ ὄνομα, ‘Under the generalship of a Persian called Boes, a *varizes* in rank.’

Varizēs, presumably a rendering of the Persian *Vahriz*, could be a title or a name or both: see Huyse 2002, 215, Schmitt 2004, 675, Börm 2007, 144 and n.7. It may be the same name/title as Φάβριζος, Phabrizus, Proc. ii.28.16, where it is clearly a name. See further Nöldeke 1879, 223 n.2, Justi 1895, 340, Greatrex 1998a, 144 n.16, Bosworth 1999, 239 n.591, Potts 2008, 207. For the name Boes (Boēs) cf. Gignoux 1986, no.212, Bōy. *Contra* Christensen 1944, 336 n.6, Procopius' Boes certainly does not correspond to the Bawi in Ps.-Josh. 59, who died in 506, before negotiations were completed: see Ps.-Josh. 95 and i.9.24n.

12.11 ὁ τε Γουργένης ἐλάσσων ὀφθείς ἢ φέρειν τὴν Περσῶν ἔφοδον, 'It was evident that Gurgenes was too weak to stand up to the Persian attack.' For the use of the infinitive after a comparative adjective see Smyth §2007.

12.11 ξὺν Ἰβήρων τοῖς λογίμοις ἅπασιν ἐς Λαζικὴν ἔφυγε, τὴν τε γυναῖκα καὶ τοὺς παῖδας ξὺν τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ἐπαγόμενος, ὦν δὴ Περάνιος ὁ πρεσβύτατος ἦν. 'And he (Gurgenes) fled to Lazica with all the leading Iberians, taking with him his wife and children as well as his brothers, of whom Peranios was the eldest.' These events probably took place in 527. As Braund 1994, 282 n.52, points out, it is likely that some Iberian nobles, as often, backed the Persians and thus did not withdraw with Gurgenes. The king's departure is generally considered to mark the end of royal government in Iberia, so Braund 1994, 283, but Toumanoff 1949–51, 487–8, argues that it continued until later in the sixth century, cf. Rapp 2003, 145, 322. See also Greatrex 1998a, 144–5 and ii.28.20n.

Our translation follows the ambiguity of the Greek: Peranios might be the eldest son or brother of Gurgenes. The former is more likely, so *PLRE* iii, Peranios; *contra*, Toumanoff 1949–51, 485 n.21, *idem* 1963, 372 n.62.

12.12 ἐν δὲ τοῖς Λαζικῆς ὁρίοις γενόμενοι ἔμενον ταῖς τε δυσχωρίαις φραζάμενοι τοὺς πολεμίους ὑφίσταντο, 'But when they arrived at the borders of Lazica they waited there and, protecting themselves by the roughness of the country, they made a stand against the enemy.' See 12.14 on the defences. The aorist middle participle φραζάμενοι, *phraxamenoi*, 'having protected themselves' is from the verb φράσσω, *phrassō*; it can be used with a direct object in the accusative, i.e. for protecting or fortifying something, while Procopius at i.18.46 uses it also with the dative for that which is used for protection.

12.14 καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν βασιλεὺς Λαζοῖς οὐ βουλομένοις ξυμφυλάσσειν τὴν χώραν ἡξίου, στρατεύμα τε καὶ Εἰρηναῖον ἄρχοντα πέμψας. 'The

emperor told him in future to help the Lazi to defend their country even against their will, sending an army with Irenaeus at its head.' As Procopius proceeds to explain, the Lazi had hitherto been responsible for their own defence; by this decision Justin jeopardised Roman relations with the Lazi, who soon came to resent the presence of Roman troops on their soil. See Braund 1994, 282–3, cf. Lordkipanidse and Brakmann 1994, 78–85 (more generally). Given the frequent contact between the Caucasus and Constantinople, it is likely that Irenaeus' despatch took place in 528, which would mean that Procopius is now dealing with events of Justinian's reign. Mal. 18.4 describes fighting in the Caucasus in which three Roman generals, Gilderich, Cerycus and Irenaeus, lost many men; other chroniclers, e.g. *Chr. Pasch.* 618.5, name Belisarius rather than Gilderich as one of the three. As Puech 2006, 217 n.26, observes, Thurn was wrong to prefer this reading to the Baroccianus' Gilderich, cf. Hofmann 1877, 21, Haury 1896, 29–30, Greatrex 1998a, 145 n.20; *contra*, MalKom on 18.4.5. See also *PLRE* ii, Irenaeus 7, *PLRE* iii, Cerycus, Gilderich, Irenaeus. *Chr. Pasch.* 618.7–13 (cf. Theoph. 174.22–6) adds that Peter restored Roman honour by a victory won by Roman and Lazic forces before his withdrawal, cf. Greatrex 1998a, 146 and n.21.

Although earlier in this section Procopius refers to 'the Iberians' arriving in Constantinople, Toumanoff 1949–51, 485 n.20, denies that Gurgenes (identified by him with the aged Vakhtang Gorgasal) was among them.

12.15 ἔστι δὲ φρούρια ἐν Λαζοῖς δύο εὐθὺς εἰσιόντι ἐκ τῶν Ἰβηρίας ὁρίων, 'There are two fortresses in Lazica immediately as one enters from the borders of Iberia.' The two fortresses are Sarapanis and Scanda, modern Shorapani and (probably) Skande; already in the first century A.D. Strabo mentions the large size of the former, 11.2.17, though cf. Braund 1994, 288 n.83. See also Murghulia 2010, 58–9, Kvirkvelia 2021 with fig.3. Procopius expands on the difficulties of provisioning these outposts, situated in inaccessible terrain, at viii.13.15–20. Although they were captured by the Persians, as recounted here, they were recovered by the Romans by the terms of the Eternal Peace (22.18); the Lazi later destroyed them, probably after the fall of Petra in 541, to prevent the Persians from seizing them again, cf. viii.13.20 with viii.4.6, 13.22 for such pre-emptive destructions. That they were perceived as a key element in the defences of Lazica is clear not just from the negotiations that preceded the Eternal Peace but also from the decision to occupy them

with Roman forces, even if the operation backfired. See Lekvinadze 1961, 144–8, Braund 1994, 287–8.

As Braund 1991 demonstrates, Procopius exaggerates the Lazi's lack of resources: even if the location of Scanda is not entirely certain, Sarapanis certainly lay close to rich agricultural land, cf. Braund 1989, 37, *idem* 1991, 223–4. Strabo, *loc. cit.*, notes that one could reach Sarapanis by river, so that Procopius' insistence (12.16) that all supplies had to be brought in on foot is incorrect. While salt is indeed lacking in Lazica, grain and wine are (and were) produced there, even if both were also imported. See further ii.15.5n, 29.18n, cf. Mitford 2018, 415 n.16 on the forts.

12.17 ἐλύμοις μέντοι τισὶν ἐνταῦθα γιγνομένοις εἰθισμένον σφίσιν οἱ Λαζοὶ ἀποζῆν ἴσχυον, 'But the Lazi could live off a kind of millet which grows there, to which they are accustomed.' The Greek word for millet, ἔλυμος, *elymos*, is usually feminine, but here is treated as masculine, cf. *LSJ*, 538. On the various Greek terms for millet see Orth, *RE* 8 (1913), 1950–6, who observes that it was the foodstuff served to Priscus on his embassy to Attila in Pannonia, frg.11.1.278/8.65 (p.28). Garnsey 1988, 52, notes its use in famine conditions in early sixth-century Mesopotamia, reported by Ps.-Josh. 38, cf. Stathakopoulos 2004, 253–4. As Braund 1994, 54–5, points out, millet was well suited to the damp conditions of Lazica. Braund 1991, 222, suggests that Procopius is referring to gomi, a Georgian dish like polenta; cf. Destunis 1876, 150 n.14, Bryer 1967, 185–6, for travellers' accounts. See Braund 1989, 39, on the Roman dislike of millet. The garrison at the Dariali fort – presumably Persian, but perhaps also Iberian (cf. Sauer et al. 2020, 877–8) – received supplies of millet, excavations have revealed: see Sauer et al. 2020, 125–7, 814.

The infinitive ἀποζῆν, *apozēn*, 'to live off', is found first in Thuc. i.2.2 and was rarely used again until the Late Antique period; it is probably a deliberate Thucydidean reminiscence, cf. 7.7, 15.21. Justinian's attempt to garrison the forts is *RKOR* 478.

i.12.20–24 The Outbreak of Hostilities in Armenia and Mesopotamia (526–7)

History

Tension between Rome and Persia had increased in the wake of the failure of the negotiations for Khusro's adoption and the defection of Iberia. It is likely that raiding by the Arabs under the Naṣrid rulers

resumed, penetrating deep into Roman territory. The Romans responded by attempting to build a fortification to the south of Dara, at Thannuris, but this initiative was thwarted; further north, in the Tur Abdin, the Romans had no more success in another similar venture. Meanwhile, the Romans tightened their grip on the north-eastern frontier by subjugating the Tzani. Negotiations remained possible, however, although a meeting between Hypatius and Pharesmanes on the Roman side and a Persian commander, *spāhbad*, in spring 527 produced no result.

Bibliography: Greatrex 1998a, 138, 147–50 with PZ viii.5a, ix.2a, ix.5a.

Historiography

In just a few lines Procopius completes his survey of events up to the moment when he came to the front as Belisarius' *assessor*. The transition from Lazic affairs to Armenian is abrupt and unclear: he fails to provide any link, causal or chronological, to the preceding section. From the explicit mention of Justin as emperor (12.21), it follows that the first raid mentioned at least must be dated to 526. It cannot have occurred earlier, since negotiations were still in progress, and it is unlikely to have taken place in the harsh Armenian winter; it is just possible, as *PLRE* iii, Belisarius 1 supposes, that it took place in 527. It is important that Procopius introduce the protagonist of his work before he assumed his eastern command, even if he offers only sparse details. It is clear that Belisarius and Sittas enjoyed mixed fortunes in their raids on Persian territory, conducted perhaps to alleviate pressure on Roman forces and their allies in Lazica. Procopius adroitly notes the defection of the two Armenian leaders before admitting that they vanquished their Roman rivals in this case; the defeat of the two Roman leaders thus recedes in importance. Libelarius' ignominious retreat (12.23) is neither excused nor explained. Belisarius takes over command from him in a context where, it seems from Procopius' account up to this point, the Romans have consistently been outmatched by the Persians.

Bibliography: Greatrex 1998a, 148–50, Börm 2007, 236.

12.20 Ῥωμαῖοι δὲ, Σίττα τε καὶ Βελισαρίου ἡγουμένων σφίσιν, 'The Romans, under the command of Sittas and Belisarius.' Both bodyguards of Justinian (12.21) were destined for glorious careers during his reign, although the former died prematurely in battle in 538/9; while Sittas married Theodora's sister Comito in 528, Belisarius' wife Antonina was a close associate of the empress. These associations may explain their

sudden rise to prominence, so Evans 2002, 20, cf. *PLRE* iii, Antonina 1, Belisarius 1, Comito, Sittas 1. Sittas may have been subjugating the Tzani during the preceding years, whose territory adjoined Persarmenia and the Caucasus. It would have been a logical step to build on this consolidation of Roman power (described by Procopius at 15.21–5, see the notes *ad loc.* on pp. 215–17) by encroaching on enemy territory. See Greatrex 1998a, 130 n.28, 147–8 and n.26. Koehn 2018a, 60–6, cf. *idem* 2018b, argues that Justinian may have been present in the East at this time himself as *magister militum praesentalis*, which would account for the deployment of his two bodyguards here. The raid undertaken by the two leaders may also be alluded to by PZ viii.5a, where a Roman attack on Arzanene, which comprises part of Persarmenia, is mentioned, probably in 526. See PZT 297 n.66. On the position of bodyguard (*doryphoros*), see i.15.4n.

12.21 τούτω δὲ τῷ ἄνδρι νεανία μὲν καὶ πρῶτον ὑπηνήτα ἦσθην. ‘These two men were young and sporting their first beards.’ An epic introduction for the two commanders: Procopius uses the archaic dual form for them and the rare noun ὑπηνήτης, *hypēnētēs*, ‘one that is just getting a beard’, *LSJ*, 1872. There is a Homeric feel, since the poet uses the term for the guise of a youth taken by the god Hermes at *Il.* 24.348 and *Ody.* 10.279; cf. Richardson 1993, 309.

12.21 ἐτέρας δὲ ἐσβολῆς Ῥωμαίοις ἐς Ἀρμενίαν γεγενημένης Ναρσῆς τε καὶ Ἀράτιος παρὰ δόξαν ὑπαντιάσαντες ἐς χεῖρας ἦλθον, ‘In another invasion of Armenia by the Romans, Narses and Aratius unexpectedly met them and engaged them.’ Both these two brothers subsequently died in Roman service; as Procopius reports, both also served in Belisarius’ campaign against the Goths in Italy (in the 540s). See *PLRE* iii, Aratius, Narses 2 (noting the possibility that they were members of the noble Kamsarakan family, cf. Tate 2004, 127, Settapani 2006, 371). This Narses must be distinguished from the eunuch Narses, also of Armenian extraction, *PLRE* iii, Narses 1.

The chronology of this second incursion is uncertain: Procopius leaves it unclear whether it followed immediately after the first success. It may therefore be dated to 526 or possibly early 527. See Greatrex 1998a, 147.

12.23 εἰσέβαλε δὲ καὶ ἀμφὶ πόλιν Νίσιβιν ἄλλη Ῥωμαίων στρατιά, ἧς Λιβελάριος ἐκ Θράκης ἦρχεν. οἱ φεύγοντες εὐθυωρὸν τὴν ἀναχώρησιν ἐποίησαντο, καίπερ οὐδενὸς σφίσιν ἐπεξιόντος. ‘Another Roman force under the command of Libelarius from Thrace invaded the land around the city of Nisibis. These troops fled in a straight retreat, even though no

one was pursuing them.’ PZ ix.1b probably reports the same debacle, describing how a force under Timostratus was repelled from both Nisibis and Thebetha, a fortress to the south, and retreated in poor order; he dates the episode (implicitly) to summer 527. Libelarius is known also from PZ viii.5a-b, where he is referred to as a harsh governor (i.e. *dux* probably, cf. ix.6d) of Osrhoene in 525 and reported to be known as ‘the bull-eater’. See Greatrex 1998a, 148–50, PZT 295 n.56.

The preposition ἀμφί, *amphi*, with the accusative, meaning ‘around’, with the idea of motion towards, is a feature of later Greek; it is frequently used by Procopius also with the dative. See Schefftlein 1893, 45–6. Procopius is the only author to employ the idiom εὐθυωρός ἀναχώρησις, *euthyōros anakhōrēsis*, ‘direct retreat’, to be found also at 21.27, vi.10.18, viii.23.40, cf. *Aed.* ii.2.21 with *LSJ*, 716.

12.24 διὸ δὴ Λιβελάριον μὲν παρέλυσε τῆς ἀρχῆς βασιλεὺς, Βελισάριον δὲ ἄρχοντα καταλόγων τῶν ἐν Δάρας κατεστήσατο. ‘For this reason the Emperor dismissed Libelarius from his command and made Belisarius the commander of the troops in Dara.’ Procopius refers to the promotion of Belisarius to the post of *dux Mesopotamiae* in summer 527, taking over from the disgraced Libelarius. PZ ix.2a (cf. ix.1b) states rather that Belisarius succeeded Timostratus, who had died, not Libelarius. It is likely that a general reorganisation of the frontier command in the East followed Justinian’s accession as sole ruler on 1 August 527. Timostratus, who may have been *magister militum per Orientem*, was succeeded by Hypatius, while Libelarius was replaced by Belisarius as *dux*. The reference to the *katalogoi*, i.e. military units, in Dara, the base of the *dux Mesopotamiae*, is as direct a reference to the post as a classicising historian, keen to avoid technical terms (such as *dux*), as one could expect. Given Procopius’ close involvement with Belisarius, it seems highly unlikely that he has blundered in making Libelarius, rather than Timostratus, his commander’s predecessor, *contra* PLRE iii, 182–3, Hughes 2009, 42. See Greatrex 1998a, 149, PZT 318 n.34, *RKOR* 496–7.

12.24 τότε δὴ αὐτῷ ξύμβουλος ἤρέθη Προκόπιος, ὃς τὰδε ξυνέγραψε. ‘At that time Procopius, who composed this history, was chosen as his adviser.’ Procopius reminds the reader of his status as eye-witness to the events that will follow. The formula ‘who composed this history’ (lit. ‘these things’) is derived from Thuc. iv.104.4, the moment at which the historian refers to his own role in events during the Peloponnesian war. Procopius uses the same phrase on the rare occasions that he himself

plays a part in the narrative, at iii.12.3, iv.14.39, vi.4.1 and vi.23.23. See Averil Cameron 1985, 135–6 and (more generally) Ross 2018.

Although Procopius' phrasing is not specific here, it will have been Belisarius who appointed him to this post: *assessores* were chosen by the official concerned as their legal adviser. See Greatrex 1998b, 40–1, cf. Auler 1876, 8 n.1, *contra*, Dahn 1865, 16, who finds it odd that Procopius does not specify that Belisarius made the appointment. The nomination will have occurred at the same time as Belisarius', i.e. probably in August 527, after Justinian became sole ruler, *contra* Börm 2007, 47 (putting it slightly earlier). Haury 1937, 2–3, suggests that Procopius' emphasis on his active participation in the campaign is partly aimed at criticising John the Lydian's account of the battle of Dara, cf. i.1.4n.

i.13–15 The Battles of Dara and Satala (530)

History

These chapters cover the period from 527 to 530, although events on the eastern frontier from the first two years of Justinian's reign are passed over very briefly; they are reported in much greater detail by Pseudo-Zachariah (ix.2) and Malalas (18.10, 16, 32, 34, 44). The Persians increased the pressure on the Romans, notably by giving their Arab Naṣrid allies free rein; al-Mundhir even reached the outskirts of Antioch in one raid. Justinian responded by launching a counter-raid and by reorganising the whole command structure of the eastern front, notably by splitting the command between the *magister militum per Orientem*, now responsible just for Mesopotamia, Osrhoene and the southern section, and a new *magister militum per Armeniam*, who took over the northern sector. New troops were recruited and deployed; Justinian gave a notably free hand to the first incumbent of the latter post, Sittas, as is attested by *C.J.* 1.29.5. He also centralised power among the Arab leaders allied to Rome, putting the Jafnid ruler al-Harith in overall charge (Proc. i.17.46–8, *RKOR* 588). In 528 there was one attempt at least to strengthen Roman defences along the Mesopotamian frontier by the construction of a new fortress: PZ refers to an expedition in the vicinity of Thannuris, approximately 70 km south of Dara, while Proc. i.13.2 describes one between Dara and Nisibis. Each writer may be referring to separate attempts, though their accounts overlap to a great extent and are supplemented by Mal. 18.26.

Both sides had reason to pursue negotiations nonetheless. The Roman empire suffered a hard winter in 528–9; Antioch, already devastated by a

huge earthquake in 526, was struck again in 528, as was Laodicea. Perhaps more dangerous was a significant Samaritan uprising in 529, which was brought to the attention of the Persians. Yet Kavadh, now well advanced in years, still needed to secure the succession of his son Khusro; he therefore had an interest in improving relations with the Romans in order to ensure a stable political backdrop to the transfer of power. Negotiations therefore continued, involving the highly experienced Roman diplomat Rufinus, who was an old interlocutor of the Persian king, and the *magister officiorum* Hermogenes. The latter brought Justinian a letter from Kavadh in late 529 which called upon him to resume monetary contributions to the depleted Persian treasury (Mal. 18.44); the emperor preferred to play for time, sending Hermogenes back with Rufinus to the frontier. By March 530 they were at Antioch, expecting to continue their discussions. But Kavadh's patience had worn thin by this point; in his letter, as preserved in Malalas, he had even given an ultimatum of one year until he would back up his demands with arms. The arrival of a Persian army near Dara can hardly therefore have been as much of a surprise as Procopius implies (i.13.12).

The Roman victory at Dara, which occurred in June 530, was, as Procopius emphasises (i.14.54), a remarkable and long-awaited success. Belisarius and Hermogenes, evidently concerned to protect the fortress of Dara, preferred to face the enemy in open battle than to endure a siege. But they clearly intended to fight a defensive engagement, protecting their infantry by a series of trenches, which may have been constructed by workmen at hand for building operations in the city; it is not clear what role the trenches actually played in the battle, although their presence may have strengthened morale among the Roman infantry and ensured that they were less vulnerable against the Persian cavalry. The battle of Satala, which took place probably somewhat later, represented another remarkable Roman success; the Persian force, having reached Satala, had already overrun a considerable expanse of Roman territory. Justinian's focus on Armenia and the involvement of Armenians in the integration of the region into the empire, combined with the victory, then served to attract others into Roman service, such as the brothers mentioned by Proc i.15.31–3. Not surprisingly, Kavadh decided to resume negotiations in the autumn.

Bibliography: Greatrex 1998, 151–85, Haldon 2001, 28–35, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 83–92 (with the sources), 130–3, Syv  ne 2004, 460–2, Lillington-Martin 2007, *idem* 2012, *idem* 2013, Hughes 2009, 39–59,

Leppin 2011. Howard-Johnston 2013 is a useful survey of the frontier region, although it is not certain that Roman defensive works were quite as ready by 530 as he believes, cf. Greatrex 1998, 149, 169–70.

Historiography

The other surviving sources for the opening years of Justinian's reign have been indicated above. Both Mal. 18.50 and PZ ix.3 offer brief accounts of the battle of Dara, in each of which the role of the Hunnic leader Sunicas is highlighted; neither offers any details not present in Procopius' version. As has already been noted (i.12.1–19g) Procopius' motivation in omitting the significant developments just mentioned is uncertain. At any rate the successes of 530, in contrast to the skirmishing of the preceding years and the defeat in the following year, inspired him to recount events in great detail, decked out with all the trappings of a traditional classicising history, notably in the exchanges between the commanders and their addresses to their troops; see further i.14.1n on this. By devoting so much space to the battle and its preliminaries he undoubtedly highlights the Roman achievement and Belisarius' role in particular, as Averil Cameron 1985, 145–6, observes, cf. Taragna 2000, 119 n.18; Rubin, *PvK*, 369.18, notes that Procopius also consistently stresses the role of Hermogenes, although relations between the *magister officiorum* and the *magister militum* were by no means so cordial in the following year. Procopius may have felt obliged to take adequate account of his role through the influence of other accounts: see i.13.10n on possible links between Hermogenes and Malalas. Bury 1923, ii, 420 n.2, suggested that these initial chapters concerning events under Justinian (i.12–22, although i.13 or i.12.20 would be a more likely starting point) represent the historian's initial attempt at history-writing, inspired by the success at Dara. See Averil Cameron 1985, 136, Greatrex 1998, 63, Zuckerman 2013, 340, cf. p. 5 above. Börm 2007, 166 n.2, plausibly suggests that, even if he could not have observed all the events (at Dara) he describes, through his association with Belisarius he probably could gain access to accounts from various quarters. Roman pride in the victories of 530 emerges not just from Procopius' account, but also from the commissioning of John the Lydian to write an account of the battle of Dara (just noted); two epigrams on statues of Justinian from Constantinople likewise probably commemorate the victory (*Anth. Gr.* xvi.62–3), cf. *PLRE* iii, Eustathius 1, Iulianus 4, Alan Cameron 1977, 42–6. See Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* iii.28.4–5 with Schamp's ed., vol.1, xxxviii–xliii, who argues that Joh. Lyd.'s allusion

to a work on Dara refers rather to the siege of 540, composed perhaps several years later; see also Averil Cameron 1985, 242 and n.1, for doubts on whether the work was actually completed. Despite this scepticism, the victory at Dara in 530 is the most likely subject of his work, as also of the epigrams just mentioned.

13.1–8 The Roman Attempt to Fortify Minduos (528)

Attempts to build a new fort right on the frontier are recorded by Procopius, by PZ ix.2 and by Mal. 18.26 (fig. 7). Malalas actually just describes a battle following an apparently unprovoked Persian incursion into Mesopotamia; he names several commanders, including Belisarius, and reports a Roman defeat. He also notes the capture of Cutzes, so that there is no doubt that the two sources refer to the same events, cf. Greatrex 1998, 156–7, MalKom *ad loc.* PZ ix.2b describes how a Roman army under (among others) Belisarius and Cutzes penetrated into ‘the wilderness of Tannuris’; the Persians, however, defended themselves with trenches and caltrops, and the impetuous Romans fell into their trap. Many were captured; Cutzes was killed, as was the Arab ruler al-Tafar (Tapharas in Mal.). Given the overlap with the commanders mentioned in Malalas and Procopius, it is likely that he is describing the same events, so Greatrex 1998, 158, but cf. Howard-Johnston 1989, 226–7 n.22. Lillington-Martin 2012, cf. Keser-Kayaalp and Erdoğan 2017, 164, builds a powerful case for locating Procopius’ Minduos 6.3 km south-east of Dara, close to two quarries and the modern hamlet of Kasriahmethayro; he rightly rejects an earlier proposal placing it much further north-east by Whitby 1988, 210, 213 (with map at 255). Here he has detected traces of a fortlet similar to others on the eastern frontier and elsewhere; the location undoubtedly corresponds well to Procopius’ description (13.2), while the site, located on a limestone spur, affords good views across the plain towards Nisibis. The discussion in Dillemann 1962, 316–18, corrects some earlier errors but maintains others (e.g. in discussing PZ ix.5): see Greatrex 1998, 150. He may be right, however, in seeing a connection between the name Minduos and the river Mygdon to which Theophylact Simocatta refers, e.g. at v.5.3. An identification of Minduos with Kalecik, 10 km north-east of Nisibis, is improbable, *contra* Comfort 2008, 233, *idem* 2017, 201, 220 with 193 fig.8; likewise Palmer’s suggestion of a location 50 km north-east of Nisibis, 1990, 5 n.7.

On the date of this campaign see Greatrex 1998, 156–9. Figs. 8–10 illustrate the frontier region around Dara.

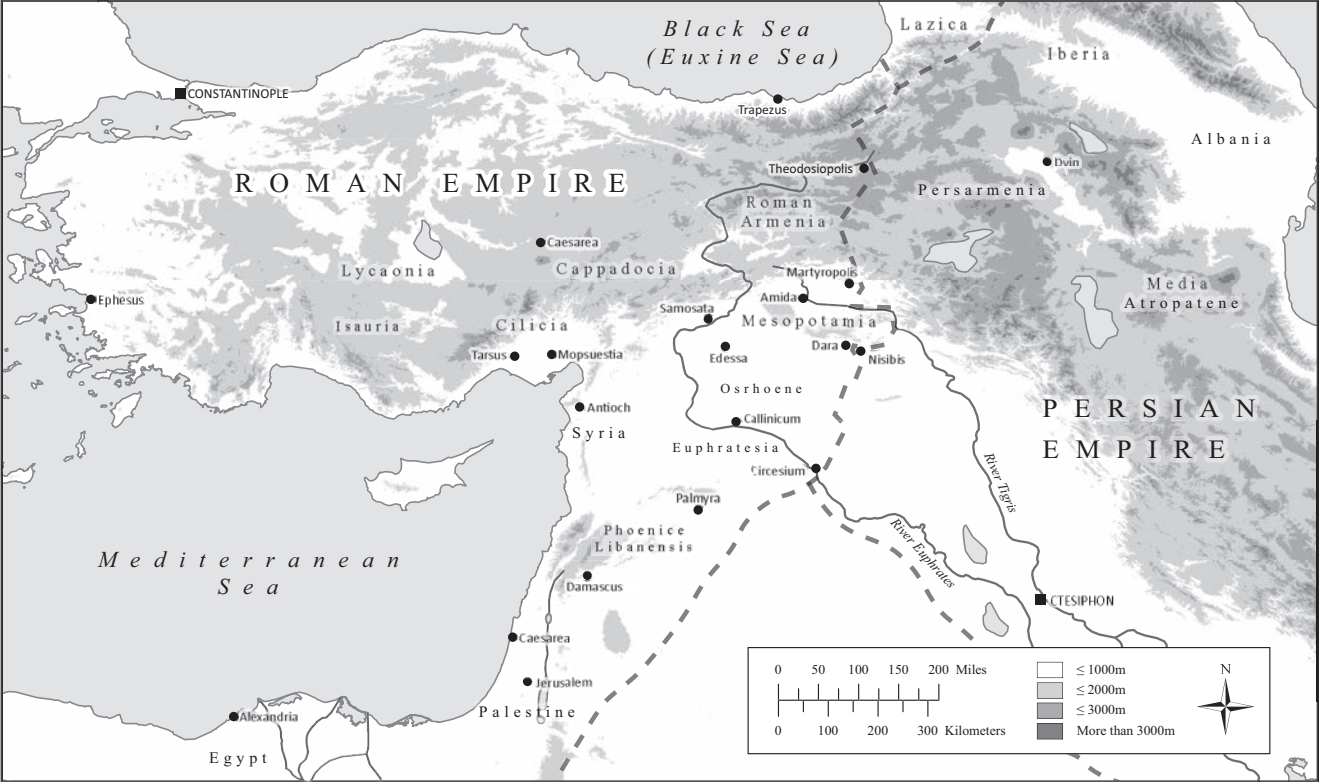


Figure 7 The Eastern Frontier in 527



Figure 8 The Frontier Around Dara

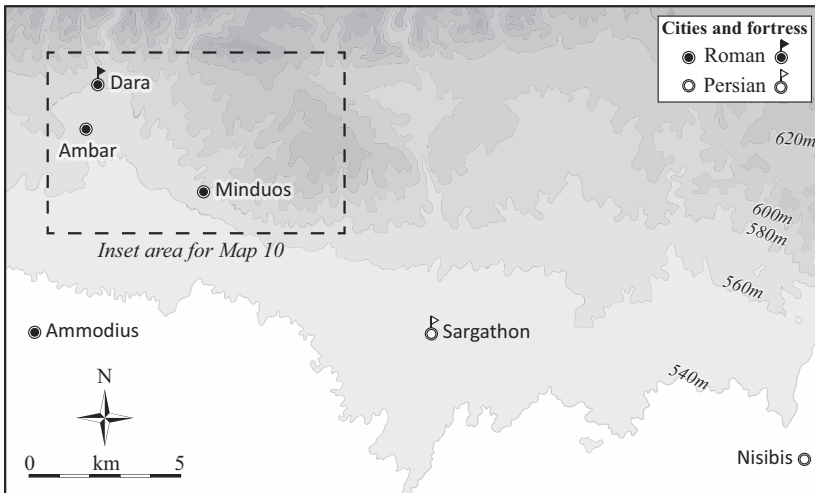


Figure 9 The Frontier Zone Between Dara and Nisibis

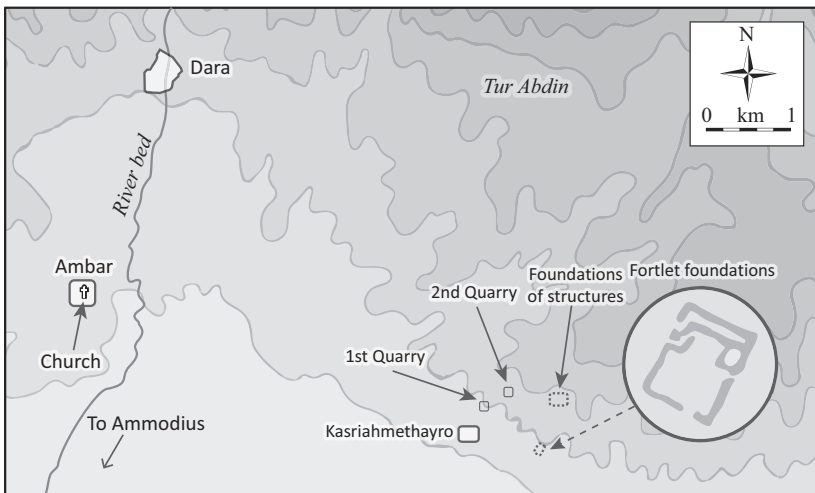


Figure 10 The Immediate Environs of Dara

13.1 Χρόνῳ δὲ οὐ πολλῷ ὕστερον Ἰουστίνος βασιλέα τὸν ἀδελφιδοῦν Ἰουστινιανὸν ξὺν αὐτῷ ἀνειπὼν ἐτελεύτησε. ‘Not long afterwards Justin died after declaring Justinian, his nephew, Augustus with him.’ The chronology is problematic: as noted at 12.24, Belisarius most likely succeeded Libelarius in summer 527, perhaps even after Justin’s death on 1 August. Uncle and nephew reigned together for four months, from 1

April to 1 August 527, before the former succumbed to illness. Procopius gives a hostile account of Justinian's accession to the throne at *Anecd.* 9.53–4. See *PLRE* ii, Iustinus 4, Croke 2007, 49–52; Szidat 2014 on the actual date (1 not 4 April).

13.2 δείμασθαι φρούριον ἐν χωρίῳ Μίνδουος, ὃ πρὸς αὐτοῖς ἐστὶ τοῖς Περσῶν ὁρίοις, ἐν ἀριστερεῇ ἐς Νίσιβιν ἰόντι, ‘to build a fort in a place called Minduos, which is on the very borders of Persia, on the left as one goes towards Nisibis’. A likely location of Minduos is discussed on p. 172, close to quarries on the route between Dara and Nisibis, very near to where Procopius puts the frontier (10.13–14). It seems reasonable to infer that the distance is from Dara, although this is not here specified, cf. Greatrex 1998, 158, for other possibilities. A φρούριον, *phrourion*, is a fort, a term also used with the verb δέμω, *demō*, at *Aed.* ii.4.18, referring to another place fortified by Justinian near Dara, Basileion; in the following section here Procopius terms it an ὀχύρωμα, *okhurōma*, a ‘stronghold’, while Khusro later (i.16.7) refers to it by the more neutral term οἰκοδομία, *oikodomia*, ‘building’. The practice of erecting such a small-scale defensive post is discussed in some detail in Maur. *Strat.* x.4 (346–50), cf. Whitby 1988, 212–13. The order to build Minduos is *RKOR* 536.

13.4 τό τε ὀχύρωμα ἐς ὕψος ἤδη πολυανθρωπία τεχνιτῶν ἤρετο, ‘and the fort was already rising high with the vast number of workmen’. Lillington-Martin forthcoming, cf. *idem* 2012, notes the proximity of quarries, cf. Nicholson 1985, 663–7. The workmen may well have been in the vicinity to work on improving the defences of Dara, cf. Whitby 1986b, 758–9, Greatrex 1998, 170.

13.5 καὶ Κούτζην τε καὶ Βούζην, οἱ τῶν ἐν Λιβάνῳ στρατιωτῶν ἤρχον τότε, ‘under Cutzes and Buzes, who were then in command of the soldiers in Lebanon’. Procopius introduces the two young brothers in a similar style to Belisarius and Sittas at 12.20–1. In both cases the two young men are referred to using archaising dual forms – here τοῦτω δὲ ἀδελφῷ μὲν ἐκ Θράκης ἦσθην, νέω δὲ ἄμφω καὶ οὐ ξὺν τῷ ἀσφαλεῖ τοῖς πολεμίοις εἰς χεῖρας ἰόντε, ‘These two were brothers from Thrace, both young, and both reckless in coming to grips with the enemy’. Their careers are outlined in *PLRE* iii, Buzes, Cutzes, cf. MalKom on 18.26 and Begass 2018, 255–6; they were sons of Vitalian. The former enjoyed a long career in the Roman high command, despite Theodora's hostility in the 540s; the latter died in or shortly after the defeat here described. The two

occupied the post of *dux* in Phoenice Libanensis at the time they were despatched to reinforce Belisarius; on this dual post, with bases at Damascus and Palmyra, which was just undergoing restructuring by Justinian, see Greatrex 2007c, 92 with Mal. 18.2 and MalKom, *RKOR* 537.

13.6 ἐκάτεροι μὲν οὖν ξυλλεγόντες ἐπὶ τὴν οἰκοδομίαν ἄθροοι ἦσαν, ‘So the two armies mustered and came *en masse* to the building site.’ The word οἰκοδομία, *oikodomia*, like the English ‘building’ is ambiguous as to whether it refers to a process or an actual object. Mal. 18.26 puts the Persian forces at 30,000 strong, although the accuracy of his figure may be questioned, so Greatrex 1998, 156–7. But the forces on each side must have been considerable – Treadgold 1995, 51, estimates that 14,000 troops lay at the disposal of the *duces* of Phoenice Libanensis – even if less numerous than clashed in 530 at Dara.

13.7–8 τινὰς δὲ καὶ ἐζώγρησαν οἱ πολέμιοι. ἐν τούτοις ἦν καὶ Κούτζης, ‘The enemy also captured some alive, among whom was Cutzes.’ This is confirmed by Mal. 18.26, who adds that the leader had been wounded; the chronicler also emphasises that the Persians suffered heavy casualties. PZ ix.2b mentions the taking of captives but merely refers to Cutzes’ death; according to his account, most of those captured were infantry, caught in the Persian trenches. No more is known of the caves where Procopius says the soldiers were imprisoned.

13.8 εἰς ἔδαφος καθεῖλον, ‘they razed (the fort) to the ground’. The older Attic form ἐς, *es*, ‘to’, is here replaced by the more common εἰς, *eis*. Procopius almost always uses the former in this standard expression for destroying buildings, as e.g. at ii.5.27 (and on seventeen other occasions). Given that one manuscript (G) actually has ἐς, it would be preferable to accept this reading here. The issue arises regularly, e.g. also at 13.37 (on which see the note *ad loc.*) and at 13.5 (where manuscript P has ἐς χεῖρας, *es kheiras*, rather than the εἰς printed in the Teubner and Loeb editions). Scribes doubtless fell back on the more customary εἰς when their attention lapsed; see also Rance 2019, 402 n.67.

13.9–14.55 The Battle of Dara (530)

The pace slows perceptibly as Procopius reaches the first significant Roman success that he had himself witnessed. As much space is devoted to the heroic duels that preceded the combat and to the exchange of

letters of the leaders as to the actual course of the battle itself. These descriptions serve to heighten further the Roman achievement: it is clear from the outset that the Persians are confident of success (cf. 14.11), while the Romans know that they will have to struggle to beat their adversary (cf. 14.21–4). The vividness of Procopius' descriptions reflects his presence at the battle; he will have observed the duels and subsequent engagement in person. He may also, as Belisarius' *assessor*, have had a hand in the correspondence he and Hermogenes exchanged with the Persian general Peroz. It is highly likely that he has adapted, if not transformed, the correspondence in order for it to reflect the attitudes of the two parties, anticipating the issue of the battle; the same applies to the speeches of the commanders of the two sides before the battle. See pp. 10–12. The whole section gives the impression of having been carefully worked up, the better to highlight the Roman success and Belisarius' role in it. So Averil Cameron 1985, 145–6, Leppin 2011, 131–2. Lendon 2017a, 59, points to the influence of Herodotus' description of Greek and Persian disposition at Plataea (ix.28–32) in the length of Procopius' account of troop formations here.

Bibliography: see i.13–15g, cf. Syv  nne 2004, 461–2, Farrokh 2017, 168–71, Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 277–9.

13.9 Ὑστερον δ  βασιλε ς Ἰουστινιαν ς στρατηγ ν τ ς  ω Βελισ ριον καταστησ μενος, στρατεύειν  π  Π ρσας  κέλευεν. 'Later the Emperor Justinian made Belisarius *magister militum per Orientem* and ordered him to campaign against the Persians.' Belisarius' promotion occurred in April 529 according to Theoph. 178.18–19, cf. Mal. 18.34: he replaced Anastasius' nephew Hypatius, who had failed to check the raids of the Na rid ruler al-Mundhir. See *PLRE* iii, 184, Greatrex 1998, 169, MalKom on Mal. 18.34, *RKOR* 639. The order 'to campaign' against the Persians was in anticipation of a Persian assault in 530. Hermogenes, who had visited Kavadh in July 529, had been given an ultimatum by the Persian king: the Romans were to accede to his requests for money or he would invade their territory in a year's time. See Mal. 18.36, 44, who also gives the text of Kavadh's letter, cf. Greatrex 1998, 160–3, MalKom *ad loc.*

13.9   δ  στρατι ν λ γου πολλο   ξι ν  γ ίρας  ς Δ ρας  λθε. 'And Belisarius, gathering a very considerable army, went to Dara.' At 13.23 Procopius puts Roman forces at 25,000. No doubt Belisarius brought with him from Antioch the eastern field army over which he now had

charge as *magister militum*, which would then augment the forces of the *dux Mesopotamiae* at Dara. Procopius is unspecific as to the timing of Belisarius' arrival and even as to the date of the battle, but Theoph. 180–1 dates it to June 530.

13.10 καὶ οἱ Ἑρμογένης ξυνδιακοσμήσων τὸν στρατὸν ἐκ βασιλέως ἀφίκετο, τὸ τοῦ μαγίστρου ἀξίωμα ἔχων, 'Hermogenes came to him from the emperor to aid him in setting the army in order. This man, holding the title of *magister* ...' Hermogenes, *magister officiorum* from 529 to 533 and again in 535, had been involved in negotiating with Kavadh, cf. *PLRE* iii, Hermogenes 1. In March 530 he and Rufinus were at Hierapolis near the Euphrates (cf. *RKOR* 695), but Justinian evidently decided to involve him at this juncture in the military rather than the diplomatic sphere. His seniority and proximity to the emperor will have helped in maintaining discipline among the troops; he could also report back on Belisarius' performance and intervene, if necessary, in disputes among Roman commanders (as occurred in the following year, *Mal.* 18.60). Celer had undertaken a similar role in the Anastasian war, cf. 8.2, with Greatrex 1998, 108, Lounghis 2005, 29, Koehn 2018a, 37 n.95. No more is known of his service under Vitalian than what Procopius mentions here; his tenure as *assessor* – the same post that Procopius held – must have occurred between 513 and Anastasius' death in 518. See *PLRE* iii, Hermogenes, *MalKom* on *Mal.* 18.34. It is possible that he was among Malalas' informants, whose account is very detailed in this section. Laniado 2019 identifies him with an anonymous but impecunious patrician mocked by Theodora at *Anecd.* 15.24–35 and discusses his career in detail.

13.11 καὶ Ῥουφῖνον δὲ πρεσβευτὴν βασιλεὺς ἔπεμψεν, 'The Emperor also sent Rufinus as ambassador', confirmed by *Mal.* 18.50, cf. Theoph. 180. The chroniclers describe Rufinus as having accompanied Hermogenes to Dara in order to continue negotiations, as is signalled here too by Procopius. It is possible that he was then ordered back to Hierapolis by Justinian; at any rate, it was important that he not be involved in active hostilities in order not to compromise his role as an envoy. See Greatrex 1998, 169, Börm 2007, 319.

13.12 ἄφνω δὲ τις Βελισαρίῳ τε καὶ Ἑρμογένει ἀπήγγελλεν ὡς Πέρσαι ἐσβάλλειν ἐπίδοξοί εἰσιν ἐς γῆν τὴν Ῥωμαίων, 'But suddenly someone told Belisarius and Hermogenes that the Persians were expected to invade

Roman territory.’ No explanation is offered, although Mal. 18.50 (cf. Theoph. 180) implies that the Persian army at Nisibis was alarmed at the mustering of Roman forces at Dara.

13.13 τῆς πύλης, ἡ πόλεως Νισίβιδος καταντικρὺ κεῖται, οὐ μακρὰν ἄποθεν, ἀλλ’ ὅσον λίθου βολήν, τάφρον βαθεῖάν τινα ὥρυξαν, διεξόδους πολλὰς ἔχουσιν. ‘Not far from the gate that lies opposite the city of Nisibis, only a stone’s throw away, they dug a deep trench with many paths across it.’ Lillington-Martin 2007 and 2013 have advanced our understanding of the dispositions for combat considerably; he is certainly correct in finding fault with earlier plans of the battle, e.g. in Greatrex 1998, 172, Haldon 2001, 33–4, Dewing–Kaldellis, 30–1, which fail to take into account the large size of the armies in relation to the city walls. The plan in Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 279, is a great improvement, yet it places the Roman lines less than 100m from the city – rather too close for Procopius’ ‘stone’s throw’, as noted just below; he gives plans of the various phases of the battle at 295–7, which have been adapted for use here with his kind permission.

As regards the battle site, much hinges on Procopius’ reference to a πύλη, a *pylē*. The Greek term is usually translated as ‘gate’, but Lillington-Martin argues there is no gate at Dara in such a position (cf. however *Aed.* ii.1.26, Whitby 1986b, 742). He proposes instead to render it as ‘gap’: the word can refer (e.g.) to a mountain pass, such as Thermopylae. On this basis he proposes a battle site just east of Ambar, where there is a narrowing of the plain 2.5 km south of Dara; here he has detected other features, such as a hill on the east side, which also fit well with Procopius’ description. See Lillington-Martin 2007, 302–5, *idem* 2013, 604–6 with fig. 10, p. 175, but cf. Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 277 and n.205, arguing that *pylē* is never used in this sense by Procopius and noting that the Ambar plain is hard to conceive of as a point of reference, so also Whitby 2021b, 127 n.41. The difference between them may not be as great as seems at first, however, when one takes into account all the city’s defences. At *Aed.* ii.1.25–7 Procopius describes extensive defensive works built by Justinian at Dara, especially on the south side, including a moat and outer walls. The defences of the city themselves thus extended some distance beyond the remains visible today, which in turn could support the notion of a battle fought some distance to the south, close to where Lillington-Martin places it. See Whitby 1987b, 742, who found traces of an outer wall, *proteichisma*, 30m south of the main wall; 120m beyond it lay another wall, with at least one tower, while a further 40m

to the south are fieldstones, which might indicate the presence of a further parallel wall. Cf. Crow 1981, 19, with the photo by Gertrude Bell (R106, available at www.gerty.ncl.ac.uk). Keser-Kayaalp and Erdoğan 2017, 161–4 with fig.2, discuss several lines of walls south of the city that have recently come to light.

From the gate (or the gap) to the trench lay ‘a stone’s throw’. Lillington-Martin 2007, 302, points out that Procopius uses this estimate also at v.22.13 (cf. 22.12 and elsewhere) in describing the length of the sides of Hadrian’s mausoleum at Rome, but as Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 277 and n.1202, observes, it is hardly a precise measurement; the engagement probably took place a few hundred metres from the gate (or beyond the gap). The Roman formation must have been quite broad, over a kilometre in length, cf. Veg. iii.15 with Le Bohec 2014, 209–10, although Vegetius’ figures are likely to be exaggerated. The expression λίθου βολήν, *lithou bolēn* (cf. Luke 22:41), is favoured by military writers: it is found (e.g.) in Maur. *Strat.* xii.B.20 (458.17), cf. *De re milit.* 4.8 (266).

On a literary level, the trenches constructed by the Romans recall those dug by the Hephthalites to defeat the Persian king Peroz (4.7–13) – a ruler homonymous with the general beaten by Belisarius; both also had passages across them for friendly cavalry. Whether they had any role to play in the Roman victory is unclear, however: Procopius makes no reference to them subsequently, save to indicate that the Persian general was aware of them (14.15). On a historical level, trenches and traps had been used to good effect just two years previously: PZ ix.2 describes how the Romans under Belisarius and others had been caught unawares by them, leading to the defeat at Minduos (or Thannuris); Mal. 18.60 confirms their use by the Persian invasion force of 531, cf. *Dial. de sci. polit.* iv.55 (10/137) and Socr. *HE* vii.20.3 (in 421). See Greatrex 1998, 175, for other cases of trenches being used to protect infantry against cavalry, cf. Syvärne 2004, 461 n.1, Janniard 2010, 199 n.614, Rance 2015, 856–7; the practice is discussed by Maur. *Strat.* iv.3 (194–6), noting possible variations, cf. Janniard 2010, 171.

Procopius’ description of the trenches leaves it ambiguous as to whether the central, shorter, portion of trench projected forward from the longer side-trenches or was instead behind them. Most scholars have supposed the former, so (e.g.) Dewing in his translation, 106, Greatrex 1998, 172; others, the latter, e.g. Janniard 2010, 416, Lillington-Martin 2013, 605. Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 278 n.1206, supporting the majority view, argues plausibly that the Greek term ἐνερθεν, *enerthen*, ‘below’ at 13.19, implies side-trenches heading back towards Dara from the

projecting central trench. See also the detailed discussion in Greatrex 1998, 173 n.12, Syv  nne 2004, 461 n.7.

13.15 ἔν τε Ἀμμώδιος χωρίῳ, πόλεως Δάρας μέτρῳ εἴκοσι σταδίων ἀπέχοντι, ἐστρατοπεδεύσαντο ἅπαντες, ‘and (the Persians) all pitched camp in a place called Ammodius, twenty stades away from the city of Dara’. One would expect 20 stades to equate to just under 3 Roman miles, i.e. some 4.2 km, whereas the distance is rather 7.7 km south of Dara. See Appendix 2, p. 675, on Procopius’ stade, cf. Lillington-Martin 2013, 608, with Dillemann 1962, 228, Greatrex 1998, 170 and n.9. If Lillington-Martin is right in placing the battle 2.5 km south of Dara, then it may be that Procopius’ apparent underestimate is connected to this: he was referring to the battle site rather than the city. The scholiast’s odd gloss in manuscript P on the term stade and the distance to which it corresponds here is unhelpful and inaccurate: see Haury, 61, with Feissel 2002, 391 n.25.

Maur. *Strat.* xi.1 (354.15–20) notes the construction of marching camps by the Persians, cf. B  rm 2007, 165, Sauer et al. 2013, 304.

13.16 ἄρχοντες δ   ἄλλοι τε ἦσαν κα   Πιτυάξης κα   Βαρεσμανῶς ἐτερόφθαλμος. ‘Among the commanders were Pityaxes and Baresmanas, who had only one eye.’ Neither of these generals is otherwise known, cf. *PLRE* iii, Baresmanas, Pityaxes. Pityaxes could be a Greek rendering of the Persian title *petiaxes*, the Armenian *bdeashkh*, on which see Garsoian 1989, 516–17, Sundermann, *Elr* iv (1989), s.v. ‘bidax  ’. Baresmanas may likewise be a rendering of the Persian office of *marzban*, so Rubin, *PvK*, 368, cf. in more detail Greatrex 1998, 176 n.22, B  rm 2007, 144. See also *ODLA*, marzban, Pitiakhsh, on the two offices.

13.16 στρατηγ  ς δ   ε  ς ἅπασιν ἐφειστήκει, Πέρσης ἀν  ρ, μ  ρράνης μ  ν τ   ἀξίωμα (ο  τω γ  ρ τ  ν ἀρχ  ν καλο  σι Πέρσαι) Περόζης δ   ὄνομα. ‘The commander in chief was a Persian called Peroz, a *mirranes* in rank (this is the Persian name for the office).’ More likely, the commander was a member of the Mihran house, which frequently held military responsibilities and thus tended to confuse Graeco-Roman sources, cf. Huyse 2015, 207. He should not be identified with the Peroz mentioned by Mal. 18.26 campaigning in the Caucasus in 528; more likely is an identification with the ‘Meran’ who defeated Belisarius near Minduos in 528, who is referred to by Mal. 18.50 as ‘Meram’. See Greatrex 1998, 176 n.21, Schmitt 2004, 675–6, B  rm 2007, 143–4.

The form ἐφειστήκει (*epheistēkei*), the pluperfect active of ἐφιστήμι (*ephistēmi*) is not found in Herodotus or Thucydides, but it is used, as here, for military appointments by Appian (e.g. *Annib.* 19.86) and later writers, especially Procopius. Cf. i.13.30.

13.17 ὃς δὴ αὐτίκα παρὰ Βελισάριον πέμψας τὸ βαλανεῖον ἐν παρασκευῇ ἐκέλευε ποιεῖσθαι. ‘He immediately sent word to Belisarius telling him to make ready the bath, for he wanted to bathe there on the next day.’ The Persians’ hubris is overt, cf. Dahn 1865, 148, Whately 2016, 82. This may well be a literary invention, so Fan Chiang 2015, 169 and n.39, but as he notes, the episode finds a parallel in an independent source, Joh. Eph. *HE* vi.8, in which Khusro insisted that the Roman envoy Theodore the *silentarius* accompany him to Theodosiopolis in 576, where he could bathe with him, i.e. after the capture of the city; in the event, Khusro was deterred from even laying siege to it. Cf. also *Mir. S. Dem.* i.14 (143), p.150, where the defenders at Thessalonica in 586 mockingly invite the besiegers to use the city’s baths, with Petersen 2013, 594–5. See further i.14.1n. Frendo 1997, 107 with 117 n.25, rejects the reference to the bath out of hand, citing Zoroastrian prohibitions on bathing, but see Greatrex 2014c, 173, on the rather ambiguous relation of Persians to (Roman) baths.

13.19 Βούζης εἶχε ξὺν ἵππεῦσι πολλοῖς καὶ Φάρας Ἑρουλος ξὺν ὁμογενέσι τριακοσίοις. ‘(The left wing) was held by Buzes with a large number of cavalry and by Pharas, the Herul, with three hundred of his people.’ See fig. 11. Buzes may still have been a *dux* of Phoenice Libanensis, despite the failure of 528; more likely, however, he was now *dux* of Mesopotamia, since he is found at Amida in the following year. See Greatrex 1998, 174 n.14 and 13.1–8n. Pharas played a prominent part in the Roman army, both on the eastern front and subsequently in North Africa, until his death there in 535. Although Procopius is generally critical of the ill-disciplined Heruls, he is more favourable towards Pharas, cf. iv.4.29–31 with Greatrex 2018b, 331–2, Sarantis 2018, 366–8. The light-armed and effective Herul troops were used extensively by Justinian in his wars: see Goffart 2006, 208–9, Sarantis 2010, *idem* 2018, 366–8, Steinacher 2010, 352–3. On their equipment and customs see ii.25.27–8n. They seem to have served as *foederati* rather than *symmachoi*, so Greatrex 1998, 174 n.16.

13.20 Σουνίκας τε ἦν καὶ Αἰγὰν Μασσαγέται γένος, ξὺν ἵππεῦσιν ἑξακοσίοις, ‘Sunicas and Aigan, both Massagetae by birth, with six

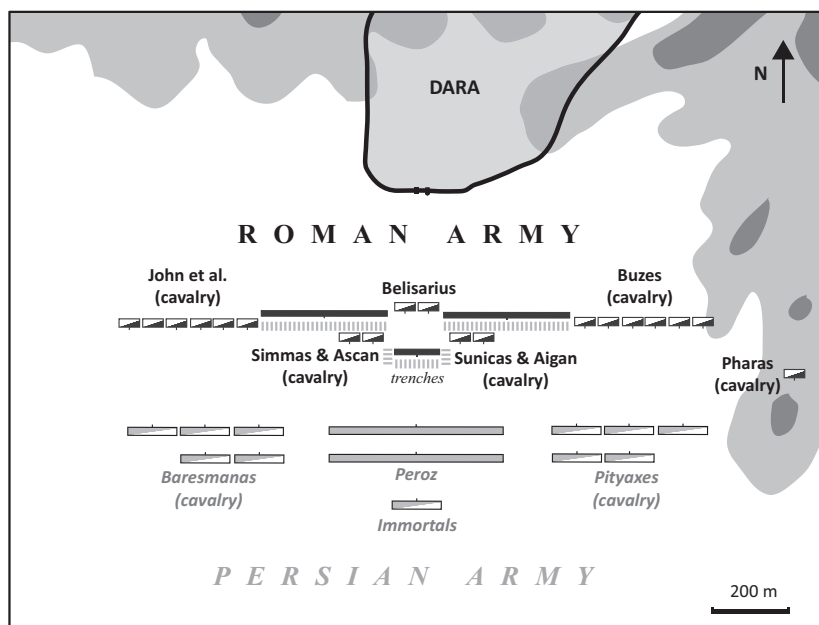


Figure 11 The Dispositions for Battle at Dara

hundred cavalry.’ It seems likely that each Hunnic leader therefore commanded 300 cavalry, though their precise rank remains unclear; see Greatrex 1998, 173 n.13 for discussion, cf. PZT 320 n.48. The former is given a prominent role in the Roman victory by both Mal. 18.50 and PZ ix.3; he may have held the post of *dux*. See *PLRE* iii, Aigan, Sunicas. Aigan subsequently joined Belisarius’ household, while Sunicas, having clashed with Belisarius in 531, is not heard of again. The cavalry under their command may have been the horse-archers much praised at 1.12–15, though Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 295 n.1286, argues that they were rather a shock force, armed with spears and swords, as PZ ix.3a states, but his description is cursory. See Janniard 2018 on Hunnic contingents, who suggests, 210, that their leaders’ success at Dara led to quick promotions. The Herodotean term ‘Massagetae’ is generally used by Procopius and classicising historians as a circumlocution for Hun, cf. e.g. Blockley, *FCH* i, 12.

Janniard 2010, 198–9, argues that Belisarius concealed these Hunnic cavalry, so as then to strike the Persians in the flank should they push the Roman left wing back, as indeed occurred; cf. Maur. *Strat.* iv.3 (194–6) with Janniard 2018, 210.

13.21 ὦν Ἰωάννης τε ὁ Νικήτου ἤρχε καὶ Κύριλλός τε καὶ Μάρκελλος· ξυνῆν δὲ αὐτοῖς καὶ Γερμανὸς καὶ Δωρόθεος, ‘under the command of John, the son of Nicetas, and Cyril and Marcellus. With them also were Germanus and Dorotheus.’ For these commanders of the right wing see *PLRE* iii, Cyrillus 2, Dorotheus 1, Germanus 1, Ioannes 32, Marcellus 2. Their ranks are unknown. Some may have been *duces*, others commanders of *numeri*. See Greatrex 1998, 184 n.14. Koehn 2018a, 122–3, notes the suggestion of Shuvalov 2006, 171–86 (cf. his plan on p.277), that the last two commanders named led a hidden cavalry force designed to outflank the enemy, as proposed by Maur. *Strat.* iii.5.77–82 (160).

13.21 ἐς γωνίαν δὲ τὴν ἐν δεξιᾷ ἵππεις ἐτάξαντο ἑξακόσιοι, ὦν Σίμμας τε καὶ Ἀσκαν Μασσαγέται ἤρχον, ‘At the angle on the right six hundred cavalry were stationed, under the command of Simmas and Ascan, both Massagetae.’ Both also fought at the battle of Callinicum, in which Ascan perished. PZ ix.3 associates Simmas (Simuth in the MS) with Sunicas, attributing valorous deeds at the battle to both of them. See PZT 320 n.48 with Greatrex 1998, 174–5 and *PLRE* iii, Askan and Simmas, where their rank is also discussed.

13.22 πανταχῇ δὲ τῆς τάφρου οἱ τε τῶν ἱππέων κατάλογοι καὶ ὁ πεζὸς στρατὸς ἵστατο, ‘All along the trench the regular cavalry (lit. ‘the units of cavalry’) and the infantry were posted.’ This is likely to indicate that the troops were deployed on both sides of the trench, with the cavalry on the far side, as represented by Janniard 2010, 416. He emphasises, 199 n.613, that Belisarius’ aim was to draw the Persians on in order to strike them from the flanks once their advance had been thwarted by the trench (rather than to protect the Roman infantry, as argued, e.g., by Greatrex 1998, 171).

13.23 ὥδε μὲν Ῥωμαῖοι ἐς πεντακισχιλίους τε καὶ δισμυρίους ξυνιόντες ἐτάξαντο, Περσῶν δὲ ὁ στρατὸς μυριάδες μὲν τέσσαρες ἱππέων τε καὶ πεζῶν ἦσαν, ἐφεξῆς δὲ ἅπαντες μετωπηδὸν ἵσταντο, ὡς βαθύτατον τῆς φάλαγγος τὸ μέτωπον ποιησόμενοι, ‘In this way the Romans were arranged for battle, some 25,000 in number. The Persian army amounted to 40,000 cavalry and infantry, standing close together forming a massed front, so that the front of the phalanx would be extremely deep.’ Procopius is the only source to give a figure for the Roman army; it corresponds to the size of army envisaged by Maur. *Strat.* iii.8, 10 (169–70, 174–8, cf. Greatrex 1998, 33) but is somewhat smaller than

the numbers mobilised for the Anastasian war, on which see Greatrex 1998, 96. Mal. 18.50 puts the Persian army at 70,000, but Procopius' 40,000 (reinforced by a further 10,000, cf. 14.1) must be closer to the mark, if it is not itself inflated. See Greatrex 1998, 176 n.20, Whately 2015, 396–8, *idem* 2016, 127.

The depth of the Persian deployment is emphasised by Procopius. Such a formation would reduce the impact of their numerical advantage. If the placement of the battle by Lillington-Martin 2007 and 2013 is accepted (see 13.9n), it is possible that the Persians were obliged to arrange their ranks thus because of the limited space available in the gap. Maur. *Strat.* xi.1 (354.22–356.27) notes how the Persians generally divided their forces into a left wing, a centre and a right wing; the depth could vary, but the first two lines were assigned to the cavalry. See also Syv  nne 2004, 344, on the depth of Persian formations.

13.24 ἀλλὰ θαυμάζουσί τε τὴν Ῥωμαίων εὐκοσμίαν Πέρσαι ἐώκεσαν καὶ ὃ τι χρήσονται τοῖς παροῦσιν ἀπορουμένοις, ‘instead the Persians seemed to be marvelling at the discipline of the Romans and at a loss as to what to do under the circumstances’. The εὐκοσμία, *eukosmia*, ‘discipline’ or ‘good order’ of the Romans is stressed by Procopius; the Persians themselves are concerned by the unusual discipline of the Romans, but their commander insists that they will revert to their customary ἀκοσμία, *akosmia*, ‘disorder’, when battle is joined (14.17). Yet in the end it is in disorder (14.50) that the Persians themselves flee. See Taragna 2000, 120–1, Whately 2016, 89–90. The term *eukosmia* was often used by theological writers, but cf. *Nov.* 26.1 (535) for its association with soldiers in this period; Procopius applies it particularly to Belisarius’ forces, cf. e.g. ii.14.21. See Adshead 1983, 84, noting Agathias’ use of it (and its association with Belisarius at *Hist.* v.17.2). The Emperor Julian, in describing Constantius’ army before the battle of Singara in the 340s, lays similar stress on the good order of his forces and the unease it caused among the Persians, *Or.* 1, 23C.

The last part of the phrase echoes Hdt. vii.213.1, where it refers to Xerxes’ uncertainty as to how to seize the pass at Thermopylae; the idiom is particularly common in Isocrates, e.g. at *Or.* 12.234.

13.25 Τῆς δὲ ἡμέρας ἀμφὶ δειλὴν ὥψιαν, ‘As the day drew towards evening.’ Maur. *Strat.* xi.4 (356.32–5) observes that the Persians were prepared to defer combat if their adversary were well prepared for battle. Cf. Thuc. iii.74.2 for the phrasing with Braun 1885, 168.

13.26 μετὰ δὲ Ῥωμαῖοι μὲν οἱ φυγόντες ἐκ τοῦ αἰφνιδίου πρὸς αὐτοὺς ὤρμησαν. ‘Next, however, the Romans who had been fleeing suddenly charged against them.’ Procopius describes a probing advance by the Persian right, to which the Romans reacted by ceding ground, perhaps hoping to lure the Persians into the trenches and then to surround them. But the Persians preferred not to follow up their probe, rightly fearing a possible flank attack from the centre. The Romans who had withdrawn – or rather, the cavalry elements among them – then wheeled around to turn upon their pursuers. Such Scythian tactics against pursuing Persians were risky since, as Maur. *Strat.* xi.2 (358.75–360.85), notes, they tended to maintain their discipline and formation even in pursuit. See Greatrex 1998, 177, Janniard 2010, 199 n.612.

13.29 εἷς δὲ ἄνθρωπος Πέρσης νεανίας, ἄγχιστα τοῦ Ῥωμαίων στρατοῦ τὸν ἵππον ἐλάσας, προὔκαλεῖτο ἅπαντας, εἰ τις οἱ βούλοιο ἐς χεῖρας ἰέναι. ‘But one young Persian, riding his horse very near to the Roman army, challenged them all to see if anyone would fight him.’ Procopius describes in detail the two duels that followed. Rance 2005, 429, plausibly suggests that he provides descriptions of such heroic events not just because of their epic qualities but also as a result of his links with the cavalry officers from whom Roman champions often came, albeit not on this occasion. They occur regularly in Procopius’ work, cf. e.g. viii.31.11–16 (before Busta Gallorum), cf. Rance 2005, 429 n.16, Whately 2016, 166–71, for other instances. Arab sources confirm the Persian tendency to challenge adversaries to single combat, e.g. Tabari 2297/92, 2310/101–2; in the latter case, before the battle of al-Qadisiyya, the first Persian challenger is killed by an Arab opponent, who likewise vanquishes a second Persian who comes forward. See Christensen 1944, 216, Farrokh 2017, 349–50, *ODLA*, warfare, Persian, cf. *Nihāya*, 413–23, tr. Browne, 250 (an instance at the battle of Dhu Qar); see also Rapp 2009, 663–7, *idem* 2014, 290 and n.79, on accounts of such duels between *bumberazi* (‘champion-duelists’) in Caucasian sources. That they were a feature of the wars between Rome and Persia is clear also from Mal. 14.23 and Socr. *HE* vii.18.25, who report that the Roman general Areobindus killed a Persian leader in single combat. See further Greatrex 1998, 177 n.25, Trombley 2002, 246–7, Rance, *loc. cit.*, Börm 2007, 168, Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 340–5.

13.30 Ἀνδρέας δὲ ἦν τις ἐν τοῖς Βούζου οἰκείοις ... παιδοτρίβης δὲ καὶ παλαίστρας τινὶ ἐν Βυζαντίῳ ἐφειστηκώς. ‘But there was a certain Andreas among Buzes’ entourage ... a trainer in charge of a wrestling

school in Byzantium.’ Nothing further is known of this Andreas, who, Procopius goes on to explain (13.31), acted as Buzes’ bath attendant. Palaestra/gymnasia were generally associated with bath complexes in the imperial period, although athletic training was on the wane by the sixth century, as attitudes changed. Those who did train there were schooled by the *paidotribēs*, the trainer, in wrestling, boxing and other physical activities. Joh. Chrys. *De prov.* 21.2 describes how the trainer would fall upon his students more vigorously even than their opponents, in order to prepare them for combat. See Remijsen 2015, 260–7, who casts doubt on the historicity of the episode (cf. 66), cf. Whately 2016, 75–6, arguing that Andreas’ two victories prefigure Roman success in the two waves of the Persian attack (i.14.34–6, 44). The name Andreas, linked to such words as ἀνδρεία, *andreia*, ‘manliness’, ‘bravery’ is, as Alan Ross points out to us, an interesting coincidence. See Holum 1982, 166, Greatrex 1998, 177 n.25, on the tough reputation of bath attendants in Late Antiquity, cf. *C.Th.* 16.2.42–3, laws of 416 and 418, aimed at curbing the violence of these attendants (known as *parabalani*) in Alexandria with 205 n.4 in vol.1 of Rougé’s translation.

It is not altogether clear how Andreas, with no prior experience of warfare according to Procopius, was able to fight on horseback so effectively. Leppin 2011, 131, emphasises that it was a representative of the amenities of traditional Roman civic life, i.e. the baths, that defeated the Persian soldiers, thwarting their commander’s desire to enjoy these amenities himself (13.17 above).

13.32 ὁ δὲ πληγὴν ἀνδρὸς ἰσχυροῦ λίαν οὐκ ἐνεγκὼν ἐκ τοῦ ἵππου ἐς ἔδαφος πίπτει, ‘The Persian could not withstand the blow from this very strong man, and he fell from his horse onto the ground.’ Procopius makes the scene more vivid through the use of the historic present, πίπτει, *piptei*, ‘he falls’, cf. 31, παίει, *paiei*, ‘he strikes’. See the preceding note on the strength of bath attendants.

13.32 καὶ αὐτὸν Ἀνδρέας μαχαίρα τινὶ βραχεῖα ὥσπερ ἱερεῖον ὑπτίως κείμενον ἔθυσσε, κραυγὴ τε ὑπερφυῆς ἐκ τε τοῦ περιβόλου καὶ τοῦ Ῥωμαίων στρατοπέδου ἤρθη, ‘... whereupon Andreas slaughtered him with a short knife as he lay flat on his back like a sacrificial victim, and a great shout broke out from the circuit wall and from the Roman troops’. Procopius employs the same simile, drawn from pagan rituals, at v.11.9, for the assassination of the Gothic king Theodahad, as also at viii.31.16 in the context of the aftermath of a duel. See Bremmer 2019, 314–15, on

pagan sacrifices, which used a short knife, μαχαίρα, *makhaira*; what is described evokes perhaps σφαγία, *sphagia*, ‘sacrificial rites’ involving the shedding of a victim’s blood, sometimes before combat, cf. Jameson 1993, 200–1 (= 2014, 102–3). The prone posture is not generally attested for sacrificial victims, though see Heinrichs 2013, 130. The shout from the wall recalls the *olohyē*, the piercing cry made by women at the moment of sacrifice. Procopius appears well informed about such sacrifices, cf. Freixas 1949, 52–3.

A very similar description of a shout greeting a Roman victory in a duel occurs at viii.31.16. In the present case, the vividness of the picture presented appears to confirm the author’s presence, yet his use of similar terms on other occasions – including the two just noted – demonstrates the limits of such inferences. Given the detailed description of the two Persian combatants, including the grey hair of the second one – which can hardly have been visible to most observers – it seems likely that Andreas himself may have provided Procopius with the information. Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 278 n.1206, suggests that Procopius may have witnessed the combat from the walls.

The περίβολος, *peribolos*, ‘circuit wall’, might mean the main city wall, but more likely here refers to one of the outer defensive works, as Whitby 1987b, 764–5, rightly observes. See 13.13n.

13.33 ἀνδρεῖον μὲν καὶ μεγέθους σώματος πέρι εὖ ἦκοντα, οὐ νεανίαν δέ, ἀλλὰ καὶ τινὰς τῶν ἐν τῇ κεφαλῇ τριχῶν πολλὸν ὄντα, ‘a brave man of splendid physique, and no youth, but one who actually showed some grey hair’. Procopius’ manner of characterising the Persian’s build is unusual: the preposition πέρι, *peri*, ‘in regard to’, here is used as a post-position, following the noun it qualifies, his body. Herodotus uses it thus just once, at viii.36.2; it is more typical of the tragedians. There are Herodotean parallels (e.g. i.30.4, i.102.2, cf. Dio 38.22.5) for the expression εὖ ἦκοντα, *eu hēkonta*, lit. ‘coming well’, i.e. perhaps ‘well-developed’ or ‘fortunate’; *LSJ*, 767, I.2.c, suggests ‘flourishing’. Procopius was fond of this formula and redeploys it at vi.26.20, vii.20.14.

13.35 καίπερ αὐτῷ πρὸς τοῦ Ἑρμογένους ἀπειρημένον, ‘even though he had been forbidden by Hermogenes’. Presumably the *magister officiorum* was concerned about the impact on Roman morale of a defeat; better to halt further duelling while the Romans held the advantage. Cf. Whately 2016, 98, on the importance of such displays of valour in boosting morale, noting also the case of the commander Florentius at

Satala (at i.15.15 below). Maur. *Strat.* i.8 (98), iii.5 (154) advises against sallies from the front line, cf. ii.16 (136), noting the demoralising effects of the death of a commander, with Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 341 n.1481, who connects Hermogenes' order with these (and earlier) restrictions.

13.36 ἄμφω γοῦν τοῖς δόρασιν ἐς ἀλλήλους θυμῷ πολλῷ ἐχόμενοι ὤρμησαν, καὶ τὰ τε δόρατα τοῖς θώραξιν ἐρεισθέντα δεινῶς ἀπεκρούσθη, 'Both men charged furiously with their spears, and the spears, hurled against their breastplates, were deflected with great force.' On the expression θυμῷ πολλῷ ἐχόμενοι, *thumō pollō ekhomenoi*, 'gripped by great anger', see i.4.31n. The perfect participle of ἐρείδω, *ereidō*, 'I plant, thrust' is difficult to translate here; one might render the phrase more literally as 'after the spears had been fixed into their breastplates'.

13.37 τῷ δὲ ἄνδρῃ τούτῳ ἄγχιστα πη πεσόντε ἀλλήλοις ἐξανίστασθαι σπουδῇ πολλῇ ἄμφω ἠπειγέσθην, 'The two men, falling next to each other, both struggled hard to get up.' Procopius uses the archaising dual forms here, giving the combat an epic resonance. The expression ἄγχιστα πη, *agkhista pē*, 'next', is not found before Procopius but is used very frequently by him, e.g. at i.3.2, i.25.28; the particle πη (or rather, according to *LSJ*, 1399, πῃ) is approximative, so that one might translate the two words more literally as 'somewhere very near'.

13.38 καὶ οἱ μὲν Πέρσαι ἐς τὸ Ἀμμώδιος τὴν φάλαγγα διαλύσαντες ἀνεχώρησαν, οἱ δὲ Ῥωμαῖοι παιανίσαντες ἐντὸς τοῦ περιβόλου ἐγένοντο. 'The Persians broke up their phalanx and retreated to Ammodius, while the Romans came inside the circuit wall singing the paean of victory.' The term 'phalanx' was by Procopius' day applied to Persian, as well as Greek and Roman, formations, cf. e.g. Heliod. *Aeth.* ix.14.3, Joh. Lyd. *De Mens.* iv.118 (157.2). Singing a paean or victory song was common Greek practice in the fifth century B.C., cf. e.g. Hdt. v.1.3, Thuc. i.50.5, but the practice is attributed to Roman soldiers already from Josephus' time, *B.J.* vi.403, cf. Appian, *Bell. Civ.* iii.9.70, Herodian viii.2.1. The archaising tone of Procopius' reference to the paean here is rightly picked up by Leppin 2011, 131.

14.1 Βελισάριος δὲ καὶ Ἑρμογένης πρὸς Μιρράνην ἔγραψαν τάδε, 'Belisarius and Hermogenes sent this letter to the *mirranes*.' Procopius himself, as Belisarius' *assessor*, may have been involved in this exchange

of letters, cf. Taragna 2000, 82 n.38. Whether their content reflects at least in part what was originally written or whether they have been worked up entirely for inclusion, they allow Procopius to draw out themes relevant to the battle, notably the responsibility of the Persians for the hostilities. See Carolla 1997, 158 n.6, for an overview of scholarly opinion on this question; the consensus favours the notion that these exchanges of letters have some foundation, cf. Whately 2016, 79–83. Frendo 1997, 105–7, follows Rubin in seeing them as propagandistic rhetoric, an effort to show that the Romans were waging a just war; Roques 2000, 24, regards them as derivative rhetorical exercises. Diplomatic letters and messages comprise over half the *logoi* (i.e. speeches) in the *Wars*: see Taragna 2000, 88–99. As she observes, 86, they display Procopius’ use of *gnōmai* and antithetical reasoning: in this case, for instance, the Roman commanders expatiate on the benefits of peace, which is contrasted with the Persian desire for war. See also pp. 10–12 above (Introduction, section (3)). Very similar themes – Persian boasting, a Roman desire to avert war – are rehearsed by Men. frg. 26.1 concerning discussions on the frontier near Dara in 580–1; cf. Börm 2007, 248–9. Whately 2016, 80, argues that Procopius signals the dominant role of the Roman commanders by placing their letter first and their speech of exhortation to the soldiers last.

The opening sections of the letter, concerning the virtues of peace, echo Thuc. iv.62.2, a speech of Hermocrates; Kaldellis 2014, 33 n.68, suggests parallels also with Plato, *Laws*, 628c and Polyb. 4.73.3. Procopius’ words were later adapted, with minimal changes, by Ignatius in his *V. Niceph.* for an address supposedly made by the patriarch to the Emperor Nicephorus, 170.25–171.1. See Cresci 1986, 254–5, who observes that Procopius consistently portrays Belisarius as avoiding unprovoked aggression.

14.2 ὥστε ἥν τις διαλυτῆς αὐτῆς γένοιτο, ‘If then someone were to break it (the peace) ...’ The use of ἥν, *ēn*, with the optative for a future less vivid conditional is unusual, cf. Smyth §2329: one would expect εἰ, *ei*, which is what Ignatius substitutes here for Procopius’ ἥν. Although Procopius elsewhere (e.g. 14.23, 17.38) uses ἥν with the subjunctive, as is normal in classical sources (cf. Smyth §2323), he employs the same idiom as here at v.27.26 and *Aed.* i.3.2, which implies it must be deliberate. Cf. Browning 1978, 109, on divergences from classical authors in Procopius’ use of the optative. The word ὥστε, *hōste*, is used adverbially here rather than as a conjunction, with the sense ‘therefore’, cf. Lampe, 1557.

14.3 πόλεμον ἐπάγειν ἡμῖν αἰτίαν οὐκ ἔχοντα ἔγνωκας, καίπερ ἑκατέρου μὲν βασιλέως εἰρηναῖα βουλευομένου, ‘You decided to start a war against us for no reason, even though each of our sovereigns is discussing peace.’ The justification of a war is a theme raised by Procopius throughout his work, cf. Brodka 2004, ch.5; the issue is also discussed in *De pol. sci. dial.* v.153 (42/176), where reference is made to enemies unjustly starting a war, πόλεμον ἐπάγοντες, *polemon epagontes*. Duwe 1885, 24, notes the use of εἰρηναῖα, *eirēnaia*, lit. ‘peaceful things’ at Thuc. i.29.4, but Procopius’ use of this term together with the verb βουλευομαι, *bouleuomai*, ‘I deliberate’, recalls rather Plut. *Marc.* 6.2.3; he uses the same expression at vi.6.35, cf. viii.29.6 and Agath. i.8.6.

On the continuing negotiations between Kavadh and Justinian see i.13–15h.

14.4 μή ποτε Πέρσαις, ὥς τὸ εἰκός, εἴης τῶν ξυμβησομένων δεινῶν αἴτιος, ‘in case you should be responsible for the disasters that, in all likelihood, will befall the Persians’. Another unusual use of the optative, this time in a purpose clause. Smyth §2200 (cf. 2227) notes circumstances where the optative, rather than a subjunctive, can be used after a main verb in a primary tense – but they do not appear to apply here.

14.5 ἔργῳ δὲ τὰ ἐπηγγελμένα ἐπιτελεῖν χαλεπώτατόν τε καὶ κρεῖσσον ἐλπίδος, ‘but (who) find the fulfilment of their promises by action very difficult and indeed more than can be hoped for’. The phrase κρεῖσσον ἐλπίδος, *kreisson elpidos*, ‘greater than hope/expectation’ is found already at Thuc. ii.64.1, referring to the plague; cf. also Proc. 14.16, iv.20.5. The *mirranes* returns to the contrast between Roman rhetoric and action in the following section, where again the term ἔργῳ, *ergō*, ‘in fact/deed’ is deployed. The Persian insistence on Roman faithlessness rings hollow for two reasons. First, Procopius has not reported any obvious violations of the peace by the Romans, although at 16.6–7 he attributes to Kavadh a complaint about the building of Dara and the attempt at Minduos; since, however, the Persians are depicted as invading Roman territory ‘for no reason’ in 502 (7.3), such accusations carry little weight. Second, the introductory chapters have built up a picture of Persian treachery, notably in the case of Peroz and the Hephthalites. Cf. however Dahn 1865, 101 and n.1.

14.6 ὑμεῖς δὲ, ὦ φίλοι Ῥωμαῖοι, μηδὲν ἄλλο τὸ λοιπὸν οἴεσθε ἢ πολεμητέα ὑμῖν ἐς Πέρσας εἶναι, ‘Rest assured, my dear Romans, that

there is nothing for you in the future but to fight the Persians.’ The tone is ironic, cf. vii.9.11, a letter of Totila addressed to the Roman senate, referring to ‘my dear Romans’; so García Romero, 89 n.112. The impersonal verbal adjective πολεμητέα, *polemētea*, ‘it is necessary to fight’, in the neuter plural, is not often used; Procopius may well have Thuc. i.79.2 and i.88.1 in mind. See also Smyth §2152.

14.8 Ρουφῖνον γὰρ ἐπὶ πρεσβείᾳ ἦκοντα οὐκ ἄποθεν εἶναι ἡμεῖς τε εἶπομεν ξὺν τῷ ἀληθεῖ καὶ αὐτὸς οὐκ ἐς μακράν εἴσῃ, ‘For when we said that Rufinus had come on an embassy and was not far away, we were speaking the truth, as you yourself will soon know.’ See i.13.10n on Rufinus.

14.9 ἡγμένον μὲν τῇ Ῥωμαίων ἀπραγμοσύνῃ, ἀλαζονείᾳ δὲ τῇ Περσῶν νεμεσήσαντα, ‘(God), moved by the Roman love of peace, and wreaking vengeance upon Persian arrogance’, an elegant instance of chiasmus. Very similar sentiments are put forward by the Persian envoy Zachariah to the Persian Andigan at Men. Prot. frg.26.1.108–32. Frendo 1997, 106, translates the term ἀπραγμοσύνη, *apragmosunē*, ‘freedom from politics’, ‘love of a quiet life’ (so *LSJ*, 229) as ‘inoffensiveness’; see further i.16.5n on the term. The justice of the Romans’ cause is an important factor in their success for Procopius: see Cresci 1986, 265–7, cf. Brodka 2004, 28–9, Whately 2016, 81. On the Persians’ ἀλαζονεία, *alazoneia*, ‘arrogance’, already invoked at 14.7, a typical barbarian trait, see Dahn 1865, 123 and n.2, 149. As he notes, it is seldom justified.

14.10 ἀντιταξόμεθα δὲ τὰ γεγραμμένα παρ’ ἐκατέρων ἀπ’ ἄκρων σημείων ἐς τὴν ξυμβολὴν ἀναψάτερων ἀπ’ ἄκρων σημείων ἐς τὴν ξυμβολὴν ἀναψάμενοι. ‘We shall take up our positions against you, fixing the letters written by both sides on the tops of our standards for the conflict.’ A reminiscence of i.4.9, where the Hephthalites suspended from their banners the salt over which Peroz had sworn not to attack them, cf. the note *ad loc.*

14.11 Οὐδὲ ἡμεῖς ἄνευ θεῶν τῶν ἡμετέρων ἐς τὸν πόλεμον καθιστάμεθα, ‘We too go into battle with our gods on our side.’ The expression ἐς τὸν πόλεμον καθιστάμεθα, *es ton polemon kathistametha*, ‘we go into battle’ is frequent in Thuc. (e.g. iii.4.1), but is found also in Appian (e.g. *Bell. Civ.* v.13.124) and Dio Cassius (48.54.6).

14.12 ἀλλά μοι τό τε βαλανεῖον καὶ ἄριστον ἐν παρασκευῇ τοῦ περιβόλου ἐντὸς γινέσθω, ‘Let bath and luncheon be ready for me inside the circuit wall.’ See 13.17n. Whately 2016, 82, suggests that Procopius contrasts the approach of each side following the exchange of letters: while Belisarius and Hermogenes prepare their troops for combat (14.12), Peroz prefers to deliver an address (14.13). Given that the speech is given on the following day, however, this is perhaps an overinterpretation.

14.13 Οὐκ ἄγνοῶ μὲν ὥς οὐ λόγοις τῶν ἡγουμένων, ἀλλ’ ἀρετῇ τε οἰκείᾳ καὶ τῇ ἐς ἀλλήλους αἰδοῖ θαρσεῖν ἐν τοῖς κινδύνοις εἰώθασι Πέρσαι, ‘I am well aware that Persians are courageous in danger not because of their generals’ speeches, but because of their own bravery and respect for each other.’ The speech attributed to the *mirranes* is of course Procopius’ invention, cf. Whately 2016, 80 and n.55. It is the first such harangue or exhortation (*logos paraklētikos*) among many in Procopius’ work, designed to reflect the issues he thought relevant to the forthcoming battle; it owes much to similar speeches in Thucydides and other historians, as to the rhetorical exercises practised by students. In general see Averil Cameron 1985, 36–8, cf. 146, Taragna 2000, 77 and n.33, 100–1, Iglesias Zoido 2008b, cf. *idem* 2012 (on the influence of Thucydides on schools of rhetoric), Lendon 2017b, esp. 149 n.21 and pp. 10–12 above; on this set of speeches see Whately 2016, 82–3. In the present case one can detect echoes of Thuc. ii.89, Phormio’s speech to the Athenians, apprehensive at the greater number of Spartan ships before them. The *mirranes* also returns to the issue of the unusual good order of the Romans, 14.14, a theme that permeates these two chapters: see 13.24n, cf. Rubin, *PvK* 369. The initial theme, that words do not in themselves instil courage, is found also in Sallust, *BC* 58.1–3, though there is no reason to suppose a direct link.

Procopius strives to add touches of Persian colouring to this speech, e.g. in the reference to their sense of mutual respect (or shame), as also their fear of their king (14.19, cf. 18.28). See Taragna 2000, 101–2, Börm 2007, 165, 249. A passage in the Denkart (viii.26) confirms the use of such addresses by the Persians, on which see Azarnouche and Petitjean, forthcoming, comm. *ad* 26.23A.

14.18 τοῦ βασιλέων βασιλέως, ‘the king of kings’. On Procopius’ unusual word order here see i.4.24n.

14.20 Βελισάριος δὲ καὶ Ἑρμογένης πρὸ τοῦ περιβόλου πάντας Ῥωμαίους ἀγείραντες παρεκελεύσαντο ὧδε, ‘Belisarius and Hermogenes called all the Romans together in front of the circuit wall and delivered this exhortation.’ This speech need not be Procopius’ invention, since he could have been present at such an address before the battle; although some commentators have expressed scepticism as to the feasibility of generals haranguing their troops before battle, sufficient precedents may be found to demonstrate that they occurred. See Iglesias Zoido 2008b, 24–5, for a summary of the debate; cf. Pritchett 2002, esp. 53–4, 65, arguing for their historicity. This is confirmed by Maur. *Strat.* vii.1.4 (232) and by the *Rhetorica Militaris* attributed to Syrianus Magister, an entire work, albeit from a later period (so Rance 2007b), devoted to advising generals on how to encourage their forces by their allocutions. But in its present form the speech bears the hallmarks of a polished set piece, beginning with an insistence on Roman valour and the importance of discipline. See Taragna 2000, 120–1, Whately 2016, 77–83; the latter suggests, 80, that the Romans’ superiority is indicated by the fact that they have the first word (in their letter sent to the Persian commander, i.14.1) and the last (in the form of this speech).

14.21 Ὡς μὲν οὐκ εἰσὶ παντάπασιν ἀνίκητοι Πέρσαι οὐδὲ κρείσσους ἢ θνήσκειν, ἐπίστασθε δὴ που μάχῃ τῇ προτέρᾳ σταθμώμενοι. ‘You know that the Persians are not wholly invincible, nor yet too strong to die, for you can judge by the previous battle.’ More likely an allusion to the skirmish of the previous day, 13.28, in which several Persians were killed, than to the unsuccessful Minduos campaign (on which see 13.7n). It is possible that the commanders are alluding to the Immortals in insisting that the Persians are indeed mortal, so García Romero, 92 n.116, cf. 14.31 on this formation.

14.22 τὰ μὲν γὰρ τῆς τύχης ἐναντιώματα σπουδῇ ἐπανορθοῦσθαι οὐδαμῶς πέφυκε, γνώμη δὲ τῶν οἰκείων κακῶν ῥαδίως ἂν ἀνθρώπῳ ἱατρὸς γένοιτο, ‘For whereas reversals of fortune are not the sort of thing to be put right by determination, intelligence can easily be the physician for a man’s own ills.’ Procopius contrasts chance, τύχη, *tychē*, with intelligence or judgement, γνώμη, *gnōmē*. See García Romero, 92 n.118, drawing the parallel of Thuc. iv.18.2, although the chance there is implicit. The expression ‘physician for ills’, κακῶν ἱατρὸς, *kakōn iatros*, is attested elsewhere in Greek literature, e.g. describing death, Aesch. frg.255, or time, Menander, frg.652 (ed. Koerte, vol.2, p.207).

14.23 ὥστε ἦν τῶν παραγγελλομένων κατακούειν ἢ βουλομένοις ὑμῖν, αὐτίκα δὴ ἀναδήσεσθε τὸ τοῦ πολέμου κράτος. ‘So therefore, if you are willing to listen to your orders, you will immediately gain for yourselves the superiority in war.’ On the participle βουλομένοις, *boulomenois*, ‘being willing’, see i.11.20n. The middle of the verb ἀναδέω, *anadeō*, ‘I bind, tie’ is here used metaphorically (cf. iv.27.11, Chor. *Or.* 5.11 [84.5]) for ‘win, gain’, as though a victory crown were in question. See *LSJ*, 103. The issue of obedience is emphasised repeatedly in *Rhet. Mil.*, e.g. 15.1, 36.3, 37.1, 43.

14.24 καὶ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν πολεμίων, ᾧ μάλιστα δεδίττονται, ὑμᾶς ὑπερφρονεῖν ἄξιον. τὸ γὰρ πεζὸν ἅπαν οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἢ ὁμιλὸς ἐστὶν ἀγροίκων οἰκτρῶν, ‘The numbers of the enemy, by which they most terrify you, you should despise. All their infantry is simply a rabble of pitiable peasants ...’ The verb ‘to be’ is omitted here, as at iv.11.33: a literal translation would be ‘(are) worthy that you should despise them’. The alleged poor quality of Persian infantry, the *paygān*, is demonstrated by their behaviour at the battle, 14.52: they threw down their shields and fled. Their long shields (14.26) are alluded to by Procopius also at v.22.20, cf. Ammianus 24.6.8. See further Shahbazi 1987, 497, Tafazzoli 2000, 13–14, Ammianus 23.6.83 with den Boeft et al. 1998, 226, Greatrex 1998, 54–5, Syväne 2004, 330–1, 338–9, Börm 2007, 167. Howard-Johnston 2012, 112, offers a more sanguine assessment. Men. Prot. frg.20.3 similarly implies that Persian armies were often bulked out by untrained peasants; he uses precisely the same terms as Procopius.

The treatise *Rhet. Mil.*, 44.9, addresses the issue of superior numbers, suggesting that the general cite instances where numerically inferior forces, notably the Macedonians and Athenians, defeated their enemies. It also advises playing up the military inadequacy of the enemy forces by stressing their poor equipment and training and suggesting that they are made up of peasants and craftsmen, 26.3. Gylippus’ speech to the Syracusans at Thuc. vii.66–8 contains some similar themes, notably at 67.3, where he insists that the Athenians’ numerical superiority will not help them, cf. 68.1, emphasising the disorganisation of the enemy.

14.30 οἱ δὲ τοὺς μαχομένους ἐκδεχόμενοι ἔμελλον ἀκμῆτες ἐπιθήσεσθαι τοῖς ἐναντίοις, ὅπως αἰεὶ ἐκ περιτροπῆς ἅπαντες μάχωνται. ‘These were to relieve the fighters and be fresh when they attacked the enemy, so that they could all fight in continuous succession.’ How this would work in practice, is less clear. See Inostrancev 1926, 13–14 with n.3, 26, Farrokh

2005, 42, *idem* 2017, 165. There may be a reminiscence of the rotation of troops by Xerxes at Thermopylae, Hdt. vii.210.

14.31 μόνον δὲ τὸν τῶν ἀθανάτων λεγομένων λόχον ἡσυχῇ μένειν, ἕως αὐτὸς σημήνη, ἐκέλευεν. ‘He ordered only the corps of the so-called Immortals to remain where they were until he gave the signal.’ Doubt has been cast on the existence of an élite corps of Persian cavalry so named, a reminiscence of the (infantry) Immortals in the Achaemenid Persian army, who feature in Herodotus’ work: see Charles 2011, esp. 299–307. Contrast Sauer et al. 2013, 348 and 378 n.238, who point to the evidence of Socr. *HE* vii.20, Mal. 14.23, also referring to the corps, and to a fortress close to the Gorgān wall that may have been designed to accommodate 10,000 cavalry. Charles is right to observe, 299 n.27, that Procopius does not specify the size of the unit, which is termed rather vaguely a λόχος, *lokhos*: it need not have been 10,000 strong, which would be a remarkably high proportion of the Persian army present at Dara, *art. cit.*, 305. See further Greatrex 1998, 53 and n.48.

14.32 αὐτὸς τε κατὰ μέσον τοῦ μετώπου ταξάμενος, Πιτυάξην μὲν τοῖς ἐν δεξιᾷ, Βαρεσμανᾶν δὲ τοῖς ἐς τὸ ἀριστερόν κέρας ἐπέστησεν. ‘He stationed himself in the middle of the front line, and put Pityaxes in charge of those on the right, and Baresmanas in charge of those on the left wing.’ Cf. Maur. *Strat.* xi.1 (354–6) on the customary three-fold division of Persian forces with Azarnouche and Petitjean, forthcoming, comm. *ad* 26.4; Mal. 18.50 confirms it in this case. See Greatrex 1998, 175. Rubin, *PvK*, 369.12–14, suggests that Procopius derived his information on the Persian deployment from captives.

14.32 Φάρας δὲ Βελισαρίῳ τε καὶ Ἑρμογένει παραστάς εἶπεν, ‘Pharas stood beside Belisarius and Hermogenes and said’. The Herul leader is consistently portrayed in a good light by Procopius, cf. iv.4.29. Although he describes himself, rather ironically, as an uneducated barbarian at iv.6.15, his letter to Gelimer at iv.6.15–26, like his intervention here, is couched in lofty terms; cf. Pazdernik 2006, 183. The location of the hill on the Roman left behind which he concealed his troops is unknown, but a similar tactic had been employed a century earlier: Janniard 2010, 198 n.610, cf. 170, draws attention to a battle in 421, when Roman forces under Procopius emerged from behind a hill to rout the Immortals decisively (Socr. *HE* vii.20.8), and which is likely to have occurred in the vicinity of Dara.

14.33 Οὐδέν μοι δοκῶ ἐνταῦθα ξὺν τοῖς Ἑρούλοις μένων τοὺς πολεμίους ἐργάσασθαι μέγα, ‘I do not think that if I stay here with the Heruls I can do much harm to the enemy.’ Wirth, 559, notes the suggestion of Herwerden 1906, 57, that the text should be emended either to οὐδέν ἄν, *ouden an*, rather than just οὐδέν, or to ἐργάσσεσθαι from ἐργάσασθαι: as the sentence stands, with an aorist infinitive, it ought to refer to a discrete action, probably in the past, which clearly is not intended. On the manoeuvre suggested by Pharas see i.15.10n.

14.34 Μάχης δὲ ἄχρι ἐς ἡμέραν μέσσην οὐδέτεροι ἤρχον, ‘Neither side began the battle until midday.’ The Persian habit of deferring battle until the hottest part of the day is noted also by Maur. *Strat.* xi.1 (356.35–8), cf. Inostrancev 1926, 14. On other occasions they were able to surprise the Romans as they took their mid-day meal, as Procopius reports at 8.14–15, cf. ii.18.17–18. See Greatrex 1998, 180 and n.30, Börm 2007, 168. Elton 2007c, 544, points out that the average temperature in July at Dara is 34°C, but at noon it often reaches 45°C, cf. Kaegi 1991, Lee 1993a, 91–5.

14.35 καὶ τινὰ τὰ βέλη τῷ πλήθει ἀχλὺν ἐπὶ πλεῖστον ἐποίει, ‘and the missiles, by their sheer number, produced quite a mist over a wide area’. The noun ἀχλὺς, *akhlus*, ‘mist’ is Homeric, often referring to the mist that falls over a hero’s eyes before death, cf. *LSJ*, 297, Rubin, *PvK*, 369.25–6; Lee 2013a, 720, sees it a classicising touch. But it is found in later prose authors too, and Joh. Chrys. *De sacerdotibus* vi.12, line 150, uses it in connection with the flurry of missiles in battle. Comparable exchanges of arrows are recorded by Procopius at Callinicum, 18.31–4, Agath. iii.22.2.

14.35 ἔκ τε ἀμφοτέρων πολλοὶ ἔπιπτον, πολλῷ δὲ συχνότερα τὰ τῶν βαρβάρων βέλη ἐφέρετο, ‘Many fell on both sides, but the barbarians’ missiles fell far more densely.’ Procopius expatiates on the difference between Roman and Persian archery in his account of Callinicum, i.18.32–4: see 18.32n.

14.36 οὐ μέντοι οὐδὲ ὥς Ῥωμαῖοι τὸ ἔλασσον εἶχον, ‘Yet even so the Romans did not get the worst of it.’ For the initial formula, a strong rebutting phrase, cf. Xen. *Anab.* ii.2.16, Proc. vi.14.20 and elsewhere. The closing expression, τὸ ἔλασσον εἶχον, *to elasson eikhon*, ‘to have the worst of it’, goes back to Hdt. ix.102.2 (the battle of Plataea), cf. Thuc. i.105.5, noted by Duwe 1885, 24.

14.36 πνεῦμα γὰρ ἐνθένδε ἐπίφορον ἐπὶ τοὺς βαρβάρους ἐπιπесόν οὐ λίαν αὐτῶν τὰ τοξεύματα ἐνεργεῖν εἶα, ‘for a favourable wind blew from their side against the barbarians and did not allow their missiles to be very effective’. This was undoubtedly a significant advantage to the Romans; at Callinicum in the following year, on the other hand, PZ ix.4 indicates that the wind was against them. See Greatrex 1998, 180 and n.31. The phrasing concerning the wind recalls Thuc. ii.77.5, so rightly Duwe 1885, 24.

14.37 ἐπεὶ δὲ ἅπαντα ἑκατέρους τὰ βέλη ἤδη ἐπιλελοίπει, τοῖς τε δόρασιν ἐς ἀλλήλους ἐχρῶντο, ‘When each side had used up all its arrows, they used their spears against each other.’ Koehn 2018a, 126, observes that spears are used in this case as thrusting weapons, not (e.g.) as missiles, as was the case on other occasions. The units involved here were probably not horse-archers, *hippotoxotai*, only some of whom carried spears, but rather lancers, so Koehn 2018a, 124–6.

14.38 Καδισηνοὶ γὰρ, οἱ ταύτη ξὺν τῷ Πιτυάξῃ ἐμάχοντο, ‘The Kadiseni, who were fighting there under Pityaxes’, i.e. on the Persian right, facing Buzes’ forces. The Kadiseni were a highland people who lived in the vicinity of the Jebel Sinjar, a little to the south of Dara. They appear in Ps.-Josh. 22 and PZ ix.2a as Qadishāyē. See Greatrex 1998, 181 n.32, PJT 19 n.96, Meier 2019, 1288 n.15. This is phase 1 of the battle on fig. 12.

14.39 πρῶτοι δὲ οἱ τριακόσιοι ξὺν τῷ Φάρα Ἑρουλοὶ ἐξ ὑψηλοῦ κατὰ νώτου τῶν πολεμίων γενόμενοι ἔργα θαυμαστά ἐς τε τοὺς ἄλλους καὶ τοὺς Καδισηνοὺς ἐπεδείκνυντο. ‘But first the three hundred Heruls with Pharas came down upon the enemy’s rear from the high ground and gave a wonderful display of valour against the Kadiseni and others.’ Pharas’ proposal to Belisarius is thus fully vindicated; see Greatrex 1998, 181, Haldon 2001, 32, cf. Whately 2016, 92–3, noting the importance of encirclement at various points in the *Wars*. This is phase 2 of the battle on fig. 13. The reference to the valiant deeds performed echoes Procopius’ preface, cf. esp. 1.7; see Basso and Greatrex 2018, 69.

14.41 τῆς δὲ τροπῆς λαμπρᾶς γενομένης, ‘The rout became obvious.’ Cf. Thuc. i.49.7, noted by Braun 1885, 204. The Persians pay the price of indiscipline as they are slaughtered by the Romans, cf. Whately 2016, 208–9 (noting parallels with viii.32, the battle of Busta Gallorum).

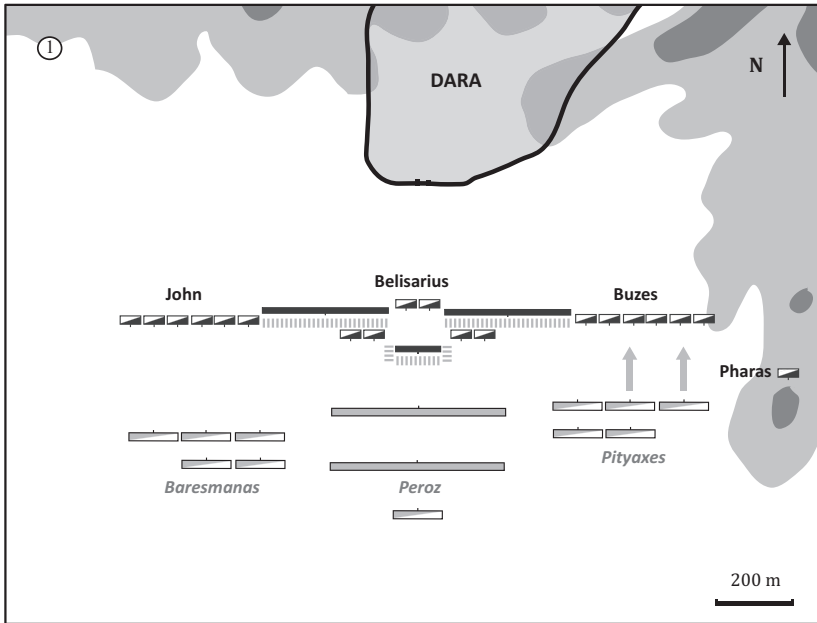


Figure 12 The Battle of Dara (Phase 1)

14.43 ταῦτα μὲν οὖν ἐφέρετο τῇδε, ‘These things turned out then in this way.’ A common Procopian formula (cf. e.g. ii.6.8, viii.25.15), not found in earlier writers, but taken up (e.g.) by Joh. Cin. iii.5 (101.5), Nic. Chon. 7.68–9 (i.1.3).

14.44 Μιρράνης δὲ ἄλλους τε πολλοὺς καὶ τοὺς ἀθανάτους λεγομένους ἅπαντας ἐς μέρος τὸ ἀριστερὸν λάθρα ἔπεμψεν. ‘But the *mirranes* secretly sent troops to the left, including all the so-called Immortals.’ It is likely that this had been the Persian general’s plan from the start: the attack on the Roman left flank may have been designed to divert attention from the main strike on the other side. See Greatrex 1998, 181, Haldon 2001, 32. Lendon 2017a, 45, notes that this is a rare instance of a historian providing further details of troop movements after describing the armies’ dispositions. The closing stages of the battle are well illustrated in the diagrams of Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 297, on which mine are based.

14.45 Πέρσαι μὲν οὖν, οἱ κέρας τὸ ἀριστερὸν εἶχον Βαρεσμανᾶ ἡγουμένου σφίσι, ξύν τοῖς ἀθανάτοις ἐς τοὺς κατ’ αὐτοὺς Ῥωμαίους

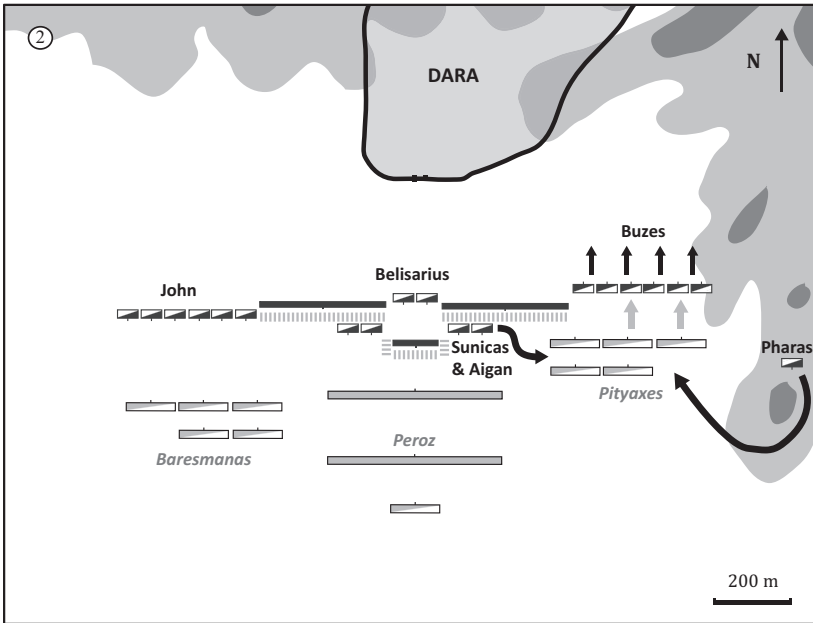


Figure 13 The Battle of Dara (Phase 2)

δρόμῳ ἐσέβαλλον. ‘So the Persians who were holding the left wing under the leadership of Baresmanas advanced at a run with the Immortals against the Romans drawn up opposite them.’ Maur. *Strat.* xi.1 (356.38–40) reports that the Persians advance calmly to battle, maintaining their formation; in this case, they may have counted upon a more sudden charge to break Roman resistance. This is phase 3 of the battle on fig. 14.

14.47 ἄτε δὲ τοῖς βαρβάροις ἐγκάρσιοι ἰόντες, διεῖλον αὐτῶν δίχα τὸ στράτευμα, ‘and since they met the barbarians from the flank, they divided their army in two’. As Janniard 2010, 171, argues, the Romans appear to have concealed from the Persians the strike force under the Hunnic commanders, which consequently were able to attack the exposed Persian flank; the trenches may also have impeded Persian attempts to defend themselves. The Roman tactic corresponds closely, as already noted, to the recommendations of Maur. *Strat.* iv.3 (194–6), cf. xi.1 (358.75–8), recommending that one fall upon the flanks or rear of the Persians. This is phase 4 of the battle on fig. 15.

14.47 ἐν τοῖς καὶ τὸν τοῦ Βαρεσμανᾶ τὸ σημεῖον φέροντα ξυνέπεσεν εἶναι, ὃν δὴ ὁ Σουνίκας τῷ δόρατι ἐπελθὼν παίει. ‘Among these there happened to be Baresmanas’ standard-bearer, and Sunicas made for him and hit him with his spear.’ Mal. 18.50 (380.4–5) confirms the capture of a Persian standard; both Mal. 18.50 and PZ ix.3 signal the important role played by Sunicas, the latter associating him with Simmas. PZ refers to the important distances traversed by Sunicas in his manoeuvres, referring to him ‘passing through the army courageously from one side to the other’, i.e. from the Roman left to the right (cf. Proc. 14.44). On Persian standards see i.15.15n; also Whately 2016, 98–9.

14.48 αἰσθόμενοι οὗ ἦσαν κακοῦ, ‘realising what danger they were in’, perhaps a reminiscence of Dem. *In Aristocr.* 156, αἰσθόμενος δ’ οὗ ἦν κακοῦ. The verb αἰσθομαι, *aisthomai*, ‘I perceive’, is a slightly less common alternative to the verb αἰσθάνομαι, *aisthanomai*, ‘I perceive’ but is frequently used by Thucydides (e.g. vii.49.1) and Xenophon (e.g. *Hell.* iv.8.13).

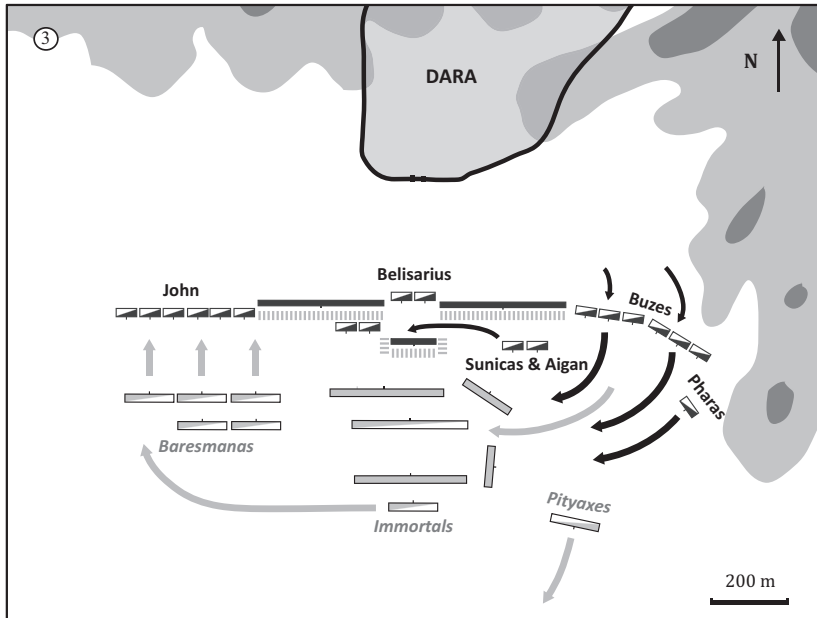


Figure 14 The Battle of Dara (Phase 3)

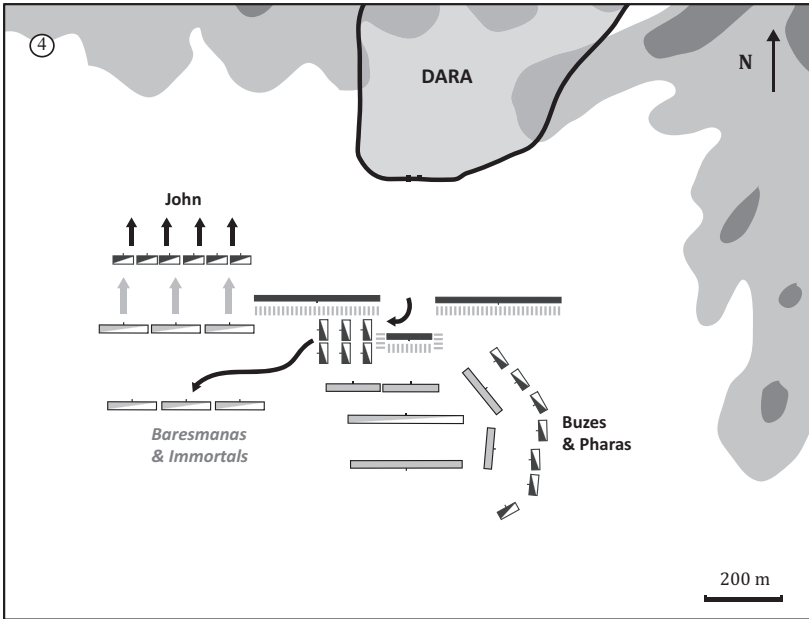


Figure 15 The Battle of Dara (Phase 4)

14.49 ξυνέντες γὰρ τῶν ποιουμένων οἱ φεύγοντες ἀνέστρεφοντες γὰρ τῶν ποιουμένων οἱ φεύγοντες ἀνέστρεφον αὐθις, ‘for those (of the the Romans) who were in flight realised what was happening and turned back again’. The Persians were thus caught on three sides, since Sunicas and those with him had struck their flank and could attack the rear of those Persians who had been advancing too precipitately; and now those that they had pursued turned back and hit them from what had been their front. See Greatrex 1998, 183; this is phase 5 on fig. 16.

14.50 καὶ πρῶτος Σουνίκας τὸν Βαρεσμανᾶν ἔκτεινέ τε καὶ ἐκ τοῦ ἵππου ἐς τὸ ἔδαφος ἔρριψε, ‘First Sunicas killed Baresmanas, knocking him from his horse onto the ground.’ Mal. 18.50 (380.6–8) refers to a duel between Sunicas and a Persian leader called Sagus, who was killed; PZ ix.3 refers to two Persian leader casualties. Procopius’ Baresmanas could be Malalas’ Sagus. The Persians appear to have been particularly dependent on their leaders, so Shahbazi 1987, 498, cf. Börm 2007, 168 and note the impact of the death of Chorienes in 549 at viii.8.34–5.

14.50 καὶ ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ ἐς δέος μέγα οἱ βάρβαροι ἐμπεπτωκότες ἀλκῆς μὲν οὐκέτι ἐμέμνηντο, ἀκοσμία δὲ πολλῇ ἐχόμενοι ἔφευγον. ‘At this the barbarians were seized by great fear and had no further thought of valour, but turned to flight in great disorder.’ While the formulation ἐς δέος μέγα, *es deos mega*, ‘into great fear’ is uniquely Procopian (cf. ii.12.2, viii.26.2), the allusion to the Persian abandonment of valour, ἀλκῆς μὲν οὐκέτι ἐμέμνηντο, *alkēs men ouketi ememnhēnto*, is a reminiscence of Hdt. ix.70.4, also referring to Persian panic (at Plataea), cf. Braun 1894, 38. On the disorder of the Persians, *akosmia*, see 13.24n.

14.51 αὐτῶν Ῥωμαῖοι κύκλωσιν τινα ποιησάμενοι πεντακισχιλίους μάλιστα ἔκτειναν, ‘The Romans encircled them and killed about 5000.’ According to PZ ix.3, however, the Persians were able to evacuate at least some of the bodies of their dead; Mal. 18.50 (380.9) refers to corpses on the battlefield. Procopius’ estimate must therefore be treated with caution. At 17.26 Procopius claims that the Persians lost more than half their force, i.e. over 25,000 men; although casualties must have been

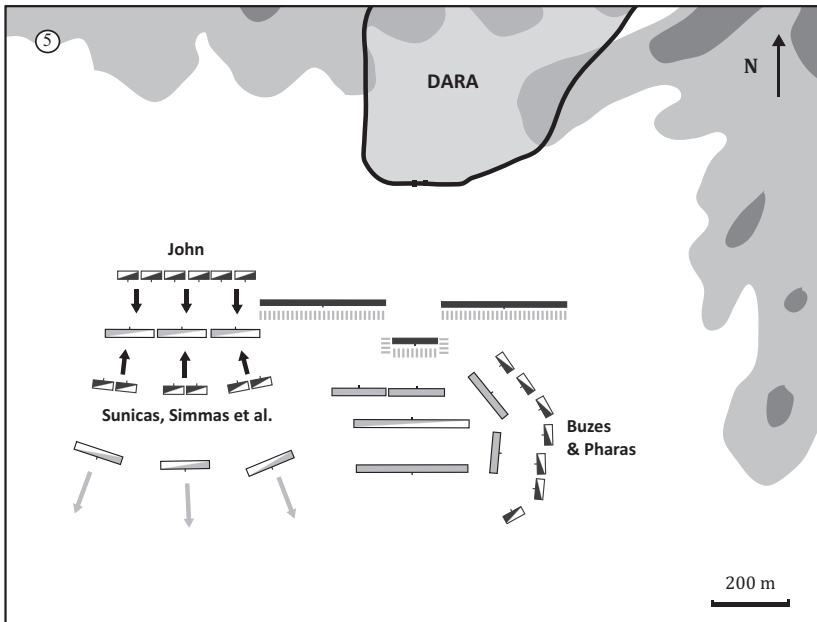


Figure 16 The Battle of Dara (Phase 5)

particularly heavy as defeat turned to rout (cf. 14.52), some exaggeration is likely. See Greatrex 1998, 185 and n.36, cf. Whately 2015, 398–9, who demonstrates how the casualty figures help to vindicate Procopius' assertion, 14.54, on the remarkable nature of the victory.

14.52 ἐν τούτῳ τῷ πόνῳ ὅσοι δὴ πεζοὶ ἐν τῷ Περσῶν στρατεύματι ἦσαν, ρίψαντές τε τοὺς θυρεοὺς καὶ καταλαμβανόμενοι κόσμῳ οὐδενὶ πρὸς τῶν πολεμίων ἐκτείνοντο. 'In this engagement such of the Persian army as were on foot threw down their shields and so were killed by the enemy as they were caught in their confusion.' The scornful assertions of Belisarius and Hermogenes at 14.24 are thus vindicated: see the note *ad loc.* Ammianus 24.8.1 attributes to the Emperor Julian a speech to his troops in which he emphasises the tendency of the Persian infantry to throw away their weapons and flee, cf. Börm 2007, 167. García Romero 97 n.122 detects an allusion to the term ρίψασπις, *rhipsaspis*, 'throwing away one's shield in battle', reflecting earlier Greek disdain for those who abandoned their shield on the battlefield, cf. (e.g.) Plato, *Laws*, 944b.

PZ ix.3 reports that Buzes and the Heruls played the leading part in routing the Persian infantry, which he places on the eastern side of the battlefield.

14.52 Ῥωμαίων μέντοι ἡ δίωξις δι' ὀλίγου ἐγένετο, 'But the Romans' pursuit was short.' Belisarius and Hermogenes were aware of the risk of indiscipline setting in as the Romans followed up their victory and turned to plundering, as happened, e.g., at Tricamerum, Proc. iv.4.1–3. See Greatrex 1998, 184 and n.35.

14.54 μακροῦ γὰρ χρόνου Ῥωμαίων τῇ μάχῃ ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἡσσήθησαν Πέρσαι, 'For on that day the Persians had after many years been defeated in battle by the Romans.' The last Roman victory over the Persians in the field had taken place in 421 and had likewise given rise to a proliferation of accounts. See Socr. *HE* vii.18, 20, Mal. 14.23 with Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 38–42. Procopius' introductory material deliberately passes over this victory and emphasises Roman reverses, doubtless in order to highlight the achievement at Dara.

μακροῦ χρόνου, *makrou khronou*, 'for a long time' is in the genitive to indicate the length of time since a Roman victory had occurred, cf. Smyth §1446. The verb ἡττάσθαι, *hēttasthai*, 'to be defeated (by)', can be used (as here) without ὑπό, *hupo*, 'by', cf. Smyth §1493b.

14.55 ἐγένοντο μέντοι ἀμφοτέροις τινὲς ἐξ ἐπιδρομῆς ἔφοδοι, ἐν αἷς οὐκ ἔλασσον Ῥωμαῖοι ἔσχον, ‘but there were surprise attacks on both sides, in which the Romans did not come off worst’. At 16.1 Procopius reports that the Persian army remained where it was, i.e. at Ammodius, even after the defeat, although a withdrawal to Nisibis is more likely. But PZ ix.3 indicates that the Persians did lay waste the Roman ‘Arab, i.e. Mesopotamia, to which Procopius may here be alluding.

15.1–33 The Roman Victory at Satala (530) and its Aftermath

Procopius devotes less space to the important victory won by Sittas and Dorotheus outside the city of Satala, about which he must have had to rely on information from participants, than to Belisarius’ success at Dara. Sittas’ victory was due partly to good intelligence, which prompts a digression from Procopius about the spies used by the general, and partly to clever tactics, much like those employed by Belisarius at Dara. The details are vaguer, however, and few individuals are mentioned. He goes on to describe the growth of Roman influence in the Caucasus region, occasioned both by the subjugation of the long refractory Tzani (described in similarly glowing terms at *Aed.* iii.6) and by the defection of several high-ranking Persarmenians (fig. 17).

As often, the chronology of the elements recounted is difficult. The definitive subjection of the Tzani may have been accomplished by Sittas already in the early 520s, so Greatrex 1998, 130 and n.28; yet a date following his appointment as *magister militum per Armeniam* in 528 is preferable, given that he must have required adequate forces to undertake this operation, cf. *RKOR* 600 (placing it in 529), Intagliata 2018, 137, Koehn 2018a, 28 n.58. See further i.15.24n. The defections of Narses and Aratius, then Isaac, appear to have taken place in the wake of the Persian defeat at Satala; the date of the battle itself is uncertain, although we can assume it took place in summer 530. See Greatrex 1998, 185 n.39, 189–90. Procopius fails to explain the reorganisation of the Roman high command in the region, which had led to the appointment of Sittas as the first *magister militum per Armeniam* and to the reinforcing of Roman troops throughout Armenia; Dorotheus succeeded him in 530. Elsewhere, at *Aed.* iii.1.27–9, Procopius alludes to these changes, which are set out in detail at *C.J.* 1.29.5, cf. Mal. 18.10 with MalKom *ad loc.* and Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 83–4, Greatrex 2007c, *RKOR* 532. This restructuring helps to explain both the Roman victory and the extension of Roman influence in the

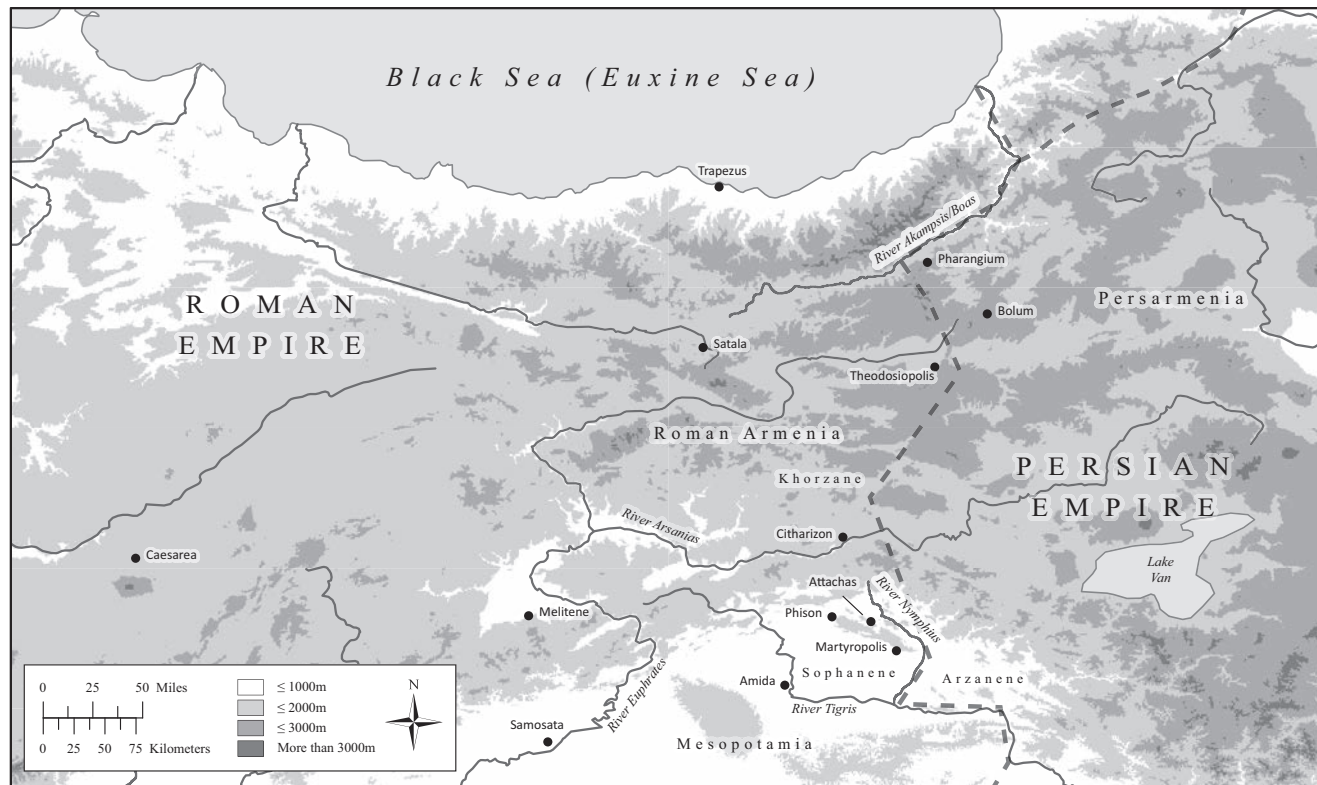


Figure 17 The Satala Campaign

Caucasus; an important restructuring of the administration of the Armenian provinces followed in 536, on which see Adontz 1970, ch.7, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 100 (with further references).

Procopius is the only source to report this battle. Given that both Malalas and PZ report other episodes in Sittas' career during this war, the suspicion arises that he may have consciously inflated the importance of a minor invasion in order to illustrate the remarkable successes of the two young men who had been mauled by Persian forces at the start of their careers. There is no need to doubt the broad outlines of his account, however, cf. Rubin, *PvK*, 369–70.

Bibliography: Greatrex 1998, 185–90.

15.1 τὸ δὲ στράτευμα τοῦτο Περσαρμενίων τε καὶ Σουνιτῶν ἦσαν, οἱ δὲ Ἄλανοις εἰσιν ὄμοροι, 'This army was composed of Persarmenians and Sunitae, who are neighbours of the Alans.' On Persarmenia see i.10.1n. On Armenians in Persian service see Adontz 1970, ch.10, esp.218–19. Procopius' Sunitae are the Armenian Siwnik', situated east of Dvin, adjacent to Albania: see (e.g.) Adontz 1970, 172 (with Ps.-Sebeos, 67–8/6), Garsoïan 1989, 490–1, Hewsens 1992, 189–90 n.189 (with map XIX, p.66A) and fig. 6, p. 131 above. They are referred to by PZ xii.7k(iv) as Sisakan, their Persian name. They constituted a separate province (*šahr*) in the Sasanian administration, even if the region itself comprised part of Greater Armenia; their ruler Vasak had defected to the Persians during the Armenian uprising of 451. See Marquart 1901, 120–2, Hewsens 2001, 89 and map 65, p.85; cf. Greenwood 2013, 128–9, *idem* 2019, 70, stressing the relative autonomy of the region.

The Alans were an Iranian people (despite Proc. v.1.3, who implies a Gothic identity), some of whom migrated to western Europe, while others remained in the central Caucasus, near the Darial pass (cf. i.10.4n). See *Elr*, 'Alans', Gnoli 1996, 843–7, Kazanski and Mastikova 2003, 115–33, cf. 10.6n. The emendation of Procopius' Ἄλανοις to Ἀλβανοῖς, as Marquart 1901, 122, and Hübschmann 1904, 237 n.2, proposed, is possible, but not necessary (cf. Hewsens 1992, 112 n.33 for a similar emendation in Armenian): from viii.3.4 it is clear that Procopius takes a broad view of Alan territory in the Caucasus, while he only once (at 10.1) refers to Albania. Both could be perceived as adjoining the Sunitae, the Alans to the north (although this passes over the Iberians), the Albanians to the east. See also Greatrex 1998, 186 n.43, noting incoherencies in Procopius' geography; he corrects some earlier errors in viii.

15.1 Οὕνοί τε αὐτοῖς οἱ Σάβειροι καλούμενοι τρισχίλιοι ξυνῆσαν, μαχιμώτατον ἔθνος, ‘Three thousand of the Huns, who are called Sabirs, were with them also, a most warlike people.’ The Sabirs lived to the north of the Caucasus and on occasion issued forth to inflict considerable damage on provinces of the Roman East, as (e.g.) in 515, cf. Greatrex 1998, 130, Haarer 2006, 175; probably in 528 they had been involved in negotiations with both Romans and Persians, Mal. 18.13 with Greatrex 1998, 143, Golden 2018, 329, and MalKom *ad loc.*, cf. Proc. viii.11.22–5. They appear to have been forced westwards from central Asia in the fifth century and are referred to by Priscus frg.40/30 (p.369–70): see Artamonov 1962, 69–78 (with a useful map at p. 71), Czeglédy 1983, 101–3, Kim 2013, 253 n.26.

The Sabirs were frequently recruited by both Persians and Romans for campaigns in and around the Caucasus; their origins and ethnicity – whether Huns or not – are uncertain. See Golden 1990, 259, Sinor 1990b, 200, Golden 1992, 104–6, Hewsén 1992, 124 n.111, Kazanski and Mastykova 2003, 108; Pritsak 1996, 228–31, argues on linguistic grounds that both the Sabirs and the Avars were Proto-Mongols. Procopius places them next to the Alans in the Caucasus when he discusses the region at length, viii.3.5, cf. ii.29.15; in 550 the Persian army included 12,000, although the commander – Mihr-Mihroe, as here – dismissed two-thirds of them because of their unreliability (viii.11.6–7). On the size of Persian forces in this instance see i.15.10n.

15.2 στρατηγὸς δὲ Μερμερόης, Πέρσης ἀνὴρ, ἅπασιν ἐφειστήκει. ‘The general in chief was Mihr-Mihroe, a Persian.’ Mihr-Mihroe (Mermeroes) enjoyed a long and successful career in the Caucasus; he died while still on campaign in the region in 555. See *PLRE* iii, Mermeroes. He may be identical with the Mihr Girovi mentioned by PZ at ix.6a, cf. Greatrex 1998, 186 n.41. Maksymiuk 2017a proposes an identification with the Persian commander named in the Armenian and Arabic sources as Shapur of Ray, which must remain speculative, cf. i.11.5n.

15.2 ἐνοστρατοπεδευσάμενοί τε ἔμενον ἐν Περσαρμενίων τῇ χώρᾳ καὶ τὰ ἐς τὴν ἐσβολὴν ἐξηρτύοντο, ‘they pitched camp and waited in Persarmenian territory, making their preparations for the invasion’. Thucydides’ influence is perceptible here, e.g. in the verb ἐξηρτύοντο, *exértuonto*, ‘they were preparing’, cf. Thuc. vi.88.3.

15.3 ἐτύγχανε δὲ Ἀρμενίας μὲν στρατηγὸς Δωρόθεος ὢν, ἀνὴρ ξυνετός τε καὶ πολέμων πολλῶν ἔμπειρος, ‘Now Dorotheus happened to be the

magister militum per Armeniam, an intelligent man, with experience of many campaigns.’ Dorotheus remained active in the east in 531 before taking part in the expedition to North Africa in 533; he died *en route*. See *PLRE* iii, Dorotheus 2, Greatrex 1998, 187. The terms used to describe him are standard for Procopius, cf. (e.g.) ii.29.30, viii.18.23.

15.3 Σίττας δὲ ἀρχὴν μὲν τὴν στρατηγίδα ἐν Βυζαντίῳ εἶχε, παντὶ δὲ τῷ ἐν Ἀρμενίοις στρατῷ ἐφειστήκει, ‘But Sittas held the office *magister militum praesentalis* (lit. the office of general in Byzantium) and was in command of the whole army in Armenia.’ Sittas was *magister militum praesentalis* but was present at the front probably as a trusted imperial agent, just like Hermogenes at Dara. See *PLRE* iii, Sittas 1, Greatrex 1998, 187.

15.4 δορυφόρους δύο, ‘two bodyguards’, here referring probably to *bucellarii*: the same term is applied to Belisarius and Sittas at 12.21. *Doryphoroi* and *hypaspistai* are the terms regularly used by Procopius to describe members of the retinue of commanders, in which the élite of the Roman forces served. See Lee 1993a, 172–3, Whitby 1995, 116–19, Greatrex 1998, 37, cf. ii.19.15n. The fact that Procopius names one of the two individuals concerned, Dagaris, implies that he may well have been his source; he was exchanged in 532 for a high-ranking Persian and distinguished himself as a commander subsequently. See *Proc.* i.22.18–19, *PLRE* iii, Dagaris, Greatrex 1998, 187 n.46.

15.7 τὸ στράτευμα ἐξοπλίσαντες, ‘They made ready (or armed) the army’, an expression frequently used by Procopius (e.g. at iv.15.2) and taken up subsequently (only) by Anna Comnena (e.g. vii.2.1); it is rare in earlier authors. The verb ἐξοπλίζω, *exoplizō*, is found in Herodotus (vii.100.3) and is regularly used by Xenophon in its middle form (e.g. *Anab.* iv.6.9).

15.8 οἱ τε βάρβαροι τῷ ἀπροσδοκῆτῳ καταπλαγέντες οὐκέτι ἐς ἀλκὴν ἐβλεπον, ‘The barbarians were overcome with surprise and had no thought of valour.’ On the expression ἐς ἀλκὴν ἐβλεπον, *es alkēn eblepon*, see 8.18n. The idiom τῷ ἀπροσδοκῆτῳ καταπλαγέντες, *tō apros dokētō kataplagentes*, ‘overcome with surprise’, is post-classical, first found in Philo, *De vit. Mos.* i.170, next in Zos. i.33.2.

Lee 1993a, 116 and n.25, points out that this apparently devastating pre-emptive strike did nothing to prevent Mihr-Mihroe gathering 30,000 troops for his invasion, cf. Greatrex 1998, 187.

15.9 καὶ καταλαμβάνουσι τοὺς πολεμίους ἀμφὶ Σάταλαν πόλιν. ‘They caught up with their enemies near the town of Satala.’ Lee 1993a, 116 n.25, rightly draws the inference that Dorotheus and Sittas’ forces had withdrawn in the face of superior Persian numbers, allowing Mihr-Mihroe to penetrate deep into Roman territory, cf. Rubin 1960, 283–4. Satala, modern Sadak, had been a legionary base from the first century A.D. and was the hub of an extensive road network; situated at an elevation of over 1600m, it is surrounded by hills and mountains, as Proc. *Aed.* iii.4.2 mentions (cf. 15.10). See (e.g.) Bryer and Winfield 1985, 15, Crow 1986, 84, Mitchell 1993, 124 (with map 9, pp. 130–1), Lightfoot 1998b, 276–7. The Persians may well have advanced westwards along the road depicted on the Peutinger Table from Artaxata to Satala; for a representation of this and an interpretation see Hewsen 2001, 65 (with map 59, p.70), cf. Bryer and Winfield 1985, map 1, Talbert 2000, 89B1.

Plans and photos of Satala and the surrounding area may be found in Mitford 1974a, 238, 240, cf. *idem* 1974b; see also Lightfoot 1998a, 265, 268, *idem* 1998b, 275. The city’s fortifications were subsequently strengthened by Justinian, Proc. *Aed.* iii.4.2–5; it was nonetheless captured by the Persians in 607/8. See Mitford 1980, 1210–11, Gregory 1997, vol.2, 39–42, Mitford 2018, 53–4, 331–47. Some inscriptions from the period may be found in Mitford 1997, e.g. nos.31–2 (= *idem* 2018, 541–2, nos.80–1).

Procopius places this incursion ‘not long’ after the raid just described. In this case, it is likely that it took place within weeks. On this typical vague formula see i.4.1n.

15.9 οὗ δὴ ἐνστρατοπεδευσάμενοι ἐν χωρίῳ Ὀκτάβῃ ἡσύχαζον, ‘There they encamped and remained in a place called Octava’, which Procopius places 56 stades from Theodosiopolis, i.e. eight Roman miles. Rubin 1960, 284, equates this to 10.5 km, but it should rather be 11.8: see Appendix 2, p. 675. The figure of 22 km in Greatrex 1998, 188 n.47, is quite mistaken. The place is not otherwise attested, but Mitford 2018, 334 (with 350 fig.220), suggests that it lies at modern Bandola/Dertyol, some 7 km south of Satala, where later lay the junction of two caravan routes, next to the Sadak Cay (river); here there is level ground suitable for an army encampment.

15.10 Σίττας μὲν οὖν χιλίους ἐπαγαγόμενος ὀπίσθεν τῶν τινος λόφων ἐκρύπτετο, οἱοὶ πολλοὶ Σάταλαν τὴν πόλιν ἐν πεδίῳ κειμένην κυκλοῦσι, ‘Sittas therefore led out a thousand men and hid them behind

one of the many hills that encircle the city of Satala.’ Sittas adopted a tactic similar to that of Belisarius at Dara (at Pharas’ suggestion), ensuring that the city did not come under siege; see i.14.33n. At Satala too it is likely that the defences were in a vulnerable state (cf. Proc. *Aed.* iii.4.2–3), cf. Whitby 1987, 101–2, Greatrex 1998, 188. Such a tactic is recommended by Onasander, *Strat.* 22.2, cf. Frontinus, *Strat.* ii.4.1–3, 5–6 (examples from the Roman republic) with Wheeler 1988, 40; both authors are mentioned by Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* i.47.1. See also Whately 2016, 97, Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 255, 268.

15.11 οὐχ ἥσσον ἢ τρισμυρίους ὄντας, αὐτοὶ μόλις ἐς τὸ ἡμισυ ἐξικνούμενοι, ‘there were no fewer than 30,000 (of the enemy), while their own numbers were scarcely half that’. These figures cannot be corroborated; that for the Persians is likely to be exaggerated, cf. i.13.23n.

15.12 κύκλωσιν αὐτοῦ ποιῆσθαι τίνα ἐν σπουδῇ εἶχον, ‘(They) were keen to encircle it’, i.e. the city walls. The expression ἐν σπουδῇ εἶχον, *en spoudē eikhon*, lit. ‘they had in enthusiasm’ is frequent and unique to Procopius, cf. (e.g.) i.5.12, 8.7, 9.3 with Scheftlein 1893, 5.

15.13 φθάσαντες δὲ Ῥωμαῖοι καὶ διελόντες σφᾶς αὐτοὺς ἐς ξυμμορίας δύο, ‘The Romans forestalled them and divided their own force into two sections.’ It follows (from 15.10) that each section or unit comprised 500 men, assuming they were divided equally. See Greatrex 1998, 189 n.50 and i.8.1n.

15.14 ἥ τε μάχη καρτερὰ ἐγεγόνει καὶ ἐκ χειρὸς ἦν, ‘and there was a fierce battle at close quarters’. The expression ἐκ χειρὸς, *ek kheiros*, lit. ‘from hand’, referring to hand-to-hand fighting (cf. e.g. Suda T1240) is very common in Polybius, e.g. 2.30.6, cf. Zos. iii.25.4; it is favoured by Procopius, who uses it twice in the previous chapter (14.17, 37). The first part of the phrase, ἥ τε μάχη καρτερὰ ἐγεγόνει, *hē te makhē kartera egegonei*, ‘the battle became strongly contested’, is found in both Thucydides (iv.43.4) and Herodotus (i.76.4), commonly in Diodorus Siculus (e.g. 16.79.6) and Zosimus (e.g. v.11.4), and frequently in Procopius (e.g. also at vi.12.33).

The Persians were evidently caught between the forces of Sittas that emerged from behind the hill and those of Dorotheus sallying from the city, as had happened at Dara when Pharas’ Heruls charged into battle (see i.14.39n).

15.15 ἀγχιστρόφους δὲ τὰς διώξεις ἐποιοῦντο ἐς ἀλλήλους ἑκάτεροι, ἐπεὶ ἵππεῖς ἅπαντες ἦσαν, ‘Each side kept making sallies against the other and then retreating, since they were all cavalry.’ The *Strategikon* xi.1 (358–60) advises against employing this tactic of feigned flight against disciplined Persian forces; but it also, xi.1 (356.45–7), claims that the Persians did not practise the manoeuvre themselves. The Sabirs and Persarmenians, who constituted the bulk of the Persian forces, may have adopted this Scythian tactic, however, just as the Romans did. See Greatrex 1998, 189 and n.50.

The first sentence of this section is quoted by the Suda, A410 (42.1–3) to define the first word, ἀγχιστρόφοι, *ankhistrophoi*, ‘sudden’; de Boor 1914–19, 44, suggested that the quotation may have originated in a lost book of the Constantinian *Excerpta*, perhaps concerning acts of bravery. In this context, he notes that the name Florentius, the commander whose self-sacrifice is recorded in the next section, also occurs in the Suda, Φ544.

15.15 ἐνταῦθα Φλωρέντιος Θραξ, καταλόγου ἵππικοῦ ἄρχων, ‘Then Florentius, a Thracian, the commander of a cavalry unit’. Nothing further is known of this commander: see *PLRE* iii, Florentius 1, which suggests he may have been a tribune, cf. Ravegnani 1988, 76–8.

15.15 τὸ στρατηγικὸν σημεῖον, ‘their general’s standard’, used elsewhere by Procopius (iv.3.6, 13) for Belisarius’ own standard. Cf. 14.47 above for comparable demoralisation resulting from the fall of a banner; Mal. 18.65 refers to the capture of Persian standards, referred to as *banda*, in 531, cf. 18.59 (387.78) on the Persian invasion force of the same year containing ‘royal standards’.

15.16 καὶ αὐτὸς μὲν καταληφθεὶς τε καὶ κρεουργηθεὶς αὐτοῦ ἔπεσε τῆς δὲ νίκης Ῥωμαίοις αἰτιώτατος γέγονεν, ‘He was caught and butchered there, but he was the one who was chiefly responsible for the Roman victory.’ For the last part of the sentence cf. Xen. *Hell.* ii.4.17, found also in other authors and at i.5.30, cf. viii.23.34, in Procopius. See Whately 2016, 98, emphasising the impact that such acts of courage might have. On the term κρεουργηθεὶς, *kreourgētheis*, ‘having been cut to pieces, butchered’, see i.18.38n. The Roman caution in not pursuing the withdrawing Persians recalls the approach of Belisarius and Hermogenes at Dara: see i.13.52n.

15.18 Τότε καὶ Περσῶν χωρία ἐν Περσαρμενίοις Ῥωμαῖοι ἔσχον φρουρίον τε τὸ Βῶλον καὶ τὸ Φαράγγιον καλούμενον, ὅθεν δὴ τὸν χρυσὸν Πέρσαι ὀρύσσοντες βασιλεῖ φέρουσιν. ‘Then the Romans obtained districts of the Persians in Persarmenia, acquiring the fortress of Bolum and that called Pharangium, from which the Persians mine gold and bring it to the king.’ Procopius provides further details on these mines below, 15.26–30. Pharangium and Bolum lie north and north-east of Theodosiopolis (Erzerum). The latter is generally identified with the Armenian Bolberd, the former with modern İspir. See (e.g.) Hewsen 1992, 209 n.252, Talbert 2000, 87 G4.

Procopius implies that the defection of these Armenian fortresses followed from the victory at Satala, which is plausible. But his chronological indicators here and in the following section are vague, just as is the τότε, *tote*, ‘then’, ‘at that time’ at i.19.1, cf. the note *ad loc.* See Greatrex 1998, 189–90.

15.19 ἐτύγγανον δὲ καὶ ὀλίγῳ πρότερον καταστρεψάμενοι τὸ Τζανικὸν ἔθνος, οἱ ἐν γῇ τῇ Ῥωμαίων αὐτόνομοι ἐκ παλαιοῦ ἱδρυντο, ‘It happened also that a short time before this they had reduced the Tzani, who had long been settled in Roman territory as an independent people.’ Procopius describes the history and geography of the Tzani, and in particular their conversion and pacification by Justinian, also at *Aed.* iii.6.1–13; he returns briefly to the topic at *Wars* viii.1.8–10. The date of their subjugation is uncertain: see i.15.1–33n and i.15.24n, cf. *RKOR* 600. See fig. 6 for their location.

15.20 ἐκ τῶν Ἀρμενίας χωρίων ἐς Περσαρμενίαν ἰόντι ἐν δεξιᾷ μὲν ὁ Ταῦρός ἐστιν, ἔς τε Ἰβηρίαν καὶ τὰ ἐκείνη ἔθνη διήκων, ὥσπερ μοι ὀλίγῳ ἔμπροσθεν εἴρηται, ‘When one goes from Armenian territory into Persarmenia, the Taurus is on the right, stretching to Iberia and the peoples thereabouts, as I have earlier explained.’ Procopius alludes to his earlier discussion (i.10.1–3) of the situation of the Caspian Gates in which he described the Taurus mountains. Here, as at viii.1.9, he lays great stress on the impenetrability of the region, partly no doubt because it serves to explain the uncivilised nature of its inhabitants. The orientation is problematic: at i.10.1 Procopius refers to the Taurus range traversing both Roman and Persian Armenia, which seems inconsistent with its placement to the right (i.e. the south) for someone going eastwards from Armenia into Persarmenia. Similar difficulties with north–south/east–west alignment may be observed (e.g.) at i.19.2 (see note *ad loc.*) and ii.29.14–26, cf. viii.20.42–6 (Hadrian’s wall separating ‘Brittia’ into eastern and western halves).

15.20 ἐν ἄριστερᾷ δὲ κατάντης μὲν ἐπὶ πλεῖστον αἰὲ προϊούσα ἡ ὁδὸς γίνεται, ‘but on the left the road descends steadily over a long distance’ through mountainous terrain. Procopius probably refers to the road leading northwards from Satala to the Black Sea coast at Trapezus, which passes through Tzanic territory. Since the road ends up at the coast, it thus can be said to proceed consistently downwards, κατάντης αἰὲ προϊούσα, *katantēs aei proiōusa*, even if it reaches a height of over 2500m in order to pass over the Pontic Alps. See Bryer and Winfield 1985, 51–2, Mitford 1998a, 268–71 with the map at 265, Talbert 2000, 87 E4, Mitford 2018, 348–84.

15.21 ἔνθεν ἐξίων ποταμὸς Φᾶσις φέρεται ἐς γῆν τὴν Κολχίδα, ‘from which the river Phasis rises and flows into the land of Colchis’. Procopius here confuses the Boas or Akampsis river with the Phasis, an error he implicitly corrects at viii.2.6–9, cf. Bryer 1967, 161, Greatrex 1998, 186 n.43; at ii.29.16 he still identifies the Boas with the Phasis. As is clear from the detailed discussion at viii.2.6–9 he is referring to the Çoruh river, the Armenian Voh, from which the Greek Boas is derived, more commonly called the Akampsis in Greek, which flows past Satala. See Hewsens 1992, 127 n.11, Bernard 1999, 43.

15.21 Σάνοι ἐν τοῖς ἄνω χρόνοις καλούμενοι, ‘(they) were called in earlier times Sani’. Cf. Strabo 12.3.18, Arrian, *Peripl.* 11.1 with Silberman 33 n.77, *RE* 27, 815, s.v. Makrones, Intagliata 2018, 136. Procopius repeats the identification at viii.1.8 while refuting misconceptions as to the people’s location.

15.21 δίαιταν δὲ σκληρὰν ὑπερφυῶς ἔχοντες καὶ τοῖς φωρίοις αἰὲ ἀποζῶντες, ‘(They) lived a very hard life, forever living off stolen goods.’ Cf. *Aed.* iii.6.2, where precisely the same formulation is used as at the end of this phrase; on the verb ἀποζῶντες, *apozōntes*, see 12.17n. As Maas 2003, 160–3, points out, Procopius’ portrayal of the Tzani’s uncivilised way of life relies on stereotypes of classical ethnography, so also Revanoglou 2005, 213–14. Yet as Bryer 1966, 194, notes, later writers present a similar picture of life in the region. Intagliata 2018, 133, remarks that the Tzanic lands were not so barren as Procopius implies.

15.22 διὸ δὴ αὐτοῖς χρυσίον τακτὸν ἀνὰ πᾶν ἔτος ὁ Ῥωμαίων βασιλεὺς ἔπεμπεν, ἐφ’ ᾧ δὴ μήποτε ληίσονται τὰ ἐκείνη χωρία. ‘So every year the Roman emperor used to send them a fixed amount of gold, on condition that they should not plunder the land thereabouts.’

As Procopius goes on to relate, the attempt to make a deal with barbarians proved fruitless; cf. i.19.30 below on Diocletian's failure to deter attacks on Roman Egypt with i.19–20g and 19.30n. Intagliata 2018, 137, connects these payments to a devastating raid launched by the Tzani in 505/6, on which see the next note.

15.23 ἐμπίπτοντες ἐκ τοῦ ἐπὶ πλεῖστον ἑκακούργουν οὐκ Ἀρμενίους μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοὺς αὐτῶν ἐχομένους Ῥωμαίους μέχρι ἐς θάλασσαν, 'and used to make sudden attacks over a wide area and harass not only the Armenians but also the Romans who lived next to them as far as the sea'. Another reminiscence of the opening of Thucydides' work (cf. the use of ἀποζῆν, *apozēn*, at 21 above, found at Thuc. i.2.2), who refers to Attica as having enjoyed stability because of its poverty ἐκ τοῦ ἐπὶ πλεῖστον, *ek tou epi pleiston*, here meaning 'from remotest antiquity' (i.2.5), although Hornblower, *CT*, i, 12 translates 'for a long time'. Cf. *Schol. in Thuc.*, 3.25–8. The idiom, found also at Euseb. *Praep. Evang.* 14.5.3, is extremely common in Procopius, and often is best translated simply as 'mostly' or 'generally' (e.g. at i.24.16), cf. Pollux, *Onom.* 9.152; here, as in some other instances (e.g. i.17.25, 21.8), it probably refers to geographical extent, although García Romero, 101, takes it in a temporal sense. See also Scheftlein 1893, 57. The sea in question must be the Black Sea, a fair distance from the Tzani's homelands, cf. *Wars* viii.1.9 with Intagliata 2018, 146. Th. Lect. *HE* 466 reports a raid that struck the province of Pontus in 505, cf. Stein 1949, 105, Haarer 2006, 70. On the strongholds mentioned by Procopius in the next section see Bryer 1966, 188, placing them along the road northwards to Trapezus (for which see i.15.20n). Later Roman forts in the region are discussed by Intagliata 2018, 138–45.

15.24 μάχη τοίνυν ὁ Σίττας αὐτοὺς πρὸ τοῦδε τοῦ πολέμου νικήσας, 'Now Sittas had defeated them in battle before this war.' But it is not clear when Procopius considers 'this war' to have begun, whether (e.g.) with the raid undertaken by Belisarius and Sittas (12.20–1), the attempted construction of a fort at Minduos in 528 (13.1–8) or in 530, when the Persians invaded Roman territory in force to seize Dara (13.9–14.55). Although once I argued that Procopius must be referring to a period before hostilities flared up again, possibly even the early 520s, I now consider this unlikely: there is no trace of such a command for Sittas then, who would in any case have still been very young (cf. 12.21 on his youth in 526/7). I now consider it more likely that Sittas undertook this conquest as the newly appointed *magister militum per Armeniam*, i.e. in

528 or possibly 529, before the outbreak of large-scale war in 530, as implied by Procopius' mention of Justinian as emperor at this point, *Aed.* vi.6.6. So already Stein 1949, 291, cf. Braund 1994, 289, Lounghis 2005, 34, *PLRE*, Sittas 1 (*contra* Howard-Johnston 1989, 218, Seibt 1992, 140, Greatrex 1998, 130 n.28). See also i.15.1–33n.

Roman influence in the Caucasus had been increasing already since the late fifth century, as emerges (e.g.) from Georgian sources, cf. Proc. *Aed.* iii.6.23. See Greatrex 1998, 127–8, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 60. See further ii.15.2n and note Proc. viii.1.8–10 with Mitford 2018, 403, on the connections between Tzanica and Lazica.

15.25 τὴν τε γὰρ δίαιταν ἐπὶ τὸ ἡμερώτερον μεταβαλόντες ἐς καταλόγους αὐτοὺς Ῥωμαϊκοὺς ἐσεγράψαντο καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν ξὺν τῷ ἄλλῳ Ῥωμαίων στρατῷ ἐπὶ τοὺς πολεμίους ἐξίασιν. τὴν τε δόξαν ἐπὶ τὸ εὐσεβέστερον μετέθεντο, ἅπαντες Χριστιανοὶ γεγεννημένοι. 'They adopted a more civilised way of life and enrolled in the Roman ranks, henceforth setting out against the enemy with the rest of the Roman army. They also changed their faith in the direction of true piety, all of them becoming Christian.' Procopius links the conversion of the Tzani to their adoption of a civilised way of life; the connection is more explicit in the lengthier description of the process at *Aed.* iii.6.1–13. Justinian's pride in this achievement is clear from his reference to it in the preface of *NovJ.* 1 of 535 (cf. *NovJ.* 28.pr, Agath. v.2.4). For a detailed discussion of Procopius' description of the reduction of the Tzani see Pazdernik 1997, 41–6, Maas 2003, 160–9. Sittas' settlement lasted until 558, when a revolt broke out; it was crushed by the *dux* Theodore. See Agath. v.1–2, Stein 1949, 516–17.

Tzan troops served henceforth with the Roman army; they tend to be distinguished from regular Roman forces by Procopius (e.g. at ii.29.10), just like the Isaurians. In principle, however, they ought to have been enrolled alongside regular Roman forces. On the issue of their status see Greatrex 2000, 270 and n.26, Maas 2003, 168–9, Sartor 2018, 274, 276. Some Tzan contingents had served in the Roman army in earlier centuries, so Wheeler 1999, 224.

15.26 ἐνταῦθα χωρία τε πολυανθρωπότατά ἐστι καὶ ἄμπελός τε καὶ ἡ ἄλλη ὀπώρα διαρκῶς φύεται, 'Here there are very populous regions, and vines and other crops grow there in plenty.' Procopius' assessment of the fertility of parts of the Çoruh valley, where it broadens out, are quite accurate, as Bernard 1999, 44–5, establishes, on the basis of

reports from modern times, cf. Ananias of Širak, *Geography*, v.22.xiii/xiv (65, 65A), cf. v.22.1 (59, 59A). See also Bryer and Winfield 1985, 15.

15.27 οὗ δὲ καὶ τὸ τοῦ χρυσοῦ μέταλλον ἐστίν, ὅπερ Καβάδου δόντος ἐπετρόπευε τῶν τις ἐπιχωρίων Συμεώνης ὄνομα, ‘Here lies the gold mine that was worked by a local inhabitant called Symeon, by the gift of Kavadh.’ The gold mine of Pharangium should be equated with Strabo’s Syspiritis (or Hyspiratis, so Roller 2014, 509 at Strabo 11.14.9) the Armenian Sper: see Adontz 1970, 22–3, Bryer and Winfield 1985, 56, cf. Bernard 1999, who argues, 45, that the mine lay 15 km upstream (west) from modern İspir, on the left bank of the Boas/Akampsis. Socr. *HE* vii.18.4 alludes to Persians hiring Roman miners in the early fifth century, while Łaz. P’arp. 65 (117–18/170–1) reports how the mine, which was the property of the Persian crown, was administered by a local magnate, Vahan Mamikonean, in the 480s. On this see Greenwood 2010, 10, noting the discovery of Sasanian seals that refer to an administrator of this region, including one that names Sper; cf. Gyselen 2002a, 120–1, 170–1, eadem 2007, 43–4. Mal. 18.54 refers to a mine on the marchlands between the two powers, discovered during the reign of Anastasius, which passed from Persian control to Roman after a period of joint administration; Kavadh used the transfer of allegiance as an excuse, according to Malalas, for breaking off talks after the defeat at Dara. Although Malalas states that the Roman take-over took place under Anastasius, the placing of the episode (and Kavadh’s complaint) implies a later dating. It is likely therefore that Malalas is referring to the same mine, even if his account is confused. See Greatrex 1998, 190 n.53, Bernard 1999, 59 n.78, 61 n.81; Stein 1949, 292 n.3, is more sceptical, cf. Vryonis 1962, 5–6.

Symeon was evidently a local leader who had been appointed the administrator of the mine by the Sasanians. On Sasanian interest in gold-working see Gariboldi 2006, 85–7. Symeon need not have been a member of one of the important Armenian families, although this district is generally associated with the Bagratuni family; cf. ii.3.12n. Nor need he have been associated with the Mamikonean family, cf. Bernard 1999, 55 n.32. Procopius later (ii.3.1–5) recounts how Justinian subsequently granted him rulership of various villages and, when he was assassinated, appointed his nephew Amazaspes, to take his place; Pharangium itself was returned to the Persians by the terms of the Eternal Peace (i.22.3, 18). See *PLRE* iii, Symeon 1, Hewsen 2001, 86 with map 66, Preiser-Kapeller 2010, 153, Ayvazyan 2012, 32–3. The passage is discussed by Preiser-Kapeller 2010, 156–7, who underlines the flexible loyalties of Armenian nobles.

15.28 ὁ Συμεώνης ἐπειδὴ ἀμφοτέρους ἐς τὸν πόλεμον ἀκμάζοντας εἶδε, ‘When this man Symeon saw that both sides were ripe for war’. It is more common among Greek authors to talk of war being at its height, using the verb ἀκμάζω, *akmazō*, e.g. Thuc. iii.3.1, rather than applying it to the protagonists; Procopius employs it thus at ii.3.1 when he mentions that Symeon handed over the fortress to Justinian ‘while war was still raging’. But cf. Proc. viii.10.18 for a similar use to here, evidently meaning ‘prepared’ or ‘ripe’ for war, and note already Thuc. i.1.1, referring to the two sides being at the height of their power at the opening of the Peloponnesian war, a passage clearly (see i.1.1n) well known to Procopius.

Symeon’s decision to hand over the fortress but retain the revenues from the gold was evidently shrewd. It is possible, however, that some gold did flow to Roman coffers, if Mal. 18.54 is referring to this episode; see the preceding note.

15.31 Ὑπὸ δὲ τοὺς αὐτοὺς χρόνους Ναρσῆς τε καὶ Ἀράτιος, ‘About the same time Narses and Aratius’. On the opening formula, which is deliberately vague, see i.20.1n; the defection is likely to have occurred in 530 or 531, cf. *PLRE* iii, Aratius, Narses 2. Roman success in the second part of the Anastasian war had similarly brought about a defection in 504: see Ps.-Josh. 75 on Mushleq. See further Nechaeva 2020, 45, on such defections in Armenia. For Narses and Aratius’ earlier defeat of Belisarius and Sittas see i.12.21n. Justinian’s favourable treatment of Symeon no doubt encouraged further defections.

15.31 καὶ αὐτοὺς Ναρσῆς ὁ βασιλέως ταμίας ἐδέξατο (Περσαρμένιος γὰρ καὶ αὐτὸς γένος ἐτύγχανε) χρήμασί τε αὐτοὺς δωρεῖται μεγάλοις, ‘Narses, the emperor’s treasurer, received them (for he too was a Persarmenian by birth) and bestowed large sums of money upon them.’ This is the first mention of Justinian’s long-serving eunuch minister, who eventually took over the command in Italy and defeated Totila in 552. Here Procopius probably refers to his position as *sacellarius*; some have suggested that he held the position of *primicerius sacri cubiculi*, i.e. head of the imperial bedchamber, at this time, so *PLRE* iii, Narses 1, 912, Stein 1949, 357, while an identification with the post of *comes sacrarum largitionum*, the ‘count of sacred largesses’, has also been proposed. Both theories are contested, and it is difficult to determine which specific post Procopius has in mind by the rather general term ταμίας, *tamias*, ‘treasurer’ or ‘manager’; Agath. iii.2.4 describes Rusticus in very similar terms,

cf. iv.17.2–3 on John Dacnas. See Brandes 2002, 430–2, for a detailed discussion, cf. Brodka 2018, 29–34, who concludes that he was a *cubicularius* or chamberlain. Colvin 2013, 587–91, suggests that such individuals were present in war-zones to report to the emperor and to reward successful soldiers. Although Narses was, like the defectors, a Persarmenian by birth, he is said to have been raised in the imperial palace: see Agath. i.16.1. On his generosity here, a hallmark of his career, see Brodka 2018, 24–7.

15.32 ὅπερ ἐπειδὴ Ἰσαάκης, ὁ νεώτατος αὐτῶν ἀδελφός, ἔμαθε, Ῥωμαίοις λάθρα ἐς λόγους ἐλθὼν Βώλου αὐτοῖς τὸ φρούριον, ἄγχιστά πη ὃν τῶν Θεοδοσιουπόλεως ὀρίων, παρέδωκε. ‘When Isaac, their youngest brother, heard of this, he entered secret negotiations with the Romans and surrendered the fortress of Bolum to them, which is very near to the borders of Theodosiopolis.’ See *PLRE* iii, Isaaces 1. As noted in 12.21n, it has been suggested that these three brothers were members of the Kamsarakan family. On Bolum see i.15.18n; it lies some 60 km north-east of Theodosiopolis and was associated with the Kamsarakan, cf. Toumanoff 1971, 148, Settapani 2006, 371. The expression ἐς λόγους ἐλθὼν, *es logous elthōn*, ‘having entered talks’, goes back to Herodotus (e.g. vii.105.1) and is taken up by Priscus, e.g. at frg.2.14/1.3 (p.1.16–17).

i.16 Negotiations for Peace (530)

Already before the battles of Dara and Satala envoys from the two sides had been in talks to resolve sources of dispute: at i.13.11 Procopius mentions the surprise with which news of the Persian invasion was received (cf. 14.3). It was natural therefore that negotiations should resume once the military effort had come to naught. Further details concerning these negotiations come from Malalas’ chronicle (and Theophanes, p.181). Malalas’ account (18.53) contains the text of a letter supposedly written by Kavadh to Justinian, although it is more likely to represent the emperor’s response to the Persian king. Procopius brings out the issues involved through speeches attributed to the Roman envoy Rufinus and (at greater length) to the Sasanian king Kavadh. The king’s lofty rhetoric and uncompromising stance are somewhat deflated by the report (16.9) that he was willing to come to terms in exchange for a payment.

Bibliography: Scott 1992, 161, Greatrex 1998, 190–2, MalKom on 18.53.

16.1 Πέρσαι δὲ πρὸς Βελισαρίου ἐν Δάρας ἡσσημένοι τῇ μάχῃ οὐδ' ὥς ἐνθὲνδε ἀναχωρεῖν ἔγνωσαν, ἕως Ῥουφίνος, ἐπεὶ ἐς ὄψιν τὴν Καβάδου ἦλθεν, 'But the Persians, despite their defeat in battle at Dara at the hands of Belisarius, did not decide to withdraw from there until Rufinus, having come into Kavadh's presence ...' Procopius alludes to the defeat described in detail at i.13–14. The invaders remained close to the frontier, perhaps at Ammodius, so Greatrex 1998, 190, but cf. 14.55n. According to Theoph. 181.10 (cf. Mal. 18.50), Rufinus, together with the *comes* Alexander, came to Kavadh in August 530: see Scott 1990, 161, Greatrex 1998, 190, *PLRE* ii, Rufinus 13, *PLRE* iii, Alexander 1, cf. *RKOR* 721.

16.1 Ἐπεμψέ με, ὦ βασιλεῦ, ὁ σὸς ἀδελφός, 'Your brother, O King, sent me'. It was standard diplomatic protocol for the two monarchs to address one another as brothers, cf. Mal. 18.44. See (e.g.) Blockley 1992, 115, Greatrex 1998, 191 n.57, cf. Amm. Marc. 17.5.3 with Börm 2007, 156, Canepa 2009, 122–7 and 294 n.25, Nechaeva 2014, 70, Maksymiuk 2018b, 597–9.

16.2 βασιλεῖ μεγάλῳ, 'for a great king'. The normal form of referring to the Achaemenid kings, e.g. in Hdt. i.192.1, though used only here for a Sasanian king by Procopius. See further ii.7.23n with Pazdernik 2017, 228–9.

16.2 ἐκ πολέμου εἰρήνην πρυτανεῦσαι, 'to obtain peace in place of war', cf. *LSJ*, 1543, πρυτανεύω, IIc. The expression εἰρήνην πρυτανεῦσαι, *eirēnēn prytaneusai*, 'to obtain peace', is found in authors both Christian (e.g. Thdrt., *ep.* 140, p.150.1) and pagan (e.g. Them. *Or.* 10, 133b, p.202.19, tr. Heather and Matthews 1991, 41), cf. Proc. ii.21.1 (in a very similar context). The verb is derived from the office of *prytanis*, president of a board of magistrates, e.g. in classical Athens. The superiority of peace to war is, as Dahn 1865, 95 and n.3 observes, a frequent theme in Procopius' speeches.

16.2 τῶν πραγμάτων εὖ καθεστῶτων, 'when affairs were firmly settled', precisely the same expression used at i.14.3. Rufinus' speech recalls several aspects of that attributed to Belisarius and Hermogenes before the battle of Dara, including the accusation that the Persian invasion has no justification (cf. also 14.3).

16.3 οἷς δὴ καὶ αὐτὸς εὐελπὶς ὢν ἐνθάδε ἀφίγμαι, 'In connection with this I have come here in person with good hope.' The relative pronoun in the dative plural at the start of the phrase is hard to translate: it is not

clear to what it refers nor what exactly it means; it is perhaps a dative of cause (cf. Smyth §§1517, 1519). As Franco Basso suggests to me, this awkwardness may be deliberate: Rufinus in fact had scant grounds for optimism. Cf. Agath. i.20.8 for a comparable use of οἷς δὴ, *hois dē*, ‘in connection with this’ (lit. ‘these things’) at the start of a sentence.

16.4 Καβάδης δὲ ἀμείβεται ὥδε, ‘Kavadh responded thus.’ The interlocutors were well known to each other: see i.11.24 with the note *ad loc.* Kavadh rehearses issues that Procopius has described earlier, notably the Caspian Gates (on which see i.10.1–12), which the Persians had taken over from King Ambazuces’ sons. In fact, already from the fifth century the Persians had made demands for Roman subsidies; these were often associated with the need to defend the Gates (i.e. the Darial Pass). See Blockley 1985, 63–6, Greatrex 1998, 15–16, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 56–9, Dignas and Winter 2007, 191–5.

16.5 δεδώκαμεν ὑμῖν τό γε κατὰ τοὺς ἐκείνη βαρβάρους μέρος ἀδήωτον τὴν χώραν οἰκεῖν ξὺν πολλῇ ἀπραγμοσύνῃ τὰ ὑμέτερα αὐτῶν ἔχουσιν. ‘Thus we have allowed you to inhabit unmolested the part of your territory that adjoins the barbarians and to hold your possessions in complete tranquillity.’ The reference to great tranquillity, ἀπραγμοσύνη, *apragmosynē*, recalls the letters of John Chrysostom, who uses the expression regularly, e.g. at *ep.*142 (to Elpidius), PG 52, 697.9, cf. 14.9 (where Belisarius refers also to the Romans’ *apragmosynē*, and viii.4.11 (an ecclesiastical context). Both Thucydides (e.g. ii.72.1) and Herodotus (vi.97.2) refer to τὰ ὑμέτερα αὐτῶν, *ta hymetera autōn*, ‘your (own) possessions’, likewise in speeches and in the context of enjoying them in peace. The tenor of Kavadh’s argument in this section, as well as some of the vocabulary used, resembles Persian claims reported by Priscus already in the fifth century at frg.47/37 (p.74). See the previous note on this issue.

16.6 καὶ πόλιν μεγάλην Δάρας ἐπιτείχισμα Πέρσαις πεποίησθε, ‘you have built a large city at Dara, a bulwark directed against the Persians’. Kavadh alludes to Anastasius’ erection of the fortress at Dara: see i.10.13–17. The king thus invokes the two developments that had occurred at the start of the century following his invasion of the Roman empire. See i.10.13n, cf. i.10.19n on the menacing nature of the fortress, with Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* iii.28.5, where he describes it as being ‘in the throat of the enemy’, cf. iii.47.4. Kavadh’s allegation that the Persians

were obliged to station an army in the vicinity reflects the effectiveness of the Roman base.

16.6 τὸ μὲν, ὅπως μὴ Μασσαγέται τὴν ἀμφοτέρων γῆν ἄγειν τε καὶ φέρειν ἀδεῶς δύνωνται, τὸ δέ, ὅπως ἂν τὰς ὑμετέρας ἐπιδρομὰς ἀναστέλλοιμεν. ‘One (army is required) in order that the Massagetae not be able to plunder the lands of both powers with impunity, the other in order to repel your potential incursions.’ The purpose clause employs the subjunctive for the Hunnic invasions and the optative with ἂν for the (hypothetical) Roman incursions, cf. Smyth §2202b. Sauer et al. 2020, 886–92, note that the garrison at the Dariali fort in the Caucasus was small, no more than a few hundred: Kavadh had no need for large sums to maintain this force. As they go on to suggest, however, the sum could have served a wider programme of fortification in the region.

16.7 τῶν μὲν λεγομένων τὴν μάθησιν οὐ προσέειπες, ‘Not only did you not accept the import of what was said’, cf. Justinian at viii.24.5, though Totila is more receptive at vii.8.15 (a similar idiom in both cases). See i.22.5n on the alternatives put forward here by Kavadh.

16.7 εἴ τι μεμνήμεθα τῆς ἐν Μίνδουος οἰκοδομίας, ‘if I have any recollection of the building work at Minduos’. Kavadh alludes ironically to the recent events in Mesopotamia: see i.13.1–8 and the notes *ad loc.*

16.7 καὶ νῦν δὲ Ῥωμαίοις ἐλετὰ μὲν τὰ τῆς εἰρήνης, αἰρετὰ δὲ τὰ ὄπλα, ‘Even now the Romans may choose peace or they may take up their weapons.’ Procopius uses the rare verbal adjectives here, doubtless to add grandeur to the king’s speech; both forms come from the same irregular verb, αἰρέω, *haireō*, ‘I take’. On the forms and meanings of the verbal adjective see Smyth §§471–2. Hesychius, *Lexicon*, E2015, actually uses the latter form to explain the former.

16.8 οὐ γὰρ τὰ ὄπλα καταθήσουσι πρότερον Πέρσαι, πρὶν δὴ αὐτοῖς Ῥωμαῖοι ἢ τὰς πύλας δικαίως τε καὶ ὀρθῶς συμφυλάξουσιν, ἢ πόλιν Δάρας καταλύσουσι, ‘For the Persians will not put down their weapons until the Romans either join them in guarding the Gates fairly and justly or they raze the city of Dara.’ Kavadh concludes with a rhetorical flourish, immediately undercut in the following section by his intimation that a payment could resolve the issue; in such a manner had Anastasius conciliated him already during the construction of Dara, cf. i.10.17. As

Börm 2007, 237, notes, Justinian accepted most of the Persian demands in 532, so that it is likely that Procopius is here correctly representing Kavadh's position.

The use of the future indicative in both parts of this temporal clause with $\pi\rho\acute{\iota}\nu$, *prin*, 'before', is quite unusual, but cf. Hdt. vii.8β2, Xerxes' promise not to rest until he has captured Athens. Cf. also Proc. v.10.46, vi.8.9 (with the aorist indicative) and Smyth §§2440–2. All three Procopian cases use $\pi\rho\acute{\iota}\nu$ δὴ, *prin dē*, for 'before', which Thucydides regularly uses with the indicative (e.g. at iii.104.6).

16.10 ὅπερ Ῥουφῖνος ἐς Βυζάντιον ἦκων βασιλεῖ ἡγγεῖλεν, 'This was what Rufinus announced to the emperor when he came to Byzantium.' Mal. 18.53 places Rufinus' return in September, while Theoph. 181.11 puts it in late November. Malalas gives the text of a letter that he claims is the response sent by Kavadh to Justinian's overtures; the content looks more like the emperor's own letter, however. See Scott 1990, 161, Greatrex 1998, 191.

16.10 καὶ ὁ χειμὼν ἔλῃγε, καὶ τέταρτον ἔτος ἐτελεύτα Ἰουστινιανῷ βασιλεῖ τὴν αὐτοκράτορα ἀρχὴν ἔχοντι. 'And the winter came to an end; and the fourth year of the reign of the Emperor Justinian drew to a close.' Procopius conspicuously adopts a Thucydidean formula for recording the end of a year, cf. (e.g.) Thuc. iii.25.2, who records the ending of winter and another year of the Peloponnesian war; cf. Taragna 2000, 75 n.27. But it is only in *The Gothic Wars* that Procopius embraces the Thucydidean formula in its entirety, reporting the end of a particular year in the war and referring to his own account of it, as at v.7.37 and subsequently. On the shorter and longer formulae of Thucydides see *HCT* v, 390–1. In *The Persian Wars* Procopius refers instead to the regnal year of Justinian (dating from 1 April 527), cf. ii.5.1n. He also prefers to vary the verb he uses for the end of the winter and the regnal year, whereas Thucydides uses the same one, τελευτάω, *teleutaō*.

i.17–18 The Callinicum Campaign (531)

History

Despite the apparently promising negotiations late in 530, Kavadh was not yet prepared to conclude a treaty with the Romans. He may have felt

it necessary to restore Sasanian prestige, following the setbacks at Dara and Satala, as well as the defection of Narses and Aratius and the loss of the gold mines near Pharangium. He may also have learnt of a substantial Samaritan revolt, since according to Malalas (18.54) and Theophanes (p.179), Samaritan leaders were intercepted by Belisarius on the frontier; the king was not to know that the rebellion had been crushed by this point. See Stein 1949, 287–8, Greatrex 1998, 190–2.

In order to ensure the success of the new invasion, the Persians adopted an unconventional route into Roman territory, advancing south of the traditional battle zones in Mesopotamia. Most likely they kept to the south of the Euphrates, advancing through Euphratesia, past Circesium and Callinicum, on the opposite bank, before turning north into Syria I. Although this strategy was not without precedent, it took the Romans by surprise. The Persian force comprised some 20,000 cavalry, an indication that their intention was probably to plunder Roman territory and restore Persian honour rather than to seize any Roman strongholds; it was under the command of a leader whom Procopius calls Azarethes, assisted by the redoubtable Naṣrid chief al-Mundhir. The Persian force penetrated some distance into Roman territory before the alert was sounded; Roman fortifications along the Euphrates were too dilapidated to offer any resistance. Once made aware of the manoeuvre, Belisarius hastened westwards, leaving a screening force in case this invasion should turn out to be a diversion. He was joined by the *magister officiorum* Hermogenes, who had arrived from Constantinople. Already Belisarius had reached Chalcis and barred the route westwards to the Persians. The Persian invasion was grinding to a halt, although they captured the town of Gabbulon and devastated the surrounding area. With Belisarius' army threatening to cut off their retreat, Azarethes and al-Mundhir started to withdraw along the Euphrates, passing through Barbalissus and Sura. The Romans followed them, avoiding battle. But across from Callinicum, where they had almost reached Persian territory, Belisarius' forces caught up with the retreating invaders and, despite the wishes of their commander, engaged them in battle on Saturday 19 April 531. The result was a bloody victory for the Persians, who were content thereafter to continue their withdrawal.

Bibliography: Rubin 1960, 284–9, Greatrex 1998, 195–207, Syv  nne 2004, 462–4, Brodka 2011, Farrokh 2017, 171–4, Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 280–1 (with a good plan), Lillington-Martin, forthcoming.

Historiography

Callinicum is one of the best attested battles of the sixth century, since Procopius and Malalas (18.60) provide detailed accounts both of the campaign leading up to it and of the engagement itself; PZ ix.4a adds further details. From both Procopius and Malalas it is clear that there were significant divisions in the Roman camp: some commanders thought that Belisarius should be much more aggressive, and Malalas reports that Sunicas, for instance, undertook solo operations against the invaders. Hermogenes therefore had to struggle to reconcile Belisarius with his subordinates even before the battle of Callinicum. Malalas' account contains much circumstantial detail, e.g. concerning operations around Gabbulon in Syria I and about the bravery of the commanders Sunicas and Simmas. He insists that al-Harith remained firm in the battle, even if many of his forces fled; Belisarius, on the other hand, fled once the Roman rout became evident, while the two Hunnic leaders remained on the field, fending off the Persians. He reports, somewhat implausibly, that the Persians were pursued from the field of battle.

There has long been controversy as to whether Malalas or Procopius should be believed. There is no doubt that Procopius' account seeks to vindicate Belisarius both by underlining his unwillingness to engage in battle and by minimising the importance of the Persian victory; it focuses on Belisarius' actions and on the battle itself, omitting much of the detail of the campaign (cf. Brodka 2011, 74–5). It is less often recognised, however, that Malalas' version is a similarly vigorous championing of the performance of Sunicas and Simmas, both before and during the battle. It follows that Procopius' account should not be dismissed out of hand. Following the defeat, an enquiry was set up, chaired by the general Constantiolus; Belisarius was dismissed from his post. It is likely that Malalas' account reflects an anti-Belisarius version that was submitted to, and probably accepted by, this enquiry. This does not necessarily boost its credibility.

Bibliography: Averil Cameron 1985, 146–7, 158, Shahîd 1995, 136–42, Greatrex 1998, 104–5, Brodka 2011, Whittow 2015, 13–14, Whately 2016, ix–xi, 84–6.

17.1 Ἄμα δὲ ἤρι ἀρχομένῳ στρατεύμα Περσῶν Ἀζαρέθου ἡγουμένου ἐσέβαλεν εἰς Ῥωμαίων τὴν γῆν. 'At the start of spring a Persian army led by Azarethes invaded Roman territory.' The name Azarethes may be a

rendering of the Persian position of *hazārbed*, a senior court official, cf. M. Rahim Shayegan, *Elr* 12 (2003), s.v., Börm 2007, 144. Mal. 18.59 gives the name as Ἐξαράθ, Exarath, *Chr.* 724, a.840 (115–16/159, tr. Palmer 1993, 21) has Zuraq.

Procopius' reference to the start of spring is Thucydidean, cf. ii.103.1, viii.61.1; this was the start of the traditional campaigning season. In this case, given that the final battle took place on 19 April, it is clear that Procopius places the start of spring quite early, probably at the start of March. See Greatrex 1998, 195 n.8, cf. Lee 1993a, 91–2.

17.1 ἦσαν δὲ πεντακισχίλιοι τε καὶ μύριοι, ἵππεῖς ἅπαντες, 'There were 15,000 of them, all cavalry', cf. i.18.1, where the same figure is given. It appears that the Persian cavalry numbered 15,000, to which an unknown number of Arab horse must be added. A total figure of 20,000 seems likely (so Greatrex 1998, 195), although Rubin 1960, 185, supposes that there were a further 15,000 Arabs, for a total therefore of 30,000. Mal. 18.59 (387.80) refers to 'a great armed force' (tr. Jeffreys et al.) under al-Mundhir, cf. the next note. See also Brodka 2011, 71.

17.1 καὶ αὐτοῖς Ἀλαμούνδαρος ὁ Σακκίκης ξυνῆν, πάμπολὺν τινα ὄμιλον Σαρακηνῶν ἔχων, 'Among them was al-Mundhir the son of Sakkike, who led a vast throng of Saracens.' On al-Mundhir (Alamundarus) see i.17.40n. The origins of the term Saracen are disputed: see (e.g.) Shahîd 1984, 123–41, Retsö 2003, ch.17, Hoyland 2009a, 392–3, Fisher 2011, 76, Mal'Kom on 18.16, line 3. It is commonly used in late antique sources. On the number of al-Mundhir's forces see the previous note.

17.2 ἀλλ' ἐς τὴν πάλαι μὲν Κομμαγηνήν, τανῦν δὲ καλουμένην Εὐφρατησίαν, ὅθεν δὴ οὐ πώποτε Πέρσαι πρότερον, ὅσα γε ἡμᾶς εἰδέναι, ἐπὶ Ῥωμαίους ἐστράτευσαν. 'But instead (they invaded) the former Commagene, now called Euphratesia, from where the Persians had never previously campaigned against the Romans, at least as far as we know.' While Roman armies regularly descended the Euphrates into Persian territory, it was far less common for Persian kings to follow the river into Roman territory; see i.17.25n. Euphratesia was not exactly the equivalent of the earlier kingdom of Commagene, since the province extended considerably further down the Euphrates, on its southern side. See Honigsmann, *RE Supp.* iv (1924), 989, cf. Comfort 2008, 267–71, with a useful map, Mitford 2018, 84–91.

Procopius' qualification, ὅσα γε ἡμᾶς εἰδέναι, 'at least as far as we know', recalls Hdt. iii.122.2, where the historian refers to the tyrant Polycrates as being 'the first of whom we know' to have exercised supremacy on the seas, cf. Thuc. i.4.1 with Munson 2012 (on these two passages). Precisely the same expression may be found in Lucian, *Timon*, 52, cf. Eunap. *Vit. Soph.* 2.6, 5.23. Procopius may well have been unaware of the similar route pursued by Shapur I in 252 or 253, about which we are informed chiefly by the king's own inscription from Naqsh-e Rostam: he reports the defeat of a Roman army of 60,000 men at Barbalissus and the capture of cities such as Circesium, Sura, Hierapolis and Chalcis. See Potter 1990, 46, Howard-Johnston 1995, 161, Huyse 1999, vol.1, 28–33 for the text and translation, cf. vol.2, 52–70, Edwell 2008, 87–91.

17.4–25 Geographical Excursus on Euphratesia and Comana

With the shift in the focus of campaigning to the south, where the Persian and Arab forces marched up the Euphrates into Roman territory, Procopius offers his reader an informative and diverting excursus, based evidently on his historical researches and personal autopsy (explicitly signalled at 17.17); Herodotean touches may be observed in the ἐς ἐμέ, *es eme*, 'up to my own time' (at 17.12 and 15), an expression frequently used by his predecessor, e.g. at i.52.1. The deployment of a variant of a well-known myth likewise recalls Herodotus' discussion of the myth of Helen, placing her in Egypt during the Trojan war, ii.112–20. Herodotus had also discussed Orestes in his first book in the context of the translation of his bones from Tegea to Sparta, i.67–8. Procopius' contemporary Malalas (5.36–8 = 5.65–7, Jeffreys) also devotes considerable space to the story of Orestes, Pylades and Iphigenia; he describes their flight from Aulis in Scythia initially to Adiabene, i.e. northern Iraq, close to the region here described by Procopius, then to Trikomia (Scythopolis, the name being linked to Iphigenia's sojourn among the Scythians) in Palestine, and finally to Antioch, where Orestes was cured of his madness and a statue erected in his honour. Malalas includes a dubious etymology for Mt Amanus in his account and offers a detailed description of the statue, which, he notes, was still visible in his own day (p.111.97). See Saliou 2006, 73–7, who discusses the numerous other communities that claimed an association with Orestes, including those here noted by Procopius, cf. eadem 2020b, 483 with the useful map at 462–3. Rubin, *PvK*, 370–2, offers an extended discussion of the digression and

Procopius' possible sources. Saradi 2000, 315–16, argues that the introduction of the Iphigenia legend is part of a wider programme of Procopius to connect contemporary events to the Trojan war. For places mentioned in the excursus see fig. 18.

17.4 καὶ πηγαὶ δύο ἐνθένδε ἐξίασι, ποταμούς δύο ποιοῦσαι αὐτίκα, Εὐφράτην μὲν ἢ ἐν δεξιᾷ, ἢ δὲ δὴ ἑτέρα Τίγρην ὄνομα. 'Two springs emerge from there, which immediately form two rivers, the one on the right the Euphrates, the other one the Tigris.' Procopius refers here to the northern of two sources of the Euphrates, today's Karasu in Turkey, which has its source to the north-east of Erzerum, i.e. Theodosiopolis. The mountain described is Dumlu Dağı, which is just under 3000m above sea level, and lies about 40 km north of Erzerum, considerably further than the 42 stades (i.e. 6 Roman miles) indicated by Procopius. The source of the Tigris lies in Asthianene, just by the Illyrisis pass, well to the south-west of Theodosiopolis. See Markwart 1930, 56–62, discussing Armenian evidence, cf. Hewsen 1992, 152 n.7: the region of Acilisene (see i.17.11n, Procopius' Kelesene) was known as the source of four major rivers, including the Euphrates and the Akampsis/Boas (discussed by Procopius, see ii.29.14n, cf. i.15.21n). Cf. Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 5.20.84, noting two identifications in his time of the source of the Euphrates. Strabo 11.12.3 offers a similar description of the upper Euphrates, flowing past Acilisene and Commagene, but he puts its source 2500 stades from that of the Tigris, cf. Diod. Sic. 2.11.1, which is a gross over-estimate. See Radt vii, 306.

17.5–6 τούτοιιν ἄτερος μὲν, ὁ Τίγρης, οὔτε περιόδοις τισὶ χρώμενος οὔτε ὑδάτων ὅτι μὴ ὀλίγων οἱ ἐπιγινόμενων, εὐθὺ Ἀμίδης πόλεως κάτεισι. καὶ αὐτῆς ἐς τὰ πρὸς βορρᾶν ἄνεμον προΐων χωρεῖ ἐς τῶν Ἀσσυρίων τὴν χώραν. 'One of the two, the Tigris, descends directly to the city of Amida with no deviations and without the addition of any further water-sources, save small ones. From there, proceeding northwards, it moves into the land of the Assyrians.' As Procopius says, the Tigris flows more or less due south as far as Amida; but it then proceeds nearly due east, rather than north; the reference to Assyria is presumably to the Sasanian province of Asorestan, which lies some distance further down the Tigris, encompassing the region to the east of the Tigris. See G. Widengren, *Elr* ii (1987), 785–6, cf. Hewsen 1992, 64 map XVI and cf. Proc. ii.19.14–18, *Anecd.* 2.25 with ii.19.17n. Revanoglou 2005, 92, points out that numerous tributaries feed into the Tigris, contrary to what



Figure 18 Places Linked to Orestes and Iphigenia

Procopius says, cf. Arrian, *Anab.* vii.7.3 for a more accurate assessment. As she observes, his ignorance is likely to be due to the loss of Roman control of the territories through which the Tigris flows. On the sources of both rivers see also the useful description of Reclus 1876, 198–201, cf. Strecker 1869, 157–9, the account of a personal inspection, Tümpel, *RE* 6 (1907), 1198.

17.7 ὑπὲρ γὰρ τοῦ ὕδατος τέλμα ἐπὶ πλεῖστον βαθύ γίνεται, ‘a tremendously deep marsh covers the water over a large area’. On the sense of ἐπὶ πλεῖστον, *epi pleiston*, see 15.23n. The marsh here described has also been known as Szzyk (Sazlık), meaning ‘reeds’ or ‘place with reeds’ in Turkish, but it is generally by no means as dry as Procopius describes, although in July, following the harvesting of the reeds he describes, the land dries up sufficiently for cracks to appear: see Strecker 1869, 159, for an eye-witness report, cf. Tümpel, *RE* 6 (1907), 1198. The Ananias of Širak (v.22.i) reports the abundance of fauna here as well as the presence of salt deposits and hot springs; see Hewsen 1992, 59 with 152 n.7. Mela iii.8 (77) emphasises the sluggish nature of the Euphrates at its start, spread over a large area. Arrian, *Anab.* v.5.5 refers to the disappearance of the Euphrates, just like Procopius here, but it is likely that he is thinking of the river’s lower reaches: see Brunt’s edition, vol.2, 19, *pace* Revanoglou 2005, 92.

17.11 ἐνθὲνδε τε ὁ ποταμός πρόεισιν ἐς τὴν Κελεσηνὴν καλουμένην χώραν, οὗ δὴ τὸ ἐν Ταύροις τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος ἱερὸν ἦν, ‘From there the river proceeds to the land known as Kelesene, where there is the temple of Artemis among the Taurians.’ Kelesēnē lies astride the Euphrates to the south of Satala; it is also referred to as Akilisēnē (Acilisene) and as Ekeleac’ in the Armenian sources. Kelesene is in fact Haury’s emendation of the manuscripts’ Ekelesēnē; see Destunis 1876, 210 n.9, for a discussion of the forms. Hewsen 1992, 152 n.7, suggests that the fortress near Satala referred to by Procopius at *Aed.* iii.4.5 as Osrhoene may represent a deformation of the Orsa and Brepos/Bressos of Ptol. v.7.4, v.13.12, i.e. Erez or Erezawan (modern Erzincan), the chief city of this district.

See i.17.4–25n on Procopius’ introduction of the Iphigenia and Orestes’ myth here. Although the Taurus/Tauris in question was more commonly associated with the Crimea, the cult of Artemis and Orestes was well established in numerous locations in Asia Minor, including the two cities of Comana referred to by Procopius. See Strabo 12.2.3, 3.32, cf. 2.7 (the cult of Artemis also at Kastabala), who omits any reference to

the legends when discussing the Crimean Tauris; cf. Braund 2018, 84–5, Roller 2018, 687–8. See also Pausanias iii.16.8, Dio 36.11, on this cult. It is not clear where exactly in Acilisene the temple mentioned by Procopius lay. Proc. viii.5.23–4 notes the association of the legend with the Crimea while alluding to his current digression; he there indicates that his source on Cappadocian Comana was ‘what the Armenians say’. He returns to the Iphigenia legend at viii.22.27–8, where he describes an inscription that he had seen at Geraestus on Euboea that purported to have been placed there by Agamemnon.

17.12 ὁ γὰρ ἄλλος νεῶς, ὃς δὴ καὶ ἐς ἐμέ ἐστιν ἐν πόλει Κομάνῃ, οὐχ ὁ ἐν Ταύροις ἐστίν, ‘The other temple, which up to my own times has existed in the city of Comana is not the one “among the Taurians”.’ Procopius later indicates the presence of two temples in (Cappadocian) Comana, cf. 17.18, one for Artemis and one for Orestes’ sister Iphigenia. The city itself is the modern Şar, 85 km south-east of Kayseri, where a considerable number of remains and inscriptions have been uncovered, which point to the presence of an important temple of the goddess Ma, sometimes identified with the classical Enyo, sometimes with Artemis, cf. Wissowa 1912, 348–51. See Ruge, *RE* 11 (1921), 1127, Harper 1968, 104, Harper and Bayburtuoğlu 1968, Mitchell 1993, 82. Baz 2007 offers a useful survey of ancient sources on the city and a catalogue of inscriptions (several of which, e.g. 140, refer to individuals called Iphigenia). Strabo 12.2.3 stresses the wealth and power of the high priest of the temple.

The reference to his own day, καὶ ἐς ἐμέ, *kai es eme*, literally ‘even up to me’, recalls Herodotus’ autopsy, e.g. at i.66.4 and elsewhere, cf. Kelly 2008, 17–18.

17.12 ἀλλ’ ὅπως ἐγένετο, ἐγὼ δηλώσω. ‘I shall (now) reveal how it came into existence.’ A geographical digression thus leads into a mythological one, cf. Hdt vii.129, 188–9, already in Hecataeus, *BNJ* 264, e.g. frg.12. The authorial intrusion into the narrative, ‘I shall reveal’ (cf. Hdt. iv.36.2, 99.5 for the phrasing, the latter instance in the context of the Taurians in Crimea), is striking and is picked up again at 17.17, where Procopius’ autopsy is emphasised. It is quite common in Procopius, cf. e.g. ii.4.12.

17.13 Ἐπειδὴ ἐκ Ταύρων Ὀρέστης ξὺν τῇ ἀδελφῇ ἀπίων ὥχετο, ξυνέπεσεν αὐτῷ νοσῆσαι τὸ σῶμα. ‘When Orestes escaped in his flight from the Taurians with his sister, it happened that his body was afflicted

with a disease.’ Procopius notes at 17.20 that some suppose that the disease in question is the madness that possessed him because of the murder of his mother, Clytemnestra; other sources do not refer to a disease. Procopius is referring to the legends surrounding the escape of the two siblings from the Taurians (in the Crimea) with Pylades and the statue of Artemis from the temple, on which see the last part of Euripides’ *Iphigenia in Tauris*, cf. Hall 2012, 37–41.

While the prophecy to which Procopius refers in this section is not otherwise attested, Strabo is aware of the tradition of Orestes bringing the rites of Artemis Tauropolus from the Crimea, 12.2.3, although he considers it to have reached Cappadocian Comana first, and from there Pontic Comana, i.e. the opposite order from Procopius. See Ruge, *RE* 11 (1921), 1126, Erciyas 2010, 120, cf. Braund 2005, 232–3. Rubin, *PvK*, 371, supposes that Procopius drew on Strabo but mistakenly inverted the order; that Procopius consulted Strabo is clear from his specific allusion to him (12.3.21–2, cf. 11.5.1–4) at viii.3.6. See Külzer 2018, 923–5, on knowledge of Strabo in the sixth century. The suggestion of Ross 2018, 80–1, that Procopius is seeking in this section to rival Strabo, partly by invoking his own autopsy (17.17), is plausible.

17.15 πόλιν τε ἐνταῦθα λόγου ἄξιαν καὶ τὸν τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος νεῶν δείμασθαι, τήν τε κόμην ἀποθερίζμενον ὁμωνύμως αὐτῇ καλεῖσαι τὴν πόλιν, ἥ δὲ Κόμανα καὶ ἐς ἐμὲ ὀνομάζεται. ‘There he (Orestes) built a noteworthy city and the temple of Artemis; he cut off his hair and endowed the city with his name, which has been known as Comana up to my own time.’ Procopius refers to Comana Pontica, i.e. in Pontus, in the Gözova plain 11 km north-east of Tokat, on the Iris river (17.14), the modern Yeşilirmak. Like Cappadocian Comana, it was an important temple-state in the Hellenistic period with rites associated with the goddess Ma (cf. 17.12n with Strabo 12.3.32). For details on modern excavations at the site see Erciyas 2009, 2010, cf. more generally Ruge, *RE* 11 (1921), 1126, Amandry and Rémy 1999, 11–17. Later in the sixth century imperial estates are attested in the vicinity: see Munro 1893, 736, Wilson 1960, 232. Cumont and Cumont 1906, 248–53, offer an evocative account of the abandoned site at the start of the twentieth century.

The etymology of the city’s name, Comana, from *kōmē*, hair, is invented, cf. Radt vii, 335. The origins of traditions concerning Orestes both here and elsewhere in Asia Minor may lie with a homophonous local name, Oaris or Oareis, so Ramsay 1918, 131. The verb Procopius here uses for the cutting off of the hair, ἀποθερίζω, *apotherizō*, in its

middle voice, is elsewhere used (on its own) for a monk's tonsure, cf. ii.30.54, *Anecd.* 1.37, on which see Pfeilschifter–Thesz. Cyr. Scyth. V. *Euthym.* 3 (10.20), V. *Sab.* 75 (181.17) uses it in the same sense (in the active voice). See also García Romero, 106 n.139.

17.17 ὄνπερ καὶ ἐγὼ πολλάκις ἰδὼν ἠγάσθην τε ὑπερφῶς καὶ μοι ἐδόκουν ἐν Ταύροις εἶναι, 'I myself have often looked at the place and marvelled greatly, since it seemed to me that I was among the Taurians.' Procopius might seem to imply that he had been among the Taurians, i.e. to the Crimea, but the following sentence clarifies the issue: the mountain in question, perhaps the Comanus or Comanum next to Cappadocian Comana, is similar to one in Acilisene in the Taurus mountains, while the valley of the Sarus in Cappadocia, the modern Sarız, resembles that of the Euphrates (in Acilisene). The emphasis on autopsy underlines the historian's competence and testifies to the breadth of his experience, cf. Rubin, *PvK*, 371, Taragna 2000, 82 (noting further examples), Börm 2007, 47. Given that both cities of Comana lay on important east–west military routes, cf. Dillemann 1962, 152, Howard-Johnston 2013, 863–5 and fig.2, Mitford 2018, 179, it is not surprising that Procopius should have visited both.

17.18 πόλιν τε οὖν ἀξιοθέατον ᾠκοδομήσατο ἐνταῦθα Ὀρέστης καὶ νεῶς δύο, 'Orestes therefore built an impressive city and two temples here.' On Cappadocian Comana, also known as Golden Comana, see 17.12n. It is thus referred to in *NovJ.* 31.2 (536), cf. *Etym. Mag.* 526.32. Baz 2007, 21–38, gathers together the ancient sources. The worship of Artemis is attested there in Origen, *Contra Celsum* vi.22, while in the fifth century Damascius (*Phil. Hist.* frg.52 = Photius, *Bibl.* cod.242.69, vol.6, 22–3, 340b) alludes to a certain Anthusa, descended from a family of Orestids of Mt Comanus (or Comanum), who practised cloud divination. Cf. A. Lesky, *RE* 18 (1939), 1002. Nothing further is known about the two temples, later transformed into churches, which Procopius mentions, but see Sinclair 1987–90, vol.3, 470–1, on what remains at the site today (including two converted churches). Saradi 2000, 316, sees in the reference to the converted temples a signal to the sixth-century reader of an effort to draw together the mythical past and contemporary Christianity.

17.20 τινές δὲ λέγουσιν αὐτὸν οὐκ ἄλλην τινὰ νόσον ἢ τὴν μανίαν ταύτην ἀποφυγεῖν, ἥπερ αὐτὸν ἔσχεν, ἐπειδὴ τὴν μητέρα τὴν ἑαυτοῦ ἔκτεινεν. 'Some claim that the illness that he escaped was none other

than that madness that possessed him as a result of his slaying of his own mother.’ Procopius refers to the madness, *mania*, that struck Orestes because of his murder of Clytemnestra. Mal. 5.31–2 (= Jeffreys, 5.61–2) explicitly makes the association, already present (e.g.) in Aesch. *Ch.* 1025–60, Pausanias, viii.34.1. Cf. Braund 2018, 85. Dahn 1865, 74, argues that this rationalisation by Procopius, together with the way he recounts the myth of Orestes, indicates that he believed the story. For the final phrase, resuming the main narrative, see i.4.31n.

17.21 καὶ ποταμῶν οἱ ἄλλων τε ἀναμιγνυμένων καὶ αὐτοῦ Ἀρσίνου, ὃς δὴ ἐκ τῶν Περσαρμενίων καλουμένων πολὺς φέρεται. ‘among the rivers flowing into it is the mighty Arsinus, which is carried forth from the lands of the so-called Persarmenians’. Procopius’ portrait of the large westward bend of the Euphrates recalls that of Strabo 11.12.3. The river to which he refers is usually known in Greek as the Arsanias; on the various forms of the name see Coulie et al. 2000, xi. It is a major tributary of the Euphrates, the modern Murat (or Murad) Su, rising close to the Euphrates itself in Armenia. See Hewsen 1992, 156 n.42.

17.21 ἐς τοὺς πάλαι μὲν Λευκοσύρους νῦν δὲ Ἀρμενίους μικροὺς καλουμένους χωρεῖ, ὧν δὴ πόλις πρώτη Μελιτηνὴ λόγου πολλοῦ ἀξία ἐστὶ, ‘as it reaches those formerly known as the White Syrians, now called the Lesser Armenians, whose capital city, Melitene, is very noteworthy’. The ‘White Syrians’ or ‘Leukosyroi’ lived to the west of the Euphrates and, according to Strabo 12.3.9, were of fairer complexion than those further east. The archaising term is found in two other sixth-century sources: Steph. Byz. Σ329 cites Strabo (16.1.2) à propos of the White Syrians, who equates the people with contemporary Cappadocia. See Roller 2018, 697–8. So also *Peripl.* 122 (8v.40, section 23), cf. 123 (9r.1, section 27).

On Melitene and its importance to Roman frontier defences see Proc. *Aed.* iii.4.15–20, cf. Crow 1986, 84–6, Howard-Johnston 2013, 878–81. It had been a legionary base since the first century A.D., cf. Mitford 2018, 171–82.

17.22 τὸ δὲ ἐντεῦθεν τὰ τε Σαμόσατα παραρρεῖ καὶ τὴν Ἱεράπολιν καὶ πάντα τὰ ἐκείνη χωρία, ‘From there it flows past Samosata, Hierapolis and all the towns there.’ On Roman defences in this region see Howard-Johnston 2013, 865, 879–80. Hierapolis does not in fact lie directly on the Euphrates, but some 25 km west of it. See Dillemann 1962, 148, 178, for maps of the region; settlements on the Euphrates south of Samosata are

documented by Gaborit 2015. All these places are mentioned in accounts of the Anastasian war in the early sixth century, notably in Pseudo-Joshua's work. See fig. 19, p. 248 below.

17.22 οὗ δὲ ἀλλήλοιν ἄμφω τῷ ποταμῷ ἀναμιγνυμένῳ ἐς ἓν ὄνομα τὸ τοῦ Τίγρητος ἀποκέκρινται, 'where the two rivers join together and, now one, are designated/distinguished by the name of the Tigris'. In reporting the course of the two rivers in Lower Mesopotamia, which he terms Assyria, Procopius employs the archaising dual form and recalls Thuc. i.3.3 at the end of the sentence; the passage of Thucydides, concerning Homer's failure to distinguish Greeks from barbarians, is cited by Strabo at 8.6.6 and 14.2.28. The Loeb edition, 150, omits the word ἓν, *hen*, 'one' in the Greek.

There is considerable confusion in ancient authors as to the lower reaches of the two rivers, no doubt partly as a result of the extensive canal network that criss-crossed the region, reaching a peak in the sixth century A.D. Strabo, following Eratosthenes, mentions a merging of the two rivers at 2.1.23, but at 2.1.26 and 11.12.3 he refers to both flowing into the Persian Gulf, cf. Dio 68.28.2. Th. Sim. v.6.5–6 offers more details than Procopius, noting a three-fold division of the Euphrates, one branch of which joined the Tigris, perhaps an allusion to the Nahrmalka canal, cf. Amm. Marc. 23.6.11 with den Boeft et al. 1998, 143. See Weissbach, *RE* VI.1 (1907), 1200–5, Donner 1981, 158–66, Christensen 1993, 68–73 with the map at 53, cf. more generally Wilkinson 2003, 90–7.

17.24 ἥ τε γὰρ ἄχρις Ἀμίδης πόλεως Ἀρμενία πρὸς ἐνίων ὠνόμασται, Ἐδεσσά τε ξὺν τοῖς ἄμφ' αὐτὴν χωρίοις Ὀσροηνή τοῦ Ὀσρόου ἐπώνυμός ἐστιν, 'As far as the city of Amida the country is called by some Armenia; Edessa and the places that surround it have taken the name Osrhoene after Osrhoes.' Procopius refers to the division of the province of Mesopotamia into two by Diocletian; its eastern section then became known as Osrhoene. Confusion nonetheless persisted, so that the entire area continues frequently to be designated as Mesopotamia. See Dillemann 1962, 105–10, noting Procopius' inconsistencies in this regard. On the new province of Euphratesia to which he alludes in the same section, see i.17.3n.

It should be noted that Procopius consistently pictures the region from a northward perspective, with the Euphrates flowing to the right, i.e. westwards, initially (17.21); this contrasts with his description of the Caucasus at 12.2, where Lazica is placed on the left, to the west. Here

the territory as far as Amida likewise applies to the northern part of the region between the two rivers.

On the name Osrhoes see Schmitt 2004, 672–3: it is another form of the name Chosroes, i.e. Khusro. Dio 68.17.2 refers to the Parthian king who fought against Trajan as Osrhoes, although many variants of the name exist in the manuscripts ('Husrawan' no.6 in Justi 1895, 134). Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 5.20.85, refers to Arabia of the Orroei, a canton with two cities, Edessa and Carrhae. As Dillemann 1962, 102–3, suggests, Procopius has probably made a false derivation here. See also Segal 1970, 9 and n.2, Ross 2001, 22, connecting the name rather with the Syriac name of the city, Orhai. As Dillemann notes, 125, however, some believe that the founder of the long-lived Abgarid dynasty was called Osroes, cf. Justi 1895, 134, 'Husrawan' no.4, who led an insurrection against the Seleucids in the 130s B.C.: this is reported by Ps.-Dion. i, 50/40, on which see Luther 1999, 438–40.

Procopius is correct in the Parthian alignment of the Edessene kingdom up to the early second century A.D., when Roman power expanded into the region. See Segal 1970, 16, Ross 2001, 8–11, ch.3, Ball 2016, 96–9.

17.25 Πέρσαι οὖν ἐπειδὴ πρὸς Ῥωμαίων Νίσιβιν τε πόλιν καὶ ἄλλα ἄττα Μεσοποταμίας χωρία ἔλαβον, 'Once, therefore, the Persians had taken the city of Nisibis and certain other districts of Mesopotamia from the Romans.' Procopius alludes to the aftermath of Julian's disastrous expedition of 363, in which his successor Jovian was obliged to cede Nisibis, Singara and certain other districts to the victorious Shapur II. See (e.g.) Blockley 1992, 26–9, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 1–9. As Procopius notes, conflicts between the two parties usually played out in Osrhoene and Mesopotamia, as in the Anastasian war (502–6), necessitating the construction of the new frontier fortress at Dara (on which see 10.13–17).

17.25 ἐκ τοῦ ἐπὶ πλεῖστον ἄνυδρόν τε καὶ ἀνθρώπων ἔρημον οὖσαν, 'because it was generally waterless and uninhabited', referring to the lands south of the Euphrates in the province of Euphratesia (described at 17.2, cf. 17.23). For the idiom ἐκ τοῦ ἐπὶ πλεῖστον, *ek tou epi pleiston*, see i.15.23n, cf. 17.7. See 17.2n concerning Procopius' assertion on the unprecedented nature of this incursion. The same route was subsequently used by Khusro in 540, then by Adarmahan in 571: see Proc. ii.5, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 146–7.

Proc. ii.1.1–11 offers a similarly downbeat assessment of the steppe lands south and south-west of the Euphrates. But the region west of the Euphrates, on the other hand, which Mouterde and Poidebard termed ‘the *limes* of Chalcis’ was undergoing a significant demographic expansion in the sixth century, as more lands were brought under cultivation. See (e.g.) Tate 1996, Foss 1997, 228–37, Rousset and Geyer 2001, 112, Liebeschuetz 2007, esp. 433–5, Mundell Mango 2011, 108–21, Rousset, Geyer and Besançon 2016, 55 and 61.

17.26 ὁ Μιρράνης, ‘the *mirranes*’ or ‘*mihran*’, the commander who had led the Persian forces at Dara in 530, on which see i.13–14. Procopius again here plays up the importance of the Persian defeat. On the name – or rather, title – see i.3.16n.

17.27 κόσμον γὰρ ἀφείλετο αὐτόν, ὃν δὴ ἀναδεῖσθαι τῶν ἐν τῇ κεφαλῇ τριχῶν εἰώθει, ἕκ τε χρυσοῦ καὶ μαργάρων πεποιημένον, ‘For he removed (from him) the ornament with which he was accustomed to tie the hair on his head, which was made from gold and pearls.’ Headgear, belts, and other items of clothing were indeed used as markers of honour and rank at the Sasanian court: see Börm 2007, 127, Wiesehöfer 2007, 67–8, Canepa 2009, 190–1, Walker 2016, 157–8, *idem* 2018, 260–1, Azarnouche and Petitjean, forthcoming, comm. *ad* 26.5B; more generally, Payne 2018, 239–42. At viii.11.6 Procopius refers to golden diadems adorning the heads of prominent courtiers, cf. Agath. iii.28.5. The Roman defector Antoninus received a tiara in 359, Amm. 18.5.6–7. Following his pyrrhic victory at Callinicum, Azarethes was likewise disgraced: see i.18.56 with Börm 2007, 241, *idem* 2018, 34–5.

17.29 καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν ὁ Καβάδης ἐν βουλῇ εἶχεν ὄντινα τρόπον αὐτὸς ἐπὶ Ῥωμαίους στρατεύοι, ‘From that point Kavadh deliberated as to the means by which he himself should campaign against the Romans.’ In the end, however, he delegated the command to Azarethes and al-Mundhir, as Procopius noted already at 17.1. The expression ἐν βουλῇ εἶχεν, meaning ‘deliberate’ or (literally) ‘he held in counsel’ is typically Procopian, cf. i.3.14n, Scheftlein 1893, 7.

17.30–39 The Speech of al-Mundhir (Alamundarus)

Procopius attributes a pompous and rather sententious speech to the Naṣrid ally of the Persians, advising the king to use a less direct route to

threaten the heartlands of the Roman Near East. This is, of course, a literary exercise: he had no knowledge of the chief's discussions with Kavadh. The first part of the speech concerns the dangers of trusting in fate, a well-worn theme no doubt rehearsed by schoolchildren. One finds, for instance, in the *Apophthegmata Laconica* attributed to Plutarch the response to a question as to how one can preserve one's good fortune: 'if one does not entrust everything to fate' (Leotyichidas, no.2, p.224d, cf. Proc. 17.30). Procopius even recycles almost exactly the same wording in a letter attributed to Belisarius sent to Justinian during the siege of Rome, v.24.9. As Taragna 2000, 84–5, notes, it is Procopius' normal practice in such speeches to start with general, abstract considerations.

There is a certain overlap (in vocabulary, notably the word ἀνθρώπειον, *anthrōpeion*, 'human', and in thought) between 17.30–1, concerning human expectations and the consequences of failure, and Chor. *Decl.* 11.78 (p.498):

δεῖ δὲ ὁμῶς εὐχεσθαι μὲν αἰεὶ τὰ βελτίω, προσδέχεσθαι δέ τι καὶ ἀνθρώπειον γίνεσθαι, ἄλλως τε ὅταν καὶ τύχη τις ἤδη κινδύνου πείραν λαβών. ὁ γὰρ πταίσας τι καὶ ταραττέται.

Still, while we must always pray for better things, we should also expect something in line with the human condition to occur, especially after having already experienced danger. For once a person has stumbled, he becomes unsettled (tr. T. Papillon in Penella 2009, 234).

Some similarities with Gylippus' speech to the Syracusans at Thuc. vii.66.2–3, 67.4, may also be observed, notably in his insistence that the Athenians will be obliged to put their trust in fate.

17.32 ἀλλ' ἀπάτη τε καὶ μηχαναῖς τισι περιελθεῖν τοὺς ἐναντίους ἐν σπουδῇ ἔχουσιν, 'but instead (they) strive to get around their opponents by deception and by various contrivances'. The Roman general Buzes at ii.6.3, when facing the superior numbers of Khusro's forces in 540, employs a very similar wording (likewise, at the start of a speech) to justify resorting to cunning to defeat the enemy, cf. Taragna 2000, 136. Cf. Chor. *Decl.* 11.3 (p. 479) for a comparable sentiment, viz. that good planning counts for more than strength. Such tactics were repeatedly employed by the late Romans/Byzantines throughout their history; Skyl. *V. Ioh.* 5 (288.25–289.1), cf. Cedrenus, ed. Bekker, vol.2, 385.1, employs almost the same formulation to describe the manner by which John Tzimiskes defeated the more numerous Rus in 970.

17.33 οἷς γὰρ ἐκ τοῦ ἀντιπάλου ὁ κίνδυνός ἐστιν, οὐκ ἐν βεβαίῳ τὰ τῆς νίκης χωρεῖ. ‘For those for whom the odds are even, victory is not assured.’ The expression ἐκ τοῦ ἀντιπάλου, *ek tou antipalou*, ‘on an even footing, balanced’ is unique to Procopius, cf. ii.21.14 for a very similar instance. The word ἀντιπάλον, however, is Thucydidean, e.g. i.91.7, cf. *LSJ*, 160.

17.35 ἐν μέντοι τῇ χώρᾳ, ἥ ἐκτὸς Εὐφράτου ποταμοῦ τυγχάνει οὔσα, καὶ τῇ ταύτης ἐχομένη Συρία οὔτε πόλεως ὀχύρωμα οὔτε στράτευμα λόγου ἄξιόν ἐστι. ‘In the region outside the Euphrates, however, and neighbouring Syria, there is no fortified city or army worthy of mention.’ By ‘outside the Euphrates’ Procopius means to the west (as also at 17.23, 25), cf. ii.29.18 on the Phasis. There were fortified Roman cities south of the Euphrates, such as Zenobia and Sura, but it appears that their defences had been poorly maintained, a situation that Justinian sought to remedy during the Eternal Peace: see Greatrex 1998, 196 and n.11. Some work may have been carried out, however, already in the late 520s, as at Palmyra and probably Circesium. See Mal. 18.2, Lauffray 1983, 140–1, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 85, ii.5.2n (on Circesium).

The expression πόλεως ὀχύρωμα, *poleōs okhurōma*, ‘fortified city’ is unusual, found otherwise only in the Septuagint, Josh. 19:29 (Cod. Alex.), concerning Tyre, quoted by Euseb. *Onom.* 144.23 (tr. Notley and Safrai, 137).

17.36 ἔνθα δὴ καὶ πόλιν Ἀντιόχειαν εἶναί φασι, πλούτῳ τε καὶ μεγέθει καὶ πολυανθρωπίᾳ πρώτην πόλεων ἀπασῶν τῶν ἐν τοῖς ἑσώοις Ῥωμαίοις οὔσαν. ‘There, they say, lies the city of Antioch, the first of all the cities among the Romans of the East in wealth, in size and in population.’ Antioch was for much of Late Antiquity a wealthy and flourishing city, frequently the host of imperial visits in the fourth century; it was the seat of the *comes Orientis*, the head of the diocese of Oriens, comprising most of the eastern provinces. But at the time al-Mundhir is speaking, the city was still reeling from a succession of crippling blows: a fire had devastated it in October 525, followed by a massive earthquake in May 526 (Guidoboni, no.203) and then a further tremor in November 528 (Guidoboni, no.206). Raids by al-Mundhir’s own forces in 523 and 529 had struck close to the city; these may be alluded to at 17.35 in the reference to Arab scouts. See Downey 1961, 519–30, Foss 2000, 23–4, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 79, 87.

17.37 οὐ γὰρ ἄλλου οὐδενὸς τῷ ταύτης δῆμῳ ὅτι μὴ πανηγύρεών τε καὶ τρυφῆς μέλει καὶ τῆς ἐν θεάτροις αἰεὶ πρὸς ἀλλήλους φιλονεικίας. ‘Its people are concerned for nothing save festivals, luxury and incessant rivalries with one another in the theatres.’ The population of Antioch was notorious for its frivolity and fractiousness. See (e.g.) Kondoleon 2000b, 8–10 (with an evocative mosaic of Megalopsychia) and ii.8.6n. Alpi 2009, i, 178–82, offers a vivid picture of the amusements enjoyed by the Antiochenes in the early sixth century, roundly condemned by the patriarch Severus.

17.39 ὕδατος δὲ ἢ ἄλλου τοῦ τῶν ἐπιτηδείων ἀπορίας πέρι μηδὲν σε εἰσίτω, ‘Do not think about a shortage of water or any other provisions’. The third-person imperative εἰσίτω, *eisitō*, ‘let it go into (your head)’ is used by Belisarius in addressing Justinian in the letter from Rome mentioned at 17.30–39n, v.24.9, cf. ii.16.10 (another speech by Belisarius). As regards provisions, see 17.25n: the region is not so waterless as al-Mundhir implies, as recent studies (cited there) have shown, cf. Edwell 2008, 89–92.

17.40 ὃς δὴ ἐς πεντήκοντα ἐνιαυτῶν χρόνον ἐς γόνυ ἐλθεῖν τὰ Ῥωμαίων ἐποίησε πράγματα, ‘Indeed, he humbled the Roman state for fifty years.’ Haury’s rather unclear note in the apparatus here implies that he would have preferred to read ‘forty’ rather than ‘fifty’, though his only reference is to Tabari, who assigns a forty-nine year reign to the king (900/163, cf. Robin 2012b, 4). But the reading of P, the Paris manuscript, is clearly πεντήκοντα, *pentēkonta*, meaning ‘fifty’, cf. Hoeschel 1607, 28.13. On the possible implications of this see Greatrex 2016b, speculatively suggesting a late addition to the work, cf. Robin 2018, 1318. At 18.48 below Procopius calls al-Mundhir ‘remarkably long-lived’, which was true already in the 540s: he had come to the throne probably in 504 and led a devastating raid against Palestine in that year, cf. Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 71, Edwell 2015, 225–6. Most likely therefore the figure of fifty was a simple approximation: it is not necessary to suppose that al-Mundhir was dead at the point Procopius was writing. I am grateful to Denis Feissel for discussion of this passage.

Al-Mundhir was undoubtedly a formidable foe for the Romans of the eastern frontier; on his raids in the 520s see 17.36n. At 17.2 Procopius refers to him as Ἀλαμούνδαρος ὁ Σακκίκης, i.e. Alamundarus (the son) of

Sakkikē; the epithet is found in other Greek and Syriac sources. It is not clear whether Sakkikē is his mother's name or, perhaps, a grandmother's: the Arabic tradition does know of a maternal grandmother called Shaqīqa. See Robin 2008a, 185, cf. Edwell 2015, 225–6. See also MalKom on 18.16 and 18.32 for detailed treatments and further references to secondary literature.

The expression ἐς γόνυ ἐλθεῖν, *es gonu elthein*, lit. 'to come to knee', i.e. 'kneel', is used of the Emperors Justinian and Leo and their deleterious impact on Roman affairs at *Anecd.* 7.1 and 14.9, respectively. See *LSJ*, 357, I.4 and cf. Hdt. vi.27.3, albeit with a different verb, noted by Braun 1894, 39; cf. Scheftlein 1893, 35, noting Appian's fondness for the use of ἐς γόνυ (e.g. at *Bell. Civ.* iii.2.20). On Procopius' portrayal of al-Mundhir see Whately 2014, 228–9.

17.41 ἐκ γὰρ τῶν Αἰγύπτου ὁρίων ἀρξάμενος καὶ μέχρι ἐς Μεσοποταμίαν ληιζόμενος τὰ ἐκείνη χωρία, 'For starting from the borders of Egypt, reaching as far as Mesopotamia, he plundered the settlements there.' No raid on Egypt is attested, but an attack on Palestine and Arabia is reported by Cyr. Scyth. *V. Ioh.* 13, quoted in the next note; the boundaries of Palaestina III stretched as far as Egypt. Most of al-Mundhir's incursions targeted the steppe lands south of the Euphrates, on occasion, as in 528, penetrating almost as far as Antioch, cf. *Anecd.* 18.22, reporting the raids in very similar terms. See Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 86, Edwell 2015, 228–9.

17.41 καὶ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους κατὰ πολλὰς αἰε μυριάδας ἀνδραποδίζων, καὶ αὐτῶν τοὺς μὲν πλείστους ἀποκτείνων οὐδενὶ λόγῳ, τοὺς δὲ ἄλλους ἀποδιδόμενος χρημάτων μεγάλων, 'He constantly enslaved tens of thousands of people; most of them he killed for no reason, the remainder he ransomed for large sums.' Cf. Cyr. Scyth. *V. Ioh.* 13 (211.15–19):

Κατ' αὐτὸν δὴ τὸν χρόνον Ἀλαμούνδαρος ὁ Σικίκης βασιλέως ἀξίωμα τῶν ὑπὸ Πέρσας τελούντων Σαρακηνῶν εἰληφώς ἐπῆλθεν τῇ τε Ἀραβίᾳ καὶ Παλαιστίνῃ μετὰ πολλοῦ τοῦ κατὰ Ῥωμαίων θυμοῦ πάντα ληιζόμενος καὶ κατὰ πολλὰς μυριάδας Ῥωμαίους ἀνδραποδίζων ...

Around this time al-Mundhir (Alamundarus) the son of Sikika, who had acquired the rank of king over the Saracens subject to the Persians, invaded Arabia and Palestine in great anger against the Romans, laying everything waste, enslaving many tens of thousands of Romans ...

The verbal parallels between the two sources are apparent; it is quite plausible that Cyril consulted Procopius' work: see Feissel, forthcoming. The taking of

prisoners is confirmed by PZ viii.5a and Mal. 18.59; the former reports the execution of nuns, while the latter describes frantic attempts by the Antiochenes to ransom prisoners just before the invasion of 531. See Shahîd 1995, 80–2, Greatrex 1998, 198, Edwell 2015, 229. On the frequent involvement of the Naşrid phylarchs in the taking of slaves see Lenski 2011, 246–7.

17.44 Τιμόστρατος δὲ ἦν ὁ Ῥουφίνου ἀδελφὸς καὶ Ἰωάννης ὁ τοῦ Λουκᾶ παῖς, οὓς δὴ ἀπέδοτο ὕστερον, πλοῦτον αὐτῶν οὐ φαῦλον οὐδὲ τὸν τυχόντα περιβαλλόμενος. ‘(The commanders) were Timostratus, the brother of Rufinus, and John, the son of Luke, whom indeed he subsequently ransomed, obtaining from them a treasure neither paltry nor trifling.’ See *PLRE* ii, Timostratus and Ioannes 70, on the two *duces* concerned. The former had served in the Anastasian war and subsequently in the East until his death in 527; nothing further is known of this John. The date of their capture is uncertain: it could be as early as 519/20, when a raid of al-Mundhir is attested, or 523, when another incursion took place. Their release was negotiated at the ‘Conference of Ramla’ in early 524 by the Roman envoy Abrames (Abraham), the father of Nonnosus. This meeting, which involved numerous church leaders, both Chalcedonians and anti-Chalcedonians, as well as al-Mundhir himself, was primarily concerned with the persecutions that had just taken place in southern Arabia, initiated by the new ruler there, Yūsuf, also referred to as dhū-Nuwās and Masrūq. He had hoped to induce al-Mundhir to follow his example, but the Naşrid leader refused. See Nonnosus §3 (with commentary) and i.19–20h with Shahîd 1964, Greatrex 1998, 131, Beaucamp et al. 1999–2000, 50–3, Fisher 2011, 97–8, Edwell 2015, 230. Bowersock 2013, 87–91, offers a useful summary of events.

It is worth noting that Procopius indicates that it was the commanders themselves who funded their own release: such is the implication of the genitive of source, αὐτῶν, *autōn*, ‘of/from them’, cf. Smyth §1410. Herwerden 1906, 42, proposed adding the preposition ἀπό, *apo*, ‘from’, to read ἀπ’ αὐτῶν, which would make this more explicit. He expresses the large sum paid by litotes; for the sense of τυχόντα, *tykhonta*, here (‘trifling’) see *LSJ*, 1832, A.2.b. Feissel 2005, 259–60, prefers the form Demostratus to Timostratus. As he points out, it is the reading of all the manuscripts, but Haury and others emend it to Timostratus, the form found in Evagrius’ summary of the passage at *HE* iv.12.

17.45 Ἀλαμούνδαρος μὲν βασιλέως ἀξίωμα ἔχων, ‘al-Mundhir, holding the rank of king’. Procopius makes the point that the Naşrid leader enjoyed a centralised command, wielding authority over all the Arab

tribes under Persian sway: hence he could raid so effectively in force. On his forces and authority see Robin 2008a, 182, Fisher and Wood 2016, 258–64. The title of king was claimed by a number of Arab rulers in this period and is widely attested for al-Mundhir in particular. See Robin 2008a, 182–4, cf. Hoyland 2009a more generally. The rank carried with it the right to wear a diadem, cf. Robin, Nehmé and Avner 2013, 253 and n.39. It is worth underlining that Procopius makes no reference to a particular tribal affiliation for al-Mundhir; modern scholars, on the basis of later Arabic accounts, associate him with the Naṣrid dynasty leading the tribe of Lakhm. See Millar 2010, 200, Fisher 2011, 3–6, 64–6, cf. Hoffmann-Salz 2014, 276, Hoyland 2014, 271–3, Fisher and Wood 2016, 252–3.

17.46 οὐδεὶς δὲ οὔτε Ῥωμαίων στρατιωτῶν ἄρχων, οὐς δοῦκας καλοῦσιν, οὔτε Σαρακηνῶν τῶν Ῥωμαίοις ἐνσπόνδων ἡγούμενος, οἱ φύλαρχοι ἐπικαλοῦνται, ξὺν τοῖς ἐπομένοις Ἀλαμουνδάρῳ ἀντιτάξασθαι ἱκανῶς εἶχεν· ἐν χώρᾳ γὰρ ἐκάστη τοῖς πολεμίοις οὐκ ἀξιόμαχοι ἐτετάχατο. ‘No commander of Roman soldiers, whom they call *duces*, nor chief of the Saracens with whom the Romans had a treaty, who are called phylarchs, was sufficiently strong to oppose al-Mundhir with their followers, for in each province were deployed forces that did not match the enemy’s strength.’ Procopius offers technical details on the defence of the Roman East: those responsible were the provincial *duces* and phylarchs. He refers to the Arab allies as ἐνσπονδοί, *enspondoi*, i.e. those with a treaty with the Romans; while some interpret this as a rendering of the Latin term *foederati*, federates, it is more likely that they served as *symmachoi*, i.e. allies. See Greatrex 2014b, 259–60, Greatrex 2015b, 126–7; *contra*, Shahīd 2009, xvii–xix, Fisher 2011, 76–9, 120–1, cf. also Fisher and Wood 2016, 264.

The term φύλαρχος, *phylarchos*, ‘phylarch’ or ‘tribal chief’, could be applied to various foreign leaders, particularly Arabs, but it need not represent a formal Roman office. As is customary, Procopius uses technical terms with circumspection, explaining them as though his reader would not understand them, cf. Beaucamp 2010, 198 n.8 (on his use of *phylarchos*). On the organisation of the Roman frontier defences and the terms here used, ‘phylarch’ in particular, see Mayerson 1991, Grouchevov 1995, Greatrex 2007c, Hoffmann-Salz 2014, 283–6, Greatrex 2015b, 124–6, Liebeschuetz 2015, 75–9. Each province had its own military commander, the *dux*, as Procopius notes, and its phylarch. He rightly underlines the lack of unity and co-ordination in defences,

which was amply illustrated by the slowness in responding to al-Mundhir's invasion of 528: it took months to assemble a counter-expedition, which succeeded only in conducting a reprisal raid into Persian territory early in 529, without ever bringing the Naṣrid chief to battle. See Mal. 18.16, Theoph. 179, Shahîd 1995, 70–6, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 86, cf. Edwell 2015, 232–6.

17.47 διὸ δὴ βασιλεὺς Ἰουστινιανὸς φυλαῖς ὅτι πλείσταις Ἀρέθαν τὸν Γαβαλᾶ παῖδα ἐπέστησεν, ὃς τῶν ἐν Ἀραβίῳις Σαρακηνῶν ἥρχεν, ἀξίωμα βασιλέως αὐτῷ περιθέμενος, 'Therefore the Emperor Justinian put al-Harith (Arethas), the son of Jabala (Gabala), who ruled over the Saracens in Arabia, in charge of as many tribes as possible; he conferred on him the rank of king.' This promotion is usually placed in 529, so Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 88, but cf. Hoffmann-Salz 2014, 279, for 530, and Fisher and Drost 2016, 44, who prefer 528. This is *RKOR* 588 (placed in 528/9). It may represent a reaction to the difficulties experienced in responding to al-Mundhir's raid of 528 (on which see the preceding note) and perhaps in quelling unrest among the Samaritans, whose revolt was suppressed only with Jafnid assistance. See Sartre 1982, 168–70, Shahîd 1995, 82–8, Greatrex 1998, 160–1.

Al-Harith (Arethas) is usually referred to as the Jafnid ruler of the tribe of Ghassan although, as was just noted for al-Mundhir, the Naṣrids and the tribe of Lakhm, his position is likely to have owed as much to his individual competence as to dynastic considerations; Liebeschuetz 2015, 85–9, finds modern scepticism as to the connection between al-Harith and the Ghassanids excessive. See Fisher 2011, 97, for epigraphic evidence (at Jebel Seis/Usays) of al-Harith's prominence at this time, cf. Shahîd 1995, 117–24, Genequand in Fisher 2015, 191–3. The extent of Ghassanid/Jafnid power is considered by Hoyland 2009b, 118–20, cf. Genequand, ch.4, in Fisher 2015. For a detailed assessment of the Ghassanid tribe in our sources see Robin 2015a; on the Jafnid dynasty, Whitton 2015.

As Procopius notes, al-Harith had hitherto been one phylarch among many, as attested by Mal. 18.16; we have translated Procopius' ἐν Ἀραβίῳις, *en Arabiois*, 'among the Arabians', as 'in Arabia', since he usually refers to Roman provinces as peoples (e.g. i.10.1 and see ii.29.19n with Greatrex 2018b, 335 and n.34). He was no doubt the phylarch in Arabia, cf. Shahîd 1995, 72, Robin 2012a, 292. Millar 2009, 104, points out that Procopius apparently perceives no difference between the Saracens and other inhabitants of the province.

Al-Harith's father Jabala, mentioned by Procopius, may be identical with the al-Tafar who was killed in battle at Thannuris in 528: see PZ ix.2b with Shahîd 1995, 63–7, PZT 319, n.37, Robin, Nehmé and Avner 2013, 248. On the ruler and his family in general see *PLRE* iii, Arethas, Shahîd 1995, 48–9, 63–70, Robin 2008a, 178–81, Robin 2015a.

On the promotion of al-Harith to the supreme phylarchate (or 'super-phylarchate') see Sartre 1982, 170–2, Shahîd 1995, 95–124 (superseding his earlier articles), Liebeschuetz 2015, 79–82 (an upbeat assessment). Robin, Nehmé and Avner 2013, 251, consider the title 'king' in general, cf. Fisher 2011, 97: the Jebel Seis/Usays inscription noted above refers to al-Harith as *mlk*, i.e. king, although this need not reflect the bestowal of the title by Justinian. See also Hoyland 2009a, 394–6, on the impact of the concentration of power on the Jafnids, cf. Fisher 2011, 79–83, al-Azmeh 2014, 121–2, Fisher and Drost 2016, 59–60. Sartre 1982, 170–2, rightly points out that al-Harith now had two roles, both as overall co-ordinator of Arab allies and as phylarch for the province of Arabia.

The significance of the appointment of al-Harith is well brought out by Robin 2012a, 292: it was part of a broader strategy to seize the initiative in the Arabian peninsula, which Procopius discusses at i.19–20, cf. Shahîd 2002, 21–8, Shahîd 2009, 43–4. It is likely that al-Harith's brother, Abū Karib, also received a post at this time. See further i.19.10n. Greatrex 2015b, 126–8, places al-Harith's elevation in the context of administrative changes along the eastern frontier, including in Armenia. Hoyland 2009a, 382–3, points out that Justinian was not in a position to bestow the position of overall ruler on al-Harith himself; instead, as Hoyland argues, the emperor probably made the phylarch his only partner for Arab affairs and granted him a superior title to his peers, cf. Hoffmann-Salz 2014, 279–81.

Procopius' assertion as to the unprecedented nature of the appointment has caused some puzzlement: he is aware, for instance, of the third-century Palmyrene rulers Odenathus and Zenobia (ii.5.5–6), the former of whom Mal. 12.26 calls a *basileus* (cf. Yon 2002, 404–7, on his titulature). In the late fourth century there is the well-attested ruler Mavia, described by Soz. *HE* vi.38.1 as the widow of a Saracen *basileus*, on whom see (e.g.) Lenski 2002, 203–9. Cf. Sartre 1982, 171, for other possible precedents. Procopius may well be criticising Justinian's decision, since elsewhere references to unprecedented acts are clearly negative, e.g. at *Anecd.* 6.11, 30.24, and Romans had long had an antipathy towards royalty; on the other hand, he also emphasises that the main aim in the appointment was to appoint an opposite number for al-Mundhir, who

enjoyed similar status. It remains true that the creation of an overall phylarch was a novelty, whether coupled with a regal title or not. See the useful comments of Chrysos 1978, 46–50, doubting that al-Harith actually was granted the title *basileus*, Shahîd 1995, 110–11 and Hoffmann-Salz 2014, 280.

Procopius presents al-Harith as an ineffective ruler who failed to prove his worth, but there are signs that he later revised his opinion at ii.28.12–14, on which see the notes *ad loc.*, cf. Greatrex 2016b. Modern assessments of Justinian's measure tend to be more positive: see (e.g.) Fisher 2011, 98, Greatrex 2015b, 128, 142–3, Liebeschuetz 2015, 82.

18.1–56 The Battle of Callinicum

For a general treatment of the battle itself, see i.17–18h. Procopius returns, after his geographical digression and his introduction of the redoubtable Persian ally, al-Mundhir, to the campaign itself. Passing quickly over the manoeuvring that preceded the battle, he focuses his attention on Belisarius' success in blocking the Persian advance and his justified reluctance to give battle. See fig. 19.

18.1 Τοῦτου οὖν τότε τοῦ ἀνδρὸς τῇ ὑποθήκῃ ἡσθεῖς, 'Therefore at this point, delighted with the man's advice'. Procopius signals a return to his main narrative, begun at 17.1–2, with the word τότε, *tote*, 'then', 'at this point', just as he does at 20.9. Kavadh's delight at the advice is expressed in the same words as Cyrus' (at Croesus' advice) at Hdt. i.156.2. On the issue of troop numbers, see i.17.1n. Procopius' description of Azarethes' prowess at warfare is generic, cf. 6.15n.

18.2 οἱ δὲ τὸν Εὐφράτην ποταμὸν διαβάντες ἐν Ἀσσυρίοις, γῆν τε πορευθέντες τινὰ ἔρημον ἀνθρώπων, ἄφνω ἐς τῶν Κομμαγενῶν καλουμένων τὴν χώραν παρὰ δόξαν ἐσέβαλλον. 'They crossed the river Euphrates in Assyria, and after advancing through uninhabited country they made a sudden and unexpected invasion of the region called Commagene.' The precise route of the Persians is uncertain: they may have entered Roman territory through Osrhoene and then followed the Euphrates on its northern bank before crossing into Syria I (so Greatrex 1998, 196), but an advance up the southern bank is perhaps more likely, given al-Mundhir's experience. So Rubin 1960, 498 n.865. Procopius' assertion in the following section about the unprecedented nature of this route is exaggerated: see i.17.2n.

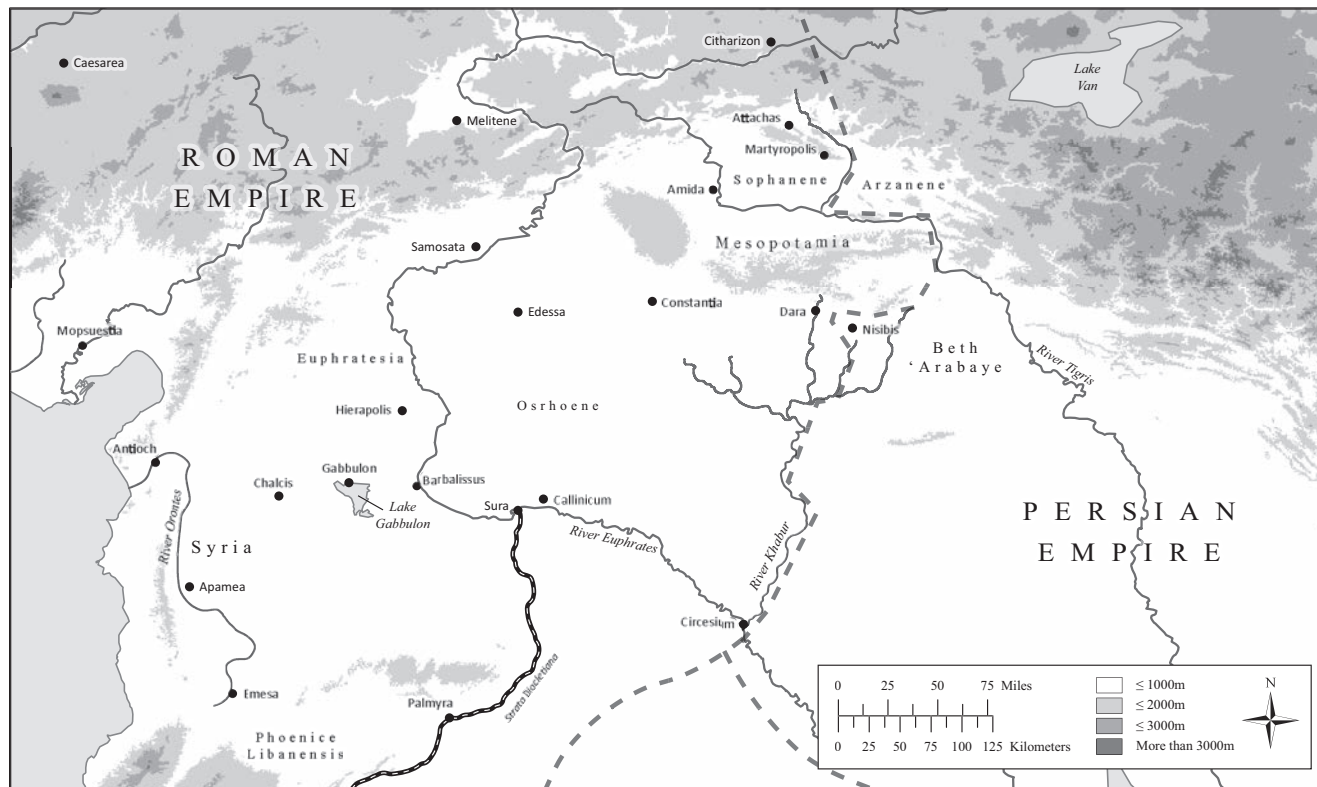


Figure 19 The Callinicum Campaign

On the location of Assyria, probably Lower Mesopotamia, see 17.5–6n, cf. ii.19.17n.

18.3 ὅσα γε ἡμᾶς ἀκοῇ ἢ τρόπῳ τῷ ἄλλῳ ἐπίστασθαι, ‘so far as I can discover by hearsay or by any other means’. Procopius vigorously insists on his research here, as Rubin, *PvK*, 372–3, notes. Cf. i.1.7 (with Basso and Greatrex 2018, 66–7, on antecedents), although the formulation is much stronger here. It is likely that Procopius is partly seeking to exculpate Belisarius for not having anticipated the invasion.

18.4 ἃ δὲ ἐπεὶ Βελισάριος ἔμαθε, τὰ μὲν πρῶτα διηπορεῖτο, μετὰ δὲ βοηθεῖν κατὰ τάχος ἔγνω. ‘When Belisarius heard about it, he was at first at a complete loss, but then decided to come to help with all speed.’ Procopius frequently alludes to Belisarius’ initial perplexity (cf. v.17.1, vi.16.17), which occasionally he himself can resolve (e.g. vi.23.23), cf. Ross 2018, 78–9.

Belisarius prudently left adequate forces to repel any Persian attack in his absence; Mal. 18.61 reports an assault on an obscure fortress called Abgersaton, perhaps near Amida, which took place around the time of the campaign, cf. PZ ix.4. See Greatrex 1998, 196–7, Brodka 2011, 72. His route westwards is uncertain, but the most direct option was through Constantia, Edessa, then across the Euphrates: see Greatrex 1998, 197 n.14.

18.5 ὁ μὲν οὖν Ῥωμαίων στρατὸς ἐς δισμυρίους μάλιστα πεζοὺς τε καὶ ἵππείας ξυνήει, καὶ αὐτῶν Ἰσαυροὶ οὐχ ἥσσον ἢ δισχίλιοι ἦσαν. ‘The Roman army comprised about 20,000 infantry and cavalry, and of these no fewer than 2000 were Isaurians.’ Mal. 18.60 states that Belisarius took 8000 troops with him, although he was accompanied by al-Harith and 5000 Arabs; two further contingents belonging no doubt to armies of the provincial *duces*, of 4000 men each, makes a total of 21,000 men. See Whately 2015, 399–400, for discussion, cf. Koehn 2018a, 26 n.50.

18.6 ἄρχοντες δὲ ἱππέων μὲν ἅπαντες ἦσαν, οἱ τὰ πρότερα τὴν ἐν Δάρας μάχην πρὸς τε Πέρσας καὶ Μιρράνην διήνεγκαν, ‘All the cavalry commanders were those who had previously withstood the Persians and the *mirranes* in the battle at Dara.’ On the sense of the verb διαφέρω, *diapherō*, here, see Suda, Δ1009. There are four short citations from this chapter in the Suda; de Boor 1923, 44, argues that they are all likely to derive from lost works of the Constantinian *Excerpta*.

The cavalry commanders to whom he refers are Pharas the Herul, Sunicas, Aigan, Simmas and Ascan (mentioned at i.13.19–21); he also there mentions John, son of Nicetas, Cyril, Marcellus, Germanus and Dorotheus as cavalry commanders, although it is not clear whether they are included in his reference here. Rubin 1960, 286, supposes that they are. Nothing further is known of the Peter who commanded the infantry; like Belisarius, he was (or had been) a bodyguard of Justinian. See *PLRE* iii, Petrus 2, Ravegnani 1988, 83–4.

18.7 τοῖς μέντοι Ἰσαύροις Λογγῖνός τε καὶ Στεφανάκιος ἐφειστήκεσαν, ‘Longinus and Stephanacius were in command of the Isaurians.’ As Brodka 2011, 73, notes, Malalas contradicts Procopius here, referring to Isaurian commanders called Dorotheus and Mamas. He suggests that Mamas may have been a subordinate commander, while Dorotheus may be the cavalry commander who served at Dara who was stationed close to the Isaurians at the battle (from which the confusion arose). Alternatively, Dorotheus may also have been a subordinate commander, so Greatrex 1998, 201 n.24, cf. *PLRE* iii, Dorotheus 1 and 3. Mal. 18.60 mentions a Stephanus among Belisarius’ subordinates, who might be identical with the Stephanacius here referred to.

Procopius generally distinguishes the Isaurian forces from the main body of the Roman empire; they were renowned for their martial prowess, cf. Elton 2000, Feld 2005, 340–1. As he later makes clear, 18.39–40, in this case they were pseudo-Isaurians, farmers from neighbouring Lycaonia, who had hastily been drafted into the army; hence their performance fell far short of what was expected. Whether they can be identified with the unit subsequently despatched to Italy is therefore doubtful, *contra* Elton 2007b, 282–3.

18.8 ἐπεὶ τε ἐς Χαλκίδα πόλιν ἀφίκοντο, ἐνστρατοπεδευσάμενοι αὐτοῦ ἔμενον, ἐπεὶ τοὺς πολεμίους ἐν χωρίῳ Γαββουλῶν εἶναι ἐπύθοντο, δέκα καὶ ἑκατὸν σταδίοις Χαλκίδος διέχοντι. ‘When they reached the city of Chalcis, they pitched camp and waited, for they had heard that the enemy were at a place called Gabbulon, 110 stades from Chalcis.’ Procopius appears to have telescoped events here: Mal. 18.60 refers to Persian penetration further to the north, reaching as far as Bathnae, about 30 km north of Gabbulon. He also mentions the presence of Hermogenes first at Hierapolis, then subsequently at Barbalissus, where he joined with Belisarius’ forces; Procopius also omits Sunicas’ strike against Persian forces, which angered Belisarius. The precise order of events is unclear, but

the Persians were able to capture Gabbulon, as they did later also in 573; the town, although large enough to have a bishop, probably possessed only rudimentary fortifications. It lies next to an important salt-producing lake. See Mouterde and Poidebard 1945, 190–1 (an inscription from 553), *TIB* 15, 499, 1178–9, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 147.

Belisarius took up position at Chalcis no doubt to block the Persian advance on Antioch: it lies about 50 km west of Gabbulon, on the road leading to Antioch. Later he was able to move forward to Barbalissus, as Malalas recounts. Unlike the deserted regions south of the Euphrates, this part of Syria was prospering at the time, as remains and inscriptions testify: see 17.25n above. The distance given by Procopius should equate to just 23 km and is thus quite misleading; see Rubin 1960, 498 n.865 with Appendix 2, p. 675.

18.9 ὁ δὲ γνόντες Ἀλαμούνδαρος τε καὶ Ἀζαρέθης τὸν τε κίνδυνον κατορρωδήσαντες ἐπίπροσθεν οὐκέτι ἐχώρουν, ἀλλ' ἐπ' οἴκου αὐτίκα δὴ ἀποχωρεῖν ἔγνωσαν. 'When al-Mundhir and Azarethes learnt of this, they were overcome with fear and refused to go any further; instead they decided to go home at once.' Procopius employs the same expression for fearfulness at iii.12.3, vii.6.18 and elsewhere, cf. Polyb. 14.1.5 (Scipio Africanus), Joh. Cin. iii.10 (p.115.4). The use of the adverb ἐπίπροσθεν, *epiprosthen*, 'before', here more in the sense 'forwards' with the verb χωρέω, *khōreō*, 'I advance', is also typically Procopian, cf. ii.21.29, vii.31.6 and elsewhere. The alarm of the Persian commanders is understandable: there was a danger of being cut off in Roman territory with no escape route. See Greatrex 1998, 199.

18.12 διὸ δὲ ἅπαντες αὐτῷ λάθρα ἐλοιδοροῦντο, 'Consequently everyone secretly abused him.' Procopius, having demonstrated that Belisarius had accomplished his objective (18.11), clearly believes the criticisms unjust. The eagerness of many to engage the Persians may be ascribed in large measure to the damage caused by recent Arab raids; the Antiochenes had just paid a large ransom for prisoners taken by al-Mundhir in 529 and now, just two years later, fled in panic as the Persians approached (Mal. 18.59–60). The Roman victories of 530 will also have inflated the confidence of Belisarius' subordinates. See Greatrex 1998, 198, Brodka 2011, 75–6.

18.13 ἐνθένδε γὰρ διὰ χώρας πρὸς οὐδενὸς ἀνθρώπων οἰκουμένης πορεύεσθαι ἔμελλον, οὕτω τε τῆς Ῥωμαίων γῆς ἀπαλλάσσεσθαι. 'From there they intended to march through territory inhabited by no

man, and thus to leave Roman territory.’ As Procopius explains, they intended to leave the banks of the Euphrates. Rubin 1960, 499 n.871, suggests that the Persians were going to cross the Euphrates and traverse Osrhoene to reach Persian territory; they might alternatively have continued marching south-east through the Syrian steppe, terrain familiar to al-Mundhir.

18.14 Ῥωμαῖοι δὲ διανυκτερεύσαντες ἐν πόλει Σούρων ἐνθένδε τε ἐξαναστάντες καταλαμβάνουσι συσκευαζομένους ἤδη ἐς τὴν ἄφοδον τοὺς πολεμίους. ‘But the Romans, after spending the night in the city of Sura, came upon their enemy as they were already packing up for their departure.’ The distance from Sura to Callinicum is a little under 25 km, the equivalent of a full day’s march, so Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 252, cf. Haldon 1999, 165 and n.70. On the city of Sura, see Kennedy and Riley 1990, 115–16, Konrad 2001, 5–12, Gaborit 2015, EoI, 349–53, *TIB* 15, 1764–6. As emerges from Konrad, there was a second fort, called by the archaeologists ‘Sura II’, 5 km north-east of the main city, which appears to have guarded a bridge over the Euphrates. Traces of the Roman road along the south side of the river have been found. If the Romans had set off from here, they would have been that much closer to the withdrawing Persians. The precise location of the Persian camp, however, and hence of the battle, is unclear. A good map of the Euphrates around Callinicum (and further east) may be found in Lauffray 1983, fig.4.

18.15 ἑορτὴ δὲ ἡ Πασχαλία ἐπέκειτο ἡμέρα ἐπιγεννησομένη τῇ ὑστεραίᾳ, ἣν δὴ σέβονται Χριστιανοὶ πασῶν μάλιστα. ‘But on the following day fell the festival of Easter, which Christians observe more solemnly than any other.’ As is customary for Procopius, he pretends that his reader would be unaware of the significance of Easter and of the practices associated with it, in this case the fasting over the preceding days; elsewhere, however, he assumes a knowledge of the feast and its associated rituals, e.g. at iv.17.15–21. Cf. i.7.5–11n and see Taragna 2000, 70 and n.12. Procopius refers to Easter as ‘the Easter (or paschal) festival’, ἑορτὴ ἡ Πασχαλία, *heortē hē Paskhalia*, a more formal designation than the simple Πάσχα, *Paskha*, found earlier only in Soz. *HE* i.21.6, vii.18.1 and elsewhere. Sozomen, like Procopius, aimed at a more elevated style, cf. Sabbah in vol.1 of the SC edition, 81–7.

Easter fell on Sunday 20 April in 531; the battle thus took place on Saturday 19 April. It is rare that an engagement can be dated with such precision. PZ ix.4 reports that the Persian commander sent a letter to

Belisarius, urging him not to attack ‘for the sake of the Nazarenes and the Jews who are in the army that is with me, and for the sake of you who are Christians’. Although Belisarius was inclined to accept the suggestion, his army, according to PZ, entered battle nonetheless. See PZT 322 n.60 on the presence of Jews and Christians in the Persian army.

Fasting was widely practised on Good Friday and could often be prolonged into the next day; Destunis 1876, 234 n.11, discusses at length how far into the night it was customary to fast in this period. See Schummer 1933, 150–2 and cf. Dunn 2010, 64–5, noting how Stilicho’s attack on the Arian Goths at Pollentia on Easter day, probably in 402, exploited the fasting of his enemies on the preceding days. The soldiers had thus marched to Sura on the Friday without eating, then set off the next morning on an empty stomach.

18.16 ταῦτα γάρ οἱ καὶ Ἑρμογένης ἐγίνωσκεν ἄρτι ἐπὶ πρεσβείᾳ ἐκ βασιλείως ἦκων, ‘for Hermogenes, who had just returned from the Emperor on an embassy, was of the same opinion as him’, i.e. he agreed with Belisarius. On Hermogenes, see 13.10n; on his role in the campaign, see i.17–18h. The text requires emendation here, as Herwerden 1906, 43, recognised. As Richard Burgess points out to me, his proposed καὐτά, *kauta*, ‘and these things’, is probably a mistake for ταῦτά, *tauta*, ‘the same things’, which we here accept. Our translation is thus the opposite of Dewing’s Loeb (and Kaldellis’ revision) but is in line (e.g.) with Rubin’s interpretation, *PvK*, 373, and Brodka’s translation, 63.

18.18 οὐκοῦν ἀπόνασθαι τῶν παρόντων ἀγαθῶν ἄμεινον ἢ παρελθόντα ταῦτα ζητεῖν. ‘It is surely better to enjoy our present benefits than to look for them when the opportunity is past.’ Procopius, through Belisarius’ speech, hammers home the futility of engaging the enemy. On the general issue of such addresses see i.14.20n, on this instance see Taragna 2000, 111. As Cresci 1986, 263, notes, Belisarius offers very similar arguments to his discontented forces at Rome at v.28.7, but, as at Callinicum, he gives way, with predictable consequences. The whole argument of the speech is diametrically opposed to the address of Gylippus to the Syracusans at Thuc. vii.78.3, in which he insists that his forces must defeat the Athenians rather than let them leave unmolested. The reference to the dashed hopes of the Persians contains slight verbal echoes of Thuc. viii.81.3, so Duwe 1885, 24.

The verb ἀπονίναμαι, *aponinamai*, ‘I have enjoyment of’ is rare, and this form of the aorist infinitive is used only by Procopius, here and at iv.12.15.

18.21 οὐ τῶν αὐθαιρέτων κινδύνων ξυναίρεσθαι ὁ θεὸς αἰεὶ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις φιλεῖ. ‘God always helps men in danger when it is forced upon them, not when it is self-chosen.’ The reference to self-chosen dangers recalls Thuc. i.144.1, where Pericles likewise wisely (and vainly) advises the Athenians to avoid them, cf. viii.27.4, where the Athenian commander Phrynichus persuades the Athenians in 412 B.C. to withdraw from Miletus in the face of superior numbers. Like Belisarius, Phrynichus was opposed by his fellow commanders, but he was able to impose his view and gained a reputation for his intelligence. See Cresci 1986, 256, drawing parallels with ii.19.10, where Belisarius warns of the dangers of rash courage, cf. ii.20.26.

18.24 Ὁ δὲ στρατὸς ἐς αὐτὸν ὕβριζον οὐ σιγῇ τινι οὐδὲ ἐν παραβύστῳ, ‘But the army insulted him, and not silently or in secret.’ As Brodka 2011, 77–8, observes, Procopius insists on Belisarius’ blamelessness for the defeat both through his speech and by emphasising the insubordination of his forces, even if this makes clear his lack of authority; cf. Jord. *Rom.* 363 for similar emphasis. The expression ἐν παραβύστῳ, *en parabustō*, ‘in secret’, is fairly common in ecclesiastical authors in the period, e.g. Socr. *HE* vii.29.8, cf. Suda E1422 for the sense (and see 18.6n on the Suda’s use of Procopius here). Belisarius is the victim again of accusations, this time in secret, at v.20.7, cf. *Anecd.* 1.17 on Theodora’s affairs.

The discipline, or lack of it, of Roman forces, is a leitmotif of Procopius’ account, present already in Belisarius’ speech at the battle of Dara, 14.21–3, cf. the notes *ad loc.* That this reflects a genuine problem, rather than merely a literary theme, is indicated by the similar difficulties experienced by John Trogita in North Africa, described by Corip. *Ioh.* vi.478–505, cf. Stein 1949, 556. Like Belisarius, John bowed to the wishes of his forces and engaged battle, even though his men were exhausted, *defessi* (vi.479); cf. Belisarius’ difficulties in 541, reported at ii.18.16–26, where subordinate commanders defied his orders outside Nisibis. See Taragna 2000, 131, Whately 2008, 244–6, *idem* 2016, 89–93, cf. Greatrex 1998, 200 n.21. Already in the fourth century the phenomenon was observed by Amm. Marc. 16.12: the Caesar Julian was unable to dissuade his men, wearied from a long march in the summer heat, from engaging the Alamanni at Strasbourg in 357, although in this case they were victorious. The Emperor Constantius proved similarly unable to restrain his forces during the battle of Singara in the 340s, which cost him a victory: see Dodgeon and Lieu 1991, 7.3.4 with Syv  ne 2015, 314.

18.26 ἐς κέρασ μέν τὸ ἀριστερόν πρὸς τῷ ποταμῷ τοὺς πεζοὺς ἅπαντας ἔστησεν, ἐς δὲ τὸ δεξιόν, ἧ δὴ ὁ χῶρος ἀνάντης ἦν, Ἀρέθαν τε καὶ τοὺς ξὺν αὐτῷ Σαρακηνοὺς ἅπαντας, αὐτὸς δὲ ξὺν τοῖς ἵππεῦσι κατὰ μέσον εἰστήκει. ‘On the left wing near the river he stationed all the infantry, on the right, where the ground was steep, al-Harith and all the Saracens with him, and he positioned himself with the cavalry in the middle.’ The Euphrates valley is quite narrow in this stretch, although it widens near Callinicum; hence the need for some forces to be stationed on more uneven terrain (fig. 20). If Malalas’ patchy account at 18.60 is integrated with Procopius’ description, one may infer that the ‘Isaurians’ were posted next to the Arabs on the right, then Ascan’s Huns, and then Belisarius’ cavalry in the centre. See Rubin 1960, 286–7, 499 n.871, Greatrex 1998, 201, Brodka 2011, 79.

18.28 οἷς μέν γάρ ἐξὸν διαφυγοῦσι τὸν κίνδυνον ξὺν τῇ ἀτιμίᾳ βιοῦν, οὐδέν, ἦν γε βούλοιντο, ἀπεικὸς ἀντὶ τῶν βελτίστων ἐλέσθαι τὰ

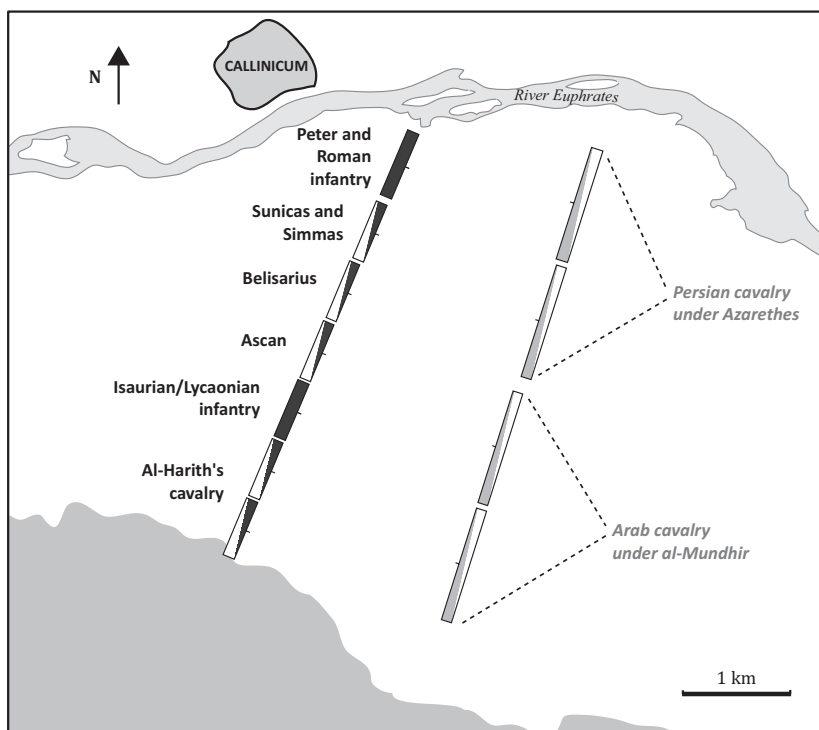


Figure 20 The Battle of Callinicum

ἡδιστα, ‘For those who can escape their dangerous position and go on living in dishonour, it is not unnatural, if they wish it, that they should choose pleasure instead of the highest good.’ The contrast between pleasure, τὰ ἡδιστα, *ta hēdista*, literally ‘the sweetest things’ and τὰ βέλτιστα, *ta beltista*, literally ‘the best things’ is found as early as Plato, *Gorgias* 521d. Brodka 2004, 114, suggests that this verdict about man’s proclivities reflects a fundamentally pessimistic outlook on Procopius’ part. On the unusual use of the optative with ἤν, *ēn*, ‘if’, see ii.19.38n.

Azarethes’ appeal to his soldiers to stand bravely rather than face the king’s wrath recalls elements of the general Peroz’s speech at 14.13 and 14.19: see i.14.13n, cf. Börm 2007, 165. His opening remarks concerning preference for life over glory, 18.27, should be taken as a general reflection on mankind, to which even the Persians are subject, not as a negative assessment of Persian valour, *contra* Börm 2007, 249 n.2.

18.29 ὅτε τοίνυν ταῦτα οὕτως ἔχει, ‘Since this is so’, literally ‘When now these things are thus’. A formal way of concluding an argument, used by Procopius also (e.g.) at iv.2.14, viii.20.20, and always in direct speech. Elsewhere it is quite rare, at least in this precise form, but Cyril of Alexandria employs exactly this idiom at *Contra eos qui theotocon nolunt confiteri* (CPG 5226) 26, *ACO* i.1.7, p.30.43.

18.30 Τοσαῦτα καὶ Ἀζαρέθης παρακελευσάμενος ἀντίξουν τοῖς ἐναντίοις τὴν φάλαγγα ἔστησε, Πέρσας μὲν τὰ ἐν δεξιᾷ ἔχοντας, Σαρακηνοὺς δὲ τὰ εὐώνυμα. ‘With this exhortation Azarethes positioned his phalanx opposite the enemy, the Persians holding the right, and the Saracens the left.’ The word ἀντίξουν, *antixoun*, ‘opposite’ is Herodotean, found (e.g.) at vi.7 (in the form ἀντίξοον), cf. Suda A2688.

The Persian disposition for battle placed al-Mundhir’s forces opposite those of al-Harith, while the rest of the Persian forces lay closer to the Euphrates. Brodka 2011, 79, plausibly suggests that Azarethes kept his best forces in reserve – as Peroz had done at Dara – which he was then able to deploy to the left flank to good effect. See also Greatrex 1998, 202.

18.32 τὰ μὲν γὰρ αὐτῶν βέλη συχνότερα μὲν ἀτεχνῶς ἦν, ‘Their arrows were undoubtedly greater in number’, literally ‘more frequent’, cf. 14.35. Procopius, while acknowledging the rapid fire-rate of the Persians, insists on the greater force of Roman archery (18.34), recalling his praise for the

horse-archers at i.1.12–15, where the penetration of Roman arrows is likewise emphasised; cf. Maur. *Strat.* xi.1 (p.354) with Rance 2007a, 356–7, Koehn 2018a, 126. Yet the suspicion arises that he has passed over episodes in the first part of the battle, brushed aside by the reference (18.31) to sporadic feats of valour; Brodka 2011, 80, suggests that Mal. 18.60 (p.388.23–5) refers to an initial Persian charge against Sunicas and Simmas, which was successfully repulsed by these cavalry commanders, cf. Greatrex 1998, 202. Despite Procopius' emphasis on the force of Roman archery, PZ ix.4 reports that a contrary wind blunted its impact, the opposite to what had happened at Dara, on which see i.14.36. Even under ordinary circumstances, Maur. *Strat.* xi.1 (p.358) recommends that Roman forces close with their Persian adversary quickly in order to minimise losses from arrows. It is possible that in this instance the discrepancy between the fire-power of the two sides was less pronounced than on other occasions. See also Börm 2007, 164, on Persian archery and cf. Amm. Marc. 25.1.13.

18.35 ἤδη μὲν οὖν τῆς ἡμέρας αἱ δύο παρωχέκεσαν μοῖραι, καὶ ἡ μάχη ἔτι ἀγχώματος ἦν. 'By now two parts of the day had passed, and the battle was still undecided.' Although Dewing prefers the translation 'two-thirds', it is uncertain whether Procopius is being so precise; cf. *Anecd.* 30.31 for another rather vague use of the term μοῖρα, *moira*, 'part' in the context of part of the day or night. Given that the battle must have started fairly late in the morning, upon the arrival of the Roman army, the decisive blow, which Procopius goes on to describe, probably came in the mid-afternoon.

The description of a battle as ἀγχώματος, *agkhōmalos*, 'undecided', goes back to Thuc. iv.134.2, and is found occasionally in other later historians.

18.35 τότε δὲ συμφρονήσαντες, ὅσοι δὲ ἄριστοι ἐν τῷ Περσῶν στρατεύματι ἦσαν, ἐσήλαυνον ἐς τῶν πολεμίων τὸ δεξιὸν κέρας, 'But then, by a concerted plan, the best of the Persian army attacked the enemy right wing.' The aorist participle συμφρονήσαντες, *xymphronēsantes*, 'by a concerted plan', literally, 'having agreed', refers to the élite Persian cavalry, as Brodka 2011, 80–3, argues, *contra* Shahîd 1995, 135, who supposes it to refer to an agreement between the Persians and al-Harith's forces. Azarethes had to communicate his plan to his heavy cavalry, which in turn had to move to the left and onto difficult, rising terrain. The sudden onslaught of these units unsurprisingly broke al-Harith's men and other Roman forces in the vicinity, such as the 'Isaurians'.

18.36 οἱ δὲ οὕτω τὴν φάλαγγα διαλύσαντες δίχα ἐγένοντο, ὥστε καὶ δόξαν ἀπήνεγκαν ὅτι δὴ Πέρσαις τὰ Ῥωμαίων πράγματα προὔδοσαν. ‘They broke ranks and split into two parts, by this move bringing upon themselves the suspicion of having betrayed the Romans to the Persians.’ Mal. 18.60 (p.388.35–7) likewise mentions suspicions of Arab treachery. In the wake of the Roman defeat and in the context of an enquiry, it will have suited all parties to raise this charge. It is likely that some phylarchs, discontented with al-Harith’s promotion, broke more quickly than they might have otherwise, but the Jafnid leader’s loyalty is not in doubt, despite Procopius’ scepticism here and at 17.47–8. See Shahîd 1995, 134–42, Greatrex 1998, 204 n.31, Brodka 2011, 81–2. *Contra* Shahîd, Procopius does not make the treachery of al-Harith the principal cause of the Roman defeat: he clearly blames the insubordination of the troops and commanders for the debacle, so rightly Brodka.

18.37 οἱ γοῦν Πέρσαι διαρρήξαντες οὕτω τὴν τῶν ἐναντίων παράταξιν κατὰ νώτου εὐθύς τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἵππου ἐγένοντο. ‘So the Persians, breaking through the enemy ranks, at once found themselves behind the Roman cavalry.’ The Roman position had now collapsed following the Persian breakthrough on the (Roman) right flank. Their remaining forces were now threatened on three sides, as Procopius goes on to note. See Brodka 2011, 84.

18.37 Ῥωμαῖοι δὲ κεκμηκότες ἤδη τῇ τε ὁδῷ καὶ τῷ πόνῳ τῆς μάχης νήσεταις τε ἅπαντες ἐς τόδε τῆς ἡμέρας ὄντες, ‘The Romans were now weary from their journey and from the battle, and all had spent the day so far fasting.’ See 18.15n on the Roman fast. The expression ἐς τόδε τῆς ἡμέρας, *es tōde tēs hēmeras*, ‘up to this point of the day’ appears to be drawn from tragedy, cf. e.g. Eur. *Alc.* 9, Soph. *OC* 1138, with Scheftlein 1893, 30.

18.38 ἐν τοῖς καὶ Ἀσκάν ἦν, ὃς δὴ πολλοὺς μὲν κτείνας τῶν ἐν Πέρσαις δοκίμων, κρεουργηθεὶς δὲ κατὰ βραχὺ μόλις ἔπεσε, λόγον αὐτοῦ πολὺν τοῖς πολεμίοις ἀπολιπών. ‘Among these was Ascan, who, after killing many notable Persians, was gradually cut to pieces and finally fell, leaving many stories about him to circulate among the enemy.’ Procopius offers one notable example of Roman valour, a leader who had performed ‘remarkable feats’ (18.37), recalling the aims of his work at i.1.7, cf. Basso and Greatrex 2018, 69–70. Mal. 18.60 (p.388.31–2) likewise recounts Ascan’s deeds, describing how he fell when his horse stumbled on a corpse after he had charged into the Persian army; there is no reason to

question the identification of Malalas' Apskal and Procopius' Ascan, cf. Rubin 1960, 500–1 n.882, Greatrex 1998, 201 n.25, Brodka 2011, 73.

It is likely that Ascan's stand, in which the 'Isaurians' took part, represented an attempt to delay the encirclement of the Roman forces; this is implied by Procopius' reference at 18.41 to Belisarius' observation of Ascan's resistance. See Greatrex 1998, 201–4, Brodka 2011, 84–6. Ascan may have hoped to repeat the exploit of Florentius at Satala, whose charge into the midst of the enemy is described at i.15.15 in similar terms to Mal. 18.60 (388.31–2): had he, like Florentius, seized a Persian standard, then the bold stroke might have been successful.

The aorist participle κρεουργηθείς, *kreourgêtheis*, 'having been cut to pieces, butchered', belongs to a less formal vocabulary than a historian would normally use, cf. i.15.16, iv.10.10. But it is to be found at Hdt. vii.181.1 and its vividness in this instance is commended in Longin. *De Subl.* 31.2. Procopius provides considerable detail on the wounds inflicted in combat in later books of the *Wars*, cf. Whately 2016, 132–3, 161–9, Rance 2020a, 180.

18.40 οὐ μὴν οὐδὲ Ἴσαυροὶ ἅπαντες, ἀλλὰ Λυκάονες οἱ πλεῖστοι ἦσαν, 'They were not all Isaurians, however; the majority were Lycaonians.' See i.18.7n on the Isaurians. From *NovJ.* 25.1 (535) it appears that, despite this poor performance, Lycaonians were regarded as a martial people, competent on horseback and with the bow. These raw recruits, no doubt from the forces of a *dux* rather than a *magister militum*, may have been enlisted at short notice to shore up defences; Malalas' brief reference at 18.58 to the mobilising of an army may be relevant in this context.

18.43 ἔνθα δὴ αὐτὸς τε τὸν ἵππον ἀφῆκε καὶ πάντας αὐτὸ δρᾶν τοὺς ἐπομένους ἐκέλευε, πεζοὺς τε ξὺν τοῖς ἄλλοις τοὺς ἐπιόντας ἀμύνασθαι. 'There he himself gave up his horse and told all his followers to do the same, and to fight the attackers with the rest as foot soldiers.' The dense infantry formation here described corresponds to the *foulkon/fulcum* described in Maur. *Strat.* xii.B.16 (ed. and tr. Rance 2004, 271–2, with corrections of the Gamillscheg/Dennis edition), cf. xii.A.7 (ed. and tr. Rance 2004, 276–7), a chapter that originally stood alone before being incorporated into the *Strategikon*, cf. Rance 2004, 277. The troops formed a sloping shield wall, with the front rank kneeling and the second rank crouching down, resting their shields on those of the front ranks; the soldiers of the third rank could then use their spears to thrust at the enemy cavalry. Meanwhile, the spears of the first two ranks had been planted in

the ground as a deterrent to the enemy horses. See Rance 2004, 280–4, for other instances of this formation being adopted in the sixth century, in particular Proc. viii.29.15–21, cf. viii.8.30–4; see Ravegnani 1988, 59–60, 64, Greatrex 1998, 204–6, Rance 2005, 439–43, Rance 2007a, 365–7, Janniard 2010, 384 and n.1204, Brodka 2011, 86, Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 327–8. See also Elton 2007a, 378–9, on the effectiveness of this formation.

Mal. 18.60 (389.39–41) claims that Belisarius fled earlier in the day, while Sunicas and Simmas dismounted their forces and fought off the Persians. In the confusion of battle, it may not have been clear who fled at what point, but Malalas probably here reflects the version accepted in Constantiolus' report. So Brodka 2011, 87–9, cf. Greatrex 1998, 206 and n.34.

18.44 ἐκ τῶν παρόντων τοὺς ἐπιόντας ἡμύνοντο, 'and fought off their attackers as best they could'. The phrase ἐκ τῶν παρόντων, *ek tōn parontōn*, means 'under the circumstances' in a context of difficulty, as here, cf. vii.38.15, where the phrasing and situation are similar. It is found already in Thuc., e.g. at iv.17.1, vii.77.1.

18.46 ἐν χρῶ τε γὰρ ἀλλήλοις ἐς ὀλίγον ἀεὶ ξυναγόμενοι καὶ ὡς ἰσχυρότατα ταῖς ἀσπίσι φραζάμενοι, 'They were massed together shoulder to shoulder in a small space, and protected themselves very closely with the shields.' The opening words of the phrase are used similarly, for Roman forces operating cheek by jowl, at v.18.24, viii.11.45; in the latter case, described in very similar terms to the present one, Procopius explains that the soldiers formed a shield wall and roof so as to protect their commander Bessas during the siege of Petra in 550–1. See 18.43n above on this formation with Rance 2004, cf. Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 316–17. The expression is later taken up by Joh. Cin. iii.9 (109.7), iv.23 (197.18), in the last case reporting Roman struggles in 1160–1 against 'Persian', i.e. Turkish, missiles.

The expression ταῖς ἀσπίσι φραζάμενοι, 'protecting themselves with their shields' or 'forming with their shields a barrier' (Rance 2004, 281), and hence the tactic, goes back to archaic Greece (if not beyond). It is found, e.g., at Tyrtaeus, frg.19.7. Procopius describes Roman forces as having recourse to it at (e.g.) iii.23.16, similarly the Goths at v.29.35, viii.5.19.

18.47 πολλάκις τε ἀπειπόντες οἱ βάρβαροι ἐπ' αὐτοὺς ἤλαυνον, 'Often, after giving up, the Persians would charge them.' The sense of the verb ἀπαγορεύω, *apagoreuō*, is hard to render here: it usually means 'I

forbid’, as in modern Greek. It can, however, also mean ‘give up, grow weary of’, as at i.14.6. Rance 2004, 281, suggests ‘after withdrawing’, which also conveys the sense well.

18.48 οἱ γὰρ ἵπποι αὐτοῖς τῷ τῶν ἀσπίδων πατάγῳ ἀχθόμενοι ἀνεχαιτίζοντό τε καὶ ἐς παραχὴν ξὺν τοῖς ἐπιβάταις καθίσταντο, ‘For their horses were unsettled by the clash of shields and reared and panicked with their riders.’ Procopius describes a very similar situation during an engagement in Lazica in 549, viii.8.29–34, esp. 32, in which the Roman commanders dismounted their cavalry to beat off superior numbers of Persians and Alans; a missile exchange followed. See Rance 2004, 284–5, Janniard 2010, 197 and n.607, and i.18.43n.

18.48 τῆς ἡμέρας ὀψέ, ‘late in the day’. A Thucydidean touch, iv.93.1, cf. Xen. *Hell.* ii.1.23, used by Procopius also at ii.5.12, vi.2.21, taken up by Joh. Cin. vi.10 (284.21).

18.49 Βελισάριος δὲ ὀλκάδος ἐπιτυχῶν ξὺν ὀλίγοις τισὶν ἐς τοῦ ποταμοῦ τὴν νῆσον κατήρεν, ‘Belisarius, finding a cargo vessel, put in at the island in the river with a few men.’ A ὀλκάς, *holkas*, is ‘a ship which is towed’, i.e. a trading vessel, cf. *LSJ*, s.v. Th. Sim. viii.9.7 notes that such a vessel was popularly referred to as a *dromon*, cf. Destunis 1876, 241 n.23. There is perhaps an echo of Thuc. iii.3.5, where a man also happens upon such a boat, cf. Proc. iii.25.10, iv.23.19.

18.51 ἐξ αἰτίας τοιαύδε, ‘for the following reason’, a typical Procopian introduction to an immediate explanation, common in Late Antique historians, both classicising (e.g. Priscus frg.11.2.243/8.56 [p.27.9]) Zos. iv.13.2) and ecclesiastical (e.g. Socr. *HE* iii.2.1, Soz. *HE* vi.25.7), and found earlier in writers such as Plutarch and Dio Cassius. Procopius uses it extensively, e.g. at v.11.7, viii.11.22; it recalls the Herodotean δι’ αἰτίην τοιήνδε, ‘for this reason’ and comparable expressions, cf. Braun 1894, 9.

18.52 νόμος ἐστὶ Πέρσαις, ‘The Persians have a custom’. Procopius offers a lengthy description of an otherwise unattested custom, designed to tally the casualties suffered during a campaign. Börm 2007, 97 n.1, cf. 259, doubts whether it corresponds to any actual Persian practice, suggesting it may reflect rumours that circulated among the Romans, although Schippmann 1990, 106, accepts the account. Azarnouche and Petitjean, forthcoming, comm. *ad* 26.27, suggest that it may be a garbling of a

practice of returning military equipment at the end of a campaign. The elaborate literary style of the description is suspicious: Procopius uses three separate (and unusual) words for basket in this section, κόφινος, *kophinos*, ἄρριχος, *arrikhos*, and τάρπη, *tarpē*. The former two, it may be noted, both occur in Aristophanes' *Av.* 1309–10; later glosses identify them as equivalents, e.g. Hesychius, *Lexicon*, A7445, Photius T65. Cf. i.4.20n, the story of the pearl-fisher, in which similar *variatio* is present. The calculation method described bears some resemblance to that ascribed to King Ariantas of the Scythians at Hdt. iv.81.5–6, who ordered all his subjects to bring arrows to him, out of which he then made a bronze memorial. See Rubin 1960, 501 n.884, for the parallel, cf. Asheri, *CH*, 641, expressing scepticism as to Herodotus' account and other parallels (including this one).

18.56 πολλῶν δὲ ἀπολελειμμένων βελῶν ὠνειδιζέ τε τῷ Ἀζαρέθῃ ὁ βασιλεὺς τὴν νίκην καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀτιμοτάτοις τὸ λοιπὸν εἶχε, 'But many arrows were left, and the king reproached Azarethes for his victory and from then onwards held him in very low esteem.' The description of the Persian custom allows Procopius to underline the hollowness of the Persian victory. His claim that no town was captured (18.54) is refuted by Malalas' report (18.60) of the fall of Gabbulon to the Persians, on which see i.18.8n, but it remains true that no significant fortress had been taken.

Azarethes' humiliation was no doubt similar to that experienced by the *mirranes*, described by Procopius at i.17.27, on which see the note *ad loc.* See Börm 2007, 127, 241 and cf. the *Letter of Tansar*, 44, a sixth-century work.

i.19–20 Justinian's Initiative in Southern Arabia

History

The Roman empire had long had contact, albeit sporadic, with both the Axumites (in the Ethiopia and Eritrea of today) and the Ḥimyarites – Procopius' Homerites – in modern-day Yemen. The kingdom of Ḥimyar, the ancient Sheba (Saba), was the wealthiest region in the Arabian peninsula; its rulers enjoyed wide influence. Over the course of the fifth century, however, as monotheism – initially Judaism, then Christianity – spread through the peninsula, some of its rulers gave support to the former and took to persecuting adherents of the latter. This provoked a reaction from the Axumite kingdom, whose rulers had converted to

Christianity already in the fourth century. Thus in the early sixth century a series of Axumite invasions of Ḥimyar took place, culminating in the events described by Procopius at i.20. There has been much work on the region in recent years, it should be noted, where newly discovered inscriptions have greatly augmented our knowledge.

The first martyr recorded is a certain Azqīr, who is said to have been executed by the Ḥimyarite ruler Shuraḥbi'il Yakkuf between 470 and 475. The *Martyrdom of Azqīr* offers a rare instance of a literary source, albeit of late date, for events in the peninsula: for the most part we must rely on the evidence of epigraphy. The corpus of Ḥimyarite inscriptions has grown over the years, as has our ability to interpret them; there are in addition inscriptions in Ge'ez (Old Ethiopic), most from modern Ethiopia and Eritrea, but some also in Yemen. From this evidence we learn of a king, Marthad'ilān Yanūf, who perhaps in the early sixth century campaigned in the Tihāmat, the plain that adjoined the Red Sea in the west of his kingdom, where an Ethiopian presence is attested. See fig. 21. It is possible that he was installed on the throne by a first Axumite expedition, led by a certain Ḥyōnā or Ḥayyān around 500. The progress of Christianity in the region at this time is confirmed by a fragment of the ecclesiastical historian, John Diacrinomenus, who reports the conversion of the 'Immerinoi' under the Emperor Anastasius (491–518) and the appointment of a bishop (§559, p.157), Silvanus, who commissioned his nephew John's work (§525, p.152). The Christian community of Najrān, a prosperous town well placed for trading links with the north of the peninsula, appears to have been particularly numerous and to have had its own bishop.

While the length of Marthad'ilān Yanūf's reign is unknown, it is clear that the increasing prominence of Christianity in Ḥimyar elicited a vigorous counter-reaction. It is possible that already c.515 a certain Yūsuf (i.e. Joseph) As'ar Yath'ar, also referred to as dhū-Nuwās and Masrūq, made an attempt to seize power. Whether or not this was the trigger, in 518 or 519 the Axumite king Kālēb, also known as 'Ella 'Aṣbeḥa (Procopius' Hellesthaeus) despatched an expedition to Ḥimyar to place a certain Ma'dikarib Ya'fur on the throne. The Roman author Cosmas Indicopleustes (ii.56) recounts how he observed preparations for the expedition at Adulis, close to the port from which the troops set forth. Epigraphic evidence indicates that Ma'dikarib Ya'fur acted in the interests of both Axum and Byzantium, undertaking a campaign deep into the interior of the peninsula, aimed at reasserting Ḥimyarite overlordship of the tribes there. Among the tribes fighting alongside him were those of

Kinda and Muḍar, as well as the family of Tha'alabat; among his adversaries was the Naṣrid ruler al-Mundhir. But at some point between late 521 and mid-522 Ma'dikarib Ya'fur was overthrown by Yūsuf who, having gained control of the capital at Zafār, sought to bolster his position by initiating a persecution of the Christians there; Yūsuf appears to have espoused Judaism himself, unlike some previous rulers, such as Shuraḥbi'il Yakkuf, who were sympathetic to the religion without necessarily adopting it themselves. Yūsuf, aware of the dangers of an Axumite riposte, then moved to ensure control of the western reaches of Ḥimyar while simultaneously sending an army to blockade the important trading city of Najrān. Such was the resistance of this community, which counted a substantial number of Christians, that he was forced to take charge of operations himself; in November 523, having gained control of the city by a ruse, he unleashed a massacre of the Christians there. The story of the martyrs of Najrān and their brave resistance swiftly circulated in the Arabian peninsula and beyond it, giving rise to hagiographies in Syriac, Greek, Arabic, Ethiopic and (subsequently) other languages. Yūsuf may have acted quite deliberately in order to draw support from Persia and its Naṣrid allies: at least some of the Lakhmid tribesmen at the so-called 'Conference of Ramla' in February 524 had the impression that the Ḥimyarite ruler had struck a significant blow against the Christians (and, by extension, the Romans). See i.17.44n on Ramla.

Yūsuf's brutal actions served instead to galvanise the Axumite king Kālēb, who assembled a fleet and crossed over to Ḥimyar in force. Although the Greek *Martyrdom of Arethas* (29) claims that Roman Red Sea ships were involved in this expedition, it is doubtful whether Justin I played any concrete part in assisting the Axumites in their undertaking. Despite ambitious defensive measures on the part of Yūsuf, including the installation of a chain to block the Ethiopian ships from entering the harbour at Maddabān, close to the Bāb al-Mandab, Kālēb's campaign, probably in 525, was a complete success. Yūsuf was defeated and killed, Kālēb took control of Ḥimyar, rebuilt churches, installed a certain Sumūyafa' Ashwa' (Procopius' Esimiphaeus, i.20.1) as ruler, and returned to Axum. The length of the latter's reign is uncertain, but probably at some point in the early 530s he was overthrown by a certain Abraha; Procopius (i.20.2–3) is our only source on the circumstances of the coup. Despite the angry reaction of Kālēb, for which Procopius is again the only source (i.20.5–7), Abraha was clearly a Christian ruler like his predecessor; and in the long run, relations with Axum remained good (cf. Proc. i.20.8). Such was the smoothness of the transition that certain sources pass over Sumūyafa' Ashwa's reign altogether.

Abraha's reign is better documented than those of his predecessors. While he was evidently able to thwart Ethiopian attempts to oust him, he had some difficulty in establishing his authority within his kingdom, although he laid claim to the traditional titulature of the Ḥimyarite kings. He pursued an overtly Christian policy, e.g. through the construction of a lavish church at San'ā, in which Roman craftsmen were involved. During the 540s he had to contend with opposition in the east of his kingdom, the impact of the Justinianic plague (on which see ii.22–23h), and the collapse of the dam at Mārib (in 547), a vital part of irrigation works in this fertile district. Inscriptions commemorating the effort undertaken to repair this installation testify both to the considerable scale involved and to the extensive contacts of the king: envoys from Axum, from Constantinople, from the two Jafnid rulers, the brothers al-Harith and Abū Karib, from the Naṣrid al-Mundhir, and from the Persian court, were all present. A few years later, in 552, further inscriptions from Central Arabia, in particular from Bi'r Murayghān, attest the involvement of Abraha in an ambitious campaign to reestablish Ḥimyarite control of the tribes there; in this he was assisted by the tribe of Kinda. He was successful in reasserting Ḥimyarite control of the Ma'add confederation and obliged al-Mundhir the Naṣrid's son 'Amr to hand over one of his sons as a hostage; in exchange 'Amr was placed in charge of the Ma'add. His only failure seems to have been in his attempt to gain control of the city of Mecca. Yet Abraha's achievements were of short duration. He himself is last attested in 558; although he had several sons, none seems to have long been able to retain the throne he had won. A revolt broke out in the eastern regions of Ḥimyar, which led, c.575, to the annexation of the kingdom by the Sasanians.

Bibliography: This account draws extensively on the work of Christian Robin, e.g. Beaucamp et al. 1999, Robin 2010, Robin 2012a, cf. Brakmann 2001, Gajda 2009, Bowersock 2012, 17–26, Robin 2014. Neber 2010 also offers a good overview, cf. Hoyland 2001, 49–57. Hatke 2011 is a detailed recent treatment, insisting on the need to avoid perceiving the conflict as a proxy war in the wider conflict between Rome and Persia; nor should the war be seen as motivated primarily by economic factors, *contra* (e.g.) Letsios 1989a, 322–3, 345–6, even if Justinian sought to exploit its consequences for the benefit of Roman trade, cf. Rubin 1986b, 384–5. All dates above assume a start of the Ḥimyarite era in 110 (rather than 115) B.C., which is the general view now among specialists: see (e.g.) Beaucamp et al. 1999, 65–73, Gajda 2009, 255–74, Hatke 2011, 66–75, but cf. Piovanelli 2013, 10.

Historiography

The dramatic events in Ḥimyar undoubtedly heightened interest in the region. Both Malalas (18.56) and Nonnosus, whose work survives only in a summary in Photius' *Bibliotheca*, briefly recount diplomatic initiatives in Axum and Ḥimyar; neither of them offers as extensive coverage as Procopius, although Malalas does elsewhere give a somewhat garbled account of the Axumite invasion (18.15, cf. Theoph. 223). Beaucamp rightly asserts (2010, 198) that Procopius' account, while probably composed later than the other two, is clearer and more useful; the three versions will be compared in detail below; Appendix 3, p. 679, offers a translation and commentary of Nonnosus' work. Since there is no evidence to suggest that Procopius visited the region himself, it is likely that he relied on diplomatic accounts, like that of Nonnosus, and other oral sources, combined with some earlier written sources, e.g. on Diocletian's moving of the frontier in Egypt. Although, as already noted, there are abundant sources in a wide range of languages concerning the martyrs of Najrān, these events are not covered by Procopius and consequently will not be discussed here. See instead Beaucamp, Briquel-Chatonnet and Robin 2010, Marrassini 2014, 110–37.

Procopius' lengthy excursus here starts with a geographical overview of the region, proceeding from Palestine, down the Sinai peninsula, through the Ḥijāz, following the Red Sea as far as the land of the Homerites (Ḥimyar, i.e. modern Yemen) (fig. 21). He then crosses over to Axum (modern Ethiopia and Eritrea) and returns northwards to the limits of the Roman empire in southern (Upper) Egypt. Various historical details are inserted, both concerning Justinian's own day (on the Palm Grove, 19.8–13) and about earlier times, e.g. on Diocletian (19.29–32), albeit in the context of a more recent initiative of Justinian. Having orientated his reader, Procopius then launches into an account of the events of his own day, starting with Kālēb's (Hellesthaeus') invasion of Ḥimyar. No doubt because he never returns elsewhere to narrate southern Arabian affairs, he here covers a period of decades, extending at least until the 540s and possibly beyond: it has been suggested that the expedition of Abraha referred to at 20.13 took place in the early 550s. This subordination of history to geography has already been observed at i.15, where Procopius proceeds from a mention of two Persarmenian fortresses to a discussion of the recent history of Tzanica; he adopts a similar approach in the case of the Heruls at vi.14–15, covering a period of decades, although in this

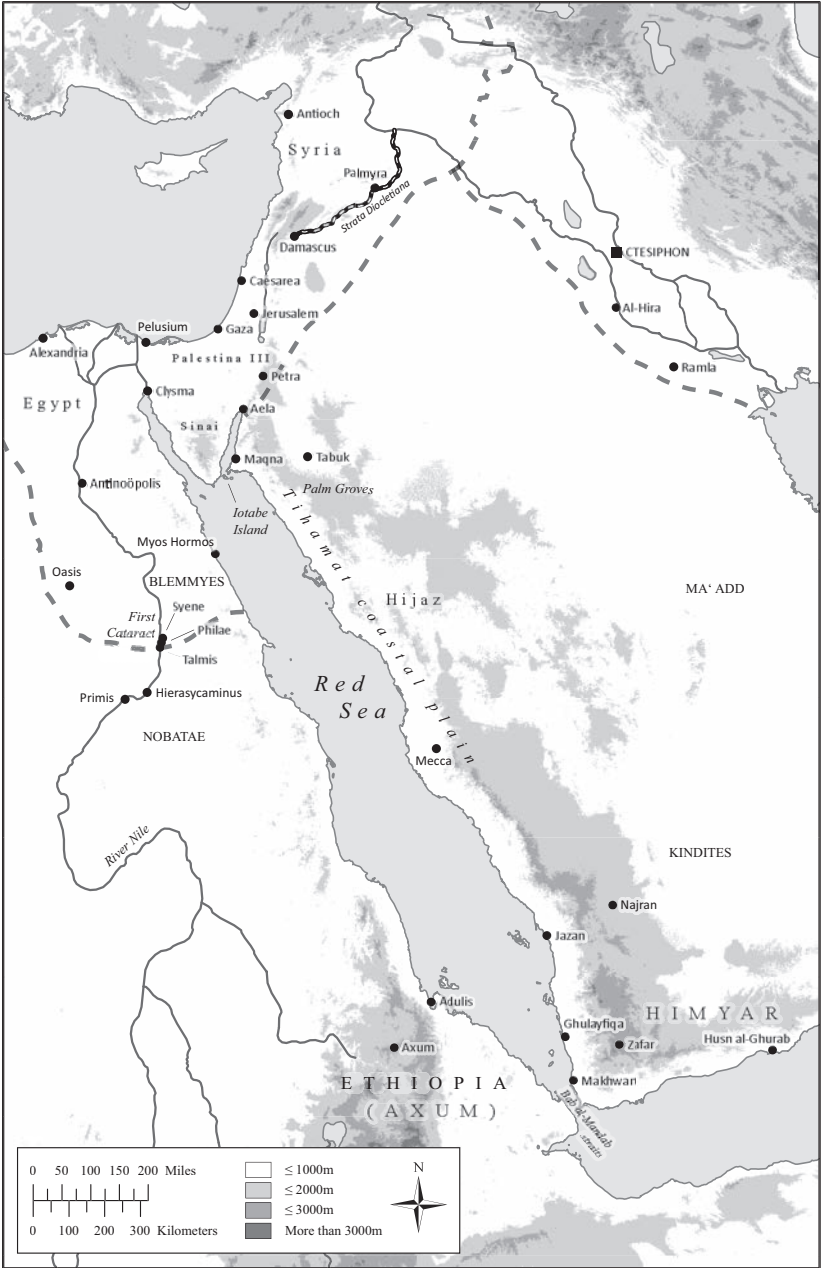


Figure 21 The Arabian Peninsula, Ethiopia and Egypt

case the geographical element, concerning Thule, is placed after the history. Unlike that on the Heruls, however, this excursus focuses more on geography and political history than on ethnography: Procopius offers few details on the customs of the peoples concerned, save concerning their paganism. See Walbank 1972, 46–8, 114–21, Clarke 1999, 91–3 (on geographical digressions in Polybius, e.g. at 4.38–45, designed to orientate the reader), cf. Thuc. ii.95–101 with Revanoglou 2005, 189–91, Pothou 2009, 49–65.

The placing of this digression may not be innocent. Smith 1954, 448, cf. Averil Cameron 1985, 147, sees it as a deliberate ploy to distract attention from Belisarius' defeat at Callinicum; Woolf 2011, 16–17, notes the phenomenon of 'ethnographic diversions' in a historical narrative, even if Procopius' excursus here contains little actual ethnography. On the other hand, there was a tradition of inserting digressions or shifts in focus in order to hold the reader's interest: Polybius 38.5–6 defends this procedure vigorously, while Herodotus is well known for his numerous excursuses. By inserting the digression here Procopius introduces a more exotic theatre of war, of which his readership will have had only limited knowledge, which nonetheless had some relevance to the unfolding of events further north. But the Roman performance here, in his judgement, was disappointing: Justinian's ambitious initiative came to nothing. One might regard the excursus therefore as an opportunity to criticise imperial policy (so Cesa 1982, 199–200, noting the parallel with Justinian's failure to secure Frankish support, v.5.8–10). If so, it could be perceived as part of the historian's wider disenchantment with efforts made by many emperors, and not just Justinian, to conclude treaties with barbarians: Diocletian's payments to the Nobatae (Noubades) are clearly also shown to have been futile (19.32–3). See also i.15.23n.

The digression falls between the defeat of Callinicum (19 April 531) and the death of Kavadh (September 531, reported at 21.19). It has been inferred from this (e.g. Gajda 2009, 112, Beaucamp 2010, 200) that the embassy of Julian, recounted at 20.9, must therefore have taken place between these dates. Such a literalistic reading of Procopius' chronology is risky: as already noted, the excursus telescopes events considerably. A superficial examination of the excursus does seem to place Justinian's initiative just after the defeat at Callinicum: the *τότε* (*tote*, 'then', 'at that time') at 19.1, repeated at 20.9, looks like a secure chronological anchor. In the second case, however, Procopius specifies that he is referring to the time when Esimiphaeus (Sumūyafa 'Ashwa') ruled the Ḥimyarites and

Hellesthaeus (Kālēb) the Ethiopians, which therefore widens the range of possibilities. As will emerge below, Julian's embassy is indeed likely to have taken place in 531; but the emperor's plan itself was probably hatched somewhat earlier, on the basis of contacts with the region by Nonnosus and members of his family.

There are signs that the digression did not form a complete block initially. At 19.35 Procopius refers to the paganism of the Nobatae, describing them as venerating the gods that the Hellenes believe in; at 20.1, only a few lines later, he explains that many Homerites (Ḥimyarites) were also pagans, i.e. that they held to the old belief-system, 'which the men of today call Hellenic'. One would expect the explanation to come in the earlier section, however. The repetition of the phrase ἐν τῇ ἀντιπέρῳς ἡπείρῳ, *en tē antiperas ēpeirō*, 'on the mainland opposite', concerning the respective position of Ḥimyarites and Ethiopians, at 19.17 and 20.1 likewise seems redundant. It is possible that all of chapter 19, including the section concerning the frontier of southern Egypt, was inserted at a later stage: the narrative from the end of chapter 18 could easily pass to 20.1 without the details provided in chapter 19, as its final words imply (at 19.36), acknowledging a return to the main narrative. The reference to the closure of the temple at Philae by Narses, probably in 535, provides a *terminus post quem*. The gloomy assessment of the possibility of controlling barbarian neighbours (19.33) recalls similar pronouncements at (e.g.) 15.23 (on the Tzani), vi.25.2 (on the Franks) and vii.33.13 (on the Heruls) and may represent a judgement reached in the late 540s, following the damage then done in the Balkans by the Heruls, Slavs and others. See Cesa 1982, 199–200 and 19.33n. Procopius' sources are unclear; he may have derived information from contemporary embassies, which he notes at 20.9–12, and which the fragments of Nonnosus' longer account (tr. in Appendix 3, p. 679) also attest. See Nechaeva 2014, 142. It is also likely that he had access to the *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, a work of the first century A.D.; some similarities are noted below. See Marcotte 2012, 20–1, demonstrating the availability of the work in the sixth century.

An important work that covers similar ground to Procopius is the Greek version of the *Martyrium Arethae*, a hagiography that focuses on the martyrdom of a Christian leader, Arethas, in the city of Najrān, mentioned above. Although this version was evidently composed relatively early, probably during or not long after Justinian's reign, certain elements seem to have been subject to embellishment, notably in exaggerating Roman involvement in the Ethiopian expedition to overthrow Yūsuf in 525.

Nonetheless, this Greek text is of importance and a useful point of comparison with Procopius, e.g. for geographical information. See Detoraki 2007, 79–99, Christides 2008, 382–3, Beaucamp 2010, 210–15, Detoraki 2010, Fiaccadori 2010, 192. A later Byzantine work, the *Life of Gregentius*, a bishop sent to christianise Ḥimyar, is for the most part a fabrication, although some elements may draw on earlier sources. See Berger 2006, Hatke 2011, 283–95. Among the Syriac sources that shed light on these events are various versions of a letter written by Simeon of Beth Arsham to galvanise Christians into action, preserved (e.g.) in the histories of Pseudo-Zachariah of Mytilene and John of Ephesus; a new letter, perhaps also by Simeon, was discovered only in the 1960s and published by Irfan Shahīd in 1971. The *Book of the Ḥimyarites* (*Lib. Him.*), a work preserved only in fragments, provides further details on some points. The relation of these sources to one another and to versions of the *Martyrium Arethae* is a thorny issue. See Beaucamp et al. 1999, 19–22, Bausi and Gori 2006, Briquel-Chatonnet 2010, Detoraki 2010, Taylor 2010, Hatke 2011, 332–50, Fisher 2015, 363–7. An exhaustive analysis of all the sources bearing on this episode is presented by Marrassini 2014, 83–137.

19.1. Ἐννοία δὲ τότε Ἰουστινιανῷ βασιλεῖ γέγονεν, ‘The idea then occurred to the Emperor Justinian’. On τότε, *tote*, ‘then’, ‘at that time’, see i.19–20g. Procopius uses the same expression for an idea occurring to Belisarius at v.17.18.

19.1 Αἰθιοπᾶς, *Aithiopas*, ‘Ethiopians’, the general Greek term for peoples of the south, including Ethiopia and Eritrea, referring to those who are dark-skinned; the term was understood to refer to the ‘burnt faces’ of the inhabitants. See *EAE* i, 162–3, ii, 884–6. Procopius notes at 19.17 that they are also known as Αὐξωμίται, *Auxōmitai*, ‘Axumites’ after their capital city at Axum, cf. Steph. Byz. *Ethnika*, A346, who gives the form Ἀξουμίτης, *Axoumitēs*, for the inhabitant; Nonnosus §5 has Αὐξουμίται, *Auxoumitai*. On the origins of the name Axum see Schneider 1994, Müller 1998.

19.1 Ὅμηρίτας, *Homēritas*, ‘Homerites’, i.e. Ḥimyarites. The same terms for both peoples are used by the *Mart. Ar.*, e.g. 1, cf. Mal. 18.15, where an alternative form, Ἀμερίται, *Ameritai*, is found alongside ‘Homerites’ in a somewhat garbled explanation of the region’s geography. See Beaucamp in Detoraki 2007, 188 n.23, Robin 2010, 96, noting further variants.

19.1 ἐπὶ τῷ Περσῶν πονηρῷ, ‘to the detriment of the Persians’, a use of ἐπί with the dative not discussed by Scheftlein 1893. See *LSJ*, 623, III.2 and cf. Hdt. i.68.4, Proc. i.3.14 and elsewhere.

19.1 ὅπη δὲ τῆς γῆς, ‘where in the world’, cf. ii.5.27 and elsewhere. The expression is found, used slightly differently, in Plato, *Phaedo*, 113b6. It may here rather be a reminiscence of Aesch. *Pr.* 564–5, ὅποιοι γῆς, *hopoi gēs*, where a number of manuscripts read instead ὅπη γῆς, cf. Eur. *Herac.* 46, ὅπου γῆς, *hopou gēs*. At viii.6.15 Procopius cites a fragment of the *Prometheus Unbound*.

19.1 ἐρῶν ἔρχομαι, ‘I shall proceed to relate’: on the idiom see 9.25n.

19.2. πρὸς ἀνίσχοντα ἥλιον, ‘eastwards’, lit. ‘towards the rising sun’. As Smith 1954, 428, points out, the Gulf of Aqaba, to which Procopius here refers, lies towards the south of Palaestina III; but Aela (Aqaba), mentioned at 19.3, lies in the south-east corner of the province. Procopius briefly describes the region again at *Aed.* v.8.1–3, where he refers the reader to his detailed treatment here: see Roques 2011, 386. On the province’s boundaries see Sipilä 2009.

19.2 ἐς θάλασσαν τὴν Ἐρυθρὰν καλουμένην, ‘to the sea called Red’, the standard name in Antiquity not just for the modern Red Sea but for an area extending well into the Indian Ocean: see Casson 1989, 94, Sidebotham 1986, 182–6, cf. Salles 1994, 173–4, detecting a shrinking of the area referred to as the Red Sea in Late Antiquity. Procopius offers more precision at 19.19, where he makes clear that the ‘Arabian Gulf’ refers to the modern Red Sea (only).

19.2 αὕτη δὲ ἡ θάλασσα ἐξ Ἰνδῶν ἀρχομένη, ‘This sea has its starting-point in India.’ Quite what region Procopius is indicating by the reference to India is uncertain: it was employed both for southern Arabia and for the eastern coast of Africa, not to mention lands further to the east, such as modern India (as at *Mart. Ar.* 2). See Wolska-Conus 1968, 17, Mayerson 1993, Johnson 2015, 409–12. Since at *Aed.* vi.1.6 Procopius refers to the Nile rising in India, it is likely that he is thus referring to the Horn of Africa, cf. Mayerson 1993, 169.

19.2 πόλις Αἰλὰς καλουμένη, ‘a city called Aela’, modern Aqaba in Jordan, a prosperous port that yielded important customs revenues to the

Roman treasury, as is attested by *IGLS* 13, 9046, cf. Ant. Plac. *Itin.* 40, p.149, referring to ships from India (written c. 570); *Mart. Ar.* 29.5 claims that it supplied fifteen ships to the fleet mustered by Kālēb for his amphibious assault on Ḥimyar, although these details are suspect. Excavations confirm the city's prosperity in the fifth century: copper-smelting is attested as is the production of ceramics, found scattered throughout the ports of the Red Sea and beyond. By the sixth century, however, there are signs of decline. A legion was stationed at Aela in the fourth century which, it has been suggested on tenuous evidence, was withdrawn or disbanded c.530. See Ward 2007, 163, Power 2011, 342–3, Power 2012a, 28–30, 66–7, cf. Parker 1996, 253, Banaji 2015, 119. Shahīd 2009, 29–31, argues for an expanded Ghassanid role in the port, but see Greatrex 2015b, 124–6, arguing against widespread abandonment of frontier posts. See further Gutwein 1981, 137–40, Tomber 2008, 69–71, Parker 2009, Sidebotham 2009, 331–3, Howard-Johnston 2017, 287, on the city's prosperity in late antiquity.

19.2 ὄρη τὰ Αἰγυπτίων, '(the) mountains of Egypt'. Although Procopius refers to 'Egyptians' he is doubtless here alluding to the province, cf. 17.47n. He refers to the Sinai peninsula, whose mountains he mentions at *Aed.* v.8.1, even if he there (rightly) places them in Palaestina III. Further west, of course, lie the mountains in Egypt that adjoin the Gulf of Suez and then (further south) the Red Sea.

19.2 χώρα ἔρημος ἀνθρώπων ἐπὶ πλεῖστον διήκει πρὸς βορρᾶν ἄνεμον, 'an uninhabited land extends northwards over a wide area'. Procopius appears to be referring to the east coast of the Gulf of Aqaba and, perhaps, its extension north from Aela along the Wadi Arabah, although, as just noted, the vicinity of Aela was thriving until at least the end of the fifth century. *Peripl. Mar. Erythr.* 20 paints a grim picture of the tribes in the vicinity of Leukē Kōmē, where the Gulf of Aqaba flows into the Red Sea.

19.2 τὴν Ἰωτάβην καλουμένην νῆσον, 'the island called Iotabe', the location of which is disputed. Some place it just 12 km from Aela (despite Procopius' reference here to 1000 stades), identifying the island with the modern Jazirat Fara'un, so Rubin 1989, 388, cf. Isaac 1992, 247 n.170, Talbert 2000, 76; cf. Rothenberg 1961, 86–92, 185–9 on the island, where important medieval fortifications survive. *Contra*, Mayerson 1992, 3, cf. Ward 2007, 163–4. Sartre 1982b, 116 n.4, cf. Power 2012a, 31, 228, prefers

the traditional identification with Tiran, at the mouth of the Gulf of Aqaba, while Mayerson 1992, cf. *idem* 1995, argues for a location in this vicinity but rules out Tiran because of the lack of archaeological findings there. Tiran lies about 200 km south of Aela, which corresponds well to Procopius' figure, cf. Appendix 2, p. 675. See Brandes 2002, 261–2, Haarer 2006, 43 n.55, for a good summary of the debate.

19.4 ἔνθα Ἑβραῖοι αὐτόνομοι μὲν ἐκ παλαιοῦ ὤκνητο, ἐπὶ τούτου δὲ Ἰουστινιανοῦ βασιλεύοντος κατήκοοι Ῥωμαίων γεγέννηται. 'There Jews had lived independently from of old, but during the reign of this Emperor Justinian they had become Roman subjects.' Even if its precise location is uncertain, Iotabe enjoys a remarkable prominence in Roman sources of the late fifth and sixth centuries. Wrested from imperial control by a certain (Arab) phylarch Amorcesus (Imru' al-Qays) in 473, it was granted to him in return for his conversion to Christianity by the Emperor Leo, so Malchus, frg.1. According to Theophanes (p.141), the *dux* Romanus restored Roman control in 498, however, and ensured that taxes levied on goods from 'the Indies' were remitted to the Roman treasury. A constitution of the Emperor Anastasius found in various places in the province of Arabia and elsewhere (e.g. *IGLS* 13, 9045–6) indicates that taxes levied at Clysmā, at the head of the Gulf of Suez, defrayed some of the costs associated with the *dux* of Palaestina: the restoration of Roman control of Iotabe thus presumably strengthened trade in both northern branches of the Red Sea. See Rubin 1986b, 388–9, 400, Mundell Mango 1996, 141, Brandes 2002, 255–63, 614–21, cf. Arce, Feissel and Weber-Karyotakis 2018, who are preparing a new edition of the whole document, generally known as the 'Edict of Anastasius'. On the renewal of Roman interest in this region under Anastasius and Justin see Nappo 2009a, cf. Darley 2013, 325; in more detail, Nappo 2009b.

Choricus, *Or.* 3 (for the *dux* Aratius and the *arkhōn*, i.e. governor, Stephanus) §§66–78 (pp.65–8) confirms the association of the Jews with the island, even if he only refers obliquely to an 'unholy people'; he describes how the two commanders had to recapture Iotabe after it had been overrun by raiders based at a nearby fort, perhaps to be located at Maqna, 46 km away on the east coast of the Gulf of Aqaba. The association of Jews with both Iotabe and Maqna is said to be confirmed by an Aramaic inscription from the northeastern Sinai: so Rothenberg 1961, 181 no.84, Mayerson 1992, 1–2, but cf. Robin 2015c, 211 n.587. Choricus insists on the value of the island for the taxes levied on trade there, but he offers no date for Aratius' campaign; it must, however, have

occurred before 535/6, the date of the oration. Since Aratius defected only in 530 (see 15.31), the earliest date possible would be later that year. See Mayerson 1992, *PLRE* iii, Aratius, Shahîd 1995, 184. An earlier date, to fit with the plan of Justinian described by Procopius at i.20, is preferable to one as late as c.535, proposed by Shahîd 2009, 30.

The genitive absolute in the last part of the sentence, placing the subjection of the Jews during the reign of Justinian, is a common dating method, cf. viii.3.18 (the integration of the Abasgi), *Aed.* iii.6.6 (the reduction of the Tzani). Justinian was particularly proud of having subjected hitherto independent peoples, such as the Tzani, cf. *NovJ.* i.pr. (535) with Pazdernik 1997, 41–3.

19.6 ἐν σκοτίῳ γὰρ ναυτίλλεσθαι ἐν ταύτῃ δὴ τῇ θαλάσσῃ ἀδύνατά ἐστιν, ἐπεὶ βράχους αὐτὴν ἔμπλεων ἐπὶ πλεῖστον ξυμβαίνει εἶναι. ‘For it is impossible to sail in this sea in the dark because it happens to be filled with shoals over a wide area.’ Procopius here describes the Red Sea, into which the Gulf of Aqaba flows. In the tenth century Mas‘udi, ch.33, vol.3, 55–6, confirms that the reefs made sailing by night prohibitively dangerous, cf. Casson 1989, 147, Searight 2007, 121–2; Seland 2009, 180–1, notes evidence from the Hellenistic period of the need to stop at night. Hdt. ii.102.2 also mentions the shoals, βράχαι, *brakheia*, as an obstacle here, describing the campaigns of Sesostris in the Red Sea. As *LSJ*, 328, note, Procopius’ use of the word in the singular is a late development in Greek: Herodotus and others use the term in the plural (like the English ‘shoals’). The first-century *Peripl. Mar. Erythr.* 20, on the other hand, advises passing by the Arabian coast here as quickly as possible, noting the brutality of the indigenous tribes and the lack of harbours; the latter point is confirmed by modern experience, cf. Kitchen 2007, 133, Zazzaro 2013, 1–2. See Power 2012a, 14–18, for a general assessment of the Red Sea coast in this period.

19.8 ἐν τῷ φοινικῶνι, ‘in the Palm Grove’, a place, presumably an oasis, mentioned also by the *Mart. Ar.* 2, where it is described as ‘now’ being under Roman control, confirming what follows in Procopius. Although there is a place by this name in the Sinai peninsula, mentioned (e.g.) by Cosmas Indicopleustes, v.13, cf. Talbert 2000, 1143 with map 76, Roques 2011, 386 n.79, Procopius (like the *Mart. Ar.*) clearly here refers to the Ḥijāz. Shahîd 1995, 128 and n.341, canvasses various possibilities, but prefers an identification with Tabūk, cf. *idem* 2009, 19, 105, Fiema et al. 2015, 388. Note also Strabo 16.4.21, who puts the Palm Grove at five days’

distance from Petra, cf. Hoyland 2001, 71–2. Smith 1954, 428, cf. the map opposite 426, attributes a considerable area to Abū Karib, which would correspond to the large extent noted by Procopius in the next section; so also Robin 2008a, 174 n.39, *idem* 2012b, 23, *idem* 2015c, 213–14. *Mart. Ar., loc. cit.*, places the Palm Grove on the route towards Ḥimyar, thirty stages away from it. Hence Shahīd 2009, 19, connects it to the trade route linking the Roman empire to Ḥimyar, passing through Mecca and Najrān, cf. map IIc at 18. See Sartre 1985, 129–32, on trade between Bostra (in the province of Arabia) and the Ḥijāz, cf. Heck 2003, esp. 558–64, Crone 2007, Bukharin 2010, Power 2012b, 295–7, al-Azmeh 2014, 154–7 (with a useful map).

19.10 τοῦτῳ τῷ φοινικῶνι βασιλείᾳ Ἰουστινιανὸν Ἀβοχάραβος ἐδωρήσατο, ὁ τῶν ἐκείνη Σαρακηνῶν ἄρχων, καὶ αὐτὸν βασιλεὺς φύλαρχον τῶν ἐν Παλαιστίνῃ Σαρακηνῶν κατεστήσατο. ‘Abu Karib, the ruler of the Saracens there, presented this Palm Grove to the Emperor Justinian as a gift, and the emperor appointed him phylarch over the Saracens in Palestine.’ The Jafnid ruler Abū Karib, the brother of Harith, who is attested in a number of other sources, is rendered in Greek as Abokharabos. Both the date of his gift to Justinian and of his appointment as phylarch of Palestine, a formal title bestowed on loyal allied chiefs, are uncertain. Detoraki 2007, 98, suggests 529, cf. Beaucamp et al. 1999, 27 (between 527 and 531). If the events are dated to before 529, then he may have been implicated in the suppression of the Samaritan revolt of that year, cf. Sartre 1982a, 169–70; Shahīd 1995, 83–4, is more hesitant. Whittow 2015, 17–18, compares Abū Karib’s gift with comparably shrewd actions by Arab rulers in the twentieth century, who likewise exploited great power rivalry in the Arabian peninsula, cf. Fisher and Drost 2016, 43–4.

The extent of Abū Karib’s authority is uncertain, i.e. whether it covered all three provinces of Palestine, as well as the Palm Grove given to the emperor. It has been thought that he may have been supplanted in his position by the refugee Qays of the Ma‘add, who, according to Nonnosus §8, was placed in charge of Palestine (on whom see i.20.10n). That he remained an important figure on the imperial frontiers, however, is established by the Mārib dam inscription (*CIH* 541) of 547: both he and al-Harith were represented among those sent to Abraha, cf. Robin forthcoming, II.g.4. No more is heard of him after this date. His prominence in the region is confirmed by epigraphic and papyrological evidence: the latter notably attests to him arbitrating in a dispute at a

place called Ṣadaqa, 25 km south-west of Petra. The evidence is gathered (e.g.) by Shahîd 1995, 124–30, *idem* 2002, 28–33, Robin 2008a, 180–1 (sceptical of certain identifications), Millar 2010, 213–14, Greatrex 2015, 123, cf. *P. Petra* IV, 39, for the papyrus, pp.46, 90–1, on Abū Karib. See also *PLRE* III, Abocharabus, Millar 2013, 25–6, Fisher 2015, 323–4. On the position of phylarch see i.17.46n.

As Shahîd 1995, 124–8, points out, Procopius fails to mention that Abū Karib was Harith's brother. Although he countenances the possibility that the historian, no doubt relying on written reports, may have been unaware of the connection, he sees in it an attempt to downplay the phylarch's role and to criticise Justinian's policies. But since Procopius states that Justinian accepted the worthless gift knowingly (19.13), it is unnecessary to perceive criticisms of the emperor here. If Procopius was aware of the relationship, he may have passed over it because Abū Karib is a marginal figure in his account, so Robin 2008a, 181.

19.11 ἀδῆωτόν τε τὴν χώραν διεφύλαξε, 'And he kept the land free from raiding', a verbal echo of Xen. *Hell.* iii.1.5, concerning the commander Thibron in Asia Minor. The term ἀδῆωτος, *adēōtos*, is rare before Procopius, who uses it eleven times, e.g. at ii.16.7 (in a similar context); cf. also Priscus frg.47.11–12/37.2 (p.74). See too 16.5n.

19.11 ἔδοξεν εἶναι καὶ διαφερόντως δραστήριος, 'he appeared remarkably energetic'. See i.6.19n on the adjective δραστήριος, *drastērios*.

19.13 γῆ τε γὰρ ἀνθρώπων παντελῶς ἔρημος καὶ ἀτεχνῶς ἄνυδρος ἐν μέσῳ οὕσα ἐς δέκα ἡμερῶν ὁδὸν διήκει. 'For a land completely desolate and utterly waterless lies in between (the Palm Grove and the Roman empire), extending for a distance of ten days' journey.' Cf. Strabo's similarly downbeat assessment of the region around Leukē Komē in the context of Gallus' expedition, 16.4.24. But see Heck 2003, 564–6, on agriculture in the Ḥijāz, which, he argues, was a 'significant industry' alongside manufacture. See also 19.8n.

19.13 τὰ μὲν οὖν ἀμφὶ τῷ φοινικῶνι ταύτῃ πη ἔχει, 'This then is how things are with the Palm Grove.' For the formulation cf. 15.25 above and see i.7.11n.

19.14 τούτων δὲ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἄλλοι Σαρακηνοὶ ἐχόμενοι τὴν ἀκτὴν ἔχουσιν, οἱ δὲ Μαδδηνοὶ καλοῦνται, 'Next to these men, other Saracens

occupy the coast, who are called the Maddeni.’ The use of the middle of ἔχω, *ekhō*, followed by the genitive in the sense of ‘neighbouring’ goes back to Herodotus e.g. i.134.3, cf. *LSJ*, 750, C.3, Smyth §1345.

Procopius’ Maddēnoi are the Arabic Ma‘add, a confederation – or rather, perhaps, a group difficult to define, so Zwettler 2000, 255, but cf. Robin 2012c, 70 n.33 – that exercised great influence in the centre of the Arabian peninsula, as well as along the Red Sea coast; it was, as Procopius affirms, generally subject to the Himyarite rulers, as is confirmed by inscriptions. The group is also mentioned by Nonnosus §4. See Shahīd 1995, 160–6, Zwettler 2000, 252 and n.255, 259–60, Robin 2008a, 172–4, Fisher 2011, 86, Robin 2012b, 22–4, 35–7, Hoyland 2014, 276–9. See further i.20.9n.

19.15 πρὸς τῇ τῆς θαλάσσης ἡϊόνι, ‘next to the seashore’, a pleonastic poetic turn of phrase, cf. Dion. Perieg. 252, ἐπ’ ἡϊόνεσσι θαλάσσης, cf. Proc. iii.21.18.

19.15 ἀνθρωποφάγους Σαρακηνοὺς, ‘man-eating Saracens’, not otherwise attested. Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 86 n.371, connects them to the blood-drinking Saracen who defended Constantinople in 378, Amm. Marc. 31.16.6, although such a practice is still somewhat removed from cannibalism, cf. Whately 2014, 222, den Boeft et al. 2017, 287. Perhaps a reminiscence of *Peripl. Mar. Erythr.* 62, which refers to cannibal tribes in inland (eastern) India, cf. Hdt. iii.99.1. See Casson 1989, 234. As noted in 19.2n, the Arabian peninsula could be referred to as ‘India’; Procopius’ reference to Indian races in the next section implies that he may have shared this perception. The reference adds to the exoticness of the excursus as well as absolving Procopius of the need to go into greater detail.

19.16 ἀλλὰ τούτων μὲν περί λεγέτω ἕκαστος ὥς πη αὐτῷ βουλομένῳ ἐστίν, ‘But let each person tell of these peoples as he wishes.’ A formulation regularly used by Procopius to conclude a digression, cf. ii.22.5, where it is clearly inspired by Thuc. ii.48.3; he uses precisely this turn of phrase again at viii.5.25. For the use of the dative of relation in the participle βουλομένῳ, *boulomenō*, see 11.20n.

19.18 καὶ θάλασσα, ἣ ἐν μέσῳ ἐστίν, ἀνέμου μετρίως ἐπιφόρου ἐπιπεσόντος ἐς πέντε ἡμερῶν τε καὶ νυκτῶν διάπλουι διήκει, ‘The sea between them extends over a distance that, with a moderately favourable wind, takes five days and nights to cross.’ Surely an overestimate, although

it is true that a direct crossing from Adulis to Ḥimyar is not possible: harbours are rare on the Arabian coast and reefs numerous. See *Peripl. Mar. Erythr.* 20, *Mart. Ar.* 33–4, where swifter crossings are reported. Gajda 2009, 92–3, identifies just three potential landing points for Ethiopian forces in Ḥimyar, at Makhwān (modern al-Makhā), at Ghulayfiqa (on which see 19.21), and at the straits of Bāb al-Mandab, where Yūsuf built the chain to block the harbour (see p. 264); see also Schiettecatte 2008, §§6–26. The distance from Ghulayfiqa to Adulis is some 400 km.

The term διὰ πλους, *diaplous*, refers to passage or sailing across, sometimes with the distance (in stades or days' journey) in the genitive, cf. e.g. Strabo 17.3.16 with Rubincam 2001, 80 n.10; the term is also used by Thucydides. The formula ἀνέμου ἐπιφόρου ἐπιπεσόντος, *anemou epiphorou epipesontos*, 'with a favourable wind', is found also at vii.18.4, where Procopius indicates that under such conditions one could reach Rome from Otranto on the fifth day, as Feissel 2002, 399 n.66, notes.

19.19 αὕτη πρὸς ἐνίων ἡ θάλασσα Ἐρυθρὰ κέκληται, 'This sea is called by some the Red Sea.' See 19.2n. Procopius uses the preposition πρὸς, 'by', with the genitive much more frequently for agency than ὑπό, 'by' (preferred by Attic writers such as Thucydides), cf. (e.g.) 1.3.5, 18, 1.4.3 and elsewhere, Scheftlein 1893, 48–52, cf. Introduction, p. 16.

19.20 χώρα γὰρ ἡ ἐνθὲνδε ἄχρι τῶν Γάζης πόλεως ὀρίων Ἀραβία τὸ παλαιὸν ὠνομάζετο, ἐπεὶ καὶ τὰ βασιλεία ἐν τοῖς ἄνω χρόνοις ἐν Πέτραις τῇ πόλει ὁ τῶν Ἀράβων βασιλεὺς εἶχεν. 'For the territory from here as far as the borders of the city of Gaza was formerly named Arabia, since the king of the Arabs had his royal palace in those earlier times at the city of Petra.' Under Trajan, at the start of the second century, the Nabataean kingdom was annexed to the Roman empire and became the province of Arabia, as Procopius indicates. See (e.g.) Millar 1993, 93–9, Sipilä 2009, 133–5. The initial boundaries of the province, which did not extend quite as far as Gaza, are discussed in Sartre 1982a, 17–54. Good maps may be found in Sartre 1982a, map 3, Sipilä 2009, 309. Procopius' inference (at 19.19) that the term 'Arabian Gulf' derives from the province is incorrect, however; it predates the formation of the province and is used (e.g.) by Strabo 17.1.13, cf. 16.3.1.

19.21 ὁ μὲν οὖν τῶν Ὀμηριτῶν ὄρμος, ἐξ οὗ ἀπαίροντες εἰώθασιν ἐς Αἰθίοπας πλεῖν, Βουλικάς ὀνομάζεται. 'The harbour of the Homerites

from which they are accustomed to set off to sail to the Ethiopians is called Bulicas.’ This port is not otherwise known. Robin 2008b, 58–9 suggested an identification with Ghalāfiqa (modern Ghulayfiqa), cf. Schiettecatte 2008, §26 n.34, *idem* 2012, 259; Callu 1993, 519, proposed Moca, but with no argumentation. Robin 2019b has now proposed an alternative identification with Pliny’s Sambrachate, *Hist. Nat.* 6.32.151, the modern Jāzān. Although Ghalāfiqa flourished rather later, there are traces of occupation in the Late Antique period, so Schiettecatte, *loc. cit.* and cf. Keall 2008 more generally (with useful maps), esp. §19. Some of Kālēb’s forces may have disembarked here in 525, cf. Mas’udi, ch.43, vol.3, p.157.

19.22 Ἄδουλις δὲ ἡ πόλις τοῦ μὲν λιμένος μέτρῳ εἴκοσι σταδίων διέχει· τοσοῦτῳ γὰρ διείργεται τὸ μὴ ἐπιθαλάσσιος εἶναι, ‘the city of Adulis is twenty stades distant from the harbour, for it is cut off by such a small distance from the coast’. A clear-cut reminiscence of Thuc. vi.1.2, καὶ τοσαύτη οὖσα ἐν εἰκοσισταδίῳ μάλιστα μέτρῳ τῆς θαλάσσης διείργεται τὸ μὴ ἡπειρος εἶναι, ‘and although it is so large only a distance of about twenty stadia of the sea divides the island from the mainland’ (tr. C.F. Smith), describing Sicily; this passage of Procopius is among the pieces of evidence used by editors to emend the manuscript reading of Thucydides’ text, which has εἶναι, *einai* (‘to be’) in place of the participle οὖσα, *ousa* (‘being’), cf. Smith 1913, 2, 207. Dover 1965, 2, explains the use of τὸ μὴ, *to mē*, as an ‘occasional alternative to μὴ and infinitive after verbs meaning “prevent” and with other types of consecutive infinitive’.

Cosmas puts the distance of Adulis from the sea as two *miliai* (ii.54, p.365), while *Peripl. Mar. Erythr.* 4, like Procopius, has twenty stades. Cosmas, *loc. cit.*, describes it as a port where traders from Alexandria and Aela – among whom he counts himself – do business; it is in this context that he offers his description and transcription of the *Monumentum Adulitanum*, an ancient monument lying west of the city, comprising both a stele and a throne. See Cosmas ii.54–5 with the detailed discussion in Kominko 2013, 24–35, cf. Bowersock 2013, 15–21, 34–43. For archaeological evidence confirming the trading contacts of Adulis see Mundell Mango 1996, 153, Hatke 2011, 236–7, Breyer 2012, 143, Power 2012a, 30. Cosmas’ passage is of some relevance to Procopius’ description of Adulis here, since his text is complemented by an illustration that depicts the monument and the vicinity of the city, including several other nearby places; as Kominko 2013, 7–9, argues, the illustrations that have survived are likely to go back to the sixth century, cf. Hatke 2011, 78 n.38.

On the name Adulis, see Müller 2008, 446, Robin 2012a, 257, Bowersock 2013, 8. Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* 6.34.172, connected it with the Greek word for a slave, δοῦλος, *doulos*, and the alpha privative, so that the name would mean ‘Freemen’s town’: he attributes its foundation to escaped Egyptian slaves. A south Arabian etymology is more plausible, however. See also Stephanus Byzantinus, *Ethnika*, A59.

The site of Adulis (modern Zula) now lies 7 km from the sea, although Procopius’ 20 stades is generally thought to correspond to a distance of about 4 km. Part of the reason for the discrepancy lies in shifts in the coastline, which has extended since Antiquity. The site occupied an area of 38 hectares; a Byzantine church has been excavated there, in which Proconnesian marble was employed. Contacts with the eastern Roman empire were relatively strong in Late Antiquity, although (despite what is sometimes claimed) it is unlikely that a bishop from Adulis attended the Council of Chalcedon in 451 (so Bevan 2014, 385–6 with refs.). See Peacock and Blue 2007, 20–3, Blue et al. 2008, 307, Tomber 2008, 90–3, Breyer 2012, 141–3, Bowersock 2013, 9–12, Zazzaro 2013, 3–6, 100, Seland 2014, 381. The harbour to which Procopius alludes has been identified with a gully in the nearby Galala hills, 5.6 km to the south-east of the city (sometimes referred to as Gamez): this may be the Gabaza that features on Cosmas’ plan as a customs-house and in *Mart. Ar.* 29, 31 as the mustering point for Kālēb’s fleet. See *EAE* ii, 600–1, Peacock and Blue 2007, 33–7, Bowersock 2013, 12, Kominko 2013, 31.

19.22 πόλεως δὲ Αὐξώμιδος ὁδῶ ἡμερῶν δώδεκα, ‘from the city of Axum it (Adulis) is a twelve days’ journey’. Axum, which is visible in Cosmas’ illustration, lies some 150 km south-west of Adulis across difficult terrain. Nonnosus §13 estimates the distance at fifteen days’ journey, while *Peripl. Mar. Erythr.* 4 puts it at eight. See Marasco 2000, 276, for an attempt to explain the discrepancy in the sources, suggesting that Nonnosus may have taken a different route, cf. Rannig 2004, assessing the routes from Adulis to Axum.

19.23 Πλοῖα μέντοι ὅσα ἐν τε Ἰνδοῖς καὶ ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ θαλάσῃ ἐστίν, ‘Now the ships that exist in India and in this sea’, i.e. in the Red Sea and beyond it, into the Indian Ocean. On the term ‘India’ see i.19.2n. Procopius’ description of the construction of boats without nails is entirely accurate: the ribs of the ships were stitched together through holes bored in the planks, which were laid next to one another (rather than overlapping). The practice continued until c.1500 and is reported

in numerous traditions. The ships were built of teak or coconut wood; contrary to Procopius' statement, however, some caulking probably took place, often using the wood of the date palm ('oakum'). A full discussion is provided by Hourani 1995, 89–98; see esp. 93 n.86 for a list of parallel sources to Procopius, including *Peripl. Mar. Erythr.* 36, and illustrations. See also Casson 1989, 181, Christides 1996, 66–8, Taylor 2007, Pomey 2012, esp. 127. A good description of such a vessel is provided by the thirteenth-century traveller Ibn Jubayr, 70–1/65, quoted by Power 2012a, 15. See also the remarks of Carswell in Hourani 1995, 150–2, noting instances of contemporary ship construction without iron. As Hourani and Carswell note, the pliable nature of the wood was well adapted to the shallows prevalent in the Red Sea, in which nailed ships might break apart. It is possible that *Mart. Ar.* 29, which refers to 'Indian ships', alludes to such vessels, cf. Beaucamp in Detoraki 2007, 177 n.262.

19.24 αἴτιον δὲ οὐχ ὅπερ οἱ πολλοὶ οἴονται, πέτραι τινὲς ἐνταῦθα οὔσαι καὶ τὸν σίδηρον ἐφ' ἑαυτὰς ἔλκουσαι, 'The grounds for this are not those that many suppose, that there are certain rocks there that draw the iron to themselves.' Such an explanation is found also in a medieval Sanskrit writer, Bhoja, cf. Hourani 1995, 95. Procopius may have encountered it in Palladius, *De Gentibus*, i.5 (p.4) or in an earlier source, since it is alluded to by Strabo 15.1.15, cf. Ptolemy, vii.2.31 (placing the rocks among today's Andaman and Nicobar islands, so Stückelberg and Grasshof 2006, vol.2, 731 n.136). Palladius refers to thousands of islands apparently in the Red Sea (the term evidently used in the wider sense), where a magnetic rock prevents iron ships from sailing, with the consequence that special boats, devoid of iron, are required to reach Taprobane (Sri Lanka). Magnetic rocks and a magnetic mountain feature also in the *Thousand and One Nights* (fourteenth night) and even in Goethe's *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers*, book 1 (26 July). Palladius may have been the first to connect the magnetic rocks to the journey to Sri Lanka and with the Maniōlai Nēsoi, generally identified with the Maldives – where still today such vessels may be found (so Carswell in Hourani 1995, 152, cf. Pomey 2012, 127). See Weerakkody 1982, 39–40. Joh. Lyd. *De Mens.* iv.13 (76–7) also refers to magnetic stones, perhaps drawing on the same source; iv.14, concerning pepper from Axum, is also derived from Palladius, so Desanges 1969, 630, Weerakkody 1982, 36. On Palladius' work generally see Kaldellis 2013a, 61–2, Johnson 2015, 412 and n.69, cf. Darley 2019.

19.24 τεκμήριον δέ, ‘the proof (of this is)’. Procopius takes the opportunity to demonstrate his learning and to distinguish himself from earlier writers; cf. vii.27.16–20 for a similar rationalisation, likewise viii.1.11–13. The correction of a popularly held view – οἱ πολλοὶ οἶονται, *hoi polloi oiontai* (‘the many suppose’) – recalls Thuc. vi.54.2 and Plato, *Crito* 49b10, a passage often cited by later authors. The use of such proofs resembles Herodotus’ interventions, e.g. at ii.104.4, where he uses the same term; cf. Asheri, *CH*, 22–3.

19.24 ταῖς γὰρ Ῥωμαίων ναυσὶν ἐξ Αἰλᾶ, ‘Roman ships sailing from Aela’ into the Red Sea. Procopius indicates that trade with the East was not conducted just by middlemen, as is confirmed (e.g.) by the case of Cosmas (ii.54, p.365), though the evidence of Roman ships in the *Mart. Ar.* 29 is of doubtful value: see i.19–20g. On the construction of Roman ships at Red Sea ports, e.g. Myos Hormos and Clysma, which did not differ significantly from those used in the Mediterranean, see Whitewright 2007, 83, Fauconnier 2012, 81–2, Thomas 2012, 176–8.

19.25 οὐ μὴν οὐδὲ πρὸς Ῥωμαίων ὠνεῖσθαι τούτων τι οἷοι τέ εἰσιν, νόμῳ ἅπανσι διαρρήδην ἀπειρημένον, ‘Moreover, they are not able to buy these things from the Romans, since such a practice is explicitly forbidden by law.’ As Chekalova 2001, 393 n.153, notes, *C.J.* 4.41.2 (455/7) confirms Procopius’ statement, prescribing the death penalty for the export of iron and other important commodities, cf. *Dig.* 39.4.11 with *Expositio totius mundi et gentium*, 22 (noting the prohibition on the export to the Persians of bronze and iron). See further Winter 1987, 62–3 and n.83: the *comes commerciorum* was responsible for enforcing this ban, presumably from his base at Clysma, cf. Jones 1964, 826–7, Sartre 1982b, 114–17. Despite the ban, it might theoretically have been possible to obtain iron, as Hourani 1995, 96–7, notes, but the cost of mining it (e.g. in Sudan) was prohibitive.

19.27–37 An Excursus on Southern Egypt

Procopius offers here a brief historical excursus within his broader digression. The Blemmyes (Blemyes in Procopius) and Nobatae (referred to in sources from the region as Noubades) were important peoples that occupied lands to the south and east of Egypt. Neither of them is referred to elsewhere by Procopius, nor are they directly relevant to Justinian’s initiative in southern Arabia. His excursus concerns Diocletian’s withdrawal of

the frontier from Hierasycaminus northwards to Philae in 298, when the emperor himself visited Egypt, and Justinian's closure of the temple at Philae probably in 535–7. Both strands of this digression can be interpreted as endorsements of contemporary imperial policy. On the one hand, Diocletian's apparent naïveté in trusting that the Blemmyes would keep to their oaths is underlined by Procopius in terms reminiscent of those applied to the Tzani at 15.22–5, a people only brought under control at last by Justinian. On the other hand, Narses' closure of the temple at Philae is associated with the termination of barbaric acts such as human sacrifice. Other references to Diocletian in the *Aed.*, at ii.6.2–11, 8.7, can be read in a similar light: Justinian strengthens fortresses (in the East) inadequately built by his predecessor. Yet one cannot exclude the possibility that the ceding of territory to barbarians and the handing over of annual subsidies here attributed to Diocletian represents an oblique criticism of Justinian's own policies, e.g. in the Balkans: at vii.33.7–14 he asserts that concessions to the Lombards and Heruls have eroded imperial power. See Dahn 1865, 113, Greatrex 2018b, 332–3, i.19.29n, and i.19–20g.

The two peoples mentioned remained important in the sixth century. In the 540s, for instance, the Nobatae (Noubades) were converted to anti-Chalcedonian Christianity by a certain priest Julian at the instance of the Empress Theodora, thus drawing them into the imperial orbit; the conversion is recounted at some length by Joh. Eph. *HE* iv.6–9, 49–53. Procopius will certainly have been aware of this development and might himself have recounted it, e.g. in his proposed work on church history (cf. *Anecd.* 26.18 with Kaldellis 2009, 607). On these events see Richter 2002 (with Dijkstra and van Ginkel 2004), Dijkstra 2008, 282–92, Edwards 2014, 420–31. The Blemmyes are mentioned in a wide range of late antique sources, usually as dangerous opponents who threaten Roman territory across a wide area, from southern Egypt to Sinai (cf. Török 1985, 29–30, Weber 2002, 18–20, Power 2011, 341); they also feature at several points in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*, notably at 17.385–97, on which see Barthel 2014, who detects an increasing respect for Blemmyan power during the Late Antique period. By the sixth century their influence had been eclipsed, as the more powerful Nobatae (Noubades) came to dominate the Nile valley beyond the Roman frontier. See Dijkstra 2014, 326–7.

Procopius' placing of the two tribes, with the Nobatae along the Nile valley south of the Egyptian frontier and the Blemmyes further east, between the river and the Red Sea, is broadly correct for the sixth century: he thus retrojects to the period of Diocletian a later situation, so

rightly Dijkstra 2008, 141, *idem* 2012, 242–3, Edwards 2014, 410–11, *idem* 2019, 954, and cf. below. But the picture is far more complex than might be inferred from such a general statement. Neither group formed a unified kingdom, and thus it is misleading to follow the approach of classicising historians, such as Priscus and Procopius, and lump them together as a single entity. Inscriptions from Talmis (modern Kalabsha) and papyri from Primis (modern Qasr Ibrim), beyond the frontiers of Roman Egypt, offer a picture of struggles between individual rulers of Blemmyes and Nobatae, such as the Noubadian *basiliskos* ('kinglet') Silko in the fifth century, and negotiations between individual chieftains and Roman commanders. Other documents from Gebelein on the Nile, written on gazelle hide, attest an apparent Blemmyan enclave within Roman Egypt in the second half of the sixth century, in which a Blemmyan ruler ensured the collection of imperial taxes. See *FHN* 317, 319–22, 331–43, Török 1985, esp. 47, Barnard 2005, 33–4, Dijkstra 2012, 244–7, Pierce 2012, 237, Obluski 2014, ch.3, Dijkstra 2014, 326–9. The Blemmyes are generally identified with the modern Beja, to be found in Egypt's Eastern Desert, so e.g. Browne 2004, but cf. Barnard 2005, *idem* 2007. The Nobatae (Noubades) are attested in a wide area south of Egypt, often along the Nile, already in the first century A.D. See Updegraff 1988, 76–9, cf. Kirwan 1958. On their evolution from the fourth to the sixth centuries see Edwards 2014, 408–14; on their identity, Smith 2014, 105–9.

Both Procopius' classicising predecessors Olympiodorus and Priscus discuss the Blemmyes. The former journeyed in the first half of the fifth century into the territory ceded by Diocletian to the Blemmyes as far as Primis and to other cities, such as Talmis. See Olymp. frg.35.2 = *FHN* 309 with Török 1985, 35–8. A letter from Appion, bishop of Syene, to Theodosius II between 425 and 450 testifies to raiding by the Blemmyes at some point after Olympiodorus' visit, *P. Leid. Z* = *FHN* 314, translated also in Dijkstra 2008, 357–8; cf. Dijkstra 2008, 51–3. Perhaps as a result of internal disputes among the Nobatae and Blemmyes (attested in Silko's inscription, *FHN* 317) Roman forces gained the upper hand in 452–3 and the Roman envoy Maximinus, whom Priscus accompanied, was able to impose a one-hundred-year peace treaty. The Romans allowed access to the temple of Isis on Philae, an important cult centre right on the frontier, of particular significance to the two peoples, while the Blemmyes and Nobatae handed over hostages; but when Maximinus suddenly died, the tribes recovered their hostages and resumed raiding. See Priscus frg.27.1–2/21 (pp.59–60) =

FHN 318; cf. Török 1985, 42–8, Dijkstra 2008, 143–6, Török 2011, 522–30. It may be soon after these events that the Nobatae gained control of the Nile valley, where Procopius here places them, while the Blemmyes recede in the sources; some remained active in the Eastern Desert, while others remained in the Nile valley, for as already noted, neither people formed a monolithic bloc. See Török 1985, 55, Dijkstra 2014, esp. 313–14. As also already noted, Procopius' supposition that the two peoples took up these positions already at the end of the third century is certainly mistaken (though still taken at face value by Bowersock 2013, 71–2). Kirwan 2002, 5, suggests that the arrangements attributed by Procopius to Diocletian better fit the reign of Theodosius I, cf. i.19.29n on the Nobatae with Török 1988, 103, Weber 2002, 14–15, Pierce 2012, 235–6. Continuing struggles against Blemmyan raiders during the reign of Anastasius are indicated (e.g.) by Ps.-Josh. 20, cf. Vasiliev 1950, 285–6, Dijkstra 2008, 157–9.

There is no reason to suppose that Procopius had visited the region himself. As will be seen from the comments below, his account of the movements of the peoples is flawed; he may well be retrojecting to Diocletian an approach taken rather in the fifth century, i.e. of attempting to pit one tribe against another. So Török 1985, 57, Burstein 1998, 128, cf. Dijkstra 2008, 138–43, Falcone 2011, 232 n.18. Pierce 2012, 235, plausibly suggests a reliance on earlier sources, both for Diocletian's measures and the geographical details. No attempt is made to link Axum with the events here related in southern Egypt. Although political contact was limited in the sixth century (cf. Hatke 2013, ch.5), *Mart. Ar.* 27.19–20 reports a threat by Justin I to send troops through the territory of the Nobatae and Blemmyes to help the Ethiopians against the Ḥimyarites, cf. Hatke 2011, 263–5, Dijkstra 2014, 326–7; this part of the *Mart. Ar.*, however, is of little historical worth, so rightly Beaucamp 2010, 215.

This passage has attracted much attention in earlier scholarship. *FHN* 328 offers a translation and commentary of this whole section, as does Updegraff 1988, 73–6, and see Letsios 1989a, 126–32, Dijkstra 2008, 138–43.

19.27 τριάκοντα ὁδὸς ἡμερῶν ἐστὶν εὐζώνῳ ἀνδρὶ, 'A journey of thirty days for an active man.' See Asheri, *CH*, 153–4 on Hdt. i.104.1, for this expression: Herodotus estimates the distance from the Maeotic Lake (Sea of Azov) to Phasis in Colchis (the later Lazica) at thirty days' journey likewise for an 'active man' (literally 'well-girdled'). The distance there is

about 500 km along the coast, which thus produces a low daily figure, 17 km per day. Procopius (iii.1.17) defines the distance that an ‘active man’ could travel in a day as 210 stades, the journey from Athens to Megara, which equates on the *Tab. Peut.* to 29 Roman miles, i.e. 42.7 km (see Appendix 2, p. 675). Cf. Haury 1906b, 296, for some parallel instances, and 8.10n. Since $30 \times 42.7 = 1281$, this corresponds quite well to the approximately 1300 km as the crow flies, cf. Veh, 476. Cosmas ii.48 gives the same figure for the distance from Axum to the Cataracts. Letsios 1989a, 126–7, links the expression to the term *Triacontaschoenus*, but this hardly refers to the number of days needed to traverse this smaller stretch of the Nile (from the First to the Second Cataract).

19.28 ἐνταῦθα ἔθνη ἄλλα τε πολλὰ ἵδρυται καὶ Βλέμυες τε καὶ Νοβάται, πολυανθρωπότατα γένη, ‘Here are established many peoples, among whom are the Blemmyes and Nobatae, tribes that are extremely populous.’ The Blemmyes had certainly not always been as powerful: Strabo 17.1.53 describes them as being few in number and unwarlike (in the first century A.D.). In the meantime, however, the term came to be applied more widely, while other groups disappear from the sources. See Updegraff 1988, 62–4, Dijkstra 2014, 303–4. Procopius, following Hdt. i.56.2, 101, here uses γένος, *genos* (‘race’, ‘tribe’) as a subdivision of ἔθνος, *ethnos* (‘people’, ‘nation’), though see Jones 1996 on ambiguity in Herodotus on this issue. Stephanus of Byzantium *Ethnika*, B109, uses the same Greek form as Procopius for the Blemmyes and offers a mythical derivation of the name, cf. Desanges 2009, 11–12. On the situation of the two tribes, see pp. 282–5 above.

19.28 πρότερον δὲ οὐ ταῦτα ἐγεγόνει τὰ ἔσχατα τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἀρχῆς, ἀλλ’ ἐπέκεινα ὅσον ἑπτὰ ἐτέρων ἐπίπροσθεν ὁδὸν ἡμερῶν, ‘Previously these were not the limits of the Roman empire, but (they extended) beyond for a distance of a further seven days’ journey.’ Procopius surely refers to the region from the First Cataract to Hierasycaminus (modern el-Maharraqa), known as the *Dodecaschoenus* (i.e. twelve *schoeni*), a distance of some 120 km, although Hdt. ii.29.3 puts at four days the length of time needed to traverse this distance, cf. Asheri, *CH*, 260. It seems unlikely that Procopius envisages a greater distance southwards, so Rose 1992, 18, 48 (*contra* Desanges 1969, 146), noting the absence of archaeological evidence for a Roman presence beyond Hierasycaminus.

19.29 ἥνικά δὲ ὁ Ῥωμαίων αὐτοκράτωρ Διοκλητιανὸς ἐνταῦθα γενόμενος, ‘When, however, the Emperor Diocletian arrived there’. Cf. *Anecd.* 26.41, describing Diocletian’s visit to Alexandria in similar terms, where Procopius criticises Hephaestus’ removal of generous grain distributions to the poor of the city that had been established by the tetrarch. Diocletian was present in Egypt in 298 in the wake of the uprising of Domitius Domitianus; in the summer or autumn of that year he travelled to the southern frontier. At Philae (on which see 19.35), the site of his new frontier, he erected a triumphal arch or gate, cf. Haeny 1985, 232, Dijkstra 2008, 27–8. See Bowman 1978, 29, Dijkstra 2008, 138–9 (with further references), *FHN* 280–1. This adjustment was part of a wider reorganisation of the government in Egypt: by 298 Diocletian had divided up the Thebaid in southern Egypt into two parts, Upper and Lower. See Bowman 2005, 316–17.

19.29 ἐπεὶ στενὴν μάλιστα τὴν γῆν ἐνταῦθα ξυμβαίνει εἶναι (πέτραι γὰρ τοῦ Νείλου οὐ πολλῶ ἄποθεν ὑψηλαὶ λίαν ἀνέχουσιν τῆς χώρας τὰ λοιπὰ ἔχουσι, ‘since it happens that the land there is extremely narrow: for not far from the Nile high rocks rise up and dominate the rest of the terrain’. Cf. Hdt. ii.29.2 on the rise in terrain here with Locher 1999, 271–3; this is where the Aswan High Dam has been built. Strabo 17.1.53 reports a different situation in the first century A.D., in which a handful of cohorts were able successfully to defend the region. In the wake of the withdrawal of the frontier to Philae, papyri and *Not. Dig. Or.* 31 attest the presence of a number of units in the vicinity; an inscription of Diocletian from Elephantine curbing abuses by a detachment on the island at Philae testifies both to his presence and that of a garrison there. See Brennan 1989, esp. 201, noting units at Syene, Contra Syenem, at Philae itself – the *legio I Maximiana* – and Elephantine: see Dijkstra 2008, 30, *idem* 2011, 417–19. In the late sixth century the papyri reveal the continuing presence of soldiers, albeit regularly moonlighting as boatmen, at Syene, cf. Jones 1964, 669, Keenan 1990, 142–5, Dijkstra 2008, 31–2. The size of the forces remaining near the frontier is uncertain: Bowman 1978, 33, suggests that Jones’ estimate of 18,000 troops in the Thebaid is probably too high; the references to Blemmyan raids, e.g. by bishop Appion of Syene (noted on p. 284), implies some deficiencies in Roman defences. For general assessments see Török 1985, 31–40, Speidel 1988, esp. 773, Dijkstra 2008, 30–2, Pollard 2010, 457–64, Kaiser 2014, esp. 12–13.

The justification offered in this section for the Roman withdrawal is not generally believed; it may nonetheless partly reflect the grounds put forward by Diocletian at the time. Letsios 1989a, 130, 326, suggests a connection between Diocletian's financial reforms and the shift in the frontier. The region around Philae is indeed unproductive, as Procopius notes: see Wilson 1955, 214, 229 with figures, cf. Locher 1999, 286–9. There may once have been gold mines in the vicinity, but these seem to have ceased production by this point, cf. Burstein 1998, 127 n.5; some stone quarries along the Nile remained, see Keenan 1990, 144. Nonetheless, as Jackson 2002, 153, points out, the evacuated zone beyond it held strategic and commercial advantages. It is likely that consistent pressure from the Meroites, rather than the Blemmyes and Nobatae, persuaded the emperor to cede the territory, just as Aurelian had relinquished Dacia in the 270s. See Török 1985, 26–8, Burstein 1998, Jackson 2002, 153–4, Dijkstra 2008, 139–41, Török 2009, 472–3, Dijkstra 2012, 241–2, Liebechuetz 2015, 78–9 (who characterises the withdrawal as ‘a convenient ad-hoc arrangement rather than part of a grand strategy’).

Diocletian's withdrawal, like Aurelian's in Dacia, merely returned to an earlier situation: in the first and second centuries A.D. the frontier had lain at or near Philae. In the third century, however, Roman troops had taken control not just of the Dodecaschoenus but even of some places beyond, although they may have pulled out again around the middle of the century. There were clashes with the kingdom of Meroë even up to the 290s, and probably also with the Blemmyes. See Haycock 1967, 118–19, Desanges 1965, esp. 146, Updegraff 1988, 87–90, Burstein 1998, Dijkstra 2008, 135, Török 2009, 469 and n.214, Faraji 2011, 225–6, Török 2012, 760.

19.29 ἅμα δὲ καὶ Νοβάται ἀμφὶ πόλιν Ὅασιν ὥκημένοι τὰ πρότερα ἦγόν τε καὶ ἔφερον ἅπαντα ἐς αἰὶ τὰ ἐκείνη χωρία, τούτους δὴ τοὺς βαρβάρους ἀνέπεισεν ἀναστῆναι μὲν ἐξ ἡθῶν τῶν σφετέρων, ἀμφὶ ποταμὸν δὲ Νεῖλον ιδρύσασθαι, ‘at the same time, the Nobatae who formerly lived around the city of Oasis constantly plundered all the villages there. So Diocletian persuaded the barbarians to move off from their own homelands and to settle around the river Nile.’ Procopius’ account is seriously awry here: the Nobatae do not appear to have emerged as a power until the fifth century, nor are they associated with the city of Oasis (at the modern Kharga oasis in Egypt). They only start to be mentioned in the sources from the fifth century onwards, so

Updegraff 1988, 75, *FHN*, p.1192, Jackson 2002, 154, Dijkstra 2012, 242; but cf. Török 1988, 103, arguing that the Meroites, to whom he argues that the Dodecaschoenus was ceded, included a Nubian component. As already suggested, Procopius is probably mistakenly inferring an earlier situation from the peoples' positions in his own day.

The city of Oasis in the Western Desert of Egypt was a remote Roman outpost sometimes used as a place of exile, e.g. for the former patriarch of Constantinople, Nestorius, who fell victim to a Blemmyan raid there in the 440s, on which see Evagr. *HE* i.7 with Whitby 2000a, 20 n.58, Weber 2002, 19, Falcone 2011, 231–6 (with useful maps); but cf. Dijkstra 2008, 158, for doubts on the involvement of the Blemmyes. Olympiodorus frg.32 briefly describes the region. See also *FHN* 302 on a possible Blemmyan raid here in the 370s.

19.30 οὕτω γὰρ ᾤετο αὐτοὺς τε οὐκέτι τὰ γε ἀμφὶ τὴν Ὀασιν ἐνοχλήσειν χωρία, 'In this way he thought that they would no longer trouble the villages around Oasis' and instead shield Roman territory from the Blemmyes. Diocletian's reasoning resembles that of Justinian in his dealing with Balkan tribes, settling them in rich lands to act as a bulwark against other peoples, a tactic viewed with scepticism by Procopius, e.g. at vii.33.7–14, cf. viii.18–19. See i.19.27–37n and Greatrex 2018b, 332–3. As in the case of Justinian, however, the barbarians, i.e. the Blemmyes and the Nobatae, collaborated against the Romans: see Török 2009, 471 and the Appion letter (e.g. in Dijkstra 2008, 357–8). Rose 1992, 132–4, suggests that items of regalia and silver artefacts from elite tombs at Ballana may represent part of a Roman subsidy mentioned by Procopius, cf. *ibid.* 177, identifying the elite with Nobatae rulers. Whether the gold payments mentioned by Procopius at 19.32 represent *annona foederatica* is uncertain: this is the inference of Letsios 1989a, 326–8, cf. Dijkstra 2014, 316–17, but note Greatrex 2014a, 259, for doubts on categorising neighbouring peoples as *foederati*.

19.33 οὕτως ἄρα βαρβάρους ἅπαντας οὐδεμία μηχανὴ διασώσασθαι τὴν ἐς Ῥωμαίους πίστιν ὅτι μὴ δέει τῶν ἀμυνομένων στρατιωτῶν, 'Thus it appears there is no way for barbarians to keep faith with the Romans save through fear of soldiers (ready) in defence.' An emphatic and pessimistic intervention by Procopius, strengthened by the particle ἄρα, *ara*, which can indicate 'surprise attendant upon disillusionment', cf. Denniston 1954, 35. As already noted, he expresses comparable distrust of barbarians elsewhere, e.g. at i.15.23 (the Tzani), iii.2.7 (a similarly

general judgement), iv.8.10 (the Moors), *Aed.* vi.5.4. See further Dahn 1865, 120, Greatrex 2018b, 332–3.

οὐδεμία μηχανή, *oudemia mēkhanē*, ‘no way’ is a common expression in Procopius, e.g. at v.15.5, vi.4.25, although it is usually found with the verb ‘to be’, which we have inserted in the translation. But see Men. Prot. frg. 25.2.43 for a comparable use, with an infinitive and no main verb, as here. On the use of ὅτι μή, *hoti mē*, ‘save’, ‘except’ see Smyth §2765.

19.34 καίτοι καὶ νῆσόν τινα ἐν ποταμῷ Νεῖλῳ ἀγχιστά πη τῆς Ἐλεφαντίνης πόλεως εὐρών ὁ βασιλεὺς οὗτος φρούριόν τε ταύτη δειμάμενος ὀχυρώτατον, κοινούς τινας ἐνταῦθα νεώς τε καὶ βωμούς Ῥωμαίοις τε καὶ τούτοις δὴ κατεστήσατο τοῖς βαρβάροις, ‘Nonetheless this emperor, after he had found out about an island in the river Nile very close to the city of Elephantine, erected a very strong fortress and certain common temples and altars there for both the Romans and these barbarians.’ As Dijkstra 2008, 27–30, shows, Procopius is no doubt relying on second-hand reports for his information here: the island of Philae lies close to the east bank of the Nile, just south of Syene and Elephantine, where the First Cataract begins. Next to it on the mainland is situated a Roman military camp dating to well before the tetrarchy. Although there is a triumphal arch of Diocletian on the island (see 19.29n), there is no evidence that he fortified it, so Dijkstra 2008, 327. The reference to a φρούριον, *phourion*, may be to a garrison rather than a fort, an ambiguous word that Procopius could have misunderstood, so Dijkstra 2008, 29. See also Speidel 1988, 773, on fortifications linking Syene and Philae.

For centuries an important temple of Isis had been situated on the island; it was particularly venerated by peoples to the south, such as the Nobatae and the Blemmyes. Numerous inscriptions from the first centuries A.D. and earlier testify to visits from embassies of Meroë to the temple; these are gathered in *FHN*. See Haycock 1967, 112–18, Rutherford 1998, 235–50, Dijkstra 2008, 131–7, Török 2009, 456–64, Faraji 2011, 224–8, Török 2012, 755–60. Whether the priests were drawn from ‘Romans’ and Blemmyes and Nobatae is doubtful: they are more likely to have been Egyptians, as was the case in Priscus’ day. The fifth-century historian provides more details on the arrangements that had been made to allow the southern peoples to visit the island, conveyed by Egyptian boatmen. See Priscus frg.27.1/21 (pp.59–60) = *FHN* 318, Dijkstra 2008, 143–5, 206–8.

19.34 ἐν τῷ βεβαίῳ τὴν φιλίαν αὐτοῖς ἔσεσθαι τῷ μετέχειν τῶν ἱερῶν σφίσιν οἰόμενος, ‘believing that their friendship would be more secure through their sharing of the sanctuaries’. Dijkstra 2008, 142 n.59, argues that the ἱερῶν, *hierōn*, refers here not to sacred rites but rather to the sacred buildings just mentioned.

19.35 διὸ δὴ καὶ Φίλας ἐπωνόμασε τὸ χωρίον. ‘He therefore named the place Philae.’ Demonstrably mistaken: the name occurs already in the Hellenistic period, cf. (e.g.) Burstein 1997, 144 n.65. The Greek form appears to derive from the demotic Egyptian Pilak. Procopius’ etymology of the name, meaning ‘female friends’ (and by extension the two peoples, Blemmyes and Romans, as Procopius implies) finds parallels in the fourth-century Latin commentator Servius and a scholiast on Lucan, although they each interpret ‘female friends’ rather differently. See Lévy 1946, Locher 1999, 125–8, Dijkstra 2008, 25, 143. Kruse 2008, 54–5, implausibly suggests that the female friends, φίλαι, *philai*, might constitute a ludic reference to ἐταῖραι, *hetairai*, female companions, i.e. prostitutes, connected to the mention of the worship of Priapus a few lines later. It is also hard to perceive an oblique criticism of the emperor here, as he suggests.

19.35 καὶ τὴν τε Ἴσιν τὸν τε Ὀσίριν σέβουσι, καὶ οὐχ ἥκιστα γε τὸν Πρίαπον, ‘and they revere both Isis and Osiris, and not least also Priapus’. The cult of Isis was well established at Philae and popular among all the peoples of the region, including Blemmyes and Nobatae. See (e.g.) Burstein 1997, 69–72 (an inscription of 253), Dijkstra 2008, 202–14 (on the festivals and priests of Isis on Philae in this period), Yellin 2012, 128–33. Osiris was likewise popular, but the reference to Priapus is obscure. Griffith 1929, 74, suggests that it could be a reference to Amon, a deity who was popular here, although he is more usually identified with Zeus, so Hdt. ii.42.5. A more plausible identification would be with Min, an ithyphallic deity referred to as ‘the son of Osiris, born of the divine Isis’ during the Middle Kingdom: see Frankfort 1948, 188–9, cf. the next note.

19.36 οἱ μέντοι Βλέμυες καὶ ἀνθρώπους τῷ ἡλίῳ θύειν εἰώθασι. ‘The Blemmyes, moreover, used to sacrifice people to the sun.’ This may be part of a *topos* of barbarous peoples, so Dijkstra 2008, 142, Smith 2017, 461–2, cf. Rives 1995, esp.67–70. Procopius attributes the practice

likewise to the supposedly Christian Franks of his own day, vi.25.10, a people whom he regarded with some distaste, cf. vi.14.1 (the Heruls): see Greatrex 2018b, 334. Procopius perhaps alludes here to the cult of the sun-god Mandulis, worshipped at Talmis (Kalabsha) and Dendur just to the south of Philae, although the deity is not associated with human sacrifice. See Griffith 1929, 74, Nock 1934, 75, Dijkstra 2008, 142 n.54, Török 2008, 100, D'Auria 2012, Lacovara 2012, Yellin 2012, 135; the cult was also present at Philae, cf. Rutherford 1998, 232, Dijkstra 2008, 175, Hahn 2008, 208–9. Murray 2004, 183, notes depictions of human sacrifice at the temple of Isis at Philae, where there is a temple of Mandulis. At Talmis (Kalabsha) the temple was dedicated primarily to Mandulis, but ‘among the other deities represented in the temple’s decoration are Osiris, Isis, and the fertility god Min’, so Hawass 2012, 62.

19.36 ταῦτα δὲ τὰ ἐν Φίλαις ἱερὰ οὗτοι δὴ οἱ βάρβαροι καὶ ἐς ἐμὲ εἶχον, ἀλλὰ βασιλεὺς αὐτὰ Ἰουστινιανὸς καθελεῖν ἔγνω. ‘These barbarians indeed maintained these temples in Philae up to my day, but the Emperor Justinian decided to destroy them.’ Until the study of Dijkstra 2008 this statement had been taken at face value: in this way Justinian destroyed the last vestiges of the ancient Egyptian religion. But it is clear from his study, esp. 214–18, that already in the fifth century the cult of Isis had all but died out at Philae: no more pagan inscriptions are found after 456/7. Dijkstra 2011, 421–30, offers a convenient summary of his work, cf. *idem* 2015, 581–7. Thus the closure of the temple by Justinian was little more than a gesture, cf. Dijkstra 2008, 298, Smith 2017, 460–2, even if the Blemmyes perhaps continued to visit the site, cf. Dijkstra 2008, 315. Hahn 2008, 216–17, suggests a link between the closure and Justinian’s ambitious Christianisation policies in the region, in particular concerning the Nobatae; Hahn discusses the closure of the temple in detail, but was unable to take into account Dijkstra 2008.

19.37 Ναρσῆς γοῦν, Περσαρμένιος γένος, οὗ πρόσθεν ἄτε ὑποτομοληκὸς ἐς Ῥωμαίους ἐμνήσθη, τῶν ἐκείνη στρατιωτῶν ἄρχων τὰ τε ἱερὰ καθεῖλε, ‘At any rate Narses, the commander of the soldiers there, a Persarmenian by birth, whose defection to the Romans I mentioned earlier, destroyed the temples.’ See 15.31n on his defection. The most likely context for Narses’ mission is the visit of his namesake, the eunuch, to Alexandria in 535 in order to restore order after the death of the anti-Chalcedonian patriarch Timothy III, though some have preferred to place it in the early 540s. See Nautin 1967, 3–6, Letsios

1989a, 276, Dijkstra 2008, 296–9, cf. *PLRE* iii, Narses 2, Kruse 2008, 26–7; Procopius' ἄρχων, *arkhōn*, 'commander' has been interpreted as a reference to the position of *dux* (of the Thebaid), so Nautin 1967, 6, *PLRE*, *loc. cit.*, cf. Zuckerman 2004, 171, who proposes that the mission took place in 536 or winter 536–7.

Only a few years later, perhaps in 538, a priest called Julian, together with bishop Theodore of Philae, undertook their first mission to convert the Nobatae, recounted by John of Ephesus (cf. i.19.27–37n): see Dijkstra 2008, 298–301. *Contra* Nautin, the closed temple was not immediately converted into a church; the site was progressively transformed and christianised over the rest of the century. Moreover, the christianisation of both Philae and Nubia had begun well before the temple's closure. See Dijkstra 2008, chs. 9–10, esp. 304, 311–12.

19.37 καὶ τοὺς μὲν ἱερεῖς ἐν φυλακῇ ἔσχε, τὰ δὲ ἀγάλματα ἐς Βυζάντιον ἔπεμψεν, 'he kept the priests in prison and sent the statues to Byzantium'. As Dijkstra 2008, 307, notes, there were no pagan priests left to be arrested. The despatch of pagan works of art to the imperial capital was quite common: see Lepelley 1994. Bassett 2004, 123–4, discusses the transfer of these statues in the wider context of Justinianic rebuilding work in Constantinople. Nautin 1967, 7, on the other hand, supposes that they were melted down for their precious metal (although their composition is not known). The ἀγάλματα, *agalmata*, 'statues' were of particular importance to the cult: a wooden statue (ξοάνον, *xoanon*) was periodically taken from Philae to the territory of the Blemmyes for veneration, as Priscus, frg.27.1/21.3 (p.60) (*FHN* 318) recounts, cf. Dijkstra 2008, 144.

20.1 Ὑπὸ τοὺς χρόνους τοῦ πολέμου τοῦδε, 'Around the time of this war', cf. ii.22.1 for the expression. A similar turn of phrase is used by Thucydides, e.g. at ii.95.1, although with the addition of αὐτούς, *autous*, to mean 'around the same time', allowing for greater precision. The word πόλεμος, *polemos*, might mean 'war', 'battle' or 'campaign'; for the last meaning see Croke 1984a, 68, *LSJ*, 1432. Given the vagueness of the term, however, it is important to stress that Procopius does not explicitly date the events recounted here to the year 531, *contra* (e.g.) Beaucamp 2010, 200. So rightly Shahid 1994, 68, emphasising the looseness of the preposition ὑπό, *hypo* ('around'), which implies a date that need not even be within the period of hostilities, i.e. 527 to 531; see also McCail 1966, 241–2, on the expression.

20.1 Ἑλλησθεαῖος ὁ τῶν Αἰθιοπῶν βασιλεὺς, Χριστιανὸς τε ὢν καὶ δόξης τῆσδε ὡς μάλιστα ἐπιμελούμενος, ‘Hellesthaeus, the king of the Ethiopians, a Christian with the greatest zeal for this faith’. Procopius refers to the Ethiopian king Kālēb, whose throne name was Ἐλλα Ἀσβεῖα, ‘he who has brought the dawn’, so Hatke 2013, 149 n.630; the substitution of a theta for a beta is not unprecedented, cf. Smith 1954, 427 n.1, although the instance he cites is incorrect. Christides 2008, 381, suggests that Procopius’ form could reflect a south Arabian variant of the name found in the inscription Ist. 7608 bis (published by Ryckmans 1946, 170), where the king is referred to as Ἐββῃ, but this is more likely just to be a stonecutter’s error, cf. Hatke 2013, 300–1. See also Fiaccadori in Berger 2006, 59 and n.74, Robin 2012a, 288, on the many different forms of his name; Mal. 18.56 (385.25–6) has Ἐλεσβόας, Elesboas, while Cosmas ii.56 has Ἐλλατζβάας, Ellatzbaas.

As noted at 19–20h, Axum had been converted to Christianity already in the fourth century; Malalas’ reference, 18.15, to the conversion of king ‘Andas’ at this time is erroneous, although Fiaccadori, *loc. cit.*, suggests that it might represent a shift from pro- to anti-Chalcedonianism, cf. Brakmann 2001, 758–61; see also Hatke 2011, 251–7, for other interpretations. *Mart. Ar.* 1.18–19 likewise emphasises Kālēb’s zeal for Christianity, a motif emphasised in one of the king’s own inscriptions, cf. Hatke 2011, 142–3.

20.1 ἐπειδὴ Ὀμηριτῶν τῶν ἐν τῇ ἀντιπέρᾳ ἡπεύρω ἔγνω πολλοὺς μὲν Ἰουδαίους ὄντας, πολλοὺς δὲ δόξαν τὴν παλαιὰν σέβοντας, ἣν δὴ καλοῦσιν Ἑλληνικὴν οἱ νῦν ἄνθρωποι, ἐπιβουλῇ μέτρον οὐκ ἐχούση ἐς τοὺς ἐκείνη Χριστιανοὺς χρῆσθαι, ‘when he (Hellesthaeus, Kālēb) learned that the Homerites of the mainland opposite – many of whom were Jews, while many others revered the ancient faith, which people now call Hellenic – were plotting against the Christians there on a large scale’. On the Jewish elements in Ḥimyar, see i.19–20h: Procopius refers to the persecutions initiated by Yūsuf As’ar Yath’ar, also referred to as dhū-Nuwās and Masrūq; on his names see Fiaccadori in Berger 2006, 61 n.85, Robin 2008b, 11–12, 42–5, Gajda 2009, 84–5. *Lib. Him.* ch.39–40 (chapter headings, p.6a/civ) reports on how news of the persecutions was conveyed to the Ethiopians by a Ḥimyarite Christian called Umayya, cf. Hatke 2011, 337.

There are few traces of polytheism in southern Arabia after the fourth century: pagan inscriptions, once quite numerous, dry up. See Gajda

2009, 251–2, cf. Hoyland 2001, 139, Hatke 2011, 249 and n.199, Bowersock 2013, 83. But the new letter attributed to Simeon of Beth Arsham (ed. Shahīd 1971) concerning the martyrs of Najrān contains an allusion to pagans, *hanpē*, among the city's inhabitants (xxii, line 17, tr. p.57), on which see Hatke 2011, 248. Cf. *Mart. Ar.* 1.11 (Jews and pagans in Ḥimyar). See further Robin 2013, esp.230, Bowersock 2013, 126–31, for a more nuanced approach.

Procopius employs the same circumlocution – ‘the ancient faith’ – for pagans at v.25.24, though at *Anecd.* 11.15 it refers to the views of Christian heretics, obliged by Justinian to convert to orthodoxy. The term ‘Hellenic’ had been used from the fourth century to refer to pagans: see (e.g.) Lampe, 451, Sandwell 2007, 149, Alan Cameron 2011, 16–17. As noted on i.19–20g, it is curious that Procopius should explain the term here, having just used it a few lines earlier.

The expression ἐπιβουλή χρῆσθαι, *epiboulē khrēsthai*, ‘to plot’, ‘to employ a plot’ is not found before Procopius, but is taken up by later Byzantine writers, e.g. Joh. Cin. iv.21 (187.1). Procopius describes the plotting as literally ‘immoderate’, μέτρον οὐκ ἐχούση, *metron ouk ekhousē*: this is probably a brief allusion to the massacres at Najrān in November 523, on which see i.19–20h.

20.1 καὶ μάχη νικήσας τόν τε βασιλέα καὶ τῶν Ὀμηριτῶν πολλοὺς ἔκτεινεν, ‘Having defeated their king in battle and killed many of the Homerites’. On the naval expedition of Kālēb of 525 and the defeat of the Ḥimyarite ruler Yūsuf, see i.19–20h; as noted there, *Mart. Ar.* 29–36 has a full account of events, although its reference to the participation of Roman ships is suspect (cf. Beaucamp 2010, 210–15). There may also have been an Axumite intervention in Ḥimyar a few years earlier, c.519, one whose departure was observed by Cosmas Indicopleustes, ii.56, so Gajda 2009, 80, Robin 2010, 70–2, Robin 2012a, 290. Modern accounts of the expedition of 525 may be found in Gajda 2009, 102–9, Hatke 2011, ch.5, Robin 2012a, 283–4 (who is prepared to countenance an alternative date between 528 and 530), Bowersock 2013, 92–105.

The death of Yūsuf is reported in *Lib. Him.* ch.42 (p.45b/cxxxiv), cf. Hatke 2011, 342–3, *Mart. Ar.* 37, *RIÉth* 195, tr. in Fisher 2015, 3.18 (160–2); it may be alluded to in the inscription *CIH* 621, translated in Hatke 2011, 320 and in Fisher 2015, 3.19 (162–3), cf. Gajda 2009, 277, Nebes 2010, 50–1, though note Smith 1954, 455 and n.8 for a different interpretation.

20.1 ἄλλον τε αὐτόθι Χριστιανὸν βασιλέα καταστήσάμενος, Ὅμηρίτην μὲν γένος, ὄνομα δὲ Ἑσιμιφαῖον, ‘he appointed another king there, a Christian, a Homerite by birth, Esimiphaeus by name’. Procopius’ Ἑσιμιφαῖος is the Sumūyafa’ Ashwa’ of the Ḥimyarite inscriptions; there are various variants in the manuscripts of Procopius’ text, cf. Smith 1954, 427 n.2. He need not be identified with a Sumūyafa’ Ashwa’ attested in an inscription (*CIH* 621) from the eastern part of Ḥimyar, on the coast, at Ḥuṣn al-Ghurāb, overlooking the port at Qāni’ (modern Bi’r ‘Alī). See Gajda 2009, 113 and 275–8, Nebes 2010, 50–1, Hatke 2011, 73–4, 311–17, though Robin in Fisher 2015, 163, is prepared to countenance the identification. Altheim and Stiehl 1971, 465 and n.10, suggested that Cosmas’ Ἀσβᾶς (Asbas), referred to at ii.56 as the governor of Adulis, is a rendering of the Ashwa’ part of the name, which would therefore make him the same person as Procopius’ Esimiphaeus, cf. Brakmann 2001, 756; it is unlikely, however, that a Ḥimyarite would have been governor of an Axumite port. Simeon of Beth Arsham, ed. Guidi, p.495/515, refers to the new ruler as *ʿlprn*, while the *Lib. Him.* ch.47 (p.54a/cxl) has *ʿ. wr*. See Robin 2008b, 46, Hatke 2011, 333–4.

The Syriac sources on the martyrs of Najrān and the *Mart. Ar.* omit Sumūyafa’ Ashwa’ entirely: they claim instead that Kālēb installed Abraha as king, cf. Detoraki 2010, 183–4. As Fiaccadori in Berger 2006, 70–1, notes, this was no doubt in order not to detract from the hagiographical aims of these works, cf. Marrassini 2014, 175–6. *Contra* Gajda 2009, 113, 115, Procopius makes no mention of Sumūyafa’ Ashwa’ being a convert to Christianity. Tardy 1999, 157 n.23, following Shahīd 1971, 228–30 (cf. *idem* 1994, 67–8), resolves the issue by supposing that Abraha is the Christian name taken by Sumūyafa’ Ashwa’ when he converted and was placed on the Ḥimyarite throne.

20.1 φόρον τε αὐτῷ τάξας Αἰθίοψι φέρειν ἀνὰ πᾶν ἔτος, ἐπ’ οἴκου ἀνεχώρησε, ‘He instructed him to pay a tribute to the Ethiopians every year and returned home.’ An inscription from Zafār alludes to the imposition of tribute payments: see Müller 2012, 10–12 and cf. *Lib. Him.* ch.48 (p.56a/cxlii). On the tributary status of Ḥimyar see Gajda 2009, Robin 2012a, 290–1. Kālēb spent some time in Ḥimyar, securing control of the whole kingdom and initiating a programme of church-building, e.g. at the capital Zafār, before returning to Ethiopia; the length of his sojourn in Ḥimyar is uncertain. See Beaucamp et al. 1999, 61, Fiaccadori in Berger 2006, 63, Hatke 2011, 344–5 (noting massacres committed by Ethiopian troops), Müller 2012, 9.

20.2 τούτου τοῦ Αἰθιοπῶν στρατοῦ δοῦλοι τε πολλοὶ καὶ ὅσοι ἐπιτηδείως ἐς τὸ κακουργεῖν εἶχον, ‘Among the Ethiopian army there were many slaves and people disposed towards mischief.’ *Mart. Ar.* 38 reports that Kālēb left behind a garrison of 10,000 men while the *V. Greg.* 9.243–4 has 15,000, cf. Fiaccadori in Berger 2006, 63, Marrassini 2014, 173, though both sources are of doubtful worth. Inscriptions, however, confirm their presence, cf. Hatke 2011, 307. Procopius appears to be drawing on rather vague (perhaps oral) sources for these details; his characterisation of the criminal elements in the Axumite forces recalls the frequently used term παράνομος, *paranomos*, ‘lawless’, ‘criminal’, in the *Mart. Ar.* for Yūsuf and his army.

For the expression ἐπιτηδείως ἐς ... ἔχω, *epitēdeĩōs es ... ekhō*, ‘I am disposed/inclined to’, cf. *Proc. Anecd.* 15.20, *Plut. Alcib.* 26.2 (with πρὸς, *pros*, instead). On a possible social dimension to this revolt see 20.4n.

20.2 ἀγαθὴ γὰρ ὑπερφυῶς ἐστίν, ‘for it (the Ḥimyarite land) is extremely good’. See i.19–20h on the fertility of southern Arabia, cf. Tardy 1999, 27–32, Hoyland 2001, 85–8, Robin 2010, 50. Inscriptions also testify to the quantities of booty seized on campaigns in the region: see Beaucamp et al. 1999, 34, Hatke 2011, 218, 221–2.

20.3 αὐτὸν μὲν ἐν τινὶ τῶν ἐκείνη φρουρίων καθεῖρξαν, ἕτερον δὲ Ὀμηρίταις βασιλέα κατεστήσαντο, Ἀβραμον ὄνομα, ‘They (the rebels) imprisoned him in a fortress there, and appointed another king for the Homerites, Abramus by name.’ Procopius describes these events as unfolding ‘not long afterwards’, a typically vague chronological indicator, on which see i.4.1n. No other source indicates the length of Sumūyafa‘ Ashwa’s reign, which could extend until the mid 530s. See Fiaccadori in Berger 2006, 63, cf. Gajda 2009, 116–17, Robin 2012a, 285 (placing the start of Abraha’s reign c.535). Those who want to identify Procopius’ Esimiphaeus with the Sumūyafa‘ Ashwa’ of *CIH* 621 note that the inscription was found in a fortress, though this hardly suffices to make the inference, cf. Gajda 2009, 277 and see 20.1n. On the name Abramus or Abraha, of Ethiopian origin, see Robin 2012b, 5–6: as he notes, 2018, 37, it is not connected with the biblical figure Abraham but is rather Ethiopic, meaning ‘(God) has illuminated’. Hatke 2011, 340–2, tentatively suggests that an Axumite commander mentioned in the *Lib. Him.* 42 (chapter heading, p.6a/civ), *Z’wns*, might be identical with Abraha, assuming that he changed his name upon converting to Christianity, cf. 20.1n on Esimiphaeus’ name.

20.4 ὁ δὲ Ἀβραμὸς οὗτος Χριστιανὸς μὲν ἦν, δοῦλος δὲ Ῥωμαίου ἀνδρὸς, ἐν πόλει Αἰθιοπῶν Ἀδούλιδι ἐπὶ τῇ κατὰ θάλασσαν ἐργασίᾳ διατριβὴν ἔχοντος. ‘This Abramus was a Christian, but a slave of a Roman in the Ethiopian city of Adulis whose occupation was maritime trade.’ See i.19–20h on Abraha’s (Abramus’) remarkably successful career; cf. Gajda 2009, 116–46, Robin 2012a, 291–2. As Robin notes, Procopius’ portrayal of him is quite different from (e.g.) that of the *Mart. Ar.* 38, in which he is described as ‘God-fearing and very Christian’. One version in the Arab tradition, the *Nihāya* (on which see Bosworth 1999, 258 n.624 with references), is aware of a social aspect to Abraha’s uprising, claiming that the Axumite king’s nominee, Aryāt, was his nephew (cf. 20.5, where Procopius refers to the Ethiopian commander as a relative of Kālēb) and that the Ethiopian nobility oppressed the Ḥimyarite population, thus provoking the revolt; Abraha, according to this version, was of humble status. See Kister 1972, 61 n.5, Greatrex 1998, 232, Bosworth 1999, 232 n.571.

Although Abraha was clearly an Ethiopian (cf. Tabari 943/232), an association with Roman commerce is not implausible: commercial ties between Adulis and the Roman empire were strong, see 19.22n. Whether there is any significance to him having been a slave, *doulos*, in a city whose etymology was connected by some to escaped slaves is doubtful, cf. 19.22n.

The expression ἐργασία κατὰ θάλασσαν, *ergasia kata thalassan*, ‘maritime business’ goes back to Demosthenes, *Or.* 33.4; cf. *Proc.* iii.14.7 and elsewhere.

20.5 Ἐλλησθεαῖος μαθὼν τίσασθαί τε Ἀβραμον ὁμοῦ τοῖς ξὺν αὐτῷ ἐπαναστᾶσι τῆς ἐς τὸν Ἑσιμιφαῖον ἀδικίας ἐν σπουδῇ ἔχων. ‘When Hellesthaeus learnt this, he was eager to obtain vengeance for the injustice to Esimiphaeus on Abramus and those who had risen up with him.’ *Mart. Ar.* 39 and other hagiographical sources claim that the Axumite king retired to a monastic cell after his earlier victory, cf. Fiacadori in Berger 2006, 63–5, Marrassini 2014, 174–6. Procopius’ version is more plausible, cf. Hatke 2011, 274–5, Robin 2012a, 291, although Fiacadori 2006, 330, is prepared to try to reconcile the two versions, suggesting a brief emergence from retirement.

20.6 κρύφα τοῦ ἄρχοντος τῷ Ἀβράμῳ ἐς λόγους ἦλθον, ἐς τε ξυμβολὴν καταστάντες τοῖς ἐναντίοις, ἐπειδὴ ἐν τῷ ἔργῳ ἐγένοντο, κτείναντες τὸν ἄρχοντα τῷ τε τῶν πολεμίων στρατῷ ἀνემίγνυντο

καὶ αὐτοῦ ἔμμενον. ‘So they (the soldiers) secretly entered negotiations with Abramus unbeknownst to their commander and after they came into battle with their enemies, when they were in the fray, they killed their commander, joined the ranks of the enemy army and remained there.’ There is a markedly Thucydidean tone here, e.g. in the use of κρύφα, *krypha*, ‘unbeknownst to’, used similarly with a genitive by Thuc. at i.101.2, though usually on its own. The expression ἐς λόγους ἦλθον, *es logous êlthon*, ‘they entered negotiations’, is also a favourite of Thucydides, e.g. at v.37.2, viii.48.1, cf. Hdt. ix.41.1 and Priscus, frg.11.2.579/8.135 (p.40); Procopius employs it frequently, e.g. at iv.22.19. Likewise the phrase ἐν τῷ ἔργῳ, *en tō ergō*, ‘in the fray’, is Thucydidean, e.g. at i.105.5, though popular also in Arrian, e.g. *Anab.* iii.14.5. On the other hand, in the expression τῷ τε τῶν πολεμίων στρατῷ ἀνεμίγνυντο, *tō te tōn polemiōn stratō anemignunto*, ‘they joined the ranks of the enemy army’, the verb ἀναμ(ε)ίγνυμι, *anam(e)ignumi*, ‘I join company’, used in the passive with a dative, is found first of such defections in Plut. *Otho*, 13.6; it is common in Procopius, in whose time transfers of allegiance were frequent, cf. (e.g.) ii.17.28, vii.36.26. The phrase ἐς ξυμβολήν, *es xymbolēn*, ‘in(to) battle’, while favoured by Procopius (e.g. at iii.8.25, also with the verb καθίστημι, *kathistēmi*), is not found in earlier writers. Malalas, however, uses εἰς συμβολήν, *eis symbolēn*, the standard Greek form, to mean ‘in battle’, 6.20, 14.10. It is thus presumably a Late Antique usage.

One tradition reported by Tabari corresponds to the reaction here described by Procopius: Ibn Hishām recounts that, upon learning of Abraha’s coup, the Axumite ruler despatched an army under a certain Aryāt in an effort to unseat him. Abraha challenged him to a duel and sent a slave in his stead, who succeeded in defeating him. See Tabari 930–1/212–13, cf. Gajda 2009, 117–18. Other Arabic traditions describe Aryāt as being the ruler who succeeded Yūsuf and was overthrown in turn by Abraha, Tabari 943/232, cf. Dinawari, 63–4/364–5 with Gajda 2009, 118, Hoyland 2001, 250 n.4. Robin 2012b, 72, suggests dates of 535 and 537 for these two attempts by Hellesthaeus (Kālēb) to avenge himself on Abraha.

20.7 θυμῷ δὲ πολλῷ Ἑλλησθεαῖος ἐχόμενος, ‘Greatly enraged, Hellesthaeus ...’ Stock Procopian phrasing for anger, cf. 7.31. Ibn Hishām’s version in Tabari recounts that Abraha got wind of the king’s anger and therefore offered him his submission, which was accepted. See Tabari 931/213–14.

20.8 Ἐλλησθεαίου δὲ τελευτήσαντος φόρους Ἀβραμος ὡμολόγησε φέρειν τῷ μετ' αὐτὸν τὴν Αἰθιοπῶν βασιλείαν παραλαβόντι, οὕτω τε τὴν ἀρχὴν ἐκρατύνατο. ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν χρόνῳ τῷ ὑστέρῳ ἐγένετο. 'When Hellesthaeus died, Abramus agreed to pay tribute to the one who inherited the Ethiopian throne from him, and thus he secured his rule. These things, however, took place subsequently.' The date of Hellesthaeus' (Kālēb's) death is unknown; it must have occurred by 547, when a reconciliation between Abraha and the Axumites is attested by the Mārib dam inscription. See Robin 2012a, 291, cf. Fiaccadori 2006, 330–1, positing a struggle for the throne after Kālēb's abdication between two of his sons; the tradition that reports his abandonment of the throne for the monastic life (see 20.5n) is vague on the date of his death.

Procopius' description of Abraha securing or strengthening his rule is ambiguous, i.e. as to whether it was his own control of the kingdom that he bolstered or the kingdom itself, cf. i.6.19n. His reference to the events happening at a later time is vague, cf. Hdt. vi.73.1, Dio Cassius 51.1.4, 62.28.4, Socr. *HE* ii.43.7, Thdr. *HE* v.39.15; in all these cases, save the last, it is followed by a τότε, *tote*, 'then', indicating the resumption of the narrative after a section that anticipated events about to be recounted, cf. Braun 1894, 11. Procopius uses the expression five times, but for periods stretching from a matter of months (iii.7.25) to more than fifteen years (iii.4.11); hence nothing can be inferred from the formulation.

20.9 Τότε δὲ Ἰουστινιανὸς βασιλεὺς ἐν μὲν Αἰθίοπι βασιλεύοντος Ἐλλησθεαίου, Ἑσιμιφαίου δὲ ἐν Ὀμηρίταις, πρεσβευτὴν Ἰουλιανὸν ἔπεμψεν, 'At that time the Emperor Justinian, in the reign of Hellesthaeus in Ethiopia and Esimiphaeus among the Homerites, sent Julian as an ambassador.' The τότε, *tote*, 'then', resumes the narrative thread from 20.1, i.e. to the time of the war between Rome and Persia; it cannot be used to infer a date between the battle of Callinicum and the events related in the following chapter, *contra* Beaucamp 2010, 200 and n.14. The likely date is 530 or 531, cf. Greatrex 1998, 238, cf. Beaucamp 2010, *loc. cit.*

Three sources refer to diplomatic activity in the region in this period: Procopius, Nonnosus and Mal. Theoph. 244–5 supplements Mal.18.56, adding the name of the ambassador, Julian, but wrongly replaces Malalas' reference to the 'Indian' (i.e. Axumite) ruler Elesboas (i.e. Hellesthaeus) with the name Arethas; he also displaces the entry to 571/2, perhaps, as

Mango and Scott 1997, 363 n.7, suggest, to fill gaps in his account for these years. Since both Malalas (supplemented by Theophanes) and Procopius mention Julian as the ambassador, it is most likely that they refer to the same mission. Malalas' account concentrates on the exotic nature of the Axumite court and insists that the king immediately acceded to Justinian's request to attack Persia. This is in line with Procopius' more downbeat assessment at 20.11: much was promised, but little delivered. See Greatrex 1998, 236–8, Beaucamp 2010, 201–3 (refuting Shahîd 1995, 144–6), but note Marasco 2000, 267–72, preferring to dissociate the two. There are no grounds for supposing that Malalas' ambassador should be identified with Nonnosus, rather than Julian, *pace* Treadgold 2007a, 256 n.101.

The missions described by Nonnosus most probably took place after that of Julian, later in the 530s. See Appendix 3, p. 679, for a translation and brief commentary. Sections 9–13 (without the final sentence) are found also in *Exc. de leg. Rom.*, 91.24–92.20.

20.9 ἀξιῶν ἄμφω Ῥωμαίοις διὰ τὸ τῆς δόξης ὁμόγνωνον Πέρσαις πολεμοῦσι ξυνάρασθαι, 'asking both to aid the Romans in their war against Persia because of their shared faith'. The verb in question, ἀξιόω, *axioō*, can be rendered 'I ask' or 'I demand/require' (as Dewing–Kaldellis take it). Given the diplomatic context, the former seems more plausible, cf. ii.3.29, a comparable situation.

Although both the Axumites and the Ḥimyarites were anti-Chalcedonian Christians, i.e. Miaphysites, such considerations were inconsequential when issues of foreign policy and alliances were concerned: see (e.g.) Vasiliev 1950, 283–4, Letsios 1989a, 272, Fowden 1993, ch.5, esp. 112–19 on this period, cf. Greatrex 2014a, 261.

20.9 ὅπως Αἰθίοπες μὲν ὠνούμενοί τε τὴν μέταξαν ἐξ Ἰνδῶν ἀποδιδόμενοί τε αὐτὴν ἐς Ῥωμαίους, '(Justinian's idea was) that the Ethiopians, by buying raw silk from the Indians and selling it to the Romans'. The emperor's objective was to bypass the Persian middleman in obtaining silk for the Roman empire: if the Ethiopians could acquire it directly from the Far East, then it would no longer be necessary to pay large sums to a power with which the empire was now in conflict. Already Ammianus 23.6.67 notes the popularity of silk in the Roman empire in the fourth century; its trade was strictly regulated through the *commerciarii*, the successors of the earlier *comites commerciorum*, who

were the only people authorised to purchase it. Naturally, when warfare broke out between Rome and Persia, the Persians could choose either to inflate their prices (for raw silk) or to withhold supplies altogether; there is little doubt that the Sasanian state profited from the sales, cf. Lukonin 1983, 741. The emperor's plan was therefore quite rational, cf. Rubin 1986b, 383–6. Phillipson 2009, 355, notes the presence of Axumite vessels in southern India by the early sixth century, cf. Tomber 2008, 163–4, Walburg 2008, 328 (citing Cosmas xi.21), Strauch 2012, 370–6, Howard-Johnston 2017, 287, but see Darley 2013, 207–8, for a more downbeat assessment. The Axumites may well already have long exported ivory in quantity to the Roman empire, so Phillipson 2009, 357–60. On the silk trade in the sixth century in general see Smith 1954, 426, Pigulewska 1969, 158–71, Oikonomides 1986, 33–4, Greatrex 2005, 501–3, and now Zuckerman 2013, esp. 323–32; on the silk trade in the Ḥijāz see Heck 2003, 549–50. See 20.12n on Procopius' assessment of Justinian's scheme.

20.9 αὕτη δὲ ἐστὶν ἡ μέταξα, ἐξ ἧς εἰώθασι τὴν ἐσθῆτα ἐργάζεσθαι, ἣν πάλαι μὲν Ἕλληνες Μηδικὴν ἐκάλουν, τανῦν δὲ σηρικὴν ὀνομάζουσιν, 'This is the raw silk from which they make clothing which the Greeks in ancient times used to call Persian, but which they now call "silk".' The first term, μέταξα, *metaxa*, emerges in the Late Antique period: it is first found in Diocletian's price edict, 24.1a (with variant readings using instead the term σηρικὸς, *sērikos*), while Philoponus uses it in the context of describing the production of raw silk, *In libros de gen. anim. comm.*, 153–4. It is also the word used in the title of Justinian's regulations on the importing of raw silk, dating probably from the 540s, *App.* 5, 1113–14 in Miller and Sarris (cf. 1113 n.1), with Zuckerman 2013, 324 n.3, on earlier editions and translations; cf. Brandes 2002, 272–81. Hdt. i.135.1 is the first to refer to Μηδικὴ ἐσθῆς, *Mēdikē esthēs*, 'Medic dress' as something particularly luxurious; these robes were presumably at least sometimes made from silk, cf. Rawlinson 1879, 316. The term ἐσθῆς refers to the 'dress materials' (tr. Williamson and Sarris, 103), as is clear from *Anecd.* 25.16, cf. Zuckerman 2013, 325, 332, from which clothing would be prepared, as Procopius also explains here. The contemporary term for silk noted by Procopius σηρικὴ, *sērikē*, goes back to the first century A.D. and is found already in Josephus, *B.J.* 7.126, as well as in the *Peripl. Mar. Erythr.*, e.g. at 56; it is derived from the Latin adjective *sericus*, referring to the Chinese, the Seres, and by extension to garments imported from there. See Casson 1989, 292.

Procopius clearly had a particular interest in the silk trade, as emerges from his lengthy diatribe against the measures introduced by Peter Barsymes at *Anecd.* 25.13–26, which are related in some way to the legislation of Justinian just mentioned. The issue of how Procopius' complaints relate to the law is much debated: Zuckerman 2013, 323–32, offers a persuasive analysis of the issue with further references.

20.9 Ὁμηρίται δὲ ὅπως Καῖσόν τὸν φυγάδα φύλαρχον Μαδδηνοῖς καταστήσονται καὶ στρατῷ μεγάλῳ αὐτῶν τε Ὁμηριτῶν καὶ Σαρακηνῶν τῶν Μαδδηνῶν ἐσβάλωσιν ἐς τὴν Περσῶν γῆν. 'He intended also that the Homerites should make the exiled Qays phylarch of the Maddeni and with a large army of Homerites and Saracen Maddeni invade Persian territory.' On the Maddeni, i.e. the Ma'add, see 19.14n; traditionally they fell under the control of the Ḥimyarites, which explains Justinian's request, viz. that Esimiphaeus should appoint Qays (Caïsus) as phylarch, i.e. chief, of this group. This Qays is Caisus in *PLRE* iii; various identifications have been proposed for him. The once popular view that associated him with the poet Imru' al-Qays is generally now rejected. Robin 2008a, 176, identified him rather with Qays b. Salama, known from Arabic traditions, cf. Shahīd 1995, 154, with Robin 2012b, 41–4, *idem* 2012c, 77–80, for more detail. Both these two individuals were grandsons of al-Harith the Kindite. Robin now countenances another possible identification with a Qays who was a nephew of the Kindite phylarch. See Appendix 3, nn.6, 14, pp. 682–3. On Qays and the projected invasion see the following notes.

20.10 ὁ δὲ Καῖσὸς οὗτος γένους μὲν ἦν τοῦ φυλαρχικοῦ καὶ διαφερόντως ἀγαθὸς τὰ πολέμια, τῶν δὲ τινα Ἑσιμιφαίου συγγενῶν κτείνας ἐς γῆν ἔφευγεν, ἥ δὲ ἔρημος ἀνθρώπων παντάπασίς ἐστιν. 'This Qays was of a family of phylarchs and very experienced in warfare, but he fled to an utterly uninhabited land after killing one of Esimiphaeus' relatives.'

Nonnosus recounts three separate missions undertaken to this same Qays, two by his father Abraham, and one by himself. He confirms the important status of Qays, whom he describes as a descendant of the Kindite ruler Arethas (al-Ḥarith) and, at the time of the first embassy, as exercising the role of 'phylarch of the Saracens' (§2); he later specifies that he ruled over the Ma'add and the Kindites (§4). The three missions aimed to build ties to the Roman empire, but also to bring the ruler himself within the Roman orbit. On the third attempt, Abraham was

able to induce him to resign his phylarchate and to enter Roman service in Palestine (§8). It is immediately apparent that Qays' status at the time of the missions recounted by Nonnosus is quite different from that described by Procopius. The most plausible assumption is that Justinian's request was heeded and that Qays received his appointment. But when the war with Persia finished in 532, the emperor may have felt that he could be of more use within the empire; hence the missions described by Nonnosus will have taken place later in the 530s. Alternatively, as Robin (forthcoming) has now proposed, Justinian sought to conciliate Abraha sometime after the renewal of war with Persia in 540 by withdrawing a powerful phylarch, supposedly under Himyarite rule, to Roman territory. See Greatrex 1998, 236–8, Beaucamp 2010, 203–6; Shahîd 1995, 155–60, prefers to associate Nonnosus' own mission with that led by Julian, cf. Marasco 2000, 271–2. See Appendix 3, p. 679, for further discussion. Nothing further is known of the relative of Esimiphaeus (Sumūyafa 'Ashwa') said to have been killed by Qays.

20.11 ἔδρασε δὲ αὐτοῖν τὰ ὡμολογημένα οὐδέτερος, 'but neither did what he had agreed', as Procopius proceeds to explain. Perhaps part of a deliberate criticism of Justinian, so Cesa 1981, 1982, 199–200, with i.19–20g. Procopius uses the archaic dual form αὐτοῖν, *autoin*, in the genitive (of the two of them).

20.12 τοῖς τε γὰρ Αἰθίοψι τὴν μέταξαν ὠνεῖσθαι πρὸς τῶν Ἰνδῶν ἀδύνατα ἦν, ἐπεὶ αἰεὶ οἱ Περσῶν ἔμποροι πρὸς αὐτοῖς τοῖς ὅρμοις γινόμενοι, οὐ δὴ τὰ πρῶτα αἱ τῶν Ἰνδῶν νῆες καταίρουσιν, ἀτε χώραν προσοικοῦντες τὴν ὁμορον, ἅπαντα ὠνεῖσθαι τὰ φορτία εἰώθασιν. 'The Ethiopians could not buy the silk from the Indians because the Persian merchants were always at the harbours where the Indian ships first anchor, since they live in the adjoining districts and buy up all the cargoes.' It is hard to gauge the accuracy of this contention, nor is it entirely clear which ports he has in mind. Power 2012a, 39, suggests the Indus delta in modern Pakistan or the Kathiawar peninsula (in north-west India), noting that both are close to Persian territories, cf. Cosmas xi.16 with Wink 1996, 50. Others have supposed that the reference is to trade through Taprobane, i.e. Sri Lanka (Ceylon), also reported by Cosmas at xi.17–18: he recounts an anecdote about a Roman trader, Sopater, who was preferred by the local king to his Persian rivals, albeit earlier in the sixth century: see Wolska-Conus, 348 n.1 *ad loc.*, Bopearachchi 1993, 75–9, *idem* 2006, Howard-Johnston 2017, 294–5, but

note the doubts of Darley 2013, 119–20, 318, on this episode. Weerakkody 1997, 178–9, finds a reference to Sri Lanka unlikely, but his proposal that Procopius must be referring to Ḥaḍramawt here, because it is in the context of Arabia, is unconvincing; he also accepts that India may be meant. In the context of Sri Lanka, a bulla with seal impressions at Mantai, in the north-west of the island, appear to confirm the presence of Persian traders: see Carswell 1991, 199, Christides 1996, 71–3, Daryae 2003, esp. 8–11, Ulrich 2011, 381, cf. Whitehouse and Williamson 1973, 43–5, Darley 2013, 257–8. On Mantai see Carswell et al. 2013, esp. the contributions of Kiribamune and Francis. Despite Procopius, Roman coins remain present throughout the period, as is underlined by Mundell Mango 1996, 156–7, although tailing off in the late fifth century, so Bopearachchi 1992, 112–17, cf. Walburg 2008, 323–4, Darley 2013, 250; Howard-Johnston 2017, 292, is more upbeat. Hence Procopius' verdict is likely to be unduly negative: as Mundell Mango puts it, 1996, 163, 'control by Persian "middlemen" of any routes or ports may have made trade between Byzantium and the East more expensive rather than eliminating it', cf. Christides 1989–93, 33–4, Hatke 2011, 241–2. See too Darley 2013, 300–15, arguing that the complete absence of Sasanian coin finds from south India and their near absence from Sri Lanka tends to imply that the middlemen need not have been Persian, cf. Banaji 2015, 124–5. Howard-Johnston, 2017, 292–3, discusses other traces of a Persian presence, however.

It was probably at this same time that monks embarked on their mission to obtain silkworm eggs and bring them to Roman territory, although Procopius only recounts this development at viii.17.1–8: see the persuasive analysis of Zuckerman 2013, 333–40. The Ethiopian conquest of Ḥimyar may also in itself have disrupted Sasanian trade, so Shahīd 1956, 187–8, cf. Heck 2003, 559.

20.12 καὶ τοῖς Ὀμηρίταις χαλεπὸν ἔδοξεν εἶναι χώραν ἀμειψαμένοις ἔρημόν τε καὶ χρόνου πολλοῦ ὁδὸν κατατείνουσιν ἐπ' ἀνθρώπους πολλῶ μαχιμωτέρους ἰέναι. 'It seemed hard to the Homerites that they should leave their country and go on a lonely and long journey against an enemy that was far more warlike.' Yet as Procopius goes on to report in the next section, they did later venture on an expedition. The reason for the inactivity of the Ḥimyarites should rather be attributed to the instability that followed the usurpation of Abraha: the new ruler needed to secure his power, defend against the Ethiopian reaction, and reassert control over the neighbouring peoples, such as the Kindites. See i.19–20h and i.20.8n and

(e.g.) Gajda 2009, 126–35, Robin 2012a, 291–2, *idem* 2012b, 47. The ‘more warlike’ people to which Procopius alludes are the Persians.

20.13 ἀλλὰ καὶ Ἀβραμὸς ὕστερον, ὅτε δὴ τὴν ἀρχὴν ὡς ἀσφαλέστατα ἐκρατύνατο, πολλάκις μὲν Ἰουστινιανῷ βασιλεῖ ὠμολόγησεν ἐς γῆν τὴν Περσίδα ἐσβάλλειν, ἅπαξ δὲ μόνον τῆς πορείας ἀρξάμενος ὀπίσω εὐθύς ἀπεχώρησε, ‘Likewise later Abramus, when he had strengthened his rule and made it as firm as possible, made many agreements with the Emperor Justinian to invade Persian territory, but only once actually set out on the journey, and then came back immediately.’ As ever, Procopius fails to specify when this abortive expedition took place. It has been suggested that the reference is to one of the ambitious campaigns led by Abraha into central Arabia in 552, commemorated by several inscriptions. By the late 540s he had overcome resistance among neighbouring peoples previously within the Ḥimyarite orbit; the Bīr Murayghān inscription (Ry 506) of September 552, which signals, for instance, the submission of al-Mundhir’s son ‘Amr to Abraha, indicates a significant Ḥimyarite success, which would have had an impact on Persia as a result of the defeat of their allies, the Naṣrids. So Robin 2012b, 47–51, Robin and Tayran 2012, esp. 542, cf. Zwettler 2000, 260–1 (but with an earlier dating of the inscription), Gajda 2009, 137–42, Robin 2018, 1346. For the Bīr Murayghān inscriptions see Fisher 2015, 3.23–4 (169–71). The implications of Robin’s view for the date of the publication of *Wars* i–vii are discussed in Greatrex 2016b, cf. already Conrad 1987, 227–8, Bowersock 2013, 115–16. For maps illustrating the provenance of the inscriptions and the peoples concerned see Gajda 2009, 139, Robin 2012b, 77.

20.13 τὰ μὲν οὖν Αἰθιοπῶν τε καὶ Ὀμηριτῶν ταύτη Ῥωμαίοις ἐχώρησεν, ‘Thus did Ethiopian and Homerite affairs turn out for the Romans.’ The expression ταύτη ἐχώρησε(ν), *tauta ekhōrēse(n)*, ‘turned out thus’, is found occasionally in Procopius (e.g. at 26.12 or vii.12.16), always concluding an excursus.

i.21–2 The Conclusion of the War and the Eternal Peace (531–2)

History

The battle of Callinicum did nothing to restore damaged Persian prestige after the defeats of 530, even if it had discredited Belisarius. A further brief Persian incursion into Osrhoene resulted only in the capture of a minor fort at Abgersaton. Justinian, while ensuring that the cities of the

East were ready to withstand a siege if necessary, pushed hard to obtain a negotiated settlement, despatching Rufinus to the Persian court. Kavadh, despite his advancing years, prevaricated, and late in the year undertook one last invasion, targeting the important frontier city of Martyropolis. But despite the vigorous efforts of the besiegers, the defenders held out. Since the siege had been started only in September, time was on the side of the besieged; in the meantime, a Roman army under Sittas and Hermogenes had taken up position nearby. Once the Persian commanders learnt both of the death of Kavadh and of the approach of a Hunnic army said to be allied to the Romans, they quickly withdrew.

Khusro, having succeeded his father, sought to reopen negotiations; initially Justinian, perhaps hoping to benefit from instability at the Persian court, demurred, but in the end a truce was agreed and talks begun. A lightning Sabir Hun invasion of Roman territory in December failed to derail the process; Rufinus, who enquired into the issue at Justinian's request, established that the Persians were not responsible for it. Probably in February or March 532 the Roman ambassadors Alexander, Thomas, Hermogenes and Rufinus met Khusro on the Tigris. Khusro was able to obtain remarkably favourable terms: he would receive 11,000 pounds of gold and keep the Lazic forts he had taken, while the Romans would be obliged to return the Persarmenian forts to him and to move the base of the *dux Mesopotamiae* from Dara to Constantia. The envoys were not empowered to cede the Persarmenian forts and so Rufinus was sent to Justinian to consult him; the emperor accepted the terms, but before Rufinus returned, Khusro was already preparing for conflict, having heard that the ambassador had been executed by the emperor. Although Rufinus was able to calm the situation, Justinian had second thoughts and hastily instructed his envoys not to agree to the cession of Pharangium and Bolum, the Armenian forts. Only with difficulty was Rufinus able to extract himself and the money, already being conveyed to the Persians, but thereby he aroused the suspicions of his colleagues. Despite this false start, a final agreement was concluded, probably in September 532 which, while returning Pharangium and Bolum to the Persians, allowed the Romans to recover the Lazic forts at Sarapanis and Scanda. The peace was known as 'eternal' or, more literally, 'indefinite' or 'endless' since it had no expiry date. The relief it occasioned throughout the Roman East is attested by a joyful inscription from Hierapolis (tr. in Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 97, cf. Yon and Gatiér 2009, 76–8).

Bibliography: Rubin 1960, 291–7, Scott 1992, 163–5, Greatrex 1998, 207–18, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 93–7, Leppin 2011, 136–7.

Historiography

The final stages of the war that had begun in 502 are covered in detail not only by Procopius, but also by Malalas (18.61–70) and Pseudo-Zachariah of Mytilene (ix.5–7). Malalas in particular, evidently relying on reports sent back to the capital (mentioned at 18.65, 66), provides a wealth of detail on the fall of Abgersaton (cf. PZ ix.4), as well as on successes achieved by the *magister militum per Armeniam* Dorotheus, which helped to provoke the Persian siege of Martyropolis; PZ ix.5 highlights the role of Bessas.

Procopius' account is relatively brief, incorporating a digression on the spies employed by either side (21.11–16), which serves to explain how the Persians were persuaded that the approaching Huns had defected to the Romans. He glosses over the sacking of Belisarius, claiming that he was being redeployed against the Vandals (21.2), although his removal from command occurred in mid 531, well before the expedition to North Africa was planned. The loose chronological structure of this part of the *Wars*, including the digression on southern Arabia, allows this assertion to seem plausible. The placing of the Nika riot at i.24 is a further indication of how Procopius has subordinated chronology to narrative structure: he prefers to conclude his account of the war before going on to relate plots against both Khusro and Justinian that occurred 'immediately' (23.1) after the peace was signed. In fact, of course, the Nika riot took place in January 532, while negotiations were continuing. It is possible, as we have suggested elsewhere, that at an early stage Procopius had envisaged continuing directly from the end of i.22 to iii.1, the start of the Vandal war: see Greatrex 1995, 2–3.

Procopius highlights in these chapters the anger of both Kavadh and his son Khusro towards the Romans; the ruthlessness of the latter is further underlined in i.23. Kavadh's anger is still swollen at 21.1 (cf. i.7.31), while at 22.2 the Roman envoys are obliged to try to 'tame' his young successor and only just, by their fawning conduct, manage to bring him under control (22.3). This sort of rapport between Khusro and Roman envoys, where in this case Rufinus finds it necessary to prostrate himself before the king (22.13), anticipates the dynamic in *Wars* ii. The contrast between Justinian, who, it turns out, has not executed Rufinus in a rage (22.9) and who subsequently keeps him in favour despite the accusations of his colleagues (22.16) and Khusro, who viciously eliminates all rivals (23.6, 21, 25), should be underlined, given that the tendency has been to search only for veiled criticisms of the emperor.

Bibliography: Dahn 1865, 125–6, Kirchner 1887, 17, Brodka 1998, *idem* 2004, 120–4 (on the portrayal of Khusro), Huyse 2015, 202, Whately 2016, 96–7, 110–11 (on the issue of anger), Roberto 2021.

21.1 Ἑρμογένης δὲ τότε, ‘Hermogenes, at this juncture’ or ‘then’. Cf. 20.9 for this use of τότε, *tote*, ‘then’, resuming the main narrative. In this case Procopius explicitly adds that he is referring to the immediate aftermath of Callinicum. On Hermogenes see 13.10n.

21.1 ἐπέραινεν οὐδὲν τῆς εἰρήνης πέρι, ‘but he achieved no agreement about peace’. The placing of the preposition περί, *peri*, after the noun it qualifies (‘peace’) is relatively uncommon, but see *LSJ*, 1367, s.v. περί, D. In conjunction with a reference to peace, it might evoke (e.g.) Ar. *Pax* 216; cf. also Priscus frg.27.1.2–3/21.1 (p.59, concerning the Nobatae and Blemmyes, tribes discussed by Procopius in i.19).

21.1 οἰδαίνοντα, ‘bursting’, i.e. with rage. The verb is more generally used in a medical context, but cf. Them. *Or.*7, 98c3 (148.3–4), Hesychius, *Lexicon*, O194; Procopius uses it in a similar sense at iii.4.37. See also i.11.30n, where Procopius uses the term περιώδυνος, *periōdunos*, for Khusro, here meaning ‘suffering great pain’, likewise often employed in a medical context. Procopius returns here to a theme already underlined at 18.51–6, Kavadh’s dissatisfaction with Azarethes’ performance; it is the first reference, however, to Kavadh succumbing to fury, a trait far more associated with Khusro, who is about to take over from his father.

21.2 καὶ Βελισάριος βασιλεῖ ἐς Βυζάντιον μετάπεμπος ἦλθε περιηρημένος ἦν εἶχεν ἀρχήν, ἐφ’ ᾧ ἐπὶ Βανδίλους στρατεύσειε. ‘And Belisarius was summoned by the emperor and came to Byzantium, relieved of his command in order to campaign against the Vandals.’ Procopius deliberately obscures the real grounds for Belisarius’ return to Constantinople, viz. the enquiry held into his failure at Callinicum, cf. i.16–18g, i.21–2g and Averil Cameron 1985, 158. From a narrative point of view, this serves to explain his presence at Constantinople for the Nika riot, i.24.40 below, even if the relative chronology is awry: see i.21–2g.

21.3 Σίττας δὲ, Ἰουστινιανῷ βασιλεῖ τοῦτο δεδογμένον, ὡς φυλάξων τὴν ἑῴαν ἐνταῦθα ἦλθε. ‘Sittas, on the orders of the Emperor Justinian, came to guard the East.’ Sittas was *magister militum praesentalis* and had been campaigning in Armenia in 530 (see i.15), where he no

doubt had remained. See Greatrex 1998, 207–8, noting other measures taken to bolster eastern defences.

21.4 καὶ Πέρσαι αὐθις στρατῷ πολλῷ ἐς Μεσοποταμίαν, Χαναράγγου τε καὶ Ἀσπεβέδου καὶ Μερμερόου ἡγουμένων σφίσιν, ἐσέβαλον, ‘The Persians again invaded Mesopotamia with a large army under the command of Khanaranges and Aspebedes and Mihr-Mihroe.’ As noted in i.21–2g, Procopius has passed over a number of incidents to focus on the invasion of Sophanene by a substantial army; earlier, Roman commanders in this vicinity had inflicted considerable losses on Persian forces, capturing a commander and laying waste parts of Persian-controlled Arzanene, just across the border from Martyropolis. See PZ ix.5–6a and Mal. 18.65–6 with Greatrex 1998, 208–10. This Persian invasion was thus a reaction to Roman pressure in the region.

Among the Persian commanders, Khanaranges recalls the Persian office of *kanārang*, to which Procopius refers at i.5.4, cf. PZ vii.4a; the office is that of commander of the Persian eastern frontier, cf. i.5.4n. It is also possible, as noted there, that the reference could be to the Kanārangīyān family; cf. also Ciancaglini 2011, 112, for an instance of the name *kanārang* on a seal. Aspebedes is doubtless another case of Procopius mistaking an office for a name: see i.9.24n and i.11.5n; it need not therefore here refer to the same individual who concluded the Anastasian war in 506. On Mihr-Mihroe see i.15.2n.

21.5 Μαρτυρόπολιν ἐγκαθεζόμενοι ἐπολιόρκουν, οὗ δὴ Βούζης τε καὶ Βέσσας τεταγμένοι ἐπὶ τῇ φυλακῇ ἔτυχον, ‘they pitched camp and laid siege to Martyropolis, where Buzes and Bessas were stationed with a garrison’. While Mal. 18.65–6 makes no mention of these two commanders, focusing instead on the *magister militum per Armeniam* Dorotheus, PZ ix.5–6a confirms the role they played. Buzes had taken part in the struggle for Minduos (i.13.5) and served at Dara (i.13.19), while Procopius noted Bessas’ presence in the Anastasian War (i.8.3). At this point Bessas was a *dux*, as PZ ix.5 states explicitly, based at Martyropolis, and thus cannot have been the *dux Mesopotamiae*. See PZT 325 n.73, Greatrex 2007c, 90. According to PZ ix.5a (p.97.19–20) Buzes’ force was ‘not inconsiderable’, *l’ b’z’ur*, even if Procopius emphasises below the precariousness of the city’s defences.

On the distance from Amida to Martyropolis see i.8.22 with the note *ad loc.* 240 stades at 7 stades to the Roman mile is the equivalent of 50.5 km, a serious underestimate, given that the actual distance is 75 km (89 km

according to Feissel 2002, 398), with a further 20 km to the river Nymphius, cf. Gregory 1997, vol.2, 66. See also Appendix 2, p. 675. Feissel 2002, 398, suggests that some of the inconsistencies in Procopius here may arise from converting a distance of 34 Roman miles into stades, cf. also Roques 2011, 228 n.32. See fig. 17, p. 207, for orientation on this campaign.

21.8 ὁ τε γὰρ περίβολος ἐπιμαχώτατος ἦν ἐκ τοῦ ἐπὶ πλεῖστον καὶ πολιορκία Περσῶν ῥᾶστα ἀλώσιμος, ‘for the circuit wall was in most parts easily assailable and could be taken by a Persian siege extremely easily’. Procopius describes the initially weak defences of the city at *Aed.* iii.2.5–10, then emphasises the significant work carried out by Justinian, iii.2.11–14. It is generally held that Justinian’s repairs had been undertaken by this point: Mal. 18.5 clearly dates the refortification to 528 and mentions the installation of a garrison. It seems highly likely that Procopius has exaggerated the vulnerability of the city, deliberately not taking into account the work already completed. So Whitby 1984, cf. Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 83–4, discussing Justinian’s wider programme in Armenia; see also Howard-Johnston 1989, 220, Gregory 1997, vol.2, 66–9. Roques 2011, 228, infers instead that Justinian’s work must have taken place after this siege, which is improbable because it would have threatened the Eternal Peace.

21.9 Σίττας δὲ καὶ ὁ Ῥωμαίων στρατὸς ἐς χωρίον μὲν Ἀτταχᾶς ἦλθον, Μαρτυροπόλεως ἑκατὸν σταδίοις διέχον, ‘Sittas and the Roman army came to a place called Attachas, 100 stades from Martyropolis’. Attachas or Attachae lies some 30 km north-west of Martyropolis, cf. Dillemann 1962, 235 fig.33, close to the Saphcae pass; it is placed by PZ ix.5 just four stades from Martyropolis, although the text here is uncertain. The fortress is not to be confused with that of Atachas (*Proc. Aed.* ii.4.14), which lay just to the north-east of Dara, cf. Dillemann 1962, 228. See Greatrex 1998, 209 n.43.

The Roman army was strengthened by forces under the Jafnid ruler al-Harith; it had assembled at Amida in October or November 531, probably the former, and from there proceeded to Attachas; the troops were accompanied by a certain bishop John of Anastasia. See PZ ix.6b. Procopius adds at 21.10 that Hermogenes, still involved in the negotiations, also accompanied Sittas. Despite what Procopius says about the lack of equipment of the besieged, Mal. 18.66 describes the construction of a tower within the walls that surpassed a Persian siege tower

and allowed the defenders to inflict considerable losses on the besiegers; he also refers to failed attempts to undermine the city's walls. See the preceding note on Procopius' insistence on the city's vulnerability here; cf. Syväne 2004, 491, Petersen 2013, 499, brief notices on the siege.

21.11–16 Digression on Roman and Persian Spies

Procopius is the only historian to enter into any detail about the practice of spying by both Rome and Persia, although his digression is very short. The *kataskopoi*, as he terms them, feature on a number of occasions in his works, e.g. at ii.16.3, where the Roman spies are mistaken in their interpretation of Khusro's plans, likewise at *Anecd.* 30.12–14, a lengthier treatment in which he accuses Justinian of having dismissed all Roman agents and consequently of making the empire vulnerable to Persian attacks, as shown by the Lazic invasion of 541. The passage in the *Anecd.* repeats many of the general points made here, often in similar terms, e.g. concerning the long tradition of both states of employing spies. In each passage the spies are said to report to the *arkhontes*, i.e. the rulers; in the present case, the Persian spy informs Justinian in person (21.13) of his side's plans. In a different context, Procopius laments the profusion of spies in the emperor's service whose mission was to target any opponents to the regime within the empire, *Anecd.* 1.2, 16.14. Börm 2007, 54, plausibly infers that spies were among Procopius' sources.

Other sources confirm the importance of espionage. Maur. *Strat.* ix.5 (326–34) refers to *kataskopoi* as scouts, while *exploratores* perform duties more akin to spying; *Peri Strat.* 42 offers recommendations on the use of *kataskopoi* and shows awareness of the danger of agents betraying secrets, cf. Proc. 21.12. Sasanian sources likewise allude to spies: references are collected in Lee 1993a, 177 n.26.

Bibliography: Lee 1989, Lee 1993a, 170–8, Austin and Rankov 1995, ch.2, 54–60, Syväne 2004, 93–100, Nechaeva 2014, 140–7, Lee 2015, Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 261–3.

21.11 Κατασκόπους ἐκ παλαιοῦ ἔν τε Ῥωμαίοις καὶ Πέρσαις δημοσίᾳ σιτίζεσθαι νόμος, 'It has long been customary among both Romans and Persians to maintain spies at public expense'. Cf. *Anecd.* 30.12, ἄνδρες πολλοὶ ἐν δημοσίᾳ τὸ ἀνέκαθεν ἐσιτίζοντο, 'Many men were maintained right from the start at public expense', who would spy on the Persians by visiting their royal palace (*basileia*). Procopius is unspecific as to the

origins of the Roman intelligence service, but see Sheldon 2005, ch.9, on the imperial period in general, and the references noted just above.

21.12 τινὲς δὲ καὶ τοῖς ἐναντίοις προΐενται τὰ ἀπόρρητα, ‘but some do indeed betray secrets to the enemy’. Procopius thus leads into the episode that provoked the digression, the revelations of a Persian spy. *Peri Strat.* 42.31–3 recommends that the family members of a spy always remain on Roman territory in order to assure his loyalty.

21.14 ὁ δὲ ταῦτα ἀκούσας, πεῖράν τε ἤδη τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἀληθείας πέρι ἐς αὐτὸν ἔχων, ‘When the emperor heard this, having evidence already of the man’s truthfulness to him’. Procopius again (cf. 21.1) prefers to use the preposition περί, *peri*, as a postpositive, placing it after the noun it qualifies, in this case ‘truth’ or ‘truthfulness’, although this means it here is followed by another preposition, ἐς, *es*, ‘to’. Both Hdt. vi.57.4 and Thuc. ii.62.1 employ the same juxtaposition, although it was not taken up again before Procopius, who uses it also at iii.7.6, vi.10.11.

21.14 καὶ τοῖς ταύτῃ βαρβάροις ἀγγεῖλαι, ὅτι δὴ οἱ Μασσαγέται οὗτοι χρήμασιν ἀναπεισθέντες τῷ Ῥωμαίων βασιλεῖ μέλλουσιν ὅσον οὐπω ἐπ’ αὐτοὺς ἥξειν, ‘and (to) tell the barbarians there that these Massagetae had been bribed by the Roman emperor and were just about to attack them’. The deception recalls the ruse Mal. 17.10 ascribes to the Emperor Justin: according to Malalas, the Huns of King Zilgibi defected from the Romans to the Persians and intended to join them in an invasion of Roman territory. But Justin revealed their earlier allegiance to the Romans, which caused Kavadh to doubt his allies’ loyalty and resulted in their massacre. Evidently neither side could be certain of the Huns’ loyalty, cf. e.g. Proc. iv.1.6. The Huns in this case, whom Procopius calls Massagetae, will have been Sabirs, who regularly penetrated southwards through the Caucasus, cf. i.8.19. See Greatrex 1998, 211–12 and i.21.28n.

The expression ὅσον οὐπω, *hoson oupō*, ‘almost immediately’, is found already in Thucydides, e.g. vi.34.9, and is common subsequently. See *LSJ*, s.v. ὅσος, 1262, IV.5.

21.17–22 The Succession of Khusro

Two issues are bound up in this short description of how Khusro succeeded his father Kavadh at the expense of his brother Kaoses (Kāwūs or Kayūs). On the one hand, there is the question of how Sasanian

succession operated, whether according to primogeniture or not. For this issue see i.11.2–3n and the works cited there. Procopius may exaggerate the degree to which Kavadh was able to impose his will, but there are references in the *Letter of Tansar*, tr. Boyce 1968, 61–3, as well as in a seventh-century Chinese source (in Ecsedy 2000, 209–10, cf. Lieu 2000, 51–2), to some sort of choice being given to the reigning monarch. Mal. 18.68 claims that Kavadh crowned Khusro himself days before he died on 13 September; a late ninth-century Persian astrological table gives a date of 18 August for Khusro's coronation. See Taqizadeh 1937, 128–30 with Stein 1949, 294 n.2 and i.21.20n. Tabari 888/138 states that Kavadh committed his choice of Khusro to writing (in a sealed document) before he died, which is certainly reconcilable with Procopius' version, cf. Bosworth 1999, 138 n.356, Börm 2007, 115–16. The *Nihāya*, 300–1, refers to a testament of Kavadh entrusted to the *mōbadān mōbad*, tr. Browne, 227, Grignaschi 1973, 125.

There remains Kavadh's preference for Khusro over Kaoses; Zames, Procopius has already explained (i.11.4), was ineligible to succeed because of the loss of one eye, despite his martial qualities. Kaoses, see i.11.3n, is associated with the Mazdakite faction at court. He ruled the eastern province of Ṭabaristān and successfully defended it against the neighbouring Turkic tribes according to Ibn Isfandīyār, before claiming the throne from Khusro: see Browne 1905, 92–5 with Crone 1991, 31–2, Pourshariati 2008, 288–9.

Bibliography: Christensen 1944, 263–6, 353–5, Widengren 1976, 241–6, Schindel 2004a, 482–3, Börm 2007, 111–19, Huyse 2009, 151–3.

21.17 καὶ Περσῶν ἕνα τῶν οἱ ἐν τοῖς μάλιστα ἐπιτηδαιοτάτων καλέσας, Μεβόδην ὄνομα, 'Summoning one of the Persians who was closest to him, Mebodes by name'. Despite indications in some sources (the *Letter of Tansar*, tr. Boyce, 61, the *Nihāya*, noted just above) of the involvement of the chief priest, the *mōbadān mōbad*, in the arranging of the succession, the name Mebodes here should not be interpreted as a reference to this office. See i.11.25n on the identity of Mebodes, whose Persian name was Māhbōdh and who was a member of the illustrious Sūrēn family, cf. Huyse 2002, 213–14, Börm 2007, 117 n.1, Börm 2008b, 434 n.81.

Haury's emendation of the manuscripts' reading here makes little difference to the sense: they read ἕνα τὸν οἱ ἐν τοῖς μάλιστα ἐπιτηδαιοτάτον, 'the one of the Persians who was closest to him'.

21.17 δεδιέναι τε Πέρσας ἔφασκε μή τι τῶν αὐτῷ βεβουλευμένων ἀλογῆσαι ἐν σπουδῇ ἔξουσιν, '(Kavadh) said that he was afraid that the Persians would want to cast aside his wishes.' Joh. Eph. *HE* vi.29 refers to Khusro later being unable to impose the successor of his choice on the nobility and therefore having to remove this son from the court; the account is suspect, however, and is connected with the appearance of an impostor at the Roman court. See Börm 2007, 118 n.2.

21.20 ὁ δὲ Μεβόδης ἐκώλυε, φάσκων οὐδένα χρῆναι αὐτόματον ἐς τὴν βασιλείαν ἵναι, ἀλλὰ ψήφῳ Περσῶν τῶν λογίμων, 'but Mebodes prevented him, saying that no one should come to the throne at his own instigation, save by the vote of the Persian nobles'. Evidence for a Persian council of nobles can be found: see Lukonin 1983, 698–708 (on the earlier period). Various sources, such as Ammianus (18.5.6) and Tabari (859–60/89), refer to a council, which sometimes had a role in making (and unmaking) kings. In general see Börm 2007, 118, 138, *idem* 2008b, 433–5, *idem* 2018, 35–6, and the works noted above, 21.17–22n. Huyse 2009, 152–3, argues that Procopius' account resembles the procedure outlined in the *Test. Ardashir*, 57–8/76, whereby the king made his nomination secretly and committed it to four letters, which were then distributed among high officials and compared with his original upon his death.

Mal. 18.68 gives the date of 13 September 531 for Kavadh's death, following a brief paralysis. He also claims that Khusro was crowned already before his father's death. See Taqizadeh 1937, 128–30, *PLRE* ii, Cavades 1, Stein 1949, 294 n.2. As Börm 2007, 116, notes, Malalas and Procopius both emphasise Kavadh's role in the selection of Khusro, even if their descriptions differ as to how this was exercised.

Procopius' reference to Kavadh's burial need not be a slip, although this was not Zoroastrian practice (see i.11.35n): some kings, as Börm 2007, 186–7, notes, erected impressive tombs nonetheless.

21.22 ἀναμνησθέντες δὲ τῆς Καβάδου ἀρετῆς ἅπαντες βασιλεῖα Πέρσαις αὐτίκα Χοσρόην ἀνείπον, 'they all remembered Kavadh's great qualities, and proclaimed Khusro king of Persia on the spot'. By translating ἀρετή, *aretē*, as 'virtue', Kaldellis 2004, 86 is able to read irony into Procopius' account, noting the king's unprovoked attack on the Roman empire in 502, for instance. But the Greek term had always also had a more neutral sense, 'excellence', or 'prowess', which we have here rendered as 'great qualities', cf. Whately 2016, 177–81 and i.11.5n. Procopius often uses it in a martial sense, as at i.7.31 (referring to

Kavadh), cf. 14.13, 18.31; moreover, at i.6.19 he explicitly signals Kavadh's competence, cf. the note *ad loc.*

21.23 ἐν δὲ Μαρτυροπόλει Σίττας τε καὶ Ἑρμογένης ἀμφὶ τῇ πόλει δειμαίνοντες, 'But at Martyropolis Sittas and Hermogenes were afraid for the city.' There is, as Herwerden 1906, 43, noticed, a *non sequitur* here, for at 21.9 we left Sittas and Hermogenes not daring to come closer than 100 stades to Martyropolis. It is possible, albeit unlikely, that the news of the bogus Hun attack (21.15–16) had somehow given an opportunity for the Roman army to enter the city. It is more plausible, however, that there is a fault in the text or the narration. Herwerden suggested emending the text to read ἐν δὲ Μεσοποταμίᾳ Σίττας τε καὶ Ἑρμογένης ἀμφὶ Μαρτυροπόλει δειμαίνοντες, 'in Mesopotamia, Sittas and Hermogenes were afraid for Martyropolis'.

21.24 Λελήθατε ὑμᾶς αὐτοὺς βασιλεῖ τε τῷ Περσῶν καὶ τοῖς τῆς εἰρήνης ἀγαθοῖς καὶ πολιτείᾳ ἑκατέρᾳ ἐμποδὼν οὐ δέον γινόμενοι. 'You have failed to notice that you are needlessly standing in the way of the king of Persia and of the blessings of peace for each state.' The Roman ambassadors in effect reprise the message sent already just before the battle of Dara at i.14.4, in which mention is also made (in similar terms) of the blessings of peace and of the Persian general proving to be an obstacle; there, too, the point is made that negotiations are ongoing. The ambassadors alluded to in the following sentence are presumably those specified at i.22.1.

21.25 ἔτοιμοι γάρ ἐσμεν ὑπὲρ τούτων αὐτῶν καὶ ὁμήρους δίδόναι ἄνδρας δοκίμους, ὥς δὴ ἔργῳ οὐκ εἰς μακρὰν ἐπιτελῆ ἔσται. 'We are ready also to give as hostages on their behalf men of high rank, so that matters may soon be finalised in practice.' On the use of hostages to guarantee good faith while negotiations are conducted see Lee 1991, 370–1, cf. Nechaeva 2014, 55; Josh. Styl. 61, 97, reports similar instances during the Anastasian war. Although ὑπέρ, *hyper*, can often have the sense 'about, concerning' in Procopius (as at i.22.7 just below), cf. Scheftlein 1893, 40–1, it seems preferable to interpret the preposition here in its more usual sense 'on behalf of' (*contra* Dewing).

21.27 Ῥωμαῖοι μὲν οὖν ἐν ὁμήρων λόγῳ εὐθύς ἔδωσαν Μαρτίνον τε καὶ τῶν Σίττα δορυφόρων ἓνα, Σενέκιον ὄνομα, 'So the Romans at once handed over as hostages Martin and one of Sittas' bodyguard,

Senecius by name.’ See *PLRE* ii, Martinus 2, Senecius, on these two individuals. Martin subsequently enjoyed a lengthy and successful career. The hand-over probably took place in November 531, by which point siege operations were in any case impaired by the cold conditions, cf. Greatrex 1998, 210–11.

21.28 οἱ τε Οὔννοι οὐ πολλῷ ὕστερον ἐσβαλόντες εἰς γῆν τὴν Ῥωμαίων, ‘Not long afterwards the Huns invaded Roman territory’. *Chr. Ede.* 103 (AG 843), cf. *Chr.* 724, a.843 (III/14), place the onslaught in December 531. According to Mal. 18.70 the Sabirs (on whom see 21.14n) penetrated as far as Euphratesia, Cilicia II and Cyrrhestike; Malalas plays up the exploits of Dorotheus, *magister militum per Armeniam*, in battling the invaders, while PZ ix.6c gives the lead role to Bessas. See Greatrex 1998, 212, cf. Trombley 1997, 165–6 with PZ viii.5f. Procopius has thus minimised what was in fact a fairly extensive and devastating raid; he has also passed over a brief hiatus in the negotiations, during which Justinian forbade his ambassadors to come to Khusro because he refused to recognise his junior rival: see Mal. 18.68 with Scott 1992, 164, Greatrex 1998, 211.

22.1 Αὐτίκα δὲ καὶ Ῥουφῖνός τε καὶ Ἀλέξανδρος καὶ Θωμᾶς ὡς ζὺν Ἑρμογένει πρεσβεύσοντες ἦλθον, παρὰ τε Περσῶν τὸν βασιλεῖα πάντες ἀφίκοντο ἐς ποταμὸν Τίγρην. ‘Rufinus, Alexander, and Thomas set out at once as ambassadors with Hermogenes and reached the king of Persia at the river Tigris.’ On Rufinus, see i.11.24n. On Alexander, see *PLRE* iii, Alexander 1: he had already been involved in negotiations with Persia, cf. Mal. 18.50 and i.16.1n. Nothing further is known of this Thomas, so *PLRE* iii, Thomas 4, unless he is to be identified with a *quaestor sacri palatii*, i.e. Thomas 3. On Hermogenes see i.13.10n. The meeting may have occurred in the same place, said to be on the river Tigris, as where Khusro had waited upon news of the adoption negotiations a few years earlier (i.11.27). This phase in the negotiations, despite Procopius’ ‘at once’, was probably reached in about February 532: see Greatrex 1998, 213 and n.1, cf. Scott 1992, 165 and Mal. 18.72 (with MalKom). Bjornlie 2013, 76, cf. 107, suggests that Justinian had already agreed to offer 11,000 pounds of gold (see 22.3) in late 531 and thus infers that dissatisfaction with the arrangement contributed to the outbreak of the Nika revolt; while the offer was not made until early 532, discussions concerning such a concession must have taken place in the period leading up to this.

22.2 τιθασσεύοντες δὲ Χοσρόην οἱ πρέσβεις, ‘The ambassadors tried to soothe Khusro’. See i.21–2g on the theme of Khusro’s anger. Both the verb τιθασσεύω, *tithasseuō*, ‘I tame’ and the adjective χειροήθης, *kheiroēthēs*, ‘manageable’ (at 22.3) are usually associated with animals, although Dem. Or. 3.31 employs them in trying to rouse the Athenians from their torpor. Procopius uses the former on a number of occasions, however, cf. e.g. iii.6.8, as does Zosimus, e.g. at v.2.4. It is quite clear that Procopius is critical of the excessive readiness of the ambassadors to conclude a deal, cf. Leppin 2011, 136.

22.3 οἷς δὴ χειροήθης ὁ Χοσρόης γενόμενος τὴν μὲν εἰρήνην πέρας οὐκ ἔχουσιν δέκα καὶ ἑκατὸν κεντηναρίων ὠμολόγει πρὸς αὐτοὺς θήσεσθαι, ‘Khusro grew more pliant towards them and agreed to make with them a peace with no limit, at the price of one hundred and ten *centenaria*.’ This is what is now generally called the ‘Eternal Peace’, which had no defined date of expiry; *ODLA* refers to it as the ‘Everlasting Peace’. See i.21–2h, but cf. Williams 2010, 16–23, who argues that Procopius exaggerates the indefinite nature of the treaty. Mal. 18.76 provides details similar to those given in this chapter, explaining that the treaty was set to last for as long as both states endured (although there is a problem with the text here), cf. *C.J.* 1.27.2.pr., *pacem cum Persis in aeternum confirmavimus*, ‘we established peace with the Persians for ever’. On the unusual nature of this treaty see Greatrex 1998, 217–18, Börm 2007, 306, 329; Procopius does however report a comparable accord between Zeno and Geiseric, iii.7.26, which proved far more enduring.

The terms set out in the rest of this section were for the most part carried over into the final accord: the base of the *dux Mesopotamiae* was withdrawn from Dara to Constantia, while the Persians recovered the fortresses that they had lost in Persarmenia, Pharangium and Bolum (on which see i.15.18n). Justinian was able, by a sudden change of heart, to recover Sarapanis and Scanda in Lazica for the Romans (22.11–12, 18, cf. i.12.15n).

Procopius explains at 22.4 that a *centenarion* is the equivalent of 100 pounds of gold. Given that the Roman pound converts to 327.5g today (cf. *OCD*⁴, s.v. ‘weights’), this implies a sum of 7935 modern pounds or just under 3600 kg (3.6 tonnes); Pfeilschifter–Thesz on *Anecd.* 1.33, following Schilbach 1970, 160–72, prefer a conversion of 1 Roman pound to 324g. Since there were 72 *solidi* to the pound, the sum involved is 792,000 *solidi*. Emperors in the fifth century had paid comparable amounts, Theodosius II to the Huns, Leo for his expedition against the

Vandals: for details see Greatrex 1998, 215–16, with bibliography, cf. Meier 2003a, 196–7, Börm 2008a, esp. 331–4. See also other useful *comparanda* assembled by Pfeilschifter–Thesz on *Anecd.* 1.33.

On the presentation of sacks of *centenaria*, on which the name of the *comes sacrarum largitionum* was inscribed, see Dagron and Morrisson 1975, 151–2, Iluk 1985, 84–5; Gariboldi 2006, 74–83, finds evidence for gold and silver objects being used as a method of making such payments. Maksymiuk 2016, 151–2, argues that the sum represented a back payment for 22 annual instalments of 500 pounds of gold per year that should have been made since the reign of Anastasius; but although the Persians did sometimes claim this annual amount, the inference is not justified, cf. Greatrex 1998, 216 n.9. Since the Persians' own currency was based on silver (cf. e.g. Börm 2008a, 336), the question arises as to the purpose of these payments in gold. Given that the sums were relatively modest, it is likely to have been linked to prestige, since the Romans could thus be portrayed as tributaries; it may also have been used to pay allies (cf. Schindel 2014, 12–13) or to stimulate trade. Gariboldi 2006, 58–9, notes celebratory emissions of gold coins by Sasanian kings, cf. Howard-Johnston 2014, 168–71. See further Gariboldi 2006, 83, Börm 2008a, 334–41, Maksymiuk 2016, 154, Howard-Johnston 2017, 293; see also ii.10.21n.

22.5 τοῦτο δέ οἱ δίδοσθαι τὸ χρυσίον ἡξίου, ὥς μήτε πόλιν Δάρας Ῥωμαῖοι καθελεῖν ἀναγκάζονται μήτε φυλακτηρίου τοῦ ἐν πύλαις Κασπίαις μεταλαχεῖν Πέρσαις. ‘This gold, he demanded, should be given to him in return for the Romans not being obliged to pull down the city of Dara or share with the Persians the garrisoning of the Caspian Gates.’ Cf. i.16.7, a speech by Kavadh to Rufinus in which he insists that the Romans choose between these two options. As he explains there, the Persians were obliged, at considerable expense, to deploy forces to counter both threats. The claim that the payment was a contribution for joint defence costs in the Caucasus helped counter the criticism that it had been extorted by the Persians, who had long been seeking such support: see i.10.9n with Greatrex 1998, 216, cf. viii.15.6–7 (Procopius’ criticism of later payments).

22.7 καὶ χρόνος ἡμερῶν ἑβδομήκοντα Ῥουφίνῳ ξυνέκειτο ἐς τὴν ἄφιξιν, ‘a period of seventy days was allowed for Rufinus to return’. This was ample time for a return trip to the imperial capital, even if Persian ambassadors on official business were allowed 103 days one way (*De Cer.*

i.98 (i.89), tr. in Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 124–8). Procopius was interested in the imperial courier service, as is clear from *Anecd.* 30.1–11, where he complains at the cuts made by Justinian. Ramsay 1925, 68–9, on the basis of this passage of the *Anecd.*, calculates an average speed of some 50 Roman miles a day (= 73.6 km); the distance from the Tigris to Constantinople is about 1500 km. See also Lee 1993a, 163 and n.70 (noting a journey from Antioch to Constantinople in five and a half days), Nechaeva 2014, 150, Greatrex 2021d, cf. McCormick 2001, 470–6 (examples from a later period).

The envoys' hesitation to make concessions without consulting the emperor was prudent: John Comentiolus incurred the wrath of Justin II for doing just this in 567–8, as Menander, frg.9.1–2, reports.

22.9 οἷς δὴ Χοσρόης ξυνταραχθεῖς τε καὶ θυμῷ πολλῷ ἤδη ἐχόμενος τῷ παντὶ στρατῷ ἐπὶ Ῥωμαίους ἦει, 'Khusro was up in arms at this and in a great passion set out against the Romans with all his army.' Both Justinian's readiness to accept the proposals put forward by Khusro (22.8) and the false rumour of Rufinus' execution will evidently have been linked to the turmoil of the Nika riot of January 532; Khusro's willingness to go on the offensive probably stems from a perception of Roman weakness, just as Justinian had sought to exploit Khusro's accession a few months earlier (cf. 21.28n above). See Güterbock 1906, 43, Leppin 2011, 136.

Procopius continues to emphasise Khusro's choleric nature, described in the same terms as his father's anger at i.7.31, cf. the note *ad loc.* on the idiom there. Ammianus likewise characterises Shapur II as irascible on a number of occasions, e.g. at 19.1.6 (when his generals have to placate him), 27.12.11, cf. Sidwell 2010, 85–6, 121–7.

22.11 ἀλλ' Ἰουστινιανῷ βασιλεῖ τὰ Λαζικῆς φρούρια ξυγκεχωρηκότε μετέμελεν ἤδη, 'But the Emperor Justinian already regretted having surrendered the fortresses in Lazica.' Once he had regained the initiative following the suppression of the Nika riot, Justinian doubtless saw no need to be so generous in the terms granted to Persia. But the interruption of negotiations cannot have lasted long. Rufinus had probably returned to Khusro by April or May 532; the treaty was finalised most likely in September. See Greatrex 1998, 214.

22.13 αὐτίκα γοῦν ἐς τὸ ἔδαφος καθῆκε τὸ σῶμα, κείμενός τε πρηνῆς Χοσρόην ἰκέτευε τὰ τε χρήματα σφίσι ξυμπέμψαι καὶ μὴ ἐπὶ Ῥωμαίους εὐθὺς στρατεύειν, 'At once he flung himself to the ground

and, with his face touching the floor, begged Khusro to send the money with them and not to campaign right away against the Romans.’ Rufinus’ humiliating behaviour before the Persian king is related in critical terms, just as was the attitude of the entire team of negotiators at 22.2: there is no reason to suppose that Procopius shared the suspicions harboured against Rufinus by his fellow ambassadors, reported at 22.15. In fact, the long-standing relations between the ambassador and the Persian court had already been underlined at i.11.24, cf. the note *ad loc.* with Börm 2007, 318–19. See also i.11.5n, noting that, according to PZ ix.7a, Rufinus had supported Khusro’s adoption by Kavadh: such a connection, if true, would explain both Khusro’s willingness to accede to the envoy’s request and the suspicions of his colleagues. See also Börm 2007, 103, 115 and n.3, Nechaeva 2014, 129.

22.16 τοῖς τε Ἰβηρσιν ἐδέδοκτο ἐν γνώμῃ εἶναι ἢ μένειν αὐτοῦ ἐν Βυζαντίῳ, ἢ ἐς σφῶν τὴν πατρίδα ἐπανίεναι. ‘And it was decided that the Iberians should choose whether to remain there in Byzantium or to return to their native country.’ The rest of the terms were as already stated: see i.21–2h and 22.3n. The Iberians in question are those who fled the Persian invasion following the defection of King Gurgenes in the mid 520s, on which see i.12.1–19h. Toumanoff 1963, 371, rightly infers that, despite Justin’s promises to defend Iberia (i.12.5), the kingdom was effectively ceded to the Persians by the terms of the peace, cf. Braund 1994, 290, Colvin 2018, 203.

Theoph. 216 (A.M. 6027) reports the welcoming of a king of the Iberians, Zamanarzus, by Justinian in 534/5, but it is unclear how this relates to these events: the entry could be misplaced and no ruler by this name is known in the Georgian sources. See Mango and Scott 1997, 313 n.1, Greatrex 1998, 215 n.6; Colvin 2018, 208, identifies Zamanarzus with the P’arsman (Pharesmanes) V in the ‘History of Vakhtang Gorgasali’ within the *Kartlis Tskhovreba*, 206–7 (tr. Thomson, 225), although his reign is usually dated 547–61, cf. e.g. Rapp 2014, 86. See also Schleicher 2019, 75–6, who accepts that Zamanarzus could be connected to the Iberian royal family. See further Mal. 18.9 and *PLRE* iii, Samanazus.

22.17 οὕτω τοίνυν τὴν τε ἀπέραντον καλουμένην εἰρήνην ἐσπείσαντο, ἔκτον ἤδη ἔτος τὴν βασιλείαν Ἰουστινιανοῦ ἔχοντος, ‘So they made the so-called “Endless Peace” in what was already the sixth year of Justinian’s reign’, i.e. between April 532 and the end of March 533,

in fact most probably in September 532, so *Chr. Ede.* 104 (AG 843), tr. in Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 97. See Greatrex 1998, 214 n.5, Börm 2007, 306.

On the places returned by each side see i.22.3n.

22.18 καὶ Δάγαριν δὲ Ῥωμαίοις ἀπέδοσαν Πέρσαι, ἀντ'αὐτοῦ ἕτερον κεκομισμένοι οὐκ ἀφανῇ ἄνδρα. 'The Persians gave up Dagaris to the Romans, receiving an important man in return for him.' See i.15.4n on Dagaris, who had been captured by Huns while spying on the Persians preparing to invade Armenia in 530. The timing and location of his victories over the Huns, noted here, are uncertain. *PLRE* iii, Dagaris, suggests that they may have taken place in the Balkans; Procopius describes his military prowess in stock terms, cf. i.6.15n.

Nechaeva 2017 proposes to identify the unnamed Persian with Pīrān-Gušnasp/Mar Grigor, a Persian general who had converted to Christianity and whose life is preserved in a Syriac source. He served in the Caucasus, where his forces were defeated by the Romans, doubtless in the 520s, and he himself was captured, *Mart. Grig.* 8, cf. Greatrex 1998, 141–2. According to *Mart. Grig.* 9, a Persian envoy to Justinian, Zabergan, asked him to allow Grigor to return to Persia at the time the Eternal Peace was concluded; the emperor accepted, provided that he was not molested for his faith. Although the chronological indicators are a little unclear in the Syriac text, Nechaeva's identification is plausible; her chronology is to be preferred to that in Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 99 and 268 n.59.

22.19 τὰς μὲν οὖν πρὸς ἀλλήλους σπονδὰς τρόπῳ τῷ εἰρημένῳ ἀμφοτέροι ἐκρατύναντο. 'Both sides thus ratified the mutual treaty in the way described.' Procopius has indeed reported most of the terms: see i.22.3n. He has omitted a few elements, however. One is clearly described by Mal. 18.76 and states that the two rulers were brothers and each was to come to the aid of the other in case of need. This clause represents a principle that had long existed, although it had invariably been the Persians who had sought to invoke it: Ps.-Josh. 8 quotes an almost identical formulation from the reign of Peroz. Procopius' omission is thus comprehensible, *contra* Colvin 2018, 206. See Greatrex 1998, 15–18, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 58–9.

One further clause of the treaty is passed over: according to Agath. ii.31.4, seven Athenian philosophers who had sought refuge at Khusro's court but had been disillusioned by life in Persia obtained through the Persian king a clause that allowed them to return home and not be

obliged to convert to Christianity. The detail comes in the context of a long digression aimed at puncturing the reputation of a philosopher called Uranius, whose erudition and competence Agathias roundly mocks; at the same time, the author condemns Khusro and Persian society more generally, clearly believing them to be incapable of comprehending Greek philosophy, cf. McDonough 2011. Frendo 2004 offers a detailed consideration of Agathias' account. Despite Kaldellis 2004, 101–2, this clause was hardly a significant aspect of the Eternal Peace. See Alan Cameron 2016b, 221–2, arguing that it was only a minor matter, cf. Nechaeva 2017, 377–8, suggesting that the clause may well have been confidential. Much has been written concerning the sojourn of the seven philosophers, who included Simplicius, Damascius and Priscian of Lydia: it is debated whether they set off when Justinian closed the Academy in Athens or following Khusro's accession, as well as whether, upon returning to Roman soil, they established themselves at Carrhae. See (e.g.) Alan Cameron 2016b (doubting the closure of the Academy in 529), Hartmann 2002, Watts 2005, Walker 2006, 182–205, Marcotte 2015, 286–8 and cf. ii.13.7n. There is also a useful introduction in the recent translation of Priscian's *Answers to King Khosroes* (tr. Huby et al. 2016), cf. Frendo 2004, 105, Huyse 2015, 72 n.104, Marcotte 2015.

A few late oriental sources, e.g. Dinawari, 71/372, claim that a certain Sharvīn Dastabāy travelled to Constantinople to see to the paying of a levy, although the episode is placed after the capture of Antioch in 540. The same courtier is associated with the guardianship of Yazdgerd I over Theodosius II (on which see i.2.1–10n) and the figure named by Theophanes as Antiochus. The account is thus of little historical worth: see Márkus 1987, 89–92, 97, Hämeen-Anttila 2022.

i.23–5 Internal Politics in Persia and Constantinople

History

In these three chapters Procopius gathers together material relating to the Persian court in the 530s and early 540s and to tensions among Justinian's leading ministers up to 546. That Khusro encountered internal opposition is clear from other sources, but it remains uncertain how the coup here reported by Procopius relates to the crushing of the Mazdakite faction at court (which is variously dated to the closing years of Kavadh's reign or the start of Khusro's, see i.11.1–30n). Khusro evidently had to struggle to overcome discontent among certain sections of the nobility,

but acted vigorously to suppress this dissent. His continuation and extension of his father's reforms may have contributed to the nobles' dissatisfaction, although he probably had had little chance to make the changes hinted at by Procopius (23.1–2) before the coup occurred. See Mosig-Walburg 2000, 69–72 and n.9, Hartmann 2005, 94, Börm 2007, 138–9, 239, Wiesehöfer 2010, 122–3. For more detail on Khusro's reforms see Rubin 1995, Rubin 2009, Gariboldi 2015.

The Nika riot (i.24) of January 532 is one of the best attested events of the reign of Justinian and has been the subject of numerous analyses. As is clear from all accounts, it was only with difficulty and huge bloodshed that Justinian was able to overcome the rioters and re-establish control of the capital. See Greatrex 1997, Pfeilschifter 2013, 178–210. The fall of John the Cappadocian in 541 (i.25) reflects continuing tensions in Justinian's administration between the traditional aristocracy and parvenus, such as John, who had ushered in an extensive series of changes to the imperial bureaucracy throughout the 530s: having been dismissed from office in January 532, John had returned to his old post already by October the same year. See Stein 1949, 463–83, Kelly 2004, 71–81, Bjornlie 2013, 77–8, 115.

Historiography

As at i.11, Procopius interweaves the internal history of both empires. In this case the link is provided by the rebellions that broke out around the time of the Eternal Peace. As already noted (i.21–2g), Procopius has re-ordered events here, placing the Nika riot after the conclusion of the peace; the date of the plot against Khusro is unknown. First and foremost, the device allows him to recount matters that were not strictly part of the wars, yet were of great importance: in both cases, a mighty monarch might have fallen. But it also allows him to compare the two rulers and their two empires: from this point onwards Khusro is at the forefront of Procopius' account and his rivalry with Justinian is a constant theme (e.g. at ii.12.32–5). It is often suggested that Procopius' portrayal of Khusro's restless lust for innovation, here and elsewhere, is a proxy for Justinian's comparable tendencies (cf. ii.9.8–13), while the historian may well have sympathised with the 'most active Persians' among the nobility (23.3) who sought to rid themselves of the young king. On the other hand, though Khusro emerges as a ruthless despot who punishes even loyal ministers, Justinian is depicted as a more human figure who only late in the day crushes the uprising in bloodshed. See Averil Cameron 1985, 163, Kaldellis 2004, 88,

Meier 2004a, 102–3, Börm 2007, 266–7, Kruse 2013, 853–6, cf. Bjornlie 2013, 106–7, Börm 2015, 313, underlining the parallels. Procopius' account of the Nika riot and its relation to other sources will be discussed at i.24.

Procopius is the only source to recount the failed coup of Zames and the extinction of his family and supporters. As others have noted, he may owe his account – which is garnished with some highly Herodotean touches – to Zames' son, Kavadh, the grandson of the homonymous Persian king. The downfall of Mebodes (23.25–9) does find parallels in oriental sources, on the other hand. See the Introduction, section (4)(b), p. 18, and Appendix 1, p. 665. The Persian chapter reprises several themes already explored by Procopius, such as the bitter intrigues at the Persian court and the unforgiving nature of Persian rulers; it also offers the reader some entertaining stories of the sort one might expect from an eastern court, notably of the younger Kavadh's escape from death (23.7–11).

As at i.11, which related the downfalls of Seoses and Hypatius, each of the narratives on the attempted coups here contains a coda: on the Persian side Procopius relates the downfall of Adergudunbades, followed by the arrival of the younger Kavadh at the Roman court some time after 541, as well as the execution of Mebodes (in the 530s). On the Roman side, Procopius inserts a vivid account of the downfall of John the Cappadocian in 541, taking the story up to 546. This chapter is likely to have been inserted at a relatively late stage, perhaps once John's fall from grace became definitive. See Greatrex 1995.

23.1 Χοσρόης ὁ Καβάδου ἄτακτός τε ἦν τὴν διάνοιαν καὶ νεωτέρων πραγμάτων ἐραστής ἄτοπος. 'Khusro, the son of Kavadh, was unstable in temperament and extraordinarily fond of novelty.' As Schmitt 2004, 673, notes, Procopius uses a Sasanian formulation to refer to Khusro as son of Kavadh, literally 'Khusro he of Kavadh'.

The word ἄτακτος, *ataktos*, 'unstable' or 'undisciplined' is more usually applied to troops than individuals, though cf. Plut. *Cim.* 4.3. The last part of the sentence stresses the king's love of novelty. The term ἄτοπος, *atopos*, 'strange' or 'unnatural' is elsewhere applied by Syrianus, *Comm. in Hermogeni librum* περὶ ἰδεῶν, 41.22, to a lover, ἐραστής, *erastēs*, describing the possessive lover of Plato's *Phaedrus* 241d, cf. Proclus, *In Platonis Alcibiadem I*, 293, where the tyrannical lover is said 'strangely', i.e. wrongly, to blame a *daimon* or fate for his situation. Procopius himself applies the same formulation to the incompetent commander in North Africa, Sergius, at iv.22.2; at ii.9.12 he invokes the φύσεως ἄτοπία, *physeōs atopia*, 'strangeness of nature' of Khusro again, also in the

context of the fact that he, rather than his more suitable brother Zames, had succeeded to the throne, cf. Brodka 2004, 112 n.225. Nic. Chon. 475.30 (xv.10.2) applies a very similar formulation to that of Procopius here to characterise Henry VI Hohenstaufen.

The term νεώτερα πράγματα, *neōtera pragmata*, literally, ‘new things’, is commonly used in Greek to refer to political revolution, *res novae* in Latin; it is invariably hostile, cf. *LSJ*, 1173. This is its sense at i.26.11, for instance, cf. vii.1.25. Procopius in this section and the following is underlining the Persian king’s disruptive nature and his tendency to foment turmoil in others: these characteristics will be displayed to full effect in the following book, cf. Kruse 2013, 853–4. Procopius may be alluding to the programme of reforms introduced by Khusro; it is known from other sources that the king was eager to consult foreign experts and to take into account others’ customs in his own changes, cf. Börm 2007, 239, Huyse 2015, 72–3.

As just noted, it is likely that Procopius’ criticisms of Khusro’s restlessness may well be meant to apply also to Justinian. In the *Anecdota* Procopius roundly criticises the emperor for his innovations: he is accused of being νεωτεροποιὸς μάλιστα, *neōteropoios malista*, 8.26, ‘an inveterate innovator’ (tr. Dewing), while similar accusations are levelled by Gothic envoys at *Wars* ii.2.5. See Averil Cameron 1985, 143, Brodka 1998, 115–16, Brodka 2004, 112, 120–1 Kaldellis 2004, 82. On the other hand, Procopius refers at viii.10.17 to Khusro’s son Anasozadus (Nūsh Zād) undertaking ‘new things’ against his father, while at vii.32.2 the Roman general Arsaces is arrested for similar activities, in this case supporting Khusro against the Romans. There is thus a technical aspect to the term, which need not always imply the author’s condemnation of the instigator of a coup.

23.3 ἀχθόμενοι οὖν αὐτοῦ τῇ ἀρχῇ ὅσοι ἐν Πέρσαις δραστήριοι ἦσαν, ‘The most active Persians, therefore, dissatisfied with his rule’. Procopius signals his sympathy for the plotters by the use of the term δραστήριος, *drastērios*, ‘active’, an adjective that he also applies to Kavadh at i.6.19, cf. the note *ad loc.* See Börm 2007, 123, 137–8. Photius’ summary (*Bibl.* cod.63, p.71.39) refers instead to the people, λεῶς, *leōs*, being dissatisfied with Khusro’s innovative tendencies, perhaps a recollection of i.5.1, where the people objected to Kavadh’s Mazdakism.

23.4 λογισάμενοι ἡύρισκον σφίσιν αὐτοῖς ἄμεινον εἶναι Καβάδην μὲν τὸν αὐτοῦ παῖδα καὶ τῷ πάππῳ ὁμώνυμον ἐς τὴν ἀρχὴν

καταστήσασθαι, ‘they thought the matter over and decided that it would be better for them if they made king his son Kavadh, who had the same name as his grandfather’. As already noted (i.23–5h), Khusro appears to have had to deal with two rivals to the throne early in his reign: his brother Kaoses, backed by the Mazdakites – assuming they were not crushed earlier (see i.II.1–3on) – and his other brother, Zames (Zham). The relation between the two is unclear; nor is it possible to date the plot more precisely, though it is generally placed in 531/2. See Hartmann 2005, 94, Börm 2007, 137 and n.1, *PLRE* ii, Zames.

Apart from Procopius, Mal. 18.69 is the only source to report the coup; he describes an attempt by the magi to unseat Khusro in favour of his brother, which Khusro suppressed and then asked Justinian for a three-month truce. The date appears to be 531 or 532, before the conclusion of the Eternal Peace. See Börm 2007, 137 and n.1, *idem* 2021. It has also been suggested that Dinawari’s (57/138) list of supporters of a pretender to the throne called Khusro upon the death of Yazdgerd I (in 420) might refer rather to those who supported the king of this name just over a century later: the offices occupied by some of them, such as Wistahm and Pīrag, now confirmed by seals, preclude a fifth-century date. See Gyselen 2002b, 451–2, *eadem* 2009, 183–4, although Pourshariati 2008, 109, prefers to associate those named by Dinawari with the reign of Khusro II.

Procopius refers back in this section to his explanation at i.II.4–5 of the grounds for Zames’ ineligibility for the throne, despite his martial qualities; he returns to the issue at ii.9.12. This is the first mention of his son Kavadh, on whom see i.23.23n: he is likely to have been the principal, if not the only, source for much of Procopius’ material here. So (e.g.) Nöldeke 1879, 147 n.1, Börm 2007, 54.

23.6 Ζάμην τε γὰρ αὐτὸν ὁ Χοσρόης καὶ τοὺς αὐτοῦ τε καὶ Ζάμου ἀδελφούς ἅπαντας ξὺν γόνῳ παντὶ ἄρσενι ἔκτεινε, ‘Khusro put to death Zames himself and all of his and Zames’ brothers with their whole male descent.’ The Greek leaves it ambiguous here as to whether Khusro’s and Zames’ brothers were identical: they could have been born of different mothers, although in this case it would be difficult to understand why Khusro’s own brothers would be executed. More likely they were sprung from the same womb, so Nöldeke 1879, 147 n.1, but cf. Börm 2007, 128 and n.2 for the contrary view. Given the polygyny practised by the Sasanians, such bloodbaths were not unknown: Kavadh II Shiroe killed some eighteen brothers when he ascended the throne, cf. Tabari 1060/398,

PLRE iii, Cavades *qui et Siroe*. As Börm 2007, 104, observes, it is clear that, when necessary, the Persians did not shy from shedding royal blood, despite what Procopius affirms at i.5.7 (cf. i.5.29); on the other hand, it was a different matter for a Sasanian ruler himself to execute family members than for members of the nobility to take such a drastic step.

23.6 ἐν τοῖς καὶ Ἀσπεβέδης ἦν ὁ τῆς Χοσρόου μητρὸς ἀδελφός, ‘Among them (those executed) was Aspebedes, Khusro’s mother’s brother.’ See i.11.5n for the identity of this Aspebedes.

23.7–11 The Saving of the Life of Kavadh, Son of Zames

No other source recounts these details. It is likely that they stem, at least in part, from Kavadh himself (see 23.4n), although Procopius has doubtless worked them over. The narrative is deliberately evocative of Herodotus’ account of Cyrus’ origins and the failure of the Median king Astyages to eliminate his rival as soon as he was born (i.108–12). Not only is the thwarted plan to remove a rival very similar, but there are obvious verbal echoes (at 23.8). As in i.1–6, romantic elements come to the fore, women play a greater role, while specific chronological indicators are absent. See Braun 1894, 27–8, 44, Roques 2000, 20.

23.7 ἔτι γὰρ ὑπὸ χανaráγγῃ τῷ Ἀδεργουνδουνβάδῃ ἐτρέφετο, ‘for he was still being reared under the care of the *kanarang*, Adergudunbades’. See i.6.15n on Adergudunbades (Ādhargulbād): he had taken over the post of *kanārang* from Gusanastades when Kavadh regained the throne in 498/9. The holder of the post governed the eastern portion of the Sasanian kingdom, see i.5.4n. If Procopius’ information is here accurate, it is a testament to the enduring power of Adergudunbades’ family – the Kanārangīyān, it is suggested – that it was entrusted with the raising of a Sasanian prince and that Khusro had to act with circumspection against Adergudunbades. See Börm 2007, 127, Pourshariati 2008, 111.

23.8 δακρύσασα δὲ ἡ γυνὴ καὶ τῶν γονάτων τοῦ ἀνδρὸς λαβομένη ἔχρηζε τέχνη μηδεμιᾶ Καβάδην κτεῖναι. ‘And his wife, weeping, seized her husband’s knees and begged him on no account to kill Kavadh.’ A clear echo of Hdt. i.112.1, δακρύσασα καὶ λαβομένη τῶν γουνάτων τοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἐχρήζε μηδεμιᾷ τέχνῃ ἐκθεῖναι μιν, ‘she wept, seized her husband’s knees and begged him on no account to expose him’. Cyrus, the infant in Herodotus’ version, like Kavadh, was concealed

and spared; the story is likely to have been well known to Procopius' readers. See Braun 1894, 27–8 and the references already noted (23.7–11n).

23.10 ὅτι μὴ Οὐαρράμη τε τῷ σφετέρῳ παιδί καὶ τῶν οἰκετῶν ἐνὶ, ὃς δὴ αὐτοῖς πιστότατος ἐς τὰ μάλιστα ἔδοξεν εἶναι, '(they kept Kavadh's existence a secret from all) except for Varrames, their own son, and one of the servants who seemed absolutely loyal to them'. The faithful servant is also a feature of the tale of Cyrus and Astyages: Harpagus, who had saved Cyrus' life and whose son had in consequence been murdered by Astyages and served to him in a banquet, urged Cyrus to revolt in a message entrusted 'to the most faithful of servants', τῶν οἰκετέων τῷ πιστοτάτῳ, *tōn oiketeōn tō pistotatō* (i.123.4), precisely the expression here used by Procopius. The name Varrames represents a Greek rendering of Bahram (Bahrām) or Wahrām: see Schmitt 2004, 673, Gyselen 2009, 208 and see i.2.11n, where Procopius transcribes the name of Bahram V differently. The prose version of the *Shāhnāmah* known as the *Shāhnāmah-i Abū Manṣūrī*, compiled in the tenth century, contains a genealogy of the Kanārangīyān family that includes the names of Ādhar K-lbād (Adergudunbades), Ādhargushnasb (Gusunastades, whom Adergudunbades replaced, cf. i.6.15, a member of the same family) and Bahram (Varrames): see Pourshariati 2010b, 361–4.

23.12–24 The Downfall of Adergudunbades

Procopius moves forward here to the year 541 and the aftermath of Khusro's invasion of Lazica (described at ii.17). It is likely that it was only some time after this episode that further information on the Persian withdrawal and Khusro's internal difficulties came to his attention. The events he describes here (and at 23.25–9) should be read in parallel with *Anecd.* 2.31–7 and *Wars* viii.7.4–5. They offer an insight into tensions between the king and the nobility and are likely to derive from one source. It is possible that prince Kavadh was a conduit for the information, for it was only after Adergudunbades' execution that he arrived at the Roman court. In the meantime, while he cannot have himself been present to witness the events, he is likely to have been made aware of them. See Börm 2007, 133, who is sceptical of the account of Adergudunbades' fall, cf. *PLRE* iii, Adergoudounbades.

23.12 Χρόνῳ δὲ ὕστερον ὁ μὲν Χοσρόης ἐς γῆν τὴν Κολχίδα στρατῷ μεγάλῳ ἐσέβαλλεν, ὥς μοι ἐν τοῖς ὀπισθεν λόγοις γεγράφεται, 'But

later Khusro invaded the land of Colchis with a large army, as I shall relate presently (lit. ‘as will be written by me in the account below’).’ Procopius refers forward to his account of the invasion of Lazica in 541 (ii.17), where he concentrates on the siege and fall of Petra; nothing is said there of Khusro’s withdrawal to Persian territory. On the vague chronological reference see 3.1n.

23.14 ταῦτα ἐπεὶ ὁ Χοσρόης ἔγνω, τῷ τε θυμῷ ἤδη ὑπερφυῶς εἶχετο καὶ δεινὰ ἐποιεῖτο εἰ πρὸς δούλου ἀνδρὸς τοιαῦτα ἔργα πεπονθῶς εἶη, ‘When Khusro heard this, he was seized with rage and was very angry that he should have suffered such a thing from a subject.’ But like Astyages (Hdt. i.118), Khusro conceals his anger in order to exact vengeance. Procopius recalls Adergudunbades’ status as a slave, δοῦλος, *doulos*, which he had earlier underlined at 6.16, see the note *ad loc.* and cf. Börm 2007, 133–4.

23.14 οὐκ ἔχων τε ὅπως οἱ ὑποχείριον τὸν ἄνδρα ποιοίη, ‘being unable to bring the man into his hands’. Procopius regularly uses ἔχω, *ekhō*, ‘I have, I have means to do’ in the latter sense (e.g. i.24.6), here with the optative in an indirect question, cf. *LSJ*, 750, A.III.2 for parallels.

23.15 γράφει τῷ χαναράγγῃ τούτῳ ὅτι δὴ αὐτῷ βεβουλευμένα εἶη παντὶ τῷ στρατῷ ἐς γῆν τὴν Ῥωμαίων ἐσβάλλειν, οὐκ ἐν μιᾷ μέντοι τῆς χώρας εἰσόδῳ, ἀλλὰ δίχα ποιησαμένῳ τὸ Περσῶν στράτευμα. ‘He wrote to this *kanarang*, saying that he had decided to invade Roman territory with his whole army, not, however, in one place, but by dividing into two the Persian army’. In 542, Khusro invaded Roman territory to the south of the Euphrates, as Procopius reports at ii.20.1. It was conceivable therefore that he would order a second offensive further north, to keep up the pressure in the Caucasus and consolidate the taking of Petra. In 573 Khusro did divide his forces, having initially advanced along the Euphrates: while he then proceeded northwards to Dara, his general Adarmahan continued westwards towards Syria. See Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 146–7. On the circumlocution αὐτῷ βεβουλευμένα εἶη, *autō bebouleumena eiē*, literally ‘it had been determined by him’, see i.11.20n.

23.17 δεῖν τοίνυν αὐτὸν μὲν ἐν τῇ ἀποπορείᾳ κατὰ τάχος οἱ ἐς ὅψιν ἐλθεῖν, ‘Therefore he must come to him with all speed on his withdrawal.’ The reading ἀποπορείᾳ, *apoporeia*, ‘withdrawal’, of manuscript

P is certainly correct, cf. ii.10.24, ii.12.3; the word is rarely used before Procopius, save by Hero, *De automatis*, e.g. in ch.19 (400.16). On the expression ἐς ὄψιν ἐλθεῖν, *es opsin elthein*, ‘to come into the presence of someone’, see i.3.13n.

23.18 ταῦτα ἐπεὶ ὁ χαναράγγης ἀπενεχθέντα εἶδε, περιχαρὴς γεγονῶς τῇ ἐς αὐτὸν τοῦ βασιλέως τιμῇ, μακρὰν τε ἀπολελειμμένος τῶν οἰκείων κακῶν αὐτίκα τὰ ἐντεταλμένα ἐπιτελῇ ἐποίει. ‘When the *kanarang* received this message, he was overjoyed at the honour the king was doing him. He prepared at once to carry out the instructions, quite unaware of his own plight.’ Adergudunbades’ delight recalls that of Harpagus after Astyages had seemed to forgive him for not exposing the young Cyrus (Hdt. i.119); Harpagus was likewise unaware of how the Median king would shortly kill his son and serve him up for dinner. The whole first part of the sentence also verbally echoes ii.10, where Procopius describes the delight of both Justin and Justinian at receiving Kavadh’s message concerning the proposed adoption of Khusro. The reference to Adergudunbades’ unawareness of his plight is expressed in a typically Procopian formulation, μακρὰν τε ἀπολελειμμένος τῶν οἰκείων κακῶν, *makran te apoleleimmenos tōn oikeiōn kakōn*, ‘far removed from/abandoned by his own troubles’; it was applied notably to Peroz at 3.12 before his catastrophic defeat. Others are said to be similarly distant from (e.g.) the truth (6.8) or an active life (v.3.1).

23.20 καὶ αὐτῷ Χοσρόης ἔφασκε ξυστρατεῦειν σφίσιν οὕτως ἔχοντι τοῦ ποδὸς ἀδύνατα εἶναι, ‘Khusro told him that he could not join in the expedition with his foot in that state.’ Procopius is either imprecise or unconcerned by inconsistencies: Adergudunbades is said in the previous section to have broken his leg (lit. ‘the bone in the leg’), whereas the reference is here to his foot. Since the point of the story is the ruthless vengeance of Khusro, such details – which may be elaborations of Procopius – must hardly have seemed important.

23.21 ἄνδρα ἐν Πέρσαις ἀήττητον στρατηγὸν ὄντα τε καὶ λεγόμενον, ‘a man who, among the Persians, was an undefeated general both in name and in fact’. Procopius plays up Adergudunbades’ military prowess, thereby highlighting the ingratitude and foolishness of Khusro in dispensing with him. Nothing is known of any triumphs of this general, but there is numismatic evidence for a Persian resurgence on the eastern

frontier towards the end of Kavadh's reign, which he could have spear-headed. See Schindel 2004a, 490, cf. *idem* 2013a, 140, who suggests that Theodore Lector's enigmatic entry (512, cf. Theoph. 163) concerning a fortress called Tzundadeer between Persia and India, recovered by Kavadh with the aid of Christians, may allude to these successes. See also i.4.35n concerning the difficulties experienced by the Sasanians in the East in the wake of Peroz's defeat of 484.

23.23 χρόνῳ δὲ οὐ πολλῷ ὕστερον εἴτε Καβάδης αὐτός, ὁ τοῦ Ζάμου υἱός, εἴτε τις ἄλλος ἐπιβατεύων τοῦ Καβάδου ὀνόματος ἐς Βυζάντιον ἦλθε· Καβάδῃ μέντοι βασιλεῖ τὴν ὄψιν ἐμφερέστατος ἦν. 'Not long afterwards either Kavadh the son of Zames himself or some other man assuming his name came to Byzantium – yet he was very like King Kavadh to look at.' The younger Kavadh thus arrived in Constantinople after 541. In 552 he led a force of Persian deserters in Narses' expedition to Italy; by then Procopius describes him as having come to the Romans 'much earlier' and is in no doubt as to the genuineness of his identity, viii.26.13. See *PLRE* iii, Cavades.

The assumption of identities in such a context was far from unknown: Procopius describes the false Chilbudius in similar terms, vii.13.26. The verb ἐπιβατεύω, *epibateuō*, 'I take on, usurp' is used by Hdt. iii.63.3 in the context of the impostor who claimed to be Smerdis, heir to the Persian throne. Kavadh's physical resemblance to his grandfather could have been remarked on by any of those who had taken part in the negotiations in 530–31 (or earlier), even if some are likely to have died before 541. See 22.11n above for the names of four Roman ambassadors. During Tiberius' reign, soon after the accession of Hormizd IV in 579, a Persian was initially accepted by the Romans as a rival candidate to the throne before being unmasked at Chalcedon by a Persian *spatharius* on a mission for the Persian king. See Joh. Eph. *HE* vi.29, where John describes how Khusrō supposedly sent off his favoured son before his death with some money for his own protection (cf. 23.11); see also i.21.17n on this episode. Similarly in the fourth century Hormisdas (Hormizd), a brother of Shapur II, took refuge at Constantine's court. Both Mosig-Walburg 2000, 69–74 and Mecella 2015, 178, 193, consider these two incidents while focusing on the case of Hormisdas. Comparable doubts attended the supposed son of Maurice, Theodosius, who fled to Persia in 602: see Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 182–3, *PLRE* iii, Theodosius 13.

23.25–9 The Downfall of Mebodes

Mebodes (Māhbōdh) had been involved in the negotiations concerning the adoption of Khusro by Justin; he had then slandered his fellow diplomat Seoses and brought about his downfall (i.11). More recently (21.17–22), he had helped ensure Khusro's accession to the throne in the face of some opposition. His rapid and ruthless removal (in the 530s) thus testifies to Khusro's thanklessness, as Procopius underlines (25.29). It is likely that his downfall is linked to struggles at the Persian court between those who favoured peace with the Roman empire and a party of hawks, keener to renew hostilities. Since the fall of Seoses the doves had been in the ascendant, but with the elimination of Mebodes, the hawks regained the upper hand, leading ultimately to the invasion of 540. So Börm 2007, 323, cf. *idem* 2010, 634 (more briefly). The rivalry between the two noblemen is confirmed by the Persian tradition: Tha'alibi, 625–9, and Firdausi vi, 294–301 both recount the downfall of Māhbōdh. The former names his adversary as Āzarvindādh, while the latter has Zarvan, i.e. Procopius' Zabergan. See Christensen 1944, 382, noting that in both versions Khusro is deceived by the official into executing his faithful minister (and his two sons), which he bitterly regrets upon learning of the deception. Nöldeke 1879, 251–2 n.1, finds both Procopius' and the oriental versions equally improbable.

23.25 Ὑστερον δὲ καὶ τὸν Μεβόδην ὁ Χοσρόης διεχρήσατο ἐξ αἰτίας τοιαύτης, 'Later Khusro also did away with Mebodes for the following reason.' The 'later' is problematic. Procopius does not refer, despite appearances, to a period after the younger Kavadh's arrival in Constantinople post-541 (23.23). He is rather referring to the period following Adergudunbades' fall in 531/2: it is likely that 23.12–24 represents a later addition, based on new information. See Greatrex 1994a, 265. Börm 2007, 323 and *PLRE* iii, Mebodes 1 both place Mebodes' death between 532 and 540.

23.25 τῶν τι σπουδαίων διαχειρίζων, παρόντι τῷ Ζαβεργάνῃ ἐπέταττε τὸν Μεβόδην καλεῖν· ἐτύγχανε δὲ τῷ Μεβόδῃ ὁ Ζαβεργάνης διάφορος ὢν, 'The king was dealing with an important matter and he told Zabergan, who was present, to summon Mebodes. But Zabergan happened to be at odds with Mebodes.' Zabergan was a prominent Persian who may have had a hand in negotiating the Eternal Peace, visiting Constantinople in 531/2: *Mart. Grig.* 10 attests a visit to the city,

although the dating is unclear. See Nechaeva 2017, 370–5. He later accompanied Khusro in his invasion of Syria in 540 and dissuaded him from showing mercy to the defeated population of Antioch, ii.8.30–3; he then took part in a further embassy to Constantinople before perhaps joining the king's invasion of Lazica in the following year, *Anecd.* 2.32–3. As Pfeilschifter–Thesz, note *ad loc.*, point out, Procopius' claim that Khusro then cited a letter of Theodora to Zabergan need not imply his presence among his forces, although it is a reasonable inference. In 543 he was involved in extorting money from the population of Edessa, *Wars* ii.26.16–17. His name, which is shared by a Hunnic leader, corresponds approximately to Firdausi's Zarvan. See *PLRE* iii, Zaberganes 1, Börm 2007, 324 and n.2, Gignoux, Jullien and Jullien 2009, no.460.

23.27 θυμῷ τοίνυν ὁ Χοσρόης ἐχόμενος, 'So Khusro was seized with anger'. On the motif of Khusro's anger, which permeates this chapter, see i.21–2g and i.22.7n.

23.28 τρίπους σιδηροῦς πρὸ τῶν βασιλείων ἑσαεὶ ἔστηκεν, 'An iron tripod has always stood in front of the palace.' Nothing further is known of this supposed Persian custom: it may represent a misunderstanding on Procopius' part. So Börm 2007, 159.

23.29 ἐς τοῦτό τε αὐτῷ τὰ τῆς ἐς Χοσρόην εὐεργεσίας ἐχώρησεν. 'This was how his good service to Khusro turned out for him.' Procopius concludes his account by underlining the ingratitude of the Persian king, cf. Brodka 2004, 120–1, Börm 2007, 252.

i.24 The Nika Riot

History

The violent events that shook Constantinople in January 532 are covered in detail by both ancient and modern sources; on the former, see the next section. Bury 1897 remains an important treatment, as is that of Gizewski 1988, 148–63, while Greatrex 1997 provides a recent analysis, arguing that Justinian consistently misjudged the mood of the urban population, thus unwittingly prolonging the unrest. Meier 2003b, on the other hand, argues that the emperor deliberately provoked the disturbances, hoping thereby to flush out opposition, cf. Brandes 2014, 253. Pfeilschifter 2013, 178–210, offers the most detailed up-to-date account of the events and considers Justinian to have overestimated his own strength, thus

provoking the urban populace; he also offers, 196–201, a convincing and detailed rebuttal of Meier's hypothesis. Averil Cameron 1985, 64, 143–4, judges Procopius' handling of the riot to be superficial, making no effort to explain the grievances of the factions, but see Dagron 2011, 185–9, arguing that for Procopius, as for Thucydides and Polybius, *stasis* (civil strife) was an endemic phenomenon in society that did not require explanation. On the riot and factions more generally the bibliography is extensive. See (e.g.) Whitby 1999, Liebeschuetz 2001, 249–57, Whitby 2006, Averil Cameron 2012, 162–5, Bell 2013, 134–60, Álvarez Jiménez 2014, Greatrex 2020c. Short narratives of the riot itself may be found (e.g.) in Evans 2002, 40–7, Potter 2015, 143–55.

Historiography

The Byzantine chroniclers – Malalas (18.71), the *Chronicon Paschale* (620–9) and Theophanes (181, 184–6) – all transmit important information, which presumably goes back to the original version of Malalas' work. Pseudo-Zachariah of Mytilene ix.14 and Marcellinus *comes* (a.532) add a few elements, cf. Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* iii.69–70. Procopius' account is independent of all of these and concentrates on the events of the final day, Sunday 18 January 532 (24.19–56). He displays no sympathy for the populace nor understanding of the factions; he offers comparable criticisms, but little analysis, in the *Anecdota* (7, cf. the cross-reference at 7.1 to the *Wars*); in the *Aed.* (i.1.20–1) he is similarly dismissive of the people. See Averil Cameron 1985, 144, 166–7, 227, cf. Dahn 1865, 141. On the other hand, he expresses trenchant criticism of John the Cappadocian and Tribonian, both of whom, by the time he was writing, were discredited or dead. Procopius' focus for the most part is the imperial palace; it is likely that he drew on information from sources close to the emperor, notably Belisarius himself, cf. Meier 2004a, 89. As so often, it is difficult to interpret the nuances of his account. As already noted (i.23–5g) there are parallels between Justinian and Khusro: while the Persian king cruelly executes his faithful minister Mebodes (23.25–9), so Justinian condemns both Hypatius and Pompey to death unjustly (24.55). It is likely, as Meier 2004a, 95–8, proposes, that Procopius has combined his court sources with his own perspectives, notably his sympathy for Hypatius and interest in senatorial opposition to the emperor; cf. Brodka 2018, 47–53, who concludes that Procopius consciously produced a tendentious account mainly to highlight Belisarius' role. Since, however, Justinian himself later rehabilitated Hypatius and Pompey, preferring to pin the blame on John

the Cappadocian, a favourable treatment of Anastasius' nephews need not imply criticism of the emperor. See Greatrex 1997, 83, Meier 2004a, 95–6. Although Kaldellis 2004, 122–6, perceives numerous instances of oblique attacks on Justinian in this section, it may also be read as a display piece that would have commanded a favourable audience at court. The line taken, as already noted, reflects the official court version of the 540s; Procopius makes an effort at an elevated style, visible in the deployment of rare words and literary allusions (most notably in Theodora's speech [24.37]); and while Belisarius undoubtedly plays the leading role in the suppression of the riot, it is Justinian himself who, undaunted by his commander's despondency at the defection of the palace guards (24.46–7), orders him to conduct the decisive assault. See Greatrex 2022.

24.1 Ὑπὸ δὲ τοὺς αὐτοὺς χρόνους ἐν Βυζαντίῳ στάσις τῷ δήμῳ ἐκ τοῦ ἀπροσδοκήτου ἐνέπεσεν, 'At about the same time a popular uprising suddenly broke out in Byzantium.' Cf. i.15.31 and 20.1: the formula is vague. It could be referring to the time of Mebodes' execution, which occurred at some point in the 530s (see 23.25–9n), but it could equally be referring to the aftermath of the Eternal Peace (23.1), even if the Nika riot actually took place before the conclusion of the peace. Despite Procopius' insistence here on the unexpectedness of the uprising, the violence of the factions had been growing for some time: see Gizewski 1988, 205–6, Greatrex 1997, 60, Dagron 2011, 153–7.

24.1 τῷ τε δήμῳ καὶ τῇ βουλῇ, '(for/to) both the people and the senate'. Chekalova 2001, 396 n.180, sees here an allusion to the traditional Latin formula *senatus populusque (Romanus)*, cf. vii.17.25 (at Rome itself).

24.2 οἱ δῆμοι ἐν πόλει ἐκάστη ἕξ τε Βενέτους ἐκ παλαιοῦ καὶ Πρασίνους διήρηντο, 'The population in every city has long since been divided into Blues and Greens.' The first words here, οἱ δῆμοι, *hoi dêmoi*, might refer either to the factions or simply to the populace, as we have translated it. Alan Cameron 1976, 28–35, favours this interpretation, cf. Dagron 2011, 136, although in Joh. Lyd. *De Ost.* §50.28 (105.14) = 99/20 (158/221) it evidently refers to the factions, cf. *NovJ.* 17.2 (535), Mal. 7.2 (recounting factional strife in Romulus' day), 12.49 and elsewhere. See further Astachova 1995, who argues that the term is used by Procopius to refer to the 'unorganised crowd' rather than the entire population.

Although the Blues and Greens were the most important factions, two others had always also existed, the Reds and the Whites. The Emperor

Anastasius had supported the Reds, perhaps in an attempt to curb the violence of the two principal factions. See Dagron 2011, 208–11. Justinian, as Procopius describes at *Anecd.* 7.1–7, had strenuously supported the Blues while his uncle was on the throne. From the mid fifth century the faction organisations grew in importance, organising entertainments throughout the empire, as Procopius here indicates. See Alan Cameron 1976, ch.3, Puk 2014, 147–53. Violence is reported with increasing frequency from the late fifth century, as emerges from Malalas' chronicle in particular; Procopius' hostile portrait in this section (and in his other works) is paralleled in *De pol. sci. dial.* v.103–12 (33–5/166–8), on which see Bell 2009, 166 n.91. Cf. Liebeschuetz 2001, 253–4, Whitby 2006, 446–7.

Throughout the empire certain seats were allocated to faction members, as attested, e.g., by inscriptions at Aphrodisias. See Alan Cameron 1976, 79, Roueché 1993, 129. In Constantinople under Justinian the tiers reserved for Blues and Greens were located on either side of the *kathisma*, the imperial box. See i.24.49n.

24.2 τὰ τε χρήματα δαπανῶσι καὶ τὰ σώματα αἰκισμοῖς πικροτάτοις προῖενται καὶ θνήσκειν οὐκ ἀπαξιοῦσι θανάτῳ αἰσχίστῳ, 'they spend their money and subject themselves to physical violence of the most bitter kind, and will even die a death of the utmost dishonour'. Procopius invokes the same combination, the sparing of neither money nor human lives, in a speech attributed to John the Cappadocian at iii.10.12, cf. Nic. *Brev.* 6.37, a speech delivered by the Persian general Saitos (to Heraclius). The verbal similarity is probably to be attributed to the high style in which this chapter and most speeches are composed.

Not all supporters of the Blues or Greens were as ferocious as those whom Procopius describes here (and at *Anecd.* 7.1–29): there was undoubtedly a hard core, however, that was consistently prepared to resort to violence to attain its ends. See Alan Cameron 1976, 74–80, Roueché 1993, 132, Astachova 1994, 110. Despite Procopius' dismissal of their conduct and motivation here, it is likely that they commanded some popular support and enjoyed links with members of the aristocracy, as Whitby 2006 shows, cf. Bell 2013, 150–60, on their networks throughout the empire, Greatrex 2020c for an overview of violence in the period.

24.4 φύεται μὲν οὖν αὐτοῖς τὸ ἐς τοὺς πέλας ἔχθος αἰτίαν οὐκ ἔχον, 'They have a senseless hatred of their neighbours'. Procopius offers no explanation for the conduct of the factions, as Averil Cameron 1985, 143, notes, nor does he consider it necessary to do so, cf. Dagron 2011, 185–9;

he is content, as (e.g.) at i.7.3 to report an event that he deems inexplicable. Other sources, like *De pol. sci. dial.* v.103–12 (33–5/166–8) or Joh. Lyd. *De Ost.* §50 (105.14–15) = 99 (158)/20 (220–1) similarly struggle to comprehend the violence, while at the same time (as here) emphasising how it cut across all normal ties. See Dagron 2011, 188, on the popularity of this theme in Late Antiquity.

24.5 ἦν γε αὐτοῖς κεῖσθαι τὸ μέρος ἐν καλῷ μέλλῃ· οὕτω γὰρ τοὺς συστασιώτας καλοῦσι, ‘so long as it goes well for their “party” – for this is the name they give to their fellow partisans’. The Greek term μέρος, *meros*, ‘party’ is commonly used, e.g. by Malalas, to refer to the factions, e.g. at 18.71. See Alan Cameron 1976, 19, 24. The term στασιώται, *stasiōtai*, ‘partisans’ is used already to refer to the circus faction members by Dio Cassius, e.g. at 78.8.2, cf. Alan Cameron 1976, 14. Procopius also sometimes refers to them simply as young men, νεανῖαι, *neaniai*, notably when reporting their courageous last-ditch defence of Antioch in 540: see ii.8.11, 17, 28–9, cf. Alan Cameron 1976, 75, Roueché 1993, 139.

24.6 μεταλαγχάνουσι δὲ τοῦ ἄγους τούτου καὶ γυναῖκες αὐτοῖς, ‘Even women share with them in this pollution.’ The term ἄγος, *agos*, ‘pollution’, is associated with religious awe, cf. *LSJ*, 14. García Romero, 141, unnecessarily suggests rendering the word as ‘fanaticism’ here, cf. n.194. Procopius is sensitive to the overturning of gender norms, as Brubaker 2005 observes, cf. Thesz 2018, 85–7; an underlying theme of the *Anecd.* is the excessive power wielded by Theodora and Antonina.

24.6 καίπερ οὐτε εἰς τὰ θεάτρα τὸ παράπαν ἰοῦσαι, ‘even though they never go to the theatres at all’. As García Romero, 141 n.195, points out, the Greek here refers specifically to theatres. There were still theatres in the Roman empire at this point, including just outside Constantinople, at Sycae: see Puk 2014, 92 and n.39, while Mal. 18.41 also clearly attests a functioning theatre in Antioch in 529. But it is possible that Procopius is referring to hippodromes as well as theatres, even if at *Anecd.* 7.13 he refers to both specifically. Despite Procopius’ explicit statement, *NovJ.* 22.15.2 (535) notes that women are entitled to attend the hippodrome and the theatre, albeit with the approval of their husband, cf. Guiland 1969, i, 486–7, who nevertheless suspects that few did so. Puk 2014, 206 n.290, notes an inscription from a hippodrome seat at Tyre, which belonged to a certain Matrona. At *Anecd.* 7.35–8, in contrast to the present passage, Procopius highlights the sexual violence of the partisans towards both well-born boys and women.

24.6 ὥστε οὐκ ἔχω ἄλλο τι ἐγῶγε τοῦτο εἰπεῖν ἢ ψυχῆς νόσημα, ‘For my part, I can only call this a disease of the soul.’ The term ψυχῆς νόσημα, *psychēs nosēma*, ‘a disease of the soul’ is first used by Plato, *Timaeus* 87c2, but is subsequently found in both Christian and pagan authors. Cf. Th. Sim. viii.7.11, a similar judgement, as Astachova 1994, 107, points out.

24.7 Τότε δὲ ἡ ἀρχή, ἡ τῷ δήμῳ ἐφειστήκει ἐν Βυζαντίῳ, τῶν στασιωτῶν τινὰς τὴν ἐπὶ θανάτῳ ἀπῆγε. ‘At that time the authorities in charge of the people in Byzantium arrested and led off some of the partisans to their death.’ The events took place on Saturday 10 January: seven partisans were condemned to death for murder, but two of them, one Blue and one Green, were rescued by monks when the ropes by which they were being hanged broke. They were taken from the place of execution at Sycae across the Golden Horn to the church of St Laurence in Constantinople itself. The remarkable saving of the partisans’ lives encouraged their supporters to seek their release and to unite in making this demand. See Mal. 18.71, Theoph. 184 with Greatrex 1997, 67–8, Meier 2003b, 288, Pfeilschifter 2013, 182.

The official responsible for public order was the city prefect. In January 532 a certain Eudaemon held this office, although Procopius never mentions him by name. See *PLRE* iii, Eudaemon 1.

The expression τὴν ἐπὶ θανάτῳ (δίκην) ἀπῆγε, *tēn epi thanatō (dikēn) apēge*, ‘(they) led off to their death (sentence)’ is a standard one, cf. (e.g.) Jos. A.J. 19.269, Zos. iv.52.4.

24.7 συμφρονήσαντες δὲ καὶ σπεισάμενοι πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἑκάτεροι τοὺς τε ἀγομένους ἀρπάζουσι, ‘But the two sides made common cause and concluded an agreement between them. They seized those being led away ...’ Here Procopius drastically telescopes his account. The factions continued for several days to demand the release of the men while Justinian refused to give an answer. At chariot races held on Tuesday 13 January the emperor continued to turn a deaf ear to the factions’ request, which led to rioting and the destruction of buildings in the city centre. That evening the *praetorium* (headquarters) of the city prefect was seized by the rioters and the prisoners liberated – as Procopius describes in this section. Rioting and incendiarism continued through the night and into Wednesday 14 January, when Justinian’s attempt to restart the games proved fruitless. See Greatrex 1997, 68–71 (phases 1–5), Pfeilschifter 2013, 182–3. The *praetorium* of the city prefect, to be distinguished from that of the praetorian prefect, burnt down later, lay on the Mesē near the Forum

of Constantine. See Bardill 1997, 85, Greatrex 1997, 70, 85, cf. Westbrook 2011b, 8 (with a useful map).

24.8 τῶν δὲ πολιτῶν εἴ τι καθαρὸν ἦν ἐς τὴν ἀντιπέραις ἡπειρον ἔφευγον, καὶ τῇ πόλει πῦρ ἐπεφέρετο, ὡς δὴ ὑπὸ πολεμίοις γεγενημένη, ‘and any noble citizens that were there fled to the mainland opposite. The city was fired as if it had fallen into enemy hands.’ Procopius describes the havoc wrought by the lawless partisans in similar terms at *Anecd.* 7.6 in a context where it is clear that Justinian was responsible for firing up the Blues (during his uncle’s reign). At 7.37–8 he reports the attempted rape of a noblewoman as she and her husband attempted to cross the Golden Horn, the same journey probably as that described here. The destination was the suburb of Sycae, where the bungled executions had taken place, which lay closer than the Asiatic shores. Kruse 2013, 854, sees an allusion to the Persians in the mention of ‘enemies’ and perceives a foreshadowing of the fall of Antioch in 540. Nickau 2003, 613, compares Romanus, *Hymn* 54.19, which depicts a population lamenting its losses, with Procopius’ analogy of a sacked city; this *kontakion* (hymn) of Romanus may have been commissioned by Justinian, so Koder 2008, 278 and n.26.

We have translated καθαρός, *katharos*, here as ‘noble’, although it also has the connotation of ‘pure’, i.e. not corrupt, as at *Anecd.* 21.6. Cf. Pfeilschifter–Thesz on *Anecd.* 2.31, below ii.3.54n.

24.9 καὶ τὸ ἱερόν ἢ Σοφία τό τε βαλανεῖον ὁ Ζεύξιππος καὶ τῆς βασιλέως αὐλῆς τὰ ἐκ τῶν προπυλαίων ἄχρι ἐς τὸν Ἄρεως λεγόμενον οἶκον καυθέντα ἐφθάρη, ‘The church of Sophia, the baths of Zeuxippus, and the part of the royal palace from the outer gateways (Propylaea) to the so-called house of Ares were burnt down and destroyed.’ Procopius offers only a sketchy account of the widespread destruction in the heart of Constantinople, which is reported more fully by Mal. 18.71, *Chr. Pasch.* 621–2 and Theoph. 184. See also the list drawn up by Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* iii.70. The baths of Zeuxippus, which, like Hagia Sophia, were rebuilt after the riot, contained numerous statues of important figures of Antiquity that were destroyed in the fire: see Kaldellis 2007a, cf. Bassett 2004, 51–8, Schamp 2006, vol.2, clvi–clix. Some buildings were burnt down on the Tuesday, especially those near the *praetorium* of the city prefect, while Hagia Sophia and the Baths of Zeuxippus, here mentioned, were struck probably on the Wednesday. See fig. 22.

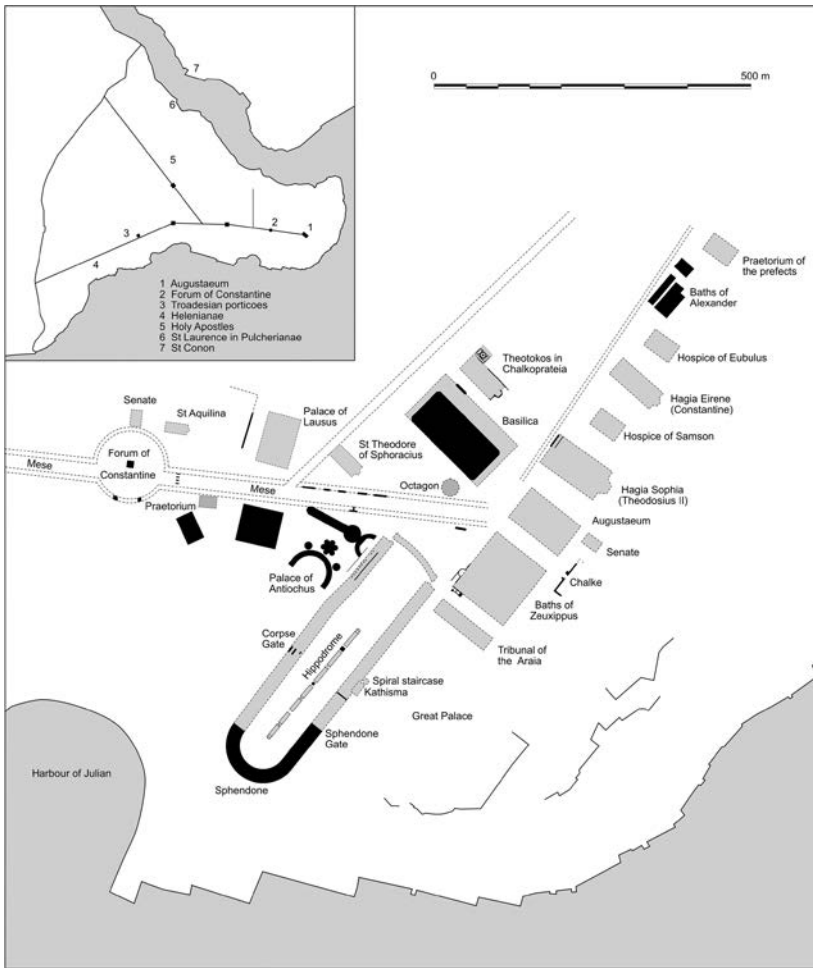


Figure 22 Constantinople at the Time of the Nika Riot

The part of the imperial palace that was destroyed was that near the Chalkē, the monumental bronze gate, while the ‘so-called house of Ares’ might refer to the quarters of the palace guards near the Chalkē gate: so Westbrook 2011a, 38 n.15. At *Aed.* i.10.3 Procopius gives similar details, but, as here, there is uncertainty about the reading Ἀρεῶς, *Areōs*, ‘of Ares’: here the first hand in MSS G and P has rather Ἀρεος, *Areos*, while in *Aed.* one MS has ἀρέας, *areas*, another ἀραῖας, *araias*, which Maltretus emended to Ἀρεῶς in line with the present passage. Since a ‘house of Ares’

is not otherwise known, Mango 1959, 36 n.1, proposes rather to identify the place with the ‘tribunal of the Araia/Area’ in front of the Triklinos of Nineteen Couches, referred to at *De Cer.* i.52.5 (i.43) and ii.27.17 (628).

The great porticoes described by Procopius are those along the Mesē, which led from the Milion westwards to the Forum of Constantine. Some damage is likely to have been caused here on the Wednesday, but there was further destruction in this quarter later on the Saturday. The houses of the wealthy to which Procopius refers are probably buildings such as the Palace of Lausus and that of Antiochus. More detailed assessments of the conflagrations may be found in Greatrex 1997, 85–6, Westbrook 2011a, 36–8, *idem* 2011b, 9–11, cf. Bardill 1997, 84–6.

24.10 βασιλεὺς δὲ καὶ ἡ συνοικοῦσα, ‘The emperor and his consort’, i.e. Justinian and Theodora, cf. Zos. iv.41.1 for the formulation. Procopius deliberately withholds their names, thus making their subsequent interventions stand out all the more. By also failing to name the city prefect (24.7) he highlights the responsibility of the two culprits he singles out explicitly in the following sections. As Procopius reports, the emperor and his entourage awaited events following the rescuing of the two partisans on the Saturday; the city prefect meanwhile had surrounded the church of St Laurence, in which the two men had sought refuge. See Greatrex 1997, 67–71, Pfeilschifter 2013, 182–3.

24.10 ξύμβολον δὲ ἀλλήλοις ἐδίδοσαν οἱ δῆμοι τὸ νίκα, καὶ ἅπ’ αὐτοῦ ἐς τὸδε τοῦ χρόνου ἡ κατάστασις ἐκείνη προσαγορεύεται. ‘The people passed around among themselves as their watchword “Nika”, and from this the event has taken its name up to the present day.’ ‘Nika’ refers to the Greek verb νικάω, *nikaō*, ‘I conquer, win’. Inscriptions often record acclamations such as νικᾷ ἡ τύχη ... *nika hē tyche*, ‘May the fortune (of the Blues/Greens/an individual) conquer.’ See Alan Cameron 1973, 76–80, Roueché 1993, 4 and no.46 (99–117), Greatrex 1997, 69 and n.46. As Alan Cameron 1973, 77, argues, the watchword ‘Nika’ was probably chosen because it was such a frequent chant of the partisans.

The term κατάστασις, *katastasis*, ‘event’ is sometimes translated as ‘insurrection’ or ‘uprising’, although it is more neutral (as in modern Greek).

24.11 Τότε τῆς μὲν αὐλῆς ἑπαρχος Ἰωάννης ἦν ὁ Καππαδόκης, ‘At that time the praetorian prefect was John, the Cappadocian’. Procopius’ first mention of Justinian’s unpopular but effective minister. Following his fall

from power in 541, recounted at i.25, he came to be the figure on whom the insurrection was blamed. Procopius describes him in more complimentary terms at iii.10.7–17, attributing to him a speech that briefly deterred Justinian from attacking the Vandals in North Africa. Clearly i.24–5 were composed rather later, cf. Greatrex 1995a, esp.4–6, and may have been initially intended for the *Anecdota*, so Greatrex 2000, 218–19, cf. Kaldellis 2010b, 254 n.7. For full details on John's career see *PLRE* iii, Ioannes 11, cf. Schamp 2006, clxxiii–clxxxiii; he had taken office early in 531.

24.11 Τριβουνιανὸς δὲ, Πάμφυλος γένος, βασιλεῖ πάρεδρος· κοιαίστῳρα τοῦτον καλοῦσι Ῥωμαῖοι, ‘Tribonian, a Pamphylian by birth, was the emperor's adviser (the Romans call this man *quaestor*).’ Procopius offers a critical portrait of Tribonian at 24.16. He had occupied the post of *quaestor sacri palatii* since late 529 and was instrumental in Justinian's legal codification projects. See Honoré 1978, *PLRE* iii, Tribonianus 1. On the term πάρεδρος, *paredros*, for a legal adviser see Lillington-Martin 2018, 158–62, cf. i.11.11n (concerning the *quaestor* Proculus). Procopius offers regular glosses for Latin terms, e.g. at i.8.2, i.22.4, ii.7.15, referring to how ‘the Romans’ designate something. On the issues this raises as to Roman identity see (e.g.) Dmitriev 2010, Moore 2018.

24.12 Ἰωάννης, λόγων μὲν τῶν ἐλευθερίων καὶ παιδείας ἀνήκοος ἦν, ‘John had no experience in liberal conversation and education.’ The phrase ἐλεύθεροι λόγοι, *eleutheroi logoi*, ‘liberal words’, i.e. liberal arts, is standard for a traditional education, e.g. at Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* ii.18.3 (in the context of criticisms of John for removing rules on the training of bureaucrats in his ministry), cf. (e.g.) Joh. Ant. frg.218. See also Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* iii.50 on the importance of a traditional education for the post of praetorian prefect, cf. Begass 2018, 399–400. This section (to 24.15) is quoted by Suda, 1469.

24.12 οὐ γὰρ ἄλλο οὐδὲν ἐς γραμματιστοῦ φοιτῶν ἔμαθεν, ὅτι μὴ γράμματα, καὶ ταῦτα κακὰ κακῶς [γράψαι], ‘He learned nothing from his attendance at school except how to read, and badly at that.’ Procopius alludes to the poor education of the sausage-seller in Aristophanes' *Eq.* 469: the last two words (not including the γράψαι, *grapsai*, ‘to write’, which is rightly rejected in Hauray's edition), κακὰ κακῶς, *kaka kakōs*, ‘bad things badly’ are found also in Aristophanes (and are quoted likewise in Suda, Π2959). Allusions to Aristophanes are plentiful in *Anecd.*, as

Kaldellis 2004, 149 and 261 n.89 shows. Suda, Γ₄₂₂ also quotes this short section from Procopius. On the education of the *grammatistēs* mentioned, here translated as ‘school’, see ii.6.23n.

The fierce criticism deployed here by Procopius recalls his harsh judgments in *Anecd.*, but in this case he had no need to hold back his dislike of a disgraced minister. See Greatrex 2000, esp. 218–19. As Taragna 2000, 87, observes, Procopius is generally critical of those who are ill educated or ignorant, cf. Maas 1992, 28–37 (on John the Lydian’s attitudes), Bell 2013, 277–82. Cf. Amm. Marc. 31.14.15 on the ill-educated Valens, with Kelly 2008, 265, who also there notes Ammianus’ allusions to Latin comedy in his portrayal of oppressive ministers, e.g. at 14.5.7. See further Thesz 2018 on Procopius’ opposition to the promotion of commoners. Nothing further of John’s education is known.

24.13 *πονηρότατος δὲ γεγωνῶς ἀνθρώπων ἀπάντων τῇ τῆς φύσεως δυνάμει ἐς τοῦτο ἐχρήτο*, ‘But he was the wickedest man on earth and used his native ability to this end.’ When describing John, Procopius piles up the superlatives: there are three in 24.12–13. He expresses himself in similarly exaggerated terms in *Anecd.*, e.g. at 20.20–1, cf. Averil Cameron 1985, 143, cf. 240, on Procopius’ ‘ cliché-ridden and repetitive’ terminology of praise and blame. Thucydides’ admiring character sketch of Themistocles at i.138.3 employs several superlatives and refers to what he could achieve ‘by natural power of mind’ (tr. Hornblower, *CT*, i, 223), *φύσεως μὲν δυνάμει*, *physeōs men dynamei*, a phrase Procopius re-uses for Tribonian at 24.16. Cresci 1987, 243–4, sees in the characterisation an implicit criticism of Justinian for dispensing with such a capable minister, cf. Moore 2014, 66–8, Börm 2015, 314; Moore detects allusions also to Thucydides’ characterisation of Pericles at ii.60.5. As *HCT* i, 443, notes, this passage on Themistocles was often quoted in Late Antiquity. There is no need therefore to suppose any direct allusion to the Athenian statesman here.

24.14 *χρόνου γοῦν ὀλίγου χρήματα μεγάλα περιβαλόμενος ἐς κραιπάλην τινὰ ἐκλελάκτικεν ὄρον οὐκ ἔχουσιν*, ‘In a short time he amassed a great deal of money and flung himself into an endless drinking bout.’ The amassing of a fortune is frequently described in these terms by Procopius, e.g. *Anecd.* 1.32, *Wars* v.11.1, cf. already Plut. *De Her. Malign.* 30 (864c). Procopius deploys further Aristophanic vocabulary in this sentence, e.g. *κραιπάλης*, *kraipalēs*, ‘drinking bout’ (found at *Ach.* 277, cf. *Vesp.* 1255), *ἐκλελάκτικεν*, *eklelaktiken*, ‘he escaped’, cf. *LSJ*, 511, attested at *Ar. Vesp.* 1492, 1525.

Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* iii.57–8 offers comparable vitriolic criticism, while at iii.62, 65 he accuses John of courting the Green faction and of sexual and alimentary excesses, cf. Kelly 2004, 16–17, 57–9, 79–81. Such *ad hominem* attacks were not unknown in works of classicising history, so Greatrex 2000, 217–19, even if they have few parallels in the *Wars*.

24.16 Τριβουνιανὸς δὲ φύσεως μὲν δυνάμει ἐχρήτο καὶ παιδείας ἐς ἄκρον ἀφίκετο τῶν κατ’ αὐτὸν οὐδενὸς ἥσσον, ἐς δὲ φιλοχρηματίαν δαιμονίως ἐσπουδακώς, ‘Tribonian, on the other hand, was both possessed of natural talent and as well-educated as any of his contemporaries, but he was extraordinarily greedy for money.’ See 24.13n on Procopius’ reference to ‘natural talent’. The term δαιμονίως, *daimoniōs*, ‘extraordinarily’, is found in Aristophanes (and others), e.g. *Nu.* 76; precisely the same formula for greed for money is applied to a Cilician called Leo at *Anecd.* 14.16. Tribonian’s penchant for constantly modifying laws is in stark contrast to the conservatism of Proculus, i.11.12, who was disinclined ever to introduce changes.

This section is quoted by Suda, T956 (588.8–12), along with *Anecd.* 13.12. It was later adapted by Michael Attaleiates in the introduction to his synopsis of Roman law produced for Michael VII in 1072/3, cf. Krallis and Kaldellis 2012, ix–x. See his *Ponēma Nomikon*, 416, §5, in which he repeats Procopius’ allegations of venality and associates the selling of rulings with the production of the *Novels* in particular, a body of work known for its inconsistencies, cf. e.g. Jones 1988, 195–7.

24.17 διὸ δὴ βασιλεὺς ἐταιρίζεσθαι τὸν δῆμον ἐθέλων ἄμφω τῆς ἀρχῆς ἐν τῷ παραυτίκα παρέλυσε. ‘So the emperor, wishing to associate himself with the people, immediately deprived both of their offices.’ A reminiscence of Hdt. v.66.2 where Cleisthenes’ victory over his opponent Tisander at Athens is reported: the reformer turned the tables on his rival during a period of factional strife (in 508/7 B.C.) by taking the people into his ἐταιρεία, *hetaireia*, ‘political party’.

24.18 καὶ Φωκᾶν μὲν, ἄνδρα πατρίκιον, ἑπαρχον τῆς αὐλῆς κατεστήσατο, ‘He made Phocas, a patrician, praetorian prefect’, whose qualities Procopius proceeds to praise, cf. Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* iii.72. Phocas was a patrician already by 526 but retained his new office of praetorian prefect only until October, when John resumed the post. He was nevertheless entrusted with some legal duties in the late 530s and early 540s. It is possible that he was accused of paganism in a wave of persecu-

tions in 529 but acquitted: Mal. 18.42 refers to the arrest (and execution) of several pagans, among them a Phocas. Ps.-Dion. ii, 76–7/71 reports the death of a Phocas in 545/6 in a round of persecutions undertaken by the leading anti-Chalcedonian figure John of Ephesus. On his career and alleged paganism see *PLRE* ii, Phocas 5, Maas 1992, 78–82, Kelly 2004, 54–6, Schamp 2006, vol.2, clxxxix–cciii (with Feissel 2009, 355), Kaldellis 2013b, 348–53, Scott 2013, 209–10, Begass 2018, 211–12 (no.173).

For Kaldellis 2013b Phocas was a leading pagan, praised by John the Lydian and Procopius partly for this very reason; he argues that he played an important part in commissioning the architects of the new Hagia Sophia, Anthemius and Isidore, who also formed part of a wider pagan circle. See, however, Alan Cameron 2016c, 262–5, suggesting that more than one Phocas may be involved. The downfall of Phocas, assuming it is the former praetorian prefect, in 545/6 may well have occurred after Procopius composed this passage, so his high praise for an alleged pagan need not be significant. See further *Anecd.* 21.6–7, where Procopius again praises Phocas’ integrity and alludes to the passage here.

24.18 Βασιλείδην δὲ τὴν τοῦ κοιαίστωρος ἀρχὴν ἔχειν ἐκέλευεν, ‘He ordered Basilides to hold the office of *quaestor*.’ Basilides was one of three officials, including Mundus and Constantiolus, who had been sent out to ascertain the demands of the crowd on Wednesday 14 January, cf. Greatrex 1997, 73. He is attested as a patrician already in 528 and served as praetorian prefect for Illyricum in the following year. His tenure as *quaestor* lasted until 534 or 535, at which point Tribonian returned to office; he subsequently served also as *magister officiorum*. He was involved in Justinian’s legal projects and thus a natural choice to take over from Tribonian. See *PLRE* iii, Basilides, Meier 2003b, 292 and n.159.

24.19 πέμπτη δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς στάσεως ἡμέρα περὶ δειλὴν ὥσιν Ἰουστινιανὸς βασιλεὺς Ὑπατίῳ τε καὶ Πομπηίῳ τοῖς Ἀναστασίου τοῦ βεβασιλευκότος ἀδελφιδοῖς οἴκαδε ὡς τάχιστα ἐπέσκηπτεν ἵεναι, ‘On the fifth day of the rebellion, about evening, the Emperor Justinian told Hypatius and Pompey, the nephews of the late Emperor Anastasius, to go home at once.’ The first explicit reference to Justinian in the account, coupled with an indication of the imperial pedigree of two nephews of the former emperor, who had been succeeded by Justin I in July 518. Soon after the appointment of the new ministers – Tryphon replaced Eudaemon as city prefect, which Procopius omits – either on Wednesday 14 or Thursday 15 January, the crowd had rushed to acclaim a

third nephew of Anastasius, Probus, and burnt down his house when he proved to be absent. See Greatrex 1997, 73–4 (phases 6–7), Pfeilschifter 2013, 184–5. Justinian's decision therefore to dismiss two further potential rivals is puzzling. The motive suggested by Procopius is unconvincing, viz. that he suspected a plot, although it may be found also in Marc. com. a.532. More likely, as Pfeilschifter 2013, 192–4, argues, Justinian released Hypatius and Pompey, along with other nobles remaining in the palace (cf. *Chr. Pasch.* 624), on logistical grounds: following the arrival of reinforcements from Thrace, he needed the space and supplies in the imperial palace for his forces.

Procopius places the dismissal of Anastasius' nephews on the evening of the fifth day since the start of the riot, referring to Saturday 17 January: serious rioting had started on Tuesday 13 January, cf. Marc. com. a.532. See Bury 1897, 108–9, Gizewski 1988, 157 n.225, Greatrex 1997, 76, cf. *CPW*, 121 n.359.

24.19 εἶτε καὶ αὐτοὺς ἡ πεπρωμένη ἐς τοῦτο ἤγεν, 'or because fate was actually leading them to this'. A Herodotean touch, recalling Hdt. i.91.1, 3, where the inevitability of the fall of Sardis to Cyrus is explained. The participle πεπρωμένη, *peprōmenē*, 'allotted' refers to the noun μοῖρα, *moira*, 'destiny', here omitted. Asheri, *CH*, 143, suggests 'predetermined fate' as a translation, cf. Gould 1989, 67–9. On the role of fate here see Dahn 1865, 230, 233, 246.

24.22 Τῇ δὲ ὑστεραίᾳ ἄμα ἡλίῳ ἀνίσχοντι, 'On the following day at sunrise', i.e. Sunday 18 January, the final day of the uprising. Procopius passes over the further destruction inflicted by the rioters on the city on the Friday; he also omits the fierce battles between the troops arrived from Thrace and the people that took place on Saturday. Having despatched Hypatius and other nobles from the palace, Justinian appeared in the hippodrome early on the Sunday morning, where he attempted a reconciliation with the crowd. Although some acclaimed him, others hurled abuse; he therefore retired to the palace. It was at this point that the rioters encountered Hypatius. See Greatrex 1997, 75–7 (phases 8–10b), Pfeilschifter 2013, 185–6.

24.23 ἡ δὲ Ὑπατίου γυνὴ Μαρία, ξυνετή τε οὖσα καὶ δόξαν ἐπὶ σωφροσύνῃ μεγίστην ἔχουσα, 'But Hypatius' wife, Maria, who was an intelligent woman well known for her discretion'. Maria is not otherwise known, but her doomed entreaties add pathos to the scene. Discretion or

prudence, σωφροσύνη, *sōphrosynē*, is held up as a female virtue in *NovJ.* 6.6 (535), cf. Proc. i.25.13. Dahn 1865, 149, interprets the word as denoting self-possession despite adverse circumstances.

24.24 ὑπερβιαζομένου μέντοι τοῦ ὁμίλου, ‘The people were very violent, however.’ The verb here, ὑπερβιάζομαι, *hyperbiazomai*, ‘I press exceedingly heavily’ (*LSJ*, 1861) is used by Thucydides ii.52.3 of the impact of the plague at Athens; it is found quite frequently in Procopius, e.g. at iv.4.5.

24.24 καὶ (οὐ γὰρ ἦν αὐτοῖς οὔτε διάδημα οὔτε τι ἄλλο ὦν δὴ βασιλέα περιβάλλεσθαι νόμος) στρεπτόν τινα χρυσοῦν ἐπὶ τῇ κεφαλῇ θέμενοι βασιλέα Ῥωμαίων ἀνέειπον. ‘Putting a golden torque on his head (for they had no diadem nor any other of the emperor’s customary ornaments), they proclaimed him emperor of Rome.’ *Chr. Pasch.* 624 (cf. Mal. 18.71, 397–8) confirms the bringing of Hypatius to the Forum of Constantine, adding that he was clad in a white garment, as was traditional at an inauguration.

Hypatius’ coronation was clearly an improvised affair, much like that of Julian in Paris in February or March 360, on which see Amm. Marc. 20.4.17–18 with den Boeft et al. 1987, 98–9; in this case too a torque was used. But the more detailed account of *Chr. Pasch.* 624 shows that Procopius has simplified matters here. His reference to the placing of a ‘golden torque on his head’ is odd. The Greek implies that it was laid *on* his head, which seems hardly feasible for a torque or necklace: the Greek word στρεπτόν, *strepton*, refers to a twisted piece of metal. *Chr. Pasch.* makes clear that ‘imperial insignia’ (tr. Whitby and Whitby) were fetched from the Placillianae palace and placed on his head, while a golden torque (here called a *maniakion*) was put around his neck. See Walter 2001, esp. 179–80, on such items, cf. Grotowski 2010, 294–6. Torques are mentioned in the context of a coronation at *De Cer.* i.100.25 (i.91) and i.102.60 (i.93). They may be observed on the San Vitale mosaics in Ravenna on the necks of bodyguards of Justinian. *Chr. Pasch.* adds that Hypatius was hailed as he stood on the steps leading up to the column of Constantine (in his forum). See further 24.30n, cf. Mango 1990, 25, Bardill 2012, 28–36, on the forum.

24.25 καὶ τῶν ἐκ βουλῆς ξυνιόντων, ὅσοι οὐκ ἀπολειφθέντες ἐτύγχανον ἐν τῇ βασιλέως αὐλῇ, πολλοὶ μὲν ἐλέγοντο γινῶμαι ὡς αὐτοῖς ἰτέον ἀγωνιουμένοις ἐς παλάτιον. ‘Now the senators were

assembling, those of them who had not been left in the imperial palace, and many expressed the opinion that they should go to the palace and fight.’ Although Kaldellis 2004, 124, finds Procopius’ phrasing ambiguous here, it is clear that the senators gathering envisaged an assault on the palace. The issue of the involvement of the aristocracy in the events of January 532 remains debated: Greatrex 2014b, 83 and n.28, argues that Theophanes’ reference (185–6) to the property of eighteen nobles being confiscated illustrates the limited scale of senatorial participation in the uprising, while others, such as Bell 2013, 324, take the opposite line, cf. Brandes 2014, esp. 259–60. Marc. *com.* a.532 refers to numerous aristocrats, *plerisque nobilium coniuratis*, but he is probably here reflecting the official line in the immediate aftermath of the events, cf. Greatrex 1997, 80 n.99. *Chr. Pasch.* 624 alludes to the presence of the former praetorian prefect Julian alongside Hypatius and Pompey, but nothing further is known of his role. See CPW, 122 n.360, 126 n.369, Greatrex 1997, 77 and n.91, PLRE iii, Iulianus 4.

24.26–30 The Speech of Origen

The senator Origen (Origenes) is otherwise unknown. It is not necessary, however, to infer that he is Procopius’ invention, *contra* Kaldellis 2014, 63 n.149. His speech mirrors that of Theodora (24.33–7): while she urges decisive action, he advocates caution and counsels against confronting the emperor. Such contrasting paired speeches are common in Procopius, cf. i.14.11 and Introduction, pp. 10–12. See Taragna 2000, 116, 120, Meier 2004a, 104. The two speeches here are remarkably short by the standards of the genre; they should be viewed more as illustrating the characteristics of the individuals involved than as an exposition of the various issues at stake (as is usually the case). Origen’s advice, prefaced by rather banal general statements, appears superficially sensible: Justinian’s power will ebb away as people start to look to Hypatius, yet it fails to take into account the reinforcements that have reached the city. Procopius attributes almost the precisely opposite opinion to Belisarius in a speech at iv.1.23 before the battle of Tricamarum.

The speech has attracted less attention than Theodora’s, but Evans 1984, 381, rightly notes a verbal parallel between 24.28, ἐπὶ ξυροῦ μὲν ἄκμῃς τὰ πράγματα ἡμῖν στήσεται, ‘our fate will stand on a razor’s edge’, and a speech by the Phocaean admiral Dionysius before the disastrous battle of Lade in 494 B.C. at Hdt. vi.11.2, cf. already Homer, *Il.* 10.173–4. But while Dionysius was trying to inspire courage in his men, ready for the imminent battle, Origen is counselling prudence: Gador-

Whyte 2011, 114, sees him as a Herodotean ‘wise adviser’, whose counsel is ignored with fatal consequence, cf. Chekalova 2001, 402 n.204. As Evans also observes, Theodora’s speech has parallels with that attributed by Hdt. viii.68 to the tyrant Artemisia of Halicarnassus before the battle of Salamis in 480 B.C., but here again the tenor is reversed: while Artemisia urges caution on Xerxes, arguing that he can win merely by holding fire, Theodora encourages her husband to action. Kaldellis 2004, 125, infers on the basis of these parallels that Procopius is casting Justinian as a Persian despot.

24.26 Τὰ μὲν παρόντα ἡμῖν, ὧ ἄνδρες Ῥωμαῖοι, πράγματα μὴ οὐκὶ πολέμῳ διακριθῆναι οὐχ οἶόν τε, ‘Our present crisis, Romans, cannot be resolved save by war.’ An emphatic opening phrase, given force by the numerous negatives, on which see Smyth §2739. A messenger to Vitigis at vi.26.6 similarly begins his address by referring to the present circumstances, cf. iii.15.27 (a speech of Belisarius).

24.26 πόλεμος δὲ καὶ βασιλεία τὰ μέγιστα τῶν ἐν ἀνθρώποις ἀπάντων ὡμολόγηται εἶναι, ‘Now war and imperial power are generally agreed to be the greatest things in the world’. Belisarius and Hermogenes, at the start of their letter to the Persian commander before the battle of Dara, likewise refer to peace being ‘generally agreed’ to be the chief good for men, i.14.1, cf. vii.22.9. As Kaegi 1990, 57, 67–8, observes, Procopius is fond of such gnomic utterances, perhaps picked up from rhetorical handbooks, cf. already Dahn 1865, 95; readers appreciated and learnt from maxims on warfare, cf. Maur. *Strat.* viii.2 (278–300), Taragna 2000, 135–6, Whately 2016, 145–51, 228–31. García Romero, 146 n.210, suggests that the reference to ‘war and imperial power’ represents an oblique compliment to Belisarius and Justinian respectively.

24.28 ἐπὶ ξυροῦ μὲν ἀκμῆς τὰ πράγματα ἡμῖν στήσεται, ‘our fate will stand on a razor’s edge’. See 24.26–30n on Origen’s speech; the expression ‘a razor’s edge’ was a common one and is found already at *Il.* 10.173.

24.29 τὰ γὰρ τῶν πραγμάτων ὀξύτατα ἐς τὸ τῆς τύχης ὥς τὰ πολλὰ περιίσταται κράτος, ‘for in swift-moving situations, the power of Fortune is generally decisive’. Braun 1885, 188, finds echoes of Thuc. i.78.2, μηκυνόμενος γὰρ φιλεῖ ἐς τύχας τὰ πολλὰ περιίστασθαι, ‘for when (war) is prolonged, it comes to be dependent on Fortune’.

24.30 ἔστι τοίνυν ἡμῖν βασιλεία ἕτερα, Πλακιλλιαναί τε καὶ τὰ Ἑλένης ἐπώνυμα, ‘We have other palaces, the Placillianae and that called after Helen’, i.e. the Placillianae (named after Flaccilla, wife of Theodosius I, cf. *Chron. Pasch.* 564) and the Helenianae (named after Helena, the mother of Constantine). See Tiftixoglou 1973, 71–7, on the latter palace and its history. The Helenianae palace in particular had an imperial resonance: the tenth-century *De Cer.* i.100.103–10 (i.91) describes how the Emperor Leo on his accession in 457 stopped here en route from the Hebdomon to the imperial palace, changed his clothes and then proceeded to the Forum of Constantine, where he received homage from the senate and the city prefect, cf. Tiftixoglou 1973, 79, Dagron 2010, 62. This helps to explain how, according to *Chr. Pasch.* 624, Hypatius’ supporters were able to find imperial insignia here, cf. i.24.24n. Theoph. 185.6–7 refers to armed Greens coming from Placillianae (although the name is garbled) to support Hypatius and storm the palace, cf. Mango and Scott 1997, 284 n.46, *CPW*, 123 n.362.

24.31 οἱ δὲ δὴ ἄλλοι, ὅπερ φιλεῖ ὄμιλος ποιεῖν, ὁξύτερόν τε ἀντελαμβάνοντο, ‘But the rest were more impetuous, as a crowd usually is.’ Two Thucydidean reminiscences in close succession: at ii.65.4, the well-known assessment of Pericles, the historian refers to the ‘usual fickleness of the mob’ (tr. Hornblower, *CT*, i, 341). The last section uses the same terms as does Thuc. at ii.8.1 to describe the general eagerness for war in Greece in 431 B.C.

24.31 καὶ οὐχ ἥκιστα γε Ὑπάτιος (χρῆν γὰρ οἱ γενέσθαι κακῶς) τῆς ἐπὶ τὸν ἵππόδρομον ὁδοῦ ἐκέλευεν ἡγεῖσθαι. ‘Hypatius (for he was fated to come to a bad end) was in the lead in urging them to lead the way to the hippodrome.’ A Herodotean touch: at i.8.2 Gyges is likewise said to have been destined for a bad end, cf. Priscus frg.30.1.9/69 (p.97.17) (= Joh. Ant. frg.224.2) referring to Valentinian III. Just like Herodotus, Procopius nevertheless does not cease to examine the issue of causation, cf. Gould 1989, 73–82; one should be wary in any case of inferring a philosophy of history to Procopius on the basis of this literary flourish, cf. Evans 1971, 85. So also already Dahn 1865, 231, who associates the expression with an occasion when someone, despite contrary warnings, embarks on a dangerous course, cf. 25.26, or when an expected result does not occur, as at ii.13.22. See also ii.8.14n.

Some scholars (e.g. Greatrex 1997, 77–9) have been prepared to accept the idea of collaboration between Hypatius and Justinian, but Pfeilschifter

2013, 191–2, rightly finds this unlikely, cf. Meier 2003a, 97–8, who fails to take into account Procopius' reference to Hypatius' eagerness here.

24.32 πότερα μένουσιν αὐτοῖς ἢ ταῖς ναυσὶν ἐς φυγὴν τρεπομένοις ἄμεινον ἔσται, 'whether it would be better for them to stay or to flee by ship'. Theoph. 184.27–30 confirms deliberations about a potential withdrawal on the Saturday morning, cf. Greatrex 1997, 78. Rumours to this effect may well have encouraged Hypatius and his supporters, especially since he was misinformed that the emperor had actually fled (*Chr. Pasch.* 625, cf. Greatrex 1997, 79). On access from the palace to the Propontis see Westbrook 2011a, 40.

24.33–7 Theodora's Speech

The bold pronouncements of the empress have always attracted the attention of scholars, although opinions differ as to their genuineness. Meier 2004a, 92 n.13, offers an exhaustive survey of attitudes, cf. Becker 2017, 393 n.36. It seems fair to assume with Evans 1984, 382 (cf. *idem* 2002, 45–6), that she advocated a more vigorous policy, but one can go no further, cf. Averil Cameron 1985, 69, Potter 2015, 152–3. As Meier argues, 2004a, 93–7, Procopius was dependent on reports he gained from palace sources, doubtless including Belisarius, even if he also includes some of his own perspectives, cf. Brodka 2018, 48–53.

Theodora's final flourish, referring to royalty (or empire) as a fine burial-shroud (24.37), is a clear allusion to a saying attributed to an adviser addressing the tyrant Dionysius I of Syracuse as he contemplated flight from his city in 403 B.C. The dictum, as the empress herself notes, was well-known and is found (e.g.) at Isocr. *Or.* 6.45, Plut. *An seni respub. gerenda sit*, 783d, Aelian, *Var. Hist.* iv.8, Diod. Sic. 14.8.5, 20.78.2. In these cases, however, the reference was to tyranny, τυραννίς, *tyrannis*. Procopius naturally chose the appropriate word for a legitimate ruler in the sixth century, βασιλεία, *basileia*. Some have seen this change as significant, arguing that Procopius is thus signalling that Justinian's regime was in fact a tyranny, so Kaldellis 2004, 124, Meier 2004a, 99–101, Goltz 2011, 253, but cf. Greatrex 2003, 64–5. Evans 1984, 381–2, observes that while Dionysius spared those who rebelled against him, Justinian executed Hypatius and Pompey. Baldwin 1981 suggests that Procopius is likely to have encountered the aphorism in Diodorus or Plutarch, both popular authors in Late Antiquity.

Theodora's justification for her intervention bears some resemblance to that of the young king Archidamus (in the same speech of Isocrates, *Or.*6) in the opening three sections: he, too, as a young man, has to explain his decision to speak among those more experienced in arms. Taragna 2000, 132–3, stresses the martial qualities of the empress' speech and argues that it may be intended to portray her in a positive light, cf. Greatrex 2022; Pazdernik 1994, 271–2, underlines Justinian's relative passivity. See also i.24.26–30 on Origen's speech, noting parallels between Theodora's intervention and that of the Ionian tyrant Artemisia at *Hdt.* viii.68.

24.33 Τὸ μὲν γυναῖκα ἐν ἀνδράσι μὴ χρῆναι τολμᾶν ἢ ἐν τοῖς ἀποκνοῦσι νεανιεύεσθαι, 'As to whether it is unseemly for a woman to be bold among men, or to be daring when others are full of fear'. There is surely an irony in Theodora, who highlights her gender at the very outset of her speech, describing herself as 'acting like a hot-headed youth' (cf. *LSJ*, 1163) and using a verb linked to the noun νεανίας, *neanias*, 'young man'. In fact the verb νεανιεύομαι, *neanieuomai*, here translated as 'be daring' can have negative connotations, e.g. at i.7.10, iv.6.18, although here it evidently must be more positive (as perhaps also at viii.29.8). See also Kaldellis 2018, 264, on this sentence in particular and the speech in general; the opening sentence, as he emphasises, is complex and perhaps meant to destabilise the audience. Goltz 2011, 252–3, suggests that Procopius introduces this issue in order specifically to undermine the empress' intervention: his audience, he argues, would share his distaste for outspoken women.

24.35 ἡγοῦμαι δὲ τὴν φυγὴν ἔγωγε, εἴπερ ποτὲ, καὶ νῦν, ἦν καὶ τὴν σωτηρίαν ἐπάγεται, ἀξύμφορον εἶναι. 'For my part, I consider that now of all times flight would be counter to our interests, even if it brings safety.' The expression εἴπερ ποτὲ, καὶ νῦν, *eiper pote, kai nun*, 'now, if ever, now of all times' is found already at *Ar. Knights* 594, cf. *NovJ.* 147.pr (553), referring to the urgent need for funds. Constantine Porphyrogenitus later deploys it in a stirring allocution to his soldiers at *De cont. militaribus*, §4, line 2 (ed. Vári, 80, tr. McGeer, 129).

24.36 μὴ γὰρ ἂν γενοίμην τῆς ἀλουργίδος ταύτης χωρίς, 'May I never be parted from this purple', i.e. from her imperial robes. The word ἀλουργίς, *halourgis*, 'purple robe' is generally used for imperial clothing, cf. (e.g.) Euseb. *VC* iv.66.1, Them. *Or.*5 (96.4, 65c), *Or.* 9 (193.5, 127d).

24.36 μηδ' ἄν τὴν ἡμέραν ἐκείνην βιώην, ἐν ᾗ με δέσποιναν οἱ ἐντυχόντες οὐ προσερούσιν, 'and may I never live to see the day when men who meet me will not address me as their mistress'. Procopius criticises Theodora's insistence on being addressed as *despoina*, mistress, at *Anecd.* 30.21–6; he likewise objects to Justinian being called *despotēs*, although Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* i.6 seeks to excuse the emperor. See Maas 1992, 94, Pazdernik 1994, 271 n.68, Kaldellis 2004, 136–40; the terms were redolent of servitude. Both also insisted on officials prostrating themselves before them, Procopius claims in the same passage.

24.37 ἐμὲ γάρ τις καὶ παλαιὸς ἀρέσκει λόγος, ὥς καλὸν ἐντάφιον ἡ βασιλεία ἐστί, 'I am in agreement with the old saying, "Royalty is a good winding sheet".' See i.24.33–7n for a discussion of this quotation. The reference to βασιλεία, *basileia*, recalls Origenes' assertion that 'war and imperial power (*basileia*) are generally agreed to be the greatest things in the world' (24.26): the empress agrees with him about this at least.

It should be noted that several things were said to be a good winding sheet in Late Antiquity, notably εὐσεβεία, *eusebeia*, 'piety', e.g. Bas. *Hom. in divites* 9, p.71.8, cf. Lib. *Or.* 14.66 and elsewhere. The expression is also found in Aphthonius, *Progymn.* 9.8, where it is used critically of Philip of Macedon, for whom pleasures were a good winding sheet. Later the same expression, with *basileia*, like Procopius, was attributed to the redoubtable Empress Procopia, who refused initially to give way in 813 to the usurper Leo V, Cedr., ed. Bekker, vol.2, 47.19, Skyl., *Mich.* I, 3 (8.62–3), cf. *PBE* i, Prokopia 1.

24.39 οὔτε τῷ βασιλεῖ εὐνοϊκῶς εἶχον οὔτε ἐς τὸ ἐμφανὲς ἔργου ἔχεσθαι ἠθελον, ἀλλὰ τὸ μέλλον ἐκαπαδόκουν ὅπῃ ἐκβήσεται. '(The soldiers) were not well disposed to the emperor and did not want to take part in the fighting openly; they were waiting for the outcome of events.' The expression εὐνοϊκῶς ἔχω, *eunoikōs ekhō*, 'I am well disposed (to)' is first used by Xenophon, e.g. *Hell.* iv.4.15, and is common in Procopius, e.g. at 24.31, iii.4.26. Both Thucydides (ii.2.4) and Herodotus (ii.121α3) use the idiom ἔργου ἔχομαι, *ergou ekhomai*, 'I get to work, set to', cf. Dio Cassius 14.57.4, Malchus frg.18.2, line 4; it is common in Procopius, cf. 24.52 and ii.27.6. The verb καπαδοκέω, *karadokeō*, 'I await the outcome of', is often used of troops temporising, e.g. at Hdt. vii.163.2, 168.2, where western fleets await the result of Xerxes' invasion of Greece. Cf. Proc. iv.8.16 for a very similar context to this one.

On the attitude of the soldiers see Pfeilschifter 2013, 205; Procopius' frankness is noteworthy, cf. Treadgold 2007a, 213. As Pfeilschifter

emphasises, it was only now, after days of rioting, that the palace guards wavered. The units that had been brought in from Thrace, along with the forces of Belisarius and Mundus, on the other hand, remained loyal. See also *CPW*, 123 n.363, on the attitudes of the various contingents of soldiers.

24.40 πᾶσαν δὲ τὴν ἐλπίδα ἐν Βελισαρίῳ τε καὶ Μούνδῳ ὁ βασιλεὺς εἶχεν. ‘The emperor put all his hope in Belisarius and Mundus.’ At i.21.2 Procopius misleadingly claims that Belisarius had been summoned to Constantinople for the Vandal war, whereas he had in fact been relieved of his eastern command following the defeat at Callinicum. The troops with him, whose numbers and experience Procopius stresses (both in this section and at 24.51), were clearly his *bucellarii*, his personal guards, as Pfeilschifter 2013, 203–4, rightly surmises; many were Goths. See also i.25.7n on *bucellarii*.

Mundus, also referred to as Mundo, was a Gepid leader who had allied himself with the Roman empire in 529 and been appointed *magister militum per Illyricum*. He had been named as Belisarius’ successor to the eastern command after his dismissal but seems never to have reached the front. He may therefore have been in Constantinople in January 532 with a contingent of a few hundred Herul troops, awaiting news of the negotiations with Persia. On his varied career see Croke 1982, *PLRE* ii, Mundo, *PLRE* iii, Mundus, Pfeilschifter 2013, 202–3, Sarantis 2016, 51–60.

24.42 κάθηται δὲ ἐξ τὸν βασιλείον θρόνον, ὅθεν αἰεὶ βασιλεὺς εἰώθει τὸν τε ἵππικόν καὶ γυμνικὸν θεᾶσθαι ἀγῶνα. ‘He (Hypatius) sat down on the imperial throne, from which the emperor always watches the equestrian and athletic contests.’ Procopius refers here to the imperial box, the *kathisma*, placed in the centre of the eastern side of the hippodrome, close to the imperial palace; it is depicted on the base of the Obelisk of Theodosius. Only a few hours earlier, Justinian himself had appeared here in order to conciliate the crowd, albeit with little success: see Greatrex 1997, 76–7. On the athletic contests in the hippodrome mentioned by Procopius see Remijsen 2015, 64–9; they continued well beyond the sixth century.

24.43 ἐκ δὲ παλατίου Μοῦνδος μὲν διὰ πύλης ἐξῆει, ἔνθα δὲ ὁ κοχλίας ἀπὸ τῆς καθόδου κυκλοτεροῦς οὔσης ὠνόμασται, ‘Mundus came from the palace through a gate where there is a “spiral” staircase, so called because of its circular descent.’ The *kochlias* (or ‘Snail’, which is what the

Greek word literally means) staircase connected the palace to the *kathisma*, allowing the emperor to attend games without mingling with the spectators. Originally it was probably built from wood, but Justinian replaced it with a stone staircase, also spiral. See Guiland 1964–5, 288, *idem* 1969, i, 504, Dagron 2000, 119–20, *idem* 2011, 89; see also the next note. It was here that Armatus had been assassinated on his way up to the imperial box in c.476, *Chr. Pasch.* 603, and where Illus narrowly avoided a similar fate, *Mal.* 15.13. The gate to which Procopius refers may be that attested underneath the *kathisma*, called the Kareia, which allowed access into the hippodrome, although in this case Mundus probably used it rather to gain access to the vaulting behind the seats in order to make his way around the building. See *CPW*, 123 n.363, Bardill 1999, 223 n.35, Golvin and Fauquet 2007, 204, Dagron 2011, 89, 155, Westbrook 2011a, 40–3.

Mundus later led his troops into the hippodrome through the Nekra gate (24.52). He evidently headed southwards, then westwards, upon leaving the palace, leaving his son Maurice to enter through the *Sphendonē*, the curved end of the hippodrome. See Guiland 1969, i, 512–13, Greatrex 1997, 79 and i.24.53n. Cf. Dagron 2000, 121, on the ground-floor link with the hippodrome.

24.44 Βελισάριος δὲ τὰ μὲν πρῶτα εὐθὺς αὐτοῦ τε Ὑπατίου καὶ θρόνου τοῦ βασιλείου ἀνέβαινεν, ‘Belisarius first went straight up to Hypatius and the imperial throne.’ *Chr. Pasch.* 625 confirms this attempt to seize the usurper but claims that Justinian led the mission, accompanied by Mundus, Belisarius, Basilides and various other senators. It explains that they reached the Pulpita, a loggia facing towards the palace that was part of the *kathisma* complex, and even entered another room, the *triclinium* (or reception hall), but were then blocked by the bronze doors, as Procopius here describes. See *CPW*, 51 n.159, on the lay-out of the *kathisma* (a term that designates both the box itself and the surrounding building), cf. Guiland 1964–5, 288, Bardill 1999, 233 n.35, Golvin and Fauquet 2007, 200–8 (with valuable plans), Bardill 2010, 140–5, Westbrook 2011a, 40–1.

24.45 δεδογμένον δὲ τοῖς στρατιώταις μηδετέρῳ ἀμύνειν, ἕως αὐτῶν ἄτερος λαμπρῶς νικῶν, ‘But the soldiers had decided to help neither side until one of them was clearly on top’, cf. 24.39n. Rumours of a withdrawal by Justinian will have encouraged their decision to maintain a neutral stance, cf. 24.32n above. Procopius uses an unusual present optative in this context, νικῶν, *nikōē*, ‘he would be victorious’, maintaining the high style

that characterises this chapter. See Smyth §2427: the optative is used because of the secondary sequence (in implied indirect speech).

24.47 ἐκέλευεν οὖν αὐτὸν βασιλεὺς ἐπὶ τὴν καλουμένην Χαλκὴν καὶ τὰ ἐνταῦθα προπύλαια ἰέναι. ‘So the emperor told him to go to the so-called Chalke and the outer gateways there.’ Another way into the imperial box had to be found. Belisarius was therefore ordered to exit the palace through its bronze gate, the Chalke, to the north. *En route* he passed through gutted buildings, as Procopius describes (24.48), which probably had housed elements of the palace guards: see 24.9n on the ‘House of Ares’. See Westbrook 2011a, 41–2, 48, cf. Guiland 1969, i, 511.

24.49 καὶ ἐπειδὴ παρὰ τὴν Βενέτειον ἐγεγόνει στοάν, ἡ τοῦ βασιλέως θρόνου ἐν δεξιᾷ ἐστίν, ‘When he came to the Blue portico, which is on the right of the emperor’s throne’. Belisarius, having left the palace complex, needed to return southwards, this time within the hippodrome, in order to assault the *kathisma*. He therefore passed through the portico or stoa of the Blues, which lay to the right of the imperial box. The portico at the top level of the *cavea* will have shielded his men from the view of the crowds already in the hippodrome, but he ran the risk of being trapped as he tried to force the door into the *kathisma* from the side, should the factions become aware of his mission; see Guiland 1969, i, 412, Golvin and Fauquet 2007, 189–91, cf. Bardill 2010, 122–3, 127–8 (with fig.8.36). This is at least the most natural interpretation of Procopius’ description here, although many scholars suppose that both the Blues and Greens were situated on the west side of the hippodrome, opposite the emperor. In this case, Belisarius would have had to cross the centre of the hippodrome to gain access to the gate at the bottom of the *kathisma* palace, so Guiland 1969, i, 482, 511. See Golvin and Fauquet 2007, 189, for this interpretation, cf. Whitby 1999, 238–9, Dagron 2011, 210. It is more probable, however, that some, at least, of the Blues were situated next to the imperial box: so Dagron 1974, 345 n.4, Bardill 1999, 224 n.35, *idem* 2010, 141–2. It may have been through this entrance or perhaps the Karea gate (see i.24.43n) that Hypatius had entered the box.

24.50 ἀπὸ τοῦ κολεοῦ τὸ ξίφος ἀράμενος τοῖς τε ἄλλοις κατὰ ταῦτα ποιεῖν ἐπαγγέλλας, δρόμῳ τε καὶ κραυγῇ ἐπ’ αὐτοὺς ἦει. ‘He drew his sword from its scabbard and, telling the rest to do the same, he advanced against them at a run, shouting.’ Procopius emphasises the difficulties facing Belisarius and his personal courage: it was he who took the lead.

The nouns employed for drawing his sword from the scabbard are first found in the *Iliad* (e.g. I.194), cf. Priscus frg.30.I.22/69 (p.97.30) (= Joh. Ant. frg.224.2), Damascius, *V. Isid.* frg.115A, line 8.

24.52 ἐπειδὴ ἔτεκμήρατο ὡς Βελισάριος ἐν τῷ πόνῳ εἶη, εὐθύς ἐπὶ τὸ ἵπποδρόμιον διὰ τῆς εἰσόδου, ἣ Νεκρά καλεῖται, εἰσβάλλει, ‘When he (Mundus) judged that Belisarius was engaged in the combat, he immediately entered the hippodrome by the gate called the Gate of the Corpse.’ In fact, the crowd was beset from all sides, as Procopius mentions. *Chr. Pasch.* 626 relates how Narses sowed disunity among the partisans by bribing some to support Justinian; he then entered the hippodrome through the *carceres* at the northern end, while Mundus, as described here, came through the western gate known as Nekra or ‘the Corpse’, and his son through the *Sphendonē*. The rioters were thus surrounded and had no chance against the imperial forces. See *CPW*, 125 n.365, Bardill 1997, 223 n.35, Brodka 2018, 41–2.

24.53 Βοραΐδης τε καὶ Ἰοῦστος, Ἰουστινιανοῦ βασιλέως ἀνεψιοί, ‘Boraides and Justus, cousins of the Emperor Justinian’. Their role is not mentioned in any other source. Boraides and Justus were brothers, cousins of Justinian; another brother was the better known Germanus. Like Justinian, they were nephews of his predecessor, Justin I. See *PLRE* iii, Boraides and Iustus 2 and ii.20.20n. The former died in 544 after serving on the eastern front, the latter in 548. They may have been assigned this task to demonstrate the victory of the house of Justin and Justinian over that of Anastasius.

24.54 θνήσκουσί τε τοῦ δήμου πλεόν ἢ τρισμύριοι ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ. ‘More than 30,000 of the people died on that day.’ The sources vary between 30,000 and 80,000: clearly the massacre was on a large scale. See *CPW*, 125 n.366, Greatrex 1997, 79 and n.98, Meier 2003b, 297, for a survey of the figures.

24.55 Ὑπάτιος δὲ αὐτὸν πολλὰ ὀνειδίσας οὐκ ἔφη χρῆναι τοὺς οὐκ ἐν δίκῃ ἀπολουμένους ὁδύρεσθαι. ‘But Hypatius rebuked him (Pompey) and said that men about to die without justice ought not to lament.’ Procopius represents Hypatius as a courageous man, unlike his brother, who is overcome by his fate. Although the portrayal is sympathetic, as Meier 2004a, 98, emphasises, it is also undercut by what Procopius reports at 24.31, where Hypatius gives the order to advance to the hippodrome. His claims to innocence in the following section therefore appear specious.

24.56 κτείναντες δὲ οἱ στρατιῶται τῇ ὕστεραίᾳ ἐκάτερον, ἐς θάλασσαν καθῆκαν τὰ σώματα. ‘But the soldiers killed both of them on the following day and threw their bodies into the sea.’ Their execution took place on Monday 19 January, perhaps in the night (so Vict. Tun. 114 [a.530]); *Chr. Pasch.* 627 reports that their bodies were thrown into the sea, although that of Hypatius subsequently washed up on shore. A lemma to *Anth. Pal.* vii.591–2 puts the execution on the island of Prinkipo, just to the south-east of Constantinople, cf. Beckby, vol.2, 348 and fig. 23 below. These two epigrams, probably both by the former praetorian prefect Julian, pay tribute to Hypatius. PZ ix.14b claims that Justinian was persuaded by an irate Theodora to execute the men rather than spare them. See Alan Cameron 1978, 264–7, *CPW*, 126 n.367, Greatrex 1997, 80, Meier 2003b, 297.

24.57 βασιλεὺς δὲ αὐτῶν τε τὰ χρήματα ἐς τὸ δημόσιον ἀνάγραπτα ἐποίησατο καὶ ἄλλων τῶν ἐκ βουλῆς ἀπάντων, οἳ δὴ τὴν γνώμην ξὺν αὐτοῖς ἔθεντο. ‘The emperor assigned their money to the treasury, together with that of all the senators who had supported them.’ Brandes 2014, 255–6, argues that Procopius here refers to the *res privatae*, which normally received the property of those who had been condemned. On the extent of senatorial involvement see 24.25n.

24.58 ἔπειτα μέντοι τοῖς τε ἄλλοις ἅπασι καὶ τοῖς Ὑπατίου καὶ Πομπηίου παισὶ τὰ τε ἀξιώματα, οἷς πρότερον ἐχρῶντο, ἀπέδωκε καὶ τῶν χρημάτων ὅσοις τῶν ἐπιτηδείων τινὰς οὐκ ἔτυχε δωρησάμενος, ‘Later, however, he restored to all of them, including the sons of Hypatius and Pompey, the rank they had previously held and such of their money as he had not given to certain of his friends.’ Mal. 18.80 places the recall of the patricians Probus and a certain Olybrius at the start of 533, when Justinian entered his third consulship, thus before the anniversary of the Nika riot, cf. Alan Cameron 1978, 266–7, MalKom *ad loc.* See i.24n on this rehabilitation; over time, John the Cappadocian came to be blamed for the uprising, rather than Anastasius’ nephews, cf. Greatrex 1997, 83. Justinian’s generosity is underlined, but Procopius is more scathing about the treatment of the senate and its members in the wake of the riot at *Anecd.* 12.12–13: the confiscated lands returned were those on which heavy taxes were due, he claims. See Brandes 2014, 255–7.

Anastasius’ family went on to flourish under Justinian: a grandson of Hypatius married the emperor’s niece Preiecta in 548/9. See Alan Cameron 1978, 268, cf. *PLRE* ii, stemma 9, *PLRE* iii, Praiecta 1, Ioannes 63.

i.25 The Downfall of John the Cappadocian

This chapter, markedly close in tone to that of the *Anecdota* (cf. Rubin, *PvK*, 380), sits somewhat uneasily in *The Persian Wars*. Since John is accused of having held ambitions to seize the throne and to have plotted against Justinian, it does thematically fit into a series of episodes relating plots against both Khusro and Justinian. But the narrative concerns events that unfolded in 541, long after the conclusion of the Eternal Peace, when John was ousted from office, and his subsequent tribulations up to 546. The link between this chapter and the preceding one lies in the focus on two prominent ministers of Justinian – and on John in particular – whose reputation sank markedly during the 540s. Averil Cameron 1985, 159, rightly notes that the chapter's position allows Procopius to draw attention to Belisarius' popularity after his victories in Italy (25.11–12) and to clear him of any involvement in John's fall. He did, after all, benefit directly from John's disgrace by being granted his *domus* (house), *Marc. com.* a.544.3, cf. Begass 2018, 427.

The account here is complemented by *Anecd.* 17.38–45, where Procopius makes clear that Theodora's hatred for John was motivated not by any public spirit but by the competition he represented for influence with her husband (*contra* Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* iii.69, cf. ii.15 in the chapter summary, p.6, ed. Schamp). See Pazdernik 1994, 262 and n.33, *idem* 2009, 413. While Cresci 1987, 243–9, suggests that verbal echoes of Thucydides in Procopius' portrayal of John (see 24.13n) indicate a willingness on his part to question official criticism of the former praetorian prefect, Kaldellis 2010b, 257–8, argues that the emperor's desire to retain the services of such a reprobate, as described in this chapter, cf. ii.30.49, represents an indictment of his regime on Procopius' part. He proposes that Justinian's abandonment of his support for John is paralleled by Xerxes' sacrifice of his sister-in-law to his wife recounted by Hdt. ix.109–13, although there are few points of overlap.

Mal. 18.89 offers an account of the same events, preserved at greater length in *Exc. de Insidiis* 47 (p.406 in Thurn's edition), on which see MalKom. There is some chronological debate as to whether John's banishment to Egypt should be placed in 541, i.e. almost immediately after his removal to Artace, or in 544, as the continuator of *Marc. com.* reports. It is far more likely that he spent three years in Artace, however, before being sent to Antinoopolis. See i.25.43n.

Bibliography: Pazdernik 1994, 268–9, Greatrex 1995a, Evans 2011, 141–52, Potter 2015, 184–7, Greatrex 2016a, 171–2, Brodka 2018, 109–14.

25.1 Τριβουνιανὸς δὲ καὶ Ἰωάννης τῆς τιμῆς οὕτω παραλυθέντες χρόνῳ ὕστερον ἐς ἀρχὰς τὰς αὐτὰς κατέστησαν ἄμφω, ‘Tribonian and John, having been thus relieved of their posts, were later both restored to the same offices.’ Tribonian was appointed *magister officiorum* already in 533, then in 535 resumed his post of *quaestor*, which he held until his death, probably in 542; since Procopius mentions a ‘disease’ at 25.2, it is possible that he succumbed to the plague. See Honoré 1978, 60–4, *PLRE* iii, Tribonianus 1. John returned to his post as praetorian prefect already in October 532 and continued in post until May 541. See *PLRE* iii, Ioannes 11. The chapter picks up where 24.11–16 left off, following the dismissal of the two officials during the Nika riot.

25.2 ἦν γὰρ αἰμύλος, ‘He was crafty’. Procopius offers personal criticisms of the two men similar to those he had expressed at 24.11–16. The adjective αἰμύλος, *haimulos*, ‘crafty, wily’ is not used elsewhere by Procopius, but is found already in Aristophanes, e.g. *Eq.* 687. See i.24.16n on Tribonian’s venality, cf. *Anecd.* 13.12 (on his flattering of Justinian).

25.3 καὶ τὰ χρήματα ἀπαξάπαντα λόγῳ οὐδενὶ ληιζόμενος, ‘and (John would) plunder men’s entire fortunes without any justification’. Cf. 24.13–15 with the notes *ad loc.* The adjective ἀπαξάπας, *hapaxapas*, ‘all together’ is found (e.g.) in *Ar. Eq.* 845. Procopius associates it again with χρήματα, *khremata*, ‘money, fortunes’ at *Anecd.* 19.1. This section on John is quoted by Suda, 1469 (650.19–23), cf. A2906 (263.1–3).

25.3 δέκατον ἔτος τὴν ἀρχὴν ἔχων τὴν δίκην ὀρθῶς καὶ δικαίως τῆς ἐς τὴν δίαιταν παρανομίας ἐξέτισε τρόπῳ τοιῷδε. ‘(John) met with a meet and just punishment in his tenth year of office for his wicked way of life. This is how it came about.’ See i.25.43n on the chronology. Thuc. vi.15.4 describes Alcibiades’ ‘wicked way of life’, τῆς ἐς τὴν δίαιταν παρανομίας, *tēs es tēn diaitan paranomias*, similarly, which incurred the distrust of the Athenian people; Procopius re-uses the same expression at 25.9. The notion of τίσις, *tisis*, ‘vengeance, retribution’ catching up eventually with a scoundrel recalls one of the recurring themes of Herodotus’ work, on the other hand (cf. e.g. Desmond 2004).

25.4 οὐτε τὴν τύχην ἐρυθριῶν οὐτε τὴν στοργὴν αἰσχυνόμενος, ἦν περ ἐς αὐτὴν ὁ βασιλεὺς εἶχεν ἐξαισίαν οἶαν, ‘without a blush for her high rank or any thought for the extraordinary love that the emperor bore her’. Cf. *Anecd.* 17.38, where Procopius reports John’s crit-

icisms of Theodora to Justinian. There he suggests that John nearly succeeded in driving a wedge between them, while here he insists on their unity. See Greatrex 1995a, 10. As Pazdernik 1994, 268–9, explains, both Procopius and John the Lydian had to be careful in their criticism of John, even if he had fallen from power, since he had been the emperor's collaborator for so many years, cf. Kaldellis 2010b, 257–8. Whether he had imperial aspirations himself may be doubted, although he was popular with the lower classes as a result of his cutbacks to the bureaucracy. See Leppin 2011, 238, citing Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* iii.62.1–2. Justinian's 'extraordinary', ἐξαισίος, *exaisios*, love for his wife is also described at *Anecd.* 9.29, which allowed her in turn to wield 'extraordinary' power (9.31). Cf. *Wars* i.6.2, ii.5.28. Evans 2011, 47, notes the emperor's statement, *NovJ.* 74.4 (538), that 'nothing is more extreme than the frenzy of love'.

25.5 ἐπεὶ λόγον αὐτοῦ Ἰουστινιανὸς βασιλεὺς ἐποιεῖτο πολὺν, 'since the Emperor Justinian thought highly of him (John)'. Pazdernik 1994, 269, notes a pun here: Justinian 'made a great account' of John, who was responsible for many aspects of imperial finances. He also rightly underlines, 1994, 270, the circumspection with which Theodora proceeded. Antonina in fact planned her scheme independently and only revealed it to the empress late in the day.

25.7 ἐπειδὴν τε ὥς καθευδήσων ἐς τὸν κοιτῶνα ἱοί, τῶν τινα βαρβάρων ἐπιστήσεσθαι οἱ ὥς ἀπολοῦντα ὑπώπτευσεν ἐς νύκτα ἐκάστην. 'Whenever he went to his bedroom to sleep he thought every night that a barbarian would spring on him and kill him.' Procopius describes in vivid fashion the travails of John, cf. *Anecd.* 4.21–2, where Belisarius likewise lives in fear of being abruptly assassinated.

25.7 καίπερ ἔταιρισάμενος δορυφόρων τε καὶ ὑπασπιστῶν χιλιάδας πολλὰς, οὐ γεγονὸς ὑπάρχων τινὶ πρότερον τοῦτό γε, 'even though he had gathered around him many thousands of spearmen and guards, something which had never before been granted to any prefect'. Procopius is referring to the many *bucellarii*, i.e. bodyguards, gathered by John. These troops were more usually associated with military commanders such as Belisarius, cf. e.g. i.24.40, vii.27.3, vii.1.20 with Ravegnani 1988, 93–4, Whitby 1995, 73. Such high numbers were exceptional, cf. Schmitt 1994, 162. The term *doryphoros*, which we have translated as 'spearman' might be rendered instead as 'officer': see ii.19.15n. On

other occasions we have translated it as ‘bodyguard’. See further Pfeilschifter–Thesz on *Anecd.* 3.5. Procopius refers to John as a ὑπαρχος, *hyparchos*, here, i.e. praetorian prefect, although at 24.11 he uses the alternative form ἑπαρχος, *eparchos*.

25.8 ἀεροβατῶν τε καταφανῆς ἦν καὶ μετέωρος ἀρθεὶς ταῖς τῆς βασιλείας ἐλπίσι, ‘He made an exhibition of himself, walking on air, completely carried away by his hopes for the throne.’ The image is of John carried up into mid-air, buoyed by his imperial aspirations. At *Anecd.* 13.11 Justinian is said to float similarly, convinced by flatterers of his many merits. The vocabulary is Aristophanic: the verb ἀεροβατέω, *aerobateō*, ‘I walk the air, I am puffed up’, is applied by Ar. *Nu.* 225 to Socrates, while μετέωρος, *meteōros*, ‘in mid-air’ is found at *Eq.* 1362. The verb τερατεύομαι, *terateuomai*, ‘talk marvels’, used just above is also found at Ar. *Eq.* 627, for instance. See Kaldellis 2004, 149, on the abundance of Aristophanic allusions in the *Anecd.*; they are in keeping with the more scurrilous tone of this chapter.

25.10 εἴ ποὺ εἰς ἱερόν ὡς εὐξόμενός τε καὶ διανυκτερεύσων ἐνταῦθα ἦοι, ‘if ever he went into a church to pray and to spend the night in vigil there’. Cf. Luke 6:12 on praying through the night, using similar terms. On nocturnal vigils see *Mir. Thecla* 26 with Dagron 1978, 79 (in the fifth century), cf. Crisafulli and Nesbitt 1997, 24–5, discussing a seventh-century source, the *Miracles of Artemius*. The verb διανυκτερεύω, *dianyktereuō*, ‘I spend the night’, is found in both Christian and pagan sources and can have military rather than religious associations (e.g. at Plut. *Tib. Gracchus* 16.3, Evagr. *HE* vi.14 (232.10)).

25.10 οὐδὲν ὁμοίως τοῖς Χριστιανῶν ἤθεσιν ἔπραττεν, ἀλλὰ τριβώνιον ἐνδιδυσκόμενος ἱερεῖ πρέπον τῆς παλαιᾶς δόξης, ἦν νῦν Ἑλληνικὴν καλεῖν νενομίκασι, ‘He did not observe Christian practices, but put on a rough cloak more appropriate for a priest of the old faith, which they now call “pagan”.’ Procopius is scathing about John’s religious practices. A τριβώνιον, *tribōnion*, ‘worn garment’ was often the badge of the (pagan) philosopher, e.g. Eunap. *Vit. Soph.* 10.73, but cf. Evagr. *HE* i.21. On the term used for pagan, ‘Hellenic’, see i.20.1n. As Scott 2013, 210, points out, these allegations are seldom believed, even by modern scholars eager to detect signs of high-ranking pagans at Justinian’s court; rather, they represent part of an attempt systematically to tarnish the reputation of the former praetorian prefect.

25.11 Ἐν τούτῳ δὲ Βελισάριος Ἰταλίαν καταστρεψάμενος βασιλεῖ ἐς Βυζάντιον ξὺν Ἀντωνίνῃ τῇ γυναικὶ μετάπεμπτos ἦλθεν, ἐφ' ᾧ ἐπὶ Πέρσας στρατεύσειε. 'In the meantime Belisarius, who had subdued Italy, was summoned by the emperor and arrived in Byzantium with his wife Antonina in order to prepare an expedition against Persia.' Procopius refers to events of 540, following the surrender of Ravenna by the Goths: at vi.30.2 he recounts how Justinian summoned Belisarius to Constantinople to take charge of the eastern front, see also ii.14.8. This is the first mention of Antonina in the *Wars*, who accompanied her husband on several campaigns and is the focus of trenchant criticism at *Anecd.* 1–5; as Procopius notes at *Anecd.* 1.42–2.1, Antonina had personal reasons – the presence of her lover Theodosius – to remain in Constantinople while Belisarius set off before her. See Kaldellis 2004, 146, Evans 2011, 148–50, *ODLA*, Antonina.

25.13 ἦν γὰρ ἱκανωτάτῃ ἀνθρώπων ἀπάντων μηχανᾶσθαι τὰ ἀμήχανα, '(she) was better able than anyone to conceive the inconceivable', cf. 24.13 on John the Cappadocian's similar capacities. See Whitby 2000b, 63, for the frequency of such allusions to overcoming the impossible in Procopius, mainly concerning Justinian in the *Aed.*, where it is generally positive; Murray 2018, 112, is doubtful whether it is in this instance. Procopius offers an instance of Antonina's ingenuity at iii.13.24. See further Brodka 2016, 113, on her characterisation here.

25.13 ἦν τῷ Ἰωάννῃ θυγάτηρ Εὐφημία, 'John had a daughter called Euphemia', cf. *Anecd.* 1.11, where Antonina is introduced (as Belisarius' wife). Nothing further is known of Euphemia beyond what Procopius recounts. See *PLRE* iii, Euphemia 2. On the 'prudence' Procopius attributes to her cf. i.24.23n. Antonina may have had the opportunity to make her visits to Euphemia while John paid a visit to various provinces of the East in the winter of 540–1: see Evans 1996, 196, Schamp 2006, vol.2, clxxix.

25.16 περιχαρὴς δὲ τῷ λόγῳ γενομένη ἡ Εὐφημία, 'Euphemia was overjoyed at these words', cf. the joy of Justin and Justinian at the Persian proposal to adopt Khusrō, i.11.10 above, with the note *ad loc.* The dialogue in direct speech between Euphemia and Antonina in what follows adds vividness to the account, cf. iv.28.17, 25.

25.17 Οὐ γὰρ οἱοί τέ ἐσμεν, ὦ θυγάτερ, εἶπεν, ἐν στρατοπέδῳ νεωτέροις ἐγχειρεῖν πράγμασιν, ἢ μὴ τοῦ ἔργου ξυνεπιλάβωνται ἡμῖν τῶν ἔνδον τινές. 'No,' (Antonina) said, 'my daughter, for we

cannot stir up revolution in the army unless some of those here at home support us in the attempt.’ Pfeilschifter 2013, 222–3 with n.29, observes that Antonina correctly identifies an important aspect of imperial power at the time: the powerful walls of Constantinople made a bid for power without support in the city impracticable, cf. Pfeilschifter–Thesz on *Anecd.* 4.2–6.

25.21 ἐπειδὴν οὖν ἐκ Βυζαντίου ἀπαλλαγεῖσα ἐν τῷ προαστείῳ γένηται (ὃ δὴ Ῥουφινιαναὶ μὲν ὀνομάζεται, Βελισαρίου δὲ ἴδιον ἐτύγχανεν ὄν), ‘So when she had left Byzantium and reached the suburb called Rufiniana, which belonged to Belisarius’. The palace at Rufiniana, a few km south-east of Chalcedon on the Asiatic shore of the Bosphorus, was built at the end of the fourth century by Rufinus, the consul of 392; see fig. 23. Subsequently it is attested in imperial hands before evidently coming into Belisarius’ possession. On his extensive estates see *PLRE* iii, 222, cf. Begass 2018, 427 and n.186. This is the final mention of Rufiniana in literary sources. See Pargoire 1899, esp. 458–9, 472–4, Janin 1923, 182–90, *idem* 1964, 496, 504, Talbert 2000, map 53 B3.

25.21 καὶ τοὺς τε λόγους περὶ τῶν ὅλων ποιήσασθαι καὶ τὰ πιστὰ λαβεῖν τε καὶ δοῦναι, ‘and there they would discuss the whole affair and exchange pledges of loyalty’. *Proc. Anecd.* 2.16 supplements this information, adding that Antonina bound herself too by the strongest oaths possible for a Christian, cf. Pfeilschifter–Thesz *ad loc.* The same chapter also describes oaths exchanged between Belisarius and his stepson Photius to support one another; they hoped to capture a certain Theodosius, the lover of Antonina, soon after these events. As Procopius relates at *Anecd.* 3.7, Theodora then repaid Antonina handsomely for her help in bringing down John the Cappadocian by intervening against Belisarius and Photius. The two accounts in the two works thus overlap in the events they describe and in their style of narration.

25.23 ἔν τε Ῥουφινιαναῖς ἐγένετο, ὥς τῇ ὑστεραίᾳ τῆς ἐπὶ τὴν ἑω ὁδοῦ ἀρξομένη, ‘soon she came to Rufiniana, since she would start her journey to the East on the following day’. The conjunction ὥς, *hōs*, ‘as (if)’ could be read to mean that this was a pretence on Antonina’s part: she was not indeed going to set off for the eastern front on the next day. This is how it is usually translated. But it can also give the reason for an action: see *LSJ*, 2039, C.I, *CGCG* 52.39, 52.41, 57.2. From *Anecd.* 2.17–18 it is clear that Antonina did then proceed to the East, where her arrival induced Belisarius, Procopius alleges, to break off his campaigning early.

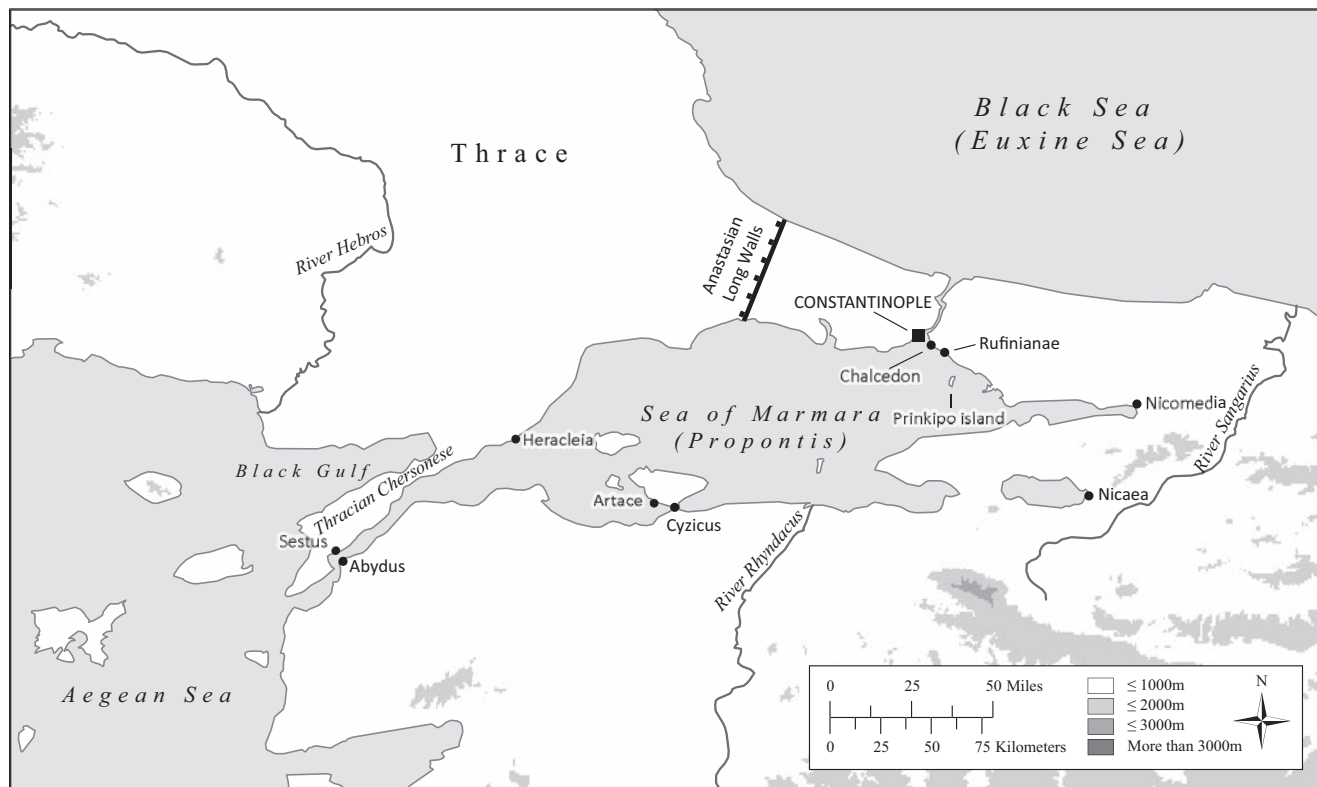


Figure 23 Constantinople and its Environs

Hence it is likely that Procopius has deliberately employed an ambiguous phrasing here.

25.24 **Ναρσῆν τε τὸν εὐνοῦχον καὶ Μάρκελλον τὸν τῶν ἐν παλατίῳ φυλάκων ἄρχοντα**, ‘the eunuch Narses and Marcellus, the commander of the palace guard’. On Narses see 15.31n. Marcellus was *comes excubitorum*, i.e. count of the excubitors, the palace guards; in 549 he was involved in suppressing the attempted coup of Arsaces and Khanaranges, in which context Procopius describes him as being very serious and austere, vii.32.23. See *PLRE* iii, Marcellus 3. He was therefore a sensible choice for this mission. Brodka 2016, 112–18, plausibly argues that he was Procopius’ source here (and elsewhere).

25.26 **Ἰωάννης δὲ (χρῆν γὰρ αὐτῷ γενέσθαι κακῶς)**, ‘But John was fated to come to a bad end’. Kaldellis 2010b, 258, perceives a specific allusion to Hdt. ix.109.2 here, but the phrasing is not as close as to Hdt. i.8.2, cf. i.24.31n.

25.26 **ἀμφὶ νύκτα μέσῃν τῇ Ἀντωνίνῃ ξυνέμιξεν, αἵμασιδς ποῦ τινος ἄγχιστα, ἧς δὴ ὀπίσθεν καθίσασα ἐτύγχανε τοὺς ἀμφὶ Ναρσῆν τε καὶ Μάρκελλον, ὅπως τῶν λεγομένων ἀκούσειαν**, ‘he met Antonina in the middle of the night, near a stone wall behind which she had posted Narses and Marcellus with their troops so that they could hear what was said’. Cf. vii.11.29 for this expression for ‘around midnight’, nowhere else attested in Greek literature, although Xen. *Anab.* ii.2.8, ἀμφὶ μέσας νύκτας, *amphi mesas nyktas*, is similar; the word order in Procopius, however, is unusual, cf. Gildersleeve 1900, §507. Holcroft 1653, 31, translates αἵμασιδς, *haimasia*, as ‘hedge’, which is also possible, cf. *BDAG*, s.v.

A distant precedent (from A.D. 28) for this sort of eavesdropping ambush may be found at Tac. *Ann.* iv.68–70, where a friend of Germanicus, Titius Sabinus, is lured into expressing criticisms of the Emperor Tiberius and his praetorian prefect Sejanus by the *delator* Latinus Latiaris. Having gained Sabinus’ trust, Latiaris stationed three senators between the ceiling and the roof in his house in order to attest to his victim’s indiscretions. Tac. *Ann.* iv.71 notes that it is with difficulty that he defers recounting how the accusers later met with an appropriate fate.

25.28 **καὶ ὅρκοις δεινотάτοις ἀπισχυρίζετο**, ‘and he was binding himself with the most solemn oaths’. On this oath-taking see above

25.21n. Already Homer, *Iliad* 15.38, refers to ‘most solemn oaths’, cf. Proc. i.5.15 and elsewhere.

25.30 καὶ εἰ μὲν εὐθύς ἔλθεῖν παρὰ βασιλέα ἐθάρσησεν, οἴμαι ἄν, οὐδὲν ἐπεπόνθει πρὸς αὐτοῦ ἄχαρι, ‘If he had had the courage to go at once to the emperor, I do not think that he would have come to any harm from him.’ The episode recalls Hdt. vi.30.1, as Braun 1894, 33, signalled: Histiaeus, former tyrant of Miletus, might have survived his capture at the hands of Artaphernes if he had been able to make contact with King Darius.

25.30 νῦν δὲ καταφυγὼν ἐς τὸ ἱερὸν δέδωκε τῇ βασιλίδι κατ’ ἐξουσίαν τῇ ἐξ αὐτὸν ἐπιβουλῇ χρῆσθαι, ‘But as it was he took refuge in a church and gave the empress the chance to prosecute her plot against him at her leisure.’ The expression κατ’ ἐξουσίαν, *kat’ exousian*, ‘at her leisure’, is common in Procopius, cf. e.g. at 25.34 immediately below or at ii.7.10; it is used similarly at Zos. i.24.2, Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* i.3.6. It is linked to the notion of authority, see *LSJ*, 599, and can often be translated ‘by/with authority’, as (e.g.) at Mark 1:27, Lib. *Or.* 33.16, cf. Proc. ii.3.35. Haury in his apparatus to 139.18 suggests that Procopius’ text should be emended to read ‘a (certain) church’, since no name is given; his alternative, to insert the name of St Laurence on the basis of its mention in Theoph. (184.9) during the Nika riot (on which see i.24.7n), is implausible.

Hillner 2015, 236–7, suggests that John’s subsequent ordination is linked to the asylum he gained from the church. The patriarch of Constantinople may then have been involved, in collaboration no doubt with the emperor, in establishing the penalty for John.

25.31 Τότε μὲν οὖν ἐξ ἐπάρχων ιδιώτης γενόμενος ἐς ἕτερον ἐνθένδε ἀναστὰς ἐκομίσθη, ὅπερ ἐν τῷ προαστείῳ Κυζίκου πόλεως ἱδρυται, Ἀρτάκην καλοῦσι Κυζικηνοὶ τὸ προάστειον. ‘So then, after being a prefect, he became a private citizen. He left that church and was brought to another, in a suburb of the city of Cyzicus called by the Cyzicenes Artace.’ Mal. 18.89 (cf. *Exc. de ins.* 47) offers similar details. Its placing of the episode in August, however, is implausible: his demotion is more likely to have taken place in May, since by June his name no longer appears on legal documents. See MalKom on 18.89.1, cf. *PLRE* iii, Ioannes 11.

John was not the first eminent courtier to be banished to Cyzicus: already in 529 a *comes excubitorum*, Priscus was dismissed from office and sent there. He was ordained as a deacon and, despite also being impris-

oned, managed to escape to Artace, after which he was permitted to live at Nicaea. See Mal. 18.43 with *Exc. de ins.* 45, Proc. *Anecd.* 16.7–10 with Hillner 2015, 236, Greatrex 2016a, 171. On Cyzicus and its suburb Artace see MalKom on 18.89.3. The latter is identified with the present-day Erdek, about 7 km from Cyzicus, and had long been a destination for those seeking refuge. The city lies about 120 km across the Sea of Marmara from Constantinople; it is possible that Justinian wanted to ensure that his former minister was within reach in case of need, cf. MalKom on 18.89.2, Hillner 2015, 239.

Like Priscus, John was ordained a deacon, which Procopius prefers to refer to as a presbyter, eschewing the technical Christian term for a more classicising one. See *LSJ* and Lampe, s.v. πρεσβύτερος, *ODLA*, s.v. priest, Christian. On the phenomenon of forced ordinations that emerges in the fifth century see Delmaire 2008, 123–4.

25.31 ἐνταῦθα ἱερέως οὐ τι ἐκούσιος περιβέβληται σχῆμα, ‘There, much against his will, he put on the garb of a priest.’ MS P offers a very different reading here, ἐνταῦθα ἱερεὺς γενόμενος ἐκουσίως Πέτρον ἑαυτὸν μετωνόμασεν, ‘There he willingly became a priest and changed his name to Peter’, cf. Haury, 139. A pious scribal intrusion seems likely: see *PCBE Asie*, Ioannes 35, cf. already Destunis 1876, 341 n.13.

25.32 ὁ δὲ ἱερουργεῖν ἥκιστα ἤθελεν, ὥς μὴ ποτε αὐτῷ ἐμπόδιον εἶη ἐς τὰς ἀρχὰς αὐθις ἰέναι, ‘But he would not perform the office of a priest, so that he might have no hindrance to returning to office.’ John was doubtless mindful of Justinian’s legislation to prevent priests from relinquishing their status and potentially entering imperial service: see *C.J.* 1.3.52.5–6 (of 531, a law addressed to John himself, aimed at *curiales*), *NovJ.* 6.7 (535), cf. canons 3 and 7 of the Council of Chalcedon, *Acts Chalc.*, vol.3, 94–6 (*ACO* ii.3.3, 93–4). Yet the former praetorian prefect Apion, who served under Anastasius, subsequently returned to office under Justin I, despite having been ordained a cleric at Nicaea: see Th. Lect. 482, *PLRE* ii, Apion 2, Hillner 2015, 236, 239. The confiscation of John’s property is confirmed by Mal. 18.89; it was normal procedure, cf. Hillner 2015, 238, Brandes 2017, 370–1.

25.35 ὅτι δὴ πονηρότατος γεγωνὼς δαιμόνων ἀπάντων, ‘for he was indeed the wickedest of all demons’. Language redolent of the *Anecdota*, where Justinian himself is accused of being the ‘Lord of demons’: at *Anecd.* 12 references to demons abound (e.g. at 14, 26), whereas elsewhere

they are infrequent. A variant reading here has ‘men’ rather than ‘demons’, but the latter is to be preferred, cf. Börm 2015, 314 n.63. On the emphatic use of δῆ, *dē*, ‘in fact’, with a superlative see Denniston 1954, 207, noting its frequency in Thucydides (e.g. at i.1.2, i.138.3); Procopius uses the particle twice in this one sentence.

25.36 ἀλλ’ ὁ θεός, οἶμαι, οὐκ ἤνεγκεν ἐς τοῦτο τὴν τίσιν Ἰωάννη ἀποκεκρίσθαι, ἐπὶ μέγα τε αὐτῷ τὴν κόλασιν ἐξηρτύετο. ‘But God, I think, could not endure that John’s punishment should amount only to this and was preparing vengeance against him on a large scale.’ The reference to God, combined with the criticisms of John’s behaviour at 25.10, favours the interpretation of Procopius as a Christian, so Averil Cameron 1985, 115, Scott 2013, 206–7 and cf. Dahn 1865, 216–17 (who is more equivocal as to his religious affiliation). As Kaldellis 2010b, 257, notes, this is the first reference to God as an agent in the work.

The phrase ἐς τοῦτο ἀποκεκρίσθαι, *es touto apokekristhai*, ‘to amount to this’, is Thucydidean, cf. ii.49.2, as Scheftlein 1893, 36, noted, although the prominence given to the notion of vengeance recalls Hdt., cf. i.25.3n. Likewise the expression ἐπὶ μέγα, *epi mega*, ‘on a large scale, abundantly’, is common first in Thucydides, e.g. at i.16.1 and in Procopius, e.g. at i.26.2. Cf. i.15.23n on ἐπὶ πλεῖστον, *epi pleiston*, with Scheftlein 1893, 56–7.

25.37 Ἦν τις ἐν Κυζίκῳ ἐπίσκοπος Εὐσέβιος ὄνομα, ‘There was a bishop in Cyzicus called Eusebius.’ See *PCBE Asia*, Eusebius 13, for his career: he is attested at some of the proceedings against Severus in Constantinople in 536.

25.38 συμφρονήσαντες νεανίαί τινες ἐν τῇ Κυζίκου ἀγορᾷ κτείνουσιν, ‘some young men plotted together and killed him in the forum in Cyzicus’. The ‘young men’, *neaniai*, may have been partisans, cf. i.24.5n. While Procopius remains sceptical of John’s involvement (cf. i.25.41 below), Mal. 18.89 implicates John in the conspiracy and associates him with local landowners.

25.40 στέλλονται τοῖνυν ἐκ βουλῆς ἄνδρες διερευνησόμενοι τὸ μίasma τοῦτο. ‘So men were sent by the senate to discover the truth about this heinous crime.’ The shocking murder of a bishop in public unsurprisingly prompted the sending of high-ranking officials to investigate. Malalas specifies their identity: Florus, Paul, Phocas and Thomas, on whom see *PLRE* iii, Florus 1, Paulus 11, Thomas 9, *PLRE* ii, Phocas 5, cf.

Leppin 2011, 236–7. The procedure recalls that employed in 478 against high-ranking supporters of Theoderic Strabo, in which the *magister officiorum* chaired a panel of three senatorial judges who investigated their treasonable correspondence with the Gothic leader. They were condemned, flogged and sent into exile. See Malchus frg.15 with Stein 1949, 11–12, 71–3. Justinian had recently legislated on the senate's role in judicial proceedings, *NovJ.* 62 (537); see Garbarino 1992, 73–4, 131–2, on the present case.

The Greek word Procopius uses for the crime, μίασμα, *miasma*, refers to the taint of guilt arising from a crime, esp. murder, cf. *LSJ*, 1132; Procopius uses it again of this act at *Anecd.* 17.42. Procopius lays great stress in the following sentence on the reversal of John's fortune, cf. *Mal.* 18.89, alluding to his patrician status and his holding of the consulship in 538, on which see *PLRE* iii, Ioannes 11. The δίφρος, *diphros*, a 'seat of office' to which Procopius alludes, is used for the *sella curulis* (curule chair), e.g. by Polyb. 6.53.9, cf. *LSJ*, 438.

25.40 καὶ ξαίνοντες κατὰ τοῦ νώτου πολλὰς εἶπεῖν τὰ βεβιωμένα ἡνάγκαζον, 'and they flogged his back with many strokes and forced him to tell of his past life'. The phrasing recalls *Dem. Or.* 19.197, cf. *Proc.* iii.8.20, *Anecd.* 3.12, 17.37. The actual word for blows or strokes, πληγαί, *plēgai*, is often omitted, as here. John would once have enjoyed immunity from such indignities because of his high status – as praetorian prefect he had held the rank of *illustris*, cf. Koch 1903, 36–7, Begass 2018, 40–6, and had been made a patrician – but he was now, as Procopius emphasises (25.31), merely a humble citizen. The emperor was able anyway to use his discretion for cases involving high-ranking senators, cf. Jones 1964, 491; privileges of status were steadily eroded in Late Antiquity, so Harries 1999, 128–9, cf. Jones 1964, 749–50. See also *Dig.* 48.8 on murderers and poisoners, esp. sections 3 and 16: for higher-ranking persons deportation was the norm, cf. Mommsen 1899, 629–30.

25.42 ἔπειτα δὲ τὰ χρήματα πάντα ἀφελόμενοι γυμνὸν ἐς τὴν ναῦν εἰσεβίβασαν, ἱμάτιον ἓν, καὶ τοῦτο τραχὺ κοιμίδῃ, ἀμπεχόμενον, 'Then they took away all his property and put him naked on a ship, with one cloak, and that of the coarsest material.' Cf. *Anecd.* 3.9, describing punishments inflicted on a certain senator called Theodosius, who was likewise stripped of his property and forced to stand in harsh conditions by Theodora. At *Anecd.* 16.9 Procopius relates how Priscus, the former *comes excubitorum* (see i.25.31n) was similarly forced on board ship and

deported, in his case to end up at Cyzicus. The cloak of the Spartan king Agesilaus is described in similar terms by Plut. *Ages.* 36.5.

25.43 οὕτω τε πτωχεύων πανταχόθι τῆς πορείας τῆς Αἰγύπτου ἐς τὴν Ἀντινόου κομίζεται, ‘And so, begging everywhere on the way, he was taken to the city of Antinous in Egypt’, i.e. Antinoöpolis (Antinoë), a city in the Thebaid built to commemorate Hadrian’s young lover, on which see MalKom on 18.89.7 and Bagnall 1993, 46. Corcoran 2007, 201, rightly points out the irony that a papyrus from this very city preserves part of *NovJ.* 62 (537), addressed to John, concerning the role of the senate.

25.43 καὶ τρίτον τοῦτο ἔτος αὐτὸν ἐνταῦθα καθείρξαντες τηροῦσιν, ‘This is the third year that they have been guarding him there in prison.’ A precious chronological indicator as to the date of composition of this passage. It has usually been supposed that John arrived in Egypt already in 541, so that the reference would therefore be to 543/4; Schamp 2006, vol.2, clxxxi–iii, places his banishment to Egypt in 542, cf. Stein 1949, 482, while *PCBE Asie*, Ioannes 35, favours 541. But there is no need to associate the two events so closely: Procopius’ description of John’s pleasant existence in Artace (25.34–5) implies a longer period, while Marc. *com. addit.* 544.3 places both his fall and his expulsion to Egypt in 544. A fall in 541, followed by about three years in Artace, is more plausible; this would imply a date of composition here of 546/7. Furthermore, at *Anecd.* 17.40–5 Procopius recounts how Theodora continued to plot against John even after his banishment to Egypt, stating that four years after he arrived there she induced members of the Green faction to testify against him, although one later recanted. Mal. 18.101 dates their trial to 547, which implies a date for John’s arrival in Egypt of 543/4, although MalKom *ad loc.* is sceptical. See Greatrex 1995a, 7–8, *contra* Croke 1995, 136, who prefers to follow Stein (1949, 483 n.1) in supposing that Marc. *com. addit.*’s entry for 544.3 has mistakenly been shifted from 541, cf. *PLRE* iii, Ioannes 11. Assuming John was still in Artace in September 543 he would have experienced the earthquake that destroyed half of Cyzicus, Mal. 18.93 with MalKom *ad loc.*

Hillner 2015, 231, 240–1, notes that the confinement of John appears to violate laws against imprisoning exiles, *C.J.* 9.5.2 (529), cf. Proc. *Anecd.* 17.40 (on John), 16.16–17 (on Theodora’s secret abductions).

25.44 ἀλλὰ καὶ Ἀλεξανδρέων τινάς, ἅτε τῷ δημοσίῳ χρυσίον ὀφείλοντας, διαβαλεῖν ἔγνω, ‘but he actually resolved to denounce some

Alexandrians for owing money to the treasury'. Procopius may have in mind the administration of the *dux* and prefect of Alexandria, Hephæstus, which he criticises at *Anecd.* 26.35–44, cf. *PLRE* iii, Hephæstus.

i.26 The Coup of John Cottistis at Dara (537)

Procopius concludes the first book with an isolated and apparently insignificant episode at the border fortress of Dara. He implies that John's coup took place following the remarkable success of Belisarius in North Africa, not long after his triumph in Constantinople in 534; as we know from other sources, however, it actually took place in 537. See *Marc. com. addit.* 537, PZ x.1c. The lead role in one version of the suppression of John's coup is played by a sausage-seller, which inevitably recalls Aristophanes' sausage-seller who rescues the Athenian people, the *dēmos*, in his play the *Knights*, first produced in 424 B.C. Kruse 2013, 856–8, suggests that Procopius' misleading dating of the episode is deliberate: he is alluding to the disastrous Athenian expedition to Sicily, which followed the conclusion of the Peace of Nicias in 421 B.C. Like the Athenians, the Romans overstretched themselves through their invasion of Sicily, then Italy, provoking the disastrous assault on the eastern provinces of 540 (*Proc.* ii.1.1). While an allusion to Aristophanes' play is highly likely, the remaining parallels are less convincing. Roques 2000, 20, finds numerous similarities between Procopius' account and Herodotus' description of the overthrow of Pseudo-Smerdis, iii.77–8, cf. Braun 1894, 44, Kaldellis 2014, 72 n.169, although the parallels are fairly distant.

In *The Vandal Wars* Procopius describes similar coups and intrigues, e.g. at iv.18, iv.25–8. Both concern attempts to set up what he calls a *tyrannis*, like the one at Dara. The leader of the first of these, Maximinus, was an officer, cf. *PLRE* iii, Maximinus 1; the attempted coup took place between 537 and 539, i.e. around the same time as John's uprising. The leader in the second, Guntharis, was a commander, although Procopius reports (e.g.) the help given him by his Moorish cook, iv.25.6, and offers a blow-by-blow account of how his regime was overthrown at a banquet in 546. See *PLRE* iii, Guntharis 2. The transfer both of the *dux* and a substantial number of soldiers to Constantia or to North Africa and Italy – see 22.16 on the withdrawal from Dara – must have had a destabilising effect on the border city; there will have been fewer troops available to counter the usurper, while the senior commander of the province was

now stationed in Constantia. It was therefore necessary for the local population to address the situation themselves.

Bibliography: *PLRE* iii, Ioannes Cottistis 24, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 101, Kruse 2013, 856–8.

26.1 Τότε δὲ βασιλεὺς στρατηγὸν τε τῆς ἐώας αὐθις Βελισάριον κατεστήσατο, ‘Then the emperor again appointed Belisarius *magister militum per Orientem*.’ Belisarius regained his former command in 533, cf. iii.11.18 with *PLRE* iii, Belisarius. The τότε, *tote*, here evidently does not refer to the fall of John the Cappadocian; it fits more appropriately in the wake of the Nika revolt. See Greatrex 1995a, 6, cf. Zuckerman 2013, 350 and n.58.

Procopius recounts the reconquest of North Africa in *Wars* iii–iv, known as *The Vandalic Wars*. For concise modern accounts of Belisarius’ swift victories see Evans 1996a, 126–36, Averil Cameron 2000, 559–61, Merrills and Miles 2010, 228–33. Just as Procopius alluded to Belisarius’ successes in Italy at 25.11, so here he takes the opportunity of reminding the reader of his victories in North Africa, cf. Averil Cameron 1985, 159.

26.2 ὅπερ ἐπεὶ ἔς τε Χοσρόην καὶ Πέρσας ἦλθε, δεινῶς ἥσχαλλον, ‘When the news reached Khusro and the Persians, they were very aggrieved.’ Cf. ii.1.1, where Khusro proves unable to resist his impulse to curtail Roman successes. See Kruse 2013, 858. The expression δεινῶς ἥσχαλλον, *deinōs ěskhallon*, ‘they were very aggrieved’ is used by Dio Cassius 39.43.4, from which it is often quoted by later lexicographers, e.g. Suda Σ981 (422.18–20).

26.3 πέμψας τε ὁ Χοσρόης ἐς Βυζάντιον πρέσβεις, ξυγχαίρειν τε Ἰουστινιανῷ τῷ βασιλεῖ, ‘Khusro sent envoys to Byzantium, declaring that he shared in the Emperor Justinian’s rejoicing.’ Their presence is confirmed by PZ ix.17c, who reports that they attended the triumphal presentation of the booty and prisoners in the hippodrome in 534, on which see Proc. iv.9. Cf. Lee 1993a, 111, suggesting that this was how Khusro obtained his information; see also Canepa 2009, 172. Bjornlie 2013, 107, suggests that Procopius’ reference to Justinian’s gift to the Persian king (26.4) represents an attempt to tarnish Belisarius’ success in North Africa, which seems unlikely.

26.6 ἐν τε παλατίῳ καθήμενος ὥσπερ ἐν ἀκροπόλει, τὴν τυραννίδα ἐκρατύνετο ἡμέρᾳ ἐκάστη. ‘He sat in the palace as if in an acropolis,

strengthening his tyranny every day.’ Procopius emphasises that John’s initial support was limited (26.5), but that it grew over time; the reference to ‘tyranny’, i.e. usurpation, recalls Hypatius’ bid for power. The potential damage to Roman fortunes of the loss of Dara, to which Procopius alludes, became clear when the city fell in 573. On the location of the *dux*’s residence in Dara, i.e. the *praetorium*, see i.26.9n. Nothing further is known of the infantryman John Cottistis; PZ x.1c refers to an individual, perhaps the commander at Dara, but only the start of his name is preserved. See PZT 401 n.27 on the passage.

26.8 ἡμέρα δὲ ἀπὸ τῆς τυραννίδος τετάρτη συμφρονήσαντες στρατιῶται, γνώμη Μάμαντός τε τοῦ τῆς πόλεως ἱερέως καὶ Ἀναστασίου τῶν δοκίμων τινὸς πολιτῶν, ‘On the fourth day of the tyranny the soldiers agreed among themselves and on the advice of Mamas the priest of the city and Anastasius, a respected citizen ...’ On the term ἱερεὺς, *hiereus*, ‘priest’, which here refers to the city’s bishop, see i.7.30n, cf. Fedalto 1988, 841 for the present case. Anastasius went on to play a part in negotiations with Khusro after the outbreak of war in 540, Proc. ii.4.15–16: he was in Constantinople in 540 and was sent with a letter to the Persian king. It seems likely that he was Procopius’ informant. See *PLRE* iii, Anastasius 6.

26.9 ἐν τῇ μεταύλῳ θύρᾳ, ‘at the door of the courtyard’, cf. Lysias, *On the murder of Eratosthenes* 17 and *LSJ*, 1105, s.v. μέσσυλος. The term refers to the door between the hall and the inner courtyard, cf. Proc. *Aed.* i.4.7, v.6.24, both in the context of churches and of doors leading from the courtyard into a hall; see also Kallenberg 1916a, 252, who considers the word θύρα, *thyra*, ‘door’, unnecessary here.

26.9 ἔπειτα δὲ καὶ εἰς τὸν ἀνδρῶνα ἐσβάντες τοῦ τυράννου ἤπτοντο, ‘Then they went into the hall and laid hands on the usurper.’ The term ἀνδρῶν, *andrōn*, ‘hall’ usually refers to ‘men’s apartments’, cf. *LSJ*, 129. Clearly this cannot apply in the *praetorium*, which is why we have adopted ‘hall’ as our translation, cf. Hdt. i.34.3, where it refers to a banqueting hall. See also Vitruvius, *On Architecture*, vi.7.5 on both terms, noting how the Romans use the term *andrones* differently from the Greeks. The *praetorium* is generally thought to lie in the centre of the city, just to the west of the Dara river, cf. Keser-Kayaalp and Erdoğan 2017, 156 with fig.2, although they have proposed (somewhat improbably) to identify it with a lavish building just to the west of the city itself.

26.9 τῶν τινὰ ἀλλαντοπωλῶν ξὺν αὐτοῖς ὄντα ἐσπηδῆσαι τε ξὺν τῇ κοπίδι καὶ τῷ Ἰωάννῃ ἐντυχόντα ἀπροσδοκῆτως παῖσαι, ‘a sausage-seller who was with them rushed in with his cleaver, came up to John and struck him, taking him by surprise’. See i.26n on the Aristophanic allusion in the role played by the sausage-seller. As was noted there, in the proliferation of coups that broke out in the 530s and 540s ordinary soldiers and civilians could be swept up, like Guntharis’ cook at Carthage (iv.25.6). Zos. v.9.1–3 recounts the prominence of a former sausage-seller from Laodicea at Arcadius’ court in 396, cf. *PLRE* ii, Bargus. The unexpected assault with a cleaver recalls the assassination of Aetius by Valentinian III and his chamberlain Heraclius in 454: according to Priscus frg.30.1.23/69 (p.97.31) (= Joh. Ant. frg.224.2) the eunuch, like the sausage-seller, attacked with a κοπίς, *kopis*, ‘cleaver, chopper’, which he had concealed in his robes.

26.11 οὕτω τε τοῦ ἀνθρώπου αὐτοὺς ἀψαμένους πυρὶ μὲν αὐτίκα τὸ παλάτιον ὑφάψαντας καῦσαι, ὥς μή τις ἐλπίς ἐνθένδε ἀπολειφθεῖη τοῖς τὰ νεώτερα πράγματα πράσσουσιν, ‘So they laid hands on the man and at once set fire to the palace and burnt it down, so that the revolutionaries should have no further hope from that direction.’ Drastic measures to suppress what is portrayed as a small-scale and brief coup. It is noteworthy that Procopius devotes more space to the second-hand report, recounted in indirect speech (26.9–12), than to his initial version. It seems likely that the revolt may have been more significant than might initially appear; the destruction of the *praetorium* and the killing of John may have been a manner of ensuring that any possible information, e.g. documents, about a wider conspiracy disappeared, thus limiting embarrassment. PZ x.1c, in his fragmentary account, refers to someone freeing Justinian ‘from mental stress’ in regard to the city; the author also explicitly hesitates to provide more details, pleading uncertainty as to exactly what occurred.

Commentary on Book II

ii.1–4 Prelude to the Second Persian War

History

Following the Eternal Peace of 532, Rome's eastern frontier was weakened by the withdrawal of forces to embark on the reconquest first of North Africa, then of Italy. Belisarius and many of the commanders mentioned in *Wars* i took part in these campaigns – as Procopius' narratives in *Vandalic* and *Gothic Wars* make clear – leaving a much reduced army to defend the East. Justinian nonetheless consolidated Roman control of Armenia by redrawing provincial boundaries and creating four provinces, while at the same time establishing a Roman city at Petra in Lazica, to the north-east; further north, meanwhile, a determined effort was made to effect the conversion of the Abasgi to Christianity. Some of these developments are reported elsewhere by Procopius (ii.15.1–30, viii.3.12–21). To the south, the stability of the steppe frontier was threatened in 536 by a drought, which led to 15,000 Arabs encroaching on Roman territory, pushed there by the Naşrid phylarch al-Mundhir; the Roman *dux* Batzas, however, managed to defuse the situation. Clearly the frontier remained permeable, as the peregrinations of John, the anti-Chalcedonian bishop of Constantia (Tella), demonstrate. In order to avoid arrest, he had crossed the frontier several times, but was finally captured in Persian territory in late 536 by a joint Romano-Persian force, taken to the local Persian commander (*marzban*) at Nisibis and then deported to Antioch. It is possible, moreover, that cutbacks in military expenditure began to take their toll already by the late 530s: Procopius refers (*Anecd.* 24.12–14) to the suspension of salaries of the *limitanei*, i.e. the frontier troops under the *duces*.

As Procopius already noted (i.26.3–4, cf. ii.1.1, *Aed.* ii.10.1), Justinian's western successes were well known at the Persian court. Khusro will have been aware of the deployment of Roman forces in Italy even without the arrival of envoys from Vitigis, as also of the difficulties in entrenching

Roman control of Armenia, right on the border with Persarmenia. Other factors, not reported by Procopius, are likely also to have contributed to his decision to break the peace. His own programme of administrative reforms was being introduced at this time and may have provoked some dissatisfaction: a foreign war offered a welcome distraction, as for Kavadh in 502, and the opportunity for easily acquired plunder. The weakening of the Hephthalite kingdom in the East, moreover, freed the king from the danger of a war on two fronts.

The Hunnic incursion in the Balkans, described at ii.4.4–12, occurred too late to influence Khusro's decision to invade Roman territory.

Bibliography: Adontz 1970, 127–55, Braund 1994, 290–5, Greatrex 1998, 219–20, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 97–101, Howard-Johnston 2016, 597, 601. On Khusro's reforms see i.23–5h; on the waning of Hephthalite power see i.4.35n.

Historiography

An atmosphere of frustration and gloom hangs over the opening chapters of this book. This reflects the more sombre picture of Roman fortunes depicted throughout it; a similar contrast can be observed between the opening book(s) and the concluding parts of both *Vandalic* and *Gothic Wars*. Procopius is undoubtedly critical both of imperial appointees, such as Acacius (ii.3.6), and of imperial impatience with Sittas' prudent approach to resolving tensions in Armenia (3.10). He places some of the blame for the breaking of the peace on Justinian, since he refuses to deny the possible validity of Khusro's claims about the emperor's correspondence with the Armenians (1.15, cf. 4.20, 10.16–17); at *Anecd.* 18.28 he accuses Justinian directly of furnishing Khusro with grounds for war, cf. 11.12 (both with cross-references to *Wars*). Although some scholars, such as Auler, Kaldellis and Kruse, argue that Procopius in the *Wars* implicates Justinian in the renewal of war, Colvin believes that he suppresses certain issues in order to blame Khusro. The narrative of the Hunnic incursions in the Balkans (4.1–12), while not relevant to the renewal of war, contributes to the building of narrative tension before finally Khusro invades Roman territory at 5.1. The tone is comparable to that at vii.38 and 40 and to that found at *Anecd.* 11.5–11, reflecting the writer's frustration at Justinian's inability to defend the Balkan peninsula adequately. On the general differences between the two books of *The Persian Wars* see the Introduction, pp. 4–8.

The model for Procopius' account of how envoys sought to bring pressure on Khusro to attack Justinian is furnished by Thucydides' description of Corinthian lobbying of Sparta to intervene against the excessive ambitions of the Athenians. As has been observed, Justinian resembles the Athenians in his restless ambition; and, like the Armenians, the Corinthians blame their host for failing to stand up to a power that will inevitably turn against them. Both authors are interested in distinguishing genuine grounds for war, *aitiai*, from pretexts, *prophaseis* or *skēpseis*. They differ, on the other hand, in their approach, for while Thucydides remains studiously impartial, Procopius clearly holds Khusro responsible for the violation of the peace. On a broader level, a sequence of opposing addresses may be observed, continued later at ii.10: following the criticisms of the Goths (2.4–11) and Armenians (3.31–54), Justinian responds by letter at 4.17–25, while Roman ambassadors also return to the issue of the violation of the Eternal Peace (10.10–15). See Taragna 2000, 123–5. Evagr. *HE* iv.25 offers a summary of the first eleven chapters, explicitly based on Procopius' narrative.

Perso-Arabic sources also attest the involvement of the Arab allies in the lead-up to war: Tabari (958/252–3) describes how al-Harith attacked al-Mundhir, who then complained to Khusro. The Persian king insisted that Justinian compensate his Arab ally for the booty seized by al-Harith, but the Roman emperor refused to comply. A similar narrative is found in Firdausi's *Shāhnāmāh*, vi, 195–201. See Shahīd 1995, 216–18, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 102–3, Börm 2006, 300–1, Jackson Bonner 2011, 47–50 (= idem 2012, 44–6), idem 2015c, 268–71. A very brief account of the war of 540, which claims that the emperor deceived the Persian king and was therefore obliged to pay off Khusro, may be found in the *Sīrat-Anūshirwān*, episode 3 (Grignaschi 1966, 17 with 30 n.10).

Bibliography: Auler 1876, 28–32, Pazdernik 1997, 14–35, Brodka 2004, 63–6, Börm 2007, 234–9, Kaldellis 2010b, 262–3, Kruse 2013, esp.858, Payne 2013, 19–22, Colvin 2018, 207–8, Koehn 2018a, 161.

ii.1 Causes of the Renewal of War in 540

Procopius begins by highlighting the prime mover in the renewal of hostilities, the Persian king. Khusro, the central figure of the whole book, unable to restrain his natural tendencies (see i.21–2g), turned to al-Mundhir, the Naşrid ruler, to manufacture a pretext for war. He successfully accomplished this by claiming rights over the marginal lands

in the vicinity of the Strata Diocletiana. Khusro further made allegations that Justinian had sought to induce al-Mundhir to defect to the Romans and to recruit Huns to attack Persia. The events described must have taken place over a period of months at the very least, although Procopius' account elides this: the commission set up to investigate the legitimacy of al-Mundhir's claims will have undertaken its work in 539, while over the winter of 539–40 Justinian tried to deflect Khusro from his preparations for war (4.14–26). See Lee 1993a, 46, 136, *PLRE* ii, Strategius 9, Begass 2018, no.196, see also p.349.

The whole chapter is quoted in *Exc. de legat. gent.* 493–4. General discussions of it may be found in Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 102–3, Dignas and Winter 2007, 171–2, Edwell 2015, 244–5.

1.1 Χρόνῳ δὲ οὐ πολλῷ ὕστερον, 'Not long afterwards', cf. i.4.1n for this typically vague formula. He presumably refers here to the attempted coup at Dara of 537, recounted at i.26. Belisarius' conquest of Italy began already in 535 and was complete, albeit provisionally, by 540. See further 1.9n below.

1.1 οὐκέτι κατέχειν οἷος τε ἦν τὴν διάνοιαν, ἀλλὰ σκήψεις ἐπινοεῖν ἤθελεν ὅπως δὴ λόγῳ τινὶ εὐπρεπεῖ τὰς σπονδὰς λύσειεν. '(Khusro) could no longer control his thoughts, but wanted to think up an excuse so that he could break the treaty for a fair-seeming reason.' The first words echo Thuc. i.130.1, referring to the Spartan commander Pausanias, cf. Pazdernik 1997, 21–4 with n.12, who draws out the parallels between the two accounts. Socr. *HE* vi.6.3 describes Gainas similarly. Procopius applies the same formula to Gelimer at iii.9.8 with further echoes of Thucydides' passage: he could not restrain himself from ousting King Hilderic. Cf. iii.10.21, iv.4.3, v.7.5, vi.18.10, for similar cases.

1.2 ὑπὲρ ὧν κοινολογησάμενος Ἀλαμουνδάρῳ ἐκέλευεν αὐτὸν συμπορίζεσθαι πολέμου αἰτίας, 'He consulted al-Mundhir about these matters and bade him furnish him with grounds for a war.' Thuc. i.22.3, a passage of which several echoes may be found in this section, alludes to the various alleged causes (αἰτίαι, *aitiai*) of the Peloponnesian war while underlining that the veritable cause, Spartan fear of the growth in Athenian power, was little discussed. See Pazdernik 1997, 21, for a comparison of these two passages. Al-Mundhir is already depicted as a loyal and wise adviser to Kavadh at i.17.30, while his prowess is vaunted by Procopius at i.17.45–8, cf. the notes *ad loc.*

1.3 ὁ δὲ Ἀρέθα ἐπικαλέσας ὅτι αὐτὸν περὶ γῆς ὁρίων βιάζοιτο, ‘He in turn accused al-Harith of using force against him over a boundary issue.’ Procopius likewise refers to ‘boundary issues’ at i.3.1–2 when reporting the conflict between the Persians and the Hephthalites; the same phrasing is employed in *NovJ.* 69.1 (538) to refer to disputes among Roman landowners. There is no need to postulate a link to the term *limes*, as Shahîd 1995, 212, proposes.

1.4 ἔφασκέ τε ὡς αὐτὸς οὐ λύει τὰς Περσῶν τε καὶ Ῥωμαίων σπονδὰς, ἐπεὶ αὐτὸν ἐς ταύτας οὐδέτεροι ἐσεγράψαντο. ‘He claimed that he himself was not violating the treaty between the Persians and the Romans because neither side had written him into it.’ Procopius vouches for the accuracy of this statement, which is confirmed by the explicit mention of the Arab allies of either side in the treaty of 562 reported by Men. Prot. at frg.6.1.320–2, cf. Winter and Dignas 2007, 142–4, 171–2, Edwell 2015, 251. Ps.-Josh. 88 notes how the Arab allies of both sides tried to continue hostilities after the conclusion of a truce in 505, although in this case they were punished. It is likely therefore that Procopius is right to state that the tribes had never been included in treaties up to this point. *Contra* Shahîd 1995, 211, this was not because they enjoyed the status of *foederati*, cf. Greatrex 2015b, 126–7.

1.6 αὕτη δὲ ἡ χώρα, ἥ δὴ πρὸς ἐκατέρων τότε Σαρακηνῶν ἀντελέγετο, Στράτα μὲν κέκληται, Παλμύρας δὲ πόλεως πρὸς νότον ἀνεμον τέτραπται. ‘This land, which was then the subject of the dispute between the Saracens of both sides, is called Strata and lies to the south of the city of Palmyra.’ Scholars often refer to the Strata Diocletiana, conceived of as stretching from Sura on the Euphrates to Damascus and beyond to the south, passing through Palmyra en route. Bauzou 1993 shows that the milestones from this road – or, rather, the part close to Palmyra – describe it instead as just ‘Strata’ or ‘Istra(ta)’, which fits Procopius’ report here. The road was protected by a string of fortresses in the early fourth century, most of which were abandoned over the following decades. Only the Latin name for a road, Strata, remained, as Procopius explains at 1.7. See Bauzou 1989, 210–12, idem 1993, 32, cf. Genequand 2012, 30–3. As Key Fowden 1999, 66–7, remarks, the road evidently made an impact on the local inhabitants; the word itself was adapted into the Arabic of the Qur’an, cf. Shahîd 1995, 213.

Procopius downplays the fertility of this region: it is fit only for pasture, he insists. Yet extensive ruins of farm complexes attest to agricul-

tural activity at Sukkariyyeh/Bkhara, 20 km south of Palmyra, in the sixth century. See Bauzou 1993, 46, Genequand 2012, 33, cf. Matthews 1984, 162–4. Al-Harith's influence in the region is attested by a mention of his phylarchate at a fortified monastery 60 km west of Palmyra at Qaṣr al-Ḥayr al-Gharbi, on which see Genequand in Fisher 2015, 201–2, cf. Robin 2008a, 79. Justinian himself was interested in Palmyra and moved swiftly to shore up its defences after coming to the throne. See Mal. 18.2, Theoph. 174, Proc. *Aed.* ii.11.10–12 with Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 85, Genequand 2012, 24. Proc. *Aed.* ii.11.12 claims that the city was all but deserted before Justinian's work, but Genequand 2012, 27, points out that numerous churches were built during this period. It would appear that Procopius systematically underrates this region, perhaps in part because he had never visited it himself.

1.7 Ἀρέθας μὲν οὖν Ῥωμαίων ἰσχυρίζετο εἶναι τὸν χώρον, τῷ τε ὀνόματι τεκμηριούμενος, οὗ δὴ πρὸς πάντων ἄνωθεν ἔτυχε, 'Al-Harith therefore insisted that the territory belonged to the Romans, adducing as evidence the name applied to it by all for a long time.' One might have expected the phylarch to make more of the evidence furnished by Roman forts and inscriptions; see also the preceding note on sixth-century farms near Palmyra. Bauzou 1993, 46–8, notes that Tabari surprisingly associates the Persians with Bkhara (on which see the previous note), although this is probably an error.

1.7 καὶ μαρτυρίαις παλαιωτάτων ἀνδρῶν χρώμενος, 'and he cited the testimony of men of old'. Shahīd 1995, 213, prefers to translate (with Bury) 'the testimony of the most venerable elders', arguing that documents were unlikely to be available. But Procopius generally uses the adjective παλαιός, *palaios*, to refer to ancient times, as (e.g.) at i.1.8, where it refers to the Homeric age.

1.9 διὸ δὴ βασιλεὺς Ἰουστινιανὸς Στρατηγίῳ τε πατρικίῳ ἀνδρὶ καὶ τῶν βασιλικῶν θησαυρῶν ἄρχοντι, ἄλλως δὲ ξυνετῷ καὶ εὐπατρίδῃ, ἔτι μέντοι καὶ Σούμμῳ τῶν ἐν Παλαιστίνῃ στρατιωτῶν ἡγήσαμένῳ, τὴν τῶν ἀντιλεγομένων ἐπέτρεψε δαίταν. 'Justinian accordingly confided the resolution of the dispute to Strategius, a patrician who ran the imperial treasury, an intelligent and well-born man, and to Summus, who had commanded the soldiers in Palestine.' Strategius was the son of Apion, whom Procopius mentions at i.8.5, and had governed Egypt under Justin. He had accompanied

Rufinus on a diplomatic mission to Kavadh in 531 after the battle of Callinicum, as Mal. 18.61 reports, cf. Greatrex 1998, 208. He was *comes sacrarum largitionum* from 535; it is unknown when he left office. See *PLRE* ii, Fl. Strategius 9, Sarris 2006, 17–19 with the family tree on 23 (on which he is Fl. Strategius III). Summus came from Palestine and twice governed Palaestina I, first in 531–2, then again later in the 530s. His career is well attested through Choricus of Gaza's encomium, *Laud. Summi*. See *PLRE* ii, Summus.

It is uncertain whether Summus was still *dux Palaestinae* at the time of his appointment as arbitrator: the aorist participle ἡγησαμένω, *hēgēsamenō*, 'having commanded' could refer to an ongoing command, as Mazza 2010, 176, points out, though the natural interpretation would be that it has finished. The issue is incapable of definitive resolution, since it is also unclear when exactly the dispute arose. Procopius' reference at ii.1.1 implies that he is recounting events subsequent to the failed coup at Dara of 537 and after at least some successes of Belisarius in Italy. A date of 538 or 539 is likely: Justinian took some time, χρόνος πολὺς, *khronos polys*, Procopius reports at 1.11, before making a decision about his arbitrators' conflicting views, though at 4.21 the emperor, in a letter to Khusro, describes al-Mundhir's raid as 'recent'. See Shahīd 1995, 210, Mazza 2010, 176–82, Sauterel 2014, 114 (a summary of the debate). The consensus favours the view that Summus had given up his Palestinian command by the time he was appointed as an arbiter.

1.10 ὁ δὲ Σοῦμμος Ἰουλιανοῦ ἀδελφὸς ἦν, ὃς ὀλίγω ἔμπροσθεν ἐς Αἰθιοπίας τε καὶ Ὀμηρίτας ἐπρέσβευσε, 'Now Summus was the brother of Julian, who a little earlier had been on an embassy to the Ethiopians and Homerites.' On this Julian see 1.20.9n, cf. *PLRE* iii, Iulianus 8; his embassy took place in 530 or 531.

1.11 Στρατήγιος δὲ βασιλέως ἐδεῖτο μὴ χώρας τινὸς ἔνεκα βραχείας τε καὶ ὥς ἥκιστα λόγου ἀξίας, ἀλλὰ ἀγόνου τε καὶ ἀκάρπου παντάπασιν οὐσης Πέρσαις πολεμησείουσι σκήψεις τοῦ πολέμου χαρίζεσθαι. 'Strategius begged the emperor not to hand the Persians, who were spoiling for a fight, pretexts for war because of a small and utterly worthless piece of land, which was completely infertile and barren.' Since Procopius has already characterised (1.6 above) the region as barren, he seems implicitly to favour Strategius' pragmatism, cf. Shahīd 1995, 212, who rightly notes parallels with his scorn for the unproductive Palm Grove, 1.19.9, with Mazza 2010, 177.

The pairing of ἄγονος and ἄκαρπος, *agonos* and *akarpas*, ‘infertile’ and ‘barren’, is common, cf. e.g. Plut. *Lyc.* 19.1, Euseb. *Comm. in Isaiam*, ii.2.

1.13 Σοῦμμον γὰρ ἔναγχος ἐπὶ διαίτη δῆθεν τῷ λόγῳ παρ’ αὐτὸν ἦκοντα ἐπαγγελίαις αὐτὸν περιελθεῖν μεγάλων χρημάτων, ἐφ’ ᾧ προσχωρήσει Ῥωμαίοις. ‘For Summus had indeed recently come to him, supposedly to settle matters but, according to Khusro, he had deceived him with offers of great sums of money if he should come over to the Romans.’ Procopius reports in indirect speech what Khusro alleges; the adverb δῆθεν, *dēthen*, ‘forsooth’, underlines the king’s scepticism, qualifying the noun διαίτα, *diaita*, ‘investigation, arbitration’, cf. Denniston 1954, 264–6.

It is highly likely that money had been paid to al-Mundhir by Summus, although it may be doubted whether the emperor explicitly sought to induce him to defect. Channels existed by which payments could be made to the Naṣrid chief, e.g. to ransom captives (Mal. 18.59), while after the battle of Callinicum the same chronicler reports that the deacon Sergius ‘was sent to king Alamundarus with imperial gifts’ (18.61, tr. Jeffreys and Scott). From Men. Prot. frg.6.1.288–303, 518–44, it appears that Justinian continued to send gifts of 100 pounds of gold to al-Mundhir until his death in 554, cf. Shahîd 1995, 273–8, Edwell 2015, 251–2.

1.13 γράμματά τε προῖσχετο, ἃ δὴ πρὸς Ἀλαμούνδαρον ὑπὲρ τούτων Ἰουστινιανὸς βασιλεὺς ἔγραψε, ‘He also provided a letter in which the Emperor Justinian wrote to al-Mundhir about these matters.’ The verb προῖσχω, *proïskhō*, used here in the middle voice, has the sense of alleging or putting forward a pretext, cf. e.g. Hdt. iv.165.3, viii.8.3.2, Dio Cassius 42.47.3. During the negotiations of 561–2, Peter the Patrician actually claimed that al-Mundhir had agreed to remain neutral in the event of a Persian attack in return for the payments from Justinian, Men. Prot. frg.6.1.532–4 with Shahîd 1995, 277–8.

1.14 καὶ πρὸς Οὐννων δέ τινας ἰσχυρίζετο αὐτὸν ἐπιστολὴν πέμψαι, ‘He further insisted that Justinian had written a letter to certain Huns.’ At *Anecd.* 11.12 he specifies that these Huns were allies of the Persians; they are likely to have been the Sabirs, who served both powers at various times, but cf. 3.47n. See Proc. viii.11.22–6, cf. Greatrex 1998, 58. The letters resurface again in Khusro’s justifications for breaking the peace to Roman ambassadors after the fall of Antioch at 10.16 below, where the king appears to have shown them to the Roman envoys. Auler

1876, 33, argues that Justinian probably made contact with the Huns only once he believed war was inevitable.

1.15 εἰ μέντοι ταῦτα λέγοντί οἱ ἀληθίζεσθαι ξυνέβαινεν, οὐκ ἔχω εἰπεῖν, ‘Whether he was actually telling the truth, however, I am unable to say.’ Kaldellis 2010b, 263, draws attention to Procopius’ ambivalent formulation here, which amounts to a criticism of the emperor, cf. already Dahn 1865, 304. At *Anecd.* 11.12 he is much more explicit, accusing Justinian of being ‘most responsible’ for the war because of his communications with the Arabs and Huns; he adds that he has already described this οὐκ ἀπαρκαλύπτως, *ouk aparakalyptōs*, ‘not without concealment’ in ‘the works on these matters’, although this is often mistranslated. Cf. *Aed.* i.1.20, where, on the other hand, he insists that he described the Nika riot ἀπαρκαλύπτως, *aparakalyptōs*, ‘without concealment’.

The formula οὐκ ἔχω εἰπεῖν, *ouk ekhō eipein*, ‘I am unable to say’ is found many times in Hdt., e.g. at i.49.1, viii.128.1; such an expression of uncertainty, as at Proc. i.6.9, can serve to underline the scrupulousness of the historian in reporting his research. Here, however, as at viii.15.13, it allows Procopius to signal his dissatisfaction with imperial policies, cf. Signes Codoñer 2003, 225. Auler 1876, 29–32, while vigorously defending Justinian against accusations of having provoked the war, argues that Procopius simply misunderstood the emperor’s policies. See also Pfeilschifter–Thesz on *Anecd.* 11.12 on the links between *Wars* and *Anecd.* here.

ii.2 The Embassy of the Goths

Procopius is well informed concerning the embassy sent by King Vitigis in 538 or 539, which reached Persia without difficulty: the interpreter was captured when trying to return to Roman soil in late 540 or early 541 and revealed all that had happened (see 14.12). By the time of the mission, as he notes (2.1), the war was going badly for the Goths: see (e.g.) Stein 1949, 352–68, Evans 1996a, 136–51. Procopius refers to an embassy sent by Vitigis to Justinian in late 537 at vi.6.33, but it is clear that he had little hope that it would succeed in obtaining a deal, cf. Stein 1949, 352; once the emperor learnt of Persian preparations for war, however, he reopened negotiations in order to be able to transfer Belisarius to the East, vi.22.21–2. At vi.22.17–20 Procopius describes Vitigis’ despatch of this embassy in similar terms and alludes to his account here, cf. Dahn 1865,

258. His reference to an interpreter (ii.2.3) indicates his likely source, since this individual was later arrested when trying to re-enter Roman territory (ii.14.12). As is noted above, ii.1–4g, the Ligurian envoys, in delivering a speech as though from Vitigis' mouth, echo complaints made by the Corinthians to the Spartans at the very beginning of the Peloponnesian war; their indictment of Justinian as a restless innovator (2.6) is paralleled by similar criticisms of Procopius at *Anecd.* 6.21, 11.1–2, 18.12. Kaldellis 2010b, 260–1, finds Procopius' defence of the emperor against the charges brought by Vitigis at 2.14–15 half-hearted, which is plausible, but cf. Dahn 1865, 102, who sees it as a means of mitigating the criticism.

The whole chapter is quoted in *Exc. de legat. gent.* 494–5.

2.3 ὁδῶ τε ἰόντες ἐς τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς Θράκης χωρία ἐταιρίζονται τινα ἐνθὲνδε Σύρας τε καὶ τῆς Ἑλληνίδος φωνῆς ἐρμηνεῖα σφίσιν ἐσόμενον, 'En route through the villages of Thrace they recruited a local man to be an interpreter for the Greek and Syriac languages for them.' An interesting chance allusion to an interpreter, who presumably usually worked for the imperial government. On imperial interpreters see Lee 1993a, 41, 111 (on this episode), 163, cf. Nechaeva 2014, 28, 133–5. The interpreter subsequently reported the whole episode to the *dux* of Mesopotamia John in late 540 or early 541: see 14.12.

The middle form of the verb ἐταιρίζω, *betairizō*, meaning 'I associate with myself, I chose for my comrade' is frequently used by Procopius in these chapters: Justinian is described at 1.12 as having tried to recruit al-Mundhir, cf. 2.7, while Sittas' attempts to enlist Armenians are similarly described at 3.11. Cf. 1.24.17n, another bid for support from Justinian, in this case with a Herodotean allusion.

2.3 ἄτε γὰρ ἐν σπονδαῖς καθεστῶτες οὐκ ἐς τὸ ἀκριβὲς ταύτην ἐφύλασσον, 'Since peace then prevailed, they were not strictly guarding the region.' The frontier was undoubtedly porous at this time: see ii.1–4h and note the claim by the anti-Chalcedonian holy man Jacob of Tella to have crossed the frontier several times and not to be able to distinguish one empire from the other, quoted in Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 98. Cf. Lee 1993a, 161–5, on border security more generally.

2.4 Τοὺς μὲν ἄλλους ἅπαντας, ὦ βασιλεῦ, πρέσβεις τῶν αὐτοῖς ἕνεκα ξυμφόρων ἐκ τοῦ ἐπὶ πλεῖστον ξυμβαίνει ἐς τὴν πρεσβείαν καθίστασθαι, 'It is generally the case, O King, that all ambassadors

undertake their embassy for their own benefit.’ There is a delightful irony here, since Procopius has just explained that the two envoys undertook their mission in return for ‘generous sums of money’ (2.2). Their opening words are therefore strictly correct, although they also lead into an antithesis in which they argue that they are striving to rescue Khusro’s own kingdom (rather than Vitigis’). This speech is quoted and translated in Winter and Dignas 2007, 106–7.

2.5 εἴ τις σε, ὦ βασιλεῦ, ξυνελών φαίη τήν τε σὴν βασιλείαν καὶ πάντας ἀνθρώπους Ἰουστινιανῷ προέσθαι, ὀρθῶς ἂν εἴποι. ‘If someone were to summarise the situation, O King, by saying that you had abandoned your own kingdom and all men to Justinian, he would be right.’ Procopius opens Vitigis’ address with a verbal allusion to the speech of the Corinthians to the Spartans, Thuc. i.70.9, cf. Pazdernik 1997, 27. Just like the Corinthians, the Gothic king is trying to stir an apparently recalcitrant ally to open hostilities. The reproach of having abandoned a people to their foe recalls in sentiment Thuc. i.69.1.

2.6 ὁ μὲν γὰρ νεωτεροποιός τε ὢν φύσει καὶ τῶν οὐδ’ ὅπωςτιοῦν αὐτῷ προσηκόντων ἐρῶν, μένειν τε οὐ δυνάμενος ἐν τοῖς καθεστῶσι, ‘Since he is by nature an innovator and enamoured of things that certainly do not belong to him, and incapable of abiding by established norms’. The criticisms echo the Corinthians’ assessment of the meddlesome Athenians at Thuc. i.70.2, cf. Pazdernik 1997, 26. Within Procopius’ works they recall his characterisation of Khusro at i.23.1 and of Justinian at *Anecd.* 8.26 (using the very term νεωτεροποιός, *neōteropoios*, ‘innovator’ found here), cf. ii.2n for other passages depicting the emperor in this light. Cf. Dahn 1865, 313, Averil Cameron 1985, 142–3, on the similar terms employed by Procopius for Justinian and Khusro.

Justinian’s inclination to appropriate others’ property is castigated in similar terms at *Anecd.* 8.31, a passage with several overlaps in vocabulary with the present one; on the strong Greek term used, ἐρῶν, *erōn*, ‘loving’ see i.4.14–31n, cf. Kaldellis 2004, 79–80. The emperor’s inability to abide by established customs is likewise the target of Procopius at *Anecd.* 18.12.

2.7 οὐδὲ γὰρ Πέρσαις κατὰ μόνας ἐγχειρεῖν ἴσχυεν, ‘since he was not strong enough alone to attack the Persians’. The expression κατὰ μόνας, *kata monas*, ‘alone’, is first used by Thucydides, e.g. at i.32.5, and is common in Dio Cassius, e.g. at 67.11.4, and in Procopius, e.g. at ii.28.12, cf. *LSJ*, 1145, *μόνος*, B.III.

2.7 σὲ μὲν τῷ τῆς εἰρήνης παραπετάσματι ἑξαπατᾶν ἔγνων, ‘he decided to trick you with a smokescreen of peace’. At Men. Prot. frg.6.1.108–9, reporting the negotiations before the treaty of 561/2, the Persian envoy Zikh likewise invokes ‘a smokescreen of peace’ thrown up by the Romans, in this case out of cowardice.

2.8 Βανδύλων μὲν οὖν ἤδη καθελὼν τὴν βασιλείαν καὶ Μαυρουσίους καταστρεψάμενος, ‘He has thus already destroyed the kingdom of the Vandals and subdued the Moors.’ See i.26.1n on the reconquest of North Africa. Vitigis exaggerates Justinian’s victory over the Moors, however, who continued to resist Roman arms for a long time: see Modéran 2003, 585–644. He rightly notes that the Goths had done nothing to impede the Roman invasion: see Proc. iii.14.5–6, cf. Stein 1949, 313–14.

2.10 ἔως οὖν ἔτι σοι λείπεται τις σωτηρίας ἐλπίς, μήτε ἡμᾶς ἐργάσῃ κακὸν περαιτέρω μηδὲν μήτε αὐτὸς πάθῃς, ‘So while you still have a hope of safety, do us no further wrong and do not suffer any yourself.’ The first phrase recalls Thuc. i.65.1, describing the hopeless situation of the Corinthian commander at Potidaea, Aristeus; in the second, the reference to ‘doing wrong’ might be a reminiscence of Thuc. i.137.4, where Themistocles reminds Artaxerxes of the harm he inflicted on the Persians.

2.11 ἐν δέοντι τοίνυν τῇ ἐξουσίᾳ χρῆσαι, μὴ παυσάμενην ἐπιζητήσης, ‘Therefore take this opportunity in good time.’ Vitigis’ envoys conclude with some typically gnomic sayings, cf. iii.10.17. At i.24.26–7 the senator Origen begins his speech with such generalisations, cf. the note *ad loc.*; see also Averil Cameron 1985, 149–50, Whately 2016, 145–51. The king uses the imperative (singular) to urge Khusro to seize the right moment, ἐν δέοντι (καιρῷ), *en deonti (kairō)*, ‘in good time, at the fitting time’. Cf. Polyb. 31.22.7, 1 Cor. 9:12 and esp. Thdrt. *Interpret. in xiv epistulas sancti Pauli*, PG 82.268B on ‘using the opportunity’ and cf. i.25.30n on the word ἐξουσία, *exousia*.

2.11 λωφήσασα γὰρ ἡ τῶν καιρῶν ἀκμή ἐπανιέναι οὐδαμῶς πῆφυκεν, ‘For once the critical moment has gone, it is not naturally inclined to return.’ The reference to the καιρός, *kairos*, ‘the critical moment’ is surely a deliberate allusion to Isocr. *Or.* 2.33, a passage that is often quoted subsequently, e.g. in Photius, *Lexicon*, A769. On Procopius’

use of the term *καιρός* in general see Andres 2017, arguing that he conceives God as providing such critical moments.

2.12 *φθόνῳ γὰρ ἐς Ἰουστινιανὸν βασιλέα ἐχόμενος*, ‘Gripped by envy of the Emperor Justinian’. As Pazdernik 1997, 22–3, observes, whereas for Thucydides at i.23.4–6 it was φόβος, *phobos*, ‘fear’, that drove the Spartans to war with Athens, for Procopius it is φθόνος, *phthonos*, ‘envy’ that brings Khusro to war; he repeats the term at 2.15. See also Börm 2007, 251. The repetition in this sentence of the word βασιλεύς, *basileus*, ‘emperor’, applied to Justinian, is surprising, unless perhaps it is intended to underline his imperial status.

2.14 *καίτοι τοιαῦτα Ἰουστινιανῷ ἐπεκάλουν ἐγκλήματα, ἅπερ ἂν εἰκότως βασιλεῖ γενναίῳ ἐγκώμια εἴη, ὅτι δὴ τὴν βασιλείαν τὴν αὐτοῦ μείζω τε ποιῆσαι καὶ πολλῷ ἐπιφανεστέραν ἐν σπουδῇ ἔχοι*. ‘Yet the sort of accusations brought against Justinian were rather the sort of things that would more reasonably be the subject of panegyrics for a noble emperor, in that he was eager to make his own empire greater and much more glorious.’ Kaldellis 2010b, 261–2, argues that this defence of Justinian is deliberately weak. As he notes, here and in the following section Procopius uses the optative mood with ἂν, *an*, indicating what one might suppose, cf. Smyth §1824. The second optative here, ἔχοι, *ekhoi*, gives the grounds alleged for why one might consider Justinian a great emperor, cf. Smyth §2242. Pazdernik 1997, 25, on the other hand argues that the repetition of the expression ἐν σπουδῇ ἔχω, *en spoudē ekhō*, ‘I am eager’, applied at 2.12 to Khusro’s keenness to break the treaty and here to Justinian’s desire to expand his empire, reflects badly on the Persian king’s gratuitous aggressiveness.

2.15 *ταῦτα γὰρ καὶ Κύρῳ ἂν τις ἐπενέγκοι τῷ Περσῶν βασιλεῖ καὶ Ἀλεξάνδρῳ τῷ Μακεδόνι*, ‘For someone could bring the same accusations against Cyrus, the king of the Persians, or Alexander the Macedonian.’ Cyrus is used as an exemplar again by Procopius at *Aed.* i.1.12–15, where it is clear that he has in mind Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia*; Börm 2007, 222, notes that the positive image of Cyrus in the Bible also influences Procopius’ favourable portrayal of the king. Even if one might expect to find at least one Roman general or emperor here, it need not follow that Procopius has chosen deliberately ambiguous examples, as Kaldellis 2010b, 261–2 (cf. idem 2004, 54–5 on Cyrus), proposes, noting certain sources that emphasise Alexander’s insatiable appetite for

conquest. Cf. Pazdernik 1997, 24–5, who is willing to take Procopius' deflection of the criticisms at face value, so likewise Brodka 1998, 120–1. Dahn 1865, 102, points out that this is a unique instance of Procopius intervening to deflect criticism levelled at the emperor by a hostile party, implying perhaps his approval of the emperor. Auler 1876, 28, on the other hand, takes the defence of the imperialist project as a vindication of what the Goths have been arguing, viz. that the emperor was contemplating eastern conquests.

3.1–31 Roman Operations in Armenia

Procopius here relates Armenian events of the 530s, taking up where he left off at i.15.26–33, cf. i.12.20–3 (an early defeat of Belisarius and Sittas in Persarmenia). He offers a critical assessment of Justinian's dealings with the Armenian aristocracy, roundly condemning his support for the unscrupulous Acacius, who ultimately provoked Sittas' death by insisting that the commander speed up his pacification of the region. Procopius is evidently well informed of the internal dissensions among the Armenians: see i.5.9–40n for the suggestion that he draws on sources linked to the Arsacids, a family whose nobility is highlighted at 3.32, cf. 3.25. See also Börm 2007, 224, Traina 2018, 178–9.

Behind the dissatisfaction of the Armenians lay Justinian's determination to reorganise the Armenian provinces and to integrate them fully into the Roman empire. Already in 528 he had created a new command for the north-eastern frontier, on which see i.13–15h. In March 536 Justinian's *Novel* 31 replaced the existing provincial structure, in which a considerable amount of local autonomy had survived, with a four-fold division of Roman Armenia; the way had been paved already by Just. *Edict* 3 of 535. The position of the Armenian nobility, the *nakharars*, was threatened, e.g. by Justinian's insistence that Roman marriage and inheritance customs apply throughout the region. Previous immunities, e.g. to taxation, were swept aside, provoking a large-scale defection of the Armenians to the Persians. See Auler 1876, 41–4, Toumanoff 1963, 174–5, 195–6, Adontz 1970, 103–55, Zuckerman 1998, 124–8, Preiser-Kapeller 2010, 141–61, Greenwood 2017, 200–4, cf. Hewsen 2001, 84–6 for a summary with maps.

Given the fairly lengthy chain of events, the Armenian uprising is likely to have broken out already in 538 (cf. e.g. Toumanoff 1963, 196): time must be allowed for Sittas' campaign, then for his replacement by Buzes and his actions. The revolt was sufficiently large in scale to deter

Sittas from engaging the rebels immediately and to induce him to seek a reconciliation (3.9). It may be inferred that units from the newly formed army of the *magister militum per Armeniam*, some of which had been recruited from among the Armenians, had joined the insurrection. Under these circumstances it is not surprising that Roman commanders found it hard to subdue the insurgents and that they sought to obtain local assistance to do so (3.12, 28). Koehn 2018a, 39, is more upbeat as to the number of forces at Sittas' disposal. A full but speculative account of the revolt is offered by Ayzvazyan 2012, cf. the critical review of Wheeler 2013. See also Traina 2015, 222–6.

3.1 Συμεώνης ἐκεῖνος, ὁ τὸ Φαράγγιον Ῥωμαίοις ἐνδούς, ‘The Symeon who handed over Pharangium to the Romans’. Procopius had earlier described his defection, noting that Justinian had been content to leave him in charge of the gold mine at Pharangium. See i.15.27n. Since he defected in 530 it may be supposed that he received his gift from Justinian later the same year or in 531. Justinian's gift no doubt allowed Symeon to retain his status after Pharangium was conceded to the Persians by the terms of the Eternal Peace: see i.22.3, 18 with the notes *ad loc.* See also *PLRE* iii, Symeon 1.

3.3 ἐξειργασμένου δὲ τοῦ κακοῦ οἱ τοῦ φόνου αὐτουργοὶ φεύγουσιν ἐς τὰ Περσῶν ἥθη, ‘In the wake of the crime, the perpetrators of the assassination fled to Persian territory.’ The date of Symeon's death is unclear. The porousness of the frontier is illustrated by the ease with which the assassins could escape Roman territory, cf. Proc. *Aed.* iii.3.9–13, highlighting this very point, cf. his description of the border near Pharangium at *Wars* i.15.27. See also Garsoïan 1998, 249. A similar situation arose in the 590s at which point rebellious Armenians again moved to Persian territory, Ps.-Seb. 87/31–2, cf. Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 178.

3.3 ἀδελφῶ δὲ ἦστην δύο Περόζου παῖδε, ‘They were two brothers, sons of Peroz.’ Nothing further is known of the two brothers nor of their father Peroz; Procopius here uses the dual form, cf. i.12.21n. The name Peroz is associated not just with the Sasanians but also with a dynasty that ruled Gogarene, just south of Iberia, in this period: see Toumanoff 1963, 187–91. Given the distance from this region to Pharangium, however, a link cannot necessarily be inferred.

3.3 βασιλεύς τε ταῦτα ἀκούσας τὰς τε κώμας Ἀμαζάσπην παραδίδωσι τῷ Συμεώνου ἀδελφιδῷ καὶ ἄρχοντα κατεστήσατο Ἀρμενίοις αὐτόν. ‘When the emperor heard of this, he handed over the villages to Amazaspes, the nephew of Symeon, and appointed him as ruler for the Armenians.’ Procopius again offers no chronological precision, although he implies in the following section that Amazaspes remained in post for some time, presumably a few years. Procopius calls Amazaspes an *arkhōn*, i.e. governor, evidently of Armenia Interior: he probably held office before the changes introduced in 536. See Adontz 1970, 138–9, suggesting that he would have been the first governor following the abolition of the post of *comes* (‘count’) that had existed hitherto, cf. Preiser-Kapeller 2010, 152–3. Sarris 2018, 245, proposes that Justinian handed to Amazaspes ancestral properties mentioned in Just. *Edict* 3; he may indeed have been the recipient of the edict, cf. Miller and Sarris 2018, 1037 n.2. See also i.15.27n on the family of Symeon and Amazaspes (Armenian Hamazasp), *PLRE* iii, Amazaspes.

3.4 τοῦτον τὸν Ἀμαζάσπην, προϊόντος τοῦ χρόνου, Ἰουστινιανῷ βασιλεῖ τῶν τις ἐπιτηδείων διέβαλλεν, Ἀκάκιος ὄνομα, ‘Over the course of time one of his relatives, Acacius by name, brought accusations against this Amazaspes to the Emperor Justinian.’ Acacius took over as governor of Armenia Interior from Amazaspes following his murder and is praised by Justinian in *NovJ.* 31.1 (536). The *Novel* boosted Acacius’ rank to that of *spectabilis*, while Armenia I, the new province that he governed, gained proconsular status. See Adontz 1970, 136–40, Preiser-Kapeller 2010, 153, cf. *PLRE* iii, Acacius 1.

Procopius explains that Acacius accused Amazaspes both of maltreating the Armenians and of planning to betray certain cities, including Theodosiopolis, to the Persians. Theoph. 144 claims that a certain Constantine betrayed this city to the Persians in 502, cf. Ps.-Josh. 48 with Greatrex 1998, 79–80, while in 589 a disgruntled Armenian commander handed over Martyropolis to the Persians, Th. Sim. iii.5.11–16 with Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 171. The accusation was at least therefore plausible, cf. Nechaeva 2020, 44–5.

3.5 ταῦτα εἰπὼν γνώμη βασιλέως Ἀκάκιος τὸν Ἀμαζάσπην δόλῳ ἔκτεινε, ‘Acacius, having made these assertions, slew Amazaspes by treachery with the emperor’s approval.’ The noun γνώμη, *gnōmē*, ‘advice’, here translated as ‘approval’ implies Justinian’s active involvement, cf. Thuc. i.90.3, 93.5, on both occasions referring to Themistocles’ *gnōmē*.

See also similar uses in Lib. *Or.* 16.24, Socr. *HE* ii.26.10, cf. Proc. i.25.34, ii.26.16, viii.34.9, where it may be translated ‘by a decision (of the emperor)’. See *Anecd.* 8.25–9 on Justinian’s tendency to make quick judgements and to believe slander.

3.6 πονηρὸς δὲ ὢν φύσει ἔσχε καθ’ ὃ τι τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς ἦθη ἐνδείξοιτο, ‘Being naturally wicked, he displayed his character whenever he had the chance.’ At *Anecd.* 21.23 Procopius reports how Justinian appointed ‘the wicked’ to high office, cf. Auler 1876, 34. Procopius characterises Khusro himself similarly, as πονηρὸς, *ponēros*, ‘wicked’ (in character) at *Anecd.* 18.28, a passage that discusses the breaking of the Eternal Peace. We translate καθ’ ὃ τι, *kath’ ho ti*, as ‘whenever’ here, following Wortley’s translation (p.5) of John Moschus, *Pratum Spirituale*, ch.3, PG 87.2853D, where the phrase καθ’ ὅτι, *kath’ hoti*, occurs twice (parsed as two words rather than three).

3.7 τε γὰρ χρήματα ἐληίζετο οὐδενὶ λόγῳ καὶ φόρου αὐτοῖς ἀπαγωγὴν οὐποτε οὔσαν ἐς κεντηνάρια τέσσαρα ἔταξεν. ‘He plundered their wealth without justification and levied an unprecedented charge of four *centenaria*.’ See i.22.3n on the *centenarion*. Acacius resembles the Justinian of the *Anecdota* (e.g. 11.13) in his predilection for plunder. The Armenian delegation to Khusro returns later to the issue of taxation imposed despite an earlier agreement: see 3.35, 39, cf. vii.32.7. Some taxes, however, were levied in Armenia earlier, as *C.J.* 10.16.13.5–7 (496) establishes, cf. Toumanoff 1963, 194–5. The measures might apply to Armenia I and II, rather than the satrapies and Armenia Interior, so Preiser-Kapeller 2001, 54, but cf. *contra* Garsoïan 1998, 256. See also Adontz 1970, 84–93, with Preiser-Kapeller 2001, 41–3, 53.

3.7 καὶ ἐς τὸ Φαράγγιον καταφεύγουσι, ‘(they) sought refuge in Pharangium’. This fortress had been delivered into Roman hands in 530 by Symeon (on whom see i.15.27), but already in 532 it was returned to the Persians, on which see i.22.3, 18. Acacius’ assassins thus fled just across the border into Persian territory.

3.8 Διὸ δὴ Σίτταν ἐπ’ αὐτοὺς ἐκ Βυζαντίου βασιλεὺς ἔπεμψεν, ‘The emperor therefore despatched Sittas against them from Byzantium.’ See i.12.20n on this commander. Despite what Procopius says in the next sentence, he had not spent all his time following the Eternal Peace in Constantinople: he defeated the Bulgars in 535. See *PLRE* iii, Sittas 1,

Sarantis 2016, 87–8. Sittas was the obvious choice to pacify Armenia, since he had been appointed the first *magister militum per Armeniam* and had helped to establish the new military command; he had also, Mal. 18.10 reports, convinced Justinian to recruit Armenians for the forces to be stationed there. See Adontz 1970, 103–25, cf. Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 83–4, for the relevant sources.

3.9 τιθασσεύειν μέντοι καί ἐπὶ τὰ πρότερα ἦθη ἀντικαθιστάναι τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ἡπείγετο, ‘striving rather to soothe the inhabitants and to bring them back to their previous temper’. The phrase ἐπὶ τὰ πρότερα ἦθη, *epi ta protera êthê*, is ambiguous: it could be interpreted as ‘their former homes’, which is how it is translated by Dewing (and Kaldellis), cf. García Romero, 174. It is more likely, however, to refer to the inhabitants’ attitude, as we have translated, cf. Veh, 213, Brodka, 103. Craveri, 95, compromises with the translation ‘state of affairs’. See *LSJ*, 766, for both senses. The phrase is admittedly not a common one, but cf. Thuc. ii.65.9, where the verb ἀντικαθίστημι, *antikathistēmi*, ‘I bring back again, rally’ is used with the preposition ἐπὶ, *epi*, ‘to’, to refer to inducing the Athenians to have courage again, i.e. a state of mind rather than a place.

3.10 ἐπεὶ δὲ αὐτὸν βασιλεὺς τῆς μελλήσεως πολλὰ ὀνειδίζων ἐκάκιζεν, ἡγμένος ταῖς Ἀδολίου διαβολαῖς τοῦ Ἀκακίου παιδός, ‘But when the emperor, led on by the accusations of Adolius, the son of Acacius, reproached him for the delay and rebuked him’. Sittas’ hesitation is understandable, given that he is likely to have faced units that he himself had recruited: see ii.3.1–31n. In light of his earlier role in shaping the military administration of the region, his hope of persuading Justinian to rescind the tax (3.9) was not unrealistic.

Adolius was at this point probably a *silentarius* at the imperial court and thus in a position to influence the emperor; Procopius describes his position at ii.21.2, cf. the note *ad loc.* He subsequently served under Belisarius in the East but was killed in 543: see *PLRE* iii, Adolius.

The expression πολλὰ ὀνειδίζων ἐκάκιζεν, *polla oneidizōn ekakizen*, ‘blaming and reproaching (him) a lot’ is used by Procopius elsewhere only at i.5.18, cf. the note *ad loc.*, a passage also concerning Armenian history.

3.12 καὶ οἱ τὸ τῶν Ἀσπετιανῶν καλουμένων γένος, μέγα τε ὄν καὶ πολυάνθρωπον, προσχωρεῖν ἤθελε, ‘And the clan known as the

Aspetiani, a large and numerous population, wished to come over to him.’ The Aspetiani are usually identified with the Bagratuni, a family or clan that generally held the title *aspet*, i.e. ‘cavalry commander’. See Toumanoff 1963, 194 n.209 (who suggests translating γένος, *genos*, as ‘family’, not ‘people’ here, where we have preferred ‘clan’), 324–5, Garsoïan 1989, 362–3, 509, cf. Preiser-Kapeller 2010, 151. The Bagratuni’s lands were situated around Pharangium (Sper): see Toumanoff 1963, 193, Garsoïan 1989, 491, Hewsen 2001, 86 map 66, cf. 76 map 63.

3.13 πέμψαντές τε παρὰ τὸν Σίτταν ἐν γράμμασιν ἐδέοντο διδόναι τὰ πιστὰ σφίσιν, ‘They made contact with Sittas and asked him to give them written pledges.’ Such written assurances were apparently the norm in relations between the Armenians and the Romans and Persians; cf. i.4.9 with the note *ad loc.*, where the Hephthalite king displays the oath that Peroz had disregarded when he attacked him, i.12.5, where the Iberian king Gurgenes seeks pledges from the Emperor Justin. See Preiser-Kapeller 2010, 158, who regards the pledges as the equivalent of the Armenian oaths of loyalty to a noble, with Ps.-Sebeos 88–9/34–5 and Mos. Khor. iii.43, cf. R. Schmitt, *Elr* ii (1986), ‘Armenia and Iran, iv. Iranian influences in Armenian language’, i.4(a), on the derivation of the Armenian term for ‘sealed deed’ from the Iranian. Ayvazyan 2012, 55–9, finding the subsequent sequence of blunders implausible, speculates that the Bagratuni/Aspetiani may merely have feigned a willingness to collaborate with Sittas. Consequently the Roman forces engaged them (3.17) and Sittas, angry at their treachery, massacred some of their civilians (3.18).

3.15 τῷ παντὶ στρατῷ ἐς χωρίον Οἰνοχάλακων ἦει, ‘he went forth with his entire force to the village of Oenochalakon’. The location of Oenochalakon is uncertain. Ayvazyan 2012, 61–2, identifies it with the later Avnik, 60 km east of Theodosiopolis, and hence in Persarmenia. But his grounds are philologically implausible, cf. Wheeler 2013, 320; the last part of the word is unlikely, for instance, to reflect the Armenian word for a city, *k’atalak*, on which see (e.g.) Garsoïan 1989, 535–6. There are no classical remains at Avnik, moreover. I am grateful to Tim Greenwood for advice on this point.

3.18 καὶ αὐτὸς Σίττας ἐν σπηλαίῳ που παῖδάς τε αὐτῶν καὶ γυναῖκας λαβὼν ἔκτεινεν, ‘Sittas himself, having captured some of their women and children in a cave somewhere, killed them.’ Cf. Mos. Khor.

iii.44, where in the late fourth century rebels against the Arsacid ruler of Persarmenia, Khosrov, seek refuge in mountain forests and caves in Tayk', the district just east of Pharangium, cf. Łazar, 68 (121/176), where Vahan and his forces shelter in 'the inaccessible regions of the province of Tayk' (tr. Thomson) in the 480s. See fig. 25, p. 417.

3.19 ἄτε δὲ ἐν δυσχωρίαις χαλεπαῖς τε καὶ κρημνώδεσιν ἐκάτεροι ὄντες οὐκ ἐν ἐνὶ χώρῳ ἐμάχοντο, ἀλλὰ διασκεδαννύμενοι ἐν τε ὑπωρείαις καὶ φάραγξι. 'Now because both sides were situated in rough terrain that was both dangerous and mountainous, they did not fight just in one place, but scattered over the foothills and ravines.' A vivid and accurate description of the harsh terrain in the region of Pharangium (Sper), cf. i.15.26–30: in the absence of details concerning the location of Oenochalakon (3.15), it must be supposed that the engagement took place somewhere near Pharangium, where the assassins of Acacius are said to have taken refuge (3.7). See Bryer and Winfield 1985, 14–15, 54–5, cf. more generally Whitby 1988, 202, Howard-Johnston and Ryan 1992, 78–81. Ps.-Seb. 89–90/34–5 relates a similar campaign in the 590s near Theodosiopolis, in which the Romans enjoyed more success, cf. Thomson and Howard-Johnston 1999, 176–7.

3.21 ἐτύγχανε δὲ ὁ Σίττας ἐς τὸ ἔδαφος τὸ δόρυ ἐρείσας, 'Sittas happened to have fixed his spear in the ground.' Cf. vii.4.24, where a spear has got jammed into the ground and prevents the Gothic champion Valaris from falling from his horse.

3.22 τὸν τε στρατηγὸν τοῦτο ἠνίασεν ἐς τὰ μάλιστα, 'This greatly vexed the general.' For the formulation cf. Plut. *Marc.* 19.8 and elsewhere and Proc. i.5.33, another expression (cf. ii.3.10) used elsewhere by Procopius only in an Armenian context. Sittas' emotions (cf. 3.18 above) are to the fore in this episode culminating in his unnecessary death (3.26), cf. Whately 2016, 97. Sometimes Procopius is more critical in his evaluation of such behaviour, though he does not blame Mundus for his fury at the death of his son, v.7.4–5. See Whately 2016, 188–9, Parnell 2018, 252–4, 259–60. Here, on the other hand, it is the triviality of the incident that is striking, although the link between Sittas' anger and his being recognised is not explained. Since Sittas is actually able to hear the Armenian pointing him out (3.23), one may infer that the Armenians had likewise been able to hear at least part of the exchange between the Roman commander and his subordinate. There is no need to suppose

that the Armenians had Sittas in their sights from the start, *contra* Ayvazyan 2012, 69–70.

3.24 καὶ τις αὐτὸν καταλαβὼν ἐν τῇ φάραγγι ξίφει ἐς ἄκραν κεφαλὴν ἔτυψε πληγῇ ἐγκαρσίᾳ, ‘and someone caught up with him in the ravine, striking obliquely the top of his head with his sword’. Cf. Nic. Dam. 89, p.118 (Müller, frg.101.515), referring to the oblique blow struck by Cassius to Julius Caesar’s face; see also Proc. vi.2.23. The blow inflicted more of a superficial cut than a deep wound.

3.24 καὶ τὸ μὲν βρέγμα ὅλον ἀφείλετο, τοῦ δὲ ὀστέου ὁ σίδηρος οὐδαμῇ ἤψατο, ‘The whole crown of his head was shorn off, but the iron blade did not touch the bone.’ The first verb here, ἀφαίρεω, *aphaireō*, is used here in the middle voice, although we have translated it in the passive. The word βρέγμα, *bregma*, is normally translated ‘the front part of the head’ (cf. Photius, *Lexicon*, B268), but *BDAG*’s ‘crown of the head’, 405, makes more sense here.

3.25 Ἀρταβάνης δὲ Ἰωάννου παῖς Ἀρσακίδης ὀπισθεν ἐπιπεσὼν καὶ παίσας τῷ δόρατι ἔκτεινεν, ‘Artabanus the Arsacid, son of John, fell upon him from behind and killed him with a blow from his spear.’ The first mention of this Artabanus, who went on to a distinguished career in Roman service; in 546 he assassinated the rebellious commander of North Africa, Guntharis and, although he subsequently participated in a plot against Justinian in 548/9, he continued to enjoy high rank. From the physical description given of him by Procopius at vii.31.9 it may be inferred that he was known to the historian. See *PLRE* iii, Artabanus 2, cf. Toumanoff 1963, 192–3, on the descendants of the (western) Arsacids in Roman service. The death of his father John is described at 3.29–31, cf. *PLRE* iii, Ioannes 28.

3.26 οὕτω τε ὁ Σίττας ἐξ ἀνθρώπων ἠφάνιστο οὐδενὶ λόγῳ, ἀναξίως τῆς τε ἀρετῆς καὶ τῶν ἐς τοὺς πολεμίους ἀεὶ πεπραγμένων, ‘And thus Sittas vanished from the world of men for no reason in a manner unworthy of his valour and his constant deeds against the enemy.’ It is the gratuitous nature of Sittas’ death that vexes Procopius, cf. the death of the drunk Ricilas in 544, reported at vii.11.25. See further i.3.22n. Kruse 2013, 846–7, finds the tone of the whole section ironic: Sittas had presided over a debacle, and if he were, as Procopius asserts, among the best Roman commanders, then evidently the entire

high command was incompetent. Yet even if Sittas' fate was inglorious there is no need to doubt the sincerity or accuracy of Procopius' assessment: see Parnell 2017, 128, 190. His victories at Satala (see i.15) and against the Bulgars (see ii.3.8n) testify to his abilities; cf. Mal. 18.10.

3.28 Τελευτήσαντος δὲ Σίττα Βούζην βασιλεὺς ἐπὶ τοὺς Ἀρμενίους ἐκέλευσεν ἰέναι. 'Following Sittas' death, the emperor ordered Buzes to proceed against the Armenians.' It is likely that Sittas died in 539, whereupon Buzes succeeded him. He had been a commander at Dara in 530, then at Martyropolis in 531: see i.13.5, 13.19 and 21.5. His career between then and this point is unknown. See *PLRE* iii, Buzes.

3.29 ἦν δὲ τις αὐτῷ μάλιστα φίλος ἀνὴρ Ἀρσακίδης, Ἰωάννης ὄνομα, Ἀρταβάνου πατήρ, 'But there was a certain man of the Arsacid family, John by name, the father of Artabanes, who was particularly friendly with him.' On this John see ii.3.25. Nothing more is known of their ties, which evidently availed John little (3.31).

3.30 πολλὰ μὲν οὖν τὸν Ἰωάννην Βασσάκης ὁ γαμβρὸς ἐλιπάρει δρασμοῦ ἔχεσθαι, 'Bassaces, the son-in-law, therefore urgently besought John to resort to flight.' Bassaces, the Armenian Vasak, may well be a member of the Mamikonean family, cf. the note *ad loc.* on the Bassacius at Proc. i.5.17. See Toumanoff 1963, 194 n.209, Ayzvazyan 2012, 49, Traina 2015, 224, *PLRE* iii, Bassaces. He returned to the Roman side in 542. The expression δρασμοῦ ἔχομαι, *drasmou ekhomai*, 'I cling to flight' is found only in Plut. *Crass.* 29.2 before Procopius, cf. v.3.15, viii.34.15.

3.32–53 The Speech of the Armenians

Like the Gothic envoys, the Armenians seek to emphasise the power Justinian has been accumulating. It is vital, they argue, that Khusro therefore strike first. They present a history of recent events (3.34) that takes a maximalist view of what the emperor has accomplished, from the Caucasus and the Crimean Bosphorus to southern Arabia. As has been observed, the Armenian version contrasts with what Procopius has himself reported earlier in many cases. It is possible therefore to read the speech as an oblique criticism of Justinian's failed foreign policy schemes (e.g. in Ethiopia) or as an indirect tribute to the extension of Roman influence and power thus far during his reign – in contrast to the setbacks of the 540s and to the defeats narrated subsequently in this

book. There are also parallels to be observed with the blistering indictment of the carnage wrought by Justinian at *Anecd.* 18, esp. 1–21. On the other hand, it is also possible that the speech reflects, at least to some degree, Armenian aspirations, and in particular those of surviving members of the Arsacid family.

Bibliography: Rubin, *PvK*, 381–2, Signes Codoñer 2003, 223–4, Kruse 2013, 847–52, Traina 2015, 226–8.

3.32 ἡνίκα ὑπὸ Πάρθοις ἔκειτο τὰ Περσῶν πράγματα, καὶ βασιλεὺς ἐπιφανῆς γέγονε τῶν καθ' αὐτὸν οὐδενὸς ἥσσον, 'when the Persian state was subject to the Parthians, and who was a distinguished king inferior to none of his contemporaries' (referring to Arsaces): the Armenians remind Khusro of the branch of the Parthian dynasty that ruled in Armenia from the first century onwards and allude to the period before the Sasanian dynasty overthrew the Parthians in the 220s. See Toumanoff, *Elr* ii (1986), 'Arsacids, vii. The Arsacid Dynasty of Armenia', Wiesehöfer 1996, 117–49. Kruse 2013, 847, assumes that the speakers refer to Arsaces III, who handed over his kingdom to the Romans (3.35), who evidently was therefore inferior at least to Theodosius I. Given the reference to the Parthians, however, it is more likely that he refers to the eponymous founder of the dynasty, Arsaces I, whose reign is said to have laid the foundations for Parthian dominance. See Shahbazi, *Elr* ii (1986), 'Arsacids, i. Origins', Wiesehöfer 1996, 130–6.

3.33 πάρεσμεν δὲ τανῦν εἰς ὑμᾶς ἅπαντες δοῦλοί τε καὶ δραπεταὶ γεγενημένοι, 'We have now all come to you having become slaves and fugitives.' As Toumanoff 1963, 194 n.212, suggests, the Armenians refer to the impact of Justinian's reorganisation of Armenia in 536: the prerogatives of the nobility have been infringed (cf. 3.35), to the extent that they are no longer independent but subjects, i.e. slaves, of the Roman empire, cf. 3.39 concerning the fate of the Tzani. See Pazdernik 1997, 40–8, for a nuanced discussion of the issue of servitude and freedom in Procopius.

3.35 Ἀρσάκης γὰρ ὁ τῶν προγόνων τῶν ἡμετέρων βασιλεὺς ὕστατος ἐξέστη τῆς ἀρχῆς τῆς αὐτοῦ Θεοδοσίῳ τῷ Ῥωμαίων αυτοκράτορι ἐκὼν γε εἶναι, 'Arsaces, the last king among our ancestors, resigned his throne in favour of the Roman Emperor Theodosius. This he did willingly.' Armenia was partitioned between Rome and Persia, probably in 387, and soon afterwards, following the death of the

king of western Armenia, Arsaces III (or IV), the Romans took over his kingdom. Procopius provides more details on the partition at *Aed.* iii.1.4–15, where he alludes to the conditions they obtained and refers the reader to this passage; his account is confused, however. See Blockley 1992, 43–5, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 28–30, Traina 2015, 224–5, with i.5.9–40n and ii.3.1–31n on Procopius' treatment of the Arsacids. Whether there were any conditions to the Roman annexation, as the Armenians allege, is doubtful, although their rule remained unobtrusive for nearly a century after Arsaces' death. See Toumanoff 1963, 194 n.212, who points out that the Armenians were in no position to demand conditions, cf. Börm 2007, 225. See also Garsoïan 1998, 254–6, arguing for a gradual diminution of immunities in Armenia Interior (or *Megalē*, i.e. great, as she argues this region was called); she suggests that the immunities referred to were enjoyed only by the Arsacids, cf. Zuckerman 1998, 108–12.

The idiom ἐκὼν γε εἶναι, *hekōn ge einai*, 'willingly', is found first in Procopius, e.g. also at iii.3.7; it is taken up with enthusiasm by Nic. Greg., e.g. at 9.3 (vol.1, 404.14). Cf. Smyth §2012c on this use of the absolute infinitive.

3.36 ἃς δὴ κοινόν τινα ὄλεθρον καλῶν τις, οἰόμεθα, οὐκ ἄν ἀμάρτοι, 'which one would not be wrong to call a general disaster', referring to the Eternal Peace of 532, on which see i.22.3n. Braun 1894, 34, notes parallels between the phrasing here and Hdt. vii.139.5, where he states that one would not be wrong to perceive the Athenians as the saviours of Greece.

3.37 φίλων τε γὰρ καὶ πολεμίων τὸ ἐντεῦθεν ἀφροντιστήσας ἅπαντα ξυνέχεε τε καὶ ξυνετάραξε τὰ ἀνθρώπεια ὁ σὸς, ὦ βασιλεῦ, τῷ λόγῳ μὲν φίλος, ἔργῳ δὲ δυσμενής. 'For from that point, O King, your friend, in theory, but in fact your foe, careless of friends and enemies alike, has brought chaos and confusion to all mankind.' A highly rhetorical sentence designed to highlight Justinian's duplicity: he only appears to be Khusro's friend. The opening and closing sections contrast friends and enemies, while the middle part offers an elegant chiasmus. *Anecd.* 18.12 offers a similarly phrased indictment.

3.38 ἢ τί οὐκ ἐκίνησε τῶν εὖ καθεστώτων; 'What well-established custom has he not shaken?' This charge is raised also by the Goths, ii.2.6, and resembles those brought by the Corinthians against the Athenians at Thuc. i.70, cf. Pazdernik 1997, 25–6. See also ii.2n, noting parallels in the

Anecdota. Pazdernik 1997, 32–3, discusses the use of the verb κινέω, *kineō*, ‘I move, shake, disturb’ here, drawing a parallel with Thuc. i.1.2, where he refers to the Peloponnesian war as the greatest κίνησις, *kinēsis*, ‘disturbance’, of mankind.

3.39 οὐχ ἡμῖν μὲν φόρου ἀπαγωγὴν ἔταξεν οὐ πρότερον οὔσαν, καὶ Τζάνους τοὺς ὁμόρους ἡμῖν αὐτονόμους ὄντας δεδούλωται, τῷ δὲ βασιλεῖ τῶν ἀθλίων Λαζῶν ἄρχοντα Ῥωμαῖον ἐπέστησε; ‘Has he not imposed on us an unprecedented levy, has he not enslaved our hitherto independent neighbours, the Tzani, and has he not placed a Roman governor in charge of the king of the wretched Lazi?’ The Armenians start their series of accusations in their own region. On the tax imposed by Justinian see ii.3.7n. The subjugation of the Tzani is described at i.15.20–5, cf. i.15.19n and 15.25n. The unfortunate situation of the Lazi, on the other hand, has not yet been described by Procopius: at i.12.19 the Roman garrison in the frontier forts of Lazica had abandoned them because of a lack of supplies, which by the terms of the Eternal Peace, i.22.18, they recovered in 532. It is not until ii.15 that Procopius recounts the corrupt administration of John Tzibus in the 530s; at ii.15.21, in a speech to Khusro, Lazi envoys deplore the powerless position of the king in relation to the governor, John. See the note *ad loc.* Kruse 2013, 847–8, considers the Armenian charges to be exaggerated, although they are broadly in line with what is reported elsewhere in his work.

3.40 οὐ Βοσπορίταις μὲν τοῖς Οὐννων κατηκόοις στρατηγούς ἔπεμψε, ‘Did he not send generals to the people of Bosphorus, the subjects of the Huns?’ The Roman take-over of Bosphorus is described at i.12.6–8, cf. the notes *ad loc.* and Kruse 2013, 849–50.

3.40 ὁμαιχμίαν δὲ πεποιήται πρὸς τὰς τῶν Αἰθιοπῶν ἀρχάς, ‘Did he not conclude an alliance with the rulers of the Ethiopians?’ See i.20.9–12 and the notes *ad loc.* on Justinian’s unsuccessful attempt to use the Ethiopians to break the Persian monopoly on silk exports to the Roman empire with i.20.9n, 20.12n. The Romans had long had dealings with the Ethiopians, contrary to the Armenians’ claims: see Gruen 1996, 149–51, on campaigns against them already under Augustus, cf. Natoulas in *EAE* i, 657–9, Hatke 2013, 89–97 (on fourth-century missionary contacts) and i.19–20h. The term ὁμαιχμία, *homaikhmia*, ‘defensive alliance, league’, is used already by Thuc. i.18.3; Procopius uses it sparingly with the middle of the verb ποιέω, *poieō*, ‘I make’, e.g. at iv.21.18, cf. Zos.

v.42.1. It is doubtful whether there is any difference in sense from the more frequently used term συμμαχία, *symmakhia*, ‘alliance’ (ξυμμαχία, *xymmakhia*, in Procopius).

3.41 ἀλλὰ καὶ Ὀμηρίτας τε καὶ θάλασσαν τὴν Ἐρυθρὰν περιβέβληται καὶ τὸν φοινικῶνα προστίθῃσι τῇ Ῥωμαίων ἀρχῇ, ‘But he has also taken over the Homerites and the Red Sea and added the Palm Grove to the Roman empire.’ Another overstatement, cf. i.20.1–8 on the Himyarites (Homerites), who swiftly broke free of their Ethiopian overlords; at i.19.8–13 Procopius explains that the Palm Grove is of little or no value to Justinian, cf. i.19.8–10n. See also Kruse 2013, 850–1.

3.42 ἀφίμεν γὰρ λέγειν τὰ Λιβύων τε καὶ Ἰταλῶν πάθη, ‘We leave aside here the sufferings of the Libyans and Italians.’ An instance of *praeteritio*, though it is the only allusion to their plight. It had already been brought up by the Gothic envoys, 2.8–9. Procopius expatiates on this theme, however, at *Anecd.* 18.1–15.

3.42 ἡ γῆ τὸν ἄνθρωπον οὐ χωρεῖ ξύμπασα, ‘The entire earth cannot contain the man.’ The Armenians insist on Justinian’s boundless ambition, extending to the limits of the known world. As they later point out, 3.52, this has the effect of drawing Roman forces away from the eastern frontier. Kaldellis 2010b, 261–2, finds parallels with negative verdicts on the overweening ambition of Alexander the Great (cf. 2.15); cf. *Anecd.* 6.25.

3.44 τί δὲ τὴν κάκιστα ἀπολουμένην εἰρήνην αἰσχύνῃ, ‘Why do you respect this ill-starred peace?’ The future middle participle of ἀπόλλυμι, *apollumi*, ‘I destroy’, is often used with an adverbial form of κακός, *kakos*, ‘evil, wicked’, to mean ‘destined to a miserable end’, cf. *LSJ*, 207. The usage is common in Ar., e.g. at *Ach.* 778 (with Olson 2002, 271–2), 924b, cf. Lucian, *De hist. conscr.* 14 (mocking the use of the expression, as applied to a ‘cursed’ Parthian king, by a would-be historian), Malchus, frg.6.2.12.

3.47 οὐκ Ἀλαμούνδαρον μὲν ἐν σπονδαῖς τὸν σὸν, ὦ κράτιστε βασιλεῦ, δοῦλον ἀπάτῃ τε περιελθεῖν καὶ βασιλείας ἀποστῆσαι τῆς σῆς ἔργον πεποιήται, ‘Did he not attempt, O most powerful King, during peacetime, to deceive your slave al-Mundhir and to make him revolt from your rule?’ Having earlier complained of their own servitude,

3.33, the Armenians do not hesitate to describe the Naṣrid king as Khusro's slave. As Pazdernik 1997, 32, observes, they are aware that they are merely trying to redress the balance of power between Rome and Persia, hoping thereby to improve their own condition. The allegations made here were noted already by Procopius at ii.1.12–14, cf. the notes *ad loc.* The reference to hitherto unknown Huns is probably an exaggerated allusion to the Sabirs, but Whittow 2018, 280, is prepared to countenance contact between Justinian and central Asian Huns at this early stage.

3.49 ἡ μὲν οὖν εἰρήνη τὸ ἐκείνου μέρος ἤδη σοι λέλυται, καὶ σπονδαῖς αὐτὸς πέρας ταῖς ἀπεράντοις ἐπέθηκε, 'Hence from his point of view the peace has already been broken by you, while he himself has set an end to the Endless Peace.' In other words, Justinian is already plotting to attack Khusro, flushed with his western successes. The phrase τὸ ἐκείνου μέρος, *to ekeinou meros*, means literally 'that man's part' but carries the meaning here of 'as far as he is concerned', cf. *LSJ*, 1105, μέρος, III, with Polyb. 38.20.8, Agath. i.4.4. The play on words at the end of the sentence is of course deliberate.

3.51 τὸ γὰρ ἔγκλημα τῷ ἐγκεχειρηκότι, κἂν ἀπῇ τὸ κατορθοῦν, πέπρακται, 'The grounds for complaint are furnished by the one who has made the attempt, even if success proves elusive. The direction the war will take is surely clear to all.' Duwe 1885, 14, notes verbal echoes here of Thuc. i.82.6, a speech of the Spartan king Archidamus.

3.52 Βελισάριον δὲ οὐποτε Ἰουστινιανὸς τὸ λοιπὸν ὄψεται. οὐπερ ἐκεῖνος ὀλιγωρήσας μεμένηκε πρὸς ταῖς ἡλίου δυσμαῖς, αὐτὸς ἔχων τὸ Ἰταλῶν κράτος. 'Justinian will never cast eyes on Belisarius again. For he is staying in the West, ignoring the emperor and controlling Italy himself.' Following their boast of having killed Sittas (cf. 3.26), the Armenians refer to Belisarius' apparent seizure of power in Italy, following his victory over the Goths. But as Procopius relates the events at vi.29, it was not until spring 540 that he entered Ravenna after agreeing to become the new ruler in Italy; Belisarius had no intention of betraying Justinian, moreover.

The assertion is thus clearly premature, since at 3.56 Procopius explicitly dates discussions at the Persian court about the peace to autumn 539. See (e.g.) Stein 1949, 366–8, *PLRE* iii, 207; Rubin, *PvK*, 382, suggests that the Armenians give voice to Procopius' secret wish here, i.e. that Belisarius should indeed rebel.

3.53 ὥστε σοι ἐπὶ τοὺς πολεμίους ἰόντι ἀπαντήσῃ τῶν πάντων οὐδεὶς, ‘Consequently, as you go forth against the enemy, no one at all will come to meet you.’ An accurate prediction, as the subsequent narrative bears out: the Armenians have drawn attention to the vulnerability of the Romans that has arisen as a consequence of Justinian’s excessive ambitions. Few troops were available to fend off Khusro’s invasion in 540. See Börm 2007, 331, Kaldellis 2010b, 268–9, Kruse 2013, 851–2, though cf. Koehn 2018a, 38–41.

3.54–7 Khusro’s Decision to Go to War

Procopius’ own account, together with the two reported speeches, point towards an inevitable resumption of hostilities; he inserts an important chronological indicator, dating the king’s decision to violate the peace to autumn 539 (3.56). As Procopius continues to emphasise (3.54), Khusro was eager to seize on any grounds to break the peace. The Romans, as the Armenians had emphasised, remained unprepared for war (3.57); Justinian’s letter to Khusro (4.17–25) reflects this relative weakness, insisting on the justice of the Roman cause, but unable to point to any adequate deterrent to Persian aggression. Kruse 2013, 859, notes that Procopius fails to deny the Armenian accusations that the Romans were indeed preparing to go to war and thus implicitly confirms the allegation. But even at *Anecd.* 11.12 he criticises the emperor for his clumsy attempts to form alliances with al-Mundhir and the Huns, not for actually seeking to begin a war with Persia. Cf. Börm 2007, 238.

This brief section is quoted in *Exc. de leg. Rom.*, 94.16–26 (without the last four words).

3.54 ταῦτα ἐπεὶ Χοσρόης ἤκουσεν, ἥσθη τε καὶ συγκαλέσας εἴ τι ἐν Πέρσῃς καθαρὸν ἦν ἐς πάντας ἐξήνεγκεν ἃ τε Οὐίττιγῖς ἔγραψε καὶ ὅσα οἱ Ἀρμένιοι εἶπον, ἀμφὶ τε τῷ πρακτέῳ βουλὴν προὔθηκεν, ‘When Khusro heard this, he was delighted and summoned the members of the Persian nobility and revealed to all of them what Vitigis had written and what the Armenians had said, seeking advice as to what should be done.’ See ii.1n on Khusro’s determination to break the peace. Börm 2007, 136, suggests that Procopius may refer to the convocation of the Persian army even if he invokes the nobility specifically, cf. Tabari 947/239, for Khusro consulting his advisers on a military strike.

Part of this sentence is quoted in Suda, K37, καθαρῶς, *katharōs*, meaning ‘clearly’. The lemma, however, does not actually correspond to

the form in Procopius' text, which has the neuter singular nominative of the adjective, καθάρων, *katharon*, rather than the adverb. Misled by the gloss in the Suda, which indicates a meaning of 'exactly, precisely', the Suda on-line translation suggests, 'If anything was clear amongst [the] Persians, he would bring [them] together and make a statement about these matters.' The term καθάρων must refer to the nobility, however, cf. i.24.8n. De Boor 1912, 388–9, observes that six entries from the Suda come from this short section and two others at ii.4, and that they are evidently drawn from the *Exc. de leg. Rom.*, since they use its (modified) version of the text, as in the case of the entry here discussed. See also de Boor 1914–19, 45–6, on the Suda's use of extant and lost parts of the *Excerpta*, with Németh 2018, 78–83, who discusses the extracts included in the *Excerpta* and the likely deployment of the omitted sections in other parts of the Constantinian collection.

For the expression βουλὴν προῦθηκεν, *boulēn prouthēken*, 'he put a proposal', i.e. consulted, cf. Malchus, frg.15.10–11, although he uses the term γνώμη, *gnōmē*, 'opinion' rather than βουλή, Proc. ii.19.36, iii.15.1, 2, with *LSJ*, s.v. προτίθημι, II.4. On the preposition ἀμφί, *amphi*, with the dative, 'about', see i.9.2n.

3.56 ἦν γὰρ τοῦ ἔτους μετόπωρον, τρίτον καὶ δέκατον ἔτος Ἰουστινιανοῦ βασιλέως τὴν αὐτοκράτορα ἀρχὴν ἔχοντος. 'For it was now autumn in the thirteenth year of the reign of the Emperor Justinian.' See 5.1n on the calculation of the years of Justinian's reign, cf. Kislinger and Stathakopoulos 1999, 78, on this instance. The reference is to autumn 539.

3.57 οὐ μέντοι Ῥωμαῖοι τοῦτο ὑπώπτευσον, οὐδὲ δὴ Πέρσας λύσειν ποτὲ τὰς ἀπεράντους καλουμένας σπονδὰς ᾤοντο. 'But the Romans had no suspicions of this, and they did not think that the Persians would break the so called Endless Peace.' Evidently they did get wind of Khusro's plans fairly quickly, since Justinian had time to despatch a letter to Khusro to dissuade him before his invasion in spring 540, as Procopius reports at 4.14–25, cf. Lee 1993a, 113.

ii.4.1–12 Omens and Invasions

Procopius continues to build the tension by describing a sinister comet that appeared in 539, then by recounting waves of invasions in the Balkans. By grouping together attacks that took place over a number of

years, as he admits (4.7, 4.10), he reinforces the gloomy atmosphere; some have detected an apocalyptic tinge in the association of Huns – Procopius fails to offer a more precise identification – and disasters. Some scholars, on the other hand (e.g. Cesa 1982, 198) see in the account of these invasions an element of relief from the build-up to the Persian war; their placement here, as she notes, means that they do not feature in *Gothic Wars* and thus overshadow Belisarius' successes there.

The Balkan provinces were struck by repeated invasions through much of the sixth century, although Justinian attempted to counteract them by negotiations with tribal groups, the appointment of effective commanders and the construction of numerous fortifications. While the emperor has been accused of neglecting the Balkans, Sarantis 2016, 232–9, argues that his measures should not be underestimated. Procopius tends to insert material on the Balkans intermittently in *Wars*, especially towards the end of *Wars* vii, where his downbeat description of Slavic incursions parallels the gloom of the current section.

Bibliography: Rubin, *PvK*, 382, Cesa 1982, 197–9, Sarantis 2011, Syrbe 2012, 305–6, Sarantis 2016, 101–8, Meier 2019, 975.

4.1 Τότε καὶ ὁ κομήτης ἀστήρ ἐφάνη, ‘And then the comet appeared.’ Although this comet is surprisingly not mentioned in chroniclers, such as Malalas, it clearly made a big impression on contemporaries, particularly in light of subsequent events. Joh. Lyd. *De Ost.* §1 (5–6) = 1 (48–50/51–3) cites it at the start of a whole work dedicated to portents, regarding it as having demonstrated the accuracy of such signs. On its form, see 4.1 and 4.2.

4.1 καὶ αὐτοῦ τὸ μὲν πέρας πρὸς δύοντα ἥλιον, ἡ δὲ ἀρχὴ πρὸς ἀνίσχοντα ἦν, αὐτῷ δὲ τῷ ἡλίῳ ὀπισθεν εἴπετο, ‘Its end was to the West, its beginning to the East, and it followed behind the sun itself.’ Since the tail of a comet points away from the sun, the ‘end’ of the comet in the west must refer rather to its head, unless the reference is to an anti-tail.

4.2 ὁ μὲν γὰρ ἐν αἰγοκέρω ἦν, αὐτὸς δὲ ἐν τοξότη, ‘The sun was in Capricorn while the comet was in Sagittarius.’ Chinese records describe a comet in November 539, which fits with Procopius' placing of the event after autumn 539 (3.56). See Ho 1962, no.221 (17 November 539), Kronk 1999, 88–90, cf. Pingré 1783, 321–3, Williams 1871, no.153. It is also referred to in several Syriac sources, e.g. PZ x.6a (191/413), reconstructed from Jacob of Edessa, Michael the Syrian and Barhebraeus, on which see

PZT 191, nn.113–17, with further secondary references; this section is more likely to derive from John of Ephesus than PZ, in fact. As at *Chr. Ede.* 96 (104), the comet is placed in AG 850, i.e. 538, but evidently this is a year too early. The comet is described as ‘great and fearsome’ and said to have been visible (according to Jacob, who also dates it to December 539 or January 540) for one hundred days. Kislinger and Stathakopoulos 1998, 53 n.49, date the comet to December 539, cf. Kronk 1999, 89, who proposes that it was observed in Europe until 27 December but in China perhaps until 30 January. The Chinese records confirm the sighting of the comet in Sagittarius, as Procopius indicates, note its increasing length and the fact that it pointed towards the south-east; the sun was to be found in Capricorn after the winter solstice in December, so Geminus ii.37–8 with Berggren and Jones 2006, 135 fig.2.2. Cf. Nonnosus §15 for the use of Zodiac signs for months.

4.2 καὶ αὐτὸν οἱ μὲν τινες ἐκάλουν ξιφίαν, ὅτι δὴ ἐπιμήκης τε ἦν καὶ λίαν ὀξεῖαν τὴν ἀρχὴν εἶχεν, οἱ δὲ πωγωνίαν, ‘Some called it “the swordfish”, because it was long and very sharp at its tip, others “bearded”.’ John the Lydian distinguishes ten types of comet, two of which correspond to those alluded to by Procopius: see *De Mens.* iv.116 (154–5) with Hooker’s useful commentary, cf. *De Ost.* §§10a–15b (31–45) = 2–9 (72–86/87–105). He describes the Xiphias (which can mean either ‘sword’ or ‘swordfish’) as pale, with sword-shaped rays, while the Pogonias (or ‘bearded’) displays a tail at its rear, which looks like a beard. A similar bearded comet was observed at the start of Justin I’s reign in 518, provoking widespread anxiety: see (e.g.) *Chr. Pasch.* 612, Mal. 18.4, cf. Destunis 1880, 26 n.1.

According to John the Lydian, each type of comet presaged a different sort of calamity: the Romans generally believed them to be signs of ill omen. See Joh. Lyd. *De Ost.* §10a (31) = 2 (72/87), cf. Schmidt 2012, 267. Procopius’ statement in the following section, concerning the various interpretations of the comet, is substantiated by John’s work: he perceived it as a ‘horse’ or ‘horseman’, a swift-moving object that sends forth oblique rays. He very specifically associates it with a Persian invasion and a subsequent plague, Joh. Lyd. *De Ost.* §11 (35–7) = 4 (76–8/91–3), cf. §1, as noted at 4.1.

4.3 ἐγὼ δὲ ὅσα γενέσθαι ξυνηνέχθη γράφων δίδωμι ἐκάστῳ τοῖς ἀποβεβηκόσι τεκμηριοῦσθαι ἢ βούλοιτο. ‘But I simply record what happened and give every man the chance of judging by the results, as he

sees fit.’ Procopius implies that he reserves judgement, although, given that he expatiates on the disasters that followed hard on the heels of the comet, it may be inferred that he too saw it as an ill omen; cf. Dahn 1865, 176–7, arguing that Procopius’ uncertainty is not as to whether the comet presaged anything, but rather as to what exactly it betokened. Cf. vii.29, which recounts the capture of the whale Porphyrius near Constantinople, invasions in the Balkans, excessive floods in Egypt and severe earthquakes, where Procopius (29.19) nonetheless declines to engage in the interpretation of signs. In both this case and the present one, Procopius could simply be aiming to increase the narrative tension, so Sarantis 2016, 102, cf. Tac. *Ann.* xv.47, setting the stage for the Pisonian conspiracy against Nero, with Koestermann 1968, 263. But see Signes Codoñer 2005, 38–40, who associates vii.29 with *Anecd.* 18.20, where the invasions of the Balkans are attributed to Justinian’s diabolical nature; similar inferences could be made from the present chapter, which also overlaps with this section of *Anecd.* Procopius’ scepticism is thus probably superficial, so already Evans 1971, 86–7 (on the present passage), cf. Averil Cameron 1985, ch.7.

At viii.14.39–40 Procopius reports another omen that presaged the imminent conflict, the birth of a two-headed boy at Edessa shortly before hostilities broke out.

4.4 μέγα μὲν εὐθὺς στράτευμα Οὐννικόν, διαβάντες ποταμὸν Ἰστρον, ξυμπάσῃ Εὐρώπῃ ἐπέσκηψαν, ‘At once a large Hunnic army crossed the river Danube and invaded the whole of Europe.’ The date of this raid remains disputed, whether late 539 or 540. The comet was visible from November for more than forty days, Procopius reports at 4.2, yielding a date in December 539 or the following year. Curta 2001, 78, places the raid in December 539 and infers that the raiders crossed the frozen Danube, cf. Sarantis 2016, 101–2. The identity of the raiders likewise remains uncertain: Procopius sometimes specifies what type of Huns are involved, but not on this occasion. Some, like Ivanišević 2006, 77, suppose that the Kutrigurs were responsible; Syrbe 2012, 305–6, argues that Procopius was not interested in such details in this case, since his objective was to heighten dramatic tension. See further Sarantis 2016, 103–4, who reserves judgement on the identity of the raiders.

Procopius’ reference here to ‘Europe’ applies to the Balkan provinces, cf. iii.2.7, 13, iii.4.29, vii.40.33, although it can of course also be used for the whole continent, as (e.g.) at iii.1.7, cf. v.12.3. At viii.18.1 Procopius moves on to Balkan affairs (termed ‘affairs in Europe’) from North Africa,

before later proceeding to the war in Italy. The existence of a small province of Europe in south-eastern Thrace (cf. e.g. *ODLA*, s.v.) is probably irrelevant in this context. See fig. 24 below.

4.4 ἐκ κόλπου γὰρ τοῦ Ἰονίου οἱ βάρβαροι οὗτοι ἅπαντα ἐφεξῆς ἐληίσαντο μέχρι ἐς τὰ Βυζαντίων προάστεια. ‘For these barbarians plundered everything in turn from the Ionian Gulf as far as the suburbs of Byzantium.’ At *Anecd.* 18.20 Procopius similarly describes waves of invasions, attributed to Huns, Slavs and Antae, from the Ionian Gulf to the suburbs of Constantinople, albeit over a sustained period; the Ionian Gulf refers to the Adriatic Sea, cf. Sarantis 2016, 103 n.442 (following Dewing). He also invokes Greece and the Thracian Chersonese specifically, which are dealt with in greater detail in this passage, see 4.8–11. In both instances Procopius is interested in painting a bleak picture, which he accomplishes in this case partly by describing a series of raids. See Sarantis 2016, 102–3, who points out that Procopius will not have witnessed the effects of this raid at first-hand, since he was then serving in Italy.

4.5 καὶ φρούρια μὲν δύο καὶ τριάκοντα ἐν Ἰλλυριοῖς εἶλον, πόλιν δὲ τὴν Κασσάνδρειαν κατεστρέψαντο βία (ἣν οἱ παλαιοὶ Ποτίδαιαν ἐκάλουν), ὅσα γε ἡμᾶς εἰδέναι οὐ τειχομαχήσαντες πρότερον. ‘They took thirty-two fortresses in Illyricum, and reduced by force the city of Cassandreia (which the ancients called Potidaea), although, as far as we know, they had never assaulted walls before.’ I accept the revised punctuation of Robertson 1941, 82, hitherto ignored, who takes the ὅσα γε ἡμᾶς εἰδέναι, *hosa ge hēmas eidenai*, ‘as far as we know’ with the assault of the walls, since the identification of Cassandreia with Potidaea was not in doubt. Cf. *Aed.* iv.3.21–2 on the identification and the unprecedented attack on the walls; for the expression see i.17.2n. Procopius actually refers to 32 fortresses ‘among the Illyrians’, but he often refers to provinces (or here, a diocese) as peoples, cf. Greatrex 2018b, 335.

Sarantis 2016, 105–8, plays down the importance of this raid and is sceptical concerning the identification of certain coin hoards sometimes associated with it (e.g. in Ivanišević 2006, 77–8 with 86, map 2); it is consequently difficult to track the route of the invaders, although some hoards, e.g. along the Via Egnatia, may reflect their movements. As he notes, Cassandreia, the ancient Potidaea, at the northern end of the Pallene peninsula, lay in ruins even before the Huns arrived: Justinian therefore embarked on an extensive rebuilding of the site, *Aed.* iv.3.21–6.



Figure 24 Hunnic Invasions of the Balkans

The reference to 32 fortresses, *phrouria*, is vague: it could, as Sarantis notes, refer to comparatively small sites.

4.6 καὶ τὰ τε χρήματα ἔχοντες αἰχμαλώτων τε μυριάδας δυοκαίδεκα ἀπαγόμενοι ἐπ’ οἴκου ἅπαντες ἀνεχώρησαν, ‘Seizing its wealth and carrying off one hundred and twenty thousand prisoners, they all retired home.’ The reference to twelve ‘myriads’, i.e. 120,000 prisoners, recalls the exaggerated figures at *Anecd.* 18, where Procopius details the slaughter for which Justinian was responsible, cf. vii.14.6, where he insists on the lack of resistance to barbarian raids in the Balkans following the death of Chilbudius in 533. The number is clearly inflated, but it signals the importance of manpower in the region; the Romans too sought to take prisoners when they went on the offensive, cf. *Proc.* vii.14.3. See Sarantis 2016, 86–7, 102–3, cf. Curta 2001, 76–9.

4.7 χρόνῳ τε τῷ ὑστέρῳ πολλάκις ἐνταῦθα γενόμενοι ἀνήκεστα ἐς Ῥωμαίους δεινὰ ἔδρασαν. ‘Later they came there often and inflicted unbearable sufferings on the Romans.’ Procopius clearly indicates that the following two raids he mentions took place subsequently, although this has frequently been overlooked, e.g. in Greatrex 1995b. It is likely, as Sarantis 2016, 240–2, cf. 101–2, argues, that the two incursions occurred in the same year, 544, in a raid that is reported also at vii.11.13–16 because of the defections it provoked among Belisarius’ forces in Italy: his troops from Illyricum went home upon hearing of it. There is no need, on the other hand, to associate the attack on Greece (4.11) with the Kotrigur attack of 559, nor to suppose that the assault on the Thracian Chersonese dates to 551, as Kislinger and Stathakopoulos 1998, 54–6, propose, cf. Greatrex 2003, 47–9, Sarantis 2016, 240–2. It is possible, as Sarantis 2016, 237, suggests, that Procopius inserted these two reports once he realised, late in the day, the importance of the Balkan region. Procopius’ reference to the frequency of the raids is echoed at *Anecd.* 18.20.

4.8 οἱ δὲ καὶ ἐν Χερρονήσῳ τειχομαχήσαντες, βιασάμενοί τε τοὺς ἐκ τοῦ τείχους ἀμυνομένους καὶ διὰ τοῦ τῆς θαλάσσης ῥοθίου τὸν περίβολον ὑπερβάντες, ‘They also attacked the wall of the Chersonese, forcing the defenders from the wall and ascending the circuit walls through the surf of the sea by the so-called Black Gulf.’ Procopius describes the shoddy defences of the peninsula at *Aed.* iv.10.1–9, where he concludes by emphasising how easily invaders ‘recently’ broke through them. See Greatrex 1995b, 125–7, identifying this attack with the one

referred to in *Aed.*, cf. Sarantis 2016, 242–3. The Black Gulf lies to the west of the Thracian Chersonese, i.e. the Gallipoli peninsula, and is now known as the Gulf of Saros, cf. Roques 2011, 335 n.188.

The few Huns that crossed over into Asia must have seized vessels to allow them to cross from Abydus, where an important customs house was located, to Sestus; Gainas had failed to accomplish this in late 400 as a result of Fravitta's vigilance, Zos. v.21. See also *ODLA*, s.v. Abydos.

4.10 ἐν ἑτέρᾳ τε εἰσβολῇ τοὺς τε Ἰλλυριοὺς καὶ Θεσσαλοὺς ληισάμενοι τειχομαχεῖν μὲν ἐνεχείρησαν ἐν Θερμοπύλαις, 'In another invasion they plundered Illyricum and Thessaly and then tried to assault the fortifications at Thermopylae.' It seems prudent, cf. ii.4.7n, to suppose that this other incursion also occurred in 544. It would therefore be in the wake of this successful assault that Justinian took measures to improve the defences of the pass, as Procopius describes at *Aed.* iv.2.2–15. See Gregory 1992, 243–9, cf. Cherf 2011, 88 n.54, who emphasises the Herodotean echoes in Procopius' descriptions of the pass (including here), as well as detecting other influences. The path, ἡ ἀτραπός, *hē atrapos*, used by the Huns (4.10) recalls that employed by Xerxes' forces in 480, cf. Hdt. viii.216–17 with Vannicelli 2017, 566–7.

4.13–26 Justinian's Attempt to Dissuade Khusro from Invading

It is clear from the start that the emperor's last-minute appeal to Khusro will fall on deaf ears: Procopius has explicitly indicated that he will shortly narrate the Persian invasion. The fact that Justinian entrusted his letter to a private citizen, Anastasius, rather than to an official envoy may also indicate an awareness of the unlikelihood of success, so Veh, 486. From ii.3.57 it appears that the Romans knew of the allegations against Justinian, although at that point they were reluctant to believe that this would lead to war. Now that the situation had changed, the emperor seeks to rebut the charges levelled against him: the arguments deployed by the Gothic and Armenian envoys are here taken up, albeit briefly. Although some scholars, such as Kaldellis, find the arguments weak – the emperor admits having corresponded with unspecified parties, presumably al-Mundhir and the Huns, cf. ii.1.13–15 – Justinian rightly points to Persian aggression, e.g. the incursion of al-Mundhir (cf. ii.1.4), and insists that he is eager to uphold the Eternal Peace. The impression given, however, is one of weakness: Justinian is able to claim the moral high ground, to be sure, but his only threat is of divine justice, should Khusro

break his oaths. Leppin 2011, 382 n.48, suggests that Theodora's letter to Zabergan, reported by Procopius at *Anecd.* 2.32–6, may also belong to this juncture, as she too sought to reconcile the two sides; see further 19.47n.

Bibliography: Lee 1993a, 113, Taragna 2000, 123–4, Kaldellis 2010b, 263, Kruse 2013, 859–60.

4.13 Βελισάριος [ἔπει] τῶν Γότθων τε καὶ Ἰταλιωτῶν βασιλέα Οὐίττιγιν καθελὼν ζῶντα ἐς Βυζάντιον ἤνεγκεν. ὅπως δὲ ὁ Περσῶν στρατὸς ἐς γῆν τὴν Ῥωμαίων ἐσέβαλεν, ἐρῶν ἔρχομαι. ‘When Belisarius had unseated Vitigis, the king of the Goths and Italians, he brought him alive to Byzantium. I will go on to tell how the Persian army invaded Roman territory.’ The sequence of sentences is jarring: at 4.12 Procopius already indicates that he is about to relate the Persian invasion, while here he does so again, following a short notice about Vitigis’ fall from power (cf. *Wars* vii.1.1–2). It is understandable that Herwerden 1906, 44, proposed eliminating the first sentence, supposing it to be a copyist’s insertion. Since, however, Procopius had last mentioned Vitigis as king of Italy at ii.2.1, it is likely that he felt the need to allude, albeit very briefly, to Belisarius’ final victory there in 540. Had he not done so, the reference to him being assigned part of the eastern frontier already in that year at ii.6.1 would have been hard to understand. Procopius makes no mention of the tradition, reported (e.g.) by *Lib. Pont.* 61.1, that Justinian sent Vitigis, who had surrendered and been accorded patrician status, to an estate near the Persian frontier. See *PLRE* iii, Vitigis, 14.10n.

4.15 ἐτύγχανε δὲ τις ἐς Βυζάντιον ἦκων ἐκ Δάρας πόλεως, Ἀναστάσιος ὄνομα, ‘A man happened to be in Byzantium who had come from the city of Dara, Anastasius by name.’ On Anastasius see i.26.8n: he had helped oust the short-lived usurper John at Dara in 536, as Procopius mentions. Whether Procopius refers to this episode in order to recall the precarious state of Roman defences, as Kruse 2013, 860, argues, is uncertain.

4.17 Ζυνετῶν μὲν ἀνθρώπων ἐστὶ καὶ οἷς τὰ ἐς τὸ θεῖον ἱκανῶς ἡσκηται πολέμου φυσόμενας αἰτίας, ἄλλως τε καὶ πρὸς ἄνδρας τὰ μάλιστα φίλους, σθένει παντὶ ἀποτέμενσθαι. ‘Wise men, and men who pay sufficient respect to God, try their hardest to nip off the causes of war as they arise, especially against their particular friends.’ Cf. i.14.1–2

for a comparable insistence on the merits of peace at the opening of a letter to the Persians, with the notes *ad loc.* On the use of τὸ θεῖον, *to theion*, to refer to God, see i.7.5n. For the reference to τὰ ἐς τὸ θεῖον ἱκανῶς ἥσκηται, *ta es to theion hikanōs ēskētai*, lit. ‘the matters relating to the divine are adequately practised’, i.e. ‘paying sufficient respect to God’ cf. iv.11.6 (in a letter of Solomon to the Moors, reproaching them like Justinian), iv.26.17, *Anecd.* 20.9.

Justinian goes on to contrast the behaviour of wise men with that of unwise men, using the negative form of the same adjective, ξυνετός, *xynetos*.

4.18 ἐπεὶ τῶν ἐπιτηδευμάτων τὰ πονηρότατα καὶ τοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀτιμοτάτοις εὐκόλα τίθεσθαι ἢ τῶν πραγμάτων νενόμικε φύσις, ‘since the nature of things makes the wickedest of actions easy for the most dishonourable of men’. Cf. Polyb. 16.10.3 on ἡ τῶν πραγμάτων φύσις, *hē tōn pragmatōn physis*, ‘the nature of things’, a common expression that Procopius deploys in numerous other speeches, e.g. at v.13.22, v.24.5.

4.20 καίτοι σὺ μὲν ἡμῖν γράμματα οὐκ ἐπίτηδες γεγραμμένα ἐπικαλεῖς, ‘Yet you now complain about my letters, which were not written with any ulterior motive.’ See ii.1.13–15, where Procopius refers to letters from Justinian to both al-Mundhir and Huns, and the notes *ad loc.* As Kaldellis 2010b, 263, remarks, the emperor admits to having written the letters, although he insists that they have been misinterpreted. The reference to Khusro acting οὐκ ἄνευ τινὸς παραπετάσματος, *ouk aneu tinos parapetasmatos*, lit. ‘not without a certain smokescreen’, recalls ii.2.7, where the Gothic envoys accuse Justinian of seeking to break the peace by means of a παραπέτασμα, cf. the note *ad loc.*

4.21 ἡμῖν δὲ πάρεστιν Ἀλαμούνδαρον δεικνύναι τὸν σὸν γῆν ξαναγχος καταδραμόντα τὴν ἡμετέραν, ‘But we can show that your own al-Mundhir recently overran our lands’, as Procopius has already recounted at ii.1.3. Justinian’s accusation is thus vindicated.

4.22 τὰ γὰρ τῶν ἡδίκηκότων ἐγκλήματα αἱ πράξεις, οὐχ αἱ διάνοιαι, δηλοῦσι τοῖς πέλας. ‘Actions – not intentions – expose to people nearby the crimes of those who have done wrong.’ As Kruse 2013, 859, observes, this statement is a direct rejoinder to the contention of the Armenians at 3.50–1, where they argue that it is those who plan to break

a peace that are guilty of breaking it, i.e. that intentions are more important than actions; they regard Justinian's correspondence with al-Mundhir as proof of his treacherous intent.

4.24 ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν οὐδὲ τοῖς τυχοῦσιν ἀνθρώποις, μή τί γε δὴ βασιλεῦσι, πρέπειν ἂν δόξειε, 'But this hardly seems fitting for ordinary men, let alone kings.' For the sense of τοῖς τυχοῦσιν ἀνθρώποις, *tois tykhousin anthrōpois*, 'for ordinary men', cf. Elias, *Comm. in Aristotelis categorias*, p.108.32, another sixth-century work (cf. *PLRE* iii, Elias 6). On the formulation μή τί γε, *mē ti ge*, 'much less', see Smyth §2763e.

4.25 σὺ δὲ τούτων ἀφέμενος σκόπει μὲν τὸ μέτρον τῶν ἐκατέρωθεν κατὰ τὸν πόλεμον ἀπολουμένων καὶ τίς ἂν εἴη τῶν ξυμπεσουμένων τὴν αἰτίαν φέρεσθαι δίκαιος. 'Leave all this to one side; consider the total losses on both sides in the war, and who will justly bear the blame for what will happen.' Justinian's letter concludes with a long sentence, insisting on the blame that Khusro will incur for violating the terms of the peace treaty: he will invite divine retribution, the emperor claims. The emperor's concern to avoid casualties, underlined here, contrasts with Procopius' emphasis on the huge losses inflicted both on the empire and foreign peoples at *Anecd.* 18. It is also evident from the subsequent account that no divine retribution fell upon the Persians. This caused some consternation for Procopius, who believed that there was a link between just conduct and success in war: see ii.10.4–5 for his incomprehension at the fall of Antioch. See Brodka 2004, ch.2, cf. Whately 2016, 101–9. Peter the Patrician, addressing Khusro during the negotiations of 561–2, appeals to some of the same considerations, e.g. the sufferings of the population in wartime, *Men. Prot. frg.* 6.1.48–69.

4.25 τὸ γὰρ θεῖον κρεῖσσον ἢ ἐξαπατᾶσθαι πέφυκε πρὸς πάντων ἀνθρώπων, 'For God is too powerful to be deceived by any man.' Dahn 1865, 182, plausibly finds here an allusion to Galatians 6:7, albeit formulated quite differently, perhaps a sign of Justinian's hand, cf. Dahn 1865, 97 n.1.

4.26 ταῦτα ἐπεὶ ὁ Χοσρόης ἀπενεχθέντα εἶδεν, ἐν μὲν τῷ αὐτίκα οὔτε τι ἀπεκρίνατο οὔτε τὸν Ἀναστάσιον ἀπεπέμψατο, ἀλλ' αὐτοῦ μένειν ἠνάγκαζεν. 'When Khusro had read this, he made no reply for the present, nor did he send Anastasius back, but forced him to remain there.' Kavadh had similarly detained Rufinus when he invaded

Roman territory in 502, Ps.-Josh. 50, cf. Nechaeva 2014, 44. *Exc. de leg. Rom.* 94.27–31 quotes 4.14 and 4.26.

ii.5–13 Khusro's Invasion of 540

History

Even if Justinian was aware of the risk of an invasion already in early 540, he lacked the manpower to be able to fend off the substantial Persian army that crossed into Roman territory in March. The king rapidly followed the Euphrates upstream, bypassing strong fortifications, extorting funds from vulnerable cities, before capturing Antioch, the most important city of the whole diocese of Oriens, in June. While Khusro had had time to assemble a considerable force, particularly since the Hephthalite threat to the north-east had greatly diminished, the Roman army for the most part remained conspicuously absent. Although Khusro then opened negotiations with Justinian, he continued to overrun the East, penetrating to the Mediterranean at Seleucia, then withdrawing eastwards past Apamea, Chalcis, Batnae, Edessa, Carrhae and Constantia; most chose to offer substantial sums to the king to depart. Despite the continuing negotiations, he then made an unsuccessful attempt to seize Dara, before finally returning to Persian territory. The course of his invasion can be followed on fig. 25 and fig. 26. The sack of Antioch was a serious blow to Roman prestige, which was exploited by Khusro, who founded his own 'Better Antioch' near Ctesiphon for the deported population and endowed it with all the amenities of a Roman city.

Bibliography: Stein 1949, 85–92, Downey 1953, Rubin 1960, 323–35, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 103–8, Meier 2003a, 313–19, Börm 2006, Dignas and Winter 2007, 107–9, Burns 2011. Maksymiuk 2015, 68–71, offers a useful map and bibliography (for the whole war from 540 to 543), Börm (forthcoming). Koehn 2018, 40–1, 218–19, argues that significant Roman forces remained in the East despite the campaigns underway in the West, cf. Whitby 1995, 74.

Historiography

Procopius is by far the most detailed source on Khusro's invasion, even if he was not an eye-witness of the campaign: he was still serving in Italy at the time. He may, however, have obtained information in the East if he

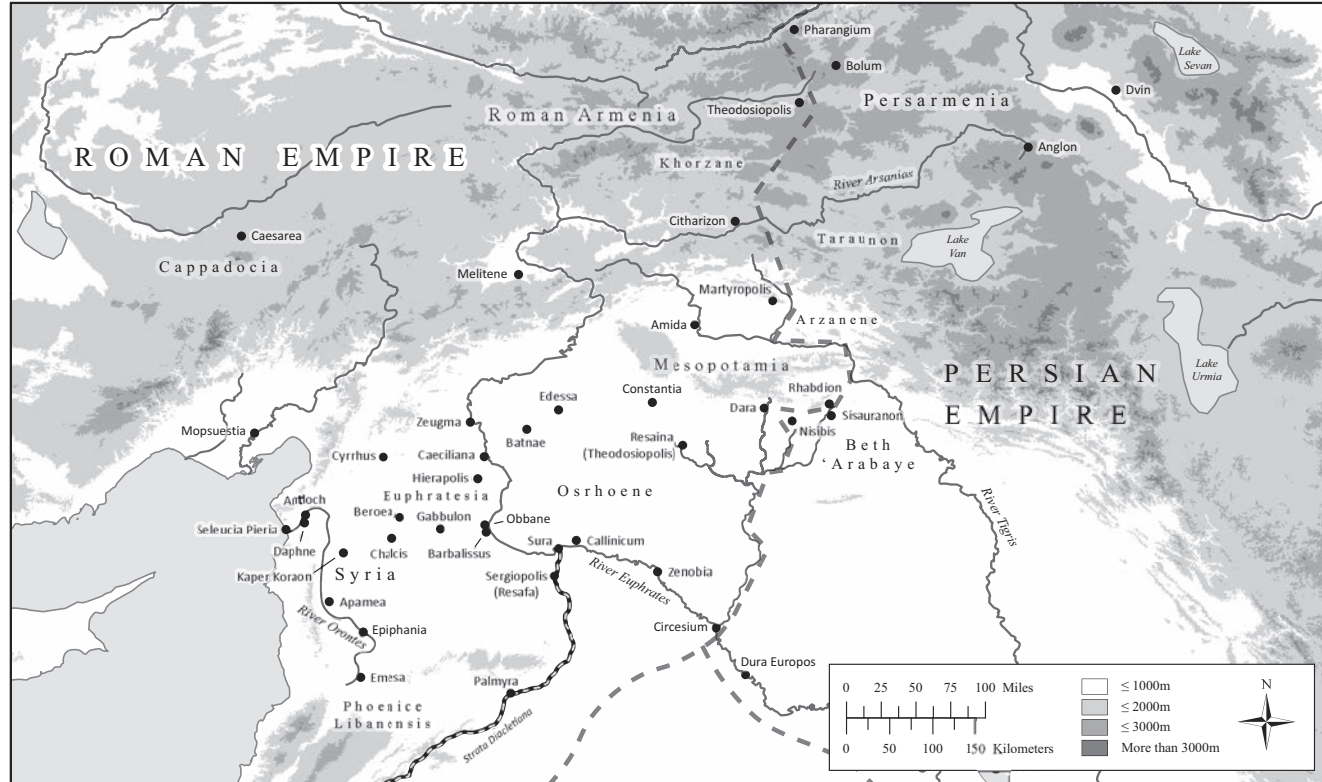


Figure 25 Khusro's Invasions of the Roman East

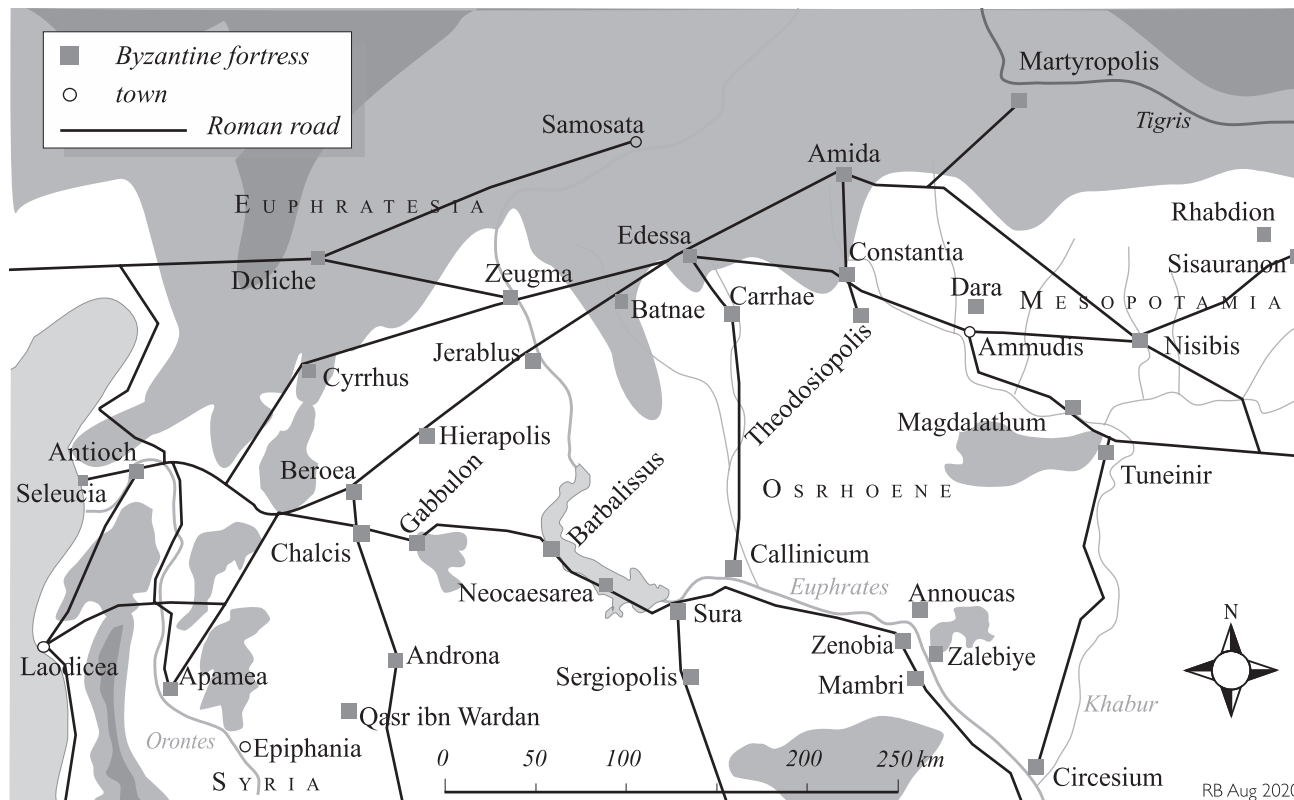


Figure 26 Khusrō's Invasion of 540

accompanied Belisarius there in 541–2. The narrative focuses on Khusro and his ruthless treatment of the Roman population, but the historian is critical of both the soldiery and the rambunctious populace (8.19, 8.6). For the first time in the narrative bishops emerge as significant players, begging the Persian king to spare their cities and offering considerable sums to persuade him. Roman commanders are either incompetent, such as Buzes, or equipped with inadequate resources to accomplish their mission, as in the case of Germanus at Antioch. The overall impression is of an ill-prepared empire, unable to defend itself – with the exception of the ill-disciplined circus factions – against a ruthless adversary. Khusro's failures at both Edessa and Dara as he left the Roman empire offer some grounds for hope while also hinting at some divine support for the wronged Romans.

Brief references to the campaign may be found in other sources, such as Evagr. *HE* iv.25–7, although he largely summarises Procopius, Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* iii.54, Mal. 18.87, *V. Sym. Styl. Iun.* 57 (a moralising account of the fall of Antioch), *Chr. Ede.* 105 (13/11), Jord. *Rom.* 376, Marc. *com. addit.* a.540.1–2, Ps.-Dion. ii, 69/64, cf. Tabari, 898/157–8, 959–60/253–5. *TIB* 15, 151 n.282, offers an extensive list. Many of these are translated in Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 103–8; most also concentrate on the capture of Antioch. On Perso-Arabic sources concerning the outbreak of the war, see ii.1–4g. Dinawari and Firdausi offer a little more information on the opening of the war, reporting, for instance, a visit to the fire temple of Ādur Gušnasp in Azerbaijan (on which see 24.1n) just before the campaign: see Jackson Bonner 2011, 50–2 (= idem 2012, 46–7).

Bibliography: Averil Cameron 1985, 163–6, Brodka 2004, 21–6, Börm 2006, 301–2, Kaldellis 2010b, 265–73, Whately 2016, 101–5, 109–11.

5.1 Ἐπειδὴ δὲ ὁ μὲν χειμὼν ἤδη ὑπέληγε, τρίτον δὲ καὶ δέκατον ἔτος ἐτελεύτα Ἰουστινιανῷ βασιλεῖ τὴν αὐτοκράτορα ἀρχὴν ἔχοντι, 'When the winter was already ending and the thirteenth year of the reign of the Emperor Justinian was coming to an end'. The thirteenth year of Justinian's reign extended from 1 April 539 to 30 March 540: he had been crowned co-emperor with Justin I on 1 April 527, cf. Szidat 2014, rejecting the alternative date of 4 April. See also Dölger 1949, 68. Justinian himself had decreed by *NovJ.* 47 (537) that his regnal year should henceforth be used for dating purposes; Procopius adopts the system throughout his works, cf. Croke 2007, 54 n.223, for examples, and see i.16.10n.

Procopius thus dates the invasion already to March 540, although *Chr. Ede.* 105 (13/11) places it in May, cf. Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 107 with 269 n.6; see also Kislinger and Stathakopoulos 1999, 79, Börm 2006, 301, *TIB* 15, 15. An earlier date is more likely, given that in June Khusro arrived at Antioch, cf. i.17.1n.

5.1 Χοσρόης ὁ Καβάδου ἐς γῆν τὴν Ῥωμαίων ἅμα ἦρι ἀρχομένῳ στρατῷ μεγάλῳ ἐσέβαλε, τὴν τε ἀπέραντον καλουμένην εἰρήνην λαμπρῶς ἔλυσεν, ‘Khusro, the son of Kavadh, at the beginning of spring, invaded Roman territory with a large army and conspicuously violated the so-called Endless Peace.’ Cf. i.16.1n for an invasion at the start of spring. As Rubin 1960, 324, notes, it is likely that al-Mundhir’s forces were also involved, just as they had been in 531, although Procopius makes no mention of them. On the Endless (or Eternal) Peace see i.22.3n. While nearly the whole of 5.1 is quoted by *Exc. de leg. Rom.*, 94.31–95.4, the last part quoted here is cited twice by the Suda, both at A3035 and at Λ100; see ii.3.54n for the proliferation of citations in the Suda from this part of the *Wars*. Braun 1885, 198, notes an echo of Thuc. ii.7.1 in the reference to the ‘conspicuous’ breaking of the peace.

5.1 ἦει δὲ οὐ κατὰ τὴν μέσσην τῶν ποταμῶν χώραν, ἀλλὰ τὸν Εὐφράτην ἐν δεξιᾷ ἔχων. ‘He did not advance through the country between the rivers, but with the Euphrates on his right.’ The country between the rivers refers to Mesopotamia, as the Greek indicates, referring here to the provinces of both Mesopotamia and Osrhoene. Al-Mundhir had recommended such a route to Kavadh, i.17.34, and it was along the south bank of the Euphrates that the Persian general Azarethes had withdrawn in 531, i.18.9–13. It would be used again to great effect by Adarmahan in 573: see Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 146–7. On communications along the south bank see Mouterde and Poidebard 1945, 129 with their general map. Key Fowden 1999, 69, notes that caravans preferred routes to the south of the river valley downstream from Barbalissus because of the valley’s narrowness and the risks of flooding along the river banks between November and June.

5.2 ἔστι δὲ τοῦ ποταμοῦ ἐπὶ θάτερα Ῥωμαίων φρούριον ἔσχατον, ὃ Κιρκήσιον ἐπικαλεῖται, ‘On the other side of the river is the furthestmost Roman fortress, which is called Circesium.’ The fort lies at the junction of the Khabur and Euphrates rivers, right on the frontier, at the site of the modern village of Buseira. On the earlier history of the site see den Boeft

et al. 1998, 82–3, discussing Ammianus’ mention of it at 23.5.2. Procopius describes Justinian’s extensive work on Circesium at *Aed.* ii.6.2–11 with some verbal overlaps with the present passage, e.g. to the triangle formed by the fortifications (5.3). It is likely therefore that these improvements had been made quite early in Justinian’s reign, so Whitby 1986a, 727, Geyer and Monchambert 2003, 278; cf. Lauffray 1983, 31, 35, Greatrex 1998 196 n.11, both unduly sceptical. The fortress had already been strengthened by Diocletian, *Amm. Marc.* 23.5.1–2, but evidently required further work by the sixth century. Saliou 2020a, 226, discusses the terms used for the fortress, noting how Procopius studiously avoids the term *kastron*. See further Dillemann 1962, 226 with fig.31, Ulbert 2000, 140–1, Geyer and Monchambert 2003, 278–9, Grotowski 2006, 134 n.182. For plans and a description of the site see Gaborit 2015, F26, 494–8.

5.4 διὸ δὴ ὁ Χοσρόης οὔτε φρουρίου ἐθέλων οὔτω δὴ ἐχυροῦ ἀποπειρᾶσθαι οὔτε διαβαίνειν ποταμὸν Εὐφράτην διανοούμενος, ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ Σύρους τε καὶ Κίλικας ἰέναι, οὐδὲν διαμελλήσας. ‘Accordingly Khusro, not wanting to attempt to take such a strong fortress, and not intending to cross the Euphrates, but to attack Syria and Cilicia, did not delay.’ Unlike Shapur II in 359, whose invasion was cut short by a lengthy siege of Amida, Khusro refused to be distracted by strongpoints that could offer stout resistance. The reference to Cilicia as well as Syria is puzzling (cf. 6.21), since Khusro made no attempt to seize any city in either Cilicia I or II; Procopius literally alludes to ‘Syrians and Cilicians’ (as in Dewing’s translation), but this is standard practice for referring to provinces, cf. Greatrex 2018b, 335 and n.34. From *Aed.* v.5.1 it appears that Procopius considered the boundary of Cilicia II to be very close to Antioch: see Honigmann 1923, 76 no.374. Roques 2011, 379 n.39, suggests that Procopius refers at *Aed.* v.5.1 to a general area, rather than the province, which could also be the case here.

5.4 τριῶν τε σχεδόν τι ὁδὸν ἡμερῶν εὐζώνῳ ἀνδρὶ παρὰ τοῦ Εὐφράτου τὴν ὄχθην ἀνύσας πόλει Ζηνοβία ἐπιτυγχάνει, ‘after a journey of about three days for an active man along the bank of the Euphrates he came upon the city of Zenobia’. The distance is only about 85 km as the crow flies, but Khusro was marching with a considerable army, even if it is unlikely to have numbered 90,000, as Tabari, 959/253, asserts, cf. Börm 2006, 321 n.70. See i.19.27n for this Herodotean method of calculating distances: one would expect three days’ journey normally to equate to about 128 km.

The city of Zenobia, modern Halabiyya, has been the focus of extensive archaeological work. See Lauffray 1983–91, Blétry and Bessac 2015, with the briefer assessments of Blétry 2014–15, eadem 2015, eadem 2017. Gaborit 2015, Eo7, 383–99, offers a useful summary. Procopius goes into considerable detail on the fortification work undertaken by Justinian there, *Aed.* ii.8.8–25, as Blétry 2015, 53–4, points out. Justinian's work is likely to have been carried out after Khusro's invasion: at *Aed.* ii.8.9–10 Procopius refers to the desertedness of the area before the repairs, which echoes Khusro's assessment as reported at 5.7. See Blétry 2015, 55–6, eadem and Bessac 2015, 29, 37, cf. Lauffray 1983, 35–6, 140–1. Whether the fortification of the site was due to Zenobia, as Procopius asserts, is uncertain: see Blétry and Bessac 2015, 452, for discussion.

5.5 ἦν δὲ ἡ Ζηνοβία Ὀδονάθου γυνή, τῶν ἐκείνη Σαρακηνῶν ἄρχοντας, οἱ Ῥωμαίοις ἐνσπονδοὶ ἐκ παλαιοῦ ἦσαν. 'Now Zenobia was the wife of Odenathus, the ruler of the Saracens in those parts, who were allies of Rome from of old.' Procopius offers the same summary at *Aed.* ii.8.8. At 5.6, however, Procopius displays his knowledge of how Odenathus had rescued the eastern empire at the time of Shapur I's invasions in the 260s, although he passes over how he had assumed control of the East himself before being assassinated in 267 or 268. His widow Zenobia pursued the same ambitions, ruling with their son Vaballathus, until they were decisively defeated by the Emperor Aurelian. For details see Millar 1993, 165–73, Hartmann 2008, Potter 2014, 255–68, summary in *ODLA*, Zenobia. Agath. iv.24.4 is less generous to Odenathus, emphasising his obscurity before his victories, cf. Averil Cameron 1969–70, 141.

5.7 ἐπειδὴ τὸ χωρίον οὔτε ἀξιόλογον ἔμαθεν εἶναι καὶ τὴν χώραν κατενόησεν ἀοίκητόν τε καὶ πάντων ἀγαθῶν ἔρημον οὔσαν, 'when he heard that the place was unremarkable and found that the land was uninhabited and without any natural advantages'. On the issue of Zenobia's fortifications see ii.5.4n. Procopius' emphasis on the barrenness of the region (cf. ii.1.6) is perhaps exaggerated: see Lauffray 1983, 45–57, arguing for some agricultural prosperity along the Euphrates valley, cf. Geyer and Monchambert 2003, 279–81 and Gaborit 2012, 38–42, who notes, however, 304–6, that fewer settlements and forts are attested along the south bank of the river here. As regards the city itself, Blétry 2017, 150, argues that its civilian population may have been underestimated. Kennedy and Riley 1990, 119 fig.66, shows how easy it is to bypass Zenobia.

5.8 Ὅδόν τε αὖθις τοσαύτην ἀνύσας ἀφίκετο ἐς πόλιν Σούρων, πρὸς τῷ Εὐφράτῃ ποταμῷ οὖσαν, ἣς δὴ ἀγχοτάτω γενόμενος ἔσται. 'After a journey of equal length again he came to the city of Sura, which is on the Euphrates, and stopped very near it.' On the city of Sura see i.18.14n, cf. Konrad 1999, 398–400. The distance from Zenobia to Sura is a little more than from Circesium to Zenobia, just under 100 km. Den Boeft et al. 1998, 82, put the distance from Callinicum (about 13 km east of Sura) to Circesium at 165 km and calculate that it would have taken the Emperor Julian about 5–8 days to march from the former to the latter, which is in line with Procopius' figures.

5.9 ἐνταῦθα δὲ τῷ ἵππῳ ξυνέβη, ἐφ' οὗ ὁ Χοσρόης ἐκάθητο, χρεμετίσαι τε καὶ τῷ ποδὶ τὸ ἔδαφος κρούειν, 'There the horse on which Khusro was sitting happened to neigh and stamp the ground.' Likewise Darius' horse neighed just before he took the throne of Persia, Hdt. iii.84–7, albeit perhaps by a ruse, cf. Ctesias, *Persica*, frg.13(17) with Dandamaev 1976, 166, Börm 2007, 193 n.3, Tuplin 2010, 143–4. As Lenfant notes in her introduction to Ctesias' work, lxxxi, hippomancy continued to be practised in Sasanian Persia, cf. Agath. iv.25.3–4. The magi, who interpreted this omen as indicating the imminent capture of the city (cf. i.7.19), normally accompanied the king on campaign, cf. i.3.18n with Börm 2007, 189, Petersen 2013, 325, on this case. Frendo 1997, 117–18 n.28, in a lengthy note on the Persian capture of Sura and Procopius' narrative, finds the prediction unlikely.

5.11 ἐτύγχανε δὲ τις ὄνομα μὲν Ἀρσάκης, Ἀρμένιος δὲ γένος, τῶν ἐνταῦθα στρατιωτῶν ἄρχων, 'There chanced to be a man called Arsaces, an Armenian by birth, in charge of the soldiers there.' Nothing further is known of this commander, who does not receive an entry in *PLRE* iii. The term ἄρχων στρατιωτῶν, *arkhōn stratiōtōn*, 'commander of soldiers', can refer to a *dux* (cf. Greatrex 2007c, 92–3), though this is unlikely to be the case here. See Petersen 2013, 271, for the heavy toll on defenders taken by missiles during sieges, drawing on Procopius' description of the siege of Petra, cf. ii.29.35.

5.13 ὄρνις τε φέροντας καὶ οἶνον καὶ καθαρούς ἄρτους, 'carrying fowl and wine and white loaves'. The (unnamed) bishop's attendants brought gifts to symbolise their surrender, cf. ii.13.14, where Baradotus brings to Kavadh wine, dried figs, honey and white loaves, while Joh. Eph. *HE* vi.6 (292.25) reports the presentation of an *aigra*, a 'mark of

honour’ to the Persian *marzban* from the inhabitants of Apamea in 573, cf. Petersen 2013, 513. The adjective καθαρός, *katharos*, is often translated as ‘pure’, but *LSJ*, 850, renders it rather as ‘white’ in the context of loaves of bread, cf. *BDAG*, 1001. Holcroft 1653, 39, translates the two words as ‘manchets’, i.e. (according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*’s definition) ‘wheaten bread of the finest quality’. See also Nechaeva 2014, 178, Fan Chiang 2015, 247; Kaldellis 2010b, 268, suggests that the three items represent the three parts of the Greek meal. Such symbolic gifts recall also the earth and water demanded by Darius from various states, cf. (e.g.) Hdt. vi.48.2. Kaldellis 2010b, 268, further argues that much of the vocabulary used by Procopius in this section, involving supplicating the Persian king, handing over a ransom (λύτρα, *lytra*), and even the wood (ξύλον, *xylon*, 5.19) used to block the gate, takes up terms relating to Christianity; he proposes that they are indicative of Procopius’ disapproving attitude towards Christianity as well of the defencelessness of the East. On the role of bishops as mediators for their city during these invasions see Garsoïan 1973–4, 121, Petersen 2013, 324, Nechaeva 2014, 99–100, cf. Kaldellis 2010b, 267–70.

5.13 ἐς δὲ τὸ ἔδαφος καθῆκεν αὐτόν, ‘Then he threw himself to the ground.’ The language and the gestures recall the self-abasing behaviour of the ambassador Rufinus in the lead-up to the conclusion of the Eternal Peace: see i.22.13n.

5.15 τὴν μέντοι ὀργὴν οὐκ ἐξήνεγκεν, ἀλλ’ ὑπὸ τῷ προσώπῳ ἀκριβῶς ἔκρυπεν, ‘But he did not reveal his anger, carefully hiding it by his expression.’ On the theme of Khusro’s anger, a leitmotif in Procopius’ portrayal of the king, see i.21–2g, cf. Börm 2007, 251. Only Procopius uses the expression ὑπὸ τῷ προσώπῳ, *hypo tō prosōpō*, ‘beneath his expression, countenance’ for hiding one’s feelings, cf. iii.3.16, describing Aetius’ concealment of his anger against Boniface. Despite Scheftlein 1894, 58, this is an unusual sense for the preposition ὑπό, *hypo*, with the dative, which usually means ‘below’ or ‘under the control of’, *LSJ*, 1874.

5.17 καὶ οἱ τῶν ἐν Πέρσῃς δοκίμων τινὰς παραπομπούς ἐσομένους δῆθεν τῷ λόγῳ ξυνέπεμψεν, ‘And (Khusro) sent with him (the bishop) some Persian notables, ostensibly as an escort.’ Cf. ii.1.13 with the note *ad loc.* for the formula δῆθεν τῷ λόγῳ, *dēthen tō logō*, ‘ostensibly’ as a means to cast doubt on what is described. The following two paragraphs report Khusro’s instructions to the escort in indirect

speech. Given that the narrative then describes the unfolding of the plan and that Procopius cannot have had access to the king's instructions, it may be inferred that he provides these details to reinforce his characterisation of a devious and treacherous ruler.

5.26 εὐθύς μὲν οὖν θυμῷ ὁ Χοσρόης ἐχόμενος τὰς τε οἰκίας ἐληίσατο καὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων πολλοὺς μὲν κτείνας, τοὺς δὲ λοιποὺς ἅπαντας ἐν ἀνδραπόδων ποιησάμενος λόγῳ, 'Khusro, carried away by fury, at once plundered the houses and killed many men, enslaving all the rest.' According to *Aed.* ii.9.1 the defenders held out for barely half an hour before Khusro captured the city. The king's anger is frequently so described, e.g. at i.22.9, 23.27, ii.17.11. See i.7.31, where Kavadh is likewise portrayed as enraged, with the note *ad loc.*, cf. i.21–2g. The idiom for the enslavement of the population is probably drawn from Hdt. iii.125.3, cf. Dion. Hal. 4.11.4, 6.20.5, Proc. i.7.32, iv.10.5 and elsewhere. See Fan Chiang 2015, 56–9, on the terminology in sixth-century sources.

5.26 πυρπολήσας τε ξύμπασαν τὴν πόλιν ἐς ἔδαφος καθεῖλεν, 'setting fire to the city and razing it to the ground'. As a result, considerable work was needed to restore the city, on which see *Aed.* ii.9.2. The rebuilt city enclosed a smaller area just west of the destroyed one. See Kennedy and Riley 1990, 116, Konrad 1999, 400 and cf. ii.5.8n. Fan Chiang 2015, 135–8, remains cautious as to the extent of the destruction.

Firdausi describes in more epic terms the capture of the city (called Schourab), vi, 209, cf. Jackson Bonner 2015c, 270. It is also mentioned in *Chr. Ede.* 105 (13/11) and Jord. *Rom.* 376, cf. Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 107. The expression for razing the city to the ground is first found at Thuc. iii.68.3 and is used extensively by Procopius, e.g. also at vi.21.39, cf. *Anecd.* 23.7, where he describes the damage wrought by Khusro (in contrast to Kavadh) in terms very similar to those used here. See Scheftlein 1894, 35.

5.27 οὕτω τε τὸν Ἀναστάσιον ἀπεπέμψατο, Ἰουστινιανῷ βασιλεῖ ἀπαγγέλλειν κελεύσας ὅπη ποτὲ γῆς Χοσρόην τὸν Καβάδου ἀπολιπὼν εἶη. 'Then he dismissed Anastasius, telling him to inform the Emperor Justinian where in the world he had left Khusro, the son of Kavadh.' On Anastasius see 4.15 and 4.26 above; he had been obliged to remain with Khusro during his invasion, cf. Börm 2007, 153. For the use of the aorist participle, ἀπολιπὼν, *apolipōn*, with εἰμί, *eimi*, 'I am' to give a pluperfect sense cf. Thuc. iv.54.3 with Smyth §1962. For the idiom ὅπη

ποτέ γῆς, *hopē pote gēs*, ‘where in the world’ cf. viii.18.8, also in indirect speech. The extract is cited by Suda, O490, where the adverb is given as ὅποι, *hopoi*, normally translated as ‘to where’, the same reading as in *Exc. de leg. Rom.* 95.6. See de Boor 1914–19, 8, on the Suda’s use of the Constantinian *Excerpta* here.

5.28 ἔρωτα ἐξάϊσιον αὐτῆς ἐρασθεῖς, ‘he loved her passionately’, or, more literally, ‘he loved her with an extraordinary love’. Such extreme passion is characteristic of the impulsive Persian king. See i.6.2n for the expression, cf. i.4.14–31n. Fan Chiang 2018, 236, rightly observes that his passion is not portrayed in a favourable light, *contra* Börm 2007, 253; the Roman woman, Euphemia, not otherwise known, serves to illustrate a further aspect of the king’s character. It is clear that Procopius finds it more likely that Khusro was motivated by greed or by passion than by a sense of humanity. Börm 2006, 308, suggests that Procopius’ assertion that the king was moved by love of money is part of his hostile portrait of the monarch. See also 9.9 for a further anecdote on the treatment of a mother and child during the capture of Sura.

5.29 πέμψας οὖν ἐς Σεργιούπολιν τὴν Ῥωμαίων κατήκοον, ἣ Σεργίου ἐπιφανοῦς ἀγίου ἐπώνυμός ἐστι, πόλεως τῆς ἀλούσης ἐξ καὶ εἴκοσι καὶ ἑκατὸν σταδίοις διέχουσα, κειμένη δὲ αὐτῆς πρὸς ἄνεμον νότον ἐν τῷ βαρβαρικῷ καλουμένῳ πεδίῳ, ‘He sent (a message) therefore to Sergiopolis, a city subject to Rome, which is called after the famous saint Sergius and is 126 stades from the captured city, lying to the south of it in the so-called Barbarian Plain.’ Procopius recounts how Justinian strengthened the city’s fortifications at *Aed.* ii.9.3–9, concluding that they were so effective as to repel Khusro’s assault in 542, on which see ii.20.1–16n. Sergius and Bacchus were soldiers that were martyred during the Great Persecution under Diocletian; Sergius in particular was widely venerated in the East. See Key Fowden 1999, 7–44, 101–29, Gussone and Sack 2017, 121–3.

The distance from Sura to Sergiopolis given by Procopius, 126 stades, equates to 18 Roman miles, which should convert to 26.5 km, cf. *ODLA*, Sergiopolis (25 km). See Appendix 2, p. 675. On the ‘barbarian plain’ see Key Fowden 1999, 65–7 and ii.1.6n.

5.29 Κάνδιδον τὸν ταύτῃ ἐπίσκοπον κεντηναρίοιν δυοῖν δισχιλίου τε καὶ μυρίου ὄντας ὠνεῖσθαι τοὺς αἰχμαλώτους ἐκέλευεν, ‘And (Khusro) ordered Candidus, the bishop there, to buy the prisoners, who

were twelve thousand strong, for two *centenaria*.’ The two *centenaria* demanded by Khusro add up to 200 (Roman) pounds of gold, i.e. 65.5 kg: see i.22.3n and cf. *TIB* 15, 151. Although the city was an important pilgrimage centre, it is possible that such a sum could not be raised at such short notice; yet at 20.5 below Candidus suggests to Khusro that he seize the treasures of the city to obtain the funds. See Key Fowden 1999, 133–4, cf. Whittow 1990, 17–18, on the wealth accumulated in churches. The poverty of at least one inhabitant (or visitor) is attested by an inscription: see Moreau 2010, 72 (cf. Karnapp 1976, 46), 75, on the indigent *paraphylax* (guardian). As Börm 2006, 307–8, cf. idem 2008a, argues, Khusro’s demands, both in this case and subsequently, are likely to have been motivated chiefly by political considerations, as a demonstration of his superiority, rather than by economic necessity.

Candidus was metropolitan of Sergiopolis: the city’s status had been raised in the fifth century, cf. e.g. Leppin 2011, 227. He is not attested outside Procopius’ work. On his role as bishop in ransoming captives see Rotman 2005, 771. The figure of 12,000 captives from Sura appears reasonable, especially when compared to that of 120,000 given at 4.6 above, but Fan Chiang 2015, 264–76, a general analysis of deportation numbers, shows that the city of Sura would have struggled to contain such a population and concludes that the number is inflated; Gaborit 2015, 302, notes that the city appears to have been densely inhabited, however. See Morony 2004, 173–4, for the deportations of Khusro during this campaign, cf. Trombley 1997, 176 and n.85, examining epigraphic traces in the region of the impact of these invasions.

5.31 Κάνδιδος δὲ κατὰ ταῦτα ἐποίει, ‘Candidus complied’, or more literally ‘Candidus acted accordingly’, swearing by the ‘most solemn oaths’ cf. i.25.28. He was therefore later obliged to beg Khusro for mercy when he proved unable to fulfil them. He was tortured and, when Khusro had failed to seize the wealth of the city, apparently deported to Persia. See 20.1–16n. Candidus pledged that he would resign as a ἱερεύς, *hiereus*, if he failed to settle his debt; here the word more probably means ‘bishop’ than ‘priest’, though either is possible. See i.7.30n.

5.33 ὧν ὀλίγοι μὲν τινες διεβίωσαν, ‘A few of them survived.’ Procopius emphasises the misery suffered by the population of Sura; Kavadh’s treatment of the captured Amidenes was notably more generous, i.7.34–5. Fan Chiang 2015, 61–8, suggests that Procopius dwells at length on the fall of the city and its impact as an emblematic case for

what happened subsequently in other cities, cf. Meier 2003a, 314 n.45, who finds the description here exaggerated. Where the prisoners were released is unclear; their continued presence with the Persian army would naturally have slowed its progress, which accounts for Khusrō's eagerness to accept a credit note from Candidus. See Börm 2006, 303, Fan Chiang 2015, 157–8.

6.1 καὶ τὰ μὲν ἄχρι ἐς ποταμὸν Εὐφράτην ἐς τὸ Βελισαρίου ἀπολιπὼν ὄνομα, 'He left, at least nominally, the region as far as the river Euphrates to Belisarius.' Belisarius had been reappointed to the post of *magister militum per Orientem* before he set off against the Vandals in 533 and it is likely that he had retained this post throughout the wars against them and the Goths. In 540 he was still occupied in Italy and thus Justinian needed to appoint someone else to organise the defence of the East. Rather than remove Belisarius from his command, he split it and put Buzes in command of the eastern section, while provisionally allowing him to take over the whole region, pending his colleague's return. Buzes thus became a second *magister militum per Orientem* following on from his command in Armenia, on which see ii.3.28n. See Stein 1949, 487, *PLRE* iii, Belisarius, 208, Koehn 2018a, 39. The division of the command is *RKOR* 1231.

The Greek word ὄνομα, *onoma*, has generally been omitted in translations, but Procopius does use it to distinguish the reality from the appearance of something, cf. e.g. *Aed.* ii.9.18, *Wars* i.10.18, viii.15.7, 17.

6.2 διὸ δὴ ὁ Βούζης ἅπαντα τὸν στρατὸν ἐπόμενον ἔχων τὰ μὲν πρῶτα ἐπὶ τῆς Ἱεραπόλεως ἔμενεν, 'And so Buzes with all his army at first remained at Hierapolis.' Hierapolis is known in Syriac sources as Mabbog, in Greek sources sometimes as Bambyce, and had been famous for its cult of Atargatis. See H. Drijvers 1989, 27–8, Millar 1993, 244–7. The city, some 25 km west of the Euphrates, had long been a mustering point for Roman armies, being situated on important east–west axes. See Goossens 1943, 149–53, 168–70, Dillemann 1962, 148 fig.17, 178–80, H. Drijvers 1989, 28, Millar 1993, 242–3. Celer arrived there in September 503 to deal with Kavadh's invasion, Ps.-Josh. 65, with Greatrex 1998, 108–9. Hierapolis is also the city where an inscription attests to the joy felt at the conclusion of the Eternal Peace in 532, see i.21–2h, cf. Tardieu 1990, 153–60.

The use of the preposition ἐπὶ, *epi*, with the genitive of a city in which one is located is not found in classical Greek, cf. *LSJ*, 621, I.1; it could,

however, mean ‘near’ rather than ‘at’, which is found in earlier authors. Schefflein 1894, 53, fails to discuss this.

ii.6.3–6 Buzes’ Speech

Buzes’ words, as Procopius notes at 6.7, were eminently sensible: he lacked sufficient forces to meet the Persian army in a direct confrontation. He underlines the contrast between the two forces and the consequences this implies for his tactics. He expresses himself by carefully drawn contrasts, concluding with a lengthy sentence that sets out why his proposed solution will bear fruit; see Taragna 2000, 86 n.50, who highlights the antithetical rhetoric in this passage. Like many such military speeches, this one starts with general considerations, cf. i.24.26n. There are echoes here of al-Mundhir’s advice to Kavadh at i.17.32–3, as Taragna 2000, 136 and n.35, points out, cf. i.17.32n. Rubin, *PvK*, 383, argues that the speech is ironic, given that Buzes failed to follow through on any aspects of his plan. Belisarius gives comparable speeches on tactics once he arrives at the front, e.g. at 19.6–14, but, unlike Buzes, he follows up his words with his actions. The tactics proposed, splitting Roman forces in order to render a siege more difficult, recall those successfully adopted by Sittas at Satala in 530, on which see i.15.10–13 and cf. Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 268. It is possible that the plan outlined was a smokescreen, calculated to confuse the Persians and thus buy the Romans time, so Rubin 1960, 326; Buzes resurfaces only at 13.6 below at Edessa. As Downey 1953, 344, points out, the general cannot bear responsibility for the lack of forces at his disposal.

It is significant that Buzes’ address is to the leading inhabitants of Hierapolis rather than to his soldiers or commanders. Already in the previous chapter the inhabitants of Sura are mentioned several times, a tendency to be observed throughout the events of 540, as the cities of the East struggled to cope with Khusro’s invasion. See Fan Chiang 2015, 19–21, noting how the civilian population was thus caught up in the hostilities and suffered the consequences.

6.3 ἢ ἐκ τοῦ ἐμφανοῦς ἀντιτασσομένοις ἐς κίνδυνόν τινα προὔπτον ἶέναι, ‘than to take an open stand against them and enter into a danger that they can foresee’. As García Romero, 191 n.43, remarks, the expression ἐς κίνδυνον προὔπτον, *es kindynon proupton*, ‘into a foreseeable danger’, goes back to Thuc. v.99, cf. Arrian, *Indica* 20.3. Buzes’ prudent principles of not engaging a numerically superior enemy reflect the norms of sixth-century warfare: see Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 76, with *Peri Strat.* 33.

6.5 ταύτη τε τῆς πολιορκίας μηκυνομένης οὐδὲ ἀρκέσειν τὸν περίβολον ταῖς τῶν πολεμίων ἐπιβουλαῖς οἶμαι, ὃν δὴ ἐπιμαχώτατον πολλαχόσε τετύχηκεν εἶναι, ‘And if the siege is prolonged in this way, I do not think that the city wall will be strong enough to resist enemy measures, for it is vulnerable in many places.’ Procopius confirms this assessment at 6.24 below, noting the large extent of the walls, difficult to defend. Justinian (doubtless subsequently) therefore reduced the walls’ extent, *Aed.* ii.9.12–13. See H. Drijvers 1989, 35, *TIB* 15, 1276. The measures earlier undertaken by Anastasius, including the building of an aqueduct, were evidently insufficient. See *Proc. Gaz. Paneg.* 18 with Chauvot 1986, 160–1, H. Drijvers 1989, 34.

6.8 καὶ ὅποι ποτὲ γῆς ἐτύγχανεν οὔτε τις τῶν ἐν Ἱεραπόλει Ῥωμαίων οὔτε ὁ τῶν πολεμίων στρατὸς μαθεῖν ἴσχυσε, ‘Where on earth he happened to have gone no Roman in Hierapolis nor the enemy army could discover.’ Cf. 5.27 above for the expression ‘where on earth’; the adverb here, ὅποι, *hopoi*, is different from that used there, indicating the place to which Buzes had fled.

6.9 Βασιλεὺς δὲ Ἰουστινιανὸς πυθόμενος τὴν Περσῶν ἔφοδον Γερμανὸν μὲν εὐθύς τὸν ἀνεψιὸν τὸν αὐτοῦ ξὺν θορύβῳ πολλῷ τριακοσίους ἐπομένους ἔχοντα ἔπεμψε, ‘But when the Emperor Justinian heard of the Persian advance, he sent forth his cousin Germanus at once in great confusion with three hundred companions.’ Germanus’ despatch is *RKOR* 1218. Germanus had already enjoyed a distinguished career, most recently in North Africa: see *PLRE* ii, Germanus 4, *MalKom ad* 18.87.2. On his age and relationship to Justinian see now Signes Codoñer 2017, 9 n.19. The three hundred men who accompanied him were presumably his *bucellarii*. Chekalova 2001, 409 n.39, underlines the sarcastic tone here of Procopius in his allusion to the confusion in which the troops set off. Masudi, *Prairies d’or*, vol.2, ch.24, p.198, refers to the presence of the emperor’s nephew in the city. Despite Justinian’s promise to him, no army was ever despatched from Constantinople, although it is possible that the 6000 troops that subsequently arrived from Phoenice Libanensis (8.2) were the promised reinforcements, cf. Downey 1961, 535 n.149.

6.10 ἔς τε Ἀντιόχειαν ὁ Γερμανὸς ἀφικόμενος περιῆλθε τὸν περίβολον ἅπαντα κύκλῳ, ‘When Germanus reached Antioch, he went all around the circuit walls in a circle.’ Germanus will have arrived in

April or May 540; the city fell in June. Plans of Antioch's walls may be found in Downey, 1961, pl.11, Whitby 1989, 550, Brands 2016, fig.2, and see fig. 27, p. 445.

6.10 τὰ τε γὰρ ἐν τῷ ὁμαλεῖ, 'the part on level ground'. Procopius appears to decline the neuter of the adjective ὁμός, *homalos*, in two ways. At i.15.11 and on a few other occasions he gives the dative case as ὁμαλῷ, *homalō*, which would be the standard form in classical Greek (cf. e.g. Thuc. v.65.4, *LSJ*, 1220). But here, as at ii.17.19, 26 and in numerous other instances, Haury's edition has this alternative dative form, rarely found before Procopius; in this case, one manuscript carries the variant form ὁμαλῶ, *homalō*, a sign of the scribal confusion that can arise. See Kallenberg 1916b, 524–5, who concludes that the form here given by Haury is the correct one.

6.10 ἐν δὲ τῇ ἄκρᾳ γενόμενος, ἣν δὲ Ὀροκασιάδα καλεῖν οἱ ταύτῃ ἄνθρωποι νενομίκασιν, ἐπιμαχώτατον κατενόησεν ὃν τὸ κατ' αὐτὴν τεῖχος. 'but when he came to the peak which the local inhabitants call Orocacias, he found that the wall there was very vulnerable'. Procopius explains in the following section that a high rock stood near the fortifications, from which attacks on the walls could easily be launched. Downey 1961, 549 n.196, proposed that Orocacias is likely to refer to the southern side of Mt Silpius, the mountain that looms over the city to the east, cf. *Aed.* ii.10.9; the name alludes originally to Mt Casius, the Jebel Aqra, some 33 km east of the city, but came to be applied to Mt Silpius. See Whitby 1989, 541–2, 547 n.8, Saliou 2010–11, 574–5, for a detailed discussion. Brands 2019, 831–3, argues that Procopius refers rather to the Parmenius massif north of Mt Silpius and the citadel, from where the Theodosian walls projected eastwards; they were later abandoned in Justinian's rebuilding of the city. He identifies the rock with a 406m high-point only 140m from the walls, which here reach a height of just 390m (above sea level). See fig. 27, p. 445, where it is indicated by a star. As Brands argues, there is no reason to doubt the existence of the rock, *contra* Downey 1961, 539–40, who proposes that the story was put out to excuse Germanus' inactivity: see Whitby 1989, 541, noting that other eastern cities also had wall circuits that displayed similar vulnerabilities, cf. Bayless 1978. Nor should Procopius' description be viewed merely as a *topos*, even if he mentions similar threatening elevations close to other cities, e.g. at *Aed.* ii.1.26–7 (a mound near Dara), iii.5.9 (Theodosiopolis), despite Croke 2017, 109.

6.13 ἀλλὰ τοῖς τῶν οἰκοδομιῶν ἀρχιτέκτοσι ποιητέα τούτων ἐδόκει οὐδέτερα εἶναι. ‘But the builders judged that neither of these alternatives should be undertaken.’ Germanus’ plans were sound but too ambitious: the rock could neither be cut off more securely from the wall nor joined to it. Justinian subsequently decided to incorporate it within the walls, *Aed.* ii.10.9–12.

6.16 ταῦτα καὶ Ἀντιοχεῦσιν ἐν νῶ ἔχουσι βουλὴν τε ὑπὲρ τούτων πεπονημένοις συμφωρώτατον ἔδοξεν εἶναι χρήματα προεμένοις Χοσρόῃ κίνδυνον τὸν παρόντα διαφυγεῖν. ‘The Antiochenes were of the same opinion, and after a council about it they decided that it would be best to escape their present danger by paying money to Khusro.’ It is perhaps in this context that Malalas’ description at 18.87 of Germanus buying up silver at a cheap rate should be understood. The Antiochenes may have envisaged offering a payment to the Persian king in silver, just as the Hierapolitans did (6.24 below), and so Germanus could have been acting to raise these funds. Given the imminent risk of a Persian attack, the conversion rate of silver to (the more portable) gold had no doubt dropped; the general could therefore take advantage of this in the interests of protecting the city. So Bayless 1978, rightly refuting the arguments of Downey 1961, 540, cf. idem 1953, 346–7, Rubin 1960, 509 n.1027. See also MalKom *ad loc.*

6.17 Μέγαν τοίνυν, τὸν Βεροίας ἐπίσκοπον, ‘Megas, the bishop of Beroea’. He is otherwise attested as one of those who signed a letter to Pope Agapetus in 536, *ACO* iii, p.150, and as leading an embassy to secure funds from Justinian in Constantinople probably in 551/2, cf. ii.7.11n. The bishop had probably come to Antioch to determine what to do: his city was likely to be the next target of Khusro’s army after Hierapolis, so Downey 1953, 341 n.4. The name Megas, ‘great’, is the Greek equivalent of the Latin Magnus. On the name see Gatier 2001, 183, cf. Feissel 1985, 472; it is found more often in Syria than elsewhere in this period. *Exc. de leg. Rom.* 95.10–98.31 quotes, with one brief omission, Procopius’ text from 6.17 to 7.36.

6.17 ὃς δὴ ἐνθένδε σταλὲς καταλαμβάνει τὸν Μήδων στρατὸν Ἱεραπόλεως οὐ μακρὰν ἄποθεν, ‘he set off and found the Persian army not far from Hierapolis’. Khusro, as Buzes had foreseen, proceeded from Sura first westwards, then north, rather as Azarethes’ forces had attempted in 531 before being intercepted near Gabbulon. Lake Gabbulon impeded a move directly westwards to Beroea, while the

Persians will also have wanted to ensure that they had not left a substantial force to their rear at Hierapolis. See Mouterde and Poidebard 1945, 129, on the roads here.

6.19 *πρέπειν γὰρ ἀνδρὶ βασιλεῖ πάντων ἥκιστα τοῖς ὑποχωροῦσι καὶ οὐδαμῇ ἐθέλουσιν ἀντιτάσσεσθαι ἐπεμβαίνειν τε καὶ βιάζεσθαι.* ‘He said it was unseemly above all for a man of royal blood to trample upon and use force against those who retired before him and had no desire to fight him.’ Megas’ remonstrations with Khusro recall, both in their tone and their admission of powerlessness, Justinian’s letter reported at 4.17–25, esp. 24 on kingly behaviour, cf. 26.32–3 below with Brodka 1998, 118–19, idem 2004, 121–3. In fact, as Börm 2006, 308–9 with n.32, points out, Khusro did tend to spare cities that surrendered to him, perhaps in order to demonstrate his clemency and to act in accordance with standards expected of a Sasanian king.

6.20 *ταῦτα ὁ Χοσρόης ἀκούσας λόγῳ ξυνετῷ τὸν τρόπον ῥυθμίζεσθαι ὑπὸ ἀμαθίας οὐδαμῶς ἴσχυσεν, ἀλλ’ ἔτι μᾶλλον τὴν διάνοιαν ἢ πρότερον ἤρθη.* ‘On hearing this Khusro could not, in his boorishness, control his conduct by intelligent reasoning, but rather was even more excited in his intentions than before.’ Procopius’ hostility to the Persian king is given full rein, cf. Rubin 1960, 327, Brodka 1998, 118, Huyse 2015, 202–4. As Börm 2007, 251 n.6, notes, Procopius’ accusation of boorishness or ignorance rings hollow, given how Khusro’s reign is associated with an impressive flourishing of learning in his kingdom, on which see (e.g.) Wiesehöfer 1996, 216–21, Dignas and Winter 2007, 263–5, Meier 2019, 1022, cf. Frendo 2004 on Agathias’ portrayal of the king with Greatrex 2014c, 168–9. On Procopius’ portrayal of Khusro more generally see i.21–2g.

6.21 *Σύρους τε οὖν ἠπειλήσε καταστρέψασθαι καὶ Κίλικας πάντας,* ‘He threatened that he would lay waste all Syria and Cilicia.’ On Khusro’s threats to Syria and Cilicia see ii.5.4n.

6.22 *καὶ στρατιωτῶν ἔμαθε φυλακτήριον διαρκῶς ἔχειν,* ‘and (he) heard that it had a considerable garrison of soldiers’. Procopius frequently alludes to a garrison in this way, cf. ii.13.14, v.22.16, vii.20.1; it is not found in earlier authors.

6.23 *ὁ δὲ Παῦλος οὗτος ἐτέθραπτό τε ἐν γῇ τῇ Ῥωμαίων καὶ εἰς γραμματιστοῦ παρὰ Ἀντιοχεῦσιν ἐφοίτησεν, ἐλέγετο δὲ καὶ Ῥωμαῖος γένος τὸ ἐξ ἀρχῆς εἶναι.* ‘This Paul had been reared in

Roman territory and went to school in Antioch; he was said to be a Roman by birth.’ On this interpreter see *PLRE* iii, Paulus 9, Greatrex 2000, 268–9: since he now lived in Persia, his Roman identity was a point of interest, as was his early education in Antioch. Boys would attend the classes of a *grammatistēs* between the ages of seven and twelve, cf. Marrou 1956, 142–9. On the use of interpreters in negotiations with the Persians see Lee 1993a, 51 and n.7, more generally Nechaeva 2014, 133–5. He continued to serve Khusro in this role in this campaign and in 543 at the siege of Edessa, on which see ii.26.14.

6.24 ἔπειτα δὲ καὶ τὴν γῆν ἀδῆωτον ἔχειν ἐθέλοντες, ‘and besides, they wished to keep their land unplundered’. Jones 1964, 465, notes that revenues from agriculture dwarfed those from trade, so that the citizens’ desire to protect their hinterland is understandable, cf. Frendo 1997, 118 n.42.

6.24 ὠμολόγησαν ἀργύρου σταθμὰ δισχίλια δώσειν, ‘So they agreed to pay 2000 measures of silver.’ See ii.6.5n regarding the defences of Hierapolis. The *stathmon* is an unspecified unit of weight, cf. *LSJ*, 1632, though it probably equates here to a pound. Although Downey 1953, 346, calculates a ratio of 1:6 for gold to silver in this period, Hendy 1985, 480–1, puts it rather at between 1:14.4 and 1:18, cf. Morrisson and Schaaf 2015, 15. On a ratio of 1:15, the sum equates to 133 pounds of gold. See also ii.6.16n: the conversion rate between silver and gold is relevant equally to Germanus’ actions at Antioch.

6.25 ἕως αὐτῷ ὁ Χοσρόης ὠμολόγησε δέκα τε χρυσοῦ κεντηνάρια λήψεσθαι καὶ πάσης ἀπαλλαγῆσεσθαι τῆς Ῥωμαίων ἀρχῆς, ‘until Khusro agreed that he would accept ten *centenaria* of gold and leave the entire Roman Empire’. This appears to have been a bluff by Khusro, since, upon Megas’ departure (7.1), he continued westwards. See Börm 2006, 303, who calculates the sum to equate to 325 kg of gold, cf. i.22.3n. Heather 2018, 217, equates the sum with £160 million (in 2017). Khusro later obtained much more generous terms, ii.10.24.

ii.7 The Fall of Beroea

Procopius continues his account of Khusro’s inexorable march westwards by narrating the fall of Beroea and the desperate efforts of its bishop Megas to save it, including a lightning trip to Antioch; he had already

been commissioned by the Antiochenes to dissuade the king from proceeding further. When Megas returned there, however, his efforts to raise the necessary funds were stymied by the arrival of emissaries from Justinian that forbade any payments to the Persian king. The ineptitude of the defenders is also highlighted by Procopius, who reports how they all sought refuge on the acropolis, despite the lack of supplies (7.12–13). Although Megas succeeds in preventing the massacre of the population, the desertion of a considerable number of soldiers to Khusro's army confirms the impression of low Roman morale and crumbling defences. On the siege of Beroea see Petersen 2013, 519–20; for a full conspectus of sources mentioning its fall see *TIB* 15, 668 n.12. On Megas' role see Kaldellis 2010b, 268–9 and cf. ii.5.13n.

7.2 Βέροια δὲ Ἀντιοχείας μὲν καὶ Ἱεραπόλεως μεταξύ κεῖται, δυοῖν δὲ ἡμερῶν ὁδῷ εὐζώνῳ ἀνδρὶ ἑκατέρας διέχει. 'Beroea lies between Antioch and Hierapolis, two days' journey for an active man from either place.' For this method of indicating distance see i.19.27n. The distance between Antioch and Hierapolis is approximately 165 km, which fits well with the 41 km a day that Procopius proposes for an active man (iii.1.17). From Antioch to Beroea is nearly 90 km, while from Beroea to Hierapolis it is close to 75 km. In 363 the Emperor Julian advanced from Antioch to Hierapolis via Beroea in (probably) six days: see Zos. iii.12.1, Julian, *ep.*98/58, 399b–401b, with den Boeft et al. 1998, xvi–xvii, 27. French 1993, 446, noting that the road from Antioch to Beroea is one of the best preserved in the Near East, argues, 451, that what survives probably dates to the sixth century.

Because the city of Beroea, today's Aleppo, has been continuously inhabited for thousands of years, little can be said about the state of its defences or resources at this point. On the various names of the city see *TIB* 15, 665; Sauvaget 1941, pl.53, offers a plan of the late Roman city. There are remains of a sixth-century cathedral, on which see Sauvaget 1941, 59, Burns 2017, 62–4. Julian describes his visit to the city in March 363 in *ep.*98/58, 399d. Procopius fails to mention it entirely in his *Aed.*, which, as Sauvaget 1941, 65 n.182 reasons, may be the result of a lacuna in our manuscripts or an oversight on his part. It is likely that Justinian was obliged to undertake repairs to the walls and the rest of the city in the wake of Khusro's destruction. A later Islamic source, Ibn ash-Shaddād, attributed repairs to the citadel walls in clay brick to Khusro, which might be an error for Justinian: see Sauvaget 1941, 64, Gaube and Wirth 1984, 165.

Manafis 2020, 84, suggests that the reason this short section on the situation of Beroea is omitted in the lengthy extract from this part of the work in *Exc. de leg. Rom.* (see ii.6.17n) is because it was cited in another part of the Constantinian corpus.

7.7 ἐγκειμένου τε σφίσι διὰ ταῦτα Χοσρόου, νυκτὸς ἐπιλαβούσης ἐς τὸ φρούριον ἅπαντες, ὃ ἐν τῇ ἀκροπόλει ἐστὶ, κατέφυγον ζύν τοῖς [ἄλλοις] στρατιώταις, οἱ δὴ ἐνταῦθα ἐπὶ φυλακῇ ἐτετάχατο, ‘Khusro pressed them for it (the payment), and when night fell, they all fled to the fortress which is on the acropolis, together with the soldiers who were garrisoned there.’ The population clustered on the citadel that still dominates the city, conscious of the weakness of the walls (7.6). See Petersen 2013, 305, for comparable withdrawals to more defensible citadels. It is noteworthy that no reference is made to a commander of the soldiers, unlike at Sura; morale among the garrison was evidently low, since later many were prepared to defect to Khusro (7.37). The soldiers may have been from the Legio IV Parthica, which by the end of the century had been moved from Circesium to Beroea, cf. Th. Sim. ii.6.9. Geyer and Monchambert 2003, 277, suggest that the unit had been transferred already in the fifth century.

7.11 θυμῷ τε πολλῷ ὁ βασιλεὺς ἤδη ἐχόμενος τὴν πόλιν ὀλίγου δέοντος ἐνέπρησε πᾶσαν, ‘Then the king, already in a great rage, burned nearly the entire city.’ On Khusro’s fury, a constant motif for Procopius, see ii.5.26n, cf. i.21–2g. Two inscriptions from Beroea dated to the fifteenth indiction refer to the reconstruction of public baths that had been burnt down, following an embassy of Bishop Megas to Constantinople. Yon and Gatier 2009, no.17, 86–7, suggest that the date is 551/2, around the time that Justinian undertook the rebuilding of Chalcis’ defences, on which see ii.12.1n; the destruction would thus have been that here described by Procopius. See further Gatier 2001, Gatier 2004–5, 155–6.

7.12 ταύτῃ τε τῇ σμικρολογίᾳ καταστρατηγηθέντες ἐς κίνδυνον ἦλθον, ‘By this thriftiness they were put at a disadvantage and came into danger.’ The meanness of the Beroeans, their σμικρολογία, *smikrologia*, cost them dear: they committed an elementary blunder in overstretching their resources by all assembling on the acropolis. Maur. *Strat.* x.3 (342) advises those expecting a siege to dismiss all idle mouths from the city in order to conserve resources; Petersen 2013, 337, compares the difficulties

of the defenders with those experienced by John, the nephew of Vitalian, at Ariminum in 538.

The city of Beroea had limited water resources, relying on canals and aqueducts from the waters of the Quwayq to the north. Later sources refer to a well deep underground on the northern side of the citadel. See Sauvaget 1941, 5–7, Gaube and Wirth 1984, 172–3, *TIB* 15, 738–40; Burns 2017, 66, offers a picture of cisterns beneath the citadel.

Suda Δ244 quotes the opening words of 7.13; de Boor 1914–19, 45–6, suggests that they were derived from one of the lost books of the Constantinian *Excerpta*.

7.14 Ὁ δὲ Μέγας εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν ἀφικόμενος ἀγγείλας τε ὅσα οἱ πρὸς Χοσρόην ξυνέκειτο, ἔργω ταῦτα ἐπιτελεῖν οὐδαμῇ ἔπειθεν, ‘When Megas reached Antioch and told them what he had agreed with Khusro, he could not by any means persuade them to fulfil their part of the deal.’ Megas consequently remained in the city for only one day before returning eastwards to meet Khusro at Beroea, cf. Downey 1953, 342 and n.7. Some scholars misrepresent Megas’ mission, however, portraying the sum of ten *centenaria* demanded by Khusro as the price for ransoming Antioch, e.g. Stein 1949, 488, Downey 1961, 537, no doubt basing themselves on ii.8.4. But Proc. ii.6.25 refers rather to the sum being destined to induce Khusro to leave Roman territory; it was not specifically for Antioch.

7.15 ἐτύγχανε γὰρ Ἰουστινιανὸς βασιλεὺς Ἰωάννην τε τὸν Ῥουφίνου καὶ Ἰουλιανὸν τὸν τῶν ἀπορρήτων γραμματέα πρέσβεις παρὰ Χοσρόην στείλας, ‘The Emperor Justinian had sent on an embassy to Khusro John, the son of Rufinus, and Julian, his private secretary.’ Their mission is *RKOR* 1222. See *PLRE* iii, Ioannes 7, Iulianus 8, on the two men, cf. Stein 1949, 488 n.3 on Julian. He had served as an envoy to southern Arabia in 531: see i.20.9n. He was the brother of Summus, on whom see ii.1.9n. John was a natural choice as an ambassador, since, as Procopius explains at i.11.24, Rufinus and his father, John’s grandfather, had enjoyed good relations with the Sasanian kings. See the note *ad loc.* The two subsequently negotiated Khusro’s withdrawal from Roman territory.

7.15 ἀσηκρήτις καλοῦσι τὸ ἀξίωμα τοῦτο Ῥωμαῖοι· σήκρητα γὰρ καλεῖν τὰ ἀπόρρητα νενομίκασιν. ‘The Romans call this office *a secretis* for they traditionally call secrets *secreta*.’ The *a secretis* were secretaries that

dealt with the business of the imperial *consistorium* (council), i.e. the emperor's highest officials. They drew their origins from the imperial *notarii* and are attested already in the mid fifth century; John the Lydian reports that he himself became an *a secretis* at the court of the praetorian prefect, *De Mag.* iii.27.5, although he seems unenthusiastic about their recent prominence, iii.10.3. See Schamp 2006, vol.2, ccxxxv–xlii, for a detailed discussion. At *Anecd.* 14.4 Procopius appears to complain that Justinian usurped the role of the *a secretis* by insisting on drafting his correspondence himself. The first part of this definition is cited by Suda, Γ418. *IGLS* 1809, an inscription of 547/8 from Ma'an, just east of Apamea, signals the role played by another *a secretis*, Theodore, in restoring a fort, cf. Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 243.

7.16 Ἰουλιανός τε, τῶν πρέσβων ἄτερος, διαρρήδην ἀπεῖπεν ἅπασι χρήματα μὴ δίδοναι τοῖς πολεμίοις, μηδὲ τὰς βασιλέως ὠνεῖσθαι πόλεις, 'Julian, one of the envoys, forbade them outright to give money to the enemy or to sell the emperor's cities.' Payments made to Khusro not only drained imperial resources but also represented a humiliation for Roman power; Börm 2006, esp. 318, rightly underlines this aspect of Khusro's demands for payments. See also Downey 1953, 342, idem 1961, 537. Megas' deal with Khusro, by which he agreed to hand over ten *centenaria* in exchange for his departure from Roman territory (6.25), was thus rendered impossible; Khusro had in any case already violated its terms. Rubin, *PvK*, 384, sees implicit criticism of Justinian in the explicit ban on ransoming cities, especially since the emperor failed to provide forces for their defence. The first part of this sentence is cited by Suda, A4346.

Justinian's measure, which probably led to the failure to ransom prisoners from Antioch subsequently (see 13.6), contrasts with the explicit permission given to bishops to ransom their flock, e.g. in *NovJ.* 7.8 (535), a law that was explicitly circulated to Antioch, as is made clear in the epilogue (conclusion) of the Novel. See also *C.J.* 1.2.21.2 (529), *NovJ.* 65 (538), 120.9 (544), the latter two concerning the Balkans, with Rotman 2005, 771, Rapp 2005, 228–32. Pre-emptive payments in order to buy off the Persians were obviously a separate issue, which was what Ephraem was trying to arrange.

7.16 ἀλλὰ καὶ τῷ Γερμανῷ διέβαλλε τὸν ἀρχιερέα Ἐφραίμιον, ἅτε τῷ Χοσρόῃ ἐνδοῦναι τὴν πόλιν ἐν σπουδῇ ἔχοντα, 'and he accused the chief priest Ephraem to Germanus of wanting to surrender the city to

Khusro'. On the term ἀρχιερεύς, *arkhiereus*, see ii.11.16n. The term ἱερεύς, *hiereus*, can be used both of pagan and Christian priests: see i.7.30n with Lampe, 239. Ephraem, originally from Amida, served as patriarch from 527 to his death in 545; earlier he had occupied the post of *comes Orientis* in Antioch. See *PLRE* ii, Ephraemius, PZT, 297 n.64. Julian's suspicions of Ephraem's willingness to buy off Khusro may have been inspired in part by his ransoming in 531 of prisoners taken by al-Mundhir, Mal. 18.59. Evagr. *HE* iv.25 implies that Ephraem had indeed hoped to ransom the city in this case too, cf. Downey 1961, 536–9, Whitby 2000a, 223 n.63. Begass 2018, 129, suggests that Ephraem's recent dealings with the Persians, when tracking down the anti-Chalcedonian bishop John of Tella (cf. Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 98), might have encouraged the accusations. See the next note.

7.17 Ἐφραίμιος δὲ, ὁ τῆς Ἀντιοχείας ἐπίσκοπος, δέσας τὴν Περσῶν ἔφοδον εἰς Κίλικας ἦλθεν. 'But Ephraem, the bishop of Antioch, was afraid of the Persian advance and went to Cilicia.' Procopius adds in the following section that he was followed by Germanus, cf. Jord. *Rom.* 376, no doubt for the reasons mentioned at 6.15–16. Downey 1953, 345, notes that the 6000 troops that arrived in Antioch from Phoenice Libanensis only days later must have been summoned by this point at the latest; he argues, 345–8, that Procopius is attempting to ensure that Germanus is not seen as abandoning the city. It is possible, on the other hand, that it was uncertain whether these reinforcements would arrive in time. The reference to Ephraem as 'bishop of Antioch', using the Christian term *episkopos*, clarifies the previous reference: at 7.16 Procopius had not specified of what city Ephraem was 'chief priest'.

7.19 Μέγας δὲ κατὰ τάχος εἰς Βέροϊαν ἦκων περιώδυνός τε τοῖς συμπεσοῦσι γενόμενος, 'Megas quickly came to Beroea and was very upset at what had happened.' From 7.25 below it is clear that Megas had spent seven days on his mission. Given what Procopius says about the distances between Hierapolis, Beroea and Antioch (7.2), it can be inferred that, following one day at Antioch, he spent two days returning to his see, so Downey 1953, 342. If he spent longer than one day in Antioch, he would indeed have had to travel very fast to reach Beroea in time. On the term περιώδυνος, *periōdynos*, 'very upset', see i.11.30n.

7.19 ἡτιᾶτο Χοσρόην εἰργάσθαι Βεροιαίους ἀνόσια ἔργα ὅτι δὴ αὐτὸν μὲν εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν ὥς ἐπὶ ταῖς σπονδαῖς στείλει, 'He accused

Khusro of treating the Beroeans disgracefully by sending him to Antioch on the pretext of making peace.’ Megas speaks directly to Khusro, perhaps exercising the *parrhēsia* (freedom of speech) that allowed holy men to upbraid rulers and officials, on which see *ODLA* s.v. The expression ἀνόσια ἔργα ἐργάζομαι, *anosia erga ergazomai*, ‘I treat disgracefully’ or, more literally, ‘I do unholy deeds’, may be found in Lys. *In Andocidem* 32 and is used extensively by Procopius, e.g. at v.7.17 (in a speech), cf. vi.14.27, *Anecd.* 17.26; at 10.5 below Khusro is described by Procopius as ‘most unholy’, cf. the note *ad loc.* The form στείλειε, *steileie*, ‘he sent’, is the third person singular of the aorist optative: Megas’ reproach is in indirect speech. The following verbs, however, are in the indicative, probably to make them more emphatic.

7.19 οὕτω τε τὴν πόλιν ἐμπρήσας ἐς τὸ ἔδαφος οὐ δέον καθεῖλε, ‘and then setting fire to the city and wantonly burning it to the ground’. As García Moreno 196, n.49, notes, the Greek οὐ δέον, *ou deon*, could mean either ‘wantonly, unnecessarily’ (cf. Brodka, 118, Veh, 251) or ‘unjustly’ (so Kaldellis, 87). The expression is picked up by Khusro in his retort at 7.22, where he complains of having needlessly lost soldiers. At 7.13 the idiom is used in the other sense, referring to the spring that should not have been drained by the animals of the Beroeans, cf. Suda Δ244, which quotes Procopius’ passage, with de Boor 1914–19, 45.

7.20 πρὸς ταῦτα ὁ Χοσρόης ἀπεκρίνατο ὧδε, ‘To this Khusro replied as follows’. The king’s brief reply is unsympathetic: he accepts no responsibility for his actions. Rather, he portrays himself as wronged and therefore obliged to besiege the citadel. His claim that Megas was late in meeting him (7.21) is clearly refuted by the bishop himself at 7.25.

7.23–34 Megas’ Speech to Khusro

Megas’ speech is an impassioned plea for Khusro to act justly in his treatment of the Beroeans, recalling Justinian’s letter at 4.17–25. Both highlight implicitly Roman impotence by insisting on issues of morality. The bishop focuses on the inability of the Beroeans to pay the sum demanded, which ought to trump all other considerations, he argues. They are worthy of pity because they are not responsible for their plight, cf. Aristot. *Rhet.* ii.8.2 (1385b) with Pazdernik 2020b, 432. As often, the speech begins with general considerations: see i.24.26n on this tendency, cf. Introduction, p. 11; on such diplomatic speeches generally i.14.1n. It is

worth noting the use of the perfect form of φύω, *phygō*, πέφυκεν, *pephyken*, ‘is naturally’ twice in the speech (7.23, 29); it is found almost exclusively in such formal addresses, as (e.g.) at i.14.3, ii.15.20, iii.15.25, often in the context of general pronouncements. There are parallels between Megas’ reproaches and those attributed to the Roman population of a city called Kalinius, said to have been taken by Khusrō after Sura but before Antioch, Firdausi, vi, 213–15; but in this case, the king is said to have been gracious in his treatment of the population.

7.23 ὁ Μέγας δὲ ἀμείβεται ὧδε, Ἐἰ μὲν, ὅτι βασιλεὺς ἀνθρώποις οἰκτροῖς τε καὶ ἀτιμοτάτοις ταῦτα ἐπικαλεῖς, σκοπήσειεν ἂν τις ..., ‘Megas replied as follows: if anyone reflected that you, a king, are making these charges against wretched and miserable men ...’ The manuscripts all put the verb ἐπικαλεῖς, *epikaleis*, in the third person, i.e. ἐπικαλεῖ, *epikalei*, which would make Megas’ intervention less direct: ‘If anyone reflected that a king is making these charges ...’ Hoeschel 1607, 56 (last line), made the emendation.

Procopius’ readers may have been struck by the juxtaposition in the text of someone called Megas, which means literally ‘great’ and the Persian king, *basileus* in Greek: the Achaemenid Persian king was commonly referred to by Greek sources (e.g. Hdt. viii.140β.4) as βασιλεὺς ὁ μέγας, *basileus ho megas*, ‘the great king’, cf. Wiesehöfer 1996, 29, Shayegan 2011, 247–56 (noting the title’s use also by the Parthian Arsacids). Procopius only once refers thus to the Sasanian king, at i.16.2, in a speech of Rufinus; at ii.16.9 the expression is actually applied (by Belisarius) to Justinian, cf. iv.11.3, v.8.16. See further Pazdernik 2017, 228–9.

Theodoridis 1998, xcv, recognised that Suda, O189, quotes this passage.

7.25 ἐγὼ μὲν γάρ, ἐπειδὴ ἅπερ Ἀντιοχεῦσιν ἐπήγγελλες, δηλώσω ἐστάλην, ἐβδομαῖός σοι ἐς ὄψιν ἦκων, ‘After I had been sent to tell the Antiochenes what you ordered, I arrived before you on the seventh day.’ See ii.7.2n and 7.14n on Megas’ journeys.

7.26 εἶτα ἐς τὸν περὶ ψυχῆς ἀγῶνα καθίστανται μόνον, ‘(they) now face only the struggle for their lives’. Cf. Eurip. *Ph.* 1330, Xen. *Mem.* iii.12.1 for the ἀγών περὶ ψυχῆς, *agōn peri psykḥēs*, ‘the struggle for life’.

7.27 τὸ γὰρ ἐκτιννύναι τι τῶν οὐ παρόντων ἀνθρώπων ἂν οὐδεμία μηχανὴ γένοιτο, ‘for there is no way by which a man can pay what he does not possess’. Megas insists on the indigence of the

Beroeans, as at 7.29. The attempt to extort funds from a city unable to pay them recalls the episode when Themistocles sought to raise funds from the citizens of Andros in 480 B.C., Hdt. viii.111.3: they wittily parried his demands by pointing out that their poverty outmatched his power. One of their gods, they claimed, was ἀμηχανίη, *amēkhaniē*, ‘want of resources’, cf. 7.32 below. Also relevant in this context is Hdt. vii.172.3, where the Thessalians declare οὐδαμὰ γὰρ ἄδυναστίης ἀνάγκη κρέσσων ἔφυ, ‘necessity was never stronger than inability’ (tr. A. Bowie): both the sentiment and the actual terms are found in Megas’ speech.

7.28 πάλαι δὲ τοῖς ἀνθρώποις εὖ τε καὶ καλῶς διώρισται τὰ τῶν πραγμάτων ὀνόματα· ἐν οἷς καὶ τόδε ἐστίν, ἀγνωμοσύνης κεχωρίσθαι ἀσθένειαν. ‘The names of qualities (lit. ‘things’) have long ago been well distinguished by men. Among them is the following: lack of strength is distinguished from lack of sense.’ Just such a distinction, couched in almost identical language, is made by the Gothic envoy Albis to Belisarius and the Roman Senate at v.20.8, in this case between foolhardiness and courage. Cristini 2019, 287–8, prefers to translate ἀγνωμοσύνη, *agnōmosynē*, as ‘ingratitude’ here, following Dewing–Kaldellis, although another possible meaning – which he favours in the context of vi.6.24, *ibid.* 290–1 – is ‘foolish pride’, which fits well in this speech.

7.30 ἔασον τοίνυν ἡμᾶς ἅπαντα, ὦ βασιλεῦ, κληρωσαμένους τὰ χεῖριστα τοῦτο γοῦν φέρεσθαι παραμύθιον, ‘We have been granted a most miserable lot, O King; allow us therefore to have this consolation at least.’ The word for consolation, παραμύθιον, *paramythion*, might be a reminiscence of Thuc. v.103.1, where the Athenian envoys remark on the dangers of hope as a comfort in the predicament of the Melians.

7.32 τὸ γὰρ ὑπερβάλλον ἀεὶ τῷ ἀμηχάνῳ τετίμηται, ‘for excess is always punished by confrontation with insuperable obstacles’. Justinian likewise, 4.25, warned of the consequences of acting unjustly, cf. the parable recounted by Peter the Patrician during the negotiations of 561, Men. Prot. frg.6.213–36. The punishment of excess is a *topos* in Greek literature and a theme of Herodotus’ work, e.g. at vii.10ε, cf. Versnel 2011, 179–87, Ellis 2015, both focusing on Hdt. i.30–3 (Solon and Croesus).

7.34 δεδακρυμένος τε παρὰ Χοσρόην αὐθις ἀφίκετο καὶ πρηνὴς κείμενος οὐδὲν μὲν Βεροιαίοις ἰσχυρίζετο ἀπολελεῖσθαι τῶν πάντων χρημάτων, ‘he went back to Khusro in tears and lay down on

his face, assuring him that Beroea had no money left whatever'. Megasthenes adopts a suppliant Christian pose, cf. e.g. Thdrt. *HE* v.18.19, where Theodosius I prostrates himself in church under pressure from Ambrose, with Lampe, 1131, and Kaldellis 2010b, 269. The last part of this phrase is cited by Suda, 1726. Rufinus had earlier adopted the same posture: see i.22.13n.

7.36 Βεροιαῖοι δὲ παρὰ τοσοῦτον κινδύνου ἐλθόντες, 'The Beroeans, who had come to such a point of danger'. The expression παρὰ τοσοῦτον κινδύνου, *para tosou-ton kindynou*, 'to such a point of danger', literally, 'to/beyond so much of danger' is Thucydidean, cf. e.g. iii.49.4, vii.2.5 with *LSJ*, s.v. παρὰ, C III.5.

7.37 οἱ δὲ πλεῖστοι ἐθελοῦσιοι παρὰ Χοσρόην αὐτόμολοι ἦλθον, ἐπικαλοῦντες ὅτι δὴ τὰς συντάξεις χρόνου μακροῦ σφίσι τὸ δημόσιον ὥφλε, 'but most of them (the soldiers) willingly deserted to Khusro, complaining that the treasury owed them their wages for a long period'. Desertions, often a consequence of unpaid wages, became common also in Italy, as Belisarius complains in a letter to Justinian, vii.12.6–9; Rubin, *PvK*, 384, rightly perceives criticism of imperial policy. There is a bitterness in tone here, as in *Wars* vii, cf. the Introduction, p. 4. The failure to pay wages to soldiers in the East is often associated with Proc. *Anecd.* 24.12–14, where he describes how Justinian cancelled arrears owed to the *limitanei* following the Eternal Peace, cf. e.g. Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 99, but Koehn 2018a, 45–7, 50–1, cautions against placing too much weight on this passage. Wages had also not been paid to the soldiers in North Africa, leading to Stotzas' revolt in 536, Proc. iv.15.55, cf. Dahn 1865, 294. On the issue of desertions at this time generally see Thompson 1982, 98–100, Ravegnani 1988, 108–9, Lee 2007, 72, Petersen 2013, 352. Kaegi 1981, 65–6, associates the soldiers' dissatisfaction with the recent revolt at Dara, on which see i.26n. The last part of the sentence is cited by Suda, Σ1623 (476.8–9).

ii.8–10 The Fall of Antioch and its Aftermath

Procopius slows the pace of his narration markedly to recount the fall of the most important city of the Roman East. As he recognises (10.1–5), the event required explanation, even if it remained hard to comprehend. From his earlier narrative it is clear that the city was vulnerable; unsurprisingly, Khusro takes advantage of the rock dangerously close to the fortifications

on the mountains east of the city (6.10). Procopius' account is vivid and circumstantial, noting how the Persians appeared to hesitate after they had scaled the outer walls (8.20) and describing the brazen courage of the circus partisans. Cf. Rubin, *PvK*, 384–5, a detailed analysis, emphasising the care with which Procopius has constructed his account, Averil Cameron 1985, 163, suggesting use of local sources. As Procopius admits himself (10.4–5), it was hard to understand how God could have allowed the city to fall, above all to a king as unscrupulous as Khusro; the emphasis placed on the king's actions, as well as the speeches delivered by him and to him, help to deflect attention from the inadequate Roman defences. Procopius' emphasis on the undisciplined taunting of the king by the partisans (8.6) may also be seen as an attempt to provide a sort of explanation for the city's fall, as in the case of Amida in 502–3 (i.7.17–18), cf. Whately 2016, 102–3. *V. Sym. Styl. Iun.* 57 similarly ascribes the city's fall to the impiety of its inhabitants, cf. Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 104–5, for a translation. Peter the Patrician, during negotiations with the Persians in 561, likewise portrayed the event as a divine punishment, as *Men. Prot.* fig. 6.1.37–40 reports. See also Averil Cameron 1985, 153, 163–5.

Although Antioch had grown considerably in the fourth century, leading to an extension to the south in the early fifth, the city suffered a series of earthquakes from the mid fifth century onwards; that of 526 was particularly devastating. See fig. 27. The city had even taken a new name, Theoupolis, 'city of God', to ensure divine protection. It is worth emphasising that Procopius makes no mention of these events, here or in his detailed account of the rebuilding of the city after 540 at *Aed.* ii.10, though he alludes to them briefly in a catalogue of natural disasters at *Anecd.* 18.41, and see 14.6 below on the earthquake of 526. John the Lydian, *De Mag.* iii.54.4–5, on the other hand, emphasises the resources poured into Antioch after the earthquakes and how the city was only just recovering at the time of Khusro's invasion. It is likely therefore that the Persians captured a city that lay at least partly still in ruins and whose population had seriously diminished: Malalas (17.16) gives a figure of 250,000 deaths for the earthquake of 526, cf. *Proc.* ii.14.6 (who gives a figure of 300,000). See Downey 1961, 519–30, Foss 1997, 190–1, Vryonis 2014, 814–16, Brands 2016, 30–8. Saliou 2019, 199–200, offers a summary of the natural disasters that struck the city from 458 to 588.

See ii.5–13g on parallel accounts of the city's fall. *Mal.* 18.87 dates the event to June 540, cf. *MalKom ad loc.* *Joh. Lyd. De Mag.* iii.54 alludes to the poor state of the city walls at the time of Khusro's attack. See also Chaumont 1987c, 123–4, Petersen 2013, 520–1, Whately 2016, 102–4.

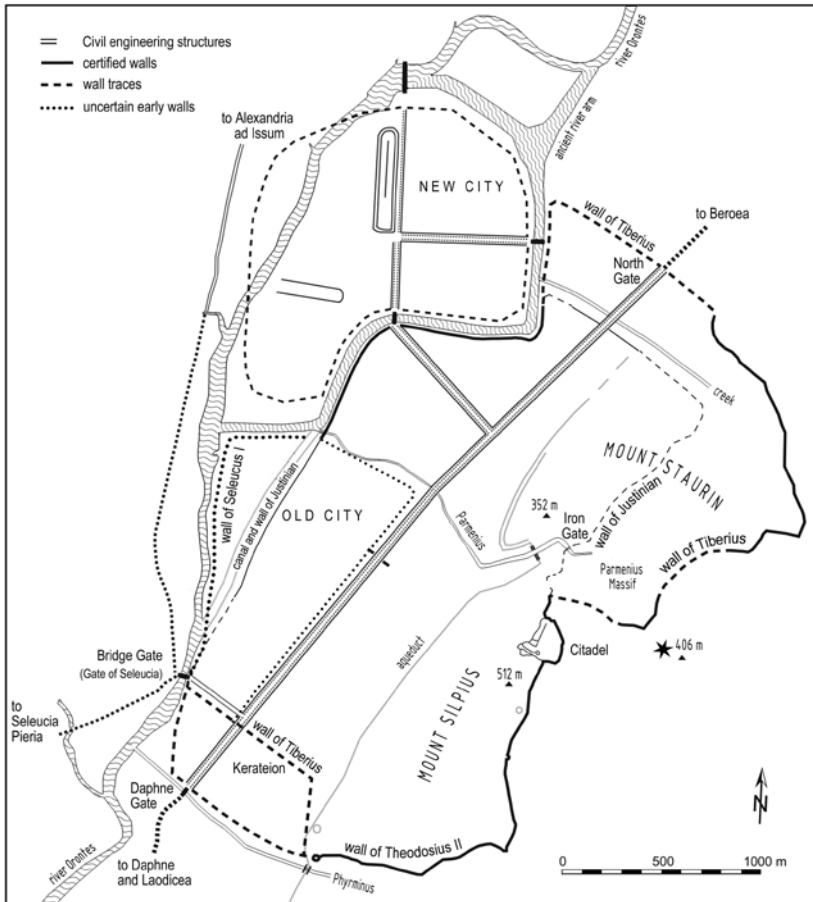


Figure 27 Antioch

8.2 εἰ μὴ μεταξὺ ἦκοντες οἱ τῶν ἐν Λιβάνῳ στρατιωτῶν ἄρχοντες, Θεόκτιστος τε καὶ Μολάτζης, ξὺν ἑξακισχιλίοις ἀνδράσιν, ‘had not the commanders of the troops in Lebanon arrived in the meantime – Theoctistus and Molatzes – with 6000 men’. The two commanders came from Phoenice Libanensis, i.e. from the steppe lands well to the south-east, perhaps from Emesa and its environs, a distance of some 180 km, but more likely from further afield, Damascus (300 km) and/or Palmyra (270 km). So *PLRE* iii, Molatzes, Theoctistus 2, cf. Greatrex 2007c, 95, on *duces* at this time; the Greek term στρατιωτῶν ἄρχοντες, *stratiōtōn arkhontes*, ‘commanders of troops’, is a non-technical way of designating

this post, cf. Greatrex 2007c, 92. Clearly, as Downey 1953, 345, reasons, they must have been summoned at least several days earlier, cf. ii.7.17n; it is likely that Buzes had ordered their transfer, so e.g. Veh, 489. Their arrival ought therefore to have been anticipated by some in the city, but the authorities may have been willing to encourage the departure of some citizens to reduce the demand on supplies left for the defenders (cf. 7.13). The troop numbers given are plausible and are among the rare precise figures Procopius gives in this campaign. Treadgold 1995, 51, table 1, calculates a paper strength of 14,000 for the troops stationed in Phoenice Libanensis, a figure that doubtless had been allowed to diminish during the years of peace.

8.4 Χοσρόης τε Παῦλον παρὰ τὸν περίβολον στείλας τοὺς Ἀντιοχέας χρήματα ἤτει, ‘Khusro sent Paul up to the wall and demanded money from the Antiochenes.’ On Paul see ii.6.23n. *Exc. de legat. Rom.*, 98.32–99.8, quotes sections 4 to 8. On the non-Attic use of παρὰ, *para*, and the accusative, meaning ‘up to’ see Scheftlein 1893, 48 and cf. 8.35 and 20.10.

8.5 καὶ τότε μὲν ἦκοντες παρὰ τὸν Χοσρόην οἱ πρέσβεις, ‘Then the ambassadors came to Khusro’, i.e. Julian and John, on whom see ii.7.15n.

8.6 τῇ δὲ ἐπιούσῃ ἡμέρᾳ τῶν Ἀντιοχέων ὁ δῆμος (εἰσὶ γὰρ οὐ κατεσπουδασμένοι, ἀλλὰ γελοίοις τε καὶ ἀταξίᾳ ἱκανῶς ἔχονται) πολλὰ ἐς τὸν Χοσρόην ὕβριζόν τε ἀπὸ τῶν ἐπάλξεων καὶ ζὺν γέλῳτι ἀκόσμῳ ἐτώθαζον. ‘On the next day the Antiochene populace (who are not serious-minded, but are unduly devoted to jokes and unruliness) insulted Khusro from the battlements and jeered at him with inappropriate laughter.’ On the term δῆμος, *dēmos*, for the ‘populace’ or ‘factions’ see i.24.2n. Although Procopius reports their fearless resistance to the Persians subsequently (8.28–9), he in general disapproves of their violence and unruliness, as noted at i.24.2–6n, cf. ii.11.8n. The frivolity of the Antiochene population was well known, incurring the wrath of the Emperor Julian in 363, for instance (cf. Athanassiadi 1981, 212), and that of the Patriarch Severus in the early sixth century, on which see Alpi 2004, 530–4, although De Giorgi 2016, 165, cautions against such labels. See also i.17.37n. Destunis 1880, 60 n.6, draws a parallel with Herodian iii.1.3, who reports the unwise alacrity with which the *dēmotai* (the people) took up the cause of Niger

at Antioch. See also ii.8–10n: *V. Sym. Styl. Iun.* 57 likewise condemns the conduct of the Antiochenes. The term κατεσπουδασμένοι, *katespoudasmenoi*, ‘serious-minded’ recalls Herodotus’ description of Amasis, pharaoh of Egypt, at ii.174.1, where he too is characterised as frivolous before ascending the throne, cf. García Romero, 199 n.51. The same verb is used at *Anecd.* 27.2 to indicate Justinian’s lack of concern for the populace (or factions).

Just as Khusro is gripped or possessed by anger (e.g. i.23.27), so the partisans are excessively given over to laughter and unruliness: the adverb ἱκανῶς, *hikanōs*, while usually meaning ‘sufficiently, quite’ can also have the sense ‘excessively’, cf. *LSJ* 825, III.b, with *Proc.* vi.30.20. The mockery of the king recalls the indecent actions of the defenders of Amida in 502–3, on which see i.7.17–18n with Whately 2016, 102–3. Excessive laughter was generally frowned on, as García Romero, 199 n.52, observes, citing (e.g.) *Isocr. Or.* I.15.

The last part of the sentence is quoted by *Suda* E3331.

8.8 ταύτη γὰρ, ὥς μοι ἔμπροσθεν ἐρρήθη, ἐπιμαχώτατος ὁ περίβολος ἦν. ‘For here, as I said before, the wall was at its most vulnerable.’ See ii.6.10n on this assessment. Khusro may have perceived the weakness himself, but he may also have been aware that it was from this side that the city had been captured in the mid third century by Shapur I, on which see Downey 1961, 252–9, Hartmann 2006, 109, Brands 2019, 834–5. That the Persian capture in 540 occurred in the heights above the city is perhaps confirmed by Nicephorus Uranus’ version of the *Life of Symeon the Stylite the Younger*, *AASS Maii*, vol.5 (24 May), ch.63, 331A which, as van den Ven 1970, 63 n.5, notes, may be based on local traditions (rather than derived from Procopius).

8.9 ἐνταῦθα Ῥωμαῖοι (στενοτάτη γὰρ ἡ οἰκοδομία ἐτύγγανεν οὕσα, ἐφ’ ἧς ἰστάμενοι πολεμεῖν ἔμελλον) ἐπενόησαν τάδε. ‘Here the Romans devised this plan, for the structure on which they would be standing to fight was very narrow.’ See Brands 2019, 835–6, on the difficulties in defending the wall on the Parmenius massif. As he suggests, the walls may have been in poor condition, which would explain the last-minute measures Procopius here describes; moreover, as he observes, the terrain here is steep and makes manoeuvring difficult. The ‘structure’ to which Procopius refers, οἰκοδομία, *oikodomia*, must refer to the ramparts between the towers, so rightly Brands 2019, 836 n.40.

8.10 οἱ μὲν οὖν Πέρσαι ἰσχυρότατα ἐγκείμενοι πανταχόθεν τὰ τοξεύματα συχνὰ ἔπεμπον, ἄλλως τε καὶ κατὰ τὴν τῆς ἄκρας ὑπερβολήν. ‘So the Persians pressed hard from all sides, despatching thick volleys of arrows especially down from the heights of the hill.’ Procopius generally stresses the rapid fire-rate of the Persians, cf. i.14.35n and i.18.32n. The translation of the last part of the sentence is uncertain. We have followed Veh, 257, cf. Craveri, 112, in interpreting the text as referring to Persians firing down from the heights: as Brands 2019, 835, shows, they were able to take advantage of occupying a hilltop overlooking the city walls. Dewing’s translation, retained by Kaldellis, has the Persians firing ‘along the crest of the hill’, which is hard to reconcile with the topography. Nic. Chon. 78.63 (iii.3.7) employs similar phrasing for those occupying the heights (of Corcyra). Another possibility would be ‘down along the line of the pass’, i.e. the gully of the Parmenius, which crosses the walls, cf. *LSJ*, s.v. κατὰ, B.I.1 and ὑπερβολή, II.2, for these meanings.

8.14 νῦν δὲ (καὶ γὰρ ἔδει Ἀντιοχέας τούτῳ τῷ Μήδων στρατῷ ἀπολέσθαι) οὐδενὶ τοῦτο ἐς ἔννοιαν ἤλθε. ‘But as it was (for the Antiochenes were fated to be destroyed by this Persian army) no one thought of this.’ Rubin, *PvK*, 384, suggests that the idea of garrisoning the dangerous peak may have emanated from Belisarius, cf. Brands 2019, 835 n.38. Whether such a plan would have worked may be doubted, given the difficulties of supplying the forces sent out to the summit, cf. Downey 1961, 543 n.176, who is also sceptical. As Braun 1894, 41, notes, Procopius echoes Hdt. v.33.2 with his reference to the fate of the Antiochenes, cf. i.24.31n, where Procopius refers to Hypatius’ apparently inevitable doom. Dahn 1865, 232, argues that fate is here invoked for the blind chance that meant that the Romans failed to take the measures necessary for the city’s defence: it could easily have not been captured, cf. the case of Petra at 17.16. See also Evans 1971, 85, and García Romero, 201 n.55. Averil Cameron 1985, 145, 153, suggests that the attribution of Antioch’s fall to fate absolved Procopius of the need to examine more closely the reasons why it fell, which could have embarrassed the authorities.

8.15 τῶν μὲν οὖν Περσῶν, ἅτε Χοσρόου παρόντος σφίσι καὶ κραυγῇ ἐγκελευομένου μεγάλῃ, ‘So the Persians, inspired by the presence of Khusro, who was shouting loud encouragements to them’. Cf. Kavadh’s intervention at the siege of Amida in January 503, i.7.28n, where other parallels are noted, with Whitby 1994, 240, Börm 2007, 94.

8.17 Βούζην αὐτοῖς ἐπιθρυλοῦντες ξὺν στρατῷ ἤκειν, ‘shouting that Buzes had arrived with his army’. Procopius describes the unceremonious retreat of the cavalry from Phoenice Libanensis in harsh terms and implies that their claim about Buzes’ arrival was specious, cf. iv.21.2 for the verb ἐπιθρυλέω, *epithryleō*, ‘I proclaim noisily’, being used in a similar context. It is possible, however, that Buzes was hoping to relieve the city by mustering an army not far away, as he had proposed to do for Hierapolis (6.6). As Veh, 489, notes, Procopius prefers to cast Buzes, a rival of Belisarius, in a bad light; he is also correct, 490, to point out that cavalry forces would have been ineffective within city walls.

8.20 ἀλλὰ διασκοπούμενοις τε καὶ ἀπορουμένοις ἐώκεσαν, ἐμοὶ μὲν δοκεῖ, προλοχίζεσθαι τὰς δυσχωρίας ἐνέδραις τισὶ τῶν πολεμίων ὑποτοπάζοντες. ‘They seemed to be looking around, not knowing what to do. I suspect that they thought that the rough ground was full of ambushes laid by the enemy.’ On Procopius’ own reasoning here, see ii.8–10n: it must be on the basis of others’ descriptions, as has been noted, since he was still in Italy at this time, cf. p. 2. For the terminology on planting ambushes cf. Thuc. iii.112.6 and Jos. *A.J.* 5.247. The steep terrain leading down from the Parmenius massif, towards where the two streams of the river merge, is indeed well suited to such ambushes. Cf. *Aed.* ii.10.10–13 with Brands 2019, 836 and fig.3.

8.23 ἔδεισε μή τινι ἀνάγκῃ ἐκ τῆς ὑπαγωγῆς ἀναστρέψαντες πράγματα σφίσι παράσχωνται, ‘he was afraid that they might for some reason have to turn back from their flight, and make trouble’. Cf. i.14.53 for a very similar formulation under comparable circumstances: Belisarius was reluctant to pursue the fleeing Persians after his victory at Dara, fearing that, if pushed too hard, his adversaries would rally and rout his forces. Maur. *Strat.* viii.1.25 (274) advises generals to open a city’s gates to permit people to flee in such cases, cf. Rance’s commentary *ad loc.* Inostrancev 1926, 14, indicates that a Sasanian military manual offered the same advice. Jord. *Rom.* 376 confirms how the Persians allowed the population and the soldiery to flee towards the coast.

8.23 πόλιν ἐλεῖν ἀρχαίαν τε καὶ λόγου ἀξίαν καὶ πρώτην Ῥωμαίοις οὖσαν τῶν κατὰ τὴν ἑω πασῶν πόλεων, πλούτῳ τε καὶ μεγέθει καὶ πολυανθρωπίᾳ καὶ κάλλει καὶ τῇ ἄλλῃ εὐδαιμονίᾳ, ‘taking an ancient and famous city, the leading Roman city in the East in

wealth and size and population and beauty and every other blessing'. An emphatic statement of the importance of Antioch, echoing al-Mundhir's description at i.17.36, cf. ii.10.5. The earthquakes of 526 and 528 (see ii.8–10n) must have had a serious impact on the qualities mentioned here, however.

8.24 οὗ δὲ, περὶ ἐλάσσονος τᾶλλα ποιούμενος ἅπαντα, 'It was, evidently, because of this fear, since he considered everything else less important.' We have translated the first two words, οὗ δὲ, *hou dē*, as a genitive of cause connected with Khusro's fears, expressed in the previous sentence, cf. Smyth §1405. Another possibility would be to eliminate the comma and take it as a genitive of comparison, 'Considering everything else as less important than this'. The idiom, περὶ ἐλάσσονος ποιοῦμαι, *peri elassonos poioumai*, 'I consider as less important', is first found at Hdt. vi.6, its only attested use before Procopius. It is taken up later by Joh. Cin., e.g. at ii.18 (p.86.1) and Nic. Greg. 25.11 (vol.3, p.32.17).

8.25 οἱ μὲν οὖν στρατιῶται Ῥωμαίων ξὺν τοῖς [ἄλλοις] ἄρχουσιν ἀπιόντες ὥχοντο ἅπαντες διὰ πύλης, ἥ ἐπὶ Δάφνην ἄγει τὸ τῶν Ἀντιοχείων προάστειον. 'So the Roman soldiers and their commanders all left through the gate that leads to Daphne, the suburb of Antioch.' The Daphne gate leaves the city to the south, cf. Downey 1961, fig.11, reproduced in Brands 2016, 91, cf. fig. 27, p. 445. *V. Sym. Styl. Iun.* 57, p.51, refers to people fleeing through two gates, the one to the south, i.e. the one mentioned here, and the one facing the sea, to the south-west, most likely the Bridge gate, which crosses the Orontes to the south of the island, where part of the city lay, cf. Jord. *Rom.* 376, according to whom the refugees fled towards Seleucia Pieria along the Orontes. See van den Ven 1970, 63 n.5. On the well-to-do suburb of Daphne (modern Harbiye), some 6 km southwest of the city, see (e.g.) Downey 1961, 29–32, Kondoleon 2000b, 9–10, *TIB* 15, 1082, De Giorgi 2016, 150–62. A type of Olympic games was still celebrated there in the early sixth century: see Alpi 2004, 532.

8.29 ὠσάμενοι δὲ τοὺς πολεμίους ἐπαιάνιζόν τε καὶ Ἰουστινιανὸν βασιλέα καλλίνικον, ἅτε νενικηκότες, ἀνέκραγον. 'And they pushed back the enemy and sang the paean, shouting "The Emperor Justinian triumphs in glory", as if they had won the battle.' Rubin, *PvK*, 385, detects some irony in the report of the partisans' acclamation of Justinian, who had after all done little to relieve the city. On the singing

of the paean see i.13.38n. Roman troops similarly acclaim Justinian as victorious at 30.4 below, cf. Joh. Ant. frg.237.10, where the soldiers, upon storming Cherris in 488, cry out ‘Zeno Augustus, may you conquer’. Lenski 2007, 231, notes similar acclamations from Roman troops at Amida in 359, Amm. Marc. 19.2.11.

The term καλλίνικος, *kallinikos*, ‘gloriously triumphant’ is a standard (exclusive) epithet for the emperor in Late Antiquity: see Dinneen 1929, 33 (on its use in Christian letters), cf. Anderson et al. 1910, no.255 (referring to Justinian, an inscription on the Pontus/Galatia frontier). The patriotism and valour displayed by the factions contrasts with some sixth-century accounts of the city’s fall in the 250s, when a certain Mareades who, according to Mal. 12.26, was a leader of one of the factions, defected to the Persians, cf. Anon. post Dionem, frg.1, *FHG* iv, 192 (= Banchich 2015, frg.171, p.112) with Hartmann 2006, 128–9. See also ii.8.6n on Procopius’ attitude to the factions.

8.30 καὶ αὐτὸν τῶν τις ἀρχόντων, ὁ Ζαβεργάνης, οἰόμενος ξυμβάσεως περὶ βούλεισθαι τοῖς πρέσβεσιν ἐς λόγους ἰέναι, ‘Zabergan, one of the officers, thinking that he wanted to speak to the envoys about a settlement’. On Zabergan see i.23.25n: he seems to have been particularly active at the Persian court in the early 540s, cf. *PLRE* iii, Zaberganes 1. Procopius and his audience may have been particularly interested in him because of his visit to Constantinople not long after these events. He appears to have been a steadfast hawk as regards relations with the Romans, so Börm 2007, 323–4. Rubin, *PvK*, 385, argues that the speech of Zabergan that follows, 8.31–3, allows Procopius to give vent to his hostility to the factions, cf. Whately 2016, 103–4.

8.33 οἱ οὐκ ἐς μακρὰν ἐπανήκοντες οὐδὲν ξυμβῆναι φλαῦρον ἀπήγγελλον, ‘but they returned soon after, saying that nothing untoward had happened’. The adjective φλαῦρος, *phlauros*, generally means ‘trivial’ or ‘bad’, though it is perhaps a little stronger here, as also at 26.34, cf. vii.8.15; in both other instances it is associated with the verb ξυμβαίνειν, *xymbainō*, ‘I occur’.

8.34 οἱ γὰρ Πέρσαι οὐδεμιᾶς ἡλικίας φειδόμενοι τοὺς ἐν ποσὶν ἅπαντας ἡβηδὸν ἔκτεινον, ‘For the Persians spared no age group and were killing all before them, from the youngest to the oldest.’ On the term ἡβηδόν, *hēbēdon*, ‘from the youth upwards’, see i.5.13n, also in the context of a massacre.

8.35 ταῖς τε καλύπτραις ἐγκαλυψαμένας τὰ πρόσωπα καὶ ἐς τὸ τοῦ ποταμοῦ ῥεῦμα ἐμπεισούσας ἀφανισθῆναι, ‘they hid their faces with their veils, threw themselves into the flowing river and disappeared from sight’ at the prospect of being seized by the Persians, cf. *Anecd.* 7.35, where Procopius describes how one wealthy woman threw herself into the Bosphorus rather than suffer indignities at the hands of the partisans. Fan Chiang 2015, 71–6, 118–23, cf. idem 2018, 230–2, discusses this episode and other similar ones at length, notably the account at Joh. Eph. *HE* vi.7 of how 2000 pious virgins, captured by the Persians at Dara in 573, threw themselves into a river rather than be sent to live with the Turks. On the veils worn by women in this region see Fan Chiang 2015, 118–19, cf. Clark 1993, 108–9, Croom 2002, 128–30.

9.1–7 Khusro’s Speech

Khusro’s speech is a rhetorical exercise in hypocrisy: Procopius has already explicitly characterised the king as a faithless hypocrite (e.g. at 5.14–27) and returns to the theme immediately after the speech. His claims to have attempted to minimise casualties when taking Antioch are belied by the narrative (e.g. at 8.34). The speech was delivered before Roman ambassadors and need not therefore be entirely Procopius’ own invention, so Börm 2007, 109, cf. Whitby 2007, 85 n.47. It is quite possible that Khusro strove to project an image of a noble king and to undercut Justinian’s own position, as Börm 2006, 308–19, argues, suggesting that it was only after the fall of Antioch that he adopted this policy. See also Kaldellis 2004, 209, who perceives in it hints of Procopius’ antipathy to Christianity.

9.1 Οὐκ ἔξω τοῦ ἀληθοῦς τὸν παλαιὸν λόγον οἶομαι εἶναι, ὅτι δὴ οὐκ ἀκραιφνῇ τὰγαθὰ ὁ θεὸς, ἀλλὰ κεραννύων αὐτὰ τοῖς κακοῖς εἶτα τοῖς ἀνθρώποις παρέχεται. ‘I consider not far from the truth the old saying that God does not give men an unmingled share of good, but first mixes it with evil.’ Cf. i.24.37, v.13.25 for speakers adducing an ‘old saying’, though in these cases it comes at the end of their oration. This passage, including also the following section, is quoted almost *verbatim* by Leo the Deacon at i.4 (9.9–12), as is noted by Talbot and Sullivan, 17. The allusion is probably to Homer, *Il.* 24.527–34, where Achilles describes the two jars of Zeus from which he bestows good and bad fortune on mortals, although never the former exclusively, on which see Brügger 2009, 189–90, cf. *Od.* 4.236–7. Cf. also Plut. *Pomp.* 42.6 for a divine

force, here referred to as *daimonion*, mixing evil with Pompey's good fortune. A similar sentiment can be found in Christian texts; a homily ascribed to Gregory of Nyssa bears some similarity to the present passage, *Sermo de Paradiso*, 78.1–2.

9.2 παραπέπηγε δέ τις αἰὶ τοῖς μὲν εὐτυχήμασι συμφορά, ταῖς δὲ ἡδοναῖς λύπη, 'and some calamity is always linked to blessings, and pain to pleasures'. Kaldellis 2014, 91 n.197, sees echoes here of Plato, *Rep.* 583c–587a and *Phaedo* 60b–c, though there are no obvious verbal links.

9.3 τοῦ θεοῦ αὐτοσχεδιάσαντος ἡμῖν, ὡς ὁρᾷτε δήπου, τὴν νίκην, 'for God has contrived this victory for us, as of course you see'. For the verb αὐτοσχεδιάζω, *autoskhediazō*, 'I improvise' (here translated as 'contrive') cf. Thuc. i.138.3, where it is applied to the wily Themistocles; Procopius echoes this same chapter of Thuc. at i.24.13, cf. the note *ad loc.* Kaldellis 2004, 209, notes the irony in God being said to have facilitated the capture of Antioch, a city that had recently been renamed Theoupolis, i.e. the city of God, cf. already Rubin, *PvK*, 386. Whether Procopius is deliberately equating God and *tychē* here is less certain: see 9.12–13n. Dahn 1865, 211, points out the incongruity of the Persians apparently invoking the Christian God.

9.5 πρὸς δὲ νενικηκότας ἤδη καὶ αὐτοβοεῖ τὴν πόλιν ἐλόντας θράσει θανατῶντες ἀλογίστῳ ζυγομαχεῖν ἔγνωσαν. 'Although the Persians were already victorious and had captured the city without a blow, they (the Antiochenes) resolved to resist, dying in irrational recklessness.' The terminology used for the swift capture of a city is Thucydidean, cf. ii.81.4, iii.113.6, as noted by Braun 1885, 212, and cf. (e.g.) Proc. v.24.4, viii.8.36. Narses describes the foolhardy courage of the Goths in very similar terms at viii.30.4, cf. i.3.17, vi.10.17. The verb ζυγομαχέω, *zygomakheō*, may be translated as 'struggle', cf. iv.7.8, viii.27.6 (against fate); it can also have the sense of fighting against one's yoke-fellow, as Dewing translates it at viii.12.8.

9.6 πάντες μὲν οὖν οἱ Περσῶν δόκιμοι πολλὰ ἐνοχλοῦντες σαγηνεῦσαι τέ με τὴν πόλιν ἤξιουν καὶ ξύμπαντας διαφθεῖραι τοὺς ἡλωκότας, 'So all the leading Persians pestered me with demands to sweep the city and kill all those captured.' Procopius employs the Herodotean term σαγηνεύω, *sagēneuō*, 'I sweep (the population)', which is derived from the noun σαγήνη, *sagēnē*, a fisherman's net (cf. i.4.20n).

Hdt. vi.31, iii.149, cf. Plato, *Leg.* 698d, uses it to describe the Persians' technique of capturing the whole population of an island by encircling it completely with men. See Scott 2005, 155, noting that the verb surfaces again only much later, cf. e.g. Jul. *Or.* 2, 79b. Both Herodotean passages are cited by Hesychius, *Lexicon*, Σ26–7.

9.6 τὸ γὰρ ἐπεμβαίνειν τοῖς ἡλωκόσιν οὐχ ὀσίον, 'For it is not righteous to trample upon prisoners.' As noted at ii.9.1–7n, Khusro had in fact shown little mercy to the population of Antioch, while Procopius had earlier explained (8.23) that he allowed the population to flee because he feared ambushes. See also 8.30–4, the advice of Zabergan and the slaughter wrought by the Persian forces. Nevertheless, as Börm 2007, 109, notes, cf. idem 2006, 308–9 with n.32, the Persian king was expected to display noble qualities, and elsewhere Procopius is prepared to acknowledge the mercy he displays, e.g. at 5.28, 7.35. Yet only a few pages later, at 10.5, Procopius characterises Khusro as ἀνοσιώτατος, *anosiōtatos*, 'most impious', cf. Brodka 1998, 122.

9.7 τοσαῦτα μὲν ὁ Χοσρόης τερατευόμενός τε καὶ διαθρυπτόμενος τοῖς πρέσβεσιν εἶπεν, 'This was the fanciful and deceitful tale that Khusro told to the envoys.' On the verb τερατεύομαι, *terateuomai*, 'I talk marvels', see i.25.8n, in connection with John the Cappadocian. Cf. also *Anecd.* 8.9, where it is applied to Justinian: this chapter of the *Anecdota*, as is noted immediately below, has interesting parallels with the sections here. The middle form διαθρύπτομαι, *diathryptomai*, has the sense of putting on airs: see *LSJ*, 440, citing instances from Theocritus, e.g. 15.99, cf. Agath. v.20.5. Rubin, *PvK*, 386, rightly perceives these two verbs as belonging to a higher register, of a sort that is deployed notably in the *Anecd.*, e.g. at 8.10.

9.8–13 The Character of Khusro

As Brodka 1998 demonstrates, Khusro is depicted in an unremittingly harsh light by Procopius, cf. Börm 2007, 251–2; Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* iii.54.5 similarly characterises him as an evil demon in the context of the invasion. This section, consisting of a round condemnation of the ruler illustrated by an anecdote from an incident that occurred earlier, when Sura was captured, is likely to have been inserted into the narrative at a later point: there is no correlative δέ, *de*, picking up the μὲν, *men* at 9.7 in 9.8, while one may be found at 9.14 when the narrative resumes its course.

The sentences, moreover, are considerably longer and more complex than those of the rest of the chapter. The meditation on the workings of *tychē* (9.13) finds parallels elsewhere in Procopius' work, as noted below, but seems otiose given the similar reflections at 10.4–5. The *ad hominem* attack parallels criticisms of Justinian in the *Anecdota*, notably at 8.24–5, where he is likewise accused of hypocrisy and faithlessness. It is not necessary, however, to see the criticisms levelled here as being directed at Justinian, despite Rubin, *PvK*, 386, though see ii.9.13n and cf. i.23–5g.

9.8 **λίαν δὲ τῶν ἔναγχος αὐτῷ ξυγκειμένων τε καὶ ὁμωμοσμένων ἐτοιμότερος ἐς λήθην ἀφίχθαι**, 'but he was readier still to forget what he had only just agreed to and sworn to'. Cf. *Anecd.* 8.24–5 for a parallel portrait of Justinian employing a similar vocabulary. For the expression ἐς λήθην ἀφίχθαι, *es lēthēn aphikhthai*, 'to attain obscurity', i.e. 'to become forgotten' cf. Proc. *Gaz.* ep.56.13, *Decl.* 3.5 and Proc. *Anecd.* 13.26, referring to Justinian's deliberate forgetfulness of his own promises.

9.8 **τῷ δὲ προσώπῳ σχηματίζεσθαι τὴν εὐλάβειαν ἀτεχνῶς ἔμπειρος, ἀφοσιοῦσθαι τε τῷ λόγῳ τὴν πράξιν**, 'he was a past master at feigning piety by his expression and making excuses to evade the responsibility for his actions'. Cf. Geo. Pis. *In Bonum*, 71, for the same phrasing for a feigned expression, albeit favourable. The verb ἀφοσιοῦμαι, *aphosioumai*, can have a range of meanings (in the middle voice), cf. *LSJ*, 293, but here it must mean 'justify' or 'give as an excuse'; it is linked to the adjective ὅσιος, *hosios*, just used by Khusro himself, at 9.6. Cf. perhaps Plut. *Them.* 24.3, likewise in the context of a justification.

9.9 **ὃς καὶ Σουρηνούς, πρότερον οὐδὲν τὸ παράπαν ἡδίκηκότας, δόλῳ τε περιελθὼν καὶ τρόπῳ ἀπολέσας τῷ εἰρημένῳ**, 'After treacherously getting the better of the people of Sura, who had before this done him no harm at all, and destroying them in the manner which I have related'. Procopius returns to the capture of Sura, narrated at 5.8–33: it had been the first city to fall to Khusro during his invasion. Nothing more is known of the mother and child referred to in the touching and vivid vignette; another woman from the city, Euphemia, later became Khusro's wife, cf. 5.28. Fan Chiang 2018, 238, suggests that Procopius recounts the story here because it is emblematic of the fate that befell Antiochene women as well. As Fan Chiang 2015, 61–8, shows, such detailed anecdotes on the harsh treatment of women and children were a stock element in accounts of a captured city, recommended by rhetorical

handbooks. Its insertion here serves further to back up Procopius' insistence on Khusro's hypocrisy.

9.9 παιδίον δέ, ὅπερ αὐτῇ ἄρτι τοῦ τιθοῦ <ῆν> ἀπαλλαγέν, 'the child which she had only just released from her breast'. Cf. i.2.1n on the terms employed for weaning. Haury inserted the verb ῆν, *ēn*, 'he was', which is absent from the manuscripts but is present at i.2.1.

9.10 φασὶ γὰρ αὐτὸν στενάξαντα δῆθεν τῷ λόγῳ, δόκησιν τε ὡς εἶη δεδακρυμένος παρεχόμενον τοῖς τότε παροῦσιν ἄλλοις τε καὶ Ἀναστασίῳ τῷ πρεσβευτῇ, 'They say that he pretended to groan, giving the impression to those present, who included Anastasius the ambassador, that he was weeping.' On Anastasius see i.26.8n above; having been obliged to accompany Khusro during his invasion, he was finally released after the fall of Sura, as Procopius relates at ii.5.27. The adverb δῆθεν, *dēthen*, 'forsooth', underlines the hollowness of the gesture, as (e.g.) at ii.1.13 and 5.17 above, cf. ii.1.13n.

9.11 Ἰουστινιανὸν δὲ τὸν Ῥωμαίων αὐτοκράτορα παραδηλοῦν ἤθελεν, ἐξεπιστάμενος ὅτι δὴ αὐτὸς αἰτιώτατος ἀπάντων εἶη. 'He meant to imply that this man was the Roman Emperor Justinian, though he knew very well that he himself was the most responsible for all that had happened.' On responsibility for the outbreak of war see ii.1.15n; at *Anecd.* 11.12 Procopius explicitly accuses Justinian of being 'most responsible' for the war.

9.12 Ζάμου τὸν ὀφθαλμὸν τοῦ δαιμονίου πηρώσαντος, ὅσπερ τῷ χρόνῳ τὰ πρωτεῖα ἐς τὴν βασιλείαν ἐφέρετο μετὰ γε τὸν Καόσην, ὃνπερ οὐδενὶ λόγῳ ἐμίσει Καβάδης, 'for a divine power mutilated Zames' eye, and he was next in line for the throne after Kaoses, for whom Kavadh had an irrational hatred'. On Khusro's two brothers and their claims to the throne see i.11.3n: Procopius repeats here what he had mentioned earlier in an attempt to underline how easily Khusro might not have come to the throne, thus sparing the Romans the sufferings they endured at his hands. Cf. i.23.1–4 with the notes *ad loc.*, also discussing Khusro's character and the sidelining of his brothers. The divine power referred to, τὸ δαιμόνιον, *to daimonion*, appears here to be a malevolent force responsible for excluding Zames from the throne: see Brodka 2004, 32–3, 44, and cf. vi.29.32; as Brodka demonstrates, the notion is not applied consistently, cf. Dahn 1865, 223–4, 251. See further the next note.

9.13 βουλομένη γάρ τινα μέγαν ἀεὶ ποιεῖν ἢ τύχῃ πράσσει τοῖς καθήκουσι χρόνοις τὰ δόξαντα, ‘For when Fortune wants to exalt a man, she does what she has decided upon at the appropriate times.’ Procopius devotes a lengthy sentence to the workings of Fortune or Fate, *tychē* in Greek, who intervenes decisively to impose her will irrespective of the consequences. The role of *tychē* in Procopius’ works has attracted much attention, notably as to whether it is compatible with a Christian perspective. It is clear that Procopius struggled to explain the disasters that he witnessed in the 540s (cf. 10.4–5 below) and that on occasion he had recourse to the classical notion of a powerful destiny that determined the lot of mankind, so (e.g.) Whitby 2018, 37–8. This need not call into question his Christianity: as Gador-Whyte 2011, 110–13, observes, other Christian sources (e.g. Mal. 18.54) were willing to ascribe calamities to God, cf. Whitby 2007, 85–6, Scott 2013, 207 (*contra* Kaldellis 2004, 205–8). Note Proc. *Anecd.* 4.44–5 (essentially the same as *Wars* viii.12.34), where *tychē* is clearly subordinated to God, cf. Brodka 2004, 50. Zali 2015, discussing parallels between Herodotus and Procopius, argues that Procopius may have combined Christian and pagan notions on the role of the divine in history. Talbot and Sullivan 2005, 17–19, find comparable issues in the work of Leo the Deacon. See Brodka 2004, 50–6, for a more detailed analysis of Procopius, noting the similarities between this passage and *Anecd.* 10.9–10, where Procopius attributes the rise of Theodora at court to the workings of fortune, whose instrument (like Khusro) she becomes. See further Proc. iii.18.2 (with Brodka 2004, 40–4), vi.8.1 (with Kaldellis 2004, 195), vii.13.15–18 (with Brodka 2004, 48–50) on the workings of *tychē*. Averil Cameron 1985, 117–19, sees *tychē* as a purely literary device for Procopius.

Gador-Whyte 2011, 113–14, points out that the passage can be read as indirect criticism of Justinian: Khusro is often described in terms reminiscent of those applied in the *Anecd.* to Justinian, cf. i.23.1n and i.23–5g. This whole section, on how Fortune can exalt a man as her instrument, despite his unworthiness, could apply just as well to the Roman emperor as to the Persian king, especially since no individual is actually named.

9.13 ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν ὅπῃ τῷ θεῷ φίλον ἔχέτω, ‘But let this be as God wishes.’ The open invocation of God after a passage underlining the workings of an impulsive *tychē* might seem paradoxical, but as was noted just above, it is clear that Procopius saw no contradiction between the two notions, cf. Whitby 2007, 85. He concludes other discussions of problematic issues similarly, e.g. at *Anecd.* 10.10, having described how

tychē favoured the rise of Theodora, cf. ii.12.30. The phrase ὅπη (or ὅπη) τῷ θεῷ φίλον, *hopē tō theō philon*, ‘as (is) dear to God’ is found first in Plato, *Apol.* 19a6, but is found subsequently in Christian authors, e.g. Greg. Naz. *Or.* 43.23.3.

9.14 αὐτὸς δὲ ξὺν τοῖς πρέσβεσιν ἐς τὸ ἱερόν ἀπὸ τῆς ἄκρας κατέβαιναν, ὅπερ ἐκκλησίαν καλοῦσιν, ‘He himself went down from the heights with the envoys to the temple that they call a “church”.’ As is normal in the classicising genre, Procopius glosses the term *ekklesiā*, church, since such buildings did not feature in classical writers, cf. i.25.31, where the term presbyter is introduced, and i.7.22 on monks, with the note *ad loc.* The evidently lavishly appointed church in question is identified as the ‘Great Church’ by Downey 1961, 544, i.e. the octagonal ‘Golden Church’ built by Constantine, which had just been rebuilt following the earthquake of 528. See PZ x.5 with PZT 412 n.110, Brands 2016, 46, Saliou 2019, 205–6. Mayer and Allen 2012, 74–6, 108–9, observe that there were other wealthy churches within the walls, e.g. that of the Theotokos and that of Cassian. Evagr. *HE* iv.25 claims that the patriarch Ephraem had deliberately adorned the church in order that its wealth could be used to preserve the building itself, which may be his interpretation of 9.15–17.

9.16 καὶ μάρμαρά τε πολλὰ καὶ θαυμαστά ἐνθένδε ἀφελὼν ἔξω τοῦ περιβόλου ἐκέλευε κατατίθεσθαι, ὅπως καὶ ταῦτα ἐς τὰ Περσῶν ἦθι κομίσωνται. ‘He took many wonderful pieces of marble from there and ordered them to be put down outside the wall so that they could take these, too, to Persia.’ Cf. Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* iii.54.5, tr. in Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 105, on the removal of the marble; he adds that statues and pictures were also taken. Ps.-Dion. ii, 69/64, tr. in Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 107, mentions the marble, stating that it was for use in Khusro’s new rival city of Antioch, on which see 14.1–4n. While some elements may have been destined for this city (see ii.14.1–4 with Coates-Williams 2003, 344–8), others may have adorned a sixth-century palace in New Ctesiphon, south of the Parthian city, at Tell Dahab, not far from the imposing Aynān e-Kesrā, where excavators found marble decorations, mosaics and sculptures. See Kröger 1993, 447, Canepa 2009, 221.

PZ vii.4f reports in similar terms how in 503 Kavadh shipped off the statues, marble and sundials from Amida to Persia using the Tigris.

9.18 ὁ δὲ τοῦτο τοῖς πρέσβεσι συγκεχωρηκῶς τᾶλλα καίειν ἐκέλευε πάντα, ‘he agreed to the envoys’ request, giving orders to burn everything

else'. In fact, some of the southern quarter survived, along with the church of St Julian: see 10.6–8 with the commentary. Van den Ven 1970, 63–4 n.5, rightly argues that Procopius has exaggerated the extent of destruction, since *V. Sym. Styl. Iun.* 57 (p.52.48–51) specifically reports that the entire city was not actually burnt down, even if the damage extended from one gate to another; in fact, Procopius' exceptions may be those that the author of the *Vita* had in mind.

10.1–5 Reflections on the Fall of Antioch

Procopius offers further reflections on Khusro's capture of the city which, he adds, had been foreshadowed by an omen that no one had recognised. As in the previous chapter and the woman of Sura, he combines a return to earlier events that he had not reported at the time with his own musings. His perplexity that a ruler as immoral as Khusro could have been allowed by any heavenly power to accomplish such a feat is obvious; this should not call his Christianity into question, cf. 10.4n. Procopius returns once again to the city's fate at ii.14.5–7, where he reports further omens that had signalled what was to befall it.

10.1 τῶν γὰρ στρατιωτῶν, οἵπερ ἐνταῦθα ἐκ παλαιοῦ ἱδρυνται, τὰ σημεῖα πρότερον ἐστῶτα πρὸς δύοντά που τὸν ἥλιον, ἀπὸ ταῦτομάτου στραφέντα πρὸς ἀνίσχοντα ἥλιον ἔστησαν, ἐς τάξιν τε αὖθις ἐπανῆκον τὴν προτέραν οὐδενὸς ἀψαμένου. 'The standards belonging to the soldiers who had long been posted there turned of their own accord to the East (they had previously faced the West), stayed in that position, and then turned back again to their former position, without anyone touching them.' The soldiers to whom Procopius refers had presumably been incorporated into Buzes' army by the time of the siege since there is no mention of any regular forces until the arrival of Theoctistus and Molatzes (8.2). The omen Procopius describes recalls one of the many ill portents that preceded Crassus' disastrous Carrhae campaign, cf. Plut. *Crass.* 19.4: an eagle, i.e. a standard, spontaneously changed its facing, cf. Val. Max. i.6.11.

10.2 ἦν δὲ οὗτος ἀνὴρ, Τατιανὸς ὄνομα, ξυνετὸς μάλιστα, ἐκ Μοψουεστίας ὀρμώμενος. 'This man, who was called Tatian and came from Mopsuestia, was very intelligent.' Clearly this Tatian, Tatianus 1 in *PLRE* iii, was Procopius' source for the omen. As *PLRE* suggests, he appears to have been an *actuarius* or *optio*, since Procopius describes him

as χορηγός τῆς τοῦ στρατοπέδου δαπάνης, *khoregos tēs tou stratopedou dapanēs*, ‘steward of the camp finances’; at i.8.5 he uses comparable phrasing for Apion, who occupied the more senior post of praetorian prefect for the army sent by Anastasius against Kavadh, cf. the note *ad loc.* See also Just. *Edict* 13.13 for a similar description of military finances. On the responsibilities of *actuarii* and *optiones* in distributing pay and supplies to the soldiers see Ravegnani 1988, 105–7, cf. Jones 1964, 626. Mopsuestia lies in Cilicia Secunda on the road to Antioch.

10.3 ἄλλ’ οὐδ’ ὥς ἔγνωσαν οἱ τὸ τέρας τοῦτο ἰδόντες ὥς δὴ ἐκ βασιλέως τοῦ ἐσπερίου ἐπὶ τὸν ἑῷον τὸ τοῦ χωρίου ἀφίξεται κράτος. ‘Yet even so, those who saw this omen did not recognise that the power over the place would pass from the emperor of the West to the emperor of the East.’ Börm 2007, 156, rightly draws attention to the equal status accorded here to the Persian king and Roman emperor, each described as a *basileus*, i.e. ‘emperor’ or ‘king’, cf. Kaldellis 2004, 127, arguing that it indicates the equivalence of the two rulers in Procopius’ eyes. See also Dahn 1865, 165 and n.1, on the issue of omens and who sends them; as he argues, 165–76, Procopius is certainly unwilling to dismiss such presages. See also his discussion of how fate obscures the understanding of such portents, 234.

10.4 ἐγὼ δὲ ἰλιγγίῳ πάθος τοσοῦτον γράφων τε καὶ παραπέμπων ἐς μνήμην τῷ μέλλοντι χρόνῳ, ‘For my part I grow dizzy at recording so great a disaster and handing it on to the memory of posterity.’ Procopius professes perplexity at how God allowed Antioch to be sacked for no reason that he could discern, a rare display of his emotions, as Dahn 1865, 154, notes. The passage is naturally cited frequently in discussions of his religious affiliation; a translation of 10.1–5 may be found in Winter and Dignas 2007, 108–9. The consensus favours the interpretation of Averil Cameron 1985, 115–17, cf. Evans 1971, 89, according to which he is expressing a conventional Christian incomprehension in understanding God’s judgement, so also Murray 2018, 113; Kaldellis 2004, 207–9, argues instead that he is hinting at his own scepticism. See also Dahn 1865, 241 n.3, 252–3, who emphasises the contradictions in Procopius’ handling of God and fate, particularly prominent in the case of Antioch; he suggests that Procopius has recourse to fate because he could not discern God’s reason for allowing the city to fall. Zali 2015, 95–6, detects parallels with Hdt. vii.10ε and i.32.9, where a jealous god punishes mortals, although the verbal links are tenuous. See also Stickler 2021 and cf. ii.9.13n on *tychē*.

Whately 2016, 101–4, believes that Procopius has explained the city's fall through the indisciplined behaviour of its population (cf. 8.6 above), but it seems unlikely that he considered this a sufficient explanation.

The verb παραπέμπω, *parapempō*, 'I transmit', cf. *LSJ*, 1320, IV, is used for passing on a record to posterity also at *Aed.* i.1.2, cf. Them. *Or.*10, 130c4 (198.8, tr. in Heather and Matthews 1991, 8), Joh. Chrys., *In epistulam ad Hebreos*, *Hom.*15, 9.1 PG 63.117, Gel. *HE* frg.1a.3–4 (= Photius, *Bibl.* cod.89, p.15).

10.5 ὅς δὴ καὶ Ἀντιόχειαν τότε ὑπέστη ἐς τὸ ἔδαφος πρὸς ἀνδρὸς ἀνοσιωτάτου καταφερομένην ἰδεῖν, ἧς τό τε κάλλος καὶ τὸ ἐς ἅπαντα μεγαλοπρεπὲς οὐδὲ νῦν ἀποκρύπτεσθαι παντάπασιν ἔσχεν, 'though at that time He endured to see Antioch brought to the ground by the most impious of men, a city whose beauty and splendour in every way have not even now been wholly obscured'. Cf. i.17.36, ii.8.23, where Procopius likewise insists on the beauty and splendour of the city, a place he clearly knew and loved, so rightly Evans 1971, 89. Khusro is referred to as 'most impious': for the term ἀνόσιος, *anosios*, 'impious' cf. 9.6, where the king asserts that maltreatment of prisoners is not ὁσιος, *hosios*, 'righteous'. As noted at ii.8–10n, Procopius makes no mention of the natural disasters that had struck the city in the 520s: Antioch's splendour had already been seriously damaged even before the Persian sack. At *Aed.* ii.10 Procopius insists on the grandeur of Justinian's reconstruction of the city, although it is clear that it was smaller in scale than what had been destroyed. See Downey 1961, 548, Whitby 1989, 546 n.4, Averil Cameron 2012, 157, Brands 2016, 39–41.

10.6 ἡ μὲν οὖν ἐκκλησία καθαιρεθείσης τῆς πόλεως ἐλείφθη μόνη, πόνῳ τε καὶ προνοίᾳ Περσῶν, οἷς τὸ ἔργον ἐπέκειτο τοῦτο. 'Once the city had been destroyed, only the church was left therefore, thanks to the labour and diligence of the Persians to whom the task was entrusted.' Procopius returns to the narrative of 9.18, referring to the Great Church of Antioch. Further exceptions to the general destruction are noted in the following lines. Kaldellis 2010b, 266, draws attention to the use of the Greek term πρόνοια, *pronoia*, 'forethought, foresight', a term often associated with the providence of God; here, on the other hand, Procopius states that the church was saved not by God's intervention, but rather by the efforts of the Persian demolition teams. While he argues that Procopius is here countering the view that God had preserved the church, it may be rather that he is merely contrasting the deliberate

nature of the church's survival with the accidental sparing of the Kerateion (10.7), where he specifically states that it was not through anyone's forethought that the quarter was not razed.

10.7 ἐλείφθησαν δὲ καὶ ἄμφι τὸ λεγόμενον Κεραταῖον οἰκίαι πολλαί, 'But many houses were also left around the so-called Kerateion.' The Kerateion (the quarter of the carob trees) lay on the south side of the city, which had undergone some expansion over the fifth century. Because the city had grown beyond the earlier walls of Tiberius, under Theodosius II the circuit had been extended to the south. This quarter may therefore have owed its survival to the earlier city walls, which cut it off from the rest of the city to the north. See Downey 1961, 614–15, Saliou 2014, 651, Brands 2016, 38, 46 and n.168, with Downey's fig.11 and Brands' fig.1, cf. fig. 27 above, p. 445.

10.8 ἐνέπρησάν τε καὶ τὰ ἐκτὸς τοῦ περιβόλου οἱ βάρβαροι, πλὴν τοῦ ἱεροῦ, ὅπερ Ἰουλιανῷ ἀνεῖται ἅγιω, 'The barbarians burned the areas outside the wall too, except for the sanctuary dedicated to St Julian.' It is believed that this church lay some 4.5 km outside the city; it was subsequently burnt down by Adarmahan's army in 573, as Greg. Tur. *Hist.* iv.40 and *Chr.* 724, a.884 (145/16) report (tr. in Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 139, 150). See Downey 1961, 544–5, 561–2, MalKom *ad* 18.49, Mayer and Allen 2012, 83–4.

10.9 τοῦ μέντοι περιβόλου παντάπασιν ἀπέσχοντο Πέρσαι, 'The Persians left the wall completely alone, however.' Justinian nonetheless undertook the building of walls on several sides of the city in order to reduce the length of the circuit and improve defences. See Proc. *Aed.* ii.10.10–12 with Downey 1961, 548–9, Whitby 1989, 539–41, Brands 2016, 41–4.

10.10–15 The Speech of the Roman Envoys

This speech, together with the reply of Khusro and the brief exchange that follows, returns to issues raised already at ii.2–4: see ii.1–4g with Taragna 2000, 124. Like Justinian in his letter to Khusro (4.17–25), the envoys concentrate on the moral aspects of the breaking of the peace. Rubin, *PvK*, 387, plausibly argues that the bitter reflections on the deterioration of *mores* during war owe more to the historian's attitude than to any arguments the ambassadors may have deployed. As in Justinian's

letter, there is no effort to threaten Khusro with reprisals: the weakness of the Roman position is thus underlined.

The ambassadors, it may be assumed (cf. Photius, *Bibl. cod.* 63, p. 74), are John, son of Rufinus, and Julian, named at 7.15; Taragna wrongly supposes that they are Antiochenes.

10.12 πόλεμος δὲ ὁ πέρας οὐκ ἔχων ἐξοικίζειν τῆς φύσεως τοὺς αὐτῷ χρωμένους ἐς αἰὲν πέφυκε, ‘and war that has no end always alienates those who engage in it from their true nature’. The metaphorical use of the verb ἐξοικίζω, *exoikizō*, ‘I banish, remove’ (*LSJ*, 596, cf. Lampe, 498) is striking: Procopius uses it elsewhere for expelling populations, e.g. at ii.28.17, iv.19.3. There are few parallels to this transitive use, but cf. Joh. Chrys. *Expositio in Psalmum iv*, ch. 11, PG 55.57. García Romero, 210 n. 74, is right to see this use as characteristic more of patristic literature than classical. In both this section and the preceding one Procopius perhaps alludes to the ‘Eternal’ peace concluded in 532, which he had referred to (i.22.3) as a peace ‘without limit’ or ‘without end’, πέρας οὐκ ἔχουσιν, *peras ouk ekhousan*, the opposite of the conflict to which he here alludes.

As noted above, this sombre assessment of the impact of war on populations evidently represents Procopius’ own opinion rather than a point made by the embassy. It reflects his more downbeat attitude towards the long-term impact of war, no doubt the result of the enduring conflict in Italy as well as the events in the East. See Brodka 2004, 96–7, 101–2, 105 n. 215 with Averil Cameron 1985, 238–9, Whitby 2018, 37–8, Brodka 2021. The famine suffered at Rome in 546 described by Procopius at vii.17 illustrates the sort of breakdown in society to which he alludes, cf. Brodka 2004, 99. Rubin, *PvK*, 387, suggests that the judgement offered by Procopius applies to Justinian no less than to Khusro, which would fit with his depiction of the war of attrition in Italy.

10.13 τί δὲ καὶ βουλόμενος πρὸς τὸν σὸν ἀδελφὸν ὀλίγῳ πρότερον γέγραφας ὡς αὐτὸς εἶη τοῦ λελύσθαι τὰς σπονδὰς αἴτιος; ‘What did you want by writing not long ago to your brother monarch saying that he was guilty of breaking the treaty?’ The envoys refer presumably to the accusations levelled at i.12–14, cf. 9.11 for the same accusation again. For the custom of addressing the rival empire’s ruler as brother see i.16.1n.

10.14 ὁ γὰρ ἐν τοῖς κακοῖς ἐλασσούμενος, οὗτος ἂν ἐν τοῖς ἀμείνοσι νικῶν δικαίως. ‘For whoever is defeated in adverse conditions

may justly gain the upper hand in better ones.’ A rhetorical flourish, as Rubin, *PvK*, 387, observes. The immediate sense is that, if Khusro were indeed the wronged party, then he could look forward to just triumphs. On the other hand, it could also be read as indicating that the Romans, who are now innocent victims, will surely themselves be victorious when circumstances are more favourable.

10.15 ἀνήκεστα ἔργα τοὺς ἄρτι σοι σπεισαμένους οὐ δέον εἰργάσθαι, ‘you have wantonly done irreparable harm to those who have just recently made a treaty with you!’ On the ambiguity of the phrase οὐ δέον, *ou deon*, see ii.7.19n.

10.16–24 Khusro’s Reply and Subsequent Negotiations

The Persian king returns to the grievances he had initially raised at 1.12–14 and repeated subsequently. He lays much emphasis on the correspondence between Justinian and both al-Mundhir and the Huns; Procopius’ text may be read as indicating that he showed the very letters themselves to the ambassadors (see 10.16n). The ambassadors, perhaps because they were now confronted with the letters, fall back on asserting that they were the work of rogue officials. Having made his point, Khusro puts forward his conditions for a deal, viz. annual payments. Evidently the envoys were empowered to consent to such payments, but Khusro, realising that he could push his advantage further – and perhaps stake a claim to be a veritable rival of Justinian throughout the East – continued his invasion nonetheless. See Börm 2006, 309–20. Given his detailed account of the exchanges, as well as his reference to the length of negotiations (10.24), Rubin’s surmise, *PvK*, 387, that Procopius had access to an account of these talks is plausible. The section from 10.16 to 11.6 is quoted in *Exc. de legat. Rom.*, 99.10–100.27 following a two-line introduction about the fall of Antioch and the ambassadors’ speech.

10.16 μάλιστα δὲ αὐτοῦ τὰς ἐπιστολὰς τοῦ πολέμου αἰτιωτάτας ἡξίου δεικνύναι πρὸς τε Ἀλαμούνδαρον καὶ Οὐννοὺς αὐτῷ γεγραμμένας, καθάπερ μοι ἐν τοῖς ἔμπροσθεν λόγοις ἐρρήθη, ‘He decided to show the letters written by Justinian to al-Mundhir and the Huns, which, as I related earlier, were the greatest cause of the war.’ An allusion to ii.1.13–14, 3.47, as just noted; Procopius literally refers to his ‘earlier words’ or ‘accounts’, his standard way of cross-referencing, on which see Croke 2021, 49, cf. e.g. 29.21. The verb δείκνυμι, *deiknumi*,

‘I show’ is likely to mean that Khusro actually presented the ambassadors with this written proof, which would in turn explain why Procopius was inclined to see the emperor as bearing at least some responsibility for the war: see ii.1.13n and i.14n. The sentence also places great emphasis on Justinian’s authorship: the pronoun αὐτός, *autos*, is twice used to refer to him: they are ‘his’ letters (in the genitive), written ‘by him’ (dative).

10.20 τὴν γὰρ ἐπὶ χρήμασι γινομένην ἀνθρώποις φιλίαν ἀναλίσκομένοις ἐκ τοῦ ἐπὶ πλεῖστον ξυνδαπανᾶσθαι τοῖς χρήμασι, ‘for friendship bought by men for money is generally spent with the money as it is used up’. Perhaps an expression of Procopius’ critical attitude towards the Eternal Peace of 532, so Börm 2007, 266, although he was no keener on annual payments, see 10.24n. On the expression ἐκ τοῦ ἐπὶ πλεῖστον, *ek tou epi pleiston*, ‘generally’, see i.15.23n.

10.21 τὰς τε Κασπίας αὐτοὶ φυλάσσοντες πύλας καὶ οὐκέτι αὐτοῖς ἀχθόμενοι διὰ πόλιν Δάρας, ὑπὲρ ὧν ἔμμισθοι καὶ αὐτοὶ ἐς αἰῶνες εἰσονται, ‘(the Persians) guarding the Caspian Gates themselves, and no longer harbouring a grudge against them (the Romans) because of the city of Dara, in exchange for which the Persians will themselves be in their pay forever’. Kavadh had raised both of these issues, the protection of the Caspian Gates and the need for the Persians to guard against the Roman fortress of Dara, in 530: see i.16.4–8 with the notes *ad loc.*: he had pointed out that he was obliged to maintain two armies as a consequence, one to cover Dara, the other to guard the passes. While Kavadh had insisted that the Romans either contribute to the cost of protecting the Caspian Gates or dismantle Dara, his son preferred simply to seek funds from the Romans, thus covering his expenditure; no longer, as he says, would the Persians be resentful of the expenses incurred in maintaining their defences against Dara. Ps.-Josh. 9 and Mal. 18.44 (tr. in Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 59, 88) portray Kavadh as advancing similar arguments for Roman payments, in particular for the Persian effort in defending against Hunnic incursions; cf. PZ viii.5a, discussed below, 10.24n, with Blockley 1985a, 69–71.

Although Khusro’s demands might appear superficially reasonable – as he points out (10.23), the Romans already offered regular payments to other groups, such as the Jafnids and Hunnic tribes (see ii.1.13–14n and i.12.6n, albeit not a regular gift) – the annual payments would undoubtedly have given the impression that the Romans were tributary to the Persians,

as the envoys immediately object (10.22). This was naturally a situation the Romans were keen to avoid, which is in part why Justinian had consented to the one-off large payment to conclude the Eternal Peace. See i.22.3n, Rubin 1986a, 41–2, Börm 2006, 318, idem 2008a, esp. 338, Nechaeva 2014, 51–4 and cf. 10.24n. See also the useful brief discussion in Maksymiuk 2016, although there is no reason to suppose that regular payments were agreed in 506. Kaldellis 2004, 68, 96, perceives a Platonic dimension to Khusro's proposal: the Romans no longer have their own guards, so vital to the health of the state, and thus now require protection from foreign rulers as a result of their own decline.

10.23 μισθὸν τῆς ὑπουργίας αὐτοῖς χορηγοῦντες ῥητόν, '(the Romans) will be paying them (the Persians) a fixed sum for their service'. For the phrasing cf. Soz. *HE* vii.1.2, referring to the allies who helped defend Constantinople after the defeat at Adrianople in 378, also Proc. v.25.11.

10.24 ξυνέβησαν ὕστερον ἐφ' ᾧ Χοσρόην ἐν μὲν τῷ παραυτίκα κεντηνάρια πεντήκοντα πρὸς Ῥωμαίων λαβόντα, πέντε δὲ ἄλλων φερόμενον ἐπέτειον ἐς τὸν πάντα αἰῶνα δασμὸν, μηδὲν αὐτοὺς ἐργάσασθαι περαιτέρω κακόν, 'later they agreed that Khusro should receive from the Romans for the present fifty *centenaria*, and that if he received a permanent yearly tribute of five more he would do them no further harm'. Procopius is openly critical of the proposed solution, referring quite explicitly to the sum to be handed over as a δασμός, *dasmos*, 'tribute', even though Justinian subsequently (13.1) assented to Khusro's terms. He makes his criticisms yet clearer at viii.15.1–7, 16–18, where he reports that the Persian king succeeded in extracting four *centenaria* a year from the Romans (in 551), which Justinian paid in advance in a lump sum. As he states there at 15.18, 'they perceived that they had openly become tributary to the Persians'. On the critical attitude of Procopius (and Agathias) see Börm 2008a, 338, cf. Blockley 1985a, 72, noting Justin II's equally unfavourable opinion; on the chronology of the passage at viii.15 see Greatrex 2003, 54–7. At ii.28.10, on which see the note *ad loc.*, Procopius reports that Justinian agreed in 545 to a payment of twenty *centenaria* for a five-year truce, i.e. four *centenaria* per year, slightly under Khusro's proposal here. Cf. PZ viii.5a, reporting a demand from Kavadh in 519 for five *centenaria* as an annual payment (PZT 297 erroneously has 500 *centenaria*) for the defences against the Huns. Although some scholars, e.g. Güterbock 1906, 38, have been inclined to believe that the

Romans did indeed owe an annual sum to the Persians, perhaps from as early as 363, the evidence is insufficient: see Blockley 1985a, 68–9, Greatrex 1998a, 14–16, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 20–1. On the *centenarion* see i.22.3n.

ii.11 Khusro's Excursion to the Mediterranean, to Daphne and to Apamea

Aware that no Roman forces were preparing to oppose him, Khusro took the opportunity to embark on a tour of the Roman East, seizing what booty he could. While Procopius suggests that his visit to the port of Seleucia Pieria was motivated merely by curiosity (11.2), Börm 2006, 310–18, cf. idem 2007, 290–1, argues plausibly that both here and at Apamea the king was seeking to present himself as a serious rival to Justinian and perhaps to win some support from the local population; he had no plans, however, to make any lasting territorial gains. On a more general level see also Payne 2013, 19, 21–2. Procopius' account testifies to his familiarity with the region, notably when discussing Daphne and the mistake made by the Persians between the two churches of the Archangel Michael (11.13). He is likely to have had access both to local sources, whether at Daphne or Apamea, and to accounts from those retained as hostages by Khusro who presumably accompanied him on his excursions (10.24), cf. Rubin, *PvK*, 387–8, proposing that the report of the ambassadors on the king's movements may also have been taken into account. Averil Cameron 1985, 163, suggests that Procopius may have been able to consult local sources while accompanying Belisarius in the East in 541–2. See also ii.5–13g.

11.1 Τότε ὁ Χοσρόης ἐς Σελεύκειαν, πόλιν ἐπιθαλασσίαν, Ἀντιοχείας τριάκοντα καὶ ἑκατὸν σταδίοις διέχουσαν ἦλθεν, 'Then Khusro went to Seleucia, a seaside city one hundred and thirty stades from Antioch.' Antioch's port city is some 25 km distant as the crow flies, but rather more by road, in order to go around the Mons Mirabilis (*Thaumaston oros*, Wondrous Mountain, *TIB* 15, 1827–8), a little over 30 km. See Appendix 2, p. 675, on Procopius' stade. On routes to Seleucia see Lafontaine-Dosogne 1967, 25–45. *V. Sym. Styl. Iun.* 59–64 vividly describes the panic caused in the region as Persian forces traversed it after the fall of Antioch; at this point the saint was not yet installed at the top of the mountain, but by his prayers he was able to deter enemy soldiers from approaching him and to cure a wounded Roman soldier. In the

following year, 541, he moved to the summit of the mountain, where he built a monastery around his column, *V. Sym. Styl. Iun.* 65–7, a development perhaps linked to Khusro's invasion, so Henry 2015, 74, 80–2, cf. Trombley 1997, 156–8.

As noted at ii.10.16–24n, the first six sections of this chapter are quoted by *Exc. de legat. Rom.* with minor textual differences. On the city itself see Dagron and Feissel 1985, 443–4, *TIB* 15, 1712–19, De Giorgi 2016, 40–1, 133–49; parts have been excavated. Although founded as an independent city, it gradually became the port facility for Antioch, although by the sixth century its fortunes were in decline.

11.1 ἐνταῦθά τε Ῥωμαίων οὐδένα οὔτε εὐρών οὔτε λυμηνάμενος ἀπελούσατο μὲν ἐκ τῆς θαλάσσης τῷ ὕδατι μόνος, θύσας τε τῷ ἡλίῳ καὶ οἷστισιν ἄλλοις ἐβούλετο, 'but (Khusro) did not find a single Roman there and did no harm. Alone, he washed himself in the water of the sea, sacrificed to the sun and whatever other gods he wished.' The text as it stands is problematic, as all editors have noted, since obviously if Khusro could not find any Romans, he would be unable to harm them; various emendations have been proposed, but we have retained what Haury and Wirth print. Robertson 1941, 82–3, offers an important but neglected discussion of the passage, notably suggesting that εὐρών, *heurōn*, 'having found' might readily be emended to Σύρων, *Syrōn*, 'of Syrians', although further changes are necessary to make sense of this section. Arguing that Procopius elsewhere contrasts soldiers and civilians (albeit not Syrians), he proposes reading ἐνταῦθά τε Ῥωμαίων οὐδένα οὔτε Σύρων οὔτε <στρατιωτῶν> λυμηνάμενος, 'there he did no harm to any Roman, whether Syrian or soldier'. Börm 2007, 96, suggests that Khusro spared the city because it had no means of defence, just like Chalcis later.

Börm 2006, 310, argues that Khusro's bathing was deliberately symbolic, evoking similar actions by much earlier Near Eastern rulers, such as the Assyrian king Ashurnasirpal II (883–59 B.C.), cf. Kaldellis 2004, 121. Rollinger 2012, 733–6, discusses the episode in detail, suggesting that although Khusro bathed alone, unlike earlier rulers, he did so on behalf of the troops. He argues also that the Greek verb ἀπολούω, *apolouō*, here in the middle voice, should be rendered as 'wash off (from oneself)' rather than as 'bathing'. As Börm, *loc. cit.*, notes, the Achaemenid rulers may have performed similar rites, although no clear evidence has survived. Hdt. vii.54.2 nevertheless attests libations to the sun by Xerxes at the Hellespont. On Persian veneration of the sun see Börm 2007, 181–2: it stemmed from their fire-worship, cf. Boyce 1987,

119, 137. Even if Zoroastrianism was in principle a dualist religion, there existed cults to other gods: Procopius' statement should not then be rejected out of hand. See Börm 2006, 310 n.36 with Duchesne-Guillemin 1983, 902–4, Rollinger 2012, 734.

11.2 οὐκ ἄλλου τοῦ ἔνεκα ἢ ἱστορίας θεάσασθαι, '(he wished) to see (Apamea) simply out of curiosity (lit. for no reason other than curiosity)'. A rare case in Procopius of the use of the word ἱστορία, *historia*, in its original sense of 'enquiry' rather than for a work of history. As Rubin, *PvK*, 387, points out, the king's curiosity tends to contradict the allegation of ignorance or boorishness made by Procopius at ii.6.20, cf. Börm 2007, 253 with the note *ad loc.* Kaldellis 2004, 121, draws parallels between Khusro's desire to see places and Xerxes' in Herodotus, e.g. at vii.128.1. For a discussion of the verb θεάομαι, *theaomai*, 'I gaze, behold' and its connection with Herodotus' Xerxes see Branscome 2013, 212–215, noting its link to the etymologically linked θαύματα/θαυμαστά, *thau-mata/thaumasta*, cf. Proc. i.1.7–8. See further now Pazdernik 2022, 151–8.

11.4 ἐνδηλος δὲ ἦν ὁ Χοσρόης τοῖς τε πρέσβεσι καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς ἄλλοις, 'It was clear to the envoys and to everyone else'. See Rubin, *PvK*, 388, suggesting that Procopius derived his information partly from the ambassadors and partly from oral sources (the others here mentioned).

11.4 τότε μὲν οὖν ἐς Δάφνην ἀνέβη, τὸ Ἀντιοχείας προάστειον, 'So then he went up to Daphne, the suburb of Antioch.' See ii.8.25n on Daphne. It lies on the road to Laodicea, not Apamea, but was almost part of the city of Antioch itself.

11.5 ἔνθα δὴ τό τε ἄλσος ἐν θαύματι μεγάλῳ ἐποιήσατο καὶ τὰς τῶν ὑδάτων πηγὰς· ἄμφω γὰρ ἀξιοθέατα ἐπιεικῶς ἐστί. 'There he greatly admired the grove and the springs of water, for both are certainly sights to be seen.' The cypress groves of Daphne, the site of a burnt temple to Apollo and an empty shrine of St Babylas, were widely admired, and protected by imperial legislation, *C. Th.* 10.1.12, *C.J.* 11.78.1–2, cf. Proc. ii.14.5; they are mentioned by Mal. 8.20, 10.9, cf. Paul Sil. *Descr.* 524. See Downey 1961, 83–4, 441, Mayer and Allen 2012, 96–7, Shepardson 2014, 58–91. The springs were likewise renowned, some of which were channeled to provide water for the city; a reservoir in the form of a theatre was built by Hadrian, which may be seen illustrated on the Yakto mosaic. See Downey, 221–2, 664, cf. Lassus 1969, 141 with Levi

1947, 329 and pl.79a = ‘Raised panel of topographical border on the Mosaic of Megalopsychia. Excavated in 1932’, *Archaeological Archives*, accessed on 28 December 2020, <http://vrc.princeton.edu/archives/items/show/17802>. Procopius confirms himself the beauty of the place, with which he was evidently familiar, cf. Rubin, *PvK*, 388. The suburb even had a Persian connection, if Mal. 12.39 is correct in reporting that Arsane, the wife of the Persian king Narses, stayed here during the period of her captivity at the end of the third century.

The expression ἐν θαύματι ποιοῦμαι, *en thaumati poioumai*, ‘I admire’, is found in Plut. *Pomp.* 14.3, cf. Pausanias v.12.1, and see *LSJ*, s.v. θαῦμα, II. It is a typical instance of Procopian periphrasis, using several words where one verb would have sufficed, cf. Scheftlein 1893, 4, 7, cf. p. 16 above.

11.6 καὶ θύσας ταῖς νύμφαις ἀπιὼν ὥχετο, ‘He left after sacrificing to the nymphs.’ Procopius refers to the nymph Daphne, who, pursued by Apollo, was transformed into a laurel tree (*daphnē* in Greek), a mosaic of which may be seen in a mosaic from the ‘House of Menander’ at Daphne, now on display at Princeton University, as also probably on the Yakto mosaic, so Lassus 1969, 141. See Downey 1961, 22, 83, De Giorgi 2016, 152. Lib. *Or.* 11.241 refers to nymphs said to dwell at Daphne. As Börm 2007, 282 n.4, points out, Khusro seems to be behaving here as a Graeco-Roman pagan.

11.6 τοῦ δὲ ἀρχαγγέλου Μιχαήλ τὸ ἱερόν καύσας ξὺν ἑτέροις τισὶν οἰκίαις, ‘burning the temple of the archangel Michael and some other buildings’. It appears that there were at least two churches of the archangel Michael in or around Daphne, since at 11.13 it becomes clear that Khusro’s men burnt down the wrong one; there was also a church of Michael in Antioch itself, which was lavishly rebuilt by Justinian after 540, as Procopius reports at *Aed.* ii.10.25. The precise location of the two churches at Daphne remains elusive. Mayer and Allen 2012, 98–100, gather the evidence, cf. Downey 1961, 545 n.183, Alpi 2009, 152, 155.

11.7 ἐς χῶρον κρημνώδη ἀμφὶ τὸν λεγόμενον Τρητὸν ἦλθε ξὺν ἑτέροις τισὶν, οὗ δὲ τοῦ ἀρχαγγέλου Μιχαήλ νεὼς ἐστίν, Εὐάριδος ἔργον, ‘(a Persian man) came with some others to a rocky place near the so-called Tretus, where there is the sanctuary of the archangel Michael, which is the work of Euaris’. On the churches of Michael see the preceding note. The Tretus probably refers to a natural feature: the Greek word τρητός, *trētos*, ‘perforated, with a hole in it’, is sometimes applied to

a mountain or mountain pass, e.g. Diod. Sic. 4.11.3, Pausanias ii.15.2, referring to an instance near Nemea, cf. *PECS*, s.v. Tretos. Euaris (Evaris), presumably the builder, is not otherwise known.

11.8 ἦν δὲ κρεοπώλης ὁ νεανίας, Αἰμάχος ὄνομα. ‘The youth was a butcher called Aeimachus.’ The name Aeimachus, meaning ‘the constant fighter’, is otherwise unattested. Kaldellis 2010b, 266–7, cf. idem 2018, 267, argues that the whole episode of Aeimachus, who slays the noble Persian, is either invented completely or at least touched up: his success is ‘a minor symbolic Roman victory set in the midst of a massive defeat’, which has parallels with David’s victory over Goliath. Given the circumstantial detail, it seems unlikely that the incident is the product of Procopius’ invention; the name, of course, could be a nickname, perhaps linked to the frequent clashes between factions. Whether Procopius generally admired the bravery of the youths, as Kaldellis argues, is open to doubt: at ii.8.17, 28–9, he does contrast their courage with the flight of the Roman soldiery at Antioch while noting that until then they had preferred to attack one another, though he is more critical at 8.6, cf. i.24.1–6.

11.9 καὶ ὁ μὲν ἐς τὸ ἔδαφος εὐθὺς ἔπεσεν, ὁ δὲ αὐτοῦ τὸν ἀκινάκην σπασάμενος κτείνει τὸν ἄνδρα. ‘The Persian fell to the ground at once and Aeimachus drew his opponent’s sabre and killed him.’ As Kaldellis 2010b, 266, points out, David also drew Goliath’s sword and slew him with it; David had likewise struck Goliath on the μέτωπον, *metōpon*, ‘forehead, temple’. See 1 Samuel (1 Kings) 17:50–1. On the word ἀκινάκης, *akinakēs*, ‘sabre’, see i.7.28n: it is used particularly for Persian weapons. For the Persian’s fall to the ground see 26.9n.

11.12 ταῦτα ὁ Χοσρόης μαθὼν καὶ τοῖς ξυμπεσοῦσι περιαλγήσας, ‘When Khusro heard this, he was very upset at what had happened.’ The king’s reaction and his decision to burn down a church as a reprisal recall the behaviour of Glon’s son at Amida following the death of his father, i.9.18. On the error of Khusro’s subordinates in destroying the church see ii.11.6n.

11.14–38 Khusro’s Visit to Apamea

From Antioch, Khusro evidently headed initially north-east, following the main road, turning south just after a bridge over the Orontes. He would then have followed the road parallel to the river towards Apamea, a total distance of c.110 km. See Mouterde and Poidebard 1945, 27–9, on

the course of the road. Khusro will have passed through what are now known as the Dead Cities of the Limestone Massif of Syria, a region that was enjoying remarkable prosperity in this period, cf. (e.g.) Tate 1992, Foss 1997, 226–9, Wickham 2006, 443–9. See figs. 25–6, pp. 417–18 above. *En route* to Apamea, and then passing from there to Chalcis, it is likely that he plundered some of these villages, notably in the Jebel Zawiye; the well-known Kaper Koraon treasure from one of these villages was built up in the period after 540, perhaps in order to replace liturgical items seized by Khusro. Apamea, the metropolis of the province of Syria II, was a thriving city in the sixth century, as the Belgian excavations have revealed. It is not surprising therefore that it should have interested Khusro and that he sought to extract as much wealth from it as he could. See Foss 1997, 207–17, surveying work on the city and highlighting the large houses of the local aristocracy with impressive mosaics; a plan of the city may be found on fig. C, cf. also *TIB* 15, 846–7. Fan Chiang 2015, 124–7, discusses Persian appetite for plunder, especially from churches. Trombley 1997, 159–67, finds traces of the Persian invasion in the local epigraphy, attesting to the construction of some defences in the wake of Khusro's attack, cf. Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 242–3.

Procopius' treatment of events at Apamea, and of the miracle of the piece of the Cross, has divided scholarly opinion: Kaldellis 2010b, 272, considers the historian's description of the miracle and conclusion (11.28) that the city was saved by God to be ironic, while Averil Cameron 1985, 30, 114, cf. Meier 2003a, 367 and n.117, Brodka 2004, 22–3, idem 2013, 350 n.4, Murray 2018, 113, emphasise the willingness of the historian to accept God's intervention in events here: his explicit statement that 'God saved Apamea' (11.28) is significant, as is his intervention at 11.25 to express his opinion about the disaster that would have occurred had it not been for a divine force. Evagr. *HE* iv.25–6 adds a few details to Procopius' account, based on his own experience of the event as a child. See also Petersen 2013, 521–2.

11.14 ἔστι δὲ ξύλον πηχυαῖον ἐν Ἀπαμείᾳ τοῦ σταυροῦ μέρος, ἐν ᾧ τὸν Χριστὸν ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις ποτὲ τὴν κόλασιν οὔτε ἀκούσιον ὑποστῆναι ὁμολογεῖται, κατὰ δὴ τὸν παλαιὸν χρόνον ἐνταῦθα πρὸς Σύρου ἀνδρὸς κομισθὲν λάθρα. 'There is a piece of wood in Apamea a cubit long, part of the Cross on which it is agreed that Christ willingly long ago underwent his punishment in Jerusalem, and which had been brought there secretly in ancient times by a Syrian.' Agapius, PO 8 (1912), 467–8, confirms Procopius' reference to a piece of the Cross

being deposited in Apamea, although in his version it was Constantine's mother Helena who, having found the Cross, gave half of it to the city. Athanassiadi 2005, 131–2, suggests that the fragment of the cross was brought in part to counter sacred pagan texts that had been housed in the city. Men. Prot. frg.17, cf. Mich. Syr. x.1 (333b/285) reports that Justin II, having initially wished to remove the entire fragment to Constantinople, was obliged to cut it in two and to leave half in Apamea. It escaped capture in 573 but was seized by the Persians in 611; Agapius, *loc. cit.* relates its return to Roman hands under Heraclius. See Frolov 1961, nos.36, 42 (182–5), Whitby 2000a, 224 n.68, Meier 2003a, 371–2. A cubit, *pēkhus*, was traditionally half as long again as a foot, the equivalent of 46.8 cm, cf. Schilbach 1970, 20.

Adshead 1996, 37, detects irony in the particle δὲ, *dē*, in this sentence, as part of an argument for Procopius' Samaritan allegiance (on which see Greatrex 2014b, 79), but it is hard to see why he would in any case be ironic about the time when (long ago) the relic was brought to Apamea.

11.15 ἦν δὲ χρυσῷ τε πολλῷ καὶ λίθοις ἐντίμοις ἐκόσμησαν, καὶ τρισὶ μὲν ἱερεῦσι παρέδοσαν, ἐφ' ᾧ ξὺν πάσῃ ἀσφαλείᾳ φυλάξουσιν, ἐξάγοντες δὲ ἀνὰ πᾶν ἔτος πανδημεὶ ἐν ἡμέρᾳ προσκυνοῦσι μιᾷ, 'which they decorated with gold and precious stones. They gave it into the care of three priests to keep it in complete safety, and on one day every year they bring it out and the people do homage to it.' See Frolov 1965 on reliquaries for pieces of the Cross (with illustrations), esp. 22 and 27. On guardians of relics of the Cross see Frolov 1961, 171–2. The feast mentioned may well be that of Encaenia, held in Jerusalem on 14 September, cf. Frolov 1961, *loc. cit.* and PZ vii.14a with PZT 277 n.222. As Meier 2003a, 366, 370–1, notes, this is the first mention of such veneration for a piece of the Cross.

11.16 καὶ παρὰ Θωμᾶν τὸν τῆς πόλεως ἀρχιερέα γενόμενοι, 'they came to Thomas, the chief priest of the city'. Thomas was the metropolitan of the province of Syria II, of which Apamea was the chief city. Procopius here prefers the classicising term ἀρχιερεύς, *arkhiereus*, 'chief priest', although at 11.24 he refers to him as *episkopos*, bishop. On the term ἱερεύς, *hiereus*, 'priest', which can also mean 'bishop', see i.7.30n. Procopius generally uses the term ἀρχιερεύς for high-ranking churchmen, often patriarchs or the pope, e.g. at 7.16 above for Ephraem, patriarch of Antioch, or v.14.4 for pope Silverius. Thomas had succeeded Paul as metropolitan sometime after 536; he was still in office in 553 when he

attended the fifth ecumenical council in Constantinople, cf. Fedalto 1988, 775. A previous incumbent of the see, Peter, at this point languished in exile, having just been condemned by a council in 536 for his anti-Chalcedonian views: see Honigsmann 1951, 58–62, *TIB* 15, 851–2.

11.17 τότε δὴ θέαμα ξυνηνέχθη λόγου τε καὶ πίστεως κρεῖσσον ἔνταῦθα γενέσθαι. ‘Then a sight was seen there beyond explanation and belief.’ On Procopius’ acceptance of the miracle he proceeds to describe see ii.11.14–38n. The phrase λόγου κρεῖσσον, *logou kreisson*, ‘stronger than explanation (or reason)’, i.e. ‘beyond description (or reason)’, is found already at Thuc. ii.50.1 (on which see Rusten 1989, 186), reporting the plague at Athens, but is used also by Christian authors for miracles, e.g. Greg. Naz. *De vita sua*, 1343. Procopius elsewhere uses it to refer to Belisarius’ preternatural success, v.5.17, vii.25.14, while at *Aed.* vi.6.9 it refers to the miracle of the spring that was discovered at Caputvada when Belisarius landed there in 533, cf. *Wars* iii.15.34–5. On the θέαμα, *theama*, ‘sight’, see Pazdernik 2022, 156 and n.46, and cf. 11.32 below.

11.17 τὸ μὲν γὰρ ξύλον ὁ ἱερεὺς φέρων ἐδείκνυσεν, ὑπερθεὶν δὲ αὐτοῦ σέλας πυρὸς ἐπεφέρετο καὶ τὸ κατ’ αὐτὸν τῆς ὀροφῆς μέρος φωτὶ πολλῷ ὑπὲρ τὸ εἰωθὸς κατελάμπετο. ‘As the priest carrying the wood was displaying it, there rose above it a tongue of fire, and the part of the ceiling around him was illuminated with an extraordinary light.’ The expression σέλας πυρὸς, *selas pyros*, ‘a tongue of fire’, is found already in Homer, *Il.* 19.366, cf. Eurip. *Tr.* 548–9. Hesychius, *Lexicon*, Σ366 defines it as the light or brightness of a fire. Although Dewing (and Kaldellis) translate ὀροφή, *orophē*, as ‘roof’, it is clear that Procopius is describing a light that shone within the church, cf. Veh, 279, Balty 1972, 213 (who offers a good translation of this whole section); hence ‘ceiling’ is preferable.

The miracle was witnessed by the young Evagrius, who was brought to the city by his parents, *HE* iv.26; he describes the fire ‘that did not consume’ in similar terms, adding that it was subsequently depicted on the church’s ceiling, cf. Meier 2003a, 372–3. The identity of the church is uncertain: the cathedral is the most likely, so Balty 1972, 213–14, but Reekmans in Balty, Balty and Koning, eds, 1972: 247–8, argues that it could also be the ‘Rotunda church’.

11.19 ὁ μὲν οὖν τῶν Ἀπαμέων δῆμος ὑπὸ τῆς τοῦ θαύματος ἡδονῆς ἐθαμβεῖτο, ‘Consequently the people of Apamea, such was their delight at the miracle, were amazed.’ The passive of the verb θαμβέω,

thambeō, meaning ‘I am astounded’ is commonly used by Christian writers, cf. e.g. Clem. Alex. *Strom.* v.14.96.

11.24 καὶ τὸ ἐπίσκοπον ἐκέλευε δοῦναι οὐ χίλια μόνον ἀργύρου σταθμὰ οὐδὲ τούτων δεκαπλάσια, ἀλλὰ <καὶ> τὰ κειμήλια ὅσα δὴ ἐνταῦθα ἔτυχε κείμενα, χρυσᾶ τε καὶ ἀργυρᾶ ξύμπαντα, μεγάλα ὑπερφυῶς ὄντα, ‘and he (Khusro) ordered the bishop to give him not just one thousand measures of silver, nor even ten times that but actually all the treasures that were there – all of gold and silver and of remarkably large size’. On the ‘measures’ of silver see ii.6.24n. The treasures referred to, the κειμήλια, *keimēlia*, probably refer above all to those kept in the church, whether in the form of liturgical vessels, such as chalices or patens, or in elaborate candelabra, or in furniture revetments: 40,000 pounds of silver, for instance, were used in the construction of Hagia Sophia (*Aed.* i.1.65). See Mundell Mango 1986, xiii–xiv, 3–4, noting that the word itself is used on some objects from the Kaper Koraon treasure, a village not far from Apamea. The surviving items from this village give some idea of the remarkable wealth that Khusro must have acquired from Apamea.

11.25 οἶμαι δ’ ἂν αὐτὸν καὶ τὴν πόλιν ὅλην ἀνδραποδίσασθαι τε καὶ ληίσασθαι οὐκ ἂν ἀποκνήσαι, εἰ μὴ τι θεῖον αὐτὸν ἐκ τοῦ ἐμφανοῦς διεκώλυσεν, ‘I think that he would not have shrunk from enslaving and plundering the whole city as well, had not some divine force manifestly prevented him.’ No doubt this is what the Apameans had also feared, given the fate of Antioch. Although for Kaldellis 2010b, 272, the ‘divine force’ is ‘precisely localized in the king’s arbitrary will’, it is generally interpreted as a classicising reference to God, as at 11.28 below, cf. i.25.36 with the note *ad loc.* See also Rubin, *PvK*, 388, Meier 2003a, 367 n.117, Brodka 2004, 22–3.

11.26 οὕτως αὐτὸν ἢ τε φιλοχρηματία ἐξέπλησσε καὶ ἔστρεφεν αὐτοῦ τὴν διάνοιαν ἢ τῆς δόξης ἐπιθυμία, ‘To such an extent was avarice driving him out of his senses and desire for fame twisting his mind’. Procopius raises the accusation of avarice already at ii.5.28, cf. the note *ad loc.* The δόξης ἐπιθυμία, *doxēs epithymia*, ‘desire for fame’ which inspired many in antiquity, is sometimes positively portrayed, e.g. at Dion. Hal. 5.29.4, and sometimes negatively, Plut. *Cam.* 37.3, cf. Dio Cassius 68.17.1 with Lepper 1948, 191–7. The two motives here raised, greed and lust for glory, are frequently paired by Joh. Chrys., e.g. at *In epist. ad Rom. Hom.* 15.3, PG 60.544.

11.27 κλέος γάρ οἱ μέγα τοὺς τῶν πόλεων ἀνδραποδισμοὺς ᾤετο εἶναι, ‘For he thought that enslaving cities was great glory for him.’ Procopius attributes a similar condemnation to the doctor Stephanus in his address to Khusro at 26.33 below, using very similar terms, cf. Brodka 1998, 118–19, idem 2004, 122–3. Dahn 1865, 126 n.2, detects an inconsistency in Procopius’ criticism, given that he defends Justinian’s imperialist aspirations at ii.2.14–15, cf. *Aed.* i.1.12.

11.28 ἅπερ μοι ἐν τοῖς ὀπισθε λελέξεται λόγοις. ἀλλ’ ὁ θεὸς, ὥσπερ εἴρηται, Ἀπάμειαν διεσώσατο, ‘as I shall recount in subsequent chapters. But God, as was stated, saved Apamea.’ Procopius refers to 13.16–28, Khusro’s attempt to capture Dara *en route* back to Persia in 540, and to his destruction of Callinicum in 541, 21.30–2. He also refers back to 11.25, concerning the sparing of Apamea. Kaldellis 2010b, 272, argues that Apamea had hardly been saved, given that Khusro seized so much booty there, but it is clear that contemporaries regarded it as having been spared, as Evagr. *HE* iv.26 and Joh. Eph. *HE* vi.6 testify.

11.30 τοῦτ’ δὲ τὸ ξύλον, σωτήριόν τε ἡμῖν καὶ τίμιόν ἐστι, τοῦτο, ἰκετεύω σε καὶ δέομαι, δός μοι, ‘but this wood is our salvation and is priceless to us; this, I beseech you and beg you, grant to me’. An impassioned plea from Thomas, the repetition of the demonstrative pronoun οὗτος, *houtos*, ‘this’ reinforcing his request; the form τοῦτί, *touti*, at the start is itself emphatic.

11.32 οὗ δὴ καὶ αὐτὸς ἀναβὰς θεατῆς γενέσθαι τῶν ποιουμένων ἐν σπουδῇ ἐποιεῖτο. ‘He went there himself in great enthusiasm to watch the events.’ Although Kaldellis 2004, 121, finds Khusro’s behaviour ‘surreal’, Börm 2006, 311–12, convincingly argues that it was a calculated move on the king’s part to display his royal credentials, challenging Justinian’s rule. See already Alan Cameron 1976, 182–3, cf. Kaldellis 2004, 122, Puk 2014, 185–6, noting sixth-century parallels such as the Samaritan rebel leader Justasas. Curiously, no vestiges of a hippodrome have been found in Apamea, although two lead curse tablets, aimed against Blue charioteers, confirm that there must have been a venue for the races; one specifically mentions the hippodrome. See Van Rengen 1984, esp. 231–2, who notes references in ecclesiastical sources to activities of the Blues.

Khusro was accompanied to the games, Evagr. *HE* iv.25 adds, by the metropolitan Thomas, who chose to do so exceptionally in order to foster good relations.

The expression ἐν σπουδῇ ποιοῦμαι, *en spoudē poioumai*, ‘I am eager (to do something)’, cf. Thuc. iv.30.3, σπουδὴν ποιοῦμαι, *spoudēn poioumai*, is rare before Procopius, but common in his work, e.g. at ii.30.18, vi.15.36, cf. Scheftlein 1894, 7.

ii.32 ἐπεὶ δὲ ἡκηκόει πολλῷ πρότερον Ἰουστινιανὸν βασιλέα χρώματος τοῦ Βενέτου, ὃ δὴ κυάνεόν ἐστιν, ἐκτόπως ἔρᾶν, ‘Since he had heard a long time ago that the Emperor Justinian was extraordinarily devoted to the Venetus colour, that is, the Blue.’ On Justinian’s support for the Blues see i.24.2n, cf. *Anecd.* 7.1–21 and Averil Cameron 1985, 75. Procopius describes the emperor’s passion as ‘extraordinary’ or ‘intemperate’: the adverb is certainly not positive, cf. iii.6.2, *Anecd.* i.17, 4.41, likewise (e.g.) Aristaenetos, *ep.* i.13 (p.32.10), Choric. *Decl.* 9.2.21 (p.395.1–2), Evagr. *HE* iv.30 (of Justinian’s love for others’ possessions), all (probably) sixth-century authors. See Kaldellis 2004, 122, on the depiction of Khusro as an ‘anti-emperor’ to Justinian.

ii.35 ὅπερ ἐξεπίτηδες ὁ Χοσρόης γεγονέναι οἰόμενος ἡγανάκει τε καὶ ξὺν ἀπειλῇ ἀνεβόα τὸν Καῖσαρα προτερῆσαι τῶν ἄλλων οὐ δέον, ‘Khusro thought that this had been done deliberately and angrily and threateningly shouted that Caesar had unjustly got ahead of the others.’ Evidently Khusro believed that the race was being fixed. Ammianus 16.10.14 implies that manipulation of results was indeed practised, as Khusro himself went on to do, cf. Börm 2006, 312 n.45, Puk 2014, 186. The reference to Justinian as ‘Caesar’ accurately reflects Persian practice, cf. Börm 2007, 156. See also Whitby 1994, 244–5, Börm 2006, 315, on the personal rivalry between the two rulers. Gariboldi 2006, 71–2, even notes claims by Khusro in a Persian source to have spent the money received from Justinian on the Roman eastern provinces.

ii.35 ὅπερ ἐπειδὴ οὕτως ἐπέπρακτο ὥσπερ ἐκεῖνος ἐκέλευε, νικᾶν οὕτως ὃ τε Χοσρόης καὶ μέρος τὸ πράσινον ἔδοξεν. ‘When his orders were carried out, Khusro and the Green faction thus appeared to win.’ Procopius emphasises that Khusro gained merely the appearance of victory: his attempt to outdo Justinian in the hippodrome was thus essentially a failure. Given the number of witnesses, it is unlikely that Procopius has invented the episode, cf. Börm 2006, 312. See also Canepa 2009, 167–73, who draws attention to displays put on in the hippodrome in Constantinople at which Persian ambassadors were present, cf. i.26.3n.

11.36 ἐνταῦθα τῶν τις Ἀπαμέων Χοσρόη ἐς ὄψιν ἦκων ἡτιᾶτο Πέρσην ἄνδρα ἐς τὴν οἰκίαν τὴν αὐτοῦ ἀναβάντα τὴν παῖδα οὔσαν παρθένον βιάζεσθαι. ‘Then one of the Apameans came before Khusro and accused a Persian of entering his house and raping his daughter, who was a virgin.’ The hippodrome gave the population the chance to air grievances to their ruler, as in Constantinople: Khusro was thus acting as emperor. But he was also performing his duty as Persian king, seeking to uphold justice. See Börm 2006, 313–14, Puk 2014, 186.

The episode is paralleled by a case at vii.8.12–25 where, at Naples in 543, Totila punishes one of his soldiers for raping a girl; when his army complains, he justifies his conduct by insisting that respect for justice is essential for victory. His soldiers accept his reasoning, the guilty man is executed, and the girl’s father compensated. It is likely that the two episodes are designed to underline the contrast between the two men: see Fan Chiang 2018, 238–40.

11.37 καὶ ἐπεὶ παρῆν ἤδη, ἀνασκολοπισθῆναι αὐτὸν ἐν τῷ στρατοπέδῳ ἐπέστελλε, ‘As soon as he came, he commanded that he be impaled in the camp.’ Khusro, boiling with anger, acts precipitately; see i.21–2g on his temper. At first sight, his action would seem to correspond to what one would expect from a just ruler, but the emphasis on the king’s anger undercuts this; Totila, by contrast, addresses his own men calmly, vii.8.15. See Börm 2007, 99 n.1. Impalement was a punishment traditionally associated with the Persians: see Börm 2007, 100 n.1, 251, cf. Hdt. i.128.2 with Schmitt 2004, 676–7, Rollinger 2010, 593, 611. *Contra* Schmitt, however, Procopius is not emphasising Persian cruelty by specifying this punishment, since he approves Belisarius’ use of the same punishment on unruly soldiers in 533 at iii.12.10, 22.

11.38 γνοὺς δὲ ὁ δῆμος παντὶ σθένει ἀνέκραγον ἐξαίσιον οἶον, πρὸς τῆς τοῦ βασιλέως ὀργῆς τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐξαιτούμενοι. ‘When the people heard of this, they shouted with all their might, making a terrible noise, demanding that the man be delivered from the king’s anger.’ *Prima facie* it seems unlikely that the Apameans would uphold the rights of a Persian soldier against those of their compatriots. But the text clearly refers to the *dēmos*, which most naturally would be taken to refer to the ‘people’ of Apamea, cf. 11.19. See Börm 2006, 313–15, for a detailed discussion: as he notes, there are no grounds for seeking to interpret the *dēmos* as the Persian army, even if in the parallel case in *Gothic Wars*, it is the Gothic army that complains to Totila. It is possible, as he countenances,

that the whole episode was staged in order to boost the reputation of Khusro; in such a case, the soldier might not have been guilty. Alternatively the Persian army may have exerted pressure on the population. As Börm 2007, 99, notes, the population's demand upstages Khusro's attempt to act justly: they seize the moral high ground. See also Fan Chiang 2015, 116–18, who doubts Procopius' account.

Khusro's accession to the demand, followed by the soldier's execution, reinforces his image as insincere and cruel, even if Totila similarly executed the Gothic soldier subsequently, vii.8.25. See van Nuffelen 2019b, 7, who sees the account as an attempt by Procopius to underline the unreliability of the king despite his pretensions to be Justinian's rival. The use of the preposition πρὸς, *pros*, 'from' with the genitive and the verb ἐξαίτουμαι is typically Procopian and not found in earlier Attic authors: see Schefflein 1894, 49 and cf. vii.20.27.

ii.12 Khusro's Extortion of Funds from Chalcis and Edessa

From Apamea Khusro proceeded north-west to Chalcis (ad Belum) along a well-attested road, cf. Mouterde and Poidebard 1945, 40–1, a distance of 86 km. Whether because of the limited resources of the city or out of concern for his own supplies, he quickly pushed on eastwards across the Euphrates and on to Edessa. See fig. 26, p. 418. The inhabitants bought the king off for the same sum as their compatriots at Chalcis, but in this case Procopius chooses to expand his account with two episodes involving a legendary early king of the city. There is a sense in his narrative that the tide has turned against the Persians, even if no Roman army has appeared. Just as God had saved Apamea, so he intervenes by thwarting Khusro's plan to assault the city, even by causing delays in his march there (12.32). This is a theme invoked again by Procopius at ii.26–7 when Khusro returns to seize the city that defied him, once more without success.

Since the Persians did not succeed in capturing any of the cities in the course of their withdrawal, few sources report on their movements. Evagr. *HE* iv.27 briefly summarises Procopius' account, but prefers then to pass immediately to an account of the siege of 543 to highlight the role of the image of Christ 'not made by human hands', but *Chr. Ede.* 105 (13/11, also tr. in Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 107) confirms that the sum of two *centenaria* was handed over by the Edessenes to secure Khusro's departure.

See Stein 1949, 491–2, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 106–7, Petersen 2013, 522–3.

12.1 Ἐπεὶ δὲ ἐς Χαλκίδα πόλιν ἀφίκετο, Βεροίας πόλεως τέτρασι καὶ ὀγδοήκοντα σταδίοις διέχουσιν, ‘When he came to the city of Chalcis, eighty-four stades from Beroea.’ Since Chalcis lies some 27 km south-west of Beroea, Procopius appears to have underestimated the distance. See Appendix 2, p. 675. Chalcis, the Syriac Qinnašrīn, was the base of the *dux* of Syria I and a significant city, situated at an important crossroads of north-south and east-west routes: see Kaegi 1992, 41, 162–3, Trombley 1997, 184, cf. Greatrex 2007c, 89, 93, 95. The condition of its defences at this point was probably bad: Proc. *Aed.* ii.11.1, 8, two separate notices apparently on the same city, implies that they had deteriorated considerably before Justinian undertook his repairs; these can be dated thanks to an inscription to 550/1, *IGLS* 348 (= Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 243, Yon and Gattier 2009, no.16, 84–5). Whether the city had actually been sacked by al-Mundhir in 529 may be doubted, but the region had been the focus of incursions, notably the invasion of 531. See Monceaux and Brossé 1925, Mouterde and Poidebard 1945, 4–9, Fourdrin 1994, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 86 with 267 n.22, 243, Roques 2011, 201–2 n.142, *TIB* 15, 1048–9.

12.1 καὶ τοὺς στρατιώτας, ὅσους ἐνταῦθα ξυμβαίνει εἶναι, ξὺν τῷ ἡγεμόνι ἐκδοῖεν σφίσι, ‘and surrender the soldiers who were there together with their commander’. The commander, named just below as Adonachus – who may be identical to an Odonachus referred to elsewhere in Procopius, e.g. at viii.9.5, cf. *PLRE* iii, Adonachus – is described as an ἄρχων, *arkhōn*, which is likely to refer to a *dux*, cf. ii.8.2n. Presumably there were few soldiers remaining; most of Adonachus’ men may have been withdrawn by Buzes, as had occurred at Hierapolis, ii.6.7. Khusro is likely to have wanted to capture the men partly for propaganda purposes, reinforcing his claims to superiority over Justinian, and perhaps to ransom them. His sparing of the city, having heard that it contained no soldiers, may reflect his upholding of his duty as king to spare the defenceless: see Börm 2006, 308–9, idem 2007, 96, 290–1.

12.2 Χαλκιδεῖς δὲ ἐς δέος μέγα πρὸς ἑκατέρου βασιλέως ἔμπεπτωκότες, ‘The people of Chalcis were terrified of both rulers.’ As Rubin, *PvK*, 389, observes, this represents further implicit criticism of Justinian and his insistence that no ransoms be paid by any eastern cities, cf. ii.7.16 with the note *ad loc.* and Börm 2007, 265 n.3.

12.2 χρυσοῦ δὲ κεντηνάρια δύο συλλέξαντες μόλις, ἐπεὶ πόλιν οὐ λίαν εὐδαίμονα ᾤκουν, ‘With some difficulty they managed to gather together two *centenaria* of gold (their city was not particularly rich).’

Chalcis lies at the north-west edge of the Syrian steppe-lands, which are largely barren. There were extensive imperial estates in the region, from which the Emperor Julian had been able to despatch grain to Antioch in 362; the wealth of the estates, however, need not have benefited the city. See Decker 2009, 31, 83. Recent incursions by al-Mundhir, noted just above, may have had a serious impact on the city's resources. On the *centenarion* see i.22.3n.

12.3 ἐνθένδε οὐκέτι ὁ Χοσρόης ἐβούλετο τὴν ἀποπορείαν ἥπερ ἐληλύθει ποιήσασθαι, 'From there Khusro did not want to continue his return journey by the way he had come.' It was by now high summer, perhaps July: supplies in the steppe-lands adjoining the Euphrates would be scarce. The king thus had little choice but to seek an alternative route, while the prospect of extorting further wealth from the Roman provinces was naturally enticing. He therefore probably proceeded eastwards from Chalcis, veering a little to the north to pass by Lake Gabbulon and the fort at Gabbulon (on which see i.18.8n, where the Persian advance of 531 was halted). See Mousterde and Poidebard 1945, 136, 156; Gatier 1995 discusses this region in general, where, in the fifth century, the holy man Alexander *Akoimētos* had travelled, see esp. 448 on this route.

Several sections of the text here are quoted in Suda, Ω116 (12.1), Ζ120 (12.2), Α3485 (12.3), Ε1301 (12.7). See ii.3.54n on such clusters.

12.4 γέφυραν οὖν ζεύξας ἀμφὶ Ὀββάνης τὸ χωρίον, ὅπερ τοῦ ἐν Βαρβαλισσῷ φρουρίου τεσσαράκοντα σταδίου ἀπέχει, 'So he bridged it at Obbane, which is forty stades from the fortress at Barbalissus.' Procopius describes the linking or yoking of the river, using the verb ζεύγνυμι, *zeugnymi*, cf. *LSJ*, s.v., IIb. As Gaborit 2015, 64–70 (§§105–10), demonstrates, there were no stone bridges across the Euphrates along this stretch of the river, although it was fordable at certain points, cf. Mitford 2018, 91. Obbane is not otherwise attested; the distance given by Procopius equates to about 8.4 km. Barbalissus is identified with Kalat Bâlis, modern Eski Meskene, on which see Gaborit 2015 B31, 172–80, *TIB* 15, 945–6. Musil 1927, 315, 318–20, identifies this crossing with the Thapsacus of Xenophon, *Anab.* i.4.11, Arrian, *Anab.* iii.7.1–2, cf. Gaborit 2015, 65–6 and see also Gatier 1995, 448. Musil suggests that the name Obbane is derived from the Syriac word *'wb* (cf. Payne Smith 1903, 403), meaning a bay or a bend in the river, and from the Greek placename Aenus (Ainos), which is placed by Steph. Byz. on the Euphrates, no.135, p.99.8–9, cf. *TIB* 15, 821–2, 1557. Harper and Wilkinson 1979, 324, suggest an identification with Tell Mureibet, just

north of Eski Meskene, which corresponds roughly to Musil's location (at Samûma), cf. Honigmann 1923, 66 no.334. Mouterde and Poidebard 1945, 155, note a ford 7 km downstream from Barbalissus at Dibsi (Faraj), on the other hand, on which see Gaborit 2015, B32, 180–7.

Procopius provides no details on how exactly Khusro built his bridge, but at 21.21–2 below he notes that the Persian army carried with it fastening hooks for the erection of wooden bridges, cf. Ravegnani 2009, 326. See also Börm 2007, 163, Comfort 2008, 53. Agath. ii.22.2 recounts how Mihr-Mihroe was able to build a wooden bridge across the Phasis in Lazica in 554. Khusro's bridge was evidently a pontoon construction – see Gaborit's discussion, cited above – which could be rapidly assembled and disassembled, using boats, no doubt commandeered, lined up in parallel. Mitford 2018, 157 n.6 (cf. 158 fig.96), offers a discussion of Roman pontoon bridges in the context of the Euphrates further north. Cf. Ammianus 23.3.9 and Zos. iii.13.2 on Julian's fleet, which contained vessels specifically designed to act as a bridge; see Tardieu 1990, 95–102, on the nature of this bridge. Khusro's haste to demolish the bridge (12.5) indicates a concern that the Romans might attack and cut off part of his army on the west bank: his forces were vulnerable while crossing the river. Ammianus 23.5.5 reports how Julian quickly demolished the bridge he had erected over the Khabur, in this case to ensure that no soldier thought of retreating. Whether the Antiochene captives that accompanied the army (cf. 13.2 below) were involved in the construction is uncertain; their presence must at any rate have increased the time required to cross.

Tabari, 897/157, reports that Khusro repaired all the wooden bridges that had been damaged by the Mazdakites.

12.6 τότε δὴ φιλοτιμία τις Χοσρόην ἐσῆλθε πόλιν Ἐδεσσαν ἐξελεῖν, 'Then Khusro was seized with a burning ambition to take the city of Edessa', cf. 11.31, where it is the same ambition, *philotimia*, that encourages the king to watch the circus races in the hippodrome at Apamea. This quality is not always a negative one in Procopius: at v.18.10 Belisarius' bodyguards vie with one another to protect their commander, cf. viii.26.8. Even after his failure in 540 Khusro tried again three years later, as Procopius describes at ii.26–7.

The Persian king was not the only figure to be vexed by the supposed impregnability of Edessa (12.7): Pope Gelasius, *Decret. Gelas.* v.8.1–2 rejected as apocryphal the correspondence between Abgar and Christ, and presumably with it the promise given to protect the city, cf. Brodka 2013a, 355 and n.23. See further ii.12.20–30n.

12.8–19 Abgar and Augustus

This curious tale, which Procopius may well have obtained from the Edessenes themselves, is without parallel, cf. Rubin, *PvK*, 389. It concerns the same King Abgar who was believed to have corresponded with Christ, a story that gained widespread circulation. It might be inferred that the wisdom of this legendary ruler attracted further anecdotes that illustrated his character. The story itself resembles in tone the excursus at i.5.10–40, which also involves earth transported from a native land: in the earlier digression Procopius recounts how the Armenian King Arsaces swore loyalty to the Persian King Pacurius while standing on Persian soil in the Persian king's tent, but once on Armenian soil became insubordinate (5.20–6). Sarris 2018b, 238–9, links these two episodes to Procopius' dream at iii.12.3–5 in which servants brought to Belisarius earth and flowers, a sign of his future conquest of North Africa and concludes that 'all living creatures, Procopius seems to be telling us, were rooted emotionally, psychologically and economically in their native soil and would only give it up if pressed by fate or circumstances'. Palmer 2000, esp. 134, argues that the references to Augustus and Christ may have been part of an attempt by the city to attract funds from Justinian to improve the city's defences.

12.8 Αὐγαρος ἦν τις ἐν τοῖς ἄνω χρόνοις Ἐδέσσης τοπάρχης (οὕτω γὰρ τοὺς κατὰ ἔθνος βασιλεῖς τηνικαῦτα ἐκάλουν), 'A certain Abgar was toparch of Edessa in former times (for this was the term by which local kings were known then).' The Abgar referred to is a contemporary of Augustus, as is made clear in the next section. Although there was an Edessene King Abgar at this time, Abgar V Ukkama (the Black, 4 B.C.–A.D. 7, A.D. 13–50), with whom the correspondence with Christ became associated, scholars now associate the conversion of the king and his kingdom with the reign of Abgar VIII (the Great, 177–212). See Segal 1970, 10–12, 66–7, Guscini 2016, 9–10. It is generally doubted that a conversion actually took place: so Brock 1992, 221–9, Ross 2001, 131–6, Brodka 2013a, 351, although Palmer 1992, 21–5, is willing to accept it.

The term τοπάρχης, *toparkhēs*, 'toparch' or 'governor of a district' is found applied to Abgar likewise in Euseb. *HE* i.13.5 and elsewhere in this section, from where Procopius may have derived it. Eusebius claimed, *loc. cit.*, to have found the correspondence between Abgar and Jesus in the archives of Edessa and it is the title that the king applies to himself at the start of his letter (13.6). Mal. 18.61 also uses the term for an Abgar.

Brodka 2013a, 351 and n.7, is rightly hesitant to suppose that Procopius' explanation of the term must be linked to Euseb. *HE* i.13.2, where reference is made to Abgar's ruling over the *ethnē*, peoples, beyond the Euphrates: the coincidence of the word ἔθνος, *ethnos*, is hardly sufficient to justify the inference. Theodoret, *Comm. in Isaiam* 5.247–8 (vol.2, p.86), uses the same formulation to refer to local kings in Lebanon.

12.8 ὁ δὲ Αὔγαρος οὗτος ξυνετώτατος ἐγεγόνει τῶν κατ' αὐτὸν ἀνθρώπων ἀπάντων, καὶ ἀπ' αὐτοῦ βασιλεῖ Αὐγούστῳ ἐς τὰ μάλιστα φίλος. 'This Abgar was the most intelligent man of his generation and as a result greatly honoured as a friend by the Emperor Augustus.' As just noted, the story, if it has any foundation, is likely to concern Abgar VIII rather than Abgar V, the contemporary of Augustus. Abgar VIII did visit Rome during the reign of Septimius Severus (193–211) and was allowed to retain control of his kingdom, despite perhaps having initially backed his rival for the throne, Pescennius Niger: the reference at 12.9 to an alliance could refer to this. See Segal 1970, 14, Sommer 2005, 240–1, cf. Ross 2001, 46–57, a detailed discussion, with Dio Cassius 80.16.2 on the lavish welcome accorded to Abgar in Rome.

The motif of the wise foreigner retained at the court of a powerful ruler recalls the situation of Democedes at Hdt. iii.130–8 and Histiaeus of Miletus at v.24–5, 35, both kept at Darius' court against their will.

12.11 ἐστάλη μὲν ὡς κυνηγετήσων ἐς τὰ ἐπὶ Ῥώμης χωρία· μελέτην γὰρ περὶ ταῦτα κατεσπουδασμένην τινὰ ἐτύγχανεν ἔχων, 'He went into the countryside around Rome ostensibly on a hunting expedition, for he was in fact very fond of this pursuit.' Julius Africanus, *Cesti*, frg.12.25–34, confirms the skill of members of Abgar's court at hunting and archery, cf. Palmer 2000, 134.

12.19 ὁ δὲ ἀποκρινάμενος Ἐδεσσηνοῖς ἐνεγκεῖν ἔφη λύπην τε ἀζήμιον καὶ χαρὰν ἀκερδῇ, τὴν τοῦ ἵπποδρομίου παραδηλῶν τύχην. 'He answered that he brought to the people of Edessa pain without loss and joy without gain, hinting at the fortunes of the hippodrome.' Holcroft 1653, 47, has 'a grief without damage and a joy without pain'. This *bon mot* caps the digression, illustrating Abgar's wisdom. The same oblique reference to the emotions of the hippodrome may be found in *Patria* i.38, p.136 (tr. Berger, 23) in the context of a (wholly fictional) reconciliation between Septimius Severus and Pescennius Niger in Byzantium: two obscure Roman philosophers cite the phrase, described

as an *apophthegma*, at a banquet, but Niger's philosophers are unable to interpret it. An old man, however, explains, 'This means a contest of horse racers and of fighters' (tr. Berger). It is equally quoted by Anna Comnena in a remark attributed to the general Melissenus Nicephorus, viii.3.1, but merely to emphasise the insignificance of a victory just won over the Scythians (Pechenegs). The hippodrome at Edessa lay outside the walls to the north-west, cf. Segal 1970, 163–4, Palmer 2000, 128, and is referred to by Procopius at *Aed.* ii.7.9; Palmer, *loc. cit.*, suggests that it could have been built by Septimius Severus.

12.20–30 Jesus' Promise to Abgar to Protect Edessa

The correspondence between Abgar and Christ has occasioned much scholarly interest: not only does Eusebius, *HE* i.13 (in the fourth century), provide the text of a letter from each side, but so does a Syriac work, the *Doctrina Addai* or *Teaching of Addai*, ch.3–4, a work of the fifth century. Both appear to have had access to an earlier Syriac version, which may have been elaborated in the second or early third century largely to boost the city's Christian credentials. See Illert 2007, 21–3, for a summary of the debate, cf. Desreumaux 1993, 33–6. Although Eusebius, *HE* i.13.5, claims to have found the letters in the archives of Edessa, it is doubtful whether this is correct: see Brock 1992, 226, cf. Mirkovic 2004, 19, 92–3, though Palmer 2002, 69, is more positive.

Procopius merely summarises the details of the correspondence, doubtless because it was so well known by his own day. Instead, he concentrates on the protection promised to the city by Christ. The Edessenes claimed to have found it in the letter from Christ, i.e. the one inserted into Eusebius' *HE* and the *Doctrina Addai*; it was subsequently inscribed on the city gates, as Procopius 12.26 notes. The legend of the city's impregnability is first attested in the *Itinerarium Egeriae* (ch.19.9) in the 380s, where Egeria also notes that the versions of the correspondence that circulated varied in length. Mirkovic 2004, 61 fig.1, offers a useful diagram of the early traditions. The tradition of divine protection may have arisen from Shapur I's failure to capture it during his otherwise highly successful invasions of the eastern empire in the mid third century; the fact that he makes no claim to have taken it is likely to indicate that it had held out against him, as later Greek sources imply. See Millar 1993, 166–7, Ross 2001, 21, Illert 2007, 27, Brodka 2013a, 355 n.24, although H. Drijvers 1982, 279, assumes that the city was captured, as does Mirkovic 2004, 35. The promise became well known over the fifth

century, featuring in inscriptions not only at Edessa itself, but also at other cities, such as Philippi and Ephesus, cf. Toth 2020, 74–7. The successful defence of Edessa in 503 against Kavadh can only have reinforced belief in its validity, whatever the qualms of Pope Gelasius (cf. ii.12.6n). See Ps.-Josh. 5, 60 with Greatrex 1998a, 103–6.

It is worth underlining that Procopius makes no mention, either here or at ii.26–7, of the subsequently famous image of Edessa ‘not made by human hands’, the Mandylion. See ii.26–7n. Although it has been supposed that Procopius’ account is based on Eusebius’, supplemented by some local information, Brodka 2013a points to significant differences from the Eusebian version. As he indicates, given that Procopius refers (12.26) to more than one earlier writer, Eusebius can at most have been one of his sources. See also Frendo 1997, 109–16, who argues that the insistence of Roman sources, including Procopius, on the divine protection for Edessa reflects imperial propaganda.

Bibliography: Segal 1970, 62–76, H. Drijvers 1982, 178–80, Brock 1992, Palmer 1992, Desreumaux 1993, H. Drijvers 1998, Palmer 2002, Brodka 2013a, Kavvadas 2018, 86–7, Mecella 2021, 185–6. Illert 2007 handily gathers together all the relevant texts, including the inscriptions, with a German translation and commentary. Guscini 2009 (to be used with caution, cf. Averil Cameron 2009) and 2016 are more interested in the image of Edessa, though there is a useful discussion of the Abgar legend and the promise of invulnerability at 2016, 9–19.

12.20 Χρόνῳ δὲ ὕστερον πόρρῳ που ἡλικίας Αὐγαρος ἦκων νόσῳ ποδάγρας χαλεπῆς τινος ὑπερφυῶς ἦλῶ, ‘Sometime later, Abgar, who was now an old man, was seized with a very acute attack of gout.’ Procopius diverges from earlier accounts firstly by highlighting Abgar’s advanced years and secondly by specifying that he suffered from gout, ποδάγρα, *podagra*. Euseb. *HE* i.13.8 merely mentions a disease, cf. *Doctr. Add.* 4 (though Desreumaux’s translation, 57, has leprosy); Euseb. *HE* i.13.18 (cf. *Doctr. Add.* 10) mentions a certain Abdu, who was healed of gout by Christ’s envoy Thaddaeus. The *Acts of Mari*, a work probably of the sixth century (so Jullien and Jullien 2003, 1, Harrak 2005, xvii), ch.2, also refers to Abgar’s gout, cf. Illert 2007, 253. As Brodka 2013a, 351–2, infers, Procopius appears to have had access to a different version of the story from Eusebius’, one that is taken up also by Syriac sources. See further Palmer 2009, 193, for a table showing how later sources expanded on Abgar’s illnesses. Abgar’s infirmity provides an explanation for why he did not visit Christ himself; *Doctr. Add.* 3, on the other hand, asserts that he

did not want to encroach on Roman territory for fear of a breach with the empire, cf. Euseb. *HE* i.13.16 with Brodka 2013a, 351.

12.22 ὑπὸ δὲ τὸν χρόνον ἐκεῖνον Ἰησοῦς ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ παῖς ἐν σώματι ὦν τοῖς ἐν Παλαιστίνῃ ἀνθρώποις ὡμίλει, ‘At that time Jesus, the Son of God, was incarnate and lived among the men of Palestine.’ As Brodka 2013a, 352–3, observes, this is another passage indicative of the Christian standpoint of Procopius. On this debate see ii.9.13n, 10.4n, 11.14–38n and cf. Introduction, pp. 13–14. For the phrase ἐν σώματι ὦν, *en sōmati ōn*, ‘incarnate’, lit. ‘being in the flesh’ cf. *Aed.* v.7.3 (also with the verb ὁμιλέω, *homileō*, ‘I consort with’). It is found earlier in Asterius, *Hom.* 13.2 (p.183).

12.23 νεκρούς τε γὰρ καλῶν ἐξανίστη ὥσπερ ἐξ ὕπνου καὶ πηροῖς τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς οὕτω τεχθεῖσιν ἀνέωγε, σώματός τε ὅλου λεύκας ἐκάθαιρε καὶ ποδῶν πῆρωσιν ἔλυσεν, ‘For he called up the dead and awakened them as if from sleep; he opened the eyes of men born blind, cleansed leprosy from the entire body, removed lameness.’ In the letter of Abgar to Jesus reported by Euseb. *HE* i.13.6 there is a comparable list of miracles, although he mentions also the expulsion of demons and unclean spirits, cf. Matthew 11:5 and Luke 7:22. As García Romero, 221, nn.97–8, points out, Procopius uses a more classical vocabulary than the evangelists for describing Christ’s miracles, who render leprosy as λεπρός, *lepros*, rather than λεύκη, *leukē*, as here.

12.24 ἐθάρσησέ τε καὶ γράμματα πρὸς τὸν Ἰησοῦν γράψας ἐδεῖτο αὐτοῦ ἀπαλλάσσεσθαι μὲν τῆς Ἰουδαίας καὶ τῶν ἐνταῦθα ἀγνωμόνων ἀνθρώπων, αὐτῷ δὲ τὸ λοιπὸν ξυμβιοτεῦν, ‘(Abgar) was heartened by it (news of Jesus’ miracles); and he wrote a letter to Jesus, asking him to leave Judaea and its unappreciative people and live with him in the future.’ As already noted, Procopius merely summarises the letters exchanged between the two; other sources gave the text of the correspondence. Euseb. *HE* i.13.8–9 reports Abgar’s invitation to Jesus to come to Edessa, cf. *Doctr. Add.* 4.

Criticism of the Jews’ treatment of Christ is to be found at Euseb. *HE* i.13.8, cf. *Doctr. Add.* 4; the Abgar tradition seems to have acquired an anti-Jewish tone in the fifth century, perceptible in the *Doctr. Add.*, on which see J. Drijvers 1997, esp. 301–4, Ross 2001, 133. The adjective ἀγνωμών, *agnōmōn*, ‘ungrateful’ (cf. Lampe, 22) is applied to the Jews by various Christian writers, e.g. Romanus the Melode, *Hymn* 32.pr2.2

(vol.4, p.30). Cristini 2019 offers a useful discussion of how to translate the noun ἀγνωμοσύνη, *agnōmosynē*, in Procopius, cf. ii.7.28n.

12.25 τὴν δὲ ὑγίειαν τῷ γράμματι ὑποσχόμενος, ‘but promising him (Abgar) health in the letter’. Procopius passes over the intermediary sent by Christ to heal Abgar, whose identity varies between the sources, whether Addai (Thaddaeus) or Thomas. See Euseb. *HE* i.13.11–18, *Doctr. Add.* 5–10 with Segal 1970, 65–6, Brodka 2013a, 353.

12.26 φασὶ δὲ καὶ τοῦτο αὐτὸν ἐπειπεῖν, ὥς οὐδὲ ἡ πόλις ποτὲ βαρβάροις ἀλώσιμος ἔσται. ‘They say that he added also that the city would never be captured by barbarians.’ As Procopius goes on to explain, this element of the letter had been omitted from previous accounts. He notes how the Edessenes had themselves found it and subsequently inscribed it on the city gates; clearly he had consulted the Edessenes and had probably seen the inscription for himself, cf. Brodka 2013a, 360, Mecella 2021, 185–6, though there is no need to see Procopius’ φασί, *phasi*, ‘they say’, as sceptical.

See ii.12.20–30n for the origins of this legend, which gained strength from previous failures of the Persians to capture the city. Procopius’ pride in bringing to light an element that had escaped his predecessors recalls Agathias’ description of his scholarship at iv.26.4, where he notes that he had found the story of Yazdgerd’s adoption of Theodosius II only in Procopius, cf. i.2.1–10n.

As Brodka 2013a, 353–4, points out, Procopius clearly was relying on more than one source: he cannot have been dependent exclusively on Eusebius, cf. ii.12.20–30n. See also Guscini 2016, 30–1, on possible Greek versions independent of Eusebius, with Brodka 2013a, 355.

12.26 ὥστε ἀμέλει καὶ ἀνάγραπτον οὕτω τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ἀντ’ ἄλλου του φυλακτηρίου ἐν ταῖς τῆς πόλεως πεποιήνται πύλαις, ‘and they have understandably had the letter inscribed in this form on the gates of the city, in preference to any other defence’. The inscriptions on the gates, not there in Egeria’s day, were probably put up in the second half of the fifth century. Other cities likewise sought protection from Christ’s words: inscriptions of the promise have been found (e.g.) at Philippi in Macedonia, as well as near Edessa. See Segal 1970, 74–6, Illert 2007, 44–8. As Segal notes, the inscription doubtless functioned as a sort of palladium, casting its protection over the city. When Procopius refers to the inscription being preferred to any other defence, φυλακτήριον,

phylaktērion, he is probably referring to other comparable texts or images that might ward off enemies, as attested (e.g.) at Anasarthā, where images of Christ, the emperor and various officials were displayed, *IGLS* 288 (tr. in Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 244–5); clearly the city remained well defended by gates and walls.

12.27 γέγονε μὲν οὖν ὑπὸ Μήδοις χρόνῳ τινὶ ὕστερον, οὐχ ἄλοῦσα μέντοι, ‘But some time later it came under the power of the Persians, not by capture, however.’ As Brodka 2013a, 356, observes, Procopius has been specific concerning the impregnability of the city: it would not be taken by barbarians, which need not mean it could not pass into their hands by other means.

12.28 ἐπειδὴ τὸ γράμμα τοῦ Χριστοῦ Αὐγαρος ἔλαβε, κακῶν μὲν ὀλίγῳ ὕστερον ἀπαθῆς γέγονε, ‘When Abgar had received Christ’s letter, he was shortly afterwards cured of his illness.’ Procopius passes over the despatch of a missionary to Edessa, cf. 12.25n.

12.28 ὅστις δὲ διεδέξατο τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν αὐτοῦ παίδων, ἄνοσιώτατος γεγωνῶς ἀπάντων ἀνθρώπων, ἅλλα τε πολλὰ ἐς τοὺς ἀρχομένους ἐξήμαρτε καὶ τὴν ἐκ Ῥωμαίων δεδιῶς τίσιν προσεχώρησεν ἐκούσιος Πέρσαις, ‘the son who succeeded him was the wickedest man on earth. Among the various wrongs that he did to his subjects, he voluntarily defected to the Persians because he was afraid of being punished by the Romans.’ The son in question must be Abgar IX Severus, who reigned for just a year and a half before being removed by the Emperor Caracalla in 212/13. According to Dio Cassius 78.12.1^a–2 (two separate fragments), the king was abusing his subjects while claiming to be Romanising them. There is no evidence that he defected to the Persians. See Segal 1970, 14, Millar 1993, 144, 473, 561–2, Ross 2001, 60–4. In the second century, however, there were tensions between Parthian and Roman factions, ending with the slaughter of a Persian garrison and the admission of the Romans under King Ma’nu VIII, cf. Segal 1970, 13; Procopius’ passage may be a dim reflection of these events, so Ross 2001, 36–7.

12.29 *** αὐτῷ προσποιεῖσθαι ἐπιμελὲς ἐστὶ, τεκμαιρόμενος οἷς ἐν τοῖς κατ’ ἐμὲ χρόνοις γέγονεν, ἅπερ ἐν τοῖς καθήκουσι λόγοις δηλώσω, ‘It was his objective to win it over, as is attested by the events that took place in my time, as I shall reveal in the appropriate place.’ A

nine-line lacuna in manuscript P precedes this incomplete sentence. Consequently it is uncertain who is the subject and what they were trying to win over. Haury 1890/I, 18, argues that it must refer to Justinian's attempts to conciliate the Edessenes by the building work he carried out, described at *Aed.* ii.7, cf. Rubin, *PvK*, 390. An equally possible alternative would be Khusro who, as Procopius proceeds to recount at ii.26–7, sought again to gain control of Edessa in 543, so Whitby 1985, 144. The verb in question, προσποιούμαι, *prospoioumai*, can mean 'win over' or 'lay claim to'. In the former sense cf. i.15.24, 25.14, v.1.25, in the latter, ii.1.1, 28.24, vi.28.7. I have deliberately tried to maintain the ambiguity in the translation.

The reference to a future discussion of the issue tends to favour the latter interpretation, since it is still generally believed that it was some years later that Procopius composed *Aed.* A forward reference to *Aed.* at this point would therefore appear unlikely, despite Haury 1890/I, 18 (cf. idem 1934, 10–11); see the discussion in the next paragraph. The Greek phrase ἐν τοῖς κατήκουσι λόγοις, *en tois kathēkousi logois*, could also mean 'in the appropriate words/terms', cf. Cyril, *Comm. in Joannem*, vol.3, 101.19, Zos. iii.18.6, but at *Anecd.* 18.28 it is evidently used in the same way as here, which favours the standard translation.

The content of the missing nine lines continues to provoke debate. Bound up with the issue is Procopius' text at *Anecd.* 18.38, where he promises to recount the flooding of the river Scirtus in Edessa (in 525) 'in the previous accounts', which Haury emended to 'in subsequent accounts'. As Mészáros 2013, 293, rightly observes, editors' choices here have depended on what they thought was referred to and the order in which they believed Procopius' works to have been published. Haury initially argued, 1890/I, 18–19, that the missing lines here must refer to the flooding of the Scirtus and thus be the passage to which the *Anecd.* alludes; hence at this stage he preferred to retain the manuscript reading at *Anecd.* 18.38, accepting Dindorf's emendation of the verb there from γεγράφεται, *gegrapsetai*, 'it will have been written', to γέγραπται, *gegraptai*, 'it has been written' (on which see Croke 2005, 430, Mészáros 2013, 293). Haury later, 1934, 10–11, was willing to see a reference forward to *Aed.*; already in 1890/I he had supposed that the last words (to the forthcoming revelation) must allude to *Aed.* If one supposes that *Aed.* precedes *Anecd.*, then one can accept Dindorf's emendation (proposed already by Alemanni, cf. Evans 1996, 311) and take Procopius to be referring back in *Anecd.* to *Aed.*, not the lacuna in *Wars*. If one prefers the traditional order of his works then, despite Evans 1996, 311, it is highly

unlikely that he could be referring forward to *Aed.* in *Anecd.*, so rightly Kaldellis 2009, 611–12. The most plausible solutions to the conundrum are proposed by Kaldellis 2009, 610–15: either the reference at *Anecd.* 18.38 is indeed to the future, in which case it could well be to his projected work on church history or, if it is to an earlier section, then it is preferable to revert to Haury's original view, i.e. that the lacuna described the flooding of the Scirtus.

Our conclusion is therefore that the lacuna may well have contained an account of the flood that devastated Edessa in 525, described in detail in Mal. 17.15 and *Chr. Ede.* 91 (10–11/9), on which see Palmer 2000, 130–3, bringing to bear further sources. Whether his treatment of this flood, and perhaps of earlier such events, was sceptical, in some way casting doubt on the utility of Christ's promise to Abgar, cannot be known. Kaldellis 2009, 614, finds the lacuna 'suspicious', cf. *idem* 2010b, 273, suggesting its suppression by an indignant Christian scribe. The hypothesis is unnecessary: the scribe of MS P (Parisinus graecus 1702) left a number of gaps in his text, aware that they required completion from another source. Some he was able to fill in himself, while others were inserted by a later hand, as Haury describes in his edition, xxxi–xxxii. The Laurentian manuscript (Haury's L) likewise left gaps that were completed by a later hand, cf. *ibid.* xlv. See further Croke 2019, 10–11.

Palmer 2000, 133–6, argues that both *Chr. Ede.* and Procopius were seeking to lobby the government in Constantinople to invest the funds necessary to defend the city adequately; the flood, and the damage it had caused, added urgency to this appeal, as did Khusro's arrival in 540, which led to improvements soon afterwards, described in *Aed.* ii.7.

12.30 καί μοί ποτε ἔννοια γέγονεν ὡς εἰ μή ταῦτα, ἅπερ ἐρρήθη, ὁ Χριστός ἔγραψεν, ἀλλ' ὅτι ἐς τοῦτο δόξης ἄνθρωποι ἦλθον, φυλάξαι διὰ τοῦτο ἀνάλωτον ἐθέλει τήν πόλιν, ὡς μήποτε αὐτοῖς πλάνης τινά σκῆψιν διδοίη. 'It has occurred to me that if Christ did not write what I said, still, since men have come to believe it, he wants by this means to keep the city uncaptured for the following reason: so as never to give them any pretext for error.' Several scholars detect irony or sarcasm in Procopius' tone: so Segal 1970, 74, Palmer 2000, 127, Kaldellis 2010b, 273, Guscini 2016, 23. For Kaldellis, it makes God subservient to human suppositions, which is 'so absurd that it must be a joke'. If, on the other hand, he is right to see the hand of a devout scribe in the lacuna just before this section, then it is surprising that this sentence too was not suppressed if his interpretation is correct. It is preferable therefore to take

it at face value, as does Averil Cameron 1981, 16, viewing Procopius ‘as an anthropologist. When he criticised the addition to the letter of Jesus he recognised that its authenticity was less important than its role and function in society’, i.e. in keeping Edessa orthodox; moreover, Procopius is not so much critical as mildly sceptical. Cf. Averil Cameron 1985, 116, Frendo 1997, 108, Brodka 2013a, 356–7.

12.31 καὶ ἐπεὶ ἐς Βάτνην ἀφίκετο, πόλισμα μὲν βραχὺ καὶ λόγου οὐδενὸς ἄξιον, ἡμέρας δὲ ὁδῶ Ἐδέσσης διέχον, ‘When he reached Batnae, a small town of no importance a day’s journey from Edessa’. In the fourth century, Ammianus reports at 14.3.3, Batnae had been a flourishing market-town; Julian stopped there in 363 on his way to Carrhae, Ammianus 23.2.7, cf. Zos. iii.12.2, who refers to it as a πολίχνιον, *polikh-nion*, ‘small town, fort’. It had suffered in the war of 502–6, however, and Anastasius had consequently strengthened its fortifications; Ps.-Josh. 89 calls it a *kastron*, i.e. *castrum* or fort, while Proc. *Aed.* ii.7.18, describing Justinian’s improvements to its defences, terms it a *phrourion* or fort. It lay 42 km south-west of Edessa at the junction of two important military roads: see Dillemann 1962, 148, fig.17, and 171, Greatrex 1998, 106, 115.

12.32 καὶ αὐτοῖς ξυνέβη πλάνη περιπεσοῦσι τῇ ὕστεραίᾳ ἐς τὸν αὐτὸν αὐλίζεσθαι χῶρον, ‘It so happened that they lost their way and in their wanderings pitched camp on the following night in the same place.’ The confusion of Khusro’s army, presumably attributed to divine intervention, recalls the fate of another Persian (or Parthian) force described in *Itin. Eger.* 19.9–10: according to what Egeria was told, Abgar himself read out Christ’s letter, as a result of which darkness enveloped the enemy army and it was obliged to pitch camp three miles from the city walls. They were subsequently unable to get any closer to the walls. See Brodka 2013a, 358.

Procopius is careful not to vouch for all aspects of the story: when he adds that this occurred twice, he notes that this is what ‘they say’, as he does likewise in the following section, cf. Brodka 2013a, 358.

12.33 μόλις δὲ ἄγχιστα Ἐδέσσης γενομένῳ Χοσρόῃ ρεύματός φασιν ἐς τὸ πρόσωπον ἐπιπεσόντος ἐπῆρθαι τὴν γνάθον. ‘But they say that after Khusro had reached the vicinity of Edessa with such difficulty, a discharge came upon his face and his jaw swelled.’ Ps.-Josh. 58 recounts a comparable incident in the war of 502–6: the Naṣrid phylarch Nu‘man uttered dreadful threats against the city, after which a headwound swelled up, leading to his death two days later. See PJT xlvi, Brodka 2013a, 358–9.

12.34 οἱ δὲ ἀμφὶ τῇ πόλει μὲν δεδιέναι ἥκιστα ἔφασκον, ὅπως δὲ μὴ τοῖς χωρίοις λυμῆνται, ὡμολόγησαν δύο χρυσοῦ κεντηνάρια δώσειν, ‘They said that they were not at all frightened for the city, but agreed to give him two *centenaria* of gold to stop him from plundering their land.’ To take only 200 pounds of gold from the city was a remarkable concession. In September 503 Kavadh had initially demanded 10,000 pounds; the Roman commander Areobindus was willing to concede 7000. See Ps.-Josh. 59 with Greatrex 1998, 103–4. *Chr. Ede.* 105 (13/11) confirms the sum and likewise attributes the city’s survival to God’s intervention, cf. Brodka 2013a, 359. Frendo 1997, 109, exaggerates the dangers faced by the Edessenes.

13.1–7 Khusro Fails to Ransom the Antiochene Prisoners and Moves on to Carrhae

Khusro, withdrawing from Edessa, no doubt wished to divest himself of some of the thousands of prisoners that he had taken, notably at Antioch: their presence must have slowed his progress and required great quantities of supplies. Procopius contrasts the generosity of the Edessene populace with the petty-mindedness of Buzes: while the entire population contributed generously to the fund to ransom the prisoners, the *magister militum* obstinately refused to hand the money over. Veh, 492, is right to perceive a hostility to the commander, cf. 6.7.

13.1 Τότε καὶ γράμματα Χοσρόη βασιλεὺς Ἰουστινιανὸς ἔγραψεν, ‘Then the Emperor Justinian also wrote a letter to Khusro.’ Justinian thus follows up the deal struck by his envoys at 10.24 above, confirming the terms reached. The somewhat repetitive formulation for writing a letter, γράμματα ἔγραψεν, *grammata egrapsen*, ‘he wrote a letter’, is not found in classical authors; it is found in Ps.-Call., e.g. at 80.15.4, 80.16.1, as elsewhere in Procopius, e.g. at i.2.10, v.24.1. The first seven sections are quoted by *Exc. de legat. Rom.* 100.28–101.14. Justinian’s letter is *RKOR* 1229.

13.2 τοὺς τε ὁμήρους ἀφῆκε, ‘he released the hostages’. The hostages taken are those mentioned at 10.24. On the use of hostages see i.21.27n. At 9.14 Procopius had referred to the prisoners taken by Khusro when he took Antioch; their numbers are uncertain. See further ii.14.1–4n.

13.3 ὅπερ Ἐδεσσηνοὶ ἐπειδὴ ἔμαθον, προθυμίαν ἐπεδείξαντο ἀκοῆς κρείσσω, ‘When the Edessenes learnt this, they displayed an eagerness greater than any attested.’ The final two words mean literally ‘stronger

than hearing’ and are likely to be a reminiscence of Thuc. ii.41.3, where Pericles describes Athens as being ‘greater than (her) reputation’. Cf. Proc. viii.17.20, 22.10, where something is described as ‘stronger than reputation (*akoē*) or reason (*logos*)’: at ii.11.17 Procopius had described the miracle of the cross at Apamea as ‘greater than reason’, cf. the note *ad loc.*

The zeal of the Edessenes recalls the generosity of the population of Antioch described by Malalas at 18.59 when in 531 the patriarch Ephraem collected funds to ransom prisoners taken by the Naṣrid chief al-Mundhir. Malalas reports how, at a public meeting, a carpet was laid out, onto which the public threw their contributions. Already in the mid fifth century the Edessene church had a fund set up for the ransoming of prisoners: see *Acts Chalc.* xi.73 (*ACO* ii.1.3, p.383), cf. Segal 1970, 130, 143.

13.4 αἱ τε γὰρ ἐταῖραι τὸν κόσμον ἀφελουῖσαι, ὅσος αὐταῖς ἐν τῷ σώματι ἦν, ἐνταῦθα ἐρρίπτουν, ‘The prostitutes removed the jewellery that they wore about their persons and threw it in there.’ They perhaps cast their ornaments into a basket or onto a carpet: see the preceding note. The prostitutes of Edessa, in disposing of their *kosmos*, i.e. ornaments or jewellery, thus behaved better than those of Amida in 502, who had foolishly mocked Kavadh, cf. i.7.18. Since the abolition of the *chrysgyron* tax in 498, the prostitutes were no longer liable to this tax on trade; there had then been much rejoicing at Edessa, as Ps.-Josh. 31 describes. See Haarer 2006, 194–6. On the rich garments and adornments worn by women generally in the period see Clark 1993, 111–13. The theme of the good-hearted prostitutes recalls stories of famous repentant prostitutes, such as Pelagia, associated with Antioch (and sometimes Edessa), and a certain Mary, associated with Edessa. See Brock and Ashbrook Harvey 1998, 40–1, 27–9, cf. Harper 2013, 226–30; both stories pre-date Procopius’ account.

13.6 Βούζης γὰρ ἐνταῦθα παρὼν ἔτυχεν, ὃς διακωλύσαι τὴν πρᾶξιν ὑπέστη, ‘for Buzes happened to be present there, who sought to prevent the transaction’. See ii.13.1–7n on Procopius’ evident antipathy towards Buzes. He was presumably merely seeking to apply the policy already mentioned at ii.7.14–16: Justinian’s emissaries had quite explicitly forbidden funds to be handed over to Khusro, thereby thwarting Bishop Megas’ efforts to buy off the king from Beroea. Procopius’ sympathy with the frustration of the inhabitants of the eastern provinces comes across clearly. See also 7.16n: the ransoming of prisoners was sanctioned by Justinian’s own legislation.

13.7 Καρρηνοὶ δὲ ἀπήντων χρήματα πολλὰ προτεινόμενοι· ὁ δὲ οὐ προσήκειν ἔφασκεν, ὅτι δὴ οἱ πλεῖστοι οὐ Χριστιανοί, ἀλλὰ δόξης τῆς παλαιᾶς τυγχάνουσιν ὄντες. ‘The inhabitants of Carrhae met him and offered large sums, but he responded that it would not be appropriate for him to take them, given that most of them were not Christians, but rather adherents of the old faith.’ The population of Carrhae enjoyed a reputation for paganism well into Islamic times, being particularly associated with the moon god, even if the city continued to have a bishop; Julian visited the place in 363 on his way to Persia, Ammianus 23.3.2. Its surrounding area had suffered considerable damage in raids in 503 during the Anastasian war, on which see Ps.-Josh. 52 with Greatrex 1998, 88, Petersen 2013, 488. Despite considerable speculation, there is no reason to suppose that the philosophers who returned to Roman territory in 532 by the terms of the Eternal Peace took up residence here. See i.22.19n and cf. Lane Fox 2005, 232. Börm 2007, 194, rightly points out that Khusro’s favourable treatment of the population was motivated more by his rivalry with Justinian’s support of Christianity than by any allegiance to pagan practices. On Carrhae, the Arabic Harran, and its pagan survivals more generally see Green 1992, 51–73, Fowden 1993, 62–5, den Boeft et al. 1998, 37.

13.8–15 Digression on the Surrender of Constantia to Kavadh in 503

The mention of the city of Constantia, east of Edessa, provides Procopius with the opportunity for a short digression on the city’s surrender to Khusro’s father in 503. The story he relates recalls the more romantic texture of the opening chapters: Baradotus, for instance, is described similarly to the holy man Jacob at i.7.5–11. A more sober account of the episode is given by Ps.-Josh. 58, according to whom Jews in the city started to build a tunnel under the walls to let the Persians in; there followed a massacre of the Jews, which the bishop Bar-Hadad (Procopius’ Baradotus) and the *comes* Leontius were able to halt only with difficulty. Some have suggested that the report of the surrender was concocted by Khusro during his invasion (e.g. PJT 74 n.353, Kaldellis 2014, 102 n.219) to justify his extortion of funds. More likely it was a story linked to the bishop’s prestige and holiness that gained new currency with the prominence of bishops negotiating with Khusro in 540; it also allows Procopius to contrast the more generous attitude of Kavadh with the ruthlessness of his son. The episode recalls that of the surrender of Martyropolis to Kavadh in 502, which is recounted by Procopius at *Aed.* iii.2.4–8: the satrap of Sophanene in this case handed over two years’ worth of taxes to the

invader and was thus allowed to remain in power, while his territory was spared. See Greatrex 1998, 81, on these events, cf. Nechaeva 2020, 48–9.

13.8 Καὶ μὴν καὶ Κωνσταντινιέων χρήματα διδόντων ἐδέξατο, καίπερ φάσκων οἱ ἐκ πατέρων προσήκειν τὴν πόλιν, ‘On the other hand, he accepted the money that the inhabitants of Constantia offered, although he said that the city belonged to him through his forefathers.’ The account given by Procopius involves only Khusro’s father, Kavadh, not any other ‘forefathers’; the Greek in fact refers to ‘fathers’, which can sometimes mean ‘forefathers’, cf. e.g. Dion. Hal. 3.74.4, Herodian ii.15.2, Proc. *Anecd.* 1.15. From 13.15 it is clear that Procopius only had Kavadh in mind here. See also i.11.25n, where it may again be used in this sense, although Haury emended the text. For parallels for such claims see Börm 2007, 110.

On the adversative sense of the opening words, καὶ μὴν, *kai mēn*, ‘and yet, on the other hand’, see Denniston 1954, 357–8.

13.9 ἀλλ’ Ἐδέσσης μὲν ἀγχοῦ γενόμενος τῶν μάγων ἀνεπυνθάνετο εἴ οἱ ἀλώσιμος ἡ πόλις ἔσται, δείξας τῇ δεξιᾷ χειρὶ τὸ χωρίον αὐτοῖς. ‘But when he drew near to Edessa, he asked the magi whether the city could be captured by him, and with his right hand he indicated the place to them.’ Procopius refers to the events of 503, following the capture of Amida; at i.8.11–19 he had described Kavadh’s second invasion of Roman territory, in summer that year, which had inflicted a serious defeat on Roman forces near Siphrios. It was after this victory that he continued westwards towards Constantia and Edessa. Proceeding westwards, he would naturally arrive first at Constantia, then at Edessa: Procopius has inverted the order of the Persian advance. He has also omitted the attempts Kavadh did make to capture Edessa and the funds he demanded from the Roman general Areobindus to withdraw, probably because he prefers here to focus only on Constantia and an anecdote that illustrates Kavadh’s generosity. See Ps.-Josh. 58–62 with Greatrex 1998, 101–6.

The magi’s advice to Kavadh resembles that reported at ii.5.9 concerning the attack on Sura, which was successful. As Börm 2007, 189, observes, such anecdotes no doubt circulated in the wake of correct predictions. It is possible that in this case the sign was put forward as a means for justifying the king’s withdrawal after his unsuccessful attacks. Cf. Ammianus 21.13.8, although in this case Shapur II abandons plans to cross the Tigris in the first place because of unfavourable omens.

13.13 ἦν δὲ Κωνσταντίνης ἱερεὺς τότε Βαράδοτος, ἀνὴρ δίκαιός τε καὶ τῷ θεῷ ἐς τὰ μάλιστα φίλος, καὶ ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ ἐνεργοῦσαν ἐς ὅτι βούλοιτο αἰεὶ τὴν εὐχὴν ἔχων, ‘The bishop of Constantia at that time was Baradotus, a just man and most dear to God, whose prayers consequently were always fulfilled for whatever he wanted.’ Baradotus’ role in the defence of the city is also underlined by Ps.-Josh. 58, who likewise reports that he negotiated with Kavadh and persuaded him to desist from his siege.

The term ἱερεὺς, *hiereus*, probably here means ‘bishop’ rather than ‘priest’: on this issue see i.7.30n and cf. PJT xlix n.144, 74 n.350. The expression ἀνὴρ δίκαιος, *anēr dikaios*, was applied to the holy man Jacob at i.7.5, cf. the note *ad loc.* Procopius employs the other formula used for Baradotus, τῷ θεῷ φίλος, *tō theō philos*, ‘dear to God’ at *Anecd.* 12.24 for a monk who visited Justinian. The effectiveness of his prayers is the consequence, Procopius explains, of his closeness to God. Cf. Thdrt. *Quaestiones et responses*, no.147, p.136.14 (a work of uncertain attribution), referring to the effectiveness of the prayers of holy men; on the verb ἐνεργέω, *energeō*, ‘I am effective’, see Lampe, 36, A.3.b.

13.13 οὗ καὶ τὸ πρόσωπον ἰδὼν ἂν τις εὐθύς εἵκασεν ὅτι δὴ τῷ θεῷ ἐνδελχεστάτα κεχαρισμένος ὁ ἀνὴρ εἶη, ‘Whoever beheld his face would immediately suppose that this man was perpetually favoured by God.’ Cf. Joh. Chrys. *Pan. S. Paul* 4.3, *V. Sym. Styl. Iun.* 215.6 (p.184), for the beholding of a holy man’s face expressed similarly, in the first case St Stephen, in the second St Symeon the Stylite the younger. The expression τῷ θεῷ κεχαρισμένος, *tō theō kekharismenos*, ‘favoured, graced by God’, is found in both Christian authors, e.g. Euseb. *Praep. Evang.* 8.8.29, and pagan writers, e.g. Damascius, *Phil. Hist.* frg.84E, p.210, cf. the classicising Men. Prot. frg.23.8.1–2. The adverb ἐνδελχεστάτα, *endelekhestata*, means ‘very persistently, continuously’, not ‘completely’ (*contra* Dewing): see *BDAG*, 688, and cf. Proc. i.5.18, 25.14 and elsewhere. This adverbial form is very common in Procopius.

13.14 οὗτος ὁ Βαράδοτος τηνικαῦτα παρὰ τὸν Καβάδην ἐλθὼν οἶνον τε ἤνεγκε καὶ ἰσχάδας καὶ μέλι καὶ καθαρούς ἄρτους, ‘At that point this Baradotus came to Kavadh bearing wine, dried figs, honey and white loaves.’ Cf. the comparable gesture of the bishop of Sura reported at ii.5.13 above. In 540 the bishop brought fowl, wine and white loaves. Nechaeva 2014, 178, suggests that the gifts may have been brought on

special tableware. This section and the following one may be found also in *Exc. de legat. Rom.*, p.101.15–23.

13.14 οὔτε στρατιωτῶν φρουρὰν ἔχουσα οὔτε ἄλλο τι φυλακτήριον, ‘which had no garrison of soldiers nor any other means of protection’. An exaggeration: Ps.-Josh. 58 implies the presence of troops in the city under a *comes* Leontius. See Greatrex 1998, 103 n.84, PJT 73 n.346.

13.15 ὁ μὲν ταῦτα εἶπε· Καβάδης δὲ αὐτῷ τὴν τε πόλιν χαριεῖσθαι ὠμολόγησε καὶ τοῖς σιτίοις ἐδωρήσατο αὐτὸν ἅπασιν, ὅσα οἱ τῷ στρατοπέδῳ ἐς τὴν πολιορκίαν ἡτοίμαστο, ‘This is what he said, and Kavadh agreed to grant him the city out of goodwill. He further bestowed on him as a gift all the provisions that he had made ready for his army for the siege.’ From Ps.-Josh. 58 it is clear that the Persian king was seriously short of provisions, a factor that induced him not to continue his siege of the city but rather to proceed against Edessa. Kaldellis 2014, 102 n.219, suggests that Khusro himself may have circulated the story about his father’s generous action. See Greatrex 1998, 103, PJT 74 n.353, Petersen 2013, 130–1.

13.16–29 Khusro’s Siege of Dara

Despite Justinian’s ratification of the terms agreed (cf. ii.13.1), Khusro attempted to seize the city of Dara (see fig. 28), ever since its construction a thorn in the Persian side (cf. i.16.6, ii.10.21). The prospect of eliminating this formidable stronghold no doubt outweighed diplomatic considerations. The failure of the siege is attributed in part to a potentially miraculous intervention – advice from a shadowy figure, who may or may not have been human (13.22) – and in part to the wise technical advice of Theodore (13.26); the strength of the city’s fortifications is also underlined, testifying to the improvements Justinian had made (*Aed.* ii.1.11–3.26), cf. Whitby 1986b, esp. 758–9. See also Petersen 2013, 523–4.

13.16 ἐνδοθεν δὲ Ῥωμαῖοι καὶ Μαρτῖνος ὁ στρατηγὸς (καὶ γὰρ ἐνταῦθα ὦν ἔτυχε) τὰ ἐς ἀντίστασιν ἐξηρτύνοντο, ‘Within the city the Romans and the general Martin, who happened to be there, made preparations to resist.’ Martin was not there by chance: he had been despatched there in haste from Italy (cf. 14.9), while certain other commanders, such as Belisarius, went first to Constantinople. Cf. *Wars* vii.1.1 with Veh, 493, *PLRE* iii, Martinus 2. Procopius had earlier reported

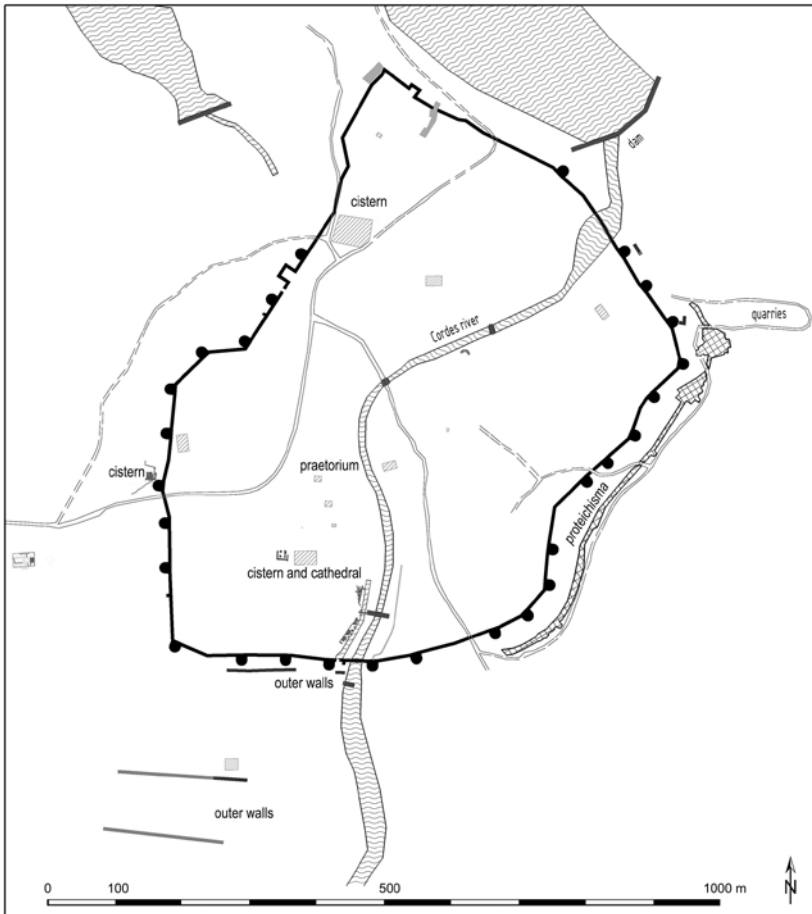


Figure 28 Dara

his service as a Roman hostage to the Persians in 531 while the Eternal Peace was being concluded, i.21.27.

13.17 δύο δὲ ἡ πόλις τείχεσι περιβέβληται, ὧν τὸ μὲν ἐντὸς μέγα τε καὶ ἀξιοθέατον ἀτεχνῶς ἔστιν (ἕς ὕψος γὰρ διήκει πύργος μὲν ἕκαστος ποδῶν ἑκατὸν, τὸ δὲ ἄλλο τεῖχος ἐξήκοντα), ‘The city is surrounded by two walls, of which the inner one is large and remarkably worth seeing (for each tower rises to a height of one hundred feet, while the rest of the wall reaches sixty feet).’ Procopius enters into greater detail on Justinian’s measures to bolster the city’s defences at *Aed.* ii.1.11–3.26, see esp. ii.1.16 on the raising of the height of the walls and towers: the

city, he explains, had been constructed in haste during the reign of Anastasius. Scholarly consensus is now inclined to accept Procopius' word that Justinian undertook substantial improvements to Anastasius' work, perhaps in the years leading up to the Eternal Peace in 532, after which it would have seemed provocative. See Whitby 1986b, esp.758, Zanini 1990, Keser-Kayaalp and Erdoğan 2017, esp.155. From *Aed.* ii.1.16 it is clear that Justinian raised the height of the Anastasian walls by thirty feet to sixty feet. The measurements equate to 17.8–18.7 m for the walls, 29.6–31.2 m for the towers, cf. Grotowski 2006, 122 n.141 with Whitby 1986b, 753, 759, confirming at least the former estimate from photographs of what still stood in the early twentieth century.

13.18 τὸ δὲ μεταξὺ χωρίον εὖρος οὐχ ἥσσον ἢ πεντήκοντα ἔχει ποδῶν, 'The space between has a breadth of not less than fifty feet.' See Whitby 1986b, 743–4 with 740 fig.41.2 on the course of the *proteichisma*, i.e. the outer wall, which varies between 15 and 20 m beyond the inner walls; cf. Kayaalp and Erdoğan 2017, 161–4, on other outer defences of the city, notably to the south. See also fig. 28.

13.19 τὰ μὲν οὖν πρῶτα ὁ Χοσρόης προσβολὴν ποιησάμενος ἐς τὰ πρὸς ἐσπέραν τοῦ περιβόλου πλήθει τε βελῶν βιασάμενος, τὰς πύλας τείχους τοῦ βραχέος ἐνέπρησεν, 'Khusro therefore first made an attack on the western side of the circuit wall, forcing his way by the volume of missiles, and burnt the gates of the lesser wall.' In the centre of the western side the city was more approachable, but at either end of the walls lay strong towers. See (e.g.) Whitby 1986b, 740 fig.41.2. The Persians refused to enter the area between the walls probably because they would have been so exposed to missile fire from the inner walls: so Petersen 2013, 523.

13.20 ἔπειτα δὲ κατώρυχα ποιῆσθαι λάθρα ἐς τὰ πρὸς ἑω τῆς πόλεως ἔγνω, 'Then he decided to build a tunnel into the eastern section of the city.' In fact, Procopius refers to the south-east of the city: at *Aed.* ii.1.26 he places this vulnerable zone to the south, in the sector of the walls where the gates lead forth to Ammodius. According to *Aed.* ii.1.24–7 Justinian subsequently took measures to thwart such tunneling by digging a moat and flooding the land to the south of the city; he also describes how the emperor removed a mound that had obscured mining operations, doubtless referring to the events narrated here. See Whitby 1986b, 761, Grotowski 2006, 124 n.149.

13.21 οἱ γοῦν Πέρσαι ἀπὸ τῆς τάφρου ἀρξάμενοι ὥρυσσον, ‘So the Persians began to dig, starting from their trench.’ Kaldellis 2014, 102, translates the word τάφρος, *taphros*, as ‘moat’, no doubt influenced by *Aed.* ii.1.25, where Procopius describes how Justinian excavated a *taphros*, which he then filled with water to defend this side of the city; Petersen 2013, 524, also refers to a moat. The sense of the word, however, is ‘trench’ or ‘ditch’, cf. *LSJ*, 1761. The moat was probably dug only after this siege: see the previous note. Whether the *taphros* here referred to was a Roman trench or a Persian one is not clear, but Persian operations were evidently obscured by the mound described at *Aed.* ii.1.26, which lay in the area between the two sets of walls.

13.22 οὐ γὰρ αὐτὴν ἔδει Πέρσαις ἀλῶναι, ‘since the Persians were not destined to capture it (Dara)’. Cf. i.24.31n for a comparable expression concerning Hypatius’ fate. This way of referring to destiny is found earlier only in Appian, *Libyca* 578 (p.291.4–5), but is deployed by Procopius also at ii.17.16, 20.10, iv.4.14. In the present context, where he refers almost immediately to a man (or divine agent) who tips off the Romans about the Persian plans, it furthers the impression of Khusrō having lost the favour of fortune, having just had to give up the siege of Edessa.

13.22 εἴτε ἄνθρωπος ὢν εἴτε τι ἄλλο ἀνθρώπου κρείσσον, ‘Whether he was a man or something greater than a man’. There is no need to suppose that the Romans’ informant was not a human supporter of their cause: Ps.-Josh. 58 describes a similar anecdote in the context of the defence of Constantia in 503. In that case a Roman officer who had been captured by the Persians, Peter, approached the city walls and was able to tip off Leontius, the *comes* of the city, about the tunnel being dug by the Jews to betray the city. There were certainly Romans among the Persian army: a good number, so Procopius reports at 7.37, had defected at Beroea.

On the alternatives proposed here, one rational, the other supernatural, see Dahn 1865, 177–8, noting other instances, e.g. at i.2.6, 246–7.

13.23 εἶτα φράσας αὐτοῖς τὸν πάντα λόγον ἐγρηγορέναι πάντας ἐκέλευε καὶ ὡς ἐνι μάλιστα τῆς σωτηρίας ἐπιμελεῖσθαι. ‘Then he declared the entire ruse to them and instructed them all to be alert and to pay the utmost attention to their safety.’ The expression ὡς ἐνι μάλιστα, *hōs eni malista*, ‘as much as possible’, is found (e.g.) in Polyb. 16.20.7 and

is common in Plutarch, e.g. *Thes.* 23.2, likewise in Euseb. *HE* ii.17.2, cf. *Proc.* ii.15.25 and elsewhere. For the sense see Suda, Ω225.

13.26 τῶν δὲ Ῥωμαίων [τε] Θεοδώρου γνώμη, ἐπὶ σοφία, τῇ καλουμένη μηχανικῇ λογίου ἀνδρός, ‘the Romans, on the advice of Theodore, a man versed in the science called mechanics’. See i.7.14n on Roman counter-mining operations during the siege of Amida in 502–3. Ps.-Josh. 71 reports how the Romans tunnelled their way beneath the walls of Amida in 504, but the Persians were able to prevent them from gaining a foothold in the city, cf. Greatrex 1998, III. See Petersen 2013, 287–8, on such attempts to capture a city.

On Theodore see *PLRE* iii, Theodorus 13, suggesting that he had earlier worked on the Nea church in Jerusalem, cf. Cyr. Scyth. *V. Sab.* 73 (177.16–17). Destunis 1880, 99 n.11, accepts an identification with the dedicatee of a work on an ‘Aratean globe’ by the engineer, *mēkhanikos*, Leontius, of uncertain date (though sometimes placed in the seventh century, cf. e.g. Dekker 2009, 134 and n.8). On his profession, that of *mēkhanikos*, see Petersen 2013, 141, 523, who defines such people as ‘academically trained architects with a solid theoretical foundation’. His advice, viz. to dig a trench perpendicular to the Persians’ tunnel, i.e. parallel to the walls, is in line with the recommendations of the *Peri Strat.* 13.22–34. See also Zanini 2007, 390, putting Theodore in the broader context of other *mēkhanikoi* active under Justinian, cf. M’Barek 2018.

13.27 καὶ αὐτῶν τοὺς μὲν πρῶτους Ῥωμαῖοι ἔκτειναν, οἱ δὲ ὀπισθεν φυγόντες κατὰ τάχος ἐς τὸ στρατόπεδον διεσώθησαν, ‘The Romans slew the first of them, but those behind swiftly fled to their camp and saved themselves.’ The Romans had the advantage of surprise in this case. In Ps.-Josh. 71 the besiegers, on the other hand, took the Persians by surprise: when the Roman tunnel emerged in Amida, a Gothic soldier sallied forth, but his companions were reluctant to follow. He was consequently obliged to withdraw. The Persians, rather than pursuing him, flooded the tunnel and blocked up the entrance. *Peri Strat.* 13.34–5 likewise recommends flooding enemy tunnels. The Romans’ reluctance to pursue the fleeing Persians is thus comprehensible. See also James 2011 for a detailed discussion of mines and counter-mines at the Persian siege of Dura Europos in the third century.

13.28 χίλιά τε κεκομισμένος ἀργύρου σταθμὰ ἐς τὰ Περσῶν ἦθη ἔχωρει, ‘And (Khusro) returned to Persian territory after carrying off one

thousand measures of silver.’ On the ‘measures’, probably pounds, see ii.6.24n.

13.29 ταῦτα ἐπεὶ βασιλεὺς Ἰουστινιανὸς ἔμαθεν, οὐκέτι τὰ συγκείμενα ἐπιτελῇ ποιήσιν ἤθελεν, ‘When the Emperor Justinian learnt of this, he no longer wished to fulfil the terms agreed.’ Justinian’s letter referred to at 13.1 was thus nullified by the unprovoked assault on Dara. The emperor doubtless calculated that he had time over the winter to strengthen the defences of the East, ready to withstand another invasion in 541. See Dignas and Winter 2007, 39–40.

13.29 καὶ τὸ θέρος μὲν ἐτελεύτα, ‘and the summer then finished’. A Thucydidean formula for marking the end of the campaigning season, cf. ii.92.7 and elsewhere, but this is the only instance when Procopius uses it. See i.16.1n, ii.5.1n, on other such chronological indicators. It was taken up subsequently by Nic. Greg., e.g. at 15.2 (vol.2, 751.20).

ii.14 Events of Winter 540–1

Procopius gathers together in this short chapter a few disparate items. The practice of reporting sundry events at the end of a year was employed already by Thucydides, e.g. at ii.67–70, where he relates various episodes of winter 430–29 B.C. In *Gothic Wars*, where Procopius consistently notes the end of the year, he does so at the end of winter, leaving no opportunity for such brief pauses. Yet vii.35 offers some parallels to the current chapter: as he reports Belisarius’ inglorious return to Constantinople in 548, he inserts into his account a story of an omen the general received before his successes in North Africa (35.4–8). There follow notices concerning Pope Vigilius, disputes between Lombards and Gepids, the defection of Belisarius’ *bucellarius* Indulf, and a Roman defeat near Saloniae; the chapter concludes by signalling the end of the fourteenth year of the Gothic war (35.30).

14.1–4 Khusro’s New Antioch

The new city founded by Khusro lay a few kilometres south of Ctesiphon; traces of it could still be seen in the days of Masudi in the tenth century, *Prairies d’or*, vol.2, ch.24, pp.199–200. Tabari, 898/157–8 (tr. also by Hoyland in Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 107–8) describes how the city, which he calls al-Rūmiyya, was built to replicate all the features of

the original Antioch, cf. 959–60/253–5, Tha'alibi, 612–13, Firdausi, vi, 215–17. Earlier Sasanian kings had similarly established cities with deportees from Roman territory, e.g. Shapur I and his own Antioch, Veh-Antiok-Shāpūr, cf. e.g. Dignas and Winter 2007, 256, Payne 2018, 230. Khusro's city was called Veh-Antiok-Khusro, i.e. 'the better Antioch of Khusro'. It is attested not only in literary sources, e.g. Joh. Eph. *HE* vi.19, who estimates the population at 30,000 later in the sixth century, Th. Sim. v.6.10, 7.1, Dinawari 70–1/372, but also by numismatic evidence, on which see Schindel 2006b. It is mentioned too in Ps.-Seb. 69/9, *Chr. Seert* ii.32, PO 7 (1911), 182, cf. *ibid.* 38, 195, Ya'qubi, i, 186/116 (Hoyland) = 461 (Gordon et al.).

Bibliography: Fiey 1967, 26–8, Jullien 2006, 115–17, Dignas and Winter 2007, 261–2 (with a translation of 14.1–4), Bonner 2013, 205–8 (esp. on the names of the city), Greatrex 2014c, 170–1, Canepa 2018a, 67–8, *idem* 2018b, 142 (with a useful map at 138). The issue of deportations generally and of Antioch in 540 in particular is discussed by Lieu 1986, 499–500, Morony 2004, 173–4, suggesting that the new city was a manufacturing centre, Maksymiuk 2017b, 125–7 (= *eadem* 2018a, 48–9). Kettenhoffen 1996, 301, finds Procopius' treatment of the city unduly favourable to the Sasanians, but Börm 2007, 175–6, is more positive in his assessment of the account.

14.1 Ὁ δὲ Χοσρόης πόλιν ἐν Ἀσσυρίοις δειμάμενος ἐν χώρῳ Κτησιφώντος πόλεως διέχοντι ἡμέρας ὁδῶ, 'Khusro built a city in Assyria in the territory of Ctesiphon, a day's journey from the city.' The city appears to have been several kilometres south of Ctesiphon, on the Tigris: Ya'qubi, ii, 440/1099, puts it at two *farsakhs*, i.e. 12 km, cf. Fiey 1967, 26, Jullien 2006, 115, Canepa 2018b, 142, W. Hinz, *EP*, s.v. Farsakh. Its likely location is most conveniently shown on map 3, Canepa 2009, 13. See also the previous note.

14.1 οἷς δὴ βαλανεῖόν τε καὶ ἵπποδρόμιον κατεσκεύαζε καὶ ταῖς ἄλλαις τρυφαῖς ἀνεῖσθαι ἐποίει, 'endowing them with a bath-house and a hippodrome and seeing to it that they were entertained with other luxuries too'. The presence of both a hippodrome and charioteers (mentioned at 14.2) is confirmed by *Mir. S. Anast.* 3.3–5, where the struggle of one charioteer, Calotychus, to obtain his salary later in the century is reported; the subsidies that Procopius describes at 14.2 evidently diminished after Khusro's death. See Flusin 1992, vol.2, 346–7, Canepa 2009, 173–4, Greatrex 2014c, 172. As Canepa 2018b, 142, observes, the hippodrome allowed Khusro to re-enact the rivalry with

Justinian he had displayed at Apamea at any point, cf. Coates-Williams 2003, 344–9. On the Persians' attitudes towards baths see i.13.17n. Some of the deportees at least are likely to have been put to work in Khusro's new palace, also known as Ayvān-e Kesrā (or Țaq-e Kesrā) near Ctesiphon, where they helped to commemorate the capture of their own city in a mosaic. See Th. Sim. v.6.10 with E.J. Keall, *Elr* iii (1987), 155–9, Shahīd 1995, 235–6, Canepa 2009, 221.

The luxuries said to have been lavished on the captive Antiochenes recalls al-Mundhir's indictment of their frivolity at i.17.37 while recommending to Kavadh that he send an expedition to seize the city: the Naṣrid leader emphasises their passion for the theatre, festivals and τρυφή, *tryphē*, 'luxury', the term also used here.

14.3 καὶ βασιλικούς καλεῖσθαι ἡξίου, ὥστε τῶν ἀρχόντων οὐδενὶ ὑποχείριους εἶναι ἢ βασιλεῖ μόνῳ, 'and (Khusro) decreed that they be called "royal", so that they should be subject to none save the king alone'. Other sources refer to the appointment of a Christian overseer, whose name varies: Dinawari, 71/371, calls him Yazdfanā, while Tabari, 960/255, has Barāz, cf. Jackson Bonner 2013, 207, suggesting that he was, in effect, a mayor, and Jackson Bonner 2012, 73. See also Kettenhoffen 1996, 304–5, on the status of the deportees, cf. Lieu 1986, 481, noting the prosperity of earlier captives; Rotman 2005, 772, emphasises that they were not actually slaves. PZ vii.4f specifies that the nobles and craftsmen captured at Amida in 503 became 'the king's captives'.

Fiey 1967, 27, notes the parallel good treatment of Roman captives around Ctesiphon at the end of the fourth century, when 18,000 people received regular rations before being returned to Roman territory, cf. *Chr.* 724, a.707 (136–7), tr. in Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 17. Khusro's personal control over the city reflects the fact that it was his own foundation and not subject to any of the great Persian noble families: see Rubin 2000, 653, on the foundation of cities by kings to extend their own power, cf. Metzler 1982, 196, Börm 2007, 176.

14.4 εἰ δέ τις καὶ τῶν ἄλλων Ῥωμαίων δραπετῆς γεγωνῶς ἐς Ἀντιόχειαν τὴν Χοσρόου διαφυγεῖν ἴσχυσε, καὶ τις αὐτὸν συγγενῇ τῶν ταύτῃ ὠκημένων ἐκάλεσεν, οὐκέτι ἐξῆν τῷ κεκτημένῳ τὸν αἰχμάλωτον τοῦτον ἀπάγειν, 'And if some other captive Roman became a runaway and succeeded in seeking refuge in Khusro's Antioch and a resident there declared him to be a relative, then it was no longer permitted for the one who had taken this captive to lead him away.'

Metzler 1982, 210, notes parallels for such a right of asylum, e.g. at the Armenian king Arsaces II's new city of Arsakavan, cf. Mos. Khor. iii.68, Pigulewskaja 1963, 187.

14.5–7 The Fulfilment of an Omen

Procopius returns once again to the fall of Antioch. His description of a portent announcing the disasters to overtake the city recalls 10.1–3, where another sign of its imminent doom is reported. No doubt the series of catastrophes that struck the city encouraged the emergence of such reports, which Procopius probably drew from local sources. It is only here that he mentions briefly the huge earthquake of 526 that devastated the city, perhaps in order to emphasise the gravity of the blows suffered by the Antiochenes. In his earlier account it was important rather to emphasise its prosperity and beauty, cf. i.8–10n.

14.5 Ἀντιοχεῦσι μέντοι τὸ ξυμβάν ἐπὶ Ἀναστασίου βασιλεύοντος τέρας ἐς τοῦτο ἀποβάν ἐτελεύτησε. ‘So the omen that occurred during the reign of Anastasius resulted in this outcome.’ The omen is not otherwise attested and can therefore only be dated to sometime between 491 and 518.

14.5 τότε γὰρ ἀνέμου σκληροῦ Δάφνη τῷ προαστείῳ ἐκ τοῦ αἰφνιδίου ἐπιπεσόντος, τῶν κυπαρίσσων αἱ ταύτη ὑψηλαὶ ἀτεχνῶς ἦσαν ἐκ ριζῶν τῶν ἐσχάτων ἀνατραπεῖσαι εἰς τὴν γῆν ἔπεσον, ὥστε ὁ νόμος ἐκτέμνεσθαι οὐδαμῇ εἶα. ‘For at that time a strong wind suddenly struck the suburb of Daphne and remarkably tall cypresses there were overturned from their deepest roots and fell to the ground, even though the law prohibited anyone from cutting them down.’ On Daphne see ii.8.25n, cf. ii.11.5n above on the legal protection granted to the cypress groves with *TIB* 15, 1082. The cypresses were believed to have been planted by King Seleucus, Lib. *Or.* 11.98, cf. Mal. 8.20, who claims that they were originally planted by Heracles. The symbolic significance of their uprooting was thus considerable.

14.6 σεισμός τις ἐπιγενόμενος ἐξαίσιος λίαν τὴν τε πόλιν κατέσεισε πᾶσαν καὶ τῶν οἰκοδομημάτων τὰ τε πλεῖστα καὶ κάλλιστα ἐς τὸ ἔδαφος εὐθὺς ἤνεγκε, ‘a singularly violent earthquake shook down the entire city and instantly levelled most of its buildings, including its most beautiful’. Procopius refers to the devastating earthquake of 29 May 526, on which see ii.8–10n.

14.6 καὶ λέγονται τότε τριάκοντα μυριάδες Ἀντιοχέων ἀπολωλέναι, ‘it is even said that 300,000 (lit. ‘thirty myriads’) Antiochenes perished at that moment’. The figure for the number of casualties is likely to be inflated, cf. ii.4.6n on ‘myriads’. Nonetheless, given that Mal. 17.16 reports 250,000 dead, a figure Downey 1961, 521, is prepared to countenance, it may not be too wide of the mark; see also Saliou 2019, 201–2, ii.8–10n.

14.7 ἐν ταύτῃ δὲ τῇ ἀλώσει ξύμπασα ἡ πόλις, ὥσπερ μοι ἐρρήθη, διέφθαρται, ‘But in this capture, as I have said, the whole city was destroyed.’ Cf. 9.14–18, 10.5–9, albeit noting that the walls and a few buildings were left undisturbed.

14.8–13 Preparations for the New Campaigning Season; Events During the Winter

Procopius reports the transfer of Belisarius and other commanders from the Italian theatre to the East: the general had enjoyed remarkable success against the Goths, culminating in Vitigis’ surrender at Ravenna. During the winter Belisarius arrived in Constantinople, bringing with him the Gothic king and his wife, various Gothic nobles, and the Gothic treasury (*Wars* vi.30.30, vii.1.1–2). Although Justinian had sent envoys to Italy to negotiate a peace already early in 540, aware of the imminent danger to the eastern frontier, Belisarius, believing the emperor’s terms to be unnecessarily generous, had succeeded in prolonging hostilities, thereby capturing Ravenna and the Gothic king; he refused, however, to declare himself emperor in the West, as the Goths had been led to believe he would. His recall to Constantinople was thus perhaps due in part to suspicions about his loyalty as well as to the urgent need for his strategic ability (*Proc. Wars* vi.30.1–2). It is likely that his numerous *bucellarii* (cf. vii.1.20) accompanied him: although at vii.1.1 Procopius refers to just a handful of commanders who came with him to Constantinople, it is clear from vii.10.1 that his bodyguards had indeed been transferred to the East.

Bibliography: Stein 1949, 365–8, *PLRE* iii, 206–8, Heather 2018, 177–9, 220–1, Koehn 2018a, 218–21.

14.8 Βελισάριος δὲ βασιλεῖ ἐς Βυζάντιον ἐξ Ἰταλίας μετάπεμπος ἦλθε. ‘Belisarius, summoned by the emperor, came to Byzantium from Italy.’ Cf. i.25.11, where the general’s recall is reported similarly, with the

note *ad loc.* Hughes 2009, 179, suggests that Belisarius set sail from Ravenna in midsummer 540, cf. *PLRE* iii, 207. He had been put in charge of the western sector of the eastern command earlier in 540: see ii.6.1 with the note *ad loc.*

14.8 στρατηγὸν ἐπὶ τε Χοσρόην καὶ Πέρσας ἅμα ἦρι ἀρχομένῳ βασιλεὺς ἐπεμψεν ἄρχοντάς τε τοὺς ἐξ Ἰταλίας ξὺν αὐτῷ ἡκόντας, ὧν δὴ ἓνα Βαλεριανὸν ἡγεῖσθαι τῶν ἐν Ἀρμενίοις καταλόγων ἐκέλευε. ‘The emperor despatched him at the start of spring against Khusro and the Persians, together with the commanders who had come with him from Italy, one of whom, Valerian, he ordered to take command of the forces in Armenia.’ At vii.1.1 Procopius specifies that Belisarius was accompanied by Ildiger, Valerian, Martin and Herodian, on whom see *PLRE* iii, Herodianus 1, Ildiger, Martinus 2 and Valerianus 1. As Procopius states, Valerian was appointed *magister militum per Armeniam*. All the other commanders, save Herodian, had already attained the rank of *magister militum*. At *Anecd.* 2.1–2 Procopius adds that he was joined on this occasion by his stepson Photius, cf. *PLRE* iii, Photius 2.

14.9 Μαρτῖνος γὰρ ἔτυχεν εὐθύς εἰς τὴν ἐῷαν σταλεῖς, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο Χοσρόης αὐτὸν, ὡς προεδήλωται, ἐς Δάρας εὗρε, ‘Martin had been immediately sent to the East, and consequently Khusro found him at Dara, as already explained.’ Cf. 13.16, where his presence was left unexplained. The use of the preposition ἐς, *es* (εἰς, *eis*), ‘to’ with the place where Martin was stationed is post-classical, cf. Mal. 18.50 (p.380.89), also referring to Dara, cf. Teuffel 1889, 262, Scheftlein 1894, 28.

14.10 τῶν δὲ Γόθων Οὐίττιγίς μὲν ἐν Βυζαντίῳ ἔμεινεν, οἱ δὲ λοιποὶ ξύμπαντες ἐπὶ Χοσρόην σὺν Βελισαρίῳ ἐστράτευσαν. ‘As for the Goths, Vitigis stayed in Byzantium, but all the others accompanied Belisarius’ army against Khusro.’ Procopius feels no need to expatiate on the defeat of the Goths, already signalled at i.25.11 and ii.4.13, as well as in detail at vi.29–vii.1. On a (doubtful) tradition that Vigitis actually took up residence near the frontier see ii.4.13n: Procopius is more likely to be right in placing the retired king at Constantinople. Gothic soldiers are attested in Belisarius’ army at 18.24 and 21.4 below. Their precise status – whether *symmachoi* (allies) or *foederati* – is uncertain. Some at least could have been *bucellarii* of Belisarius. See Ravegnani 1988, 27–8, Greatrex 2014a, 259 and n.40, idem 2018b, 340–1.

14.11 ὅσπερ τοῦ ἐπισκόπου ὀνόματος ἐπεβάτευεν, ‘the one who had assumed the title of bishop’. For the use of the verb ἐπιβατεύω, *epibateuō*, ‘I take on, usurp’, emulating Hdt. iii.63.3 see García Romero, 229 n.126 with i.23.23n.

14.12 ὅστις δὲ αὐτοῖς ἐρμηνεὺς εἶπετο, ἀνεχώρησεν εἰς Ῥωμαίων τὴν γῆν, καὶ αὐτὸν Ἰωάννης, ὃς τῶν ἐν Μεσοποταμίᾳ στρατιωτῶν ἦρχεν, ἀμφὶ τὰ Κωνσταντίνης ὄρια συλλαβών. ‘The man who had followed them as their interpreter, however, returned to Roman territory and was caught on the edge of the district of Constantia by John, the commander of the forces in Mesopotamia.’ Procopius provides an update on the individuals whose mission to the Persian court was reported at ii.2.1–11. Evidently it was the interrogation of the interpreter by John, the *dux* of Mesopotamia, that provided the details of the mission described earlier. It is interesting that the interpreter was able to pass by Dara and reach Constantia before being intercepted; the base of the *dux*, it is true, had been moved back from the former city to the latter by the terms of the Eternal Peace of 532, cf. i.22.16 with Greatrex 1998, 216. The John who caught the interpreter is John Troglita, who had served as *dux* in North Africa and returned there later in Justinian’s reign as *magister militum per Africam*, where his deeds were commemorated in Corippus’ epic poem, the *Iohannid*. See *PLRE* iii, Ioannes *qui et* Troglita 36; although it places the capture in 541, it could equally have taken place in late 540.

ii.15–19 The Eastern Front in 541

There are two distinct strands to Procopius’ account of the events on the Persian frontier in this year. In the north, Khusro exploits dissatisfaction with Roman rule in Lazica: the discontent voiced by Lazic envoys to the king (15.14–30) echoes the complaints of the Armenians at 3.32–53 and Khusro is quick to press home his advantage. As in the Armenian case, where Procopius held Acacius responsible for the maladministration of the region (3.4–7), so here he squarely blames the corruption of John Tzibus for the deterioration of the situation (15.9–12). In the south, Belisarius undertakes an invasion of Persian Mesopotamia, which enjoys only limited success. As in the Gothic war, the general had some difficulty with his subordinates; Procopius leaves the impression that more could have been accomplished had he had more control, although in the *Anecdota* (2.18–25) he blames Belisarius himself for withdrawing because of his desire to confront his wife Antonina.

Bibliography: Auler 1876, 18–22, Braund 1994, 278–96, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 108–9, 115–16, Dignas and Winter 2007, 40, Maksymiuk 2015c, 68–74.

ii.15 The Lazic Appeal to Khusro (540/1)

Procopius attributes Khusro's intervention in the Caucasus to the appeal of the Lazi, dissatisfied by some twenty years of Roman rule; he is scathing about the administrators appointed by Justinian, just as he was of those who took charge of Armenia (ii.3). From Malalas (17.9) and other sources it is known that the Lazic king Tzath defected to the Romans under Justin I, probably in 522: see i.12.1–19h. Procopius alludes to this only in passing at i.11.28, but at i.12.15–19 he reports how Roman forces were installed in Lazica, which they soon abandoned through dissatisfaction with their diet. The terms of the Eternal Peace returned the two important border fortresses of Sarapanis and Scanda to the Romans, despite Khusro's initial hesitation: see i.22.3, 18.

It is likely, as David Braund has argued, that Procopius' portrayal of the economic plight of the Lazi is mistaken. Although they did import many goods, such as olive oil, wine and salt, it was only the last commodity that was essential. In other respects, moreover, the region was quite prosperous, as Agath. iii.5.2–4 explicitly attests, cf. Strabo 11.2.17. As Braund suggests, some of the imports Procopius mentions and the transport required are likely to have been linked to the presence of Roman forces. This need not mean that restrictions on trade imposed by successive commanders may not have vexed the population, but it must also be borne in mind that those accused by Procopius of maladministration are figures for whom he had a particular dislike: Peter, for instance, accused Belisarius of being unwilling to accept an alternative emperor if Justinian died (*Anecd.* 4.2–6 with Pfeilschifter–Thesz *ad loc.*). On a more general level, as Timo Stickler points out, Procopius gives a greater prominence to the Caucasus henceforth, an indication, perhaps, that he came to appreciate the region's geopolitical significance. See also fig. 30, p. 641.

Bibliography: Averil Cameron 1985, 122, Angeli Bertinelli 1989, Braund 1989, Braund 1991, Braund 1994, 55–6, 280–1, Börm 2007, 211, 215, Stickler 2019, esp.160–1.

15.2 Λαζοὶ τὰ μὲν πρῶτα γῆν τὴν Κολχίδα ὥκουν, Ῥωμαίων κατήκοοι ὄντες, οὐ μέντοι ἐς φόρου ἀπαγωγὴν, 'The Lazi initially used to live in the land of Colchis as subjects of the Romans, not,

however, paying tribute.’ At least in the first half of the fifth century the Lazi appear to have come within the Roman orbit, but trouble broke out during the reign of Marcian, as Priscus reports. It appears that the region thus slipped from the Roman grasp until the 520s, as noted at i.12.1–19h. See Zuckerman 1991, 536–42, making good use of the evidence of Men. Prot. frg.6.1.430–603, Greatrex 1998, 126, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 56–8 with the relevant fragments of Priscus, 33.1–2/25–6 (pp.65–6), 44/34 (p.73), 51/41 (pp.77–8), to which must be added a recently discovered fragment from Suda T134, cf. Rance 2015, esp.861–5 on the context. The Lazi’s own representation of their history at 15.15 below is clearly tendentious. The terms Lazica and Colchis are used interchangeably.

15.2 ἐπειδὴν αὐτοῖς ὁ βασιλεὺς τελευτήσῃ, ξύμβολα τῆς ἀρχῆς τῷ διαδεχομένῳ τὴν βασιλείαν ὁ Ῥωμαίων βασιλεὺς ἔπεμπε, ‘when their king died, the Roman emperor used to send to his successor on the throne the symbols of sovereignty’. This is confirmed by Priscus, frg.33.2/26.3 (p.66), which reports how Gubazes returned these symbols to the Romans so that his son might rule. Descriptions of these symbols or regalia may be found (e.g.) in Mal. 17.9, cf. Proc. *Aed.* iii.1.18–23 (on Armenian satraps), while Agath. iii.15.2–3 gives a detailed account of the arrival of the newly enthroned King Tzath in 555/6, cf. Braund 1994, 281. Such procedures had long been employed by the Romans to project their power beyond their formal frontiers; Procopius describes it in use in North Africa at iii.25.3–8, where Belisarius despatches the customary items to the Moors to secure their loyalty. On this see Williams 2015, 173–9, a good general discussion of the use of such insignia in the sixth century, cf. Morrisson 1997, 764–7.

The Lazic kings not only received their regalia from the Roman emperor, but also appointed a number of local rulers in the Caucasus, notably for the Suani – which sparked lengthy negotiations at the time of the peace of 561/2 and subsequently – but also for the Apsili (Proc. viii.2.32–3), the Abasgi (viii.3.12) and the Misimians (Agath. iii.15.8). Their allegiance to the Roman empire was thus a significant issue for the whole wider region. See Lordkipanidze and Brakmann 1994, 80–1, Braund 1994, 63, 309–10, Sartor 2018, 271–7.

15.3 ὅπως δὴ μὴ Οὐννοὶ πολέμιοι ἐξ ὄρους τοῦ Καυκάσου, ὁμόρου σφίσιν ὄντος, διὰ Λαζικῆς πορευόμενοι ἐσβάλλωσιν ἐς γῆν τὴν Ῥωμαίων, ‘To prevent hostile Huns from the adjacent Caucasus mountains from invading Roman territory through Lazica’. Procopius refers to

Huns beyond the Caucasus, on whom see i.10.6n. See further ii.28.22n: Khusro later hoped to be able to control Hunnic incursions through his annexation of Lazica.

15.4 ἐφύλασσον δὲ οὔτε αὐτοὶ χρήματα ἢ στρατιὰν πρὸς Ῥωμαίων δεχόμενοι οὔτε Ῥωμαίοις πη ξυστρατεύοντες, ‘For this guard duty they received no money or forces from the Romans, nor did they serve anywhere with the Roman troops.’ Since Procopius at 15.6 describes the situation under Justinian, he must here be referring to the situation earlier, presumably in the fifth century. Later, however, they did receive subsidies. See Sartor 2018, 271–2.

15.4 ἐπ’ ἐμπορίᾳ δὲ τῇ κατὰ θάλασσαν πρὸς Ῥωμαίους αἰετοὺς ἐν πόντῳ ὥκημένους ἐργαζόμενοι, ‘but (the Lazi were) engaged in continuous commerce by sea with the Romans who lived on the Euxine (Black) Sea’. Cf. Agath. iii.5.3. See Braund 1991, 221–2, for the active trading carried out by the Lazi to supplement their own resources, cf. idem 1989, 38, Lordkipanidse and Brakmann 1994, 81, Braund 1994, 55, Bibikov 1996, 374–7, Zerbin et al. 2012, 28–9. Avdaliani 2019, 40–6, argues that Lazica was an important conduit for trade in this period.

15.5 αὐτοὶ μὲν γὰρ οὔτε ἄλας οὔτε σῖτον οὔτε ἄλλο τι ἀγαθὸν ἔχουσι, δέρρεις δὲ καὶ βύρσας καὶ ἀνδράποδα παρεχόμενοι τὰ σφίσιν ἐπιτήδεια ἐκομίζοντο. ‘For they had themselves neither salt nor cereals nor any other asset and obtained their provisions by supplying skins, hides and slaves.’ As noted at ii.15n, Procopius seriously underestimates the resources of Lazica, cf. Agath. iii.5.2–4, Sarris 2011b, 138–9, Avdaliani 2019, 46; his description of the country at i.12.15 is similarly downbeat, although at viii.14.46 he notes the fertility of the district of Mokherisis, cf. viii.2.25–6 on the vineyards of the Meskhi, neighbours of the Lazi. See Lordkipanidse and Brakmann 1994, 81, Bibikov 1996, 376–7, Wheeler 1999, 217–18, for a more measured view. While salt was indeed lacking, some cereals were produced, even if the local millet was looked down upon by the Romans, i.12.15–17. See Braund 1989, 39, noting that the presence of the Roman army may have encouraged diversification of crops, idem 1991, 222, on the shortage of salt, cf. Strabo ii.5.6. Mitford 2018, 11–12, offers a good overview of the region.

δέρρεις, *derreis*, ‘skins’ and βύρσας, *byrsas*, ‘hides’, are very similar products: see Hesychius, *Lexicon*, Δ690, cf. Suda, Δ256. Men. Prot. frg.6.1.569 reports that among the wares that the Suani paid in tribute to

the Lazi were δέρρεις, cf. Braund 1994, 63. Slaves were a long-standing export of Lazica and the Black Sea region: see Braund and Tsetskhladze 1989, Braund 1994, 69–70.

15.5 ἐπειδὴ δὲ τὰ ἀμφὶ Γουργένει τῷ Ἰβήρων βασιλεῖ γενέσθαι ξυνέπεσεν, ὥσπερ μοι ἐν τοῖς ἔμπροσθεν λόγοις ἐρρήθη, ‘But after the affair of Gurgenes the king of Iberia, which I related earlier in my narrative’. A reference back to i.12.1–13, on which see the note *ad loc.*

15.6 στρατιῶται Ῥωμαίων ἐπιχωριάζειν Λαζοῖς ἤρξαντο, οἷς δὴ οἱ βάρβαροι οὗτοι ἤχθοντο, ‘Roman soldiers began to be stationed among the Lazi, and these barbarians were annoyed by them.’ Procopius refers to the abortive attempt to garrison Lazica in the 520s, reported at i.12.14–19 and repeated at viii.13.17–19. Following the conclusion of the Eternal Peace, it appears that some forces returned to the kingdom, cf. 15.12. Agath. iii.15.4 insists that the Lazi were not really barbarians at all, cf. Greatrex 2018b, 338 and n.52. See Braund 1994, 293, on the friction arising from the soldiers’ presence; he also offers a translation of this section.

15.7 ὁ δὲ Πέτρος οὗτος ὠρμητο μὲν ἐξ Ἀρζανηνῆς, ἣ ἐκτὸς Νυμφίου ποταμοῦ ἐστι, Περσῶν κατήκοος ἐκ παλαιοῦ οὔσα, ‘This Peter came from Arzanene, which is on the other side of the river Nymphius, long subject to Persia.’ On Peter see *PLRE* ii, Petrus 27 with i.12.9n. His origins in Persian Arzanene explain why Khusro subsequently demanded that he be handed over to him as a former Persian subject, cf. ii.26.38n. The district had been in Persian hands since 363: see Dignas and Winter 2007, 126–31, for discussion and a useful map. On the river Nymphius and Arzanene see i.8.21n, referring to the raid in 503 on which the future general was captured, cf. Greatrex 1998, 97 n.72. On the education Procopius says that he received from a *grammatistēs*, see ii.6.23n.

15.8 ὁ Πέτρος στρατηγὸς γεγωνὼς ἔς τε φιλοχρηματίαν εἵπερ τις ἄλλος ἐξώκειλε καὶ ἀβελτερίᾳ πολλῇ ἐς ἅπαντας ἐχρήτο, ‘Peter became a general, drifting into greed for money as much as anyone ever had, and used to behave towards everyone with great folly.’ On Procopius’ antipathy towards Peter see ii.15n. Love of money is a vice Procopius signals in numerous figures, such as John the Cappadocian, i.24.16, Khusro, ii.5.28, or Justinian himself, *Anecd.* 13.18. The expression ἔς τε φιλοχρηματίαν ἐξώκειλε, *es te philokhrēmatian exōkeile*, ‘he drifted,

ran aground into greed for money’ is found also in Olympiodorus, frg.37.5–6. For the phrase εἴ(περ) τις ἄλλος, *ei(per) tis allos*, ‘if any other person (had)’ cf. Eur. *Ph.* 1596 with Mastronarde, 599 and Soph. *OT* 1118 with Finglass, 504, *CGCG* 29.42. The word ἀβελτερία, *abelteria*, ‘foolishness’ implies an element of culpability, at least in Procopius’ usage, e.g. at vii.25.4, cf. v.2.19, v.4.31, Agath. iv.21.7, *Dial. de sci. pol.* v.75 (29/161). Braund 1994, 293, renders the phrase as ‘with the utmost disdain’.

15.9 Ὑστερον δὲ βασιλεὺς Ἰουστινιανὸς ἄλλους τε ἐς Λαζικήν ἄρχοντας ἔπεμψε καὶ Ἰωάννην, ὃν Τζίβον ἐκάλουν, ἄνδρα ἐξ ἀφανῶν μὲν καὶ ἀδόξων ἀρχὴν γεγονότα, ‘Later the Emperor Justinian sent out among other commanders to Lazica John, whom they called Tzibus, a man of obscure and undistinguished origins.’ Procopius’ sketch of John’s character is damning, recalling the traits of John the Cappadocian at i.24.13; both were of similarly humble origins, cf. Agath. iv.21.5–7 on John the Libyan, an equally unscrupulous high-ranking official in the employ of the general Justin in the Caucasus in the late 550s, on whom see *PLRE* iii, Ioannes 68. For John Tzibus, *ibid.*, Ioannes *qui et* Tzibus 20. See Thesz 2018 on Procopius’ criticism of the promotion of ill-educated commoners. Both John Tzibus and John the Cappadocian were also adept at developing new sources of revenue, as Procopius explains, thus gaining imperial favour, cf. Kruse 2018, 52. Averil Cameron 1985, 140, 143, 240, rightly points out that Procopius’ criticism is expressed in stock phrases, e.g. ‘the most wicked man on earth (lit. of all)’, likewise applied to John the Cappadocian. In the present case, as with John the Cappadocian, the indictment of the emperor’s officials represents an indirect way of criticising Justinian himself, cf. (e.g.) Braund 1994, 293 and already Dahn 1865, 297–302.

15.9 ὃς δὴ ἅπαντα ἔσφηλέ τε καὶ συνετάραξε τὰ Ῥωμαίων τε καὶ Λαζῶν πράγματα, ‘He completely upset and confused affairs, both for Rome and for the Lazi.’ Procopius gives a comparable assessment of Bessas’ failure to follow up his capture of Petra in 551 at viii.13.11: the general preferred to tap the revenues of the region instead.

15.10 οὗτος καὶ βασιλέα Ἰουστινιανὸν πόλιν ἀνέπεισεν ἐπιθαλασσίαν, Πέτρην ὄνομα, ἐν Λαζοῖς δεῖμασθαι, ‘This man persuaded the Emperor Justinian to build a city by the sea in Lazica, called Petra.’ Petra is generally identified with Tsikhisdziri in today’s Georgia, 29 km north of Batumi, although Mitford 2018, 412, prefers to

place it at the modern Poti. The site was inhabited before this refoundation, as excavations have revealed, but evidently Justinian boosted the prominence of the city by his efforts, no doubt at the instigation of John. See Seibt 1992, 143 and n.29, Tsetzkhladze 1994, 388–9, Braund 1994, 293, Lordkipanidze 1994, 150, Lordkipanidze and Brakmann 1994, 85, *ODLA*, Petra. The city of Petra (Justiniana) is attested in *NovJ.* 28.pr. (July 535), which gives a *terminus ante quem* for its refoundation.

It is possible, as suggested by Lordkipanidze and Brakmann, that an Armenian called Thomas undertook the work at Petra, cf. *PLRE* iii, Thomas 2 and ii.30.5. Colvin 2022, ch.5, suggests that Procopius may have played up the role of John in the foundation of Petra, seeking to criticise his administration, and passed over that of Thomas, the father of John Guzes (on whom see ii.30.5n).

15.11 ἀλλ' ἐν Πέτρᾳ ξυστησάμενος τὸ δὴ καλούμενον μονοπώλιον αὐτὸς κάπηλός τε καὶ ξυμπάσης τῆς περὶ ταῦτα ἐργασίας ἐπιστάτης ἐγίγνετο, ἅπαντα ὠνούμενός τε καὶ ἀποδιδόμενος Κόλχοις, οὐχ ἥπερ εἶθιστο, ἀλλ' ἥπερ ἐξῆν. 'Instead he himself set up in Petra what they call a "monopoly" and became a trader and overseer of all the activity in this connection, buying up everything and selling it to the Colchians, not in accordance with custom but at the highest price he could.' Both the Emperors Leo and Zeno (*C.J.* 4.59.1–2 of 473 and 483) sought to clamp down on the creation of monopolies, but Procopius accuses Justinian of supporting them for financial gain through his ministers, notably the praetorian prefect Peter Barsymes, on which see (e.g.) Jones 1964, 296, Zuckerman 2013, 323–32; a monopoly on salt production, on the other hand, is attested already at *C.J.* 4.61.11 (of 398 perhaps), cf. Karayannopoulos 1958, 235, Jones 1964, 705. At *Anecd.* 26.36–9 Procopius describes a monopoly established by the prefect of Alexandria, Hephaestus, like the one reported here: both are referred to as a 'so-called monopoly', while the official in question is portrayed as a κάπηλος, *kapēlos*, 'retail dealer, salesman', a negative term, cf. Hdt. iii.89.3. See Stein 1949, 426, Jones 1964, 826, on Justinian's support for monopolies, cf. Angeli Bertinelli 1989, 141 and n.91, Evans 1996, 235–6, *ODB*, 1399–1400; Proc. *Anecd.* 20 offers general criticism of the practice, cf. 20.5 in particular. Note also his criticism of Bessas' profiteering (with 15.9n) during the Gothic war with Kruse 2018, 46–8.

While Procopius may exaggerate the degree to which John (and Hephaestus) intervened in the market (so Karayannopoulos 1958, 235), it is clear that their profiteering at the expense of the population caused

great discontent. This will not have been diminished even if part of the proceeds could be used to defray the cost of stationing Roman soldiers in the region, as Evans 1996, 158, suggests.

The relative ἥπερ, *hēper*, is a dative of price, where the noun τιμή, *timē*, ‘price’, is understood and the relative has been attracted into its case, cf. Smyth §§1372a, 1508a.

15.12 κρύφα Ῥωμαίων, ‘unknownst to the Romans’. Cf. i.20.6 on this expression. On Lazic discontent at the Roman garrison see 15.6, where it is already noted in very similar terms.

15.13 οἷς δὴ εἶρητο τὰ πιστὰ πρὸς Χοσρόου λαβοῦσιν, ὅτι γε οὔποτε Λαζοὺς ἄκοντας ἐκδώσει Ῥωμαίοις, ‘They had been told to obtain pledges from Khusro that he would never give up the Lazi to the Romans against their will.’ The caution exercised by the Lazi was prudent, although it was they who broke with the Persians in the end, cf. 29.9. When the Iberian king Gurgenes had defected to the Romans in the 520s he had sought similar guarantees from the Emperor Justin; they proved of little worth. See i.12.5–6 with i.12.1–19h.

15.13 ἐπαγαγέσθαι, ‘to invite, lead in’. See Haury 1893, 20, for his correction of the manuscripts’ παραγαγέσθαι, *paragegesthai*, ‘direct, introduce’ and ἀπαγαγέσθαι, *apagagesthai*, ‘lead away’.

15.14–30 The Speech of the Lazi to Khusro

As noted at ii.15n, the speech of the Lazic envoys recalls that of the Armenians: both peoples are seeking to induce the Persian king to intervene against the Romans. Alongside complaints about Roman maladministration are arguments of principle: it is incumbent on Khusro to defend those who are victims of injustice (15.20), a plea that recalls the Armenians’ claim that the king is responsible for their sufferings by giving Justinian free rein (3.33–4), thereby abetting his injustices. Some of their claims are vindicated by what Procopius has already explained, but others, such as the ease with which the king could now attack Constantinople (15.27) are clearly exaggerated, cf. Auler 1876, 44. See Taragna 2000, 95, rightly perceiving this as a typical *presbeutikos logos*, i.e. diplomatic speech, although it is slightly unusual in omitting the name of the ambassadors, cf. *ibid.* 91 and n.58.

15.15 Κόλχοι γὰρ Πέρσαις σύμμαχοι τὸ ἀνέκαθεν ὄντες πολλὰ τε εἰργάσαντο αὐτοὺς ἀγαθὰ καὶ αὐτοὶ ἔπαθον, ‘For the Colchians, allies of the Persians since ancient times, did them great good and received the same in return.’ See 15.2n: in fact, the Lazi had been aligned with the Romans for a long time up to the mid fifth century. Already in the second century A.D. the Lazic king Malassas owed his position to the Emperor Hadrian, Arrian, *Peripl.* 11.2, cf. Braund 1989, 38–9. It is more likely that the claim should be seen as specious rather than as referring to the Achaemenid period, despite Braund 1994, 278.

15.15 ὧν δὴ ἐν γράμμασι μνημεῖα πολλὰ ἡμεῖς τε ἔχομεν κἂν τοῖς βασιλείοις τοῖς σοῖς ἐς τὸ παρὸν διασώζεται. ‘Of this we have many memorials in writing, while others are preserved up to the present time in your palace.’ Men. Prot. fig.6.1.589–90 confirms the existence of Persian records of dealings in the region, in this case concerning the dependency of Suania, cf. Zuckerman 1991, 542, Börm 2007, 153, 156, noting further attestations of such archives.

15.16 χρόνῳ δὲ ὕστερον τοῖς ἡμετέροις προγόνοις τετύχηκεν εἴτε παρ’ ὑμῶν ἀμεληθεῖσιν εἴτε ἄλλου του ἔνεκα (οὐ γὰρ ἔχομέν τι σαφὲς περὶ τούτων εἰδέναι) Ῥωμαίοις ἐνσπόνδοις γενέσθαι, ‘But later it befell our ancestors, either because they were neglected by you or for some other reason (for we cannot find out anything definite about this), to become allied to the Romans.’ Given that the defection of Tzath occurred probably in 522, some twenty years earlier, the envoys’ claim that they could not determine his motives, like the impression given that it happened long ago, is clearly specious. See ii.15.2n.

15.19 τῆς δικαιοσύνης ἄξια πράσσοντες, ἣν περιστέλλειν ἀεὶ πάτριον Πέρσαις, ‘acting worthily of the justice that the Persians traditionally uphold’. Schmitt 2004, 676, argues that this reflects Zoroastrian veneration of *aštād*, the Middle Persian term for ‘justice’, cf. Börm 2007, 184, 285.

15.21 ἔνια δὲ εἰπεῖν ὧν τετολμήκασιν οἱ κατάρατοι Ῥωμαῖοι καθ’ ἡμῶν ἄξιον, ‘We should mention some of the things that the accursed Romans have dared to do to us.’ The envoys proceed to offer an account of John Tzibus’ conduct broadly in line with Procopius’ earlier narrative (15.9–11). On the adjective κατάρατοι, *kataratoi*, ‘accursed’, see i.9.8n.

15.21 τῷ μὲν γὰρ ἡμετέρῳ βασιλεῖ τὸ σχῆμα μόνον τῆς βασιλείας ἀπολιπόντες, ‘They left to our king only the semblance of monarchy.’ As Stein 1949, 303, remarks, the king had the modest honorary rank of *silentiarius* at the court in Constantinople, perhaps acquired when resident there, cf. Proc. ii.21.2, 29.31 with *PLRE* iii, Gubazes; Stein likens his position to that of a maharaja in India under British rule. The Armenian ambassadors to Khusro paint a similar portrait, 3.39. Procopius describes the position of the Senate under Justinian in comparable terms at *Anecd.* 14.8: like the Lazic king, it ‘sat’, ἐκάθητο, *ekathēto*, powerlessly, cf. κάθηται, *kathētai*, ‘sits’, just below in this section.

15.23 ὄρα, ὦ βασιλεῦ, ἐς ὅποιαν τινὰ ἔννοιαν ἤλθον, ‘And see, O King, what scheme they have adopted.’ On the ‘monopoly’ established by John Tzibus that excites the ire of the ambassadors, see ii.15.11n. The concluding section of the speech is curiously quoted by Dundua and Avdaliani 2017, 52, in the context of advocating Georgia’s admission to NATO.

15.25 οὕτω τε ξύν τοῖς ἀναγκαίοις ἅπαν ἀφαιροῦνται τὸ χρυσίον ἡμᾶς, ‘So they are taking all our gold alongside our basic produce.’ On the production of gold in the region see Strabo 11.2.19 with Braund 1994, 61–2, Zerbini et al. 2012, 24.

15.27 μετεῖναι δὲ τῆς Ῥωμαίων θαλάσσης ὑμῖν διὰ τῆς ἡμετέρας ξυμβήσεται χώρας, ἐν ᾗ πλοῖά σοι, ὦ βασιλεῦ, ναυπηγουμένῳ βατόν οὐδενὶ πόνῳ τὸ ἐν Βυζαντίῳ παλάτιον ἔσται, ‘further, you will have access to the Roman sea through our country, and by building ships upon it you will easily be able, O King, to reach the palace in Byzantium since there is no obstacle in the way’. This suggestion is rightly taken by Lee 1993a, 23–4, as indicative more of Roman worries about a Persian presence in Lazica than of genuine Sasanian strategic aims, cf. Braund 1994, 297–8, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 273 n.1, though it is taken more seriously by Avdaliani 2019, 39. See also Börm 2007, 211. Such Roman concerns may be perceived likewise at ii.28.23, viii.7.12, Agath. ii.18.7.

15.29 ὅρεσι γὰρ τοῖς Καυκασίοις ἐπιτείχισμα μέχρι τοῦδε γεγονέναι τὴν Λαζῶν χώραν πάντως που καὶ ὑμεῖς ξυνεπίστασθε, ‘For surely you too know well that the country of the Lazi has been up to now a bulwark against the Caucasus mountains.’ The envoys claim that Khusro will be able to direct barbarians, presumably Huns, against the Romans, cf. ii.28.22. See Braund 1994, 46–7, on routes into Lazica from

the Caucasus, cf. Zuckerman 1991, 540, 544, de Siena 2009, 243–7, Mitford 2018, 420–4, Avdaliani 2019, 53; Suania was particularly important in this regard, as Men. Prot. fig.6.1.500 makes clear. Jord. *Get.* 7.50 describes the region in similar terms, *Pylas Caspiae, quod nunc Lazorum gens custodit pro munitione Romana*, ‘the Caspian Gates, which the Lazic people now guards as a Roman bulwark’. See also Angeli Bertinelli 1989, 138, Lordkipanidse and Brakmann 1994, 84. On the term ἐπιτείχισμα, *epiteikhisma*, ‘bulwark, stronghold’, see i.10.19n.

15.31 Χοσρόης δὲ τοῖς λόγοις ἡσθεῖς, ‘Khusro was delighted at their words’, cf. the delight of Kavadh at i.7.32, 18.1 and that of Justinian at v.6.22 with i.18.1n.

15.32 ἀνδρὶ εὐζώνῳ, ‘for an active man’. See i.19.27n for this Herodotean idiom.

15.32 κρημνώδη τε ὑπερφυῶς οὖσαν καὶ δένδροις συχνοῖς τε καὶ ἀμφιλαφείσιν ἐπὶ μακρότατον συνεχομένην, ‘being very rocky and covered over a great expanse by numerous dense forests’. Cf. *Airs, Waters, Places*, 15.1, which refers to the region as δασεῖα, *daseia*, ‘thickly wooded’ with Braund 1989, 36–7, idem 1994, 53, on the arduous terrain in general, cf. Sauer et al. 2020, 789, albeit more focused on the environs of the Dariali fort, and 816, fig.22.5 for a vegetation map of modern Georgia. See also 17.1, viii.13.5, *Anecd.* 2.26, and Agath. ii.29.3–4; it is evidently a theme close to Procopius’ heart, cf. Stickler 2019, 169. As Stickler 2019, 161, points out, the Persians must already have been aware of the nature of the terrain, although Khusro himself had no experience of it.

15.33 οἱ δὲ οἱ ἰσχυρίζοντο παντὶ τῷ Περσῶν στρατῷ τὴν ἐκείνη ὁδὸν εὐπετῇ ἔσεσθαι, τέμνουσι μὲν τὰ δένδρα, ἔς δὲ τῶν κρημνῶν τὰς δυσχωρίας αὐτὰ ἐμβαλλομένοις, ‘But they assured him that the road there would be easy for the entire Persian army, if they cut down the trees and threw them into the ravines by the cliffs.’ This was the technique that the Persians adopted, cf. 17.1 with viii.13.5. Despite these efforts, Khusro’s worries about the terrain were vindicated to some extent by the discontent that became rife in his army during his invasion, *Anecd.* 2.31.

15.34 καὶ αὐτοὶ ὡμολόγουν τῆς τε ὁδοῦ ἡγεμόνες καὶ τοῦ ἔργου τούτου Πέρσαις ἔσεσθαι [πρόπονοι], ‘They agreed that they would themselves lead the way and carry out this work for the Persians.’

Already in 1903 Haury, 391, expressed doubts as to the last word, πρόπονοι, *proponoi*, which ought to mean something like ‘labouring in advance’, but is nowhere else attested in Greek literature, cf. Wirth’s note, 564. Nauck 1868, 529, proposed emending it to πρόξενοι, *proxenoi*, which can be used to mean ‘assisting’, followed by the genitive case, as here, cf. *LSJ*, 1492, III. Yet πρόπονοι is retained in Dewing’s text, likewise in Kaldellis’ revised translation, cf. García Romero 234 and n.132, Brodka, 143. It is not accepted, however, by Veh, 310, and it seems preferable to follow him in interpreting the Lazi as pledging to take the lead both in showing and in clearing the way for the Persians.

15.35 ἔθνος γὰρ Οὐννικὸν ἐνταῦθά πη ἐπισκῆψαι τῇ Περσῶν ἀρχῇ ἐπεφῆμιζεν, ‘for he put it about that a Hunnic people somewhere there had attacked the Persian empire’. This proved an effective piece of exercise in deception, as emerges from the following lines. Two passages from *Anecd.* provide further background. At 30.14 Procopius complains that the cuts Justinian made to Roman spying efforts led to their ignorance of what Khusro was planning and consequently to the loss of Lazica. At 2.29–31 he adds that the Persian king actually organised a Hunnic invasion of Armenia in order to deflect attention from his preparations, but the Roman *magister militum per Armeniam* Valerian decisively defeated the invaders, thereby undermining morale in Khusro’s own army. See Lee 1989, idem 1993a, 116–17, who overlooks, however, the invasion of Armenia, on which see Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 115–16, *PLRE* iii, Valerianus 1. It is interesting that Procopius omits the failed invasion of Armenia entirely here, perhaps because Valerian’s victory might overshadow Belisarius’ modest achievements in 541. Valerian’s success may also be the context for the defection of a certain Artabanes (*PLRE* iii, Artabanus 1, to be distinguished from the homonymous Arsacid commander, Artabanus 2) that Procopius describes at viii.8.21–4. See also i.21.11–16n on Roman espionage.

ii.16 Belisarius’ Preparations to Invade Persian Mesopotamia

Procopius slows the pace as Belisarius enters the stage again. His speech, which takes up half the chapter, underlines his prudence and willingness to consult his colleagues; his insistence on seeking intelligence as to Khusro’s plans demonstrates his caution. As Stein 1949, 494, suggests, Belisarius may have been seeking to deflect criticism of his more independent attitude during the closing phase of the war in Italy. His response

(16.18) to the reluctance of the two commanders from Phoenice Libanensis to take part in his offensive displays his knowledge of the region. The impression of haste in the narrative is deceptive: from 14.8 and 13 (cf. 16.4), where Belisarius is depicted as rushing to the eastern front at the start of spring, one would assume that the projected invasion here described would be taking place in April or May, just like Khusro's of the previous year. Evidently, however, it took him some months to muster his forces: the imperfect tenses used at 16.2 may reflect the continuous effort required to prepare his ill-equipped troops for combat. That months have passed by before the invasion has begun emerges from the Arabs' truce mentioned by Theoctistus and Rhecithangus (16.17): this took place, as Procopius notes (16.18), around the summer solstice, i.e. late June, cf. 19.32, where the heat of the summer is emphasised.

Bibliography: Taragna 2000, 104–5, Chekalova 2001, 416 n.107, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 108. See also Whately 2016, 107–9, 228–31, on the didactic aspect of Proc.'s work, relevant to Belisarius' speech, cf. Koehn 2018a, 277–8. Kislinger and Stathakopoulos 1999, 81, on the chronology.

16.2 διεῖπέ τε αὐτοῦ καὶ διεκόσμηι τοὺς στρατιώτας, γυμνοὺς τε καὶ ἀνόπλους ἐπὶ πλεῖστον ὄντας, κατωρρωδηκότας τὸ Περσῶν ὄνομα. 'Here then he was organising and equipping the soldiers, who mostly lacked both weapons and armour and were terrified at the very name of the Persians.' The phrasing recalls Vitigis' mobilisation of the Goths at the start of the Gothic war, v.11.28, cf. vii.11.3–10, a letter sent by Justinian to Belisarius from Italy in 545, likewise emphasising the lack of equipment (and pay) of Roman forces. Procopius claims that Belisarius' troops were unarmed and without protection, which is probably an exaggeration: at 14.13 he noted that Belisarius' 'followers', i.e. his *bucellarii*, had accompanied him from Italy, cf. ii.14.8–13n. Local troops, on the other hand, were no doubt demoralised by Khusro's invasion and perhaps suffering from the damage caused to local infrastructure, including weapons factories at Antioch and Edessa (cf. M. Whitby, *ERA*, s.v. *fabrica*). Leppin 2011, 225, proposes a figure of 15–30,000 men for Belisarius' army.

16.3 πολέμου γὰρ Οὐννικοῦ ἀσχολίαν Χοσρόη ἐτέρωθι εἶναι, 'since Khusro was occupied elsewhere by a war against the Huns'. Khusro's cover-story for his presence in the Caucasus thus bore fruit, but the fact that he was about to invade Lazica rather than deal with a Hunnic invasion made no difference to Belisarius' plans. See ii.15.35n.

16.5 καὶ οἱ Ἀρέθας τε ξὺν πολλῷ στρατῷ Σαρακηνῶν ἦλθε, ‘In addition, al-Harith came to him with a large army of Saracens.’ Nothing more is known of the forces brought by the phylarch; in 531 he had contributed 5000 men to the battle of Callinicum, cf. i.18.5n with Mal. 18.60. See Shahîd 1995, 219, 229, suggesting his force on this occasion may have been comparable in size, *PLRE* iii, Arethas.

16.6–15 Belisarius’ Speech to his Officers

This is the first of such councils of war in the *Persian Wars*. They also take place in the *Vandalic* and *Gothic Wars*, e.g. at iii.15.1–2, where Belisarius invites Archelaus, the prefect to the Roman expeditionary force, to set forth his views. Only then does he outline his own view, which is swiftly adopted by the assembled officers (15.31). At vi.18.12–26 he exchanges views with Narses, who refuses to accept his plans; cf. ii.19.6–14n. As noted already (on ii.16), the speech displays Belisarius’ prudence and wisdom: he is willing to listen to his commanders’ views, and later, at 19.45, he accepts the consensus with which the speech of John, the son of Nicetas, is hailed, although it is unclear whether he agrees with it. Perhaps by such means he hoped to avoid being wrongfooted by his subordinates, as had occurred at Callinicum (i.18.25), where he was obliged by their reproaches to accept battle immediately despite his misgivings. Maur. *Strat.* viii.2.23 (282) recommends such wide consultations, although it adds that the general should formulate his final plan with the assistance of only a few. See Taragna 2000, 112–19, on speeches made at assemblies.

16.6 Ἀπαντας ὑμᾶς, ὧ ξυνάρχοντες, πολέμων πολλῶν ἐμπείρους οἶδα, ξυνήγαγόν τε ἐν τῷ παρόντι, ‘Since I know, fellow officers, that you all have experience of many wars, I have brought you together now.’ Cf. 19.6, where again Belisarius invokes his commanders’ experience at the start of a speech. Nicias addresses the Athenians at Syracuse in similar terms: they are πολλῶν ἤδη πολέμων ἐμπειροὶ ὄντες, *pollōn ēdē polemōn empeiroi ontes*, ‘already experienced in many wars’, Thuc. vii.61.3. Only Belisarius addresses his officers as ξυνάρχοντες, *xynarkhontes*, ‘fellow officers’, cf. ii.18.14, iii.15.18. Barbarian commanders prefer the term ξυστρατιῶται, *xystратиōtai*, ‘fellow soldiers’, e.g. the Moorish leaders at iv.11.38 or Totila at viii.30.7. Just once do Roman generals address their forces thus, viii.23.14.

16.6 οὐ γὰρ λόγου δεῖσθαι ὑμᾶς τοῦ ἐς εὐτολμίαν ἐνάγοντος οἶμαι, ‘since I do not believe that you need a speech to spur you to boldness’. This aside is mined by Leo the Deacon, ii.3 (p.20) for a speech attributed to Leo Phocas in 960 before an engagement with the Arabs, cf. Koehn 2018a, 277. Leo takes over other elements of speeches of Belisarius in the same passage, cf. ii.16.7n, 19.10n. Németh 2018, 84, suggests that Leo may have extracted the quotations from a lost volume ‘On Public Speeches’ of the Constantinian *Excerpta*.

16.6 ἀλλ’ ὅπως συμβουλήν τινα ἐν γε ἡμῖν αὐτοῖς ποιησάμενοι ἐλώμεθα μᾶλλον ἅπερ ἂν δοκῇ βέλτιστά τε καὶ ἄριστα τοῖς βασιλέως πράγμασιν εἶναι, ‘but in order that we might take counsel among us and choose the best possible strategy for the interests of the emperor’. The superlative adjectives βέλτιστα, *beltista*, ‘best (things)’, and ἄριστα, *arista*, ‘best (things)’ are pleonastic. Belisarius employs them again during a council of war at vi.18.22.

16.7 πόλεμος γὰρ εὐβουλίᾳ πάντων μάλιστα κατορθοῦσθαι φιλεῖ, ‘For a war tends to be successful above all as a consequence of good advice.’ Belisarius makes the same point at vi.3.26, while Vitigis makes a similar observation at v.11.12, where the importance of εὐβουλίᾳ, *euboulia*, ‘good advice’, is underlined, cf. Origenes’ speech at i.24.27 with the Introduction, p. 11, on such gnomic utterances. See also Taragna 2000, 136. Leo Diac. ii.3 (p.20) recalls this and other formulations of Procopius noted just above.

16.7 δεῖ δὲ τοὺς ἐς βουλήν καθισταμένους αἰδοῦς τε καὶ φόβου παντάπασιν ἐλευθέραν ποιεῖσθαι τὴν γνώμην, ‘Those who are preparing for discussions must free their minds from both modesty and fear.’ Belisarius wishes his subordinates to speak freely, cf. Maur. *Strat.* viii.2.35 (284), for the maxim that a commander should be neither too harsh nor too indulgent. The issue of παρρησία, *parrhēsia*, freedom of speech, is raised in a number of interventions in deliberations, notably at iii.15, where the prefect Archelaus commends Belisarius for allowing his officers to speak freely and Belisarius thanks them for having done so, cf. iii.10.7, where John the Cappadocian is the only official prepared to object to Justinian’s plans to invade North Africa. See Taragna 2000, 104–5.

The noun αἰδώς, *aidōs*, can be translated in various ways: we have chosen ‘modesty’, but ‘respect’ would equally be appropriate, cf. *LSJ*, 36.

At iv.8.10 Procopius describes the Moors as having no φόβος, *phobos*, ‘fear’, of God, nor any αἰδώς of men, where clearly the latter translation is preferable. Belisarius fears, as he states just below, that preferable options may be overshadowed by subordinates’ modesty, presumably because they would hesitate to put them forward.

16.9 εἴ τι τοίνυν ἡ βασιλεῖ τῷ μεγάλῳ ἢ ἐμοὶ βεβουλευῆσθαι ὑπὲρ τῶν παρόντων δοκεῖ, μηδὲν ὑμᾶς τοῦτο εἰσίτω, ‘Consequently, if either the great emperor or I myself seem to have taken a decision about the present circumstances, let this not preoccupy you.’ During the council of war at the start of the Vandal war, Belisarius deliberately spoke last, iii.15.18, since he had wanted to solicit the views of all present and not impose his own. The reference to Justinian as the ‘great emperor’ or ‘great king’, *megas basileus*, recalls the titulature of the Achaemenid Persian king, cf. ii.7.23n with Pazdernik 2017, 222–4.

16.10 ὁ μὲν γὰρ μακρὰν πρὸς ἀπολελειμμένους τῶν πρᾶσσομένων, οὐκ ἔχει τοῖς καιροῖς ἀρμόσαι τὰς πράξεις, ‘He is left far removed from events and cannot adjust tactics to opportunities.’ Taragna 2000, 133, detects criticism of Justinian here, not without justification: Belisarius is, after all, inviting his officers to set aside the emperor’s instructions for an immediate attack (16.5). It is equally possible to interpret Procopius’ reference to Justinian’s distance from events metaphorically, cf. ii.29.32: the emperor’s attention to military matters was not constant, as noted also at vii.32.9. The opinion expressed by Belisarius might also serve as a pithy justification for his initiative in pursuing the war in Italy in 540, despite the emperor’s instructions.

16.16 Πέτρος δὲ καὶ Βούζης ἐξηγεῖσθαι τῷ στρατῷ οὐδὲν μελλήσοντα ἐπὶ τὴν πολεμίαν ἐκέλευον, ‘Peter and Buzes insisted that he lead forth the army against enemy territory without hesitating.’ Peter is the former commander in Lazica, on whom see ii.15.7n; Buzes had been responsible for defending the East in 540, cf. ii.6.1n. Both were disliked by Procopius, cf. ii.15n, with ii.6.3–6n and 6.8n.

16.17 Ῥεκίθαγγος μέντοι καὶ Θεόκτιστος, οἱ τῶν ἐν Λιβάνῳ στρατιωτῶν ἄρχοντες, ‘Rhecithangus and Theoctistus, the commanders of the troops in Lebanon’. They were the *duces* of Phoenice Libanensis: see *PLRE* iii, Rhecithangus and Theoctistus 2 with ii.8.2n. Evidently the former had taken over from Molatzes sometime after the

fall of Antioch in June 540, when he is last mentioned. On their concerns see 16.18n. The two *duces* would have led a force comprising mostly *limitanei*, an indication that these troops were still capable of offensive operations at this point, cf. Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 164.

16.17 δεδιέναι δὲ μὴ σφῶν ἐκλελοιπότων τὰ τε ἐπὶ Φοινίκης καὶ Συρίας χωρία κατ' ἐξουσίαν μὲν Ἀλαμούνδαρος ταῦτα ληίζηται, βασιλεὺς δὲ σφᾶς δι' ὀργῆς ἔχοι, 'they feared that because of their abandonment of the districts of Phoenice and Syria, al-Mundhir would plunder them at his leisure; the emperor would then be angry at them'. The syntax places greater emphasis on the commanders' first concern, where the subjunctive is used for vividness (cf. Smyth §2226, noting its common use by historians), while for the second the usual optative for secondary sequences in indirect speech is used (cf. Smyth §2619). Their worry about Justinian's anger is a reminder of the difficulty Belisarius faced in persuading his officers to speak their mind.

16.18 τοῦ γὰρ καιροῦ τροπὰς θερινὰς εἶναι. ταύτης δὲ τῆς ὥρας δύο μάλιστα μῆνας ἀνάθημα τῷ σφετέρῳ θεῷ Σαρακηνοὺς ἐς αἰὲ φέροντας ἐν ταύτῃ ἐπιδρομῇ τινὶ οὐποτε χρῆσθαι ἐς γῆν ἄλλοτρίαν, 'since it was then the summer solstice: in this season, he (Belisarius) pointed out, the Saracens always dedicate about two months to their god and do not undertake any raid on another's territory'. That certain months were 'forbidden' in pre-Islamic Arabia is generally agreed: no raiding was allowed for one month in the spring and for two months around the summer solstice. Arabic sources refer to four, rather than three, such months, which could on occasion be postponed. The issue is complex, however, since if a lunar calendar operated in pre-Islamic Arabia (convincingly refuted by Robin 2019, 33–8), the months may not have been attached to any one particular season; there may also have been a variation between regions, cf. Robin 2019, 38. The periods of truce gave an opportunity for pilgrimages and for attendance at a sequence of markets and fairs around the Arabian peninsula on which see Bonner 2011, 18–30, Ioh 2014, 474–8; these had to take place in the right season for merchants to arrive from elsewhere, and so one may infer that Procopius is right in specifying midsummer for the occurrence of one of these periods of truce. See Lee 1993a, 105, drawing attention to the comparable report of Nonnosus §11 with our note *ad loc.*, de Blois, *EP*, vol.10 (2000), s.v. Ta'rikh, 260. Ant. Plac. *Itin.* 36, 39, also refers to this period, likewise applying to it the term *anathema*, cf. Procopius'

ἀνάθημα, *anathēma*, ‘offering’. When it drew to a close, pilgrims in the Sinai were advised to leave the desert.

From the exchange it is clear, as noted at ii.16n, that Belisarius’ consultation took place around the middle of June, just as this festival period was beginning; hence Belisarius agreed to dismiss the two commanders two months later, 16.19.

ii.17 The Persian Capture of Petra

Procopius recounts Khusro’s seizure of the important Roman base at Petra with few flourishes. He consciously chooses to pass over certain events, concentrating on the fall of Petra, since both *Anecd.* 2.25–37 and *Wars* i.23.12–24 demonstrate that he had more information at his disposal on Khusro’s invasion, cf. ii.15.33n, 15.35n. A Persian source, perhaps Kavadh, grandson of Kavadh (cf. i.23–5g), is implied by Procopius’ uncertainty as to whether the general Aniabedes or the commander in charge of the battering-ram was executed, 17.12. Despite his earlier criticisms of John Tzibus (notably at 15.9–12), he acknowledges the effectiveness of his defensive measures: only after his death did the garrison decide to surrender. The capture of the city was a heavy blow to Roman power and prestige in the region, but it was not long before the Lazi regretted their defection to the Persians and joined with the Romans in trying to expel them. Despite some initial setbacks (see ii.29.33–43), a determined effort by the aged Roman general Bessas retook the city from the Persians in 551.

Bibliography: Rubin, *PvK*, 392–3, Braund 1994, 295–6, Lordkipanidse and Brakmann 1994, 86–7, Petersen 2013, 525–6, Stickler 2019, 161–2.

17.1 Χοσρόης δὲ καὶ ὁ Μήδων στρατός, ‘Khusro and the Persian (Medic) army’. Whately 2016, 112, argues that Procopius is consciously here comparing Belisarius and Khusro: the final sentence of 16.19 refers to the former with the particle μέν, *men*, while here the first sentence contains a δέ, *de*, a combination frequently used to this end, cf. Smyth §2904. This and at least some other instances in this part of book ii noted by Whately, *ibid.*, may, however, simply reflect a transition from one theatre of war to another.

17.1 τὰ δένδρα οὐδενὸς ἀντιστατοῦντος ἐκτέμνοντες, ‘they proceeded without any opposition to cut down the trees’. The description of the landscape and the measures taken to build a road for the army echo 15.32–3.

17.2 οὐ δὴ τὰ τε ἀμφὶ Μήδειαν καὶ Ἰάσονα οἱ ποιηταὶ γεγενῆσθαι μυθολογοῦσιν, ‘where the poets set the tale of Medea and Jason in mythology’. Pindar’s fourth *Pythian Ode* recounts the tale of Jason and the Argonauts, likewise the later *Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodius. Procopius returns to the legends concerning Jason, Medea and the Golden Fleece at viii.2.30, where he contests the poets’ siting of the events.

17.2 ἐλθὼν Γουβάζης, ὁ Λαζῶν βασιλεὺς προσεκύνησεν ἅτε δεσπότην Χοσρόην τὸν Καβάδου, ‘Gubazes, the king of the Lazi, came forward and did obeisance to Khusro, the son of Kavadh, as his lord and master.’ On Gubazes see *PLRE* iii, Gubazes; this is his first mention in the *Wars*, cf. Stickler 2019, 161. For the reference to Khusro, son of Kavadh, see i.23.1n. On the *proskynēsis* performed by Gubazes see i.6.16n.

17.3 Ἔστι δὲ Πέτρα πόλις ἐπιθαλασσία ἐν Κόλχοις, ‘There is a coastal city in Colchis called Petra.’ See ii.15.10n on the city.

17.4 ὁ Χοσρόης στρατιάν τε καὶ στρατηγὸν Ἀνιαβέδην ὡς αὐτοβοεὶ ἐξελοῦντας ἐπ’ αὐτοὺς ἔπεμψε, ‘Khusro sent Aniabedes as general in command of a force against them to take the place at the first shout.’ The king’s overconfidence is clear; naturally it is disappointed. The name Aniabedes may be a rendering of a Persian title, *ayēnbadh*, ‘master of ceremonies’: see *PLRE* iii, Aniabedes, Justi 1895, 16 with Christensen 1944, 300, Brock and Ashbrook Harvey 1998, 87–8.

17.8 πολέμιόν τε οὐδὲν οὔτε ὀρῶντες οὔτε ἀκούοντες, πέμψαντες παρὰ Χοσρόην τὰ παρόντα σφίσιν ἐδήλουν, ‘Hearing and seeing nothing hostile, they sent a message to Khusro, informing him of the situation.’ The situation recalls ii.7.8 at Beroea: faced with an apparently abandoned city, the Persian troops seek instructions from the king.

17.9 ἐν δὲ τῷ λόφῳ καθήμενος, ὃς δὴ τῇ πόλει ὡς ἀγχοτάτῳ ἐπικείται, θεατὴς τῶν πρασσομένων ἐγένετο, ‘Sitting on the hill that lies very close to the city, he himself became a spectator of the events.’ The practice of the king of observing proceedings, the better to inspire his soldiers, went back to Achaemenid times, e.g. at the battle of Salamis, where Xerxes watched the battle from the base of Mt Aegealus, Hdt. viii.90.4. See Whitby 1994, 240, Börm 2007, 94, Farrokh 2017, 255, and cf. Proc. i.7.28, ii.27.11 (with the notes *ad loc.*), Joh. Eph. *HE* vi.5. On the term θεατὴς, *theatēs*,

‘spectator’, see Pazdernik 2020a, 996, idem 2022, 143–5. Wiesehöfer 2021, discussing Procopius and Herodotus, while acknowledging that Persian monarchs did observe battlefields and are represented as doing so, remains sceptical as to the historicity of their accounts, cf. de Jong 2018, esp. 32–3.

17.11 θυμῷ τε ὁ Χοσρόης ἐχόμενος Ἀνιαβέδην ἀνεσκολόπισεν, ‘Khusro was seized with anger and impaled Aniabedes.’ On the theme of Khusro’s rage see i.21–2g, cf. i.23.14n and elsewhere. He would similarly in anger have impaled a Persian accused of rape by the population of Apamea, but had to defer the punishment: see ii.11.37. The huge Persian losses reported at 17.10 must be exaggerated, since Khusro had no trouble in continuing the siege.

17.15 Ῥωμαῖοι δὲ ἀμυνόμενοι ταῖς τε μηχαναῖς καὶ πᾶσιν ἐχρῶντο τοξεύμασι. ‘The Romans defended themselves with war-machines and all their arrows.’ Procopius’ language is vague: the machine, μηχανή, *mēkhanē*, is likely to be some sort of artillery instrument, perhaps a ballista, which he describes in some detail at v.21.14–18, cf. Turquois 2015, 224–5, stressing the vagueness of the description. It appears from v.27.10 that specialists fired τοξεύματα, *toxēumata*, ‘arrows’, from these instruments; hence the reference here to ‘arrows’ may refer to those fired both from bows and from ballistae. See also Petersen 2013, 272–5, on the use of artillery by the besieged.

17.16 ἔπειτα δὲ (καὶ γὰρ ἔδει Πέτραν Χοσρόη ἀλῶναι) βληθεὶς Ἰωάννης τύχη τινὶ ἐς τὸν τράχηλον θνήσκει, καὶ ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ οἱ ἄλλοι Ῥωμαῖοι ἐς ὀλιγωρίαν ἀπάντων κατέστησαν. ‘But later, since it was fated that Petra should be taken by Khusro, John was by some chance struck in the throat and died, and after this the remaining Romans gave up hope of anything.’ On the reference to Petra’s fate see ii.8.14n and 13.22n. The death of the commander of a besieged city tended to provoke a collapse of morale, as had occurred also at Sura, on which see ii.5.11n with Petersen 2013, 271.

The final words of the sentence mean literally that ‘the remaining Romans came into a state of neglect of all things’, cf. *LSJ*, s.v. καθίστημι, B.5.

17.18 Πέτρα ἢ πόλις πῇ μὲν ἐκ θαλάσσης ἀπρόσοδός ἐστι, πῇ δὲ ἐκ πετρῶν ἀποτόμων, αἱ ταύτη πανταχόθεν ἀνέχουσιν· ἀφ’ οὗ δὴ καὶ τὴν προσηγορίαν ἔλαχε. ‘The city of Petra is unapproachable partly

because of the sea and partly because of sheer rocks that rise up there on all sides. It is from this that it got its name.’ Procopius’ description of the city’s site is difficult to combine with plans of the fortress to be found at today’s Tsikhisdziri, although the identification is now generally accepted, cf. ii.15.10n and Mania and Natsvlishvili 2013, 286 fig.7, for a plan. See also Intagliata, Naskidashvili and Snyder 2019 on the fortifications that remain, some of which are rather later. The remains indicate a fortified city straddling two hills on the Black Sea coast, linked by double walls. It seems likely that the walls described at 17.19–20, which are vulnerable to attack, are those that link the two hills, but until more archaeological reports are published, certainty is impossible. See Gregory 1992, 238–9, for such *diateichismata*, rather like the classical Long Walls of Athens.

The name of Petra was derived, Procopius indicates, from the rock on which it was built: the Greek word πέτρα, *petra*, means ‘rock’.

17.21 **τούτων τε τῶν τειχῶν ἐκατέρωθι πύργους ἐτεκτῆναντο δύο, οὐχ ἥπερ εἰώθει, ἀλλὰ τρόπῳ ἑτέρῳ**, ‘On these walls they built two towers, one on either side, not in the usual way, but with a different technique.’ The remains of ‘two small rectangular towers’ have been found in the walls linking the two hills, cf. Mania and Natsvlishvili 2013, 280. It may well have been this section of the walls that was subsequently assaulted by Dagisthaeus when he tried to retake the city in 548, on which see 29.37n.

17.22 **κενὸν γὰρ τὸ ἐν μέσῳ τῆς οἰκοδομίας χωρίον οὐδαμῇ εἶσαν, ἀλλ’ ὅλους ἐκ γῆς ἄχρι ἐς ὕψος μέγα τοὺς πύργους λίθοις παμμεγέθεσιν ἀλλήλων ἐχομένοις εἰργάσαντο**, ‘They did not leave the space inside the building empty, but made the whole of the towers, from the ground up to a great height, of enormous stones fitting into one another.’ In fact, it was quite common for the ground floor at least of a tower to be solid, as is the case, e.g., for half the towers at Sergiopolis: see Karnapp 1976, 19, cf. Hof 2009, esp. 815 with fig. 2 and 818–819 with figs. 6–7 (referring to solid cores in the masonry of curtain walls as also in turrets) with Lawrence 1979, 376, 388, 391 (on earlier precedents), Johnson 1983, 40. This was as much for structural strength as to resist siege engines. Procopius may therefore be exaggerating the novelty of such a procedure.

17.24 **ἣ τε φλόξ κατὰ βραχὺ αἰρομένη διέθρυψε μὲν τὴν τῶν λίθων ἰσχὺν, ὅλον δὲ τὸν πύργον κατασείσασα ἐκ τοῦ αἰφνιδίου ἐς τὸ**

ἔδαφος καθεῖλεν αὐτίκα. ‘The flame gradually rose and broke down the strength of the stones, shaking the entire tower, and suddenly brought it all down to the ground in an instant.’ The verb διαθρύπτω, *diathryptō*, ‘I break in pieces’, is quite rare in its literal sense, cf. e.g. Luc. *DMort.* 20.2, Aelian, *Nat. Anim.* vi.42 with *LSJ*, 395. Procopius emphasises the suddenness of the collapse by the deployment of the expression ἐκ τοῦ αἰφνιδίου, *ek tou aiphnidíou*, ‘suddenly’, and the adverb αὐτίκα, *autika*, ‘immediately’; already, at 17.10, he had combined them to underline the sudden onslaught of the Roman forces. The combination is not found in other authors but is used elsewhere by Procopius, e.g. at vii.15.2.

17.26 παρῆν, τε ἤδη τοῖς πολεμίοις ἐν τῷ ὁμαλεῖ τειχομαχοῦσι πόνῳ [ἐν] οὐδενὶ τὴν πόλιν κατὰ κράτος ἐλεῖν. ‘Now the enemy who were storming the wall on the level ground could capture the city by force without any hindrance.’ Haury’s comma after the first word is obviously otiose, cf. Kallenberg 1916a, 252. The preposition ἐν, *en*, ‘in’, was rejected already by Braun, but Haury’s suggestion that it be emended to the conditional particle ἄν, *an*, is not attractive: he offers the parallel of v.3.29, but while there the optative is used, as one would expect, here there is none, nor any notion of conditionality. It is possible for the ἐν to stand, however, since it can be used instrumentally in later authors, cf. *LSJ*, s.v., III (with D on its position), Lampe, s.v., F.

17.28 ἀλλὰ Ῥωμαῖοι τὰ σφέτερα αὐτῶν ἔχοντες τῷ Μήδων στρατῷ ἀνemieγνυντο, ‘while the Romans joined the Persian (Medic) army with their own property’. Cf. ii.7.37n, reporting the defection of the garrison of Beroea to Khusro following the city’s surrender. At vi.27.33–4 Procopius describes the surrender of the Goths to the Romans at Auximum similarly, although in this case the former retained only half their possessions, cf. vii.36.26, where Roman soldiers joined Totila’s army. See further Petersen 2013, 352.

ii.18–19 Belisarius’ Mesopotamian Offensive (541)

History

While Khusro seized control of Lazica, Belisarius took advantage of his absence to strike into Persian territory in Mesopotamia. His success, however, was limited: he failed to capture the important Persian base at Nisibis, even if the comparatively minor fort of Sisauranon was seized

and destroyed. Al-Harith's raiding mission deeper into Persian territory likewise yielded few concrete results, which reinforced Roman suspicions as to his loyalty. Since Belisarius' campaign did not start until high summer (cf. ii.16n), his forces, some of which had been transferred from the western theatres of war, suffered considerably in the heat. Consequently, by late summer, as the end of the truce for the Arab tribes approached, it became necessary for the Roman army to withdraw to friendly territory. See figs. 8 and 25, pp. 174 and 417 for the places mentioned in these chapters. As noted in the Introduction, section (1), p. 2, Procopius may have accompanied Belisarius on this campaign.

Bibliography: Stein 1949, 494–6, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 108–9, Trombley 2005, 396–403, Edwell 2015, 246.

Historiography

The general's counter-strike is described in detail, with specific figures for casualties, e.g. at 18.22, 25, and with ample space for speeches by both Belisarius and other Roman commanders. It is quite likely that Procopius accompanied the general on this campaign, about which he reveals more details in the *Anecdota* (2.15–25), notably concerning the role of his wife Antonina. The poet Corippus offers a much more favourable account of the *dux* John's performance at the battle in front of the walls of Nisibis at *Ioh.* i.56–67, but otherwise there are no other accounts with which to compare Procopius'. The overall tone of his account is justificatory of Belisarius' conduct; while his speeches illustrate his strategic brilliance, his colleagues' insubordination demonstrably hinders the Roman war effort.

Bibliography: Dahn 1865, 344–5, 382, Rubin, *PvK*, 393–4, Whately 2016, 111–13, cf. ii.16n.

18.1 Ἐν τούτῳ δὲ Βελισάριός τε καὶ ὁ Ῥωμαίων στρατός, οὐδέν τι πεπυσμένοι ὦν ταύτῃ ἐπράσσετο, κόσμῳ πολλῷ ἐκ Δάρας πόλεως ἐπὶ Νισιβιν ἦεισαν. 'In the meantime Belisarius and the Roman army, unaware of what was happening here, were proceeding in good order from the city of Dara to Nisibis.' See ii.17.1n for the possibility that the δέ, *de*, here might mark a contrast between Belisarius and Khusro (mentioned last at 17.27). On Belisarius' unawareness of events in Lazica see ii.16.3 with ii.15.35n. The good order of the Roman army is

underlined, cf. (e.g.) i.13.34, ii.21.14: this is an underlying theme of Procopius' work and *The Persian Wars* in particular, so Whately 2016, 89–96. As he notes, 91, this good order is soon challenged by the insubordination of certain commanders.

18.2 ἐπειδὴ δὲ τῆς ὁδοῦ κατὰ μέσον ἐγένοντο, Βελισάριος μὲν ἐν δεξιᾷ τὸ στράτευμα ἤγεν, οὗ δὴ πηγαί τε ὑδάτων διαρκεῖς, 'When they were half-way there, Belisarius led the army to the right, where there were sufficient sources of water.' The Roman army thus headed southwards en route to Nisibis. On the water-courses in the vicinity of Nisibis see Dillemann 1962, 52–4, who draws attention to the Syriac sources referring to the gardens around the city, e.g. *Chr. Khuz.* 18 (tr. Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 230), cf. Lawrence and Wilkinson 2017, 106–9, on surveys in the region, and Trombley 2005, 397–8. As Maur. *Strat.* viii.2.75 (292) advises for a commander, Belisarius is well acquainted with the region and its resources.

18.3 ἐνταῦθὰ τε στρατόπεδον ἐκέλευε ποιεῖσθαι ὅσον ἀπὸ σταδίων δύο καὶ τεσσαράκοντα Νισίβιδος πόλεως, 'There he told them to pitch camp about forty-two stades from the city of Nisibis.' The Romans thus encamped some 42 stades, i.e. six Roman miles or 10.3 km, from the city. See also i.10.14 on distances in this region with Appendix 2, p. 675. The tenth-century manual, *De re militari*, recommends that the Roman emperor set up camp six miles away from the enemy city, 21.51–3 (p.304).

On the formula ὅσον ἀπό, *hōson apo*, for approximation, see i.8.22n.

18.5–15 Belisarius' Speech to his Officers

Faced with the blatant insubordination of some officers, Belisarius explains his strategy: rather than embark on a lengthy siege, he prefers to lure out the Persian commander, Nabedes, and to exploit a Roman victory in the field by a swift move against the city. Given that he was unable to carry out his plan, the speech represents a sort of substitute for the decisive victory that eluded him. As in his earlier address, 16.6–15, Belisarius displays his strategic knowledge and aptitude by his words, cf. the note *ad loc.* A certain didactic element can also be observed here, cf. Whately 2016, 113. See also Veh, 496.

18.5 λόγος γὰρ ἐν στρατοπέδῳ περιφερόμενος οὐκ οἶδε τηρεῖν τὰ ἀπόρρητα, 'For when talk gets around in a camp, it cannot keep secrets.'

Cf. Plut. *Pel.* 10.4 for the expression λόγος περιφερόμενος, *logos periph-eromenos*, ‘a circulated story’. Maur. *Strat.* viii.2.72 (292) advises the commander not to disseminate his plans widely.

18.6 ὁρῶν δὲ τοὺς τε πολλοὺς ὑμῶν ἀταξία πολλῇ εἰκοντας καὶ αὐτὸν ἕκαστον αὐτοκράτορα τοῦ πολέμου ἐθέλοντα εἶναι, ‘But I can see that many of you are giving way to indiscipline and that each one of you wants to direct the war himself.’ Procopius emphasises the lack of discipline of the army, although it had marched from Dara in good order (18.1), cf. Whately 2016, 109. Trombley 2005, 399, plausibly suggests that Belisarius’ tactics were designed to mitigate the inexperience of many of his freshly levied forces. Procopius uses the term αὐτοκράτωρ, *autokratōr*, ‘complete master’ for the post of supreme commander, e.g. of the war in North Africa, iii.11.18, or in Italy, v.5.4, as also on occasion for the imperial office itself, e.g. i.7.1. For the phrase αὐτοκράτορα τοῦ πολέμου, *autokratora tou poleμου*, ‘commander-in-chief of the war’, cf. vi.22.4, vii.21.25.

18.7 ἡ πρώτη τε τυγχάνει οὔσα καὶ πάσης τῆς ἐκείνου γῆς προβεβλημένη, ‘which is the first to be reached and is set as a defence before his whole land’. Belisarius emphasises the strategic importance of Nisibis, a Persian bulwark since its surrender by Jovian in 363, cf. i.17.25n. Although the Romans seem nearly to have captured the city in 573, it never fell into their hands. See Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 142–5. We have interpreted the adjective πρώτη, *prōtē*, ‘first’, as referring to its geographic situation, i.e. the first that one reaches when entering Persian territory, cf. Brodka, 148; others, e.g. Dewing, 413 (cf. Dewing–Kaldellis, 110), García Romero, 242, take it as referring to the city’s political importance, which is possible. Kaldellis’ revision of Dewing’s translation inadvertently omits the important negative ὥς ἥκιστα, *hōs hēkista*, ‘by no means’ earlier in the sentence, which therefore reverses the sense, making it seem as though Khusro has left his territory undefended.

18.9 Ναβέδην γὰρ στρατηγὸν τούτοις ἐπέστησεν, ὃς δὴ μετὰ γε τὸν Χοσρόην αὐτὸν δόξῃ τε καὶ τῷ ἄλλῳ ἀξιώματι πρῶτος ἐν Πέρσῃς εἶναι δοκεῖ, ‘For he put as general over them Nabedes, who, it seems, is first among the Persians after Khusro himself in reputation and standing.’ The name Nabedes is connected with the Armenian term for the head of a clan: see Huyse 2002, 214, cf. Justi 1895, 219. He inflicted a notable defeat on the Romans in Persarmenia in 542 (ii.25), but enjoyed

less success in Lazica in 549–50, viii.9.6–7. See *PLRE* iii, Nabedes, cf. *ODLA*, Nabad (Gk. Nabedes). Corip. *Ioh.* i.61 calls Nabedes *Parthoque a rege secundus*, ‘second (in importance) only to the Parthian king’ (tr. Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 108), likewise emphasising his high status. Procopius’ expression, referring to him as *first* after the king, corresponds closely to one found in Achaemenid texts: see Schmitt 2004, 677. Procopius later refers to him as holding a command in Persarmenia, 24.6, but his precise position and rank remain unclear, cf. Börm 2007, 146–7.

18.11 οὐκ ἐκ τοῦ ἀντιπάλου ἡμῖν τε καὶ Πέρσαις ὁ ἀγὼν ἔσται, ‘we and the Persians will not be evenly matched’. On the phrase ἐκ τοῦ ἀντιπάλου, *ek tou antipalou*, ‘on even terms’ see i.17.33n.

18.15 φεύγουσι γὰρ τοῖς ἐναντίοις πολὺν τινα δρόμον ἢ ἀναμιχθέντες εἴσω πυλῶν, ὡς τὸ εἰκὸς, ξυνεισπεσούμεθα, ‘For while the enemy flee over a considerable distance, we shall probably either be able to mingle with them and rush inside the gates with them’ Cor. *Ioh.* i.64–7 claims that the Romans nearly did accomplish this, although the text is somewhat uncertain, cf. Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 108, for a translation.

18.16 Πέτρος δὲ Ἰωάννην ἑταιρισάμενος, ὃς τῶν ἐν Μεσοποταμίᾳ καταλόγων ἄρχων μοῖραν οὐ φαύλην τινὰ τοῦ στρατοῦ εἶχεν, ‘But Peter associated with himself John, who was the commander of the regular troops in Mesopotamia and in charge of a not inconsiderable proportion of the army.’ On Peter see ii.15n and 15.7n: Procopius is particularly critical of him. On John see ii.14.12: he was the *dux* of Mesopotamia, as is here indicated somewhat obliquely. On the classicising reference to the position see i.12.24n. Treadgold 1995, 51, estimates that the forces under the *dux* in 395 amounted to some 9,500 men, albeit on paper. By the sixth century there were undoubtedly fewer, although he may have had command of some units of *comitatenses*, cf. more generally Greatrex 2007c.

18.17 Βελισάριος δὲ τοὺς τε ξὺν αὐτῷ ὡς εἰς παράταξιν ἔστησε καὶ τοῖς ἀμφὶ τὸν Πέτρον ἐπέστελλεν ὡς ἐπὶ συμβολῇ παρατάσσεσθαι μέχρι αὐτὸς σημῆνη, ‘Belisarius stationed those with him for battle, and he told Peter’s men to hold (lit. ‘position’) themselves ready for an engagement until he gave the signal.’ Cf. Maur. *Strat.* viii.2.40 (286) on forming up for battle before the enemy. This is the one of the few occasions Procopius uses μέχρι, *mekhri*, ‘up to, until’, as a conjunction rather

than a preposition (often with ἐς, *es*). At viii.24.9 he uses it with the optative, as one would expect in a historic sequence, but with ἄν, *an*, while at *Anecd.* 12.12 it is followed by the indicative. The use here of the subjunctive without the particle ἄν, *an* is unusual, though cf. Hdt. iv.119.4. See Smyth §2619, *CGCG* 41.20, *BDAG*, 1338.

One might infer from the fact that Belisarius continues to issue orders to Peter and John that their presence right outside Nisibis, far from being an instance of insubordination, was a calculated attempt to lure Nabedes and the Persians out of the city. But given the frequency with which commanders defied his orders, this must remain the most likely explanation for their conduct.

18.17 εὖ τε εἰδέναι ὥς οἱ βάρβαροι περὶ μεσημβρίαν ἐπιθήσονται σφίσιν, ἐκεῖνο δηλονότι ἐν νῶ ἔχοντες, ὅτι δὴ αὐτοὶ μὲν τροφῆς ἐς δειλὴν ὥσιν μεταλαγχάνειν εἰώθασι, Ῥωμαῖοι δὲ ἄμφι μεσημβρίαν, ‘and to be aware that the enemy would attack about noon, obviously with the idea that it was their habit to eat in the evening, but the Romans’ at noon’. The initial infinitive, εἰδέναι, *eidenai*, ‘to know’, depends on ἐπέστελλεν, *epestellen*, ‘he told, he enjoined’. On the differing mealtimes of the two sides see i.8.14n, i.14.34n.

18.18 οἱ δὲ ζῦν τῷ Πέτρῳ ἐν οὐδενὶ τὰς ἐντολὰς ποιησάμενοι, ‘But Peter’s men paid no heed to his orders.’ The sense is clear, although some have felt the need for a noun to qualify οὐδενί, *oudení*, ‘no, none’, such as λόγῳ, *logō* (the proposal of Herwerden); García Romero, 243 n.149, judges the insertion unnecessary. Needless confusion has been introduced here by Haury’s apparatus, where he adduces Suda’s reading of οὐδενὶ κόσμῳ, *oudení kosmō*, ‘in no order’ in this context, while it actually refers to line 15 in his edition, four lines below. Suda’s reading is irrelevant here, despite the notes of Dewing, 414 n.1, and García Romero, 243 n.149. See the next note.

18.18 σικύους ἐνταῦθ’ ἀπὸ φυομένων κόσμῳ οὐδενὶ περιόντες κατήσθιον, ‘(they) went round the cucumbers that grew there and started eating them, in no sort of order’. The cucumber, σίκυος, *sikyos*, would certainly have slaked the soldiers’ thirst: see i.14.34n for the high temperatures in this region in high summer and cf. 19.32. Although Dewing translated the word as ‘gourds’, cf. García Romero, 243, ‘calabazas’, Kaldellis rightly corrected this to ‘cucumbers’, III, cf. Veh, 327. In seventh-century England, Archbishop Theodore of Canterbury, originally

from Tarsus, remarked on the large size of cucumbers from Edessa, cf. Bischoff and Lapidge 1994, 324–5. This short section is quoted by Suda, Σ400, where the order of the words κόσμῳ οὐδενί *kosmō oudeni*, ‘in no order’, is reversed; see also de Boor 1914–19, 46. For a similar case of Roman soldiers laying aside their weapons to eat and thus falling prey to the Persians see i.8.14n.

18.22 ἐπισπόμενοι δὲ πεντήκοντά τε διέφθειραν καὶ τὸ τοῦ Πέτρου σημεῖον ἀρπάσαντες ἔσχον, ‘(the Persians) followed them and killed fifty (Romans); they also captured and kept Peter’s standard’. The small figure for Roman casualties, followed by the larger one just below, 18.25, of 150 Persians killed, helps paint a picture of a Roman success, despite the irresponsible actions of Peter and John. See Whately 2015, 398–9; Veh, 496, considers the battle to be a defeat, which is an unduly sceptical interpretation of Procopius’ account. The loss of a standard had always been viewed as a particular disgrace: see Ravegnani 1988, 38–9 and cf. vii.40.42 (the loss of Constantianus’ standards to the Slavs). The loss of a standard, often referred to as a *bandon* (cf. Proc. iv.2.1, 10.4), required condign punishment according to Maur. *Strat.* i.8.16 (98), 8.18 (100).

18.24 πρώτους γὰρ ἀπάντων ξὺν δόρασι μακροῖς τε καὶ συχνοῖς Γότθους ἐπιόντας Πέρσαι οὐχ ὑπομείναντες ἐς φυγὴν ὤρμηντο. ‘For when the Goths charged ahead of all the rest with a dense array of long spears, the Persians could not withstand them and turned to flight.’ On the Goths who had accompanied Belisarius from Italy, and thence presumably to the East, see ii.14.10n. Vandal forces had likewise been deployed in the East, cf. iv.14.17–18. The Gothic cavalry relied on their spears and swords rather than archery, cf. Proc. v.27.27, viii.32.6. See Hughes 2009, 127–31, Halsall 2016, 193, Wiemer and Berndt 2016, 155–61, Koehn 2018a, 131–2. They may have hastened into battle to avoid losses from Persian archery, cf. Rance 2007a, 357.

18.26 οἱ δὲ Πέρσαι τῇ ἐπιγινομένη ἡμέρᾳ ἐν πύργῳ τινὶ ἔστησαν ἀντὶ τροπαίου τὸ Πέτρου σημεῖον, ἀλλὰ ντάς τε αὐτοῦ ἀποκρεμάσαντες τοῖς πολεμίοις ξὺν γέλῳτι ἐπετῶθάζον, ‘and the Persians on the following day erected Peter’s standard on a tower instead of a trophy. They hung sausages on it and jeered and laughed at the enemy.’ This section is quoted by Suda, A1067, concerning sausages. The gesture was no doubt intended to debase the Roman standard rather than mock Peter personally; on Procopius’ dislike for him see ii.15n.

The reference to sausages recalls the role of the sausage-seller in suppressing the coup at Dara at i.26.9, on which see the note *ad loc.*

19.2 ἀνύσαντές τε ἡμέρας ὁδὸν φρουρίῳ ἐνέτυχον, ὃ Σισαυράνων καλοῦσι Πέρσαι. ‘After a day’s journey they came upon a fortress that the Persians call Sisauranon.’ Sisauranon, called by Theophylact Simocatta Sisarbanon (e.g. at i.13.10), lies some 40 km east and a little north of Nisibis, in the fertile foothills of the Tur Abdin. It is situated on the main road from Nisibis towards Bezabde and features in the Peutinger table, where it is called Sarbane, cf. Dillemann 1962, 83, 134 fig.12, 149 fig.18, 213 fig.29, Comfort 2008, 326. Roman forces, operating from the Tur Abdin, raided its vicinity, known as Bearbaës, Beth ‘Arabaye in the Syriac sources, in the 580s, withdrawing on one occasion past Sisauranon, Th. Sim. i.13, iii.6.1–4. On the various forms of its name see Dillemann 1962, 83, who suggests that it derives from the Persian Si-Sar-Ban, meaning ‘guardian of three heads’, a reference perhaps to the springs that rose there; it is referred to by Amm. Marc. 18.6.9 as Sisara. See also *ODLA*, Sisauronon (*sic*).

Sisauranon, while one day’s journey from Nisibis, as Procopius says – 28 miles on the Peutinger Table – is closer to Roman territory than is indicated here, as the raids mentioned above testify. For just three Roman miles away (Proc. *Aed.* ii.4.9), albeit up a rough escarpment, lay the Roman fortress of Rhabdion, while various monasteries of the Tur Abdin were also to be found nearby: see Dillemann 1962, 233 fig.32, for a detailed map, although it is not clear that Rhabdion was necessarily a Roman enclave, as Proc. implies at *Aed.* ii.4.10–11; it is worth noting in passing that he mentions his own visit to this very region at *Aed.* ii.4.3. See Honigmann 1935, 12, Palmer 1990, 5–6 with fig.1, Comfort 2008, 182–3, 322–3. See also *Anecd.* 2.24, where Procopius criticises Belisarius’ caution and puts Sisauranon only half a day’s journey from Roman territory. See further Dillemann 1962, 229 and n.5, giving distances, Palmer 1990, 5 n.10, Roques 2011, 179 n.36, Pfeilschifter–Thesz on *Anecd.* 2.24.

19.3 οἷς ἀνὴρ δόκιμος, Βλησχάμης ὄνομα, ἐφειστήκει, ‘in charge of whom (the garrison) was an eminent Persian, Bleschames by name’. See *PLRE* iii, Bleschames, on the commander, who subsequently served in the Roman army, cf. 19.24. The fact that the Persian garrison comprised cavalry rather than infantry implies that they were expecting to repel raiders – like the Roman forces in the 580s, on which see the previous note – rather than to withstand a siege.

19.6–14 Belisarius' Speech to His Officers

As with his previous speech, 18.5–15, Belisarius displays his sound strategic thinking: he refuses to bypass enemy fortresses, not wanting to be trapped between two opposing armies. Combined with Procopius' earlier statement on the one-day journey from Nisibis and the subsequent panic that overtakes the Roman forces when no news from the expeditionary force is received, the reader is left with the impression that Belisarius' men have penetrated quite far into Persian territory. In fact, as noted at ii.19.2n, the Roman army had not strayed far from its bases. In *Anecd.* 2.21–3 Procopius accuses Belisarius of deliberately remaining close to the Roman frontier in order to be able to confront his wife Antonina when she should arrive there. See Cresci 1986, esp.256, Taragna 2000, 129–30.

19.6 Ἐμπειρία πολέμων πολλῶν, 'The experience of many wars'. So also at ii.16.6 Belisarius insists on the combat experience of his officers, cf. the note *ad loc.* Cf. iii.15.2, where Archelaus praises, already in 533, Belisarius' ἐμπειρία, *empeiria*, 'experience'. Solomon, in addressing his forces in 535, reminds them of their experience of wars, iv.11.30, cf. i.24.51. See further Taragna 2000, 130.

19.7 ἐπίστασθε τοίνυν πηλίκον ἐστὶ κακὸν στράτευμα εἰς γῆν πολεμίαν ... πορεύεσθαι, 'So you understand how great a danger it is for an army to advance into enemy territory.' The correlative πηλίκος, *pēlikos*, 'how great', is rarely used by Procopius: it is found otherwise only at *Aed.* i.1.2, ii.2, but is common in Polybius, e.g. at 2.58.9, and Dionysius of Halicarnassus, e.g. 2.72.3.

19.9 ἐὼ γὰρ λέγειν, 'I forbear from mentioning'. Belisarius' *praeteritio* reflects the rhetorical style of his address, cf. v.24.10, vi.18.21, both speeches of Belisarius, vii.9.14, a speech of Totila.

19.10 τόλμα μὲν γὰρ ἄμαθής ἐς ὄλεθρον φέρει, μέλλησις δὲ σώφρων ἐς τὸ σώζειν αἰετὸς αὐτῇ χρωμένους ἱκανῶς πέφυκεν, 'For rash daring brings destruction, but prudent postponement always preserves those who practise it.' Cf. ii.16.7n on such gnomic formulations. Cresci 1986, 256, rightly sees Procopius as emulating Thucydides in his references to rash daring, cf. Thucydides' τόλμα ἀλόγιστος, *tolma alogistos*, 'irrational daring', iii.82.4, vi.59.1 and μέλλησις προμηθής, *mellēsis promēthēs*, 'provident postponement, hesitation', iii.82.4, already noted by

Braun 1885, 180, Duwe 1885, 14. Cf. the principles to be found at vi.3.26, part of another speech of Belisarius on strategy. Leo Diac. ii.3 (p.21) expresses a similar sentiment, cf. Koehn 2018a, 277. See also i.18.21n.

19.12 Σαρακηνοὶ γὰρ τειχομαχεῖν μὲν εἰσὶν ἀδύνατοι φύσει, ἐς δὲ τὸ ληΐζεσθαι πάντων μάλιστα δεξιοί. ‘For the Saracens are by nature incapable of storming a wall but the most adept of all men at plundering.’ Procopius expresses the same view at *Aed.* ii.9.3–4. While it doubtless reflects typical Roman prejudices, it remains the case that Arab forces did not capture any Roman or Persian cities until the Islamic conquests, so rightly Edwell 2015, 246–7, cf. Petersen 2013, 389, who goes on to explain their remarkable increase in competence from the 630s onwards. Their skill at plundering was put to good use notably by Kavadh in the Anastasian war, cf. Ps.-Josh. 51–2: while he remained to besiege Edessa, he despatched the Naṣrid chief al-Nu‘man to harass Roman districts to the west, just as Belisarius proposes to do at Sisauranon by sending off al-Harith. See Greatrex 1998, 88.

19.14 εὖ δὲ εἰδότες ὅπη ποτὲ τοῖς Ἀσσυρίοις τὰ πράγματα ἔχει, ‘with a good knowledge of how matters stand in Assyria’. Procopius actually refers to ‘the Assyrians’ rather than ‘Assyria’, as Dewing translates. In this case, as often elsewhere, it seems more likely that he is referring to the region rather than the people, cf. García Romero, 246, Brodka, 151, and 19.17n. See Greatrex 2018b, 335, for discussion. The idiom ὅπη ποτέ, *hopē pote*, ‘how, in what possible manner’, cf. *LSJ*, 1237, III, is used in various senses by Procopius, cf. ii.3.51 for this meaning.

19.15 Ἀρέθαν τε ξὺν τοῖς ἐπομένοις ἐπὶ Ἀσσυρίας ἐκέλευεν ἰέναι καὶ αὐτοῖς στρατιώτας διακοσίους τε καὶ χιλίους ξυνέπεμψεν, ‘He ordered al-Harith to enter Assyria with his followers; with him he despatched 1200 soldiers.’ On the Jafnid leader al-Harith see i.17.47n; since 531 he had been the head phylarch of the Arabs allied to Rome. He had joined Belisarius’ army at the start of the campaign ‘with a large army’, see ii.16.5n.

19.15 ὧν δὴ οἱ πλεῖστοι τῶν ὑπασπιστῶν τῶν αὐτοῦ ἦσαν, δορυφόρους αὐτοῖς ἐπιστήσας δύο, Τραϊανόν τε καὶ Ἰωάννην τὸν Φαγᾶν καλούμενον, ἄμφω ἀγαθοὺς τὰ πολέμια, ‘of whom the majority were drawn from his own guards, while he put in charge of them two bodyguards, Trajan and John, called the Glutton, both experts

in warfare'. Procopius refers here to the *bucellarii* of Belisarius, among whom the spearmen, the *doryphoroi*, generally held leadership roles. See Schmitt 1994, 151 and n.30, 164, Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 164 n.686, and cf. i.25.7n. See *PLRE* iii, Traianus 2, Ioannes 64, which translates their position here as 'officer'. On their somewhat colourless characterisation as 'experts in warfare' see i.6.15n.

19.17 οἱ μὲν οὖν ἀμφὶ τὸν Ἀρέθαν Τίγρην ποταμὸν διαβάντες ἐν Ἀσσυρίοις ἐγένοντο. 'Al-Harith's men therefore crossed the river Tigris and arrived in Assyria.' It is not certain to what region 'Assyria' refers; the Greek literally refers to the Assyrians (cf. i.17.47n for such references to peoples rather than regions). *Prima facie* this should refer to the Sasanian province of Asōristān, which occupies much of Lower Mesopotamia, cf. Widengren, *Elr* ii (1987), s.v. Morony 1982, 3–4, cf. idem 1984, 126–7, notes the division, until Khusro's reforms, of the western part of the Sasanian empire into Asōristān, Adiabene and Arbayestān (Beth 'Arabaye); see also Simpson 2013, 106–7. But the term can be used also for Persian territory beyond the Roman frontiers generally, as e.g. by Amm. Marc. at 24.1.1. See Fontaine's commentary on Amm. Marc. 23.2.7 at p.24 n.45, likewise on 24.1.1 at p.132 n.286, cf. den Boeft et al. 1998, 30–1. It is likely that Procopius' usage is similarly imprecise, although cf. 28.4n. See also Dillemann 1961, 138–42, noting how far north it could extend, including also Adiabene.

In late 578 the future Emperor Maurice, while himself laying waste Beth 'Arabaye, similarly despatched his officers Curs and Romanus to cross the Tigris and conduct raids, Th. Sim. iii.16.2, cf. Whitby 1988, 269–70, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 161. Agap. PO 8 (1912), 431, describes a plundering expedition by al-Harith which, while apparently dated to 543, may refer to this incursion: see Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 109, for a translation, cf. Edwell 2015, 246 and n.153.

19.19 τότε δὲ Βελισάριος τῶν τινὰς Περσῶν ξυλλαβών, 'Then Belisarius captured some Persians.' The τότε, *tote*, 'then' is at first sight problematic: at 19.31 the siege is said to have been prolonged. This narrative confusion may well be the result of the later insertion of a section: see ii.19.25n.

19.20 οὐ γάρ, ὥσπερ ἐν Δάρας τε καὶ Νισίβιδι πόλει, ἐν δημοσίῳ τὰς ἐπετείους τροφὰς ἀποτίθεσθαι νενομίκασιν, 'For unlike at Dara and the city of Nisibis, they were not in the habit of storing the yearly

rations in a public granary.’ The Greek word δημόσιον, *dēmosion*, ‘public’, has a wide range of meanings, but can be used for a (public) granary. See *IGLS* 2081 (tr. in Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 240), although in this case the word has been restored by the editors, who nonetheless, p.56, provide evidence for the application of the word to a granary (including this passage), cf. Bedjan 1890–7, vol.5, 148.7, for an instance in Syriac, a reference I owe to Sebastian Brock. On the granaries at Dara see Whitby 1986b, 750. As noted above, ii.19.3n, the fact that there were cavalry stationed here implies more of a policing than a garrisoning role.

19.22 ἄ δὴ Βελισάριος γνοὺς Γεώργιον ἔπεμψεν, ἄνδρα ξυνετώτατόν τε καὶ τῶν ἀπορρήτων αὐτῷ κοινωνοῦντα, ‘Once Belisarius learnt this, he despatched George, a highly intelligent man with whom he shared his secrets.’ This is the first appearance of George, who subsequently foiled a Persian plot to seize Dara, cf. ii.28.33n. His precise status is unclear: see *PLRE* iii, Georgius 4. Ciancaglini 2001, 120, suggests that this George could have been Procopius’ main informant on Persian affairs, given his knowledge of the language, cf. Brodka 2016, 118.

19.24 οὕτω Βελισάριος τὸ Σισαυράνων ἑλὼν τοὺς μὲν οἰκήτορας ἅπαντας Χριστιανούς τε καὶ Ῥωμαίους τὸ ἀνέκαθεν ὄντας, ἀθῶους ἀφῆκε, τοὺς δὲ Πέρσας ξὺν τῷ Βλησχάμῃ ἐς Βυζάντιον ἔπεμψε, ‘Thus Belisarius captured Sisauranon and released unharmed all its inhabitants, who were Christian and Roman by origin. He sent the Persians with Bleschames to Byzantium.’ Since until 363 the Roman frontier had extended eastwards as far as Bezabde on the Tigris, it is not surprising that the population was Christian and claimed a Roman identity; cf. also Dillemann 1962, 233 fig.32, showing the proximity of monasteries, Palmer 1990, 5–6 with fig.1. Khusro had treated the Christians of his empire well up to this point, leading to the appointment of Mar Aba as *catholicos* of the church in Persia, but in 541, probably partly as a result of the renewed conflict with Rome, the situation deteriorated. See *Hist. Mar Abba*, ch.12 (14/16), with Jullien’s notes, cf. Maksymiuk 2015d, 126. As Rotman 2005, 781, notes, Sebokhth, Khusro’s envoy to Justin II, later pointed out (Men. Prot. frg.16.1.45–7) that Roman forces invading Persia would find the kingdom populated extensively by fellow-Christians.

The captured Persians were soon deployed in Italy, 19.25, just as the Goths had been despatched to the East, cf. 18.2–3. Proc. vii.3.11 reports the courageous service of one of this contingent, an Armenian called Artabazes, at Verona in 542, as also subsequently. See *PLRE* iii, Artabazes.

See Ravegnani 1988, 27–8, although he misdates Artabazes' actions at Verona to 541, cf. Farrokh 2017, 346–7. While Hoffmann 1961/2 argues that a mosaic inscription from Grado, near Aquileia, referring to a certain John of the *numerus equitum Persoiustinianorum*, must refer to a member of this unit, Börm 2007, 77 n.1, cf. Koehn 2018a, 50, 91–2 n.269, is more sceptical: the name John is, of course, not Persian. But since the inscription dates from the 570s, it is possible that this John was the son of a Persian soldier transferred to the West from Sisauranon. Whether the Persian troops were *comitatenses* or *foederati* is unclear; they may have had a distinct status, cf. Greatrex 2018b, 340–1.

The capture of the fortress is confirmed by PZ x.o, where the chapter heading for the (lost) ch.7 alludes to it, cf. PZT 396–7, *PLRE* iii, 209.

19.25 τὰ μὲν οὖν ἀμφὶ τῷ Σισαυράνων φρουρίῳ ταύτη ἐχώρησεν. ‘This was the way in which the events relating to the fortress of Sisauranon took place.’ This gives the appearance of concluding Procopius’ account of the campaign; it is highly likely that 19.26–46 represents a later insertion, which causes some awkwardness in the narrative. Up to 19.25 the tone is generally positive: a raiding party is sent out, the fortress is captured, the Persian troops sent off to the western front. The next section, on the other hand, paints a much darker picture – treacherous Arabs, Roman forces suffering in the heat, followed by a rather ignominious withdrawal. It is likely that the initial positive verdict required modification: at *Anecd.* 2.21 Procopius reports that Belisarius was the target of general accusations of having not been energetic enough and himself asserts, 2.25, that he could even have reached Ctesiphon, had he pressed home his advantage; see also ii.19.6–14n. *Anecd.* 2.18–20 leads into his critical assessment of Belisarius’ personal reasons for cutting short the campaign, explaining that he could not go into these details in the *Wars*. Here he needed to adjust his account to respond to the criticisms of the campaign while at the same time exonerating Belisarius. See Averil Cameron 1985, 160–1, Greatrex 2022.

19.26 Ἀρέθας δὲ, δεισας μὴ τὴν λείαν πρὸς Ῥωμαίων ἀφαιρεθείη, οὐκέτι ἀναστρέφειν ἐς τὸ στρατόπεδον ἤθελε. ‘But al-Harith, fearing that he might be deprived of his spoils by the Romans, no longer wished to return to the camp.’ Procopius thus makes the Jafnid leader responsible both for the failure of the expedition and for Belisarius’ withdrawal from Sisauranon; at *Anecd.* 2.18–25 he offers further details, cf. ii.19.45n. Shahīd 1995, 220–30, argues that Procopius has unjustly maligned

al-Harith; as he points out, it is likely that disputes arose between him and the two *bucellarii* sent to accompany him, which may have led to the break-up of the army, cf. Averil Cameron 1985, 125, more generally. Arab infidelity was a convenient charge for Roman commanders to explain failure, cf. Maurice's accusation that al-Mundhir sabotaged his invasion of Persia in 581, Th. Sim. iii.17.5–11. See Whitby 1988, 273–4, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 163–5 and, more generally on stereotypes of treacherous Arabs, Whately 2014. By the time he wrote ii.28.12–14, on which see the note below *ad loc.*, Procopius appears to have formed a less hostile assessment of the Jafnid leader: see Greatrex 2014a, 252, idem 2014b, 95.

19.29 παρὰ μὲν οὖν Βελισάριον οὐκέτι ἤλθον, ἔχοντες δὲ ποταμὸν Εὐφράτην ἐν δεξιᾷ οὕτω δὴ ἐς Θεοδοσιούπολιν τὴν πρὸς τῷ Ἀβόρρᾳ ποταμῷ ἴκοντο, 'Hence they did not come to Belisarius again but, keeping the river Euphrates to their right, they thus reached Theodosiopolis on the river Khabur.' This is problematic: if this force had penetrated deep into the Persian heartlands, where the Tigris and Euphrates approach one another, then one could envisage a crossing of the latter and a retreat upstream, thus with the Euphrates on their right; Maurice's forces took the same route in 581 after the failure of their expedition, on which see the preceding note. At Circesium they would have turned north up the Khabur, finally reaching Theodosiopolis (Resaina). But it seems unlikely that this modest force went so far south. The account that reached Procopius may have been confused; Trajan and John may rather have cut across the dry lands of Beth 'Arabaye in order to reach Roman territory as quickly as possible; cf. Rubin, *PvK*, 393, who proposes that Procopius confused the Euphrates with the Khabur. Th. Sim. iii.6.2 accuses the Roman commander Comentiolus of engaging in a panicked retreat from Sisauranon to Theodosiopolis in 589, on which see Whitby 1988, 290, who is sceptical of the account; at iii.13.10 he reports the withdrawal of some Roman forces likewise to Theodosiopolis, while others pass over the Tur Abdin from Sisauranon to Rhabdion and further west, cf. Whitby 1988, 279. See also Dillemann 1962, 73 fig.9, on the terrain here.

19.30 ἔς τε δέος καὶ ὑποψίαν οὔτε φορητὴν τινα οὔτε μετρίαν ἐμπίπτοντες, 'falling into a state of unbearable and unreasonable fear and suspicion'. Procopius insists on the alarm of Belisarius and his men by the double adjectives and nouns, cf. Rubin, *PvK*, 393. Even if the siege is described as already concluded (19.31), their worries no doubt started

earlier: it is only here that Procopius insists on the length of the siege, while earlier he gave the impression that it was swiftly resolved. See further Greatrex 2022. The weight attached to Roman worries could be interpreted as an attempt to justify their imminent withdrawal; on the other hand, the description of their anxieties as ‘unreasonable, immoderate’ might rather reflect the more critical attitude found at *Anecd.* 2.25, where Procopius claims that Belisarius could have laid waste all Assyria and even reached Ctesiphon.

19.31 αὐχμηρά γὰρ Μεσοποταμία ἢ Περσῶν κατήκοος ὑπερφῶς ἐστίν, ‘for Persian-controlled Mesopotamia is extremely parched’. See the note on 19.29 on the dryness of this region, cf. i.14.34n. Th. Sim. iii.13.10 reports that the region is ‘waterless and parched’ (tr. Whitby). See also the next note.

19.32 οὐπὲρ ἀήθεις ὄντες Ῥωμαῖοι καὶ διαφερόντως οἱ ἐκ Θράκης ὀρμώμενοι, ἐν χωρίῳ ἐκτόπως αὐχμῶδει καὶ καλύβαις τισὶ πνιγηραῖς ὥρᾳ θέρους δίαιταν ἔχοντες ἐνόσησαν οὕτως, ‘The Romans, and especially those who came from Thrace, were unused to this. Since they were quartered in an extraordinarily arid place in stiflingly hot huts, they fell so ill ...’ See the previous note on the harsh nature of the climate in northern Mesopotamia; Herodian vi.6.2 notes how the Illyrians in Alexander Severus’ army suffered under these conditions. Kaegi 1991 emphasises the heat of the region in summer, see esp. 588–9 on the problems it posed for troops unused to it; cf. also Dillemann 1962, 65, Lee 1993a, 91–5. Pfeilschifter–Thesz on *Anecd.* 2.27 rightly point out that this illness is not linked to the Justinianic plague, which Procopius describes later.

Procopius consciously echoes Thucydides here (cf. also iv.6.10), as Braun 1885, 194, notes: at ii.52.2 the Athenian historian refers to the refugees from Attica at the time of the plague dwelling ἐν καλύβαις πνιγηραῖς ὥρᾳ ἔτους διαιτωμένων, ‘in stiflingly hot huts in the campaigning season’. The word ἡμιθνήτες, *hēmithnētes*, ‘half-dead’, just below, occurs in the same passage of Thucydides.

19.33 ὁρῶντες ὅτι δὴ καὶ ὁ χρόνος τὸ Σαρακηνῶν ἀνάθημα παρώχκεν ἤδη, ‘realising that the time of the sacred truce of the Saracens had indeed already expired’. See ii.16.17–18n on the two commanders, their worries for their provinces and this truce. Since the truce was around the time of the summer solstice, this implies that the

army was still in the field in (at least) July. See Kislinger and Stathakopoulos 1999, 81; Pfeilschifter–Thesz on *Anecd.* 2.18 place the fall of Sisauranon as late as August 541, though Trombley 2005, 402, implausibly dates it rather to late May or early June.

19.35 Διὸ δὴ Βελισάριος ἅπαντας συγκαλέσας τοὺς ἄρχοντας βουλὴν προὔθηκεν, ‘Belisarius therefore summoned all the officers and invited a discussion.’ Cf. iii.15.1–2 for a comparable discussion with ii.16.6–15n. There too the speaker is quick to praise Belisarius. On John, the son of Nicetas, whose address is here reported, see *PLRE* iii, Ioannes 32; he is only attested serving in the East.

19.38 ταύτην μέντοι βεβαιότατα διαφυλάξεις τὴν εὐκλειαν, ἣν γε ζῶντας ἡμᾶς ἐς Ῥωμαίων τὴν γῆν διασώσασθαι δυνατός εἴης, ‘But you will maintain this good reputation most firmly if you should prove able to bring us alive and in safety to Roman territory.’ The use of ἣν, *ēn*, ‘if’ with the optative for a prospective conditional is not classical, cf. e.g. *CGCG* 49.6: one would expect it to take the subjunctive instead in the protasis. See Teuffel 1889, 262, on this tendency; as he remarks, it is common in Procopius, and recurs almost immediately at 19.41.

19.38 ὥς νῦν γε ἡμῖν τὰ τῆς ἐλπίδος οὐκ ἐν καλῷ κεῖται, ‘for at present our expectations are not in a happy state’. For the idiom τὰ τῆς ἐλπίδος, *ta tēs elpidos*, cf. Polyb. 8.27.9; it is common in Christian authors, e.g. Cyril, *Contra Jul.* iii.10 (624A), cf. Just. *Edict* 9.7. Procopius uses it only in speeches, as also at iv.1.14, vi.3.13.

19.38 οὕτωςί γάρ μοι περὶ τοῦδε τοῦ στρατοῦ σκόπει, ‘So for my sake take thought for this army along these lines.’ This is the reading accepted by Haury, but Kallenberg 2016b, 509–10, argues that the reading of manuscript G, οὕτωςί γάρ μοι περὶ τοῦδε τοῦ στρατοῦ σκοπεῖν ἔπεισι, ‘It occurs to me to take thought for this army along these lines’, may be preferable; the ethical dative, μοι, *moi*, ‘for my sake’, seems rather surprising otherwise.

19.43 τοῖς γὰρ ἐς κίνδυνον ἄλλως τε καὶ τοιοῦτον καθεστηκόσι μὴ τὴν σωτηρίαν διασκοπεῖσθαι, ἀλλὰ τὴν ἐς τοὺς πολεμίους ἐπιβουλὴν πολλὴ ἄνοια. ‘For those in danger, and particularly in such danger as this, it is utter madness to consider not one’s safety, but plans against the enemy.’ Echoes in John’s peroration of Thuc. ii.61.1, a speech

of Pericles where he asserts that it is ‘utter madness’, πολλή ἄνοια, *pollē anoia*, gratuitously to enter hostilities, cf. 20.26n.

19.44 ἔς τε θόρυβον καθιστάμενοι τὴν ἀναχώρησιν κατὰ τάχος ποιεῖσθαι ἤξιουν, ‘In the ensuing disorder they decided to withdraw in haste.’ One could translate the main verb, ἤξιουν, *ēxioun*, from ἀξιόω, *axioō*, as ‘they demanded’ or ‘they decided’. Dewing, 429, prefers the former, cf. Veh, 337, García Romero, 249, Brodka, 153 with (e.g.) ii.9.6; on the other hand, at i.8.16, iii.3.35, the sense is rather ‘decided’.

19.45 διὸ δὴ Βελισάριος πρότερον τοὺς νοσοῦντας ἐν τοῖς ὑποζυγίοις ἐνθέμενος, ‘Belisarius therefore first placed the sick on pack animals.’ Some translators prefer to interpret the ὑποζύγια, *hypozygia*, ‘beasts of burden’ (so *LSJ*, 1881) as referring to carts or wagons, so Holcroft 1653, 54, Dewing, 429, retained by Kaldellis, 114, García Romero, 249, Brodka 153, but Veh, 337, opts for the translation given by *LSJ*. Philip Rance observes (pers. comm.) that the use of the verb ἐντίθημι with ἐν and the dative might imply the placing of the afflicted in carts rather than on animals. See Rance, *ERA*, s.v. ‘Medical Service: Late Empire’, for a discussion of the evacuation of the wounded in this period. Cf. PZ ix.3 on the Persians evacuating their dead on pack animals (after the battle of Dara).

Belisarius probably returned the way he had come, skirting Nisibis, rather than through the more difficult terrain of the Tur Abdin to the north: Proc. *Aed.* ii.4.1 states that this region is unsuited either to wagons or horses. So Comfort 2008, 192, who presumes, however, that the wounded were on wagons.

19.46 ἐπεὶ οἱ ἔς ὄψιν οὐκέτι ἦλθεν, ‘since he (al-Harith) never came into his (Belisarius’) sight again’. On the question of al-Harith’s loyalties see ii.19.26n. Shahîd 1995, 225–6, observes that the phylarch was soon involved in petitioning Theodora for anti-Chalcedonian bishops for the East, which led to the appointment of Jacob Baradaeus and Theodore, cf. *ibid.* 755–60. See also Fisher and Wood 2015, 281, *PLRE* iii, Arethas. It follows that al-Harith’s position was not seriously compromised, if it was at all, by the events of 541.

19.47 Χοσρόη δὲ Πέτραν ἐλόντι Βελισάριος ἐσβαλὼν ἐς γῆν τὴν Περσίδα ἡγγέλλετο, ‘When Khusro had taken Petra, it was announced to him that Belisarius had invaded Persia.’ Procopius concludes his

account of the events of 541 by bringing together the two theatres of war. The summary of Belisarius' achievements is a generous one, cf. ii.19.25n, and provokes Khusro's return to Persia from Petra; at 17.28 the narrative concerning the Persian king had concluded following his capture of the city. See Whately 2016, 112–13, arguing that Procopius is deliberately contrasting the two men by this juxtaposition and by the use of the particles μέν, *men*, and δέ, *de*.

From *Anecd.* 2.26–37 it is clear that Procopius has consciously omitted details concerning Khusro's return to Persia, cf. *Wars* viii.7.4. In the former passage he reports serious disaffection in the Persian forces in Lazica, caused partly by disease and partly by news both of Belisarius' invasion and of a defeat by Valerian of Hunnic forces sent to attack Roman Armenia (on which see ii.15.35n). Khusro defuses the situation by reading out a letter from Theodora to his minister Zabergan and mocking the involvement of a woman in politics. Only thus does he bring his army out of Lazica, still worried about encountering Belisarius in the field. See ii.17n, 19.25n and Pfeilschifter–Thesz on *Anecd.* 2.26–37, cf. Rubin, *PvK*, 394.

19.49 Βελισάριος δὲ βασιλεῖ ἐς Βυζάντιον μετάπεμπτos ἐλθὼν διεχίμαζεν, 'And Belisarius was summoned to the emperor in Byzantium and there spent the winter.' As Rubin, *PvK*, 394, observes, Procopius does not specify the reason for the recall to the capital, as he does sometimes, e.g. at 21.34. Given the accusations that had been raised against him as to his conduct during the campaign, see ii.19.25n, there was doubtless much for him to discuss with Justinian.

ii.20–I Khusro's Aborted Invasion of Euphratesia (542)

History

Whereas in 541 the leading commanders on either side, Khusro and Belisarius, had campaigned in different regions, in the following year they came into direct contact with one another. Although Procopius claims that the Persian king hoped to plunder Palestine (20.18), it is more likely that he intended rather to seize what he could in Euphratesia, Syria, Osroene and Mesopotamia. In the event, however, his gains were modest; his most significant achievement was the capture of Callinicum (21.30–2). By taking up position at Europus on the Euphrates, midway between Zeugma and Caeciliana, the crossing for Hierapolis, Belisarius

blocked the Persian king's advance and threatened his retreat, should he push further west or south; he had similarly cut off Azarethes' advance in 531 before the battle of Callinicum, although in that case he had moved further south because the line of the Persian invasion was clearer. For the places discussed in the chapters see fig. 25 p. 417.

Bibliography: Stein 1949, 496–7, Greatrex and Lieu, 109–12.

Historiography

The campaign of 542 represents the final appearance of Belisarius in *The Persian Wars*. His success in persuading Khusro by bluff to withdraw receives lavish praise from Procopius, who underlines the importance of the achievement, given the paucity of forces available to the general (21.29). Probably because the episode constitutes one of the few Roman successes in this war, the chronicler Theophanes chose to quote it extensively in his entry for the year 540/1, 219–22. It is the only section of *The Persian Wars* that he incorporated into his chronicle; Cedrenus subsequently likewise included it, 407.1 (652–3). As with the campaign of 541, Procopius offers a contrasting picture in *Anecd.* 3.30–1, where he signals that Belisarius was accused of cowardice and negligence for not preventing the fall of Callinicum and not harrying the retreating Persian forces. The circumstantial detail of the account has persuaded some scholars that Procopius accompanied Belisarius on this campaign, cf. Rubin, *PvK*, 395–6, Averil Cameron 1985, 164; but see ii.22.9n.

Other sources may add a few details concerning the campaign: a Persian force under Mihr-Mihroe is said to have been despatched to besiege Theodosiopolis (Resaina) but was beaten off by John Troglita and subsequently failed to capture Dara: see Agap. PO 8 (1912), 431 and Corip. *Ioh.* i.68–98, both tr. in Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 111–12, cf. 271 n.48 on the dating of these events. Evagr. *HE* iv.28 offers an alternative account of Khusro's attempt to capture Sergiopolis.

Bibliography: Averil Cameron 1985, 161, Cresci 1986, 264, Whately 2016, 111–12.

20.1 Ἄμα δὲ ἤρι ἀρχομένῳ Χοσρόης ὁ Καβάδου τὸ τρίτον στρατῷ μεγάλῳ ἐς γῆν τὴν Ῥωμαίων ἐσέβαλλε, ποταμὸν Εὐφράτην ἐν δεξιᾷ ἔχων. 'At the beginning of spring, Khusro the son of Kavadh invaded Roman territory with a large army for the third time, keeping the river Euphrates on his right.' From *Marg. Grig.* 19 it emerges that

Khusro left Ctesiphon in March and proceeded to Pirisabora (Perozshapur). It was here that on 18 April, Good Friday, Grigor, the formal general Pirangushnasp, was martyred, apparently while Khusro remained there, cf. *Mart. Grig.* 26. He must have advanced to Roman territory soon afterwards. See Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 110 and 271 n.38. For his route to the south of the Euphrates cf. ii.5.1.

20.2 Κάνδιδος δὲ, ὁ Σεργιουπόλεως ἱερεὺς, ἐπειδὴ τὸν Μήδων στρατὸν ἄγχιστά που ἤκειν ἐπύθετο, δέισας περὶ τέ οἱ αὐτῷ καὶ τῇ πόλει. ‘Candidus, the bishop of Sergiopolis, grew afraid for himself and the city when he heard that the Persian (Medic) army had come very near.’ On Candidus and the pledge he had signed for Khusro in 540 see 5.29–33 with the notes *ad loc.* This section (20.2–11) is quoted in *Exc. de leg. Rom.* 101.24–102.15, while Suda Δ367 quotes the short phrase after the participle δέισας, *deisas*, ‘having become afraid’ under its entry for δέισαντες, *deisantes*, the nominative plural form of the same participle; cf. de Boor 1914–19, 46. As is evident from Suda’s entry, cf. Thuc. i.60.1, Hdt. iii.35.4, the use of this verb with the preposition περὶ, *peri*, ‘for’, and the dative case is well attested in earlier historians, cf. Scheftlein 1893, 46–7.

20.3 χρήματα μὲν γὰρ οὐδεπώποτε αὐτῷ γεγονέναι, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἀρχὴν οὐδὲ βεβουλῆσθαι Σουρηνούς ρύεσθαι, ‘For he said that he had never had any money and for this reason he had not even wanted to save the people of Sura in the first place.’ Cf. ii.5.30, where Candidus denied he had the resources to ransom the prisoners at the outset. On Justinian’s refusal to provide any funds see ii.7.16n; Rubin, *PvK*, 394, sees criticism of the emperor in Candidus’ assertion. The reading of the manuscripts’ βεβουλῆσθαι, *beboulēsthai*, ‘to have wanted’, accepted by Haury against that of the text of the citation in the *Exc. de leg. Rom.* 101.29 (βεβουλεῦσθαι, *bebouleusthai*, ‘to have deliberated’), is confirmed also by the use of the same expression at viii.34.12.

20.7 οἱ μὲν οὖν Σεργιουπολῖται τοὺς παρὰ Χοσρόου σταλέντας τῇ πόλει δεξάμενοι τῶν κειμηλίων πολλὰ ἔδοσαν, ‘The people of Sergiopolis therefore received into the city the men sent by Khusro and gave them many of their treasures.’ On the term κειμήλια, *keimēlia*, ‘treasures’ see ii.11.24n. More details on the items seized by the Persians are provided by Th. Sim. v.13.1–2 and Evagr. *HE* vi.28, who note in particular the taking of a jewelled golden cross that had been presented to

the shrine of St Sergius by Theodora. In the early 590s, following his restoration to the throne with Maurice's help, Khusro II, the grandson of Khusro I, returned the cross and later dedicated another one himself to the saint. See Allen 1981, 259–61, Key Fowden 1999, 133–6. Rubin, *PvK*, 394, perceives criticism of Candidus for not abiding by his oath, since the Sergiopolitans handed over not all, but only 'many', of their treasures. This is overstated: it is likely that the only significant item that remained was the relics of the saint himself, as Evagr. *HE* iv.28 makes clear.

20.9 πέμπει τοίνυν τινάς τῷ μὲν λόγῳ διερευνησομένους ἐς τὸ ἀκριβὲς τὰ τῆς πόλεως χρήματα, ἔργῳ δὲ τὴν πόλιν καθέξοντας, 'So he sent some men ostensibly to examine the city's wealth in detail, but in fact to take possession of the city.' Khusro had employed a similar ruse in 540 to capture Sura, despatching his own men with the returning bishop, who were instructed to wedge open the gate and seize the city, 5.17–19, cf. the notes *ad loc.*; in that case, the tactic was successful, leading to the capture of the city and the prisoners later ransomed by Candidus.

20.10 καὶ ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἔδει Σεργιούπολιν Πέρσαις ἀλῶναι, 'Since it was not fated that Sergiopolis should be taken by the Persians'. Cf. ii.13.22n on this expression. There are wider parallels with the earlier passage (13.22–7), which describes how an anonymous informant reports to the Romans news of the Persian tunnel beneath the walls of Dara, as a result of which Khusro was obliged to abandon his siege.

20.10 τῶν τις Σαρακηνῶν Χριστιανὸς μὲν, ταττόμενος δὲ ὑπὸ Ἀλαμουνδάρῳ, Ἄμβρος ὄνομα, νύκτωρ παρὰ τῆς πόλεως τὸ τεῖχος ἦκων, 'a Saracen called Ἄμρ (Ambrus), who was a Christian and enrolled under al-Mundhir, came along the city wall by night'. This Christian Arab is otherwise unknown, but other sources attest the presence of Christian elements in the generally pagan forces under the Naṣrid rulers. See (e.g.) PZ viii.3d with PZT 289 n.42 with Shahîd 1995, 725–6, Fisher 2011, 69. Another Ἄμρ later succeeded al-Mundhir as Naṣrid chief, cf. *PLRE* iii, Ambrus 2, Fisher 2011, 92. As Shahîd 1995, 957, observes, such Arab Christians, among whom the cult of Sergius was widespread, would have been reluctant to bring about the fall of his city, cf. Key Fowden 1999, 139.

On the use of παρὰ, *para*, here, see ii.8.4n. For the formulation τῶν τις Σαρακηνῶν, *tōn tis Sarakēnōn*, 'one among the Saracens', cf. Hdt. i.51.4 with Braun 1894, 27.

20.11 καὶ ὃς τῷ θυμῷ ζέων τὴν πόλιν ἐξελεῖν διανοεῖτο, ‘he (Khusro) boiled with anger and determined to take the city’. Procopius returns to the theme of Khusro’s rage, on which see i.21–2g and ii.5.26n, ii.37–8n.

20.12 στράτευμα οὖν ἐς ἑξακισχιλίους στείλας ἐκέλευεν ἔς τε πολιορκίαν καθίστασθαι καὶ προσβολὰς τῷ περιβόλῳ ποιήσασθαι. ‘He therefore despatched an army six thousand strong, and ordered the forces to lay siege to it and assault the circuit wall.’ Here and at 20.14 Procopius offers a rare glimpse of troop numbers: 6000 Persians detached from Khusro’s army faced a mere 200 soldiers manning the extensive walls of Sergiopolis. Evagr. *HE* iv.21 offers a different account of the city’s defence: in his version the entire army of Khusro is brought to bear but is met by a host of supernatural defenders, whose shields on the battlements deter the king from persevering in his attack. Consequently Khusro realised that he was confronted by the power of the martyr Sergius and immediately departed. See Key Fowden 1999, 134, Whitby 2000a, 229 n.76. Petersen 2013, 529, discusses the siege but omits Evagrius’ version.

20.14 τοῦ ὕδατος αὐτοὺς παντάπασιν ἐπιλιπόντος, ‘since their (the Persians’) water was failing them altogether’. While the city of Sergiopolis was well endowed with cisterns that could provision even a considerable population for months, the lands around it would not have been able to support a large hostile force. See Key Fowden 1999, 71–2, Hof 2020, 92–3. Proc. *Aed.* ii.9.3–9 stresses Justinian’s investment in defences for the city, including for the storage of water. While at 9.9 he alludes to Khusro’s unsuccessful siege, at 9.8 he refers to the installation of a sizeable garrison. Even if one accepts that the fortifications were upgraded before 542, cf. Whitby 1987, 105, Hof 2020, 116–17, it does not appear that the garrison was yet in place, cf. the previous note.

20.16 χρῆν γὰρ, οἶμαι, αὐτὸν τὰ ὁμωμοσμένα ἡλογηκότα ἱερέα μηκέτι εἶναι, ‘the reason being, I imagine, that he could no longer be a bishop after he had broken his oath’. Cf. i.25.36n for such a reflection by Procopius. On the translation of the word ἱερεύς, *hiereus*, ‘priest’ or ‘bishop’ see i.7.30n, ii.13.13n. Justinian attached great importance to oath-taking and, in *NovJ.* 8 of 535, sought to associate bishops with his efforts to ensure that governors and officials abided by their oaths. See Rapp 2005, 276–7, Pazdernik 2009, 150–1; it would follow that their position would be called into question if they were to break an oath themselves. Proc. *Anecd.* 21.16–19 is critical of Justinian’s violation of his own

legislation and the oaths that went with it, cf. Pazdernik 2009, 152–3. At *Anecd.* 3.30 Procopius attributes Belisarius' lack of success in this campaign to his own failure to honour his oaths to his stepson Photius: it was clearly an issue dear to his heart.

Veh, 497–8, suggests that the negative characterisation of Candidus as an oath-breaker may reflect a local tradition that wanted to underline the very distinct fates of the bishop and the city. As just noted, Procopius may have taken a harsh view of such oath-breaking, cf. Börm 2007, 253 n.4, 99, and Averil Cameron 1985, 30. Nothing further is known of the unfortunate Candidus' fate, although Börm 2007, 99, surmises that the Persians imprisoned him for life. The episode was included (20.15–16) in *Exc. de leg. Rom.*, 102.16–17.

20.17 Ἐπεὶ δὲ εἰς τὴν Κομμαγενῶν χώραν ὁ Χοσρόης ἀφίκετο, ἣν καλοῦσιν Εὐφρατησίαν, 'When Khusro came to the country of the Commageni, which they call Euphratesia'. On the names of the two regions, which do not precisely overlap, see i.17.2n. It is from this point that Theoph., 219, begins to follow Procopius' account closely.

20.18 γνώμην δὲ εἶχεν εὐθὺ Παλαιστίνης ἄγειν τὸ στράτευμα, ὅπως τὰ τε ἄλλα καὶ τὰ ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις κειμήλια πάντα ληίστηται. 'It was his intention to lead the army to Palestine so that he could plunder it, particularly the treasures in Jerusalem.' Procopius' surmise is implausible: even in the late 520s, when some of the rebellious Samaritans succeeded in communicating with the Persians, no Sasanian army approached the region. In the seventh century it was not until after a decade of warfare in Mesopotamia and Osroene that Persian armies finally penetrated into Palestine. Veh, 498, is nonetheless prepared to take the statement seriously, supposing that Khusro intended to follow the Mediterranean coast southwards, contrast Börm 2007, 194–5. See Lee 1993a, 110, Greatrex 1998, 191–2 and i.17–18h on the Samaritan uprising.

20.18 χώραν γὰρ ταύτην ἀγαθὴν τε διαφερόντως καὶ πολυχρύσων οἰκητόρων εἶναι ἀκοῇ εἶχε. 'He had heard that this land was particularly rich and belonged to wealthy inhabitants.' According to Mal. 18.54, in 530 the Samaritans had emphasised to Kavadh the wealth of Jerusalem; Khusro was doubtless aware both of the riches accumulated in the city and of the prosperity of the region as a whole. Destunis 1880, 140 n.7, notes the similarly glowing appraisal of Amm. Marc. 14.8.11 and even Exodus 3:8. On Jerusalem see Schick 2007, 174–6, Sivan 2008, 40–6,

210–19. On Palestine more generally see (e.g.) Dauphin 1992, 78–9, Walmsley 1996, 147–52, Sipilä 2009, 196–200. Procopius was, of course, very familiar with Palestine from his childhood, cf. Greatrex 2018a, 15–19 and pp. 1–2 above.

20.20 ὁ δὲ ἵπποισι τοῖς δημοσίοις ὁχούμενος, οὓς δὴ βερέδους καλεῖν νενομίκασιν, ‘Riding on the public horses, which they call ‘post-horses’. On the terms *veredi*, post-horses, and *veredarius*, a courier, attested already in the first century A.D., see Paschoud 1983, 238–9 with Joh. Lyd. *De Mens.* i.32 (15), *De Mag.* iii.61.3, Jones 1964, 830 and vol.3, 274–5 n.14. Although at *Anecd.* 30.1–11 Procopius complains of cutbacks to the *cursus publicus* by Justinian, the route to the eastern frontier was maintained and, thanks to the regularly spaced relay stations, allowed officials to traverse large distances in a day: Procopius asserts at *Anecd.* 30.5 that a rider could cover ten days’ journey in just one day, although this may be an exaggeration. See Stoffel 1994, 159–65, Lemcke 2016, 55, 132–4, on the speed of the service and Justinian’s measures.

20.20 Ἰοῦστος δὲ, ὁ βασιλέως ἀνεψιός, ἐν Ἱεραπόλει ξύν τε τῷ Βούζῃ καὶ ἑτέροις τισὶ καταφυγὼν ἔτυχεν. ‘Now Justus, the emperor’s cousin, happened to have taken refuge in Hierapolis with Buzes and some others.’ Procopius renews his criticism of the craven attitude of the Roman commanders before Belisarius’ arrival, cf. 20.19. On Justus see i.24.53n and *PLRE* iii, Iustus 2. While Dewing consistently renders the word ἀνεψιός, *anepsios*, as ‘nephew’, cf. Craveri, 146, Kaldellis’ revision rightly prefers ‘cousin’ at i.24.53, but retains ‘nephew’ here. The noun more generally means ‘cousin’ cf. *LSJ* and *BDAG*, s.v., and this translation should be retained, *contra* Veh, 343, García Romero, 252, but with Brodka, 155 and Mango and Scott 1997, 319, cf. Stein 1949, 454. Rubin, *PvK*, 395, suggests that Justus is a proxy for Justinian in Procopius’ criticism. On Buzes see i.13.5n, ii.6.3–6n; he is generally unfavourably presented by Procopius, cf. ii.3.29–31, where he treacherously kills his friend, the Armenian John. His imprisonment by Theodora soon after the present episode elicits some sympathy, however, *Anecd.* 4.6–12, cf. *PLRE* iii, Buzes.

20.22–3 The Letter of Justus and Buzes

The two commanders urge Belisarius to join them at Hierapolis. The missive reflects their fear and passivity: they consider it sufficient to save themselves and the city, waiting to see where Khusro will advance. It is

quite possible that they intended to join forces with Belisarius and go on the offensive, but Procopius has crafted his account to highlight the contrast between the energetic and courageous Belisarius and his timorous colleagues. The presentation of the letter, referred to as a γραφή, *graphē*, both before and after it, is Thucydidean, echoing parts of his excursus on Themistocles, most notably at i.129.1, the first sentence of which is identical to the first sentence of 20.24 here, cf. Thuc. i.137.4 and Proc. i.14.11 with Braun 1885, 183. Theoph. 220.1–2 merely notes their contact with Belisarius and passes over the letter.

20.24 Βελισάριος δὲ οὐκ ἐπαινέσας τὰ γεγραμμένα ἐς Εὐρώπὸν τὸ χωρίον ἀφίκετο, ὃ πρὸς Εὐφράτῃ ποταμῷ ἐστίν, ‘Belisarius, not liking what it said, went to the place called Europus, which is on the river Euphrates.’ Europus, known earlier as Carchemish and near Jerablous today, lies on the west bank of the Euphrates midway between Zeugma to the north and Caeciliana, the crossing for Hierapolis, to the south; it is situated about 30 km north of Hierapolis, where Buzes and Justus were based. Its fortifications had been strengthened in the aftermath of the Anastasian war, see Ps.-Josh. 91 with PJT III n.515; at some point Justinian did likewise, Proc. *Aed.* ii.9.10. It was situated in Euphratesia, cf. Hierocl. *Syn.* 713.11. See further *TIB* 15, 1149–50, Gaborit 2015, A28, 60–76. It is possible that this was the moment when work was carried out on the defences of the nearby city of Cyrrhus, where inscriptions praise Belisarius for a victory, *IGLS* 145–7, with Greatrex and Lieu 2002, III. Belisarius’ position at Europus allowed him easily to cross the Euphrates into Osrhoene or to turn southwards to defend Syria. See also Roques 2011, 194 n.109.

20.25–7 Belisarius’ Reply

Belisarius’ letter to the commanders is a ringing call to arms, insisting that all of them do their utmost to protect the empire, even if their efforts should fail. No doubt because of its stirring tone Theoph. 220.5–9 quotes the last section in direct speech, having paraphrased 20.25–6. The contrast between gratuitous risk-taking – as had proved disastrous when, despite his warnings, the troops had insisted on fighting at Callinicum in 531 (i.18, esp. i.18.21) – and the need now to stand firm is well brought out. The verbal echo of i.18.17, where Belisarius begins his speech asking his soldiers why they are seeking out an unnecessary danger, at 20.26 reinforces the link. In this campaign

Belisarius wins the sort of bloodless victory that he had envisaged in 531, although he is prepared to engage the enemy, Procopius insists. The letter thus underlines Belisarius' courage and his loyalty to the emperor; by the 540s, the latter had on several occasions been called into question, cf. iv.8.1–5, *Anecd.* 4.4.

20.26 οἷς γὰρ πάρεστιν ἡσυχῇ μένουσιν ἀπηλλάχθαι κακῶν, πολλὴ ἄνοια ἐς κίνδυνον οὐκ ἀναγκαῖόν τινα ἰέναι. 'For when men can remain at rest and avoid evils, it is utter madness to incur any unnecessary danger.' As just noted, a reminiscence of i.18.17: at Callinicum the Persians were already retreating and hence there was nothing to be gained by seeking battle. The expression πολλή ἄνοια, *pollē anoia*, 'much foolishness, madness', is employed by the Persian general Azarethes at i.18.28 in urging his men to be brave before the battle at Callinicum. Here, however, its context is more similar to that of Pericles' final address to the Athenians at ii.61.1, where he emphasises the foolishness of engaging in hostilities unnecessarily, cf. Duwe 1885, 14, ii.19.43n. Procopius also uses it elsewhere, e.g. at v.8.33.

20.26 εἰ δὲ νῦν ἐνθὲνδε ἀπαλλαγεῖς ὁ βάρβαρος οὗτος ἑτέρᾳ τινὶ ἐπισκήψει βασιλέως Ἰουστινιανοῦ χώρα, καὶ ταύτῃ διαφερόντως μὲν ἀγαθὴ φρουράν δὲ οὐδαμῇ στρατιωτῶν ἐχούσῃ, 'But if this barbarian, on leaving here, means to strike some other land that belongs to the Emperor Justinian, and that a particularly rich land, with no garrison of soldiers whatever...' The allusion must be to Palestine and Jerusalem, mentioned by Procopius already at 20.18. There was only one *dux* for the three provinces of Palestine, while few forces were stationed in Jerusalem: see Dauphin 1992, 71, Schick 2007, 173–4, cf. Sipilä 2009, 200–5 for a general survey.

20.26–7 εὖ ἴστε ὅτι τὸ ξὺν τῇ ἀρετῇ ἀπολωλέναι τοῦ σεσῶσθαι ἀμαχητὶ τῷ παντὶ ἄμεινον. οὐ γὰρ ἂν σωτηρία τοῦτό γε, ἀλλὰ προδοσία δικαίως καλοῖτο. 'Rest assured that death with valour is in every way better than safety without fighting. For that could not properly be called safety, only betrayal.' The conclusion of Belisarius' letter is quoted nearly *verbatim* by Theoph. 220.5–9, Cedr. 407.1.11–15 (652–3). Its bold determination recalls Theodora's speech during the Nika riot, i.24.33–7, where she likewise prefers death to safety. The insistence on Belisarius' courage is of a piece with 21.28–9: see ii.21.30n, noting accusations of cowardice levelled at the commander.

The first two words, εὖ ἴστε, *eu iste*, may be taken either as an imperative, as we have translated them here, or as an ordinary indicative, ‘you know well’. The former interpretation is adopted also by Dewing, 437 (and cf. i.5.5), Veh, 343, García Romero, 253, the latter by Mango and Scott 1997, 319, in their translation of Theophanes. It is an idiom common in Xenophon, e.g. *Hell.* v.1.14, 16.

20.27 ἀλλ’ ἤκετε ὅτι τάχιστα ἐς τὸν Εὐρώπῳν, οὗ δὴ συλλέξας τὸ στράτευμα ὅλον ὅσα ἂν ὁ θεὸς διδῷ ἐλπίδα ἔχω τοὺς πολεμίους ἐργάσασθαι. ‘But come to Europus as quickly as you can, where I have collected all the army and have hopes of doing to the enemy all that God allows.’ As at 20.22, 24 above, there are echoes of Thuc. i.137.4, where Themistocles alludes to the harm he has wrought the Persians, κακὰ εἰργασμαι, *kaka eirgasmai*, using the same verb, ἐργάζομαι, *ergazomai*, cf. *LSJ*, s.v. II; the Thucydidean passage also uses the verb ἤκω, *hēkō*, ‘I have come’. The last part of the sentence is to be found also almost *verbatim* at the end of the speech of Principius and Tarmutus (v.28.27), two infantry commanders who sought to persuade Belisarius during the siege of Rome to let their forces take a more active role.

20.28 καὶ Ἰοῦστον μὲν ξὺν ὀλίγοις τισὶν αὐτοῦ ἔλιπον ἐφ’ ᾧ τὴν Ἱεράπολιν φυλάξουσιν, ‘leaving Justus with a few men to guard Hierapolis’. Belisarius thus concentrated his forces at Europus. On the use of ἐφ’ ᾧ, *eph’ hō*, ‘in order to’ with the future indicative – although one manuscript has the aorist subjunctive instead – see Scheftlein 1893, 55 and cf. vi.16.18 for a comparable case.

21.1 τῶν δὲ βασιλικῶν γραμματέων ἓνα, Ἀβανδάνην ὄνομα, ‘one of the royal secretaries called Abandanēs’. Not otherwise known, cf. *PLRE* iii, Abandanēs, cf. Justi 1895, 1, on the name. The scribes, *dibīrān*, constituted an important element in Persian society, inferior in theory only to the priests and the warriors: see (e.g.) Rubin 2004, 241–8, cf. Börm 2007, 129–30. Whether Abandanēs occupied a particular office among the royal scribes is unclear: see Börm 2007, 147 and n.2.

21.1 ἐφ’ ᾧ τὰ ἀμφὶ τῇ εἰρήνῃ κατὰ τὰ συγκείμενα πρυτανεύσωσιν, ‘to treat for peace according to their agreement’. Here ἐφ’ ᾧ, *eph’ hō*, ‘in order to’, is used with the aorist subjunctive, cf. Scheftlein 1893, 55. On the verb πρυτανεύω, *prytaneuō*, ‘I obtain (peace)’ see i.16.2n. Negotiations seem to have broken down after Khusro tried to capture

Dara as he left Roman territory in 540: at ii.13.29 Procopius reports that Justinian refused to send emissaries for peace after learning of this violation of what had been agreed earlier.

21.2 αὐτὸς μὲν ἑξακισχιλίους ἀπολεξάμενος ἄνδρας εὐμήκεις τε καὶ τὰ σώματα καλοῦς μάλιστα, ‘He chose six thousand tall, especially finelooking men.’ Evidently Belisarius had more than 6000 troops from which to choose these élite soldiers. Among them were certainly members of his own *bucellarii*, such as Diogenes, mentioned in 21.2. Although Belisarius had come in haste to the front, he had left most of his forces there at the end of the previous campaigning season: they wintered in Cilicia, cf. *Anecd.* 3.5 with Pfeilschifter–Thesz *ad loc.* Once he returned to Constantinople after this campaign he was obliged to leave many of them in the East, cf. *Proc.* vii.10.1; he had hoped to return once again to the East according to *Anecd.* 4.38.

21.2 Διογένην δὲ τὸν δορυφόρον καὶ Ἀδόλιον τὸν Ἀκακίου, ἄνδρα Ἀρμένιον γένος, ‘Diogenes the bodyguard and Adolius, the son of Acacius, an Armenian by birth’. On Diogenes see *PLRE* iii, Diogenes 2: he had served as a *bucellarius* of Belisarius with distinction in both North Africa and Italy. On Adolius see ii.3.10n and *PLRE* iii, Adolius; Procopius paints a harsh portrait of his father, Acacius, at ii.3.5–7.

21.2 βασιλεῖ μὲν αἰὲν ἐν παλατίῳ τὰ ἐς τὴν ἡσυχίαν ὑπηρετοῦντα (σιλენτιαρίους Ῥωμαῖοι καλοῦσιν οἷς ἡ τιμὴ αὕτη ἐπικείται), ‘who saw to the emperor’s tranquillity in the palace on a permanent basis (the Romans call the holders of this office *silentiarii*)’. On the post of *silentiarius*, see Joh. Lyd. *De Mens.* i.30 (15), who links the silence in question to the meetings of the emperors’ ministers, where they acted as ushers. See Jones 1964, 571–2, Acerbi 2007, 212–13, *ODLA*, *silentiarii*. Begass 2018, 34, notes that while the term τιμή, *timē*, usually means ‘honour’, it here has rather the sense of ‘office’. Pazdernik 2020a, 1017 n.107, suggests that the phrase ἐς τὴν ἡσυχίαν, *es tēn hēsychian*, ‘to the tranquillity’ might refer to the *silentium*, i.e. the meeting of the *consistorium*, the emperor’s cabinet, cf. Begass 2018, 11–12. One could therefore perhaps translate the phrase instead as ‘a permanent aide to the *silentium* in the palace’.

21.2 ἢν ἐθέλωσι τὸν Εὐφράτην διαβάντες ἐπὶ τὰ σφέτερα αὐτῶν ὁδῶ ἰέναι, οὐ μήποτε ἐπιτρέψουσι, ‘if they wanted to cross the Euphrates and go to their own country, they would never allow them’.

The manuscripts all read ἐπιστρέψουσι, *epistrepsousi*, which Haury emended to *epitrepsousi*. In favour of keeping the original reading is the fact that the subject would remain the same in both parts of the conditional clause: the apodosis would then read ‘they would never return’, i.e. the Persians.

21.3 καλύβην ἐκ παχειῶν τινῶν σινδόνων πηξάμενος, ἦν δὴ παπυλεῶνα καλεῖν νενομίκασιν, ἐκάθητο ἐκεῖ ὥσπερ ἐν χωρίῳ ἐρήμῳ, παραδηλῶν ὅτι δὴ οὐδεμιᾶ παρασκευῇ ἐνταῦθα ἦκοι, ‘he made a tent of some fine cloth, of the sort which it is the custom to call a *papilio*, and sat there as if in a deserted spot, trying to show that he had come without any equipment’. On the term παπυλεῶν, *papyleōn*, ‘tent’, of which there are a number of forms in Greek, see Greatrex et al. 2005, 65 with Lampe, 1006. It is a transliteration of the Latin term *papilio*, found e.g. at Veg. 3.8.16. Joh. Chrys. *Homiliae in Lazarum* 3.1, PG 48.992 refers to the pitching of just such a tent in the desert, cf. Asterius, *Hom. in Psalmos* 26.7 (208.24–6), who, when referring to a tent pitched in the desert, glosses the term καλύβη, *kalybē*, with the clarification that the Romans called this a *papyleōn*. Belisarius’ tent was presumably rather grander than the normal legionary *papilio*, on which see (e.g.) Reddé in *ERA*, 81: Procopius specifies that it was made of σινδών, *sindōn*, referring to fine cloth or linen.

21.4 τῆς μὲν καλύβης ἐφ’ ἐκάτερα Θρᾷκές τε καὶ Ἰλλυριοὶ ἦσαν, Γότθοι δὲ μετ’ αὐτοῦς, καὶ τούτων ἐχόμενοι Ἑρουλοὶ, μεθ’ οὓς Βανδίλοι τε καὶ Μαυρούσιοι ἦσαν, ‘On either side of the tent were Thracians and Illyrians, and after them Goths, next to them Heruls, and then Vandals and Moors.’ The heterogeneity of Belisarius’ forces is evident. At vii.1.6 Procopius reports that he was usually surrounded by a crowd of Goths, Vandals and Moors, among others, presumably his *bucellarii*; cf. Schmitt 1994, 163–4. Procopius already mentioned Thracians at 19.32, suffering in the heat; they were renowned for their martial qualities, cf. Maas 1986, 20–1, Greatrex 2018b, 338–9. Like Isaurians and Thracians, Illyrian soldiers are also often distinguished from others by Procopius, e.g. at vii.10.2, 11.11, no doubt also because of their superior quality. On Goths in the eastern army see ii.18.24n, on Heruls, i.13.19n. On Vandals in the East see Proc. iv.10.17–18, reporting the despatch of five cavalry units against the Persians, although some of them returned to North Africa. Moorish troops had inspired great fear in the Goths during the war in Italy through their night-time raids, Proc.

v.25.8–9. The status of these soldiers may well have varied as to whether they were serving among the regular soldiers, as *foederati*, *bucellarii* or allies (*symmachoi*): see Koehn 2018a, 107–8, for discussion.

The account of Belisarius' attempt to impress the Persian envoy by the physique of his forces, if not their nonchalance, recalls Herodian's story (vi.4.4–6) of Ardashir despatching 400 particularly impressive Persians to Severus Alexander, dressed finely and equipped with bows; the emperor, however, seized and enslaved them.

21.6 εἶχε δὲ αὐτῶν οὐδεὶς οὔτε χλαμύδα οὔτε ἄλλην ἐπωμίδα τινά, 'None of them had either a cloak or any other covering for their shoulders.' Dindorf replaced the manuscripts' reference to the χλανίς, *khlanis* with one to the χλαμύς, *khlamys*, although the former, which refers to a finer garment than the latter, also comes to be used in Late Antiquity for the military cloak, the *paludamentum*, cf. *LSJ*, s.v. and *Suda* X334. See Cleland et al. 2007, 34, 137–8, Olson 2017, 77–8. It is uncertain to what exactly the ἐπωμίς, *epōmis*, refers, although it is clearly something connected to the shoulder, most likely a garment that either covered the shoulder or was fastened there.

21.6 ἀλλὰ χιτῶνας μὲν λινοῦς καὶ ἀναξυρίδας ἀμπεχόμενοι, εἶτα διεζωσμένοι ἐβάδιζον, 'but (they) were strolling about dressed in linen tunics and trousers, with their belts on top'. A χιτῶν, *khitōn*, was a light tunic usually worn beneath other clothing; see *LSJ*, s.v., cf. Cleland et al. 2007, 32. Brzóstkowska 1980 offers an exhaustive analysis of the use of the term ἀναξυρίδες, *anaxyrides*, in Procopius' work, noting considerable variations. In this case, however, it most probably refers to the wide breeches of the sort associated with Parthians and Persians, *ibid.*, 263, cf. more generally Cleland et al. 2007, 6. See also Huyse 2002, 199, on the term. Procopius' description of the soldiers' dress and weaponry (in the next section) is designed to emphasise their casualness: they are unconcerned at the prospect of a confrontation with the Persians.

21.9 ὁ Καῖσαρ (οὕτω γὰρ τὸν Ῥωμαίων βασιλέα καλοῦσι Πέρσαι), 'the Caesar (for this is what the Persians called the Roman emperor)'. Cf. ii.11.35n.

21.14 στρατηγῷ τε γὰρ ἐντυχεῖν ἔφη ἀνδρειοτάτῳ τε καὶ ξυνητωτάτῳ ἀνθρώπων ἀπάντων, 'for he said he had met a general who was the bravest and shrewdest among men'. The whole episode

serves to cast Belisarius in the best possible light, perhaps in an effort to counteract accusations that he had unnecessarily avoided battle, as noted in *Anecd.* 3.31, cf. 21.18. See Rubin, *PvK*, 395.

21.14 διαφέρειν δέ, ὅτι νικήσας μὲν αὐτὸς τὸν Καίσαρος νικήσει δοῦλον, ἥσσηθεις δέ, ἂν οὕτω τύχοι, μέγα τι αἴσχος τῇ τε βασιλείᾳ πορίσεται καὶ τῷ Περσῶν γένει, ‘the difference being that if he himself won, he would be conquering Caesar’s slave, whereas if he should chance to be defeated he would bring great shame on the monarchy and the Persian race’. Abandanes’ fears were fulfilled finally in 576 when the aged Khusro was defeated by the Roman general Justinian near Melitene, after which he passed a law to curtail the king’s right to lead military expeditions, cf. Th. Sim. iii.14.11, Evagr. *HE* v.15, Joh. Eph. *HE* vi.9 with Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 156–8. Whitby 1994 discusses the issue in detail, esp. 227–8 and 242–3, cf. Börm 2007, 95. As Whitby notes, the defeat of the Sasanian king constituted a severe blow to Persian prestige.

There are some similarities between Abandanes’ advice to Khusro and those of Artemisia to Xerxes following the defeat at Salamis (Hdt. viii.103, cf. Braun 1894, 31): she argues that there is no danger in leaving Mardonius to take charge of operations since, if he is beaten, the Greeks will have vanquished only a slave of the king. Given Khusro’s subsequent law, the advice attributed to the secretary by Procopius is not implausible, although it is evidently his own supposition. See Whitby 1994, 243 n.50.

21.14 καὶ Ῥωμαῖοι μὲν νενικημένοι ῥαδίως ἂν ἔν τε ὀχυρώμασι καὶ γῇ τῇ αὐτῶν διασώζοιντο, αὐτῶν δέ, ἣν γέ τι ἐναντίωμα ξυμβαίη, οὐδ’ ἂν ἄγγελος διαφύγοι ἐς τὴν Περσῶν χώραν. ‘The vanquished Romans could easily save themselves in strongholds and in their own land, while of the Persian troops, if they should meet with a reversal, not even a messenger could escape to Persia.’ Abandanes’ advice echoes earlier speeches by Belisarius and John, the son of Nicetas, cf. 18.12–13, noting the difficulties of laying siege to Nisibis and the advantages of being close to one’s own fortifications, and 19.41, where John insists that no one will be left, if the Romans do not immediately withdraw from Sisauranon, to announce the news to those in Dara.

21.15 ὁ Χοσρόης ἀναπεισθεὶς τῇ ὑποθήκῃ ἀναστρέφειν μὲν ἐς τὰ Περσῶν ἦθη ἐβούλετο, ἀμηχανία δέ πολλῇ εἶχετο, ‘Khusro was

convinced by this warning and decided to retreat to Persia, but was greatly puzzled as to how to do it.’ News of the spread of the Justinianic plague, on which see ii.22–3h, may rather have been the cause of Khusro’s hasty withdrawal, so e.g. Stein 1949, 497, Rubin, *PvK*, 396, Kislinger and Stathakopoulos 1999, 82–5.

21.16 τὴν τε γὰρ διάβασιν τοῦ ποταμοῦ πρὸς τῶν πολεμίων φυλάσσεσθαι ᾤετο, ‘for he believed that the river crossing was guarded by the enemy’. Procopius fails to specify where Khusro’s forces were encamped. As Gaborit 2012, 64–70, notes, there were a number of convenient crossing points in the vicinity of Europus, where the presence of channels and islands made the task easier, cf. 21.18 and Plut. *Crass.* 17.2 on the ease with which Crassus crossed the river. One possible place would be Caeciliana (Tell Amarna), 8 km south of Europus, on which see Gaborit 2015, Bo4, 83–6.

21.17 ἐς γῆν τε τὴν ἀντιπέρας ἦκειν καὶ διὰ χώρας πᾶσιν εὐθηνούσης τοῖς ἀγαθοῖς τὴν πορείαν ποιήσασθαι, ‘and make their journey through country that was flourishing with every kind of good thing’. Khusro preferred to make his way back through Osrhoene, presumably along the northern bank of the Euphrates, having entered Roman territory to the south of the river, as in 540. On the relative prosperity of the region around the Euphrates in Late Antiquity see Gaborit 2012, 295–8 with fig.114, cf. Segal 1970, 141, on the hinterland of Edessa. The king was familiar with the region, having withdrawn through it already in 540.

21.20 οὐδεμιᾷ κινδυνεύσαντι μάχῃ πρὸς μυριάδας βαρβάρων πολλὰς ξύν στρατιώταις λίαν τε ὀλίγοις οὔσι καὶ ἀτεχνῶς κατεπτηχόσι τὸν Μῆδων στρατόν, ‘without risking a battle against the myriads of barbarians with soldiers who were very few in number and absolutely terrified of the Persian (Medic) army’. Procopius hammers home the disparity in numbers, thereby emphasising Belisarius’ achievement; he likewise emphasises the Roman fear of the Persians, already signalled at 20.20–8, cf. 21.29. During the war in Italy he likewise insists on the odds the general was obliged to face, clearly inflating the Goths’ numbers, cf. v.24 (with Whately 2019, 266–9) and vii.12, both with letters to the emperor pleading for more resources; at vii.12.5 the feeble numbers of the Roman forces and their terror before the enemy are expressed in similar terms.

On the term ‘myriad’, applied also to the Moors in the North African campaign, see Whately 2016, 404, cf. ii.4.6n, 14.6n; although it means literally ‘ten thousand’, it should not be translated as such here, cf. Whately 2019, 267. Procopius offers a similar contrast between exiguous Roman forces and ‘myriads’ of barbarians at v.28.24.

21.22 Πέρσαις γὰρ πόνω οὐδενὶ διαβατοὶ εἰσι ποταμοὶ ἅπαντες, ‘For the Persians can cross any river without trouble.’ See ii.12.4n concerning Persian bridge-building techniques, cf. Mitford 2018, 91 and n.21. With the iron hooks mentioned by Procopius cf. the ‘metal clamps’ used by the Sasanians according to Huff, *Elr* iv (1989), 451–2, but note also Comfort 2008, 53.

21.26 ἡξίουں τε διὰ Ῥωμαίων ἅτε φίλων αὐτῷ τῇ πορείᾳ χρῆσθαι, ‘They asked him to make his way through Roman lands as though it were friendly territory.’ The Romans thus imply that they would provide supplies, of which the Persians were short (cf. 21.16), but at the same time expect that the king will not damage the lands through which he passes.

21.27 ὁ δὲ εἰς τὴν Ἑδεσσαν ἀφικόμενος Ἰωάννην τὸν Βασιλείου παῖδα, γένει τε καὶ πλούτῳ πάντων τῶν Ἑδεσσηνῶν διαφανέστατον, ὄμηρον τῷ Χοσρόῃ οὗτι ἐκούσιον εὐθύς ἔπεμψε, ‘and he (Belisarius) went to Edessa and immediately sent as an unwilling hostage to Khusro John, the son of Basil, by far the most notable of the Edessenes by birth and wealth’. As Rubin, *PvK*, 395, notes, the reference to John’s unwillingness reflects the dissatisfaction of Procopius, to which he gives fuller rein at *Anecd.* 12.6–10. There it emerges that John was never released because Khusro claimed that Justinian had failed to follow up his promises, while his grandmother’s attempt to ransom him for 2000 pounds of silver was thwarted by the emperor himself, anxious not to boost Khusro’s coffers. When the unfortunate John died soon afterwards, the governor of Osrhoene claimed that he had bequeathed his fortune to the emperor. See *PLRE* iii, Ioannes 30, with Segal 1970, 146, 154, on the wealthy families of Edessa.

21.28 Ῥωμαῖοι δὲ Βελισάριον ἐν εὐφημίαις εἶχον, μᾶλλον τε σφίσιν ὁ ἀνὴρ ἐν τούτῳ εὐδοκιμῆσαι τῷ ἔργῳ ἐδόκει ἢ ὅτε Γελίμερα δορυάλωτον ἢ τὸν Οὐίττιγιν ἐς Βυζάντιον ἦνεγκεν. ‘The Romans held Belisarius in high regard, and the man seemed to have gained more renown in this affair even than when he brought Gelimer or Vitigis as

captives to Byzantium.’ This and the next section conclude Procopius’ eulogy of Belisarius’ achievement, taken up in turn (cf. ii.20–1g) by Theophanes and Cedrenus. The complex and lengthy sentences underline the odds stacked against him and the magnitude of what he had accomplished in inducing Khusro to retreat. For the expression ἐν εὐφημίαις εἶχον, *en euphēmiāis eikhon*, ‘they held in high regard’, cf. Lib. *Or.* 27.13 and Proc. v.23.27, also concerning Belisarius. Laniado 2010 draws attention to a scholion in two manuscripts of the *Basilica* of Leo VI that describes a ceremony that took place in Antioch (called Theoupolis in the scholia) at which gold coins were displayed in glass vessels to the public to celebrate the peace then in force. He connects this event with the general’s foiling of Khusro’s invasion; it would have been a sort of triumph, at which acclamations – a possible meaning of εὐφημία – would have been shouted, 286–7.

On the renown gained by Belisarius cf. i.25.12, iii.13.20, v.5.1 with Pazdernik 2020a, 1028. On his bringing of Gelimer to Constantinople see iv.9.1, for that of Vitigis, vii.1.1.

21.30 ταύτης γὰρ τὸν περίβολον ὀρῶντες Ῥωμαῖοι σαθρόν τε καὶ εὐάλωτον παντάπασιν ὄντα, μοῖραν αὐτοῦ ἀεὶ καθαιροῦντές τινα, νέα τινὶ ἀνενεοῦντο οἰκοδομία. ‘For the Romans, seeing that its circuit wall was rotten and could very easily be taken, were engaged in pulling it down in sections and restoring it with a new structure.’ The invasion of 540 had evidently spurred a programme of repair to eastern defences; since the Persians’ invasion route in both 531 and 540 had passed along the south bank of the Euphrates, the authorities may have counted on Callinicum, lying on the north bank, escaping their attention. See *Aed.* ii.7.17 where Procopius describes the demolition and reconstruction of the walls similarly, cf. Whitby 1987, 93–4, Roques 2011, 188–9 n.79. The procedure described by Procopius appears remarkably risky, given the danger of a Persian invasion. It is more likely, as Catharine Hof suggests to me, that the weak elements of the wall were removed before a section was strengthened, as occurred at Dara. On the site of Callinicum see Gaborit 2015, For, 445–9.

Whately 2016, 111–12, argues that the description in the next sections (21.30–2) of Khusro’s capture of Callinicum deliberately undercuts Procopius’ praise for Belisarius: the general has himself been outwitted by the king, cf. Pfeilschifter–Thesz on *Anecd.* 3.30–1 and already Roth 1846, 9–10. Rubin, *PvK*, 395–6, more plausibly considers Procopius to have played down the fall of the city and to blame Khusro for violating the

terms of the agreement. From *Anecd.* 3.30–1 it is clear that many did blame Belisarius for not saving Callinicum, accusing him of negligence and cowardice. It is important to note that in the *Anecd.* Procopius refers to the general's reputation: he does not explicitly endorse the criticisms levelled at him, and so one need not suppose that the high praise accorded him here is insincere.

21.32 καὶ γεωργῶν πάμπολύ τι χρήμα ἔνταῦθα ξυνειλῆσθαι συνέβη, 'It so happened that a large number of farmers had gathered there.' On agriculture in this part of the Euphrates valley see ii.5.7n, cf. Lauffray 1983, 52–7. Al-Muqaddasī in the tenth century praises the prosperity of ar-Raqqā, as Callinicum had by then become known: see al-Khalaf and Kohlmeyer 1985, 149–50. The wealthy were perhaps able to cross to the south bank of the river, where there were more fortresses, cf. Gaborit 2012, 301–2, 306–9, while the farmers may have hoped that Khusro would abide by the terms he had agreed. They may also have been taking their crops to market if Khusro were withdrawing in May or June: Ps.-Josh. 27 refers to crops being harvested in mid May, cf. Segal 1970, 141. Kislinger and Stathakopoulos 1999, 82, place the Persian withdrawal in early summer at the latest. On Persian deportations of Roman workers as a means of boosting production see Morony 2004, 174, Börm 2007, 173, 177.

21.34 Ἀρμένιοί τε οἱ τῷ Χοσρόῃ προσκεχωρηκότες, τὰ πιστὰ πρὸς Ῥωμαίων λαβόντες ξύν τῷ Βασσάκῃ ἐς Βυζάντιον ἦλθον, 'The Armenians who had gone over to Khusro received pledges from the Romans and came with Bassaces to Byzantium.' Both this sentence and the previous one, 21.33, each introduced by the particle τε, *te*, 'and', give the impression of being tacked on to the previous account, as though Procopius is inserting brief notices of other events in the campaign as concisely as possible. In this case he could undoubtedly have made more of the return to the Roman side of Bassaces, one of the leading Armenians who had visited Khusro and urged him to intervene before war broke out in 540: see ii.2.30n with Rubin, *PvK*, 396, who discusses the reasons for his return to the Roman cause, notably the Persian encroachments in the Caucasus. See Stein 1949, 498–9, Braund 1994, 296–7. The defection of Bassaces forms part of the background to Roman operations in Persarmenia later the same year, reported at ii.24–5 below, sometimes misdated to 543. See Kislinger and Stathakopoulos 1999, 95, cf. Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 116. It is possible that a certain Armenian

called Artabanus also defected around this time, cf. *Proc.* viii.8.21–4 with *PLRE* iii, Artabanus 1, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 273 n.8.

21.34 ἐφ' ᾧ ἐς Ἰταλίαν αὐθις σταλήσεται, πονηρῶν ἤδη παντάπασιν τῶν ἐκείνῃ πραγμάτων Ῥωμαίοις ὄντων, 'to be despatched again to Italy, for things were already very bad there for the Romans'. Belisarius was indeed sent to Italy, where Totila had succeeded in undoing many of his gains, but only in 544. The recall to Constantinople was more likely connected to allegations that he had expressed unwillingness to tolerate a replacement emperor for Justinian, since rumours had circulated concerning the emperor's death from the plague. See *Anecd.* 4 for a detailed account with Rubin, *PvK*, 396, *PLRE* iii, 211, Meier 1999, 184 and Pfeilschifter–Thesz on *Anecd.* 4.2–6. On the deteriorating situation in Italy for the Romans see Stein 1949, 564–76, Koehn 2018a, 224–9. Belisarius' recall is *RKOR* 1281, although its proposed dating of 543 is mistaken.

ii.22–23 The Justinianic Plague

History

The bibliography on the Justinianic plague, also known as the Early Medieval Pandemic (EMP), is vast and constantly expanding. The disease is now generally identified as bubonic plague, *Yersinia pestis*, as analysis of DNA from various graves of the period has confirmed. This first manifestation of the plague in history lasted for two centuries, returning repeatedly to strike the populations of Europe, the Near East and North Africa; it subsequently re-emerged in the fourteenth century as the Black Death, then again at the end of the nineteenth century in Hong Kong, from where it spread widely. Although on occasion the population loss caused by the plague has been played down, notably by Durlat 1989 and now by Mordechai and Eisenberg 2019a, many scholars believe that the demographic impact was significant, both in the cities and in rural areas. The population loss naturally had an adverse effect on state finances as well as on military manpower, on which see (e.g.) Sarris 2020, 526. A longer-term impact has sometimes also been perceived: Mischa Meier has argued that the plague brought about notable changes in Late Antique society, perceptible in an increased veneration of the Virgin Mary and a greater integration of Christianity into the fabric of daily life, though cf. Sessa 2019, 236–44, Mordechai and Eisenberg 2019a, 47, *idem* 2019b, 177–8.

Meier 2020a offer a salutary rejoinder, cf. Greatrex 2020a, but the debate shows no sign of abating, as Mordechai et al. 2020 and Meier 2020b attest.

Bibliography: As just noted, there has been a huge growth in work on the plague in recent years, stimulated by the discovery of the DNA of its victims found in various locations. Among slightly earlier research, Little 2007 gathers together many important contributions on the plague, while Sarris 2002 (= 2007) and Horden 2005 remain useful synthetic treatments, cf. Harper 2017, 206–45, for a dramatic recent account (with the reviews of Haldon et al. 2018 and Sarris 2018a). Mordechai and Eisenberg 2019b offer a bibliographical overview of work on the plague between 2000 and 2018. The publications of Meier, e.g. 2003a, 321–40, 2005 and 2016 are important; the last offers a useful review of earlier work, while Sarris 2020 puts the plague in its global context. Little 2011 considers the debate between historians and scientists and the new light shed on the plague by DNA analysis. Mordechai and Eisenberg 2019a emphasise the dangers in overstating the pandemic's impact, cf. eidem et al. 2019, but they exaggerate the maximalist view, cf. Sarris 2022. Their project has given rise to an application related to the plague, to be found at <https://cchri.princeton.edu/justinianic-plague-app>.

Historiography

It has long been recognised that Procopius' account of the plague is heavily influenced by Thucydides' description of the epidemic that struck Athens in 430 B.C. (ii.48–54), whose nature remains elusive, cf. Hornblower, *CT*, i, 316; later Byzantine historians, such as John Cantacuzenus (iv.8, vol.3, 49–53, cf. Miller 1976) and Critobulus of Imbros (v.17) likewise included similar reports of plagues, in their turn influenced by both illustrious predecessors. See Reinsch 2006, 769–78, for a detailed assessment, cf. Leven 2005, 27–8, Whately 2017, 701, Jeffreys 2019, 22. Meier 1999 and Aerts 2003, 93–6, consider the interplay between Thucydides and Procopius in detail, setting out parallel passages; cf. Braun 1885, 191–5, Duwe 1894, 7–9, Brückner 1896, 11–12, for earlier close comparisons. Meier 1999, 203, suggests that Procopius deliberately emphasises the contrast between Athens and Constantinople by demonstrating the underlying cohesion of society and the measures undertaken to resolve the problems of disposing of bodies in his own day, cf. idem 2003a, 335, finding parallel evidence for this in other sources. There are numerous other contrasts that Meier signals, such as the issue of divine

responsibility and the very different consequences for popular *mores* of the two diseases. Procopius' account also formed the basis of the entry of *Meg. Chr.* 9 (tr. in CPW, 196), on which see Greatrex (forthcoming).

Procopius returns to the plague on several occasions in the *Anecdota*: at 4.1 he reports rumours that Justinian had died from it (cf. ii.23.20), which led to accusations against Belisarius and Buzes (see ii.20.20n), on which see Pfeilschifter–Thesz *ad loc.* At 23.19–22 he emphasises the difficulties of landowners in meeting tax demands in the wake of the plague, on which see Sarris 2002, 175 (= 2007, 127), Meier 2016, 279. At *Anecd.* 18.44, in a catalogue of ills to befall the Roman empire, he concludes by mentioning the plague, which, he claims, carried off about half its population, an assertion that continues to find some support: see (e.g.) Harper 2017, 226, *contra*, Haldon et al. 2018 (3), 1–4, Mordechai and Eisenberg 2019a, 9–10, Sessa 2019, 234–5. See also Meier 2016, 277–80, for a sensible discussion. Leppin 2011, 209–10, points out that one would have expected Procopius to make more of the plague in the *Anecd.* as a whole, although it is far from clear that the fact that less than 1 per cent of his work discusses it (as Mordechai, Eisenberg et al. 2019, 2, note) is significant, cf. Meier 2020a, 177–8.

Bibliography: Meier 1999 and Aerts 2003, 91–6 are the most detailed treatments of these chapters, cf. Averil Cameron 1985, 40–2, who argues that the episode represents a set piece for Procopius, though his emulation of Thucydides may lead him to play down the impact of the plague beyond Constantinople. Gervais 1972 remains an interesting discussion of plague descriptions from Thucydides onwards, including Procopius.

Other literary sources confirm and supplement Procopius' account, most notably the version of the church historian John of Ephesus, writing in Syriac, that is preserved in the chronicle attributed to Dionysius of Tel-Mahre, also known as the Zuqnin chronicle (79–110/74–98). Like Procopius, John of Ephesus, whose account Pseudo-Dionysius relays, was an eye-witness to the ravages brought on by the plague and vividly describes its impact in the countryside and in the city; his interpretation, on the other hand, is far more overtly Christian, characterising the disease as sent by God to chastise mankind for its sins, cf. Meier 1999, 198–9. Evagr. *HE* iv.29 represents a further important description: the historian contracted the disease as a child and later lost his wife, a daughter and a grandson to one of its periodic outbreaks. Mal. 18.92 briefly recounts the plague, which is reduced to just one sentence in Theoph. 222.22–3. Agath. v.10 describes an outbreak in Constantinople in 558.

Bibliography: Durlat 1989 compares the literary sources with numismatic and other evidence, prompting scepticism at the former's claims; see also Meier 1999, 197–204, for a general treatment, cf. *idem* 2005b. Stathakopoulos 2004, 135–43 discusses the Greek sources, Morony 2007 the Syriac sources, while Sarris 2002 (= 2007) combines papyrological and literary evidence. Horden 2005, 139–43, offers a brief overview of the two main accounts, those of Procopius and John of Ephesus. For a wider perspective on sources see Sarris 2020 with Little 2007, Leppin 2011, 207–15.

22.1 Ὑπὸ δὲ τοὺς χρόνους τούτους λοιμὸς γέγονεν, ἐξ οὗ δὴ ἅπαντα ὀλίγου ἐδέησε τὰ ἀνθρώπεια ἐξίτηλα εἶναι. 'At about this time a plague occurred, as a result of which all human life was very nearly extinguished.' As noted at ii.21.15n, Khusro's withdrawal in the spring from Roman territory may have been due in part to news of the spread of the plague, while at 22.9 Procopius reports that it reached Constantinople in 542, its second year. Hence already in 541 it had struck Egypt (on which see 22.6). It is likely therefore that Procopius has inserted his account of the epidemic so as to separate Belisarius' coup in inducing Khusro to retreat from the subsequent lacklustre performance of the Roman army in the East; it also allows him to paper over Belisarius' disgrace following the accusations of disloyalty reported at *Anecd.* 4.1–38. See Kislinger and Stathakopoulos 1999, 82–5, Meier 1999, 184, Aerts 2003, 93 and n.16, and cf. i.19–20g, which diverts attention from Belisarius' defeat at Callinicum; see i.20.1n on a similar formula, ὑπὸ τοὺς χρόνους τοῦ πολέμου τοῦδε, *hypo tous khronous tou polemou toude*, 'at about the time of this war/campaign'.

Like the other sources discussed just above, Procopius underlines the severity of the plague; at *Anecd.* 18.44 he claims it killed half the population. The term he uses here, ἐξίτηλα, *exitēla*, 'extinct', recalls the opening words of the *Wars*, i.1.1, where he explains that he wants to preserve the events recorded from extinction. Aerts 2003, 94, notes the Herodotean flavour of the adjective.

22.1 ἅπασι μὲν οὖν τοῖς ἐξ οὐρανοῦ ἐπισκῆπτουσιν ἴσως ἂν καὶ λέγοιτό τις ὑπ' ἀνδρῶν τολμητῶν αἰτίου λόγος, 'Now for everything that comes from heaven some explanation of its cause can probably be given by daring men.' Procopius pours scorn on speculation among his contemporaries as to the cause of the plague, rather as Agath. ii.29 dismisses the pretentious philosophising of his contemporary Uranius.

On the verb *τερατεύομαι*, *terateuomai*, ‘I talk marvels’, used in this passage, see i.25.8n.

22.1 φυσιολογίας τε ἀναπλάσσειν ὑπερόριους, ‘and to fabricate outlandish natural science’. For the adjective ὑπερόριος, *hyperorios*, ‘outlandish’ see *LSJ*, 1867, III, with *Proc.* vii.17.9. Cf. *Agath.* ii.15.9 for φυσιολογία, *physiologia*, ‘natural science’, where he observes that theories propounded as to the absence of earthquakes in Egypt were disproved in 551.

22.2 τούτῳ μέντοι τῷ κακῷ πρόφασιν τινὰ ἢ λόγῳ εἰπεῖν ἢ διανοίᾳ λογίσασθαι μηχανὴ τις οὐδεμία ἐστὶ, πλὴν γε δὴ ὅσα ἐς τὸν θεὸν ἀναφέρεσθαι. ‘But for this disaster there is no way of giving a reason or of conceiving one in the imagination, except indeed to refer it to God.’ Meier 1999, 185–6, sees here a contrast to *Thuc.* ii.47.4, who reports the helplessness of doctors and the futility of sacrifices in the face of the plague: Procopius instead appears to ascribe the responsibility to God, cf. Atkinson 2002, 2, Meier 2004b, 291–2. Aerts 2003, 94 n.18, argues that Procopius is indicating merely that only God could explain the course of events; this is also what *Evagr. HE* iv.29 (179.12–14) asserts. Meier’s interpretation may be closer to the mark, given that at 22.18 Procopius implies that God introduced the disease. Other sources, such as John of Ephesus, did not hesitate to attribute the plague itself to God, who was seeking thereby to punish mankind for its sins, cf. (e.g.) *Corip. Ioh.* iii.380–3 and *Ps.-Zach.* x.9, who refers to God permitting Satan to chastise mankind, with Meier 1999, 201–2, for other examples. Kaldellis 2007b, 14–15, argues, on the other hand, that Procopius’ ascription of the plague to God reflects his lack of belief in the Christian God. *Agath.* v.10.7 is alone in reserving judgement as to the plague’s cause, so rightly Leven 1995, 398. See further Meier 2016, 290–1, who perceives a significant trend over the sixth century to fall back on divine explanations, but cf. Sessa 2019, 236–44.

22.3 οὐ γὰρ ἐπὶ μέρους τῆς γῆς οὐδὲ ἀνθρώπων τισὶ γέγονεν οὐδέ τινὰ ὥραν τοῦ ἔτους ἔσχεν, ὅθεν ἂν καὶ σοφίσματα αἰτίας εὐρέσθαι δυνατὰ εἴη, ‘For it did not happen in a part of the earth or to certain men only, nor did it observe a season of the year, from which some clever explanation of its cause might be deduced.’ Procopius is correct to emphasise here the wide dissemination of the plague: DNA from burials in Bavaria and England has attested its presence even in

places invisible in the literary sources. See ii.22–3h on the spread of the plague and cf. (e.g.) Stathakopoulos 2004, 113–24, Horden 2005, 135–8, Sallares 2007, 256–7, Little 2011, 276–9, Harper 2017, 228–30, Sarris 2020, 521–2.

On the seasonality of the plague see Stathakopoulos 2004, 128–32, 141–2. The plague bacillus could provoke three forms of disease in humans, bubonic plague (the most common), septicaemic plague (where death typically is swift and buboes do not have time to appear), and pneumonic plague, spread by droplets from human to human. While conditions for the fleas that spread the bubonic plague are better in spring, pneumonic plague circulates more easily in winter as people congregate for warmth. See also Horden 2005, 144–6, Morony 2007, 70, Harper 2017, 209–13 (with Haldon et al. 2018 (3), 3–4), Mordechai and Eisenberg 2019b, 165–6. It is unsurprising therefore that no difference between seasons could be perceived by contemporaries in the incidence of the pandemic.

Procopius' allusion to the impossibility of finding σοφίσματα αἰτίας, *sophismata aitiās*, 'some clever explanations of a cause', reflects the scepticism already noted at 22.1: the word σόφισμα is often pejorative, cf. *LSJ*, 1622.

22.3 βίους δὲ ἀνθρώπων ἅπαντας ἔβλαψε, καίπερ ἀλλήλων ἐς τοῦναντίον παρὰ πολὺ διαλλάσσουντας, οὔτε φύσεώς τινος οὔτε ἡλικίας φεισάμενον, 'it was spread over the whole earth and ruined the lives of all alike, however much they differed from one other, sparing neither sex nor time of life'. John of Ephesus in Ps.-Dion. ii, 106/95 likewise insists on the indiscriminate nature of the epidemic, cf. Sallares 2007, 274. It is possible, however, that women were marginally less affected than men and that the young were more vulnerable than the old. So Stathakopoulos 2004, 133–4, 143, cf. Sallares 2007, 274–5, Leven 2011, 231–2. *Mir. S. Dem.* i.3 (33), cited by Stathakopoulos 2007, 108, stresses the all-encompassing nature of a subsequent wave of the plague, albeit noting that the elderly were spared, while Agath. v.10.4 reports that young men were hardest hit, but women suffered less.

22.4 εἴτε γὰρ χωρίων ἐνοικήσει, 'by their place of habitation'. Procopius claims thus that rural populations were no less vulnerable than urban, which is borne out by the testimony at Ps.-Dion. ii, 81/75, cf. Sarris 2002, 172–5 (= 2007, 124–7), Sallares 2007, 270–4, Sarris 2020, 525–6.

22.5 ἐπέσκηψε δὲ τοῖς μὲν ὥρα θέρους, ‘It attacked some in summer’. On the issue of the pandemic’s seasonality see ii.22.3n.

22.5 λεγέτω μὲν οὖν ὥς πη ἕκαστος περὶ αὐτῶν γινώσκει καὶ σοφιστῆς καὶ μετεωρολόγος, ‘Let every man, both sophist and astrol-
o-ger, say as he thinks fit about it.’ Closely modelled on Thuc. ii.48.3, where, however, doctors and laymen are invited to give their opinion. Meier 1999, 186, perceives in Procopius’ choice of spokesmen a contempt for rational explanations for the plague, cf. ii.22.2n. It is possible, given that he reports with interest on experiments conducted by doctors at 22.29, that his remarks reflect rather a bitterness at the implausible theories propounded in his day, cf. Atkinson 2002, 3–4.

22.6 Ἦρξατο μὲν ἐξ Αἰγυπτίων οἱ ὥκηνται ἐν Πηλουσίῳ, ‘It began with the Egyptians who live in Pelusium.’ Pelusium, on the eastern edge of the Nile delta, was a port that had contact with trade coming up the Red Sea via Clysma in particular. This need not imply that the origins of this outbreak of the plague lie in China or India rather than the east African coast; the matter remains the subject of discussion. See Sarris 2002, 172 (= 2007, 121–2), Horden 2005, 135, McCormick 2007, 302–3, Little 2011, 282–3, Meier 2016, 275, Harper 2017, 217–19, Mordechai and Eisenberg 2019b, 166–7, Sarris 2020, 521. It appeared there most probably in July 541, cf. (e.g.) Stathakopoulos 2004, 113, Sallares 2007, 248–9.

22.6 γενομένη δὲ δίχα πῇ μὲν ἐπὶ τε Ἀλεξανδρείας καὶ τῆς ἄλλης Αἰγύπτου ἐχώρησε, ‘Once it had divided, part went to Alexandria and the rest of Egypt.’ On the spread of the plague to Alexandria, and thence throughout the Mediterranean as a result of the trade networks leading to and from the city, see Stathakopoulos 2004, 280 no.104, Meier 2016, 274, Harper 2017, 224. Kislinger and Stathakopoulos 1999, 88–9, suggest that the plague arrived in Alexandria after the middle of September 541 by a land route rather than by sea. John of Ephesus describes the impact of the plague on Alexandria at Mich. Syr. ix.28 (305–6b/235–8), on which see Morony 2007, 72, 78. Traces of the plague in Egypt south of Alexandria are few, but Sarris 2002, 177–8 (= 2007, 129–31) notes improvements in conditions for agricultural workers that are likely to have arisen as a result of labour shortages, cf. Meier 2016, 279.

22.6 πῇ δὲ ἐπὶ Παλαιστίνους τοὺς Αἰγυπτίοις ὁμόρους ἦλθεν, ‘and part came to Palestine, on the borders of Egypt’. Kislinger and

Sathakopoulos track the movement of the plague through the Negev and into Palestine in the late summer and autumn of 541, noting an increase in funerary inscriptions, cf. Sathakopoulos 2002, 100–1, one of which, at Zora in Arabia, records the death of a bishop Varus ‘on whom God brought the evil death of the groin and the armpit’, cf. Sathakopoulos 2004, 281 no.106. See further Benovitz 2014, esp. 491, McCormick 2015, 327 and n.10, Harper 2017, 224. John of Ephesus in Ps.-Dion. ii, 83/77, describes the progress of the plague through Gaza and Ashkelon into Palestine, on which see Sathakopoulos 2002, 101–2; John was present in Palestine when it arrived and eventually made his way to Constantinople, cf. Morony 2007, 63.

22.6 ὁδῶ τε ἀεὶ προϊούσα καὶ χρόνοις βαδίζουσα τοῖς καθήκουσιν, ‘always moving forward and travelling at a fixed pace’. For the sense of χρόνοις καθήκουσιν, *khronois kathēkousin*, ‘at a fixed pace’, cf. Proc. vi.21.13, *Anecd.* 28.9; it could also have the sense ‘at the appropriate moments’, cf. ii.9.13. Meier 1999, 186, contrasts Thucydides’ dispassionate portrayal of an impersonal epidemic with Procopius’ personification here and in the following two sections, where he depicts it as actively seeking out victims, cf. Corip. *Ioh.* iii.365–70, Evagr. *HE* iv.29 (179.8), with Leven 2011, 219.

22.8 ἀλλὰ χρόνῳ τῷ ὑστέρω αὐθις ἐνταῦθα ἐπανιοῦσα, ‘it returned again later’. Cf. Sallares 2007, 258, who notes that this implies that some regions dodged the plague initially. See also Harper 2017, 225 and n.57, comparing Procopius’ description of the plague’s advance to John of Ephesus in Ps.-Dion. ii, 93/85–6, cf. Morony 2007, 64. On the wide penetration of the plague, vividly recorded by Procopius, see Sallares 2007, 273, Meier 2016, 279.

22.9 ἀρξαμένη δὲ αἰεὶ ἐκ τῆς παραλίας ἢ νόσος ἦδε, οὕτω δὴ ἐς τὴν μεσόγειον ἀνέβαινε χώραν. ‘This disease always began from the coast and then moved up to the country inland.’ Comparative evidence confirms Procopius’ assertion: the infected rats and fleas travelled by sea, thus spreading the disease. See Bratton 1981, 115–16, Maddicott 2007, 184, cf. Kislinger and Sathakopoulos 1999, 88, Sallares 2007, 263–5. John of Ephesus in Ps.-Dion. ii, 80/75, notes the arrival of empty ships in harbours, whose crews had all perished, cf. 82–3/77 for visions of ships travelling and spreading plague, with Harper 2017, 225.

22.9 δευτέρῳ δὲ ἔτει ἐς Βυζάντιον μεσοῦντος τοῦ ἥρος ἀφίκετο, ἔνθα καὶ ἐμοὶ ἐπιδημεῖν τηνικαῦτα ξυνέβη, ‘In the second year, in the

middle of spring, it reached Byzantium, where it happened that I too was living at the time.’ Unlike Thucydides (ii.48.3), Procopius did not contract the disease himself. His indication that he was present in Constantinople in spring 542 is important, since it reduces the chances that he took part himself in the campaign of Belisarius just described, although, as Averil Cameron 1985, 164, argues, he could have witnessed the arrival of the plague before moving east. Alternatively, he may have returned to the city just as its impact started to be seriously felt. See ii.20–1g. On the other hand, the vividness of his description of the continuing efforts to combat the plague might imply a consistent presence.

The precise date of the plague’s arrival in Constantinople remains disputed. Just., *Edict* 7.pr. of 1 March 542 refers to the plague’s ravages throughout the empire, which may indicate that it had arrived in the capital; Kislinger and Stathakopoulos 1999, 89–93, do not draw this inference, but cf. Harper 2017, 226. Meier 2003a, 326 n.117, cf. idem 2016, 285, prefers an earlier date, arguing that the moving of the feast of the Virgin Mary known as the Hypapante from 14 February to 2 February was the consequence of a need to ward off the pandemic, but see Sessa 2019, 241 n.136, for scepticism on the link between this development and the plague. A date in March or April is more likely, cf. (e.g.) Zuckerman 2004, 207, Horden 2005, 135, although Procopius’ reference to the middle of spring strongly favours the latter or even May (so Bratton 1981, 117), cf. Leo Diac. iii.1 (35.1) with Talbot and Sullivan’s tr., 87 n.1. See further Stathakopoulos 2002, 102–3.

22.10 φάσματα δαιμόνων πολλοῖς ἐς πᾶσαν ἀνθρώπου ἰδέαν ὤφθη, ‘Apparitions of demons were seen by many in every human form.’ For the expression φάσματα δαιμόνων, *phasmata daimonōn*, which is relatively common, cf. Plut. *Numa* 8.3, Soz. *HE* vi.28.7. Th. Lect. 396 (p.111.3–4) refers to a φάσμα δαιμόνιον, *phasma daimonion*, which threatened the patriarch Gennadius. John of Ephesus in Ps.-Dion. ii, 82–5/77–9, reports apparitions yet more fantastic than those described by Procopius. As Meier 1999, 200, observes, Procopius elsewhere reports comparable supernatural visions, most notably at *Anecd.* 12.20–2, concerning the Emperor Justinian. See further Morony 2007, 78, Meier 2016, 290, on popular hysteria as a result of the pandemic, cf. idem 2020, 191–2; Horden 2005, 139, terms these visions ‘popular aetiology’. There is no obvious connection to Thucydides here, although Aerts 2003, 95, suggests that the passage is ‘inspired’ by Thucydides’ mention of Athenian suspicions of their wells being poisoned by the Spartans, ii.48.2. Nic. *Brev.* 67.19–21 describes how victims of a further round of plague in

Constantinople in 747 beheld apparitions striking them with swords before they succumbed to the disease. Treadgold 2013, 20 n.82, suggests that the source of Theophanes and Nicephorus may have been influenced by Procopius' account.

22.11 ἤνυσον μέντοι τὸ παράπαν οὐδέν, ἐπεὶ κὰν τοῖς ἱεροῖς οἱ πλεῖστοι καταφεύγοντες διεφθείροντο, 'But they accomplished nothing at all, since most of them died, even after they had taken refuge in churches.' Meier 1999, 206, correctly notes the parallel with Thuc. ii.47.4, where the Athenian historian drily reports that supplications, even at sanctuaries, proved ineffectual against the epidemic; there are no substantial verbal echoes, however. Leven 1995, 398–9, points out that *Mir. S. Dem.* i.3 (37–41) reports instances of people being saved by fleeing to churches during a later outbreak, cf. Stathakopoulos 2004, 153.

22.12 καίπερ ἀρασσομένων αὐτοῖς τῶν θυρῶν, 'even when their doors were being battered'. Cf. viii.20.51, part of Procopius' account of the ghostly Brittia: its denizens are summoned by the doors being battered. The passage has other verbal echoes of this section, e.g. the use of the verb ἀποστοματίζω, *apostomatizō*, 'I recite' at 22.11, cf. viii.20.57.

22.13 ὄψιν ὀνείρου, 'a vision in a dream'. A Herodotean touch, cf. e.g. i.38.1, 121. It is common in Procopius, e.g. at ii.26.12, *Anecd.* 6.8, 9, cf. Dahn 1865, 166, as also in Nonnus, e.g. *Dionysiaca* 35.250.

22.14 τοῖς δὲ πλείστοις οὔτε ὕπαρ οὔτε ὄναρ αἰσθομένοις τοῦ ἔσομένου εἶτα τῇ νόσῳ ξυνέβη ἀλῶναι. 'But the majority were seized by the disease without realising in a dream, either while asleep or in waking life, what was going to happen.' The contrast between two types of vision, one waking (ὕπαρ, *hypar*), one in sleep (ὄναρ, *onar*), goes back to Homer, *Od.* 19.547; cf. Zos. v.38.4, likewise concerning imminent death. Procopius now turns to a more sober description of the pandemic's symptoms.

22.15 ἐπύρεσσον ἄφνω, 'They would suddenly develop a fever'. On the symptoms described by Procopius see Bratton 1981, 117, noting a 2–6 day incubation period for the plague bacilli to multiply in the human host, leading to a serious fever, cf. Stathakopoulos 2004, 128–9, Sallares 2007, 233–45, Leven 2011, 219–20.

22.16 καὶ τὸ μὲν σῶμα οὔτε τι διήλλασσε τῆς προτέρας χροιάς οὔτε θερμὸν ἦν, 'Their body did not alter its previous hue, nor was it

hot.’ Thucydides likewise reports that the bodies of the epidemic’s victims in Athens did not outwardly seem hot, ii.49.5, cf. Meier 1999, 187, Aerts 2003, 95.

22.16 οὐ μὴν οὐδὲ φλόγωσις ἐπεγίνετο, ‘nor was there any burning’. Thuc. ii.49.2 reports that there was a φλόγωσις, *phlogōsis*, ‘burning’ in the eyes of those stricken. See Hornblower, *CT* i, 322, on the term.

22.16 ἀλλ’ οὕτως ἀβληχρός τις ἐξ ἀρχῆς τε καὶ ἄχρις ἑσπέρας ὁ πυρετὸς ἦν, ‘the fever was so slight from the beginning until the evening’. Manuscript G reads ἄχρι ἐς πέρας, *akhri es peras*, ‘until the end’, i.e. death, cf. (e.g.) Cyril of Alexandria, *Comm. in Isaiam prophetam*, PG 70.1232D. Procopius elsewhere uses ἐς πέρας in the sense ‘until the end’ or ‘until completion’, e.g. at ii.6.13, iv.8.16. There is something to be said for this alternative reading, given that the mention of evening here otherwise seems arbitrary: the fever could surely begin at any point of the day.

22.17 βουβῶν ἐπῆρτο, οὐκ ἐνταῦθα μόνον, ἔνθα καὶ τὸ τοῦ σώματος μόριον, ὃ δὴ τοῦ ἥτρου ἔνερθεν ἐστὶ, βουβῶν κέκληται, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῆς μάλης ἐντός, ἐνίοις δὲ καὶ παρὰ τὰ ὦτα καὶ ὅπου ποτὲ τῶν μηρῶν ἔτυχε. ‘A bubonic swelling developed, not only in the place where the part of the body under the stomach is also called the bubo (groin), but also within the armpit, and, in some, beside the ears and in places on the thighs.’ The description of the bubo, following a fever, is confirmed by other sources and allows the identification of the disease as *Yersinia pestis*. Cf. John of Ephesus in Ps.-Dion. ii, 95/87 with Morony 2007, 69–70, Leven 2011, 219–20, while Maddicott 2007, 173, discusses descriptions in western sources. On the incubation period see ii.22.15n.

Buboes represent swollen infected lymph nodes, usually in the groin, the armpit or the thigh; the first is by far the most common, which gave rise to the term, as Procopius indicates, since βουβῶν, *boubōn*, ‘bubo’ also means ‘groin’. See Bratton 1981, 117–18, Stathakopoulos 2004, 128–9, 135–7, Horden 2005, 144–6, Sallares 2007, 233–45, Harper 2017, 223.

22.18 ἢ ὅπη ποτὲ βουλομένῳ εἴη τῷ τὴν νόσον ἐπαγαγόντι, ‘Or whether it was according to the wishes of the bringer of the disease’. On the issue of the role of God see ii.22.2n.

22.19 ἐπεγίνετο γὰρ τοῖς μὲν κῶμα βαθύ, τοῖς δὲ παραφροσύνη ὀξεῖα, ‘For some were afflicted by a deep coma, others by violent frenzy.’

The nervous system is often affected by the onset of bubonic plague: see Bratton 1981, 118, Sallares 2007, 237, Leven 2011, 220, Harper 2017, 222. Critobulus, *Hist.* v.18 (206.14–16), reports comparable symptoms for an outbreak of the Black Death in Constantinople in 1466.

22.19 οἷς μὲν γὰρ τὸ κῶμα ἐπέκειτο, πάντων ἐπιλεησμένοι τῶν εἰωθότων σφίσιν ἐς αἰὶ καθεύδειν ἐδόκουν. ‘Those in a coma forgot all their usual habits and seemed as if they were sleeping forever.’ Dewing–Kaldellis render τῶν εἰωθότων σφίσιν, *tōn eiōthotōn sphisin*, ‘their (usual) habits’ as ‘their loved ones’ (vel sim.), but most scholars (e.g. Veh, 359, Craveri, 153, Brodka, 163) consider this to be a genitive plural neuter (rather than masculine) of the perfect participle of ἔθω, *ethō*, ‘I am accustomed’. Either interpretation is possible, cf. *LSJ*, 480. Thuc. ii.51.1 uses precisely this form of the participle in referring to the usual diseases that failed to strike Athens in the year that the epidemic arrived. At ii.49.8 Thucydides reports how some afflicted by the epidemic lost their memory and were unable to recognise their friends or even themselves.

22.21 οἱ μέντοι τῷ τῆς παραφροσύνης ἀλόντες κακῷ ἀγρυπνία τε καὶ φαντασία πολλῇ εἶχοντο, ‘But those afflicted by the frenzy were seized by terrible sleeplessness and multiple hallucinations.’ Bratton 1981, 118–19, cf. Atkinson 2002, 6, suggests that a shortage of air in the lungs of those affected by pneumonic plague might have induced hallucinations of the type described; on the other hand, those looking after them would almost certainly therefore have caught the disease from them in this case, contrary to what Procopius goes on to report. Sleeplessness, ἀγρυπνία, *agrypnia*, is also recorded in victims of the epidemic at Athens, Thuc. ii.49.6, cf. Critobulus, *Hist.* v.18 (206.16) on Constantinople in 1466.

Christoph Begass suggests (pers. comm.) that Procopius may be alluding critically to Justinian in the reference to ἀγρυπνία, *agrypnia*, ‘sleeplessness’ or ‘wakefulness’, an attribute on which the emperor prided himself, but here associated with hallucinations and the plague. Cf. *Anecd.* 13.28–33 with Letsios 1989b, 138–45, Meier 2003a, 620–3, Croke 2011.

22.22 καμάτῳ ἀπαύστῳ ἐχόμενοι, ‘were kept working continually’. Thuc. ii.49.5 mentions those τῇ δίψῃ ἀπαύστῳ ξυνεχόμενοι, *tē dipsē apaustō xynekhomenoi*, ‘afflicted by unceasing thirst’, cf. Duwe 1885, 15.

22.23 οὐτε γὰρ ἰατρῷ οὐτε ἰδιώτῃ μεταλαχεῖν τοῦ κακοῦ τοῦδε τῶν νοσοῦντων ἢ τῶν τετελευτηκότων ἀπτομένῳ ξυνέβη, ‘for it so

happened that no doctor or anyone else caught this disease from touching the sick or the dead'. A problematic claim. Bratton 1981, 119, argues that if the victim (of bubonic, rather than pneumonic, plague) did not carry fleas, then his or her attendants should not have contracted it, but cf. Sallares 2007, 243, who notes how Evagr. *HE* iv.29 (178–9) reports that while some did not catch the plague from frequenting victims, others did. See also Atkinson 2002, 6–7, Leven 2011, 223.

22.23 ἐπεὶ πολλοὶ μὲν αἰεὶ καὶ τοὺς οὐδὲν σφίσι προσήκοντας ἢ θάπτοντες ἢ θεραπεύοντες ταύτη δὴ τῇ ὑπουργίᾳ παρὰ δόξαν ἀντεῖχον, 'since many people throughout this time stood up remarkably to the service of burying or tending even people unrelated to them'. Procopius returns to the issue of burials in ii.23 below. Thuc. ii.49.6 uses similar language to refer to the surprising resistance of some plague victims, ἀλλ' ἀντεῖχε παρὰ δόξαν τῇ τάλαιπωρίᾳ, *all' anteikhe paradoxan tē talaipōria*, 'but it (the body) stood up remarkably to the hardship'; the term τάλαιπωρία is employed by Procopius immediately below. Cf. Duwe 1885, 15.

22.23 πολλοὶ δὲ τῆς νόσου ἀπροφασίστως αὐτοῖς ἐπιπεσούσης εὐθὺς ἔθνησκον, 'while many others died at once from an attack of the disease for no obvious cause'. Procopius offers more details on those who died almost instantaneously at 22.30–1, on which see the notes *ad loc.* John of Ephesus in Ps.-Dion. ii, 96–7/88, reports sudden deaths similar to those indicated by Procopius, cf. Morony 2007, 69 and n.82; see also Agath. v.10.4 with Sallares 2007, 235.

22.24 ἔκ τε γὰρ τῶν στρωμάτων ἐκπίπτοντας καὶ καλινδουμένους ἐς τὸ ἑδαφος ἀντικαθίστων αὖθις, 'They had to put them (their charges) back again when they had fallen out of bed and were rolling on the floor.' See ii.22.19n for the delirium that afflicted victims of the plague. The main verb, ἀντικαθίστων, *antikathistōn*, is the third person plural of the imperfect active of ἀντικαθιστά(ν)ω, *antikathista(n)ō*, 'I substitute', i.e. 'I put back', cf. *BDAG*, s.v.; the verb is rare in classical texts but more common in Byzantine, cf. *LBG*, s.v. and note *NovJ.* 16.1 (535, p.116.29). Bratton 1981, 119, gives parallels for the types of behaviour recounted here and below, brought on by the anguish of those struck by the pandemic.

22.25 ὕδωρ τε οἷς παρατύχοι, ἐμπεσεῖν ἤθελον οὐ δὴ οὐχ ὅσον τοῦ ποτοῦ ἐπιθυμία (ἐς γὰρ θάλασσαν οἱ πολλοὶ ὥρμηντο), ἀλλ'

αἴτιον ἦν μάλιστα ἢ τῶν φρενῶν νόσος. ‘Where there was water available, they wanted to throw themselves into it, not so much because they wanted to drink (for the majority jumped into the sea), but above all because of their mental illness.’ Although there is some uncertainty in the text here, cf. Haury’s apparatus, 254, the sense is clear. The fevers experienced by plague victims (cf. e.g. Stathakopoulos 2004, 128) explain the craving for water, cf. Thuc. ii.49.5, who reports how those suffering in the Athenian epidemic sought to hurl themselves into wells (using the expression σφᾶς αὐτοὺς ρίπτειν, *sphas autous rhiptein*, ‘to throw themselves’) as Procopius at 22.24. John of Ephesus in Ps.-Dion. ii, 108/97, reports a craze for breaking pitchers as a means to ward off the plague, another symptom of popular frenzy, cf. Morony 2007, 78, Leppin 2011, 209.

22.26 πολλοί τε ἀπορίᾳ τοῦ θεραπεύοντος διεφθάρησαν, ἢ λιμῷ πιεζόμενοι, ἢ ἀφ’ ὑψηλοῦ καθιέντες τὸ σῶμα, ‘Many died for want of attention, either overcome by hunger or else flinging themselves down from a height.’ Cf. ii.23.19n on food shortages. John of Ephesus in Ps.-Dion. ii, 101/92, reports the deserted state of even large houses, bereft of servants. Thuc. ii.51.2 signals the death of some through neglect while remarking that others died despite being cared for, cf. Aerts 2003, 95, who notes the verbal parallels with this passage.

22.27 ὁ τε βουβῶν ἐσφακέλιζε, ‘the bubo became gangrenous’. Procopius offers more details on the mortification of the buboes at 22.29. See Stathakopoulos 2004, 135, Horden 2005, 145, Harper 2017, 222, on the development of the bubo.

22.29 Ἀπορούμενοι γοῦν τῶν τινες ἰατρῶν τῇ τῶν συμπιπτόντων ἀγνοίᾳ τό τε τῆς νόσου κεφάλαιον ἐν τοῖς βουβῶσιν ἀποκεκρίσθαι οἰόμενοι, διερευνᾶσθαι τῶν τετελευτηκότων τὰ σώματα ἔγνωσαν. ‘Some doctors, in bewilderment because of their ignorance of what was happening, thought that the epicentre of the disease lay in the buboes, and they determined to examine the bodies of the dead.’ Thuc. ii.47.4 alludes to the bafflement of the doctors in similar terms but refers to no such experiments. As Sallares 2007, 234 notes, cf. Atkinson 2002, 5, Stathakopoulos 2004, 152, these doctors were acting in the spirit of the Hippocratic tradition in trying to elucidate the source of the pandemic, even if their discoveries do not appear to have allowed them to stem the plague’s advance. Kaldellis 2007b, 14, plausibly suggests that Procopius obtained his information from the doctors himself.

22.29 καὶ διελόντες τῶν βουβώνων τινὰς ἄνθρακος δεινὸν τι χρῆμα ἐμπεφυκὸς εὖρον. ‘After opening some of the buboes they discovered a remarkable sort of carbuncle that had grown inside them.’ The carbuncles – the Greek term is ἄνθραξ, *anthrax*, also applied to charcoal – derive their name from the fact that the swollen lymph nodes had turned dark as a result of haemorrhaging. They are, as the doctors inferred, a characteristic symptom of the disease. See Bratton 1981, 120, Atkinson 2002, 5, Horden 2005, 145.

22.30 ἔθνησκον δὲ οἱ μὲν αὐτίκα, οἱ δὲ ἡμέραις πολλαῖς ὕστερον, ‘Some of the victims died immediately, others many days later.’ Death usually ensues three to five days after the appearance of buboes: see Stathakopoulos 2004, 129, Harper 2017, 222.

22.30 τισὶ τε φλυκταίναις μελαίναις, ὅσον φακοῦ μέγεθος, ἐξήνθει τὸ σῶμα, οἱ οὐδὲ μίαν ἐπεβίων ἡμέραν, ἀλλ’ εὐθυωρὸν ἅπαντες ἔθνησκον. ‘And in some the body erupted in black blisters the size of a lentil; these did not live even for one day, but all died the very same hour.’ These blisters and the swiftness of death imply the action of the septicaemic form of the plague, so Horden 2005, 146, Sallares 2007, 235, cf. Allen 1979, 8–9. Bratton 1981, 122, suggests rather vesicular or carbuncular plague, a rare but lethal form of the disease. Thuc. ii.47.5 notes the presence of blisters on Athenians who had contracted the epidemic in similar terms; John of Ephesus at Ps.-Dion. ii, 96/88, also reports the appearance of spots on the skin, followed by almost instantaneous death, cf. Harper 2017, 223.

22.31 πολλοὺς δὲ καὶ τις αὐτόματος αἵματος ἐπιγινόμενος ἔμετος εὐθύς διεχρήσατο, ‘Many were overtaken by a spontaneous vomiting of blood that caused their immediate death.’ Sallares 2007, 242, notes that this is a typical symptom of pneumonic plague; it is uncertain how heavy a death toll the pneumonic variant of the bubonic plague took, cf. Bratton 1981, 123–4, Horden 2005, 146. Allen 1979, 9, suggests alternatively that the bubonic plague might have infected the digestive system. Harper 2017, 222, points out that bloody vomiting or sputum might arise from either the pneumonic or the septicaemic form of the plague; he also distinguishes between primary versions of these forms, in which there are no signs of the bubonic plague such as buboes, and the secondary versions, which follow on from the infection of the lymphatic system. It is not clear which version Procopius is describing, so Bratton 1981, 122.

22.32 ἐκεῖνο μέντοι ἀποφήνασθαι ἔχω, ‘I can affirm this, however’. Procopius insists again on the incomprehensibility of the plague: it defies human understanding by its randomness. Cf. ii.22.2n. Meier 1999, 387, notes the contrast with Thuc. ii.51.4, who chooses rather to highlight the despair of the stricken population. Thuc. ii.51.2 emphasises, like Procopius, the unpredictable nature of the disease.

22.34 ἀμελούμενοί τε πολλοὶ ἔθνησκον, πολλοὶ δὲ παρὰ λόγον ἐσώζοντο, ‘Many died if they were neglected, but many were saved contrary to all expectation.’ Cf. Thuc. ii.51.2 who reports that many died who were neglected, but also others who were looked after. On those lacking any care in Constantinople see also ii.22.26.

22.34 καὶ τὸ ξύμπαν εἶπεῖν οὐδεμία μηχανὴ ἀνθρώπῳ ἐς τὴν σωτηρίαν ἐξεύρητο, ‘and to sum it all up, no path to safety was discovered by man’. A distant echo of Thuc. ii.47.4, referring to no human way to stem the disease being found, cf. Meier 1999, 207. Atkinson 2002, 5, rightly emphasises that Procopius’ observations on the symptoms of the plague and whom it struck reflect a careful observation, even if it yielded no satisfactory result.

22.35 καὶ γυναιξὶ δὲ ὅσαι ἐκύουν προὔπτως ἐγίνετο τῇ νόσῳ ἀλικομέναις ὁ θάνατος. ‘Women who caught the disease while they were pregnant were sure of death.’ Pregnant women were weaker and hence more likely to succumb; remaining at home may also have increased exposure to rats and fleas. See Bratton 1981, 120, Sallares 2007, 275.

22.35 τρεῖς μέντοι λεχοῦς, ‘three women, however, giving birth’. The form λεχοῦς, *lekhouś*, is the accusative plural of λεχώ, *lekhō*, ‘woman giving birth’, cf. *LSJ*, s.v.

22.37 ὅσοις μὲν οὖν μείζων τε ὁ βουβῶν ἦρετο καὶ ἐς πῦον ἀφῆκτο, τούτοις δὴ περιεῖναι τῆς νόσου ἀπαλλασσομένοις ξυνέβαινεν, ‘Those in whom the bubo grew and came to the stage of discharge recovered from the disease and survived.’ Survival as a consequence of suppuration of the bubo is well attested for the bubonic plague: see Sallares 2007, 237–8, cf. Bratton 1981, 121, Harper 2017, 223.

22.38 τισὶ δὲ αὐτῶν καὶ τὸν μῆρὸν ἀποξηρανθῆναι ξυνέβη, ἐφ’ οὗ ὁ βουβῶν ἐπαρθεῖς ὡς ἥκιστα ἔμπυος γέγονεν. ‘In some cases it

happened that the thigh withered, in which case the bubo swelled, but did not suppurate at all.’ On these consequences of the pandemic see Bratton 1981, 121, arguing that they were due to tissue destruction from the disease; see also Sallares 2007, 238.

22.39 ἄλλοις τε οὐκ ἐπ’ ἀκεραίῳ τῇ γλώσση περιγενέσθαι τετύχηκεν. ‘Others survived, but with their tongue damaged.’ Bratton 1981, 122, suggests that these problems arose from neurological or motor damage caused by the plague or perhaps even brain damage, cf. Sallares 2007, 238.

23.1 Ἡ μὲν οὖν νόσος ἐν Βυζαντίῳ ἐς τέσσαρας διῆλθε μῆνας, ἤκμασε δὲ ἐν τρισὶ μάλιστα, ‘The plague lasted in Byzantium for four months and was at its peak for about three.’ See ii.22.9n for the date at which the plague reached Constantinople in spring 542. The table in Stathakopoulos 2004, 142, shows a peak in cases from April to August, which coincides well with Procopius’ figures here, cf. ii.22.3n on the seasonality of the pandemic. Mal. 18.92 refers to a duration of two months in Constantinople, while Geo. Mon. 641.16–17 adds that the months were July and August, cf. Sym. Mag. *Chr.* 104.8 (141.28–9), Cedr. 408.1.19–20 (676.7–8).

Little 2007, 11, cf. Harper 2017, 225, notes that in 588 the plague struck Marseilles for two months, as Greg. Tur. *Hist. Franc.* ix.22 reports, while Ps.-Dion. ii 119/107 refers to a three-month visitation of the pandemic at Amida in 558/9, cf. Morony 2007, 64, where 30,000 people are said to have died.

23.2 μετὰ δὲ ἐς πεντακισχιλίους ἡμέρας ἐκάστη ἐξικνεῖτο τὸ τῶν νεκρῶν μέτρον, καὶ αὖ πάλιν ἐς μυρίους τε καὶ τούτων ἔτι πλείους ἦλθε. ‘And finally the number of dead reached 5000 a day, and then attained 10,000 and even more than this.’ John of Ephesus in Ps.-Dion. ii 94–5/86–7 offers similarly high figures, cf. Morony 2007, 72, which are sometimes taken at face value, e.g. by Harper 2017, 226, who argues for a mortality rate of some 50 per cent, cf. Haldon et al. 2018 (3), 3–4, for criticisms. Allen 1979, 10–11, also favours accepting the figures, but see Bratton 1981, 174–9, arguing for a mortality rate of only 20 per cent, cf. Stathakopoulos 2004, 139–41, Wickham 2006, 548–9, Sessa 2019, 344–7, for measured assessments of the pandemic’s impact; see also Mordechai and Eisenberg 2019b, 173–4. Meier 2016, 277, cf. Leven 2011, 228–30, plausibly argues that both John of Ephesus’ and Procopius’ figures are

designed to give an order of magnitude and should not be accepted at face value. The population of Constantinople is generally estimated at between 400,000 and 500,000, so (e.g.) Mango 1990, 51, Harper 2017, 226. Zuckerman 2004, 205–12, argues persuasively, however, for a 33 per cent mortality rate in a population of 750,000, accepting John's figure of 230,000 casualties; cf. Wickham 2006, 73, putting the city's population between half a million and a million. On the basis of Egyptian exports of grain, Zuckerman shows that over the following years the population steadily recovered.

23.3 οὐς δὴ καὶ ἐς ἀλλοτρίας θήκας ἐρρίπτουν ἢ λανθάνοντες ἢ βιαζόμενοι, 'They would throw the dead, either by stealth or by force, into the graves of others.' Thuc. ii.52.4 describes how some dumped their dead on others' funeral pyres, cf. Meier 1999, 187. While the classical Athenians cremated their dead, in sixth-century Constantinople inhumation was the norm.

23.3 ἔπειτα δὲ πάντα ἐν ἅπασι ξυνεταράχθη, 'but later everything was in confusion everywhere'. Thuc. ii.52.4 uses the same form of the same verb for the confusion that arose in Athens from the difficulties in disposing of the dead.

23.4 πολλαὶ τε οἰκίαι παντάπασιν ἔρημοι ἀνθρώπων ἐγένοντο, 'and many households were emptied of people altogether.' John of Ephesus in Ps.-Dion. ii, 80/74, 101/92, makes similar observations, reporting empty houses and the rich deprived of their servants, cf. Morony 2007, 79–80. See also Sallares 2007, 276, noting parallel cases in Greg. Tur., *Hist. Franc.* ix.22, cf. Little 2007, 11, and in Evagr. *HE* iv.29 (177.20–1). Cf. also Thuc. ii.51.5 on the emptying of houses, expressed similarly.

23.5 ἔς τε βασιλέα ἢ τοῦ πράγματος πρόνοια, ὥς τὸ εἶκος, ἦλθε, 'Provision for the situation naturally fell to the emperor.' Procopius refers to the *pronoia* of Justinian here, his forethought or solicitude, cf. Bartusis 2013, 14–16, on the term, concentrating, however, on its later evolution. Cf. Eunap. frg.37.28 (Julian's forethought), Proc. *Aed.* ii.11.4, v.7.15. The section that follows, detailing the measures taken to combat the problem of burying bodies, presents a stark contrast to the chaos that ensued in Athens (reported by Thuc. ii.52), so rightly Meier 1999, 187–8, 200–1,

idem 2016, 178 n.59, although he considers Procopius to present too rosy a picture; John of Ephesus in Ps.-Dion. ii, 96–101/87–93, offers a bleaker description. At 23.16 Procopius appears to make a more hostile allusion to the emperor, cf. the note *ad loc.*

23.6 στρατιώτας οὖν ἐκ παλατίου καὶ χρήματα νείμας Θεόδωρον ἐκέλευε τοῦ ἔργου τούτου ἐπιμελεῖσθαι, ὃς δὴ ἀποκρίσεσι ταῖς βασιλικαῖς ἐφειστήκει, ‘So he allotted soldiers from the palace and money for the task and told Theodore to look after it, the man in charge of the imperial responses.’ Procopius proceeds to explain the task of the *referendarii*, a subject he also discusses at *Anecd.* 14.11–12, where he complains of their abuse of power in representing the interests of litigants at court, cf. 14.16–23, 17.32, on the power wielded by the corrupt *referendarius* Leo (with *PLRE* iii, Leo 1). They were intermediaries, as Procopius states, in presenting petitions to the emperor and in delivering his response. *NovJ.* 10 (535) reduced their number from fourteen to eight; only two drew a salary, recruited from the *tribuni notarii*. See Bury 1910, 25–9, Jones 1964, 575 and vol.3, 166 n.24, Delmaire 1995, 55–6, Atkinson 2002, 11.

On Theodore see *PLRE* iii, Theodorus 10; he is attested in post already in 536. His role is described also by John of Ephesus in Ps.-Dion. ii, 101–2/91–2. His appointment is *RKOR* 1269. Given that he was not an especially high-ranking official, Justinian might have entrusted him with this task because of his trustworthiness and piety; if he is identified with a Theodore, the nephew of John the Hesychast (Cyr. Scyth. *V. Ioannes Hes.* 3 [203.8–15], cf. *PLRE* ii, Theodorus 58), who was renowned in the city for his good works, as *PLRE* iii, Theodorus 10, tentatively suggests, the appointment becomes more explicable. The fact that Cyril, writing in the 550s, cf. Binns 1996, 33–5, mentions that Theodore was ‘now’ (203.12) held in high esteem strengthens the probability of the identification. Both Procopius (23.9) and John of Ephesus report his actions approvingly.

23.9 ἐπεὶ δὲ τὰς θήκας ἀπάσας, αἱ πρότερον ἦσαν, ἐμπίπλασθαι τῶν νεκρῶν ἔτυχεν, οἱ δὲ ὀρύσσοντες ἅπαντα ἐφεξῆς τὰ ἀμφὶ τὴν πόλιν χωρία, ‘After all the tombs that were there originally had been filled with the corpses, they dug up all the areas around the city in turn.’ Cf. John of Ephesus in Ps.-Dion. ii, 100/91, on the digging of mass graves beyond the city walls; bodies were generally buried outside the walls of cities in this period, cf. Ps.-Dion. ii, 94–5/87, on the tallying of corpses as

they left the city gates (with Morony 2007, 74–5). At Constantinople, however, it appears to have been sufficient to bury bodies outside the Constantinian walls, i.e. the walls built by Constantine in the early fourth century, so that inhumation within the Theodosian walls was permitted. See Dagron 1977, 15–16, idem 1991, 157 and n.11, Mango 1990, 47–8 and cf. *NovJ.* 59.5 (537).

23.9 ἔπειτα δὲ οἱ τὰς κατώρυχας ταύτας ποιοῦμενοι πρὸς τῶν ἀποθνησκόντων τὸ μέτρον οὐκέτι ἀντέχοντες ἐς τοὺς πύργους τοῦ περιβόλου ἀνέβαινον, ὃς ἐν Συκαῖς ἐστί. ‘But later the men digging the trenches could not keep up with the number of the dead and went up onto the towers on the circuit walls at Sycae.’ On those involved in digging tombs and in funerals see Dagron 1991, 155–61, Bond 2013, esp.149: Justinian had made efforts in the 530s to regulate practices and costs. As John of Ephesus in Ps.-Dion. ii, 100/91, makes clear, Theodore was obliged to recruit further grave-diggers to deal with the huge accumulation of bodies. He also mentions the preparation of 600 extra stretchers or litters, cf. Geo. Mon. 641.5–8, Cedr. 416.1.14–16 (676.1–3), who give a figure of 1000, cf. Dagron 1991, 169 n.73.

Sycae lies across the Golden Horn from Constantinople, the site of later Galata; it was sufficiently substantial by this point to be endowed with city walls and to have been renamed Justinianopolis in 528, cf. Mango 1996, 364. It was from here that the two partisans had escaped following their bungled execution in January 532, cf. i.24.7n above; it was already a common burial ground, cf. Dagron 1977, 16. John of Ephesus in Ps.-Dion. ii, 100–1/91–2, also describes Theodore’s organisation of burials in Sycae, although he refers to mass grave pits rather than to the deposition of bodies in towers. It is likely that he had recourse to both measures. See Janin 1964, 56–7, 466–7, Stathakopoulos 2004, 148–9, Morony 2007, 74–5, Harper 2017, 227.

23.11 καὶ ἀπ’ αὐτοῦ πνεῦμα δυσῶδες ἐς τὴν πόλιν ἰὼν ἔτι μᾶλλον ἐλύπει τοὺς ταύτῃ ἀνθρώπους, ἄλλως τε ἢν καὶ ἀνεμός τις ἐκεῖθεν ἐπίφορος ἐπιπνεύσειε. ‘As a result a dreadful stench came over the city and did still more harm to the people there, especially if a carrying wind blew from that direction.’ Thuc. ii.49.2 also refers to a πνεῦμα δυσῶδες, *pneuma dysōdes*, ‘malodorous breath’ or ‘stench’, but in the context of the breath of those suffering from the epidemic. On Procopius’ use of ἦν, *ēn*, ‘if’, and the optative see ii.19.38n. Leven 2011, 223–4, unnecessarily argues

that the stench referred to is more notional than real, connected to ancient ideas of noxious vapours.

23.12 οὐτε γὰρ παραπεμπόμενοι ἢ νενόμισται οἱ νεκροὶ ἐκομίζοντο οὐτε καταψαλλόμενοι ἤπερ εἰώθει, ‘For the dead were not carried with the customary escort, nor to the sound of the usual music.’ One could translate the verb νενόμισται, *nenomistai*, as ‘laid down by law’ cf. *NovJ.* 59 (537), which prescribes the regulations and charges for burials. See *NovJ.* 59.3–4 for details on the rates for mourners and women who chant in the funeral cortège, cf. Dagron 1991, 159–61. On funerary practices more generally see Kyriakakis 1974, Rebillard 2009, 129–34.

This phrase is echoed by *Meg. Chr.* 9.14–15, cf. Greatrex (forthcoming).

23.12 ἀλλ’ ἱκανὸν ἦν, εἰ φέρων τις ἐπὶ τῶν ὤμων τῶν τετελευτηκότων τινὰ ἔς τε τῆς πόλεως τὰ ἐπιθαλάσσια ἐλθὼν ἔρριπεν, ‘rather, it was enough if someone carried a dead body on his shoulders and threw it down when he came to the coastal part of the city’. John of Ephesus in *Ps.-Dion.* ii, 97–9/88–91, describes the ferrying of corpses out to sea, cf. Morony 2007, 74, noting other Syriac sources.

23.13 τότε καὶ τοῦ δήμου ὅσοι στασιῶται πρότερον ἦσαν, ἔχθους τοῦ ἐς ἀλλήλους ἀφέμενοι, ‘Then even those of the populace that had earlier been partisans forgot their mutual hatred.’ On the partisans, whose lawlessness and rivalries are harshly condemned by Procopius, see i.24.2–6n. As Meier 1999, 188–9, notes, Procopius consciously differs from Thuc. ii.53 in these sections, emphasising the solidarity, albeit temporary, of the citizens of Constantinople, in contrast to the chaos that erupted in Athens. See also Stathakopoulos 2004, 152–3.

23.14 οὐ τὴν σωφροσύνην μεταμαθόντες οὐδὲ τῆς ἀρετῆς ἐρασταὶ τινες ἐκ τοῦ αἰφνιδίου γεγενημένοι, ‘not because they had now learned prudence, or because they had suddenly become lovers of virtue’. Joh. Cantac. iv.8 (vol.3, p.52.7–11) also describes a change for the better in society as a result of the plague of his day, referring to the turning towards σωφρονισμός, *sōphronismos*, ‘moderation’ (cf. Procopius’ σωφροσύνη, *sōphrosynē*, ‘prudence’), about which he is more positive than Procopius. The expression τῆς ἀρετῆς ἐρασταί, *tēs aretēs erastai*, ‘lovers of virtue’ is common in Christian writers, e.g. Thdrt. *Interpretatio in Psalmos*, PG 80.1400A.

23.15 ἀνάγκη, ὡς τὸ εἰκὸς, πάσῃ τὴν ἐπιείκειαν ἐπὶ καιροῦ μετεμάνθανον. ‘(They) were compelled, as was only to be expected, to learn moderation for a time.’ The sense of the phrase ἐπὶ καιροῦ, *epi kairou*, is not entirely certain. We have followed Dewing here, cf. Veh, 469, Brodka, 166, but García Romero, 268, prefers another possibility, ‘on the spur of the moment’, cf. *LSJ*, 859, IIIb. At iii.7.8, v.7.24, viii.30.2, *Aed.* i.ii.27, Procopius uses it in the sense that we have attributed to it here, but at *Anecd.* 8.24, cf. *Wars* vi.20.26, the other meaning seems more plausible. In other authors, the latter meaning is more common. See also Andres 2017, 76–7.

23.16 ἀγχίστροφον αὐθις τῆς γνώμης τὴν μεταβολὴν ἐπὶ τὰ χεῖρω πεποιημένοι, ‘they abruptly reverted again and changed for the worse’. Thuc. ii.53.1 similarly reports an abrupt change for the worse in social attitudes as a consequence of the epidemic. Cf. Meier 1999, 188. Kaldellis 2007b, 14–15, interprets Procopius’ reference to the temporary nature of the improvement in popular morality as an implicit rejection of Christian narratives of God using the plague to curb vice.

23.16 ἐπεὶ καὶ ἀπισχυρισάμενος ἂν τις οὐ τὰ ψευδῇ εἴποι ὡς ἡ νόσος ἦδε εἴτε τύχῃ τινὶ εἴτε προνοίᾳ ἐς τὸ ἀκριβὲς ἀπολεξαμένη τοὺς πονηροτάτους ἀφῆκεν, ‘It would not then be a lie to assert that this disease, whether by chance or by foresight, carefully selected the most wicked and spared them.’ Haury 1936, cf. idem 1937, 1–2, Leven 1995, 400, takes this assertion as reflecting what is described in *Anecd.* where, as he notes, the πονηρότατοι, *ponērotatoi*, ‘the most wicked’, feature extensively. There Justinian, Theodora, Belisarius and Antonina are all so portrayed; and all survived the plague. Haury 1937, 1–2, points to *Anecd.* 8.27, where Procopius claims that ‘nature’ concentrated all possible bad traits in the emperor, cf. idem 1936, 2–3, on *Anecd.* 6.5–9. Meier 1999, 188 n.35, downplays the negative remarks of this section, but cf. idem 2003a, 338.

23.16 ἀλλὰ ταῦτα μὲν τῷ ὑστέρω ἀποδεδεικται χρόνῳ, ‘though this only became clear later.’ An indication, perhaps, that these bitter remarks were added some time after the plague, around the time of the composition of the *Anecdota*, so Haury 1936, 3, drawing attention to the use of the perfect tense.

23.17 ἀλλ’ οἱκοι καθήμενοι ἅπαντες, ὅσοις ξυνέβαινε τὸ σῶμα ἔρρῳσθαι, ‘all those who were healthy sat at home’. Stathakopoulos

2007, 111–12, finds Procopius' assertion unlikely: flight, he argues, is a more natural reaction, and is attested in other cases, e.g. by Evagr. *HE* iv.29 (179.1–2), cf. Stathakopoulos 2004, 147. But as Leven 2011, 226–7, points out, flight served little purpose, since the plague seemed to catch up with people regardless of their location. The description of life in the city, on the other hand, is vivid and likely to be based on personal experience, cf. ii.22.9n with Leppin 2011, 211.

23.18 ἐργασία τε ζύμπασα ἤργει καὶ τὰς τέχνας οἱ τεχνῖται μεθῆκαν ἀπάσας, ἔργα τε ἄλλα ὅσα δὴ ἕκαστοι ἐν χερσὶν εἶχον. 'All work was stopped; craftsmen abandoned all their crafts and every task that any man had in hand.' The economy was thus brought to a standstill, cf. John of Ephesus in Ps.-Dion. ii, 97/88, at least temporarily. In the longer term, labour shortages led to demands for higher wages, which the imperial government struggled to curb. See Sarris 2002, 177–8 (= 2007, 129–31), Stathakopoulos 2004, 164, Morony 2007, 79, cf. Meier 2016, 279–81.

23.19 ἐν πόλει γοῦν ἀγαθοῖς ἅπασιν ἀτεχνῶς εὐθηνούση λιμός τις ἀκριβῆς ἐπεκώμαζεν. 'In a city with a remarkable abundance of good things a harsh famine ran riot.' John of Ephesus in Ps.-Dion. ii, 97/88, confirms the shortage of food as a result of the shutting down of commercial life, cf. Stathakopoulos 2004, 164, idem 2007, 115–16, citing comparable cases of famine following the plague. Later, however, grain imports from Egypt led to a surplus in the city because of the dramatic depopulation, which was sold off by the praetorian prefect Peter Barsymes: see Zuckerman 2004, 207–9.

23.20 καὶ τὸ ζύμπαν εἶπεῖν, χλαμύδα οὐκ ἦν ἐνδιδυσκόμενόν τινα ἐν Βυζαντίῳ τὸ παράπαν ἰδεῖν, 'To sum it all up, it was quite impossible to see anyone dressed in a *chlamys* in Byzantium.' The *chlamys* was a long cloak, usually of wool, that was worn by Roman officials in Late Antiquity, fastened at the shoulder by a brooch. Justinian and his ministers are depicted in such robes on the mosaic of San Vitale, Ravenna. See *ODLA*, s.v. Procopius is drawing attention to the suspension of all court activity, cf. Harper 2017, 227.

23.20 ἄλλως τε ἡνίκα βασιλεῖ νοσῆσαι ξυνέβη (καὶ αὐτῷ γὰρ ξυνέπεσε βουβῶνα ἐπῆρθαι), 'especially when the emperor fell ill (for he too had a bubonic swelling)'. At *Anecd.* 4.1 Procopius describes the emperor as having been very severely ill from the plague, which gave rise to rumours of his demise, cf. ii.22–3g and Haury 1936, 2 and n.1. Pottier

2010 has suggested that certain coins from the emperor's fifteenth and sixteenth regnal years feature a bubo on his neck, perhaps in an effort to show solidarity with the sufferings of the population, but this is doubted by Meier 2016, 286 n.III, who notes other irregularities in the depiction of the emperor on coins.

23.20 ἱμάτια ἐν ἰδιωτῶν λόγῳ ἅπαντες ἀμπεχόμενοι ἡσυχῇ ἔμενον, 'everyone was wearing clothes befitting private citizens and staying quietly at home'. The plural form ἱμάτια, *himatia*, of the noun ἱμάτιον, *himation*, can mean just 'clothes', as is likely to be the case here, cf. Dewing–Kaldellis, 124; the reference must be to ordinary, non-formal attire, in contrast to the *chlamys* worn at court. The word can also refer to the Latin *pallium*, the cloak favoured by the philosopher, cf. ODLA, s.v., Cleland et al. 2007, 92.

23.21 ἐπέσκηψε δὲ καὶ ἐς τὴν Περσῶν γῆν καὶ ἐς βαρβάρους τοὺς ἄλλους ἅπαντας. 'It (the plague) also attacked Persian territory and all the other barbarians.' See ii.22–3h on the wide reach of the plague, spreading throughout western Europe and beyond, cf. Meier 2016, 274, for a summary. At 24.5 and 8 below Procopius mentions again the arrival of plague on Persian territory, cf. Ps.-Zach. x.9, *Chr. Seert* ii.42, PO 7 (1911), 183, with Morony 2007, 63–4. Khusro hoped that in Atropatene (Azerbaijan) he would be able to avoid the ravages of the disease, but was disappointed, cf. Kislinger and Stathakopoulos 1999, 94. As noted at ii.22–3h, the fact that the pandemic entered Persia from Roman territory is significant when considering its origins, cf. Sarris 2002, 171 (= 2007, 122).

ii.24–5 The disastrous Roman invasion of Persarmenia (542)

History

Notwithstanding the ravages of the plague, Justinian attempted to avenge Roman losses of the previous years by an ambitious and large-scale invasion of Persarmenia. The time seemed ripe: Khusro and his army were suffering in their turn from the pandemic, while one of Khusro's sons had risen against him, an episode that Procopius narrates at greater length at viii.10.8–22. Moreover, as he noted at 21.34 (cf. the note *ad loc.*), the Armenians who had urged Khusro to take control of their territory had now returned to their earlier allegiance. A plethora of Roman commanders were able to muster 30,000 men with which they drove

forward towards the Persarmenian capital at Dvin (Dubios). But they were outwitted by the Persian commander Nabedes and heavily defeated at Anglon *en route*; the Roman troops were poorly led and quick to flee, Procopius reports. These events took place later in 542, not 543, as Kislinger and Stathakopoulos have established; they follow on naturally from the defection of Bassaces to the Romans reported at 21.34. For geographical orientation see figs. 6 and 25, pp. 131 and 417.

Bibliography: Kislinger and Stathakopoulos 1999, 94–5, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 116, Trombley 2005, 404–12. Meier 2003a, 320 n.84, argues against dating these events to 542 rather than 543. Whitby 2021a re-states the case for the traditional dating, placing this campaign in 543, but see Greatrex 2021d for a detailed refutation.

Historiography

As noted at ii.22.1n, the narrative on the plague operates as a caesura in Procopius' work. Following Belisarius' departure, Roman fortunes take a turn for the worse owing to the lack of collaboration among the numerous commanders stationed in the East. Procopius describes an analogous situation in Italy at vii.1.23–4, 2.14, 3.1–22: an array of officers prove unwilling to gather their forces, save when the emperor insists on it, and then fail to follow through on their operations, a pattern often repeated subsequently.

Bibliography: Kislinger and Stathakopoulos 1999, 95, Rance 2019, 404 and n.74 (on the inadequacy of Belisarius' successors).

24.1 Ἐτύχχανε δὲ ὁ Χοσρόης ἐξ Ἀσσυρίων ἐς χωρίον Ἀδαρβιγάνων ἦκων πρὸς βορρᾶν ἄνεμον, 'It so happened that Khusro had come north from Assyria to a place called Adarbiganon.' Procopius' Adarbiganon is a rendering of the Persian Ādurbādagān, also referred to as Media Atropatene, the region east of Persarmenia and west of the Caspian Sea. He seems to suppose that Adarbiganon is a place rather than a region; as emerges from the next section, he is referring to the site of the holy fire temple of Ādur Gušnasp (on which see 24.2). See K. Schippmann, *EIr* iii (1987), 'Azerbaijan, iii. Pre-Islamic history', 224, Börm 2007, 183, 205, idem 2021, 328–9. On Procopius' Assyria see ii.19.17n.

24.2 τὸ μέγα πυρεῖον ἐνταῦθ' ἐστίν, ὃ σέβονται Πέρσαι θεῶν μάλιστα. 'The big fire temple is there, which the Persians honour most

of all gods.’ Procopius refers to the imposing remains to be found today at Takht-i Suleyman, where one of the most important Zoroastrian fire temples, Ādur Gušnasp, ‘The fire of the stallion’, was situated. It is the best known of the great fires revered in Antiquity and was associated with the warrior class. It was particularly favoured by the Sasanian kings, who regularly went there following their coronation: see Schippmann 1971, 309–57, M. Boyce, *EIr* i (1983), ‘Ādur Gušnasp’, 475–6, D. Huff, ‘Takht-e Solaymān’, *EIr* (2002), Börm 2007, 183, Huff 2008, Canepa 2013, idem 2018, 286–8, Börm 2021, 329. *ODLA*, 1449–50, offers a good synthesis, cf. Huff 2000, Boyce 2001, 123–5. Khusrō had worshipped at the temple before undertaking his invasion in 540 according to Firdausi, *Shāhnāmah*, vi, 220–3, and later deposited substantial quantities of booty from his campaign there, 360–1. See ii.5–13g. Archaeological evidence confirms its development in the sixth century, cf. Canepa 2013, 84, who notes that this is the first literary reference to the temple. It was later stormed and demolished by Heraclius’ forces in 624, Theoph. 307–8 (tr. in Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 200), cf. Howard-Johnston 1999, 17.

The term πυρεῖον, *pyreion*, is used also by Thdrt. *HE* v.41.1 for a fire-temple (cf. *BDAG*, s.v.), explaining that this is what the Persians call it.

24.2 οὗ δὴ τὸ πῦρ ἄσβεστον φυλάσσοντες μάγοι τὰ τε ἄλλα ἐς τὸ ἀκριβὲς ἐξοσιοῦνται, ‘Magi tend the unquenched fire there and scrupulously perform the other rites.’ Zoroastrian fire-worship was well known in the Graeco-Roman world, cf. e.g. Börm 2007, 183–4; fire-altars were depicted on Sasanian coins. See also Duchesne-Guillemin 1983, 904–6, M. Boyce, *EIr* iii (1987), ‘Ātaškada’, 9–10, Kaim 2004, Dignas and Winter 2007, 213–14, Stewart and Mistree 2013, 202–4, on fire-temples generally. Strabo 15.3.15 describes in similar terms how magi in Cappadocia tended to the unquenched fire there. For some discussion of the rites that may have been practised here see Jackson Bonner 2011, 50–2 (= idem 2012, 46–7); on the form of two fire-temples that have been discovered see the useful summary in Huff 2000 (where pl.119 shows a fire-altar in the second temple), cf. idem 2008. On the role of the magi see Börm 2007, 189.

The middle form of the verb ἐξοσιόω, *exosioō*, is common in Procopius’ work, where it generally has the sense of observing rites, cf. ii.22.11 above, iii.21.18, v.13.10 and elsewhere; it is rare in other authors. Agath. ii.25.1, describing the Persians’ fire-worship, echoes Procopius, cf. Averil Cameron 1969–70, 99.

24.2 τοῦτό ἐστι τὸ πῦρ, ὅπερ Ἑστίαν ἐκάλουν τε καὶ ἐσέβοντο ἐν τοῖς ἄνω χρόνοις Ῥωμαῖοι. ‘This is the fire that the Romans of former times called Hestia and used to worship.’ Dion. Hal. 1.76.3, 3.67.2 reports how the Vestal Virgins in Rome likewise ensured that the sacred fire in Rome was never extinguished; Procopius naturally uses the Greek name, Hestia, of the Roman goddess Vesta. The Vestal Virgins existed in Rome until the late fourth century, cf. *ODLA*, s.v. See Börm 2007, 179, on this *interpretatio Graeca*. Kaldellis 2010b, 265, points out that Procopius’ treatment of Persian religion here is far less hostile than that of Agath. ii.23.

24.3 ἐνταῦθα σταλείς τις ἐκ Βυζαντίου παρὰ Χοσρόην ἀπήγγελλε Κωνσταντιανόν τε καὶ Σέργιον πρέσβεις ἐς αὐτὸν ἐπὶ τῇ συμβάσει αὐτίκα δὴ μάλα ἀφίξεσθαι. ‘There a man who had been sent from Byzantium announced to Khusro that Constantianus and Sergius would soon reach him as envoys about the agreement.’ On the two ambassadors see *PLRE* iii, Constantianus 1, Sergius 3, although it misdates their mission to 543, cf. ii.24–5h; likewise *RKOR* 1279 in registering their mission. Both continued to be involved in events in the East, as Procopius reports subsequently. They were fulfilling the mission promised by Belisarius at ii.21.25, cf. also ii.26.46n.

24.3–10 is quoted in *Exc. de leg. Rom.* 102.18–103.11.

24.3 ἦσθιν δὲ τῷ ἄνδρῃ τούτῳ ῥήτορέ τε ἄμφω καὶ ξυνετὼ ἐς τὰ μάλιστα, ‘These two men were both rhetors, very intelligent men.’ *PLRE* iii, Constantianus 1, Sergius 3, plausibly suggests that both were advocates in Constantinople, from where they were despatched on their mission. Procopius introduces the two with the archaising dual, just as he had Belisarius and Sittas at i.12.21, cf. i.13.5; the adjective ξυνετός, *xynetos*, ‘intelligent’ is very commonly used by Procopius, cf. (e.g.) i.15.3, 24.23. On the use of rhetors as envoys see Nechaeva 2014, 124–5.

24.5 τὸν λοιμὸν ἐπισκῆψαι Πέρσας ξυνέπεσε, ‘It happened that the plague attacked the Persians.’ See ii.23.21n on the spread of the pandemic to Persia, with Kislinger and Stathakopoulos 1999, 94–5. The length of time involved here – for the illness of Constantianus and the plague reaching the Persians – is unclear, so that one should not infer that the events of this and the following chapter could not also have taken place in 542, rather than 543, *contra* Meier 2003a, 320 n.84.

24.6 διὸ δὴ Ναβέδης τηνικαῦτα ἐν Περσαρμενίοις τὴν στρατηγίδα ἔχων ἀρχὴν τὸν ἐν Δούβιος τῶν Χριστιανῶν ἱερέα βασιλέως ἐπαγγείλαντος παρὰ Βαλεριανὸν τὸν ἐν Ἀρμενίοις στρατηγὸν ἔπεμψεν. ‘Accordingly, Nabedes, who at that time held the post of commander in Persarmenia, sent the bishop of the Christians in Dvin by order of the king to Valerian, the general in Armenia.’ On Nabedes see ii.18.9n. His presence in Persarmenia is confirmed in the *Passio s. Isbozetae*, 207–8, cf. Peeters’ discussion, *ibid.*, 196. The identity of the bishop of Dvin (Dubios), or rather the *catholicos*, as Procopius notes himself at 25.4, is uncertain: it may have been the rather obscure K’ristap’or Tirarič, so Garsoïan 1973–4, 131 n.61, Fedalto 1988, 410. Garsoïan 1999, 195, 201–4, 225, discusses late accounts of his support for Miaphysites in Persia. On the city itself see 25.1n. Valerian had decisively defeated a Hunnic attack, sent by Khusro, on Roman Armenia in 541, cf. *Anecd.* 2.29–31 with ii.15.35n. He occupied the post of *magister militum per Armeniam*, cf. *PLRE* iii, Valerianus 1. On the term ἱερεύς, *hiereus*, which we have here translated as ‘bishop’ see i.7.30n.

24.7 αὐτός τε Ῥωμαίοις ἄτε Χριστιανὸς ἰσχυρίζετο εὐνοϊκῶς ἔχειν καὶ οἱ βασιλέα Χοσρόην πείθεσθαι ἀεὶ ἐς βουλὴν πᾶσαν, ‘(the bishop) assured him that as a Christian he was himself well disposed to the Romans, and that king Khusro always heeded him on every matter’. An unlikely claim, although Khusro did succeed on occasion in giving hope to Christians that he might even convert to their religion, cf. PZ xii.7p with PZT 454 n.233. As Garsoïan 1999, 195–7, notes, relations between the Armenian church and the empire deteriorated after Justin I gave his firm backing to Chalcedon, cf. Börm 2007, 270–1, on the role of Christianity in relations between these Persarmenians and Rome. Khusro may have hoped to improve the chances of concluding a peace by the despatch of a Christian emissary, so Nechaeva 2014, 99 n.139.

24.8 ὁ δὲ τοῦ ἱερέως ἀδελφὸς Βαλεριανῶ ἐντυχὼν λάθρα Χοσρόην ἐν μεγάλοις εἶναι κακοῖς ἔφασκε, ‘But the bishop’s brother came secretly to Valerian and told him that Khusro had great difficulties.’ Garsoïan 1973–4, 131, plausibly suggests that while the bishop was trying to stall Valerian, his brother, on the other hand, revealed the true situation to the Romans. Nechaeva 2012, 188, sees the bishop’s brother as acting, in effect, as a Roman agent, cf. Lee 1993b, 575.

24.8 τὸν τε γάρ οἱ παῖδα τυραννίδι ἐπιθέμενον ἐπαναστῆναι καὶ αὐτὸν ὁμοῦ ξὺν παντὶ τῷ Περσῶν στρατῷ τῇ νόσῳ ἀλῶναι, ‘for his (Khusro’s) son had rebelled, aiming at usurpation, and at the same time he himself and all the Persian army had been overtaken by the plague’. Procopius very briefly here refers to the revolt of the king’s son Anūš Zād, which he then reports in much greater detail at viii.10.8–22, apparently placing it in 550 rather than 542; Khusro’s son is there called Anasozadus. There is no modern consensus as to which is the correct date, assuming that there were not two revolts. Jullien 2011, bringing to bear the *Hist. Mar Abba* and numismatic evidence, places the uprising in 550/1 in Khuzistan; she argues that the rebel was not a Christian, contrary to the accounts of Dinawari (71–2/373–4) and Firdausi, *Shāhnāmāh*, vi, 220–43. Jackson Bonner 2011, 59–70 (= idem 2012, 50–5, cf. idem 2015a, 105–6), takes the opposite view, seeing Anūš Zād as a Christian and placing the episode in 542; he believes that Procopius fails to mention his religious allegiance because it was embarrassing that Justinian had failed to support his co-religionist, and for the same reason he moved the event to a time (550) when the emperor could not in any case have intervened. A commentary on viii.10.8–22 will deal with this issue. See also *PLRE* iii, Anasozadus, Börm 2007, 121–4, Jackson Bonner 2015a, 103–7.

24.10 οἷς δὴ ὁ βασιλεὺς αὐτίκα ἡγμένος αὐτῷ τε καὶ Μαρτίνῳ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἄρχουσιν ὅτι τάχιστα ἐσβάλλειν εἰς τὴν πολεμίαν ἐπέστελλεν. ‘Influenced by this news, the emperor immediately ordered Martin and the other commanders to invade the enemy lands as swiftly as possible, for he knew very well that no enemy would stand in their way.’ See Koehn 2018a, 241–7, on Justinian’s interventions in military policy, arguing that the emperor was more heavily involved than is generally recognised. This call for a co-ordinated attack recalls the expedition despatched in 528 to avenge a devastating razzia of al-Mundhir, where Justinian likewise wrote to various commanders and ordered them into action: see Mal. 18.16 with Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 86. Upon the death of Kavadh in late 531, the emperor had similarly sought to exploit the weakness of Khusro’s position, although he quickly backed down. See Mal. 18.68 with Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 96.

Martin replaced Belisarius as *magister militum per Orientem* (cf. 24.13); he had been in the East since 540, cf. ii.14.9n and *RKOR* 1282, which misdates his appointment to 543. The other generals are indicated in the next sections. Given the time involved in communicating with Constantinople, the invasion can have begun only in late summer 542,

the optimum time for campaigns in this mountainous region, cf. Whitby 1988, 202.

24.11 ταῦτα ἐπεὶ ἀπενεχθέντα οἱ ἄρχοντες τὰ γράμματα εἶδον, ἅπαντες ὁμοῦ τοῖς ἐπομένοις ξυνέρρεον ἐς τὰ ἐπὶ Ἀρμενίας χωρία, ‘When the commanders had read this, they all streamed into the districts of Armenia with their troops.’ For the metaphorical use of συρρέω, *syrreō*, ‘I flow together’, cf. Hdt. v.101.2, Jos. *A.J.* 19.253, Proc. vi.9.15, *Anecd.* 7.23, 19.14.

24.12 Ἦδη δὲ ὁ Χοσρόης ὀλίγῳ πρότερον τὸ Ἀδαρβιγάνων δέει τῷ ἐκ τῆς νόσου ἀπολιπὼν ἐς τὴν Ἀσσυρίαν παντὶ τῷ στρατῷ ἀπιὼν ὥχετο, ‘But already shortly before this Khusro had left Adarbiganon in fear of the disease and gone to Assyria with all his army.’ The king thus returned to the region he had left, cf. 24.1. It is unlikely that Khusro could do more than defer the infection of his army with the plague; no more is known of the speed of its spread through Persian territory.

24.12–16 Roman Dispositions for the Invasion of Persarmenia

Procopius offers a detailed survey of the various Roman contingents that took part in the ill-organised offensive of 542. His list of commanders recalls that given at i.8.1–5: he clearly had access to military reports. No doubt, given the debacle that took place, each commander sent in a report to justify his conduct. Procopius presents the generals more or less in order from north to south and concludes by assessing their strength as 30,000 men in total. Although this may represent a paper strength rather than actual numbers, the Romans were clearly able to field a substantial force despite the war in Italy and the effects of the plague. The figure includes troops of *duces* and of the *magistri militum* of both Armenia and Mesopotamia. See Stein 1949, 499, Syv  nne 2004, 81–91, Koehn 2018a, 40, 175 and n.93, 229. For useful maps of the region and its fortresses see Greatrex 2007c, 94 fig.9.3, Howard-Johnston 2013, 875 fig.4, and fig. 25, p. 417. As Rance 2019, 404, points out, the practice of uniting scattered Roman forces only once inside enemy territory was standard procedure, cf. Maur. *Strat.* i.9 (102–6).

24.12 Βαλεριανὸς μὲν οὖν Θεοδοσιουπόλεως ἄγχιστα ἐστρατοπεδεύσατο ξὺν τοῖς ἀμφ’ αὐτὸν καταλόγοις, καὶ οἱ Ναρσῆς ξυνετάττετο Ἀρμενίου τε καὶ Ἐρούλων τινὰς ξὺν αὐτῷ ἔχων. ‘So

Valerian encamped near Theodosiopolis with the troops that accompanied him, while Narses drew up the Armenians and some Heruls that he had with him.’ On Valerian, the *magister militum per Armeniam*, see ii.24.6n. Narses is the Persarmenian whose defection was reported at i.15.31, cf. the note *ad loc.* and *PLRE* iii, Narses 2. His precise command at this point is uncertain. On Heruls in the Roman army see i.13.19n; this Narses is found commanding a substantial Herul unit in Italy in 538 at vi.13.18, cf. Sarantis 2016, 256. The headquarters of the *magister militum per Armeniam* lay at Theodosiopolis, *Aed.* iii.5.12; these troops therefore gathered not far from their base. See Greatrex 2007c, 90–4.

24.13 Μαρτῖνος δὲ ὁ τῆς ἑω στρατηγὸς ζύν τε Ἰλδιγερὶ καὶ Θεοκτίστῳ ἐς Κιθαρίζων τὸ φρούριον ἀφικόμενος ἐνταῦθ’ αὖτε πηξάμενος τὸ στρατόπεδον αὐτοῦ ἔμεινε. ‘Martin, the *magister militum per Orientem*, arrived at the fort of Citharizon with Ildiger and Theoctistus, pitched his camp there and waited.’ On Martin see ii.14.9n and 24.10n. Ildiger had served in both North Africa and Italy; this is his last mention in Procopius’ work. *PLRE* iii, Ildiger, suggests that he was, with Theoctistus, *dux* of Phoenice Libanensis; this is possible, although both *duces* might not have taken part if the midsummer truce among the Arabs was close to expiring (on which see ii.16.18n). On Theoctistus, see ii.8.2n, 16.17n. On Citharizon see Proc. *Aed.* iii.3.7–8 with Howard-Johnston 1989, idem 2013, 878: Justinian had made it the base of a *dux* in order to protect this section of the Armenian frontier, cf. Greatrex 2007c, replacing the Armenian troops stationed there when it had been the satrapy of Asthianene. From 536 Citharizon had been part of the new province of Armenia IV, *NovJ.* 31.1.3 (536), cf. Howard-Johnston 1989, 221. The fortress, if Howard-Johnston’s identification is accepted, lies some 130 km south of Theodosiopolis.

24.13 ἵνα καὶ Πέτρος οὐκ εἰς μακρὰν ζύν τε Ἀδολίῳ καὶ ἄλλοις τισὶν ἄρχουσιν ἦλθεν. ‘Peter came there shortly afterwards with Adolius and some other officers.’ On Peter see i.12.9n, ii.15.7n; he had been born in the vicinity, in Arzanene, cf. *PLRE* ii, Petrus 27. He is likely to have been serving with the rank of *magister militum* but without a specific command. On Adolius see ii.3.10n, 21.2n: he had played an important role in Belisarius’ ruse earlier in the year, cf. *PLRE* iii, Adolius.

24.14 ἡγεῖτο δὲ τῶν ταύτῃ καταλόγων Ἰσαάκης ὁ Ναρσοῦ ἀδελφός. ‘Isaac, Narses’ brother, was in command of the army units

there.’ On Isaac, the brother of both Aratius and Narses, Persarmenians who had defected to the Romans in 530, see i.15.32n with *PLRE* iii, Isaaces I. He was evidently *dux* of Citharizon.

24.14 Φιλημούθ δὲ καὶ Βῆρος ξύν Ἑρούλοις τοῖς σφίσιν ἐπομένοις εἰς τὰ ἐπὶ Χορζιανηνῆς χωρία ἦλθον, τοῦ Μαρτίνου στρατοπέδου οὐ πολλῷ ἄποθεν. ‘Philemuth and Verus came to Khorzianene with their Herul followers, not far from Martin’s camp.’ Philemuth was a Herul who had served in Italy and returned there subsequently, while Verus also went on to serve in Italy. See *PLRE* iii, Philemuth, Verus. Their rank is uncertain, but both evidently commanded units of Herul troops (on which see ii.24.12n). Khorzianene should be identified with the Khorzane referred to at *Aed.* iii.3.9–14, lying between Citharizon and Theodosiopolis, cf. Roques 2011, 229–30 n.44; it was strengthened by the construction of a base at Artaleson, where another *dux* was stationed. It is unclear whether either of these commanders was the *dux*. See Greatrex 2007c, 90–2, Howard-Johnston 2013, 878, fig. 25, p. 417 above.

24.15 Ἰουστός τε ὁ βασιλέως ἀνεψιὸς καὶ Περάνιος καὶ Ἰωάννης ὁ Νικήτου παῖς ξύν τε Δομνεντιόλῳ καὶ Ἰωάννῃ τῷ Φαγᾶ τὴν ἐπὶ κλησιν ἐστρατοπεδεύσαντο πρὸς τῷ Φισῶν καλουμένῳ φρουρίῳ, ὅπερ ἄγχιστά πη τῶν Μαρτυροπόλεως ὀρίων ἐστίν. ‘Justus the emperor’s cousin, Peranius, and John, the son of Nicetas, with Domnentiolus and John, called the Glutton, encamped at the fort called Phison, which is very near the borders of Martyropolis.’ On Justus, cousin, rather than nephew, of Justinian, see i.24.53n, ii.20.20n, cf. *PLRE* iii, Iustus 2; he was probably another *magister militum*. On Peranius, an Iberian prince who had defected to the Romans, see i.12.11n; he had served in Italy and now also held the post of *magister militum*. John, the son of Nicetas, had been present at the battle of Dara in 530 (cf. i.13.21) and during Belisarius’ Sisauranon campaign, when he urged Belisarius to withdraw: see ii.19.36–43 with *PLRE* iii, Ioannes 32. Domnentiolus, a nephew of Buzes, had been captured by the Persians in 531 and subsequently ransomed; he later served in Sicily. See *PLRE* iii, Domnentiolus (noting other forms of his name), cf. *PZ* ix.4–5. John the Glutton had accompanied al-Harith’s ill-fated expedition to Lower Mesopotamia in 541, cf. ii.19.15n with *PLRE* iii, Ioannes 64.

Phison lies in Sophanene, about 58 km north-west of Martyropolis, cf. *Aed.* iii.3.1, along the route leading, through a pass, towards Citharizon. See Dillemann 1962, 235–6, Howard-Johnston 2013, 881.

24.17 οὔτοι ἅπαντες οὔτε ἐς ταὐτὸ ξυνελέγησαν οὐ μὴν οὔτε ἀλλήλοις ἐς λόγους ἦλθον. ‘They did not all gather together, nor did they even hold a conference among themselves.’ The failure to co-ordinate recalls the botched attack on Nisibis of the preceding year described at 18.16–26. In the present case, the situation appears to have been worse since there was no one commander in charge. But the failure to concentrate their forces initially may have been deliberate (cf. 24.12–16n): in the mountainous terrain of Armenia it would have been difficult to supply such a large army. See Whitby 1988, 202, on the challenges of campaigning in the region, noting how late the campaigning season started.

24.18 ἄφνω δὲ Πέτρος, οὐδενὶ κοινολογησάμενος, ξὺν τοῖς ἀμφ’ αὐτὸν ἀνεπισκέπτως ἐς τὴν πολεμίαν ἐσέβαλλεν. ‘But Peter, without telling anyone, suddenly and without due forethought invaded the enemy country with his troops.’ Peter had acted with similar rashness during the invasion of 541, 18.16, in defiance of Belisarius’ orders; on Peter see ii.24.13n.

24.21 οἱ μέντοι ἄλλοι ξύμπαντες ἐπορεύοντο εὐθὺ Δούβιος, οὔτε ληϊζόμενοι οὔτε τι ἄλλο ἄχαρι πράσσοντες ἐς τὴν Περσῶν χώραν, ‘But all the rest marched off directly towards Dvin, without plundering or doing any other harm to the Persian territory.’ On Dvin see the next note. The unusually generous treatment of the region by the Roman army could be linked to the Persarmenian connections of some of the commanders, noted above, such as Narses and Isaac.

25.1 Ἔστι δὲ τὸ Δούβιος χώρα τις τὰ τε ἄλλα ἀγαθὴ καὶ ἀέρων τε καὶ ὑδάτων εὐεξίαν τινὰ διαρκῶς ἔχουσα, ‘Dvin is a productive district in many respects, and in particular is well provided with healthy air and water.’ See Strabo 11.14.4 on the prosperity of the Araxes valley, near where Dvin was located, cf. Hewsen 2001, 19, with useful maps illustrating the hydrology, climate and vegetation. Ananias of Širak, *Geogr.* v.22.xv (tr. Hewsen 1992, 70A), also emphasises the fertility of the region of Dvin (which, Hewsen suggests, *op. cit.*, 19, corresponds to the land of Ayrarat). The city lies on the Azat river, a tributary of the Araxes, between the modern capital of Armenia, Erevan, and Artaxata, which had been the capital until some time in the fifth century, when Dvin superseded it. See Garsoïan 1989, 460, cf. *ODLA*, s.v. Dvin. It seems doubtful, despite Rubin, *PvK*, 398, that Procopius ever journeyed as far east as Dvin to observe its climate at first hand.

25.1 Θεοδοσιουπόλεως δὲ ὁδῷ ἡμερῶν ὀκτῶ διέχει. ‘It lies eight days’ journey from Theodosiopolis.’ The distance is approximately 270 km; the Roman frontier city lies almost due west of Dvin. One day’s journey normally equates to 30 Roman miles (see Appendix 2, p. 675), 44.2 km, so that 8 days’ journey ought to be some 353 km. The mountainous terrain in Armenia would doubtless reduce the distance that could be covered in a day, however. An Armenian itinerary associated with the *Geography* of Ananias of Širak puts the distance between Dvin and Karin (i.e. Theodosiopolis) at 200 (Roman) miles, 1400 stades, which converts to the more accurate figure of 294 km. See Hewsens 1992, 320–1.

25.3 ἔκ τε γὰρ Ἰνδῶν καὶ τῶν πλησιοχώρων Ἰβήρων πάντων τε ὡς εἰπεῖν τῶν ἐν Πέρσῃσι ἐθνῶν καὶ Ῥωμαίων τινῶν τὰ φορτία ἐσκομιζόμενοι ἐνταῦθα ἀλλήλοις ξυμβάλλουσι. ‘They import commodities from India and from the Iberians, who live close by, and from virtually all the Persian peoples and from some Romans, and they trade with each other there.’ Artaxata (Artašat) had likewise been a significant trading centre, cf. Hewsens 1992, 219 n.305, noting that it is reported by the *Epic Histories* iv.55 to have been home to a significant number of Jewish families. Like Artaxata, Dvin became a nodal point in east–west trade, probably including silk. See Redgate 1998, 165, De la Vaissière 2012, 156, Avdaliani 2019, 40–2. Procopius’ reference to ‘India’ is obscure, cf. i.19.2n: it may mean the Arabian peninsula rather than India itself. Iberia lay just to the north. Persian commercial activity in the city is attested by clay seals, used to secure goods, found both at Dvin and elsewhere: see Kalantarian 1996, 100–6, Daryaei 2003, 14–15, Niknami and Naderi 2016, 229, Greenwood 2019, 62–3.

Attaleiates, *Hist.* 148 (20.9) similarly describes the wide-ranging trade at Artze, near Theodosiopolis, mentioning products from Persia, India and Asia.

25.4 τὸν τε τῶν Χριστιανῶν ἱερέα Καθολικὸν καλοῦσι τῇ Ἑλλήνων φωνῇ, ὅτι δὴ ἐφέστηκεν εἰς ὧν ἅπασιν τοῖς ταύτῃ χωρίοις. ‘They call the Christian bishop the *catholicos* in Greek because he is the one man in charge of the whole area.’ See ii.24.6n for the identity of the *catholicos* at this time. The Greek term *katholikos* (i.e. *catholicos*) means ‘general, universal’, but is applied also to the main church of a diocese or province, cf. Lampe, s.v. In the present context it may have been a shortened form of καθόλικος ἐπίσκοπος, *katholikos episkopos*. The term *katholikos* had earlier been used for a financial official in Egypt, the Latin

rationalis, cf. *ODLA*, s.v., but was applied subsequently to the head of various churches, including the Armenian. See Adontz 1970, 286–7 with 475 n.76, cf. Redgate 1998, 146–9, for a brief survey of the evolution of the Armenian office. Cf. also PZ xii.7k with PZT 446 n.197.

25.5 Δούβιος δὲ ἄποθεν ὅσον εἴκοσι καὶ ἑκατὸν σταδίων ἐν δεξιᾷ ἰόντι ἐκ Ῥωμαίων τῆς γῆς ὅρος ἐστὶ δύσβατόν τε καὶ ἄλλως κρημνῶδες, καὶ κώμη τις ἐν δυσχωρίᾳ στενοτάτῃ κειμένη, Ἀγγλῶν ὄνομα. ‘About 120 stades from Dvin (Dubios), on the right as one goes from Roman territory, there is a mountain that is hard to climb and very precipitous, and a village called Anglon in a very narrow space in the harsh terrain.’ Anglon is the Armenian Angl in the province of Ayrarat and district of Calkotn; it lies on the river Aratsani (Procopius’ Arsanius, i.17.21, today’s Murat Su), some 100 km south-west of Dvin as the crow flies, so that Procopius’ estimate is somewhat awry, although the place is to the south, i.e. to the right, as one heads towards Dvin from Theodosiopolis. The whole region, in which Mt Niphates (Npat, 2350m) is situated, is very mountainous. In the early seventh century it was the scene of another crushing Roman defeat, reported by Ps.-Sebeos, 109–10/60–2, cf. Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 186. See also Adontz 1970, 241, Hewsens 2001, 61 and 63, map 55.

25.6 χωρίου τε ἰσχυρὴ θαρσήςσας, ‘taking heart from the strength of the position’. A common Procopian formula, cf. ii.7.21, 26.5, viii.5.19. See Whitby 1988, 202, who emphasises the advantages afforded to smaller forces by the mountainous Armenian terrain.

25.7 καὶ ἡ μὲν κώμη ἐς τοῦ ὄρους τὰ ἔσχατα κεῖται, φρούριον δὲ ἐχυρὸν τῇ κώμῃ ταύτῃ ὁμώνυμον ἐν τῷ κρημνῶδει ἐστίν, ‘The village lies at the foot of the mountain, and a strong fortress of the same name as the village lies on the precipices.’ The fortress is presumably that in which Theodosius Khorkhoruni took refuge in 605/6, cf. Ps.-Sebeos, 109/61. See Howard-Johnston’s commentary in Ps.-Sebeos, 200–1, on the village and the fortress of Anglon, both of which are referred to, albeit somewhat unclearly, in the Armenian text. Procopius’ description of the village’s site, ἐς τοῦ ὄρους τὰ ἔσχατα, *es tou orous ta eskhata*, is often translated as ‘at the mountain’s extreme end’ (Kaldellis’ revision of Dewing, 126) or similarly, cf. García Romero, 273. But Hesychius, *Lexicon*, Π4126, albeit in a late gloss (cf. Homer, *Il.* 14.307), interprets ὄρους τὸ ἔσχατον μέρος, *orous to eskhaton meros*, ‘the final part of the

mountain’, as its foot, which is surely more plausible here, cf. Proc. iv.4.27, vi.4.23. Craveri, 160, takes this interpretation.

25.8 ὁ γοῦν Ναβέδης λίθοις μὲν καὶ ἀμάξαις τὰς ἐπὶ τὴν κώμην ἀποφράξας εἰσόδους δυσπρόσοδον ἔτι μᾶλλον εἰργάσατο ταύτην. ‘Nabedes therefore blocked off the entrances to the village with boulders and carts, and made it even harder to reach.’ Cf. Thuc. vii.74.2, Dio 41.12.3, for similarly phrased descriptions of the blocking off of access points.

25.9 προλοχίσας οἰκίσκους τινὰς παλαιούς ἐνέδραις πεζῶν, ‘Filling some old huts with foot soldiers by way of an ambush’. Cf. Thuc. ii.81.5 for the same idiom concerning the planting of an ambush with ii.8.20n.

25.10–35 The Roman Defeat at Anglon (542)

Procopius is well informed about the Roman debacle at Anglon, doubtless thanks to his contacts in the military and to access to correspondence between commanders and Constantinople, so Colvin 2013, 580–96. He clearly emphasises the pitiful performance of the Roman army, unable to vanquish the Persians despite a numerical superiority of 30,000 to 4000, even calling it (at 25.33) the greatest disaster ever suffered by the Roman military. Rubin, *PvK*, 398, cf. Brodka, 172 n.136, rightly sees in this an attempt to underline what Belisarius had achieved with less substantial resources. The disorder of the Roman troops is particularly stressed (e.g. at 25.13, 17), as is their greed (25.15); these are themes highlighted also in the war in Italy, e.g. in Belisarius’ successors’ failure to seize Verona in 541, vii.3, where eleven commanders, by arguing over the division of spoils, actually forfeit their chance of capturing the city, cf. ii.18.20, where Belisarius has to rescue disorderly subordinates outside Nisibis. As Rubin also suggests, Procopius may have exaggerated the Roman failure since, according to Ps.-Zach. x.10a (reported by Jacob of Edessa), ‘The Romans went down (with an army) and wrought much destruction in the territory of the Armenians’, tr. Phenix and Horn in PZT 415. Sarantis 2013a, 53, offers a markedly more favourable assessment of the Roman invasion, while Trombley 2005, 408–11, provides a detailed analysis of the battle, cf. Syv  ne 2004, 441–2.

25.10 καὶ ὃς ἀνακεχωρηκ  ναι τὸν ἄνδρα ἐξ Ἀγγλῶν παντὶ τῷ Μ  δων στρατῷ ἔφασκεν, ‘He said that he (Nabedes) had retreated from Anglon with the entire Persian (Medic) army.’ The Persian spy was thus

feeding disinformation to the Romans, although cf. ii.25.7n: ‘Anglon’ might refer either to the fortress or the village.

25.13 ἄραντες τοίνυν ἀστρατήγητοὶ τε καὶ ἄτακτοι κόσμῳ οὐδενὶ ἐπίπροσθεν ἦσαν, οὔτε τι ἔχοντες σύμβολον ἐν σφίσιν αὐτοῖς, ‘So they set off without a commander and in no order or formation went forward, without any kind of watchword among themselves.’ The Roman forces had numerous ἄρχοντες, *arkhontes*, ‘officers, commanders’ (cf. 24.16), but no one was in overall charge. See also iv.15.15 for the term, cf. Jos. *B.J.* 2.234, and ii.8.2n. As just noted, Procopius is at pains to underline the disorder of the Roman army.

The σύμβολον, *symbolon* (one would expect the Attic form ξύμβολον, *xymbolon*, which is found in manuscript V), ‘watchword, signal’, was a means used to avoid the danger of engaging friendly forces; it was employed by Germanus when fighting rebellious Roman troops at Scalae Veteres in 539, iv.17.22, cf. Th. Sim. v.10.4 for a case in 591. According to Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* i.46.5 soldiers known as *tesserarii* circulated the password (cf. Feissel 2009, 344, for a correction to Schamp’s translation of this passage).

25.14 τοῖς γὰρ σκευοφόροις οἱ στρατιῶται ἀναμιγνύμενοι ἐπορεύοντο, ‘The soldiers were mixed up with the camp followers as they advanced.’ Although this sounds like an aspect of Roman ill discipline, Petersen 2013, 530, suggests that the troops may have been seeking to protect siege engines and supplies.

25.16 τάξαντες δὲ ὡς ἐκ τῶν παρόντων εἰς τὰ τρία τέλη τὸ στράτευμα εὐθὺ τῶν πολεμίων ἐχώρουν, ‘So they drew up the army as best they could in the present circumstances in three divisions and advanced straight towards the enemy.’ The three-fold division, left, right and centre, was standard, as is the terminology, cf. Thuc. ii.81.2, Dio 75.3.2, Proc. vii.40.33 and see Lendon 2017a, 39–44, more generally. See also Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 291, on the tactics prescribed for cavalry battles and the failure to apply them at Anglon.

25.17 Πέτρος μὲν οὖν κέρας τὸ δεξιὸν εἶχε, Βαλεριανὸς δὲ τὸ εὐώνυμον, εἰς δὲ τὸ μέσον οἱ ἀμφὶ Μαρτῖνον ἐτάσσοντο. ‘Peter had the right wing, Valerian the left, and in the middle Martin’s men were positioned.’ On Peter, see ii.24.13n and i.12.9n, on Valerian, ii.24.6n, on Martin, ii.24.10n and 14.9n.

25.18 αἴτιον δὲ ἦν ἣ τε δυσχωρία κρημνώδης ὑπερφυῶς οὕσα, ‘The reason was the extremely rocky and difficult terrain’. Cf. ii.25.5n on the landscape. For the formulation αἴτιον ἦν, *aition ēn*, ‘the reason was’, cf. Thuc. i.11.1, 3.93.2, Polyb. 1.57.7, Proc. ii.22.25.

25.19 ἔτι μέντοι καὶ οἱ βάρβαροι σφᾶς αὐτοὺς ἐς ὀλίγον ξυναγαγόντες ἡσυχῇ ἔμενον, ‘Yet the barbarians were still quietly waiting; they gathered close together.’ The expression ἡσυχῇ ἔμενον, *hēsychē emenon*, ‘they were waiting quietly’, is typically Procopian, cf. (e.g.) i.9.24, vi.24.5, taken up later by John Cinnamus, e.g. iii.8 (108.3). The discipline of the Persian forces, obeying Nabedes’ instructions, contrasts with the Roman soldiery; cf. also ii.20.26n. His willingness to remain on the defensive recalls Belisarius’ own tactics, cf. e.g. ii.18.17.

25.24 καὶ αὐτὸν Ἰσαάκης ὁ ἀδελφὸς καιρίαν τυπέντα ὑπεξήγαγε τῶν μαχομένων, ‘His (Narses’) brother Isaac rescued him, fatally wounded, from the fighting.’ On the two Persarmenian brothers see i.15.31–2n. For the use of the adjective καιρίος, *kairios*, with πληγή, *plēgē*, understood, meaning ‘mortal wound’, cf. Hdt. iii.64.3, Proc. iv.4.19. Narses’ untimely and needless death recalls that of Sittas, ii.3.24–6.

25.24 ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς ἐν τῷ πόνῳ τούτῳ γενόμενος, ‘after giving a brave performance in this engagement’, lit. ‘having become a brave man in this struggle’. The idiom goes back to Hdt. vi.114, cf. Polyb. 11.2.1, Arrian, *Anab.* ii.23.4, and is used elsewhere by Procopius at iii.18.6, vii.37.28, on both occasions after the death in battle of a notable Roman commander.

25.27 οὔτε γὰρ κράνος οὔτε θώρακα οὔτε ἄλλο τι φυλακτήριον Ἑρουλοὶ ἔχουσιν, ὅτι μὴ ἀσπίδα καὶ τριβώνιον ἄδρὸν, ὃ δὴ διεζωσμένοι ἐς τὸν ἀγῶνα καθίστανται, ‘The Heruls have no helmet or corselet or any other protection, save for a shield and a thick cloak, which they wrap around themselves when they go into battle.’ Procopius offers a lengthy digression on the Heruls at vi.14, which has attracted considerable scholarly attention: see (e.g.) Steinacher 2010, Sarantis 2016, 253–65, with further bibliography. That they were only lightly equipped is confirmed by Jord. *Get.* 50.261. Their swiftness and fighting prowess were prized by the Romans, who frequently recruited them for campaigns: Pharas and his Heruls played a decisive role at Dara, as Procopius reports at i.14.39. See Sarantis 2010, 387–9, idem 2016, 254–6, idem 2018, 366–8

(more generally), Steinacher 2010, 352–3. On Procopius' variable attitude to the Heruls see Parnell 2015, 814–20, Greatrex 2018b, 331–2.

For the *τριβώνιον*, *tribōnion*, '(rough) cloak', see i.25.10n; the Moors are said to have worn only a *τριβώνιον ἄδρόν*, *tribōnion hadron*, 'a thick cloak' at iv.6.12.

25.28 δοῦλοι μέντοι Ἑρουλοὶ καὶ ἀσπίδος χωρὶς ἐς μάχην χωροῦσιν, 'But Herul slaves actually go into battle without shields'. Nothing further is known of this practice, but cf. Agath. ii.7.2–3, who narrates an episode in which Narses condemns a noble Herul in his army to death for killing one of his slaves, who was evidently accompanying him. Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 185–6, points out that the practice of soldiers being attended by slaves on campaign is attested among various peoples. Cf. also Thompson 1958, 10, for late seventh-century regulations on the equipment to be furnished to slaves serving in Visigothic armies in Spain.

25.29 Ῥωμαῖοι δὲ οὐκ ἐνεγκόντες τοὺς πολεμίους ἀνὰ κράτος ἅπαντες ἔφευγον, οὔτε ἀλκῆς μεμνημένοι οὔτε τινὰ αἰδῶ ἢ ἄλλο τι ἐν νῶ ἄγαθὸν ἔχοντες. 'The Romans could not withstand the enemy and all fled with all their might, with no thought for bravery and with no self-respect or anything valorous in their minds.' The formula ἀνὰ κράτος, *ana kratos*, 'with all their might', is common in Xenophon, e.g. *Anab.* i.8.1, 10.15, as also in Philo, e.g. at *De Virtutibus* 8.48, cf. Arrian, *Anab.* iv.17.1 (also in the context of a flight); Procopius uses it frequently, e.g. at i.4.10, 18.37, iii.19.24, all in describing a flight. On the idiom οὔτε ἀλκῆς μεμνημένοι, *oute alkēs memnēmenoi*, 'with no thought for bravery, forgetful of their courage' see i.14.50n.

25.31 τοὺς δὲ θώρακας καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ὅπλα ῥίπτοῦντες σπουδῇ τε καὶ θορύβῳ ἐς ἔδαφος, 'and throwing their corselets and other arms onto the ground in panic and confusion'. Cf. *Peri Strat.* 40.19–28, which advises the Romans to jettison equipment during a feigned flight, with Petitjean 2017, vol.2, 255.

25.32 τοιαύτη γέγονεν ἡ φυγή ὥστε τῶν ἵππων σχεδὸν τι αὐτοῖς οὐδεὶς διεβίω, ἀλλ' ἠνίκα τοῦ δρόμου ἐπαύσαντο, πεσόντες εὐθὺς διεφθάρησαν. 'In sum, the flight was such that hardly any of the horses survived: when they stopped their gallop, they immediately collapsed and died.' Doubtless an exaggeration, although horses were often lost to exhaustion: see Méa 2014, 267–8, citing detailed evidence from the

English Civil War, and cf. Arrian, *Anab.* iii.15.6, who reports the loss of over a thousand horses to Alexander's army in the pursuit of Darius' forces at Gaugamela.

25.33 καὶ πάθος τοῦτο μέγα Ῥωμαίοις οἷον οὔποτε πρότερον γέγονε, 'This disaster was greater than any that the Romans had suffered before.' See ii.25.10–35n on this evident exaggeration. Procopius invokes 'a great disaster for the Romans' on several occasions, at vi.21.41, vii.18.19 (referring to Hannibal's victory at Cannae) and vii.28.16; the expression πάθος μέγα Ῥωμαίοις, *pathos mega Romaiois*, is used also by Appian, *Italica*, frg.6, in *Historia Romana*, vol.1, p.27 (= Suda A3642, E781), of the Roman defeat at Cremera in 477 B.C.

25.35 Ἀδόλιος δὲ διὰ φρουρίου ἐν ταύτῃ δὴ τῇ ὑπαγωγῇ παριῶν ἐν Περσαρμενίοις κειμένου λίθῳ τε τὴν κεφαλὴν πρὸς τοῦ τῶν ταύτῃ ὥκημένων πληγείς αὐτοῦ διεφθάρη. 'Adolius, while passing by a fortress in Persarmenia in this retreat, was struck on the head by a stone thrown by one of the inhabitants, and he died there.' Cf. ii.3.10n, 24.13n, on Adolius.

25.35 οἱ τε ἀμφὶ τὸν Ἰοῦστον καὶ Περάνιον ἐσβαλόντες ἐς τὰ ἐπὶ Ταραύνων χωρία καὶ ὀλίγα ἄττα ληισάμενοι εὐθύς ἐπανῆλθον. 'Justus' and Peranius' troops invaded the country around Taraunon, and after plundering some of it, they immediately returned.' This army, which had encamped at Phison (24.15), proceeded only a little way eastwards, crossing into Persian territory to plunder the district of Taron, as it is referred to in the Armenian sources, lying to the west of Lake Van. See Garsoïan 1989, 492, Trombley 2005, 410–11.

ii.26–7 The Persian Siege of Edessa (543)

History

Khusro had withdrawn from Roman territory in 542 under pressure from Belisarius; he expected envoys to be sent from Justinian to negotiate a peace treaty (21.25). In the meantime, however, the king seized Callinicum (21.30–2), while the Roman ambassadors Constantianus and Sergius failed to reach him because the former fell ill (24.4–5). When Justinian learnt from the *magister militum per Armeniam*, Valerian, that Khusro's kingdom was seriously weakened by the plague, he ordered an invasion of Persarmenia later the same year which, as just described,

culminated in a decisive defeat. Evidently by spring 543 there had been no diplomatic progress, so that the Persian king determined to exert pressure on the emperor once more. The army and population at Edessa may well have had the opportunity to make preparations for a siege, just as they had done in 503 (Ps.-Josh. 52). On the present occasion, after a siege that is said by Agapius, PO 8 (1912), 432, to have lasted two months, Khusro gave up his attempt to capture the city and retreated. The loyalty of the city, despite Justinian's hardening anti-Chalcedonian policies, is worth underlining.

Bibliography: Stein 1949, 501, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 113, Burns 2011, 133–5, Petersen 2013, 131–2, 531–2, Vryonis 2014, 818, 821–2, Kavvadas 2018, 133.

Historiography

The siege of Edessa is a detailed set-piece account of a dramatic two-month-long struggle. It is the last significant siege of the work and is reported in vivid terms: Procopius includes plenty of circumstantial details, pointing to an eye-witness source, most likely officers that served in the Roman forces defending the city. He is likely to have had links also to the city's élite, given his interest in the fate of the unfortunate hostage Basil, on which see ii.21.27n. He later added further details on the siege: at viii.14.35–7 he reports how the defenders frightened off Persian elephants by suspending squealing pigs from a tower (on which see Mayor 2003, 202–3).

The siege is the only event recorded for the year; neither Khusro's invasion route to Edessa nor his retreat receives any attention. The fact that Khusro's designs are thwarted, despite constant fears for the city's safety, underlines the justice of the Roman cause and the courage of the defenders. By portraying the king's campaign as being directed against God himself (26.2), rather than the Romans or Justinian, Procopius reinforces this impression. The valour displayed by the inhabitants and the soldiery contrasts with the ease with which cities had been taken earlier by Khusro, notably in 540, and with the fall of Amida in 503. There are echoes throughout of the siege and capture of Amida in 502–3, notably at the point when the Persians almost seize the city at night because the defenders were asleep (27.19, cf. i.7.24). Despite the plague and the redeployment of Belisarius, the war in Mesopotamia thus concludes with a creditable Roman performance. His account of the resolve of the population and soldiers should not be seen as mere literary exaggeration; Ps.-Josh. 60 recounts similarly stiff resistance to King Kavadh at Edessa in summer 503. See fig. 29 for a plan of the city.

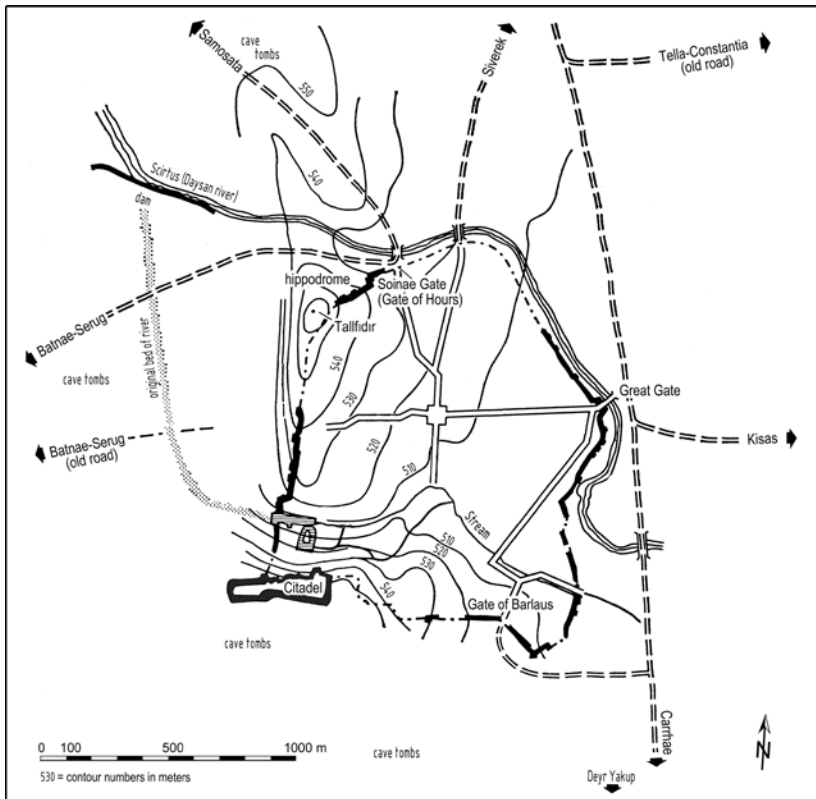


Figure 29 Edessa

Procopius' account is adapted by Evagrius in his *Ecclesiastical History* (iv.27), but he adds an important detail, recounting how the image of Christ, 'not made by human hands', later known as the Mandyllion and described as being imprinted on cloth, was deployed by the defenders to neutralise the Persian mound. It is likely that in Procopius' day this icon had not yet acquired the reputation it enjoyed by the end of the sixth century, which is why it is not mentioned; one should not therefore draw inferences from its omission, *contra* Kaldellis 2010b, 271–2. From ii.12.26–30 it is clear that he was interested in the tradition that insisted that the city was protected by Christ, and already at 12.31 he indicates that Khusro was minded to seize the city in order to prove it wrong. A few Syriac sources briefly report the siege without furnishing any details. A sermon in Greek delivered in 944 on the occasion of the transfer of the

image of Christ to Constantinople elaborates unreliably on the siege, referring to a general called Ilion, otherwise unattested (ed. von Dobschütz 1899, vol.3, 63**–64**), cf. Meier 2003a, 396–7. Meier 2003a, 399–400, observes that over time the role of the imperial forces and leaders – already in Procopius’ account rivalled by that of the Edessenes themselves – shrank, especially as the role of the image of Christ was emphasised.

Bibliography: Rubin, *PvK*, 398–9, Averil Cameron 1981, 5–12, eadem 1983, 84–6, eadem 1985, 116–17, eadem 1998, Whitby 2000a, 226–8, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 113 (on the Syriac sources), Brodka 2004, 23–4, idem 2013a, 359–60, Colvin 2013 (on Procopius’ sources), Guscini 2016, 25–7, *ODLA*, ‘Mandyliion of Edessa’. Details of notable feats by local people in Procopius’ account suggest to Kavvadas 2018, 133 n.26, the use of Edessene sources and traditions.

26.1 Τῷ δὲ ἐπιγινομένῳ ἔτει Χοσρόης ὁ Καβάδου τὸ τέταρτον ἐς γῆν τὴν Ῥωμαίων ἐσέβαλλεν, ‘In the following year Khusro, the son of Kavadh, invaded Roman territory for the fourth time.’ On the year, 543, see ii.24–5h. Khusro had invaded Roman territory each year since 540.

26.2 ἐπὶ τὸν θεὸν ὃνπερ Χριστιανοὶ σέβονται μόνον, ‘(the invasion was undertaken) solely against the God whom the Christians worship’. A motif already highlighted by Procopius at 12.31, as just noted, and one that is strengthened in the rest of the account by biblical allusions, e.g. to David’s defeat of Goliath (26.9), cf. Rubin, *PvK*, 399. See also Frendo 1997, 108–10, arguing that the emphasis placed on the religious dimension of Khusro’s invasion is tendentious: the king was simply seeking further booty and could even exploit belief in the city’s impregnability to extort higher sums from it. Cf. Börm 2007, 269 and n.5.

As at i.7.22, Procopius writes as though the reader were unfamiliar with the Christian God. It does not imply that he was not a Christian himself, cf. ii.12.22n concerning Edessa. Overtly Christian writers might employ the formula themselves, e.g. Euseb. *HE* ix.1.8, cf. Evagr. *HE* vi.17. Procopius uses it elsewhere only at iii.8.18.

26.3 ἐπειδὴ γὰρ ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ ἐφόδῳ Ἐδέσσης ἀποτυχὼν ἀνεχώρησε, πολλή τις ἐγεγόνει αὐτῷ τε καὶ μάγοις ... κατῆφεια, ‘For after he had retreated, failing to capture Edessa in his first invasion, he and the magi were seized by dejection.’ An allusion to Khusro’s failure in 540, narrated at 12.6, 31–4. The noun κατῆφεια, *katēpheia*, is translated as ‘dejection’, cf. García Romero 277, Brodka, 172, but it might also be rendered as ‘shame’, cf. *LSJ*, s.v.

26.4 ὁ Χοσρόης ἐν τοῖς βασιλείοις ... ἠπειλήσεν ... τὴν δὲ πόλιν μηλόβοτον καταστήσεται. ‘Khusro threatened in his palace that he would make the city (Edessa) a pasture for sheep.’ A standard way of expressing intent to lay waste a city utterly, cf. Isocr. *Or.* 14.31, Diod. Sic. 15.63.1, Appian, *Bell. Civ.* i.24, Herodian viii.4.8.

26.5 Οὐννων τῶν οἱ ἐπομένων τινὰς ἐπὶ τὸν τῆς πόλεως περίβολον ἔπεμψεν, ὃς δὴ τοῦ ἵπποδρόμου καθύπερθεν ἐστίν, ‘and he sent some of the Huns who were with him to the circuit wall of the city above the hippodrome’. See ii.12.19n for the location of the hippodrome, on the north-west side of the city, with Segal 1970, plan 1. There is a fairly steep hill here, Tallfidır, at the bottom of which today lies Beyazsarai Park. See also Luther 1997, 238, plates 4–5.

26.7 ἡ δὲ ἀγέλη αὐτόματος ἐς τοὺς ποιμένας ἐπανῆκεν αὐθις, ‘The flock spontaneously returned again to the shepherds.’ Aelian, *Nat. Anim.* x.50 describes how sheep of a flock chosen for sacrifice come αὐτομάτα, *automata*, ‘spontaneously’, to the altar. The Persians’ attempt to snatch the Romans’ flocks has a religious dimension to it, as Murray 2018, 114, observes, cf. John 10, esp. 10:1, describing the one who tries to do this as a κλέπτης, *kleptēs*, ‘thief’ and ληστής, *lēstēs*, ‘robber’. The incident is not implausible: sheep will tend to return to what is familiar. There is perhaps a deliberate irony in the presence of sheep at Edessa, given Khusro’s vow (26.4) to turn the city into a pasture for them.

26.9 καὶ τις αὐτὸν ἀγροῖκος ἐς γόνυ τὸ δεξιὸν σφενδόνῃ ἐπιτυχὼν βάλλει, ὁ δὲ πρηνὴς ἀπὸ τοῦ ἵππου ἐς τὸ ἔδαφος εὐθύς ἔπεσεν, ‘A peasant hit him on the right knee with a sling, and he at once fell flat on his face from his horse to the ground.’ There is a biblical tinge to the account here: the victory of the humble slinger recalls David’s triumph over Goliath, cf. ii.11.8n. At both 11.9 and here Procopius describes the fate of the Persian in exactly the same terms, ἐς τὸ ἔδαφος εὐθύς ἔπεσεν, *es to edaphos euthys epesen*, ‘he at once fell to the ground’. This expression for falling to the ground is first used by Paul at Acts 22:6, then subsequently elsewhere in Christian literature.

Ps.-Josh. 60, 62 confirms the martial prowess of the citizenry of Edessa, who do not hesitate to engage the Persian besiegers in 503. He specifically reports, ch.62, the heavy casualties inflicted by the slingers on the Persians and likens their struggle to that of Samson against the Philistines. On the slings see PJT 80 n.384.

26.12 ὄψιν ὀνείρου, ‘a vision in a dream’: see ii.22.13n on this expression. The section from 26.12 to 26.22 is quoted in *Exc. de leg. Rom.* 103.12–104.8. Dahn 1865, 166–7, observes that Procopius frequently offers a dream as one of the possible factors motivating an action.

26.14 Παῦλος ἑρμηνεύς, ‘Paul, the interpreter’, on whom see ii.6.23n. He acted similarly at Antioch in 540, ii.8.4, as also at Edessa, ii.12.33.

26.15 οἱ δὲ κατὰ τάχος τέσσαρας ἀπολεξάμενοι τῶν ἐν σφίσιν αὐτοῖς ἐπιφανῶν ἐπεμψαν. ‘They quickly chose four of the notable men among them and despatched them.’ The Edessenes had already handed over in the previous year one eminent hostage, Basil, who remained in Persian custody: see ii.21.27n.

26.16 ὁ Ζαβεργάνης ἀπειλαῖς τε πολλαῖς δεδιξάμενος, ‘Zabergan frightened them with many threats.’ Khusro’s minister Zabergan is consistently depicted as ruthless and hawkish. See i.23.25n. The aorist (middle) participle, δεδιξάμενος, *dedixamenos*, ‘having frightened’, from the verb δε(ι)δίσσομαι, *deidissomai*, is rare, found first in Dem. *Or.* 19.291, then in Plut. *Cat. Min.* 43.4, Thdrt. *Ther.* ix.22 (likewise invoking threats), cf. Thdrt. *HE* ii.28(27).8 and elsewhere. Procopius uses it quite frequently, e.g. at ii.21.19, v.22.25 and elsewhere, always with an active sense. Suda Δ149, misinterpreting the sense of the word, glosses it as meaning ‘having been frightened’. See also i.7.28n.

26.18 οἱ τε πρέσβεις ἔφασαν τοσαῦτα δώσειν ὅσα παρέσχοντο πρότερον, ‘The envoys said that they would give what they had given before.’ At 12.34 Procopius reports that they handed over two *centenaria* to obtain Khusro’s departure in 540.

26.21 τοῦ δὲ κινδύνου τὸ πέρας οὐδενὶ τῶν πάντων ἔφασαν πρὸ τῆς ἀγωνίας ἐνδηλον εἶναι, ‘but they said that no one at all could see the ultimate issue of the danger before the conflict.’ The envoys emphasise the unpredictability of warfare, a point that is borne out by the subsequent narrative. Men. Prot. frg. 6.1.213–38 describes how Peter the Patrician recounted to the Persian Zikh the story of Sesostris, conqueror of Asia, and the rotating wheels of his chariot, to make the same point. Procopius portrays Belisarius as being particularly sensitive to this issue, avoiding unnecessary dangers, i.18.17–23 (his speech before Callinicum), and seeking to pre-empt possible ones, ii.19.6 (in the campaign of 541), cf. more generally Whately 2016, 188–95. Contrast the

blithe assurance of the Lazi at ii.3.51, confident of the issue of Khusro's attack on the Roman empire (because of the justice of his cause).

26.22 τότε μὲν οὖν ξὺν ὀργῇ ὁ Χοσρόης τοὺς πρέσβεις ἐκέλευεν ὅτι τάχιστα ἀπαλλάσσεσθαι. 'At this point therefore Khusro angrily told the envoys to leave as quickly as possible.' Khusro's rage is a leitmotif of *Wars* ii particularly, cf. i.21–2g, ii.5.15n, 15.26n.

26.23 χοῦν τε πολὺν τινα ἀτεχνῶς ὑπερθεῖν τῶν δένδρων ξυναμηςάμενος μέγα τι χρῆμα λίθων ἐπέβαλλεν, 'Then he heaped a huge amount of earth on the trees and put a vast quantity of stones on top.' Cf. i.7.14 on Kavadh's mound outside Amida in late 502. Petersen 2013, 279–80, discusses the construction of such elaborate siegeworks. Cf. Thuc. ii.75.1–2 on the mound erected by the Spartans at Plataea.

26.24 καὶ ξύλα μακρὰ τοῦ τε χοῦ καὶ τῶν λίθων μεταξύ ἐς αἰὲ ἐμβαλλόμενος ἐνδεσμον ἐποιεῖτο τοῦ ἔργου, ὅπως μὴ ὑψηλὸν γενόμενον ἀσθενὲς εἴη. 'Between the mound and the stones he inserted long beams, binding the structure together so that it would not be weak as it grew high.' A clear echo of Thuc. ii.75.5, ξύνδεσμος δ' ἦν αὐτοῖς τὰ ξύλα, τοῦ μὴ ὑψηλὸν γιγνόμενον ἀσθενὲς εἶναι τὸ οἰκοδόμημα, 'The timbers served to hold the bricks together, preventing the structure from becoming weak as it attained height' (tr. Smith). See Duwe 1885, 15, Braun 1894, 208–9. As noted already (i.7.12–32n), such imitations do not cast doubt on Procopius' accuracy, cf. Blockley 1972, discussing accounts of sieges by Dexippus and Priscus that likewise evoke Thucydides' description of the siege of Plataea.

26.25 Πέτρος δὲ ὁ Ῥωμαίων στρατηγὸς (ἐνταῦθα γὰρ ξὺν Μαρτίνῳ καὶ Περανίῳ ἐτύγχανεν ὦν), 'But Peter the Roman general (who happened to be there with Martin and Peranius)'. All three had taken part in the botched invasion of Persarmenia in 542. On Peter see i.12.9n, ii.15.7n with *PLRE* ii, Petrus 27, on Martin see ii.24.10n with *PLRE* iii, Martinus 2, on Peranius, ii.24.15n with *PLRE* iii, Peranius. Clearly the Roman high command had had time to congregate in Edessa before Khusro began his siege.

26.26 οἱ δὲ πολλοὺς ἐκ τοῦ αἰφνιδίου ἐπελθόντες ἀνέϊλον, καὶ πάντων μάλιστα τῶν τις δορυφόρων, Ἀργήκ ὄνομα, 'They (Peter's Huns) came upon them (the Persians) suddenly and killed many, the

most successful of them in this being one of the bodyguards, a man called Argek.’ Procopius adds that he slew 27 of the enemy: he was perhaps drawing on despatches designed to highlight acts of bravery and subsequently to reward the soldiers concerned, so Colvin 2013, 590–2. Argek himself was a Hun, but the origins of his name are uncertain: see Maenchen-Helfen 1973, 413, 442. On Huns among the Roman forces, see Janniard 2018.

26.28 ἐπεὶ δὲ προϊόντες ἐντὸς βέλους οἱ τεχνῖται τοῦ ἔργου τούτου ἐγένοντο, ‘But when the specialists engaged in this task came forward within arrow’s range’. The reference to τεχνῖται, *tekhnitai*, is significant: Khusro’s army evidently included (siege) engineers, who were responsible for the construction of the mound. See Petersen 2013, 364.

26.28 διὸ δὴ οἱ βάρβαροι ἐπενόουν τάδε, ‘So the barbarians devised this solution.’ Duwe 1885, 15, compares the phrase with Thuc. ii.75.6, also using the verb ἐπινοέω, *epinoeō*, ‘I devise’.

26.29 προκαλύμματα ἐκ τραγείων τριχῶν, ἃ δὴ καλοῦσι Κιλικία, πάχους τε καὶ μήκους διαρκῶς ἔχοντα, ἄρτήσαντες ἐκ ξύλων μακρῶν, ‘They hung thick, broad coverings of goat’s hair called “Cilician” on long beams.’ Cf. Thuc. ii.75.5, where the Spartans also erect προκαλύμματα, *prokalymmata*, ‘coverings’ to protect their siege-works, likewise Priscus frg.6.2.22/1b.4 (p.6.4–5, the siege of Naissus) with Petersen 2013, 47, 269. Men. Prot. frg.40 describes a Roman version of these screens, *spaliones*, designed to protect besiegers, cf. Petersen 2013, 286. The Persians had availed themselves of similar screens at the siege of Amida, which were wet and hence resistant to flaming missiles; but the Romans had then employed an *onager* hurling heavy rocks to break through the coverings, Ps.-Josh. 53. See Lenski 2007, 227, on these screens and how they served both to obscure and protect siege operations and cf. Börm 2007, 169, on Sasanian siege techniques.

The coarse cloth of Cilicia was well known in antiquity, cf. Hesychius, *Lexicon*, K2676, Suda K1605, 1607.

26.29 ἀεὶ τὴν ἄγεσταν ἐργαζομένων ἐτίθεντο (οὕτω γὰρ τὸ ποιοῦμενον τῇ Λατίνων φωνῇ ἐκάλουν Ῥωμαῖοι), ‘And they kept them in front of those who were working on the *agesta* (for this was what the Romans called what they were making in Latin).’ Suda’s definition of an *agesta* or *egesta* is drawn from this passage of Proc., E52, cf. A203; de

Boor 1914–19, 46, argues that the entry is derived from a lost part of the *Exc. de legationibus*. The word, not attested in this form in Latin but evidently derived from the Latin *agger* and *aggestus* (a mound or bank of earth), is also employed by Maur. *Strat.* x.1.55 (340), cf. Veg. iv.15. See Campbell 2002, 139 and cf. i.7.14n, Whitby 2000a, 226 n.72.

26.30 ἐνταῦθα γὰρ οὔτε πυρφόροι οἰστοὶ οὔτε τὰ ἄλλα βέλη ἐξικνεῖσθαι εἶχον, ‘Neither flaming arrows nor other projectiles could penetrate here.’ Another allusion to the siege of Plataea: Thuc. ii.75.5 likewise refers to πυρφόροις οἰστοῖς, *pyrphoroiis oistois*, ‘flaming arrows’, cf. Priscus frag.6.2.17/1b.3 (pp.5–6) with Blockley 1972, 23.

26.31 καὶ Στέφανον σὺν αὐτοῖς, ἐν γε τοῖς κατ’ αὐτὸν ἰατροῖς λόγιον, ὅς δὴ Καβάδην τὸν Περόζου νοσοῦντά ποτε ἰασάμενος κύριος χρημάτων μεγάλων πρὸς αὐτοῦ γέγονεν. ‘With them went Stephanus, who was famous among the doctors of his day and who had once cured Kavadh, the son of Peroz, when he was ill and had received a large amount of money from him.’ Nothing further is known of Stephanus, who claims (at 26.35) to have recommended Khusro’s succession to Kavadh and to have been born in Edessa. See Blockley 1980, 90–1, part of a wider analysis of the use of doctors in diplomacy, cf. Nechaeva 2014, 125–6, *PLRE* iii, Stephanus 9. Cf. ii.28.8n on Tribunus, a Roman physician favoured by Khusro. The designation of Kavadh as the son of Peroz reflects Sasanian usage: see Börm 2007, 106 and cf. i.23.1n.

26.32–7 Stephanus’ Address to Khusro

Procopius attributes to Stephanus a terse but outspoken indictment of Khusro’s conduct. The bishop Megas had likewise addressed the king at ii.7.23–33, complaining at the unreasonableness of his demands. Here, as there, the king gives some ground, albeit very little. The Roman general Justinian reproached Khusro in similar terms for the destruction of Melitene in 576 according to Joh. Eph. *HE* vi.9, cf. Whitby 1994, 243. The criticisms offered correspond to earlier references to Khusro’s ruthlessness, cf. e.g. ii.9.6 with Brodka 2004, 122–3. As Börm 2006, 308–9 and n.32, points out, Persian kings were expected to uphold certain norms even by their own traditions.

As Taragna 2000, 91, notes, Procopius evidently had an interest in diplomatic exchanges. In this case, no corresponding speech is reported for Khusro, perhaps to give greater prominence to Stephanus’ words, so

Rubin, *PvK*, 399. As is typical for such speeches, it begins with a general maxim, cf. i.24.26–30n, and includes other such pronouncements, e.g. at 26.36.

26.32 Βασιλέως τὴν φιланθρωπίαν ἀγαθοῦ γνώρισμα πάντες ἐκ παλαιοῦ νενομίκασιν, ‘From ancient times everyone has taken kindness to be the sign of a good king.’ As Stephanus affirms, φιλανθρωπία, *philanthrōpia*, ‘kindness, love of mankind’, had long been regarded as a royal or imperial virtue, cf. e.g. Them. *Or.*1, 8a (11–12, tr. Heather and Moncur, 85), an oration devoted to the *philanthrōpia* of Constantius II, Thdrt. *HE* i.811, and Just. *Edict* 7.pr., tr. Miller and Sarris, 1043. See also i.7.34n, noting Procopius’ allusion to Kavadh’s *philanthrōpia* in releasing prisoners taken at Amida. For the notion of a γνώρισμα, *gnōrisma*, a ‘sign, mark’ of a ‘good emperor’ cf. Zon. xiii.4, p.189.19, alluding to Julian’s *Caesars*.

26.33 ὦ κράτιστε βασιλεῦ, ‘Most powerful King’. The expression is used almost exclusively in the *Wars* by those addressing Khusro, cf. ii.3.47, 11.29, although Belisarius uses it in his plea to Justinian for more resources to be sent to Italy in late 545, vii.13.3. Stephanus’ insistence that Khusro would gain no glory from his plundering of cities echoes Procopius’ own view at ii.11.27.

26.35 ὅσπερ σε τῶν ἐσομένων οὐδὲν προειδὼς ἐξέθρεψά τε καὶ τῷ πατρὶ τῷ σῶ ξύμβουλος γεγονὼς, ἐφ’ ᾧ σε τῆς ἀρχῆς διάδοχον καταστήσεται. ‘I who reared you, knowing nothing of what was to come, and who was your father’s adviser and told him to make you his successor on the throne’. Stephanus was not the only person to make this claim: see i.11.5n. PZ ix.7 recounts that both the Roman envoy Rufinus and the holy man Moses, who healed Kavadh, recommended Khusro’s succession, cf. Börm 2007, 115 n.3.

26.36 οἱ γὰρ ἄνθρωποι τὰ πολλὰ τῶν ἀτυχημάτων σφίσιν αὐτοῖς ἐκ τοῦ ἐπὶ πλεῖστον τῶν ξυμβησομένων προστρίβονται, ‘since for the most part, men bring upon themselves their future misfortunes.’ See Dahn 1865, 226–7 with 226 n.3, on Procopius’ somewhat inconsistent reflections on the actions of an apparently random chance, citing also viii.33.24–34.1.

26.38 εἰ μὴ Πέτρον τε καὶ Περάνιον αὐτῷ παραδοῖεν Ῥωμαῖοι, ὅτι δὴ οἱ, δοῦλοί γε ὄντες πατρῷοι, τετολμήκασιν ἀντιτάξασθαι,

‘unless the Romans surrendered Peter and Peranius to him (Khusro), because they had dared to join battle against him though they were his hereditary slaves’. Even the Persian nobility were regarded as slaves of the king: see Börm 2007, 134, with Widengren 1976, 252–63 and i.6.16n. Peter was from Arzanene, which was under Persian control: see ii.15.7n. Peranius was an Iberian prince: see i.12.11n. The section from 26.38 to 26.44 is quoted in *Exc. de leg. Rom.* 104.9–30.

26.39 τοῦτο δὲ ἦν μὴ δρᾶν Ῥωμαίοις ἐν ἡδονῇ ἔστιν, ‘And if the Romans did not find it pleasing to do this.’ Cf. Hdt. iv.139.1, vii.15.3 for the idiom ἐν ἡδονῇ ἔστιν, *en hēdonē estin*, ‘it is a pleasure’, lit. ‘in pleasure’, with *LSJ*, s.v. ἡδονή. Procopius uses it likewise at v.6.18 in the context of unappealing options.

The alternatives offered by Khusro were almost equivalent to the city’s capture: given that the Eternal Peace had cost 110 *centenaria*, 500 represents a huge sum, cf. i.22.3n. In 540 Khusro had been willing to abandon his invasion for ten *centenaria*, ii.6.25, while the Edessenes had bought the king off later the same year for just two, ii.12.34. On the other hand, Kavadh’s emissary Bawi had asked the Roman general Areobindus in 503 for 10,000 pounds of gold to desist from the siege; the general had been willing to expend 7000, but the Persians refused the offer. See Ps.-Josh. 59 with Greatrex 1998, 104. The city undoubtedly possessed great wealth, as Whittow 1990, 17–18, insists: when Khusro II finally captured it in the 610s his forces seized 120,000 pounds of silver alone according to Mich. Syr. xi.2 (404b/403). See also Banaji 2014, 609, emphasising the wealth of the region.

26.40 ταῦτα μὲν ὁ Χοσρόης ἀπέρριψεν, ‘These were the options that Khusro threw out to them.’ Cf. Hdt. i.153.2, viii.92.2 for this metaphorical use of the verb ἀπορρίπτω, *aporriptō*, ‘I cast, shoot forth’ with *LSJ*, s.v., III, and Braun 1894, 11, cf. Proc. v.7.15, 10.43, Men. Prot. frg.9.1.96.

26.44 τὰ μὲν οὖν πρῶτα Ῥωμαῖοι τὸ κατὰ τὸν λόφον τεῖχος ἑτέρα ἐνεχέρουν οἰκοδομίᾳ τινὶ ὑπερβαλέσθαι, ‘At first the Romans tried to raise the wall opposite the hill higher by means of another structure.’ Petersen 2013, 531, supposes that this structure was placed on top of the wall, which seems probable. Cf. Ps.-Josh. 50 with Greatrex 1998, 85, who describes how the Amidenes in 502 built up their wall opposite where the Persians were erecting their mound. See also more generally Petersen 2013, 278–82, on mounds and defensive countermeasures.

26.45 οἱ δὲ τὸν Μαρτῖνον ἐξαπατῶντες, ‘But they deceived Martin’, as became clear soon afterwards, 27.6: they were playing for time. Cf. 30.7, where the Persian commander Mirranes (Mihran) deceives the Roman general Dagisthaeus into deferring his assault on Petra.

26.46 ἐπεὶ καὶ Βελισάριον, ὅνπερ τῇ τε δυνάμει καὶ τῷ ἀξιώματι πολὺ Μαρτίνου προὔχειν οὐδ’ ἂν αὐτὸς ἀντεῖποι, ‘Belisarius too, who, as not even Martin himself would deny, was far superior to him in power and rank.’ Procopius here reports in indirect speech the misleading statements put forward to Martin by the Persian generals. As his readers would doubtless be aware, Belisarius’ station was far from high following his recall from the front in 542, cf. ii.21.34n: see *PLRE* iii, 211, with Proc. *Anecd.* 4.13, 16, 20–1.

26.46 πείσαι μὲν ἔναγχος τὸν Περσῶν βασιλέα, ὄντα δὴ πού ἐν μέσοις Ῥωμαίοις, ἐνθένδε ἀπαλλάσσεσθαι ἐς τὰ Περσῶν ἥθη, ὑποσχόμενον πρέσβεις τε παρ’ αὐτὸν οὐκ εἰς μακρὰν ἐκ Βυζαντίου ἀφίξεσθαι, ‘(Belisarius) had recently persuaded the Persian king when he was in the midst of the Romans to depart to Persia, promising that envoys would soon come to him from Byzantium.’ An allusion to ii.21.25, events of 542, cf. ii.24.3n; note also ii.21.1, where Khusro makes a similar excuse for his invasion of 542. The Persians were right to point out that no ambassadors had come to discuss peace terms because the envoys that had been sent, Constantianus and Sergius, had incurred significant delays *en route*; the attempt to pin the blame for the continuation of the war on Justinian recalls earlier accusations by Khusro at ii.9.11, 10.16.

27.1 διώρυχα ἐκ τῆς πόλεως ἔνερθεν τῶν πολεμίων τοῦ χώματος ἐργασάμενοι, ‘They made a trench from the city under the enemy mound.’ Sasanian armies regularly erected mounds or ramps to capture cities, as at Amida in 502–3, cf. i.7.14n on their techniques and expertise with Petersen 2013, 281–2. The Romans in turn often resorted to undermining the mounds, as also happened at Amida, cf. i.7.14n with Petersen 2013, 35.

27.3 αἰσθόμενοι τε τοῦ ποιουμένου καὶ αὐτοὶ ἄνωθεν ἀρξάμενοι ἐφ’ ἑκάτερα τοῦ μέσου ὠρυσσον, ὅπως λάβοιεν τοὺς ἐκείνη κακουργοῦντας Ῥωμαίους, ‘They noticed what was happening, and they began to tunnel from above on both sides of the middle so as to catch the Romans who were causing them problems there.’ The Romans

had likewise sought to intercept Persian mining efforts at Dara in 541, ii.13.26n, cf. the extensive mining and counter-mining operations at Dura Europus in the 250s on which see (e.g.) James 2011. See also *Peri Strat.* 13.35–9 on the need to put one's ear to the ground to detect mining operations, cf. Lenski 2007, 234.

27.4 ἐλαίῳ τε καταβεβρεγμένα τῷ ἐκ κέδρου πεπτοιημένῳ καὶ θείῳ τε καὶ ἀσφάλτῳ πολλῇ, 'drenched with oil of cedar and prepared with sulphur and bitumen in large quantities'. The defenders at Aquileia in 238 poured just such a liquid over the besieging forces of Maximinus Thrax, Herodian viii.4.9, cf. 27.36 below. The use of such petrochemical materials in sieges was widespread in the ancient world, as James 2011, 81, points out, citing Jos. *B.J.* 3.228. Belisarius also used such materials against Rome in 546, Proc. vii.19.10 with Petersen 2013, 536. More generally see Mayor 2003, 228–35. Joh. Lyd. *De Mens.* iv.115 (153) briefly discusses θεῖον, *theion*, 'sulphur, brimstone', and ἀσφαλτος, *asphaltos*, 'bitumen'.

27.7 οὐδένα ἀνιέντες καιρόν, 'without losing any opportunity'. An idiom unique to Procopius, cf. e.g. ii.25.31, viii.11.47. It is at this point that Evagr. *HE* iv.27 inserts the miracle wrought by the image 'not made by human hands' (on which see ii.26–7g), which allowed the fire set by the Romans to light.

27.9 ταῦτά τε καὶ πυρφόρους οἰστοὺς τοῦ χώματος πανταχόσε συχνὰ ἔπεμπον, 'they threw these, together with flaming arrows, onto all parts of the mound in great quantities'. On the flaming arrows see ii.26.30n.

27.11 ἔξ τε τὸν λόφον ἀναβάς πρῶτος ἔλαβε τοῦ κακοῦ αἴσθησιν. 'And when he (Khusro) went up onto the hill, he was the first to perceive the problem.' The image of the ruler or general surveying the scene from a height is sufficiently frequent as to be a *topos*, cf. de Jong 2018. Despite Wiesehöfer 2021, 258, the context here is rather different from ii.17.9 and need not cast doubt on Procopius' vivid account in this instance.

27.14 ἥ τε γὰρ ὁ χοῦς ἐπιβληθείη, ταύτη μὲν ὁ καπνὸς, ὡς τὸ εἶκος, ἀνεστέλλετο, ἐτέρωθι δὲ οὐκ εἰς μακρὰν ἀνεδίδοτο, αὐτὸν τοῦ πυρὸς καὶ βιάζεσθαι τὴν ἔξοδον ὅπη δύναίτο ἀναγκάζοντος. 'For where earth was thrown on, the smoke was naturally checked, but it soon

came up again in other places, because the fire compelled it to force an exit where it could.’ On the problems of extinguishing such fires see Amm. Marc. 23.4.15, who notes the greater effectiveness of earth than water, cf. Mayor 2003, 213, James 2011, 79. The expression οὐκ εἰς μακρὰν, *ouk eis makran* should be taken temporally rather than spatially, cf. i.7.19n. One would expect ἐς, *es*, rather than εἰς, *eis*, but such slips in Procopius’ atticising are not infrequent.

The verb ἐπιβληθεῖη, *epiblētheiē*, ‘(it) was thrown on’, cf. ἐπισκήψεie, *episkēpseie*, ‘(the water) fell, was thrown’, is an iterative (aorist) optative, cf. CGCG 50.21, Smyth §2340.

27.15 ὁ δὲ καπνὸς ἀμφὶ δειλὴν ὀψίαν τοσοῦτος ἐγένετο ὥστε καὶ τοῖς Καρρηνοῖς καὶ ἄλλοις τισὶ πολλῶ ἐπέκεινα ὥκημένοις ἔνδηλος εἶναι. ‘By evening there was so much smoke that it could be seen by the inhabitants of Carrhae and others living far beyond.’ Carrhae lies just under 40 km south-east of Edessa. For the expression ἀμφὶ δειλὴν ὀψίαν, *amphi deilēn opsian*, ‘towards, around evening’ see i.13.25n.

27.18 Ἐκτὴ δὲ ἀπὸ ταύτης ἡμέρας, ὀρθρου βαθέος, μοίρα τινὶ τοῦ περιπόλου λάθρα ἐπέσκηψαν κλίμακας ἔχοντες, οὗ δὴ τὸ φρούριον ἐπωνόμασται. ‘But on the sixth day after this, at the break of dawn, they secretly attacked a part of the city wall with scaling ladders, at the place that is called the Citadel.’ Khusro had had no more success in a sudden dawn approach to Edessa in 541, ii.12.31. Maur. *Strat.* x.3.46–9 (346) warns of the dangers of such secret attacks in the night.

Procopius probably refers here to the south walls of the city, where the Citadel was located, cf. Segal 1970, 188. At *Aed.* ii.7.13–16 he describes how Justinian subsequently strengthened this section of the walls, which had been vulnerable because of low cross-walls built to incorporate a hill that dominated the city; this part of the walls incorporated a *phrourion*, i.e. a citadel or fort, *Aed.* ii.7.13. See also Whitby 1987, 98.

27.19 τῶν δὲ φυλακῆν ἐνταῦθα ἐχόντων Ῥωμαίων πρᾶόν τινα καθευδόντων ὕπνον, ‘As the night was drawing to its end and the Romans standing guard there were sleeping peacefully’. The peaceful sleep of defenders is described similarly by Procopius at i.7.23, cf. the note *ad loc.*

27.22 τὴν μεγάλην καλουμένην πύλην, ‘the so-called Great Gate’. Procopius refers to the eastern gate of the city, cf. e.g. Segal 1970, 190, Luther 1997, 154, 171 and fig. 29, p. 606 above. It is likely that it was on

this gate that Christ's promise to Abgar to protect the city was inscribed, cf. ii.12.26n with Segal 1970, 74–6. In October 499 the walls to the south of the gate had collapsed, requiring swift repairs, Ps.-Josh. 36, cf. Segal 1970, 155, Whitby 1987, 98.

27.23 οἷς δὴ Ῥωμαῖοι ὑπαντιάσαντες οὐ στρατιῶται μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἀγροῖκοι καὶ τοῦ δήμου τινές, 'The Romans met them – not only soldiers, but also peasants and some townsmen.' See ii.26.9n on the martial qualities of the Edessene population; they are further illustrated in the account that follows. Petersen 2013, 139–43, discusses the role of civilians in sieges in this period, cf. Isaac 1992, 253–4, Lenski 2007, 225, Fan Chiang 2015, 16–17. The 'townsmen' or members of the *dēmos* might refer rather to circus partisans, cf. ii.8.26n: in the defence of Antioch it is clear that Procopius is referring to partisans.

27.24 Παῦλος ἑρμηνεὺς παρὰ Χοσρόου ἦκων ἐς μέσους Ῥωμαίους ἀπήγγελλε Ῥεκινάριον ἐπὶ τῇ εἰρήνῃ ἐκ Βυζαντίου ἦκειν, 'Paul the interpreter came into the midst of the Romans from Khusro and told them that Recinarius had come from Byzantium about the peace.' Recinarius, an associate of John Troglita, features more in Corippus' *Iohannid* than in the *Wars*: he is mentioned only in this section. See *PLRE* iii, Recinarius. For Paul see ii.6.23n and 26.14n. The repetition of the verb ἦκω, *hēkō*, 'I come', seems careless.

27.28 Εἶναί τε ὑποτοπάζων οὐχ ὑγιᾶ τὸν λόγον Χοσρόης τὰ ἐς τὴν παράταξιν ἐξηρτύετο. 'Khusro suspected that their story was not sound and prepared for battle.' Procopius does not vouch for the truth of Martin's excuse: Rubin, *PvK*, 399, perceives a hostility to the commander. The expression for an unsound story or reason, οὐχ ὑγιᾶς ὁ λόγος, *oukh hygiēs ho logos*, is quite frequent in Procopius' work, generally in the negative, as here, e.g. at v.18.36. He may well have adopted it from Hdt. i.8.3, a well-known passage in which Gyges tries to refuse King Candaules' request that he observe his wife naked, describing it as 'not sound'.

27.28 καὶ τότε μὲν πλίνθων πάμπολύ τι χρῆμα ἐπὶ τὸ χῶμα ἐπέβαλε, 'He then threw a large number of bricks on the mound.' This is the mound that the Persians had abandoned, 27.17, after the Romans had set fire to its base. Petersen 2013, 531, oddly interprets the passage as referring to the filling-in of a moat. Khusro wanted to ensure that his siege

engines, mentioned in the next section, would be able to reach the wall in this sector. See Elton 2018, 106–8, for interesting remarks on Persian bricks, notably in connection with the siege of Dura Europos.

27.30 ἀλλ’ ὅπως ἀλISCOμένης τῆς πόλεως αὐτοὶ τοὺς φεύγοντας σαγηνεύσαντες λάβωσι, ‘but so that when the city was captured, they could sweep the area and catch the fugitives’. See ii.9.6n for the Persian technique of rounding up survivors. The Saracens tasked with this were doubtless Naṣrid allies, cf. Lenski 2011, 247, Edwell 2015, 247.

27.32 ἐπεὶ τῶν Ῥωμαίων οἱ πλεῖστοι ἀνήκοοί τε τῶν ποιουμένων καὶ ἀπαράσκευοι παντάπασιν ἦσαν, ‘For most of the Romans were unaware of what was happening and were totally unprepared.’ The unpreparedness of the defenders of Amida in 502 is likewise described: they too were ἀπαράσκευοι παντάπασιν, *aparaskeuoi pantapasin*, cf. i.7.4n.

27.33 καὶ ξύμπαντες ἤδη αὐταῖς γυναιξὶ καὶ παιδαρίοις ἐπὶ τὸ τεῖχος ἀνέβαινον, ‘And all the men hastened up to the wall, even with their wives and children.’ The latter groups are designated by a dative of accompaniment, on which see *CGCG* 36.51. Maur. *Strat.* x.3.32–5 (344) recommends mixing elements of the populace with the soldiers on the wall, partly to reduce the chances of strife within the city, cf. Petersen 2013, 140.

27.34 καὶ τῶν ἀγροίκων πολλοὶ ἐς τοὺς βαρβάρους ἔργα θαυμαστά ἐπεδείκνυντο, ‘and many peasants performed amazing deeds of valour against the barbarians.’ Cf. i.1.6–7n: Procopius’ work aims to highlight just such glorious deeds, as also at i.14.39, 18.37. See Basso and Greatrex 2018, 69.

27.36 καὶ ζέον ὑπεράγαν τὸ ἔλαιον περιρραντηρίοις τισὶν ἐπιχέοντες ἔτι μᾶλλον τοὺς πολεμίους τοὺς τῷ περιβόλῳ προσιόντας ἐλύπουν, ‘They poured the oil, boiling vigorously, onto the enemy by means of a sprinkler and hurt them even more as they approached the wall.’ Herodian viii.4.9 describes a similar device that showered hot pitch, sulphur and bitumen onto the besiegers of Aquileia in 238, cf. *Peri Strat.* 13.64–6. A περιρραντήριον, *perirrantērion*, usually refers to a vessel used for sprinkling water in a religious context: see *LSJ*, s.v. with Hdt. i.51.4.

27.38 θυμῷ δὲ πολλῷ ὁ Χοσρόης ἐχόμενος, ‘But Khusro was seized by a violent anger.’ See i.23.27n, ii.5.2–6n, 17.11n, on this consistent depiction of the choleric king, cf. Whitby 1994, 241. The king’s threats to his troops recalls Kavadh’s behaviour at Amida in 503, cf. i.7.28n with Börm 2007, 249.

27.39 τοὺς τε πύργους καὶ τὰς ἄλλας μηχανὰς τῷ τείχει προσῆγον, ‘they brought towers and other engines against the wall’. No further details are provided concerning the siege-engines employed by the Persians. Siege-towers were commonly used to provide a platform for the besiegers against the defenders of the walls; Vitigis built some from wood during the siege of Rome, v.21.3–4, which were to be drawn by oxen towards the walls. The Roman generals Hypatius and Patricius constructed three iron-clad wooden towers while trying to retake Amida from the Persians in 503, Ps.-Josh. 56. See Petersen 2013, 272–5, on the devices deployed during sieges, notably the *ballista* and the *onager*; Amm. Marc. 19.5.1 mentions the former, as well as towers, among the preparations made against Amida in 359. See also Petersen 2013, 532.

27.40 ἀναχωροῦντα δὲ τὸν Χοσρόην ἐτώθαζον Ῥωμαῖοι, ἐς τειχομαχίαν παρακαλοῦντες, ‘and the Romans tauntingly invited Khusro to storm the wall as he retreated.’ The Amidene defenders had behaved similarly, cf. i.7.17n, while Khusro had been mocked by the people of Antioch in 540: see ii.8.6n. In general see Petersen 2013, 318–19, on the psychological aspect of such insults.

27.41 μόνος δὲ Ἀζαρέθης ἀμφὶ πύλας τὰς Σοῖνας καλουμένας ξὺν τοῖς ἐπομένοις ἐμάχετο, οὗ δὴ Τριπυργίαν καλοῦσι τὸν χώρον, ‘Only Azarethes was still fighting with his men at the gate called Soinae, at the place they call Tripyrgia.’ On Azarethes see i.17.1n: he had led the expedition into Roman territory in 531 that had culminated in the battle of Callinicum. The gate called Soinae refers to the ‘Gate of Hours’, on the north side of the city: the Greek word represents, Segal 1970, 190 n.3, suggests, a garbled rendering of the Syriac *šāʿē*, ‘hours’, which might refer to a sun-dial, cf. Payne Smith 1903, 588. See also Luther 1997, 156. The location of the Tripyrgia is unknown; it is likely to refer to a stretch of the walls with three towers in close proximity, perhaps at a point where the wall projected forwards or backwards. See Hof 2016, 402–3, with PZ vii.4a.

27.42 ἤδη τὸ ἐκτὸς τεῖχος, ὃ δὴ καλοῦσι προτείχισμα, πολλαχῇ διελόντες οἱ βάρβαροι ἰσχυρότατα τοῖς ἐκ τοῦ μεγάλου περιβόλου ἀμυνομένοις ἐνέκειντο, ‘The barbarians had already torn down the outer wall, which they call the outwork, in many places and were pressing hard the defenders from the main wall.’ Only here in the *Wars* does Procopius use the term προτείχισμα, *proteikhisma*, ‘outwork’ or ‘fore-wall’ (the translation of Petersen 2013, 284). At *Aed.* ii.7.11 Procopius describes the subsequent strengthening of the outworks by Justinian. Their location is uncertain.

27.42 Περάνιος ξύν τε στρατιώταις πολλοῖς καὶ τῶν Ἐδεσσηνῶν τισιν, ‘Peranios sallied out with many soldiers and some Edessenes.’ On Peranios see i.12.11n, ii.24.15n, 26.38n.

27.43 Πέρσαι μὲν περὶ τε τοῖς χαρακώμασι δεδιότες καὶ σφίσιν αὐτοῖς, ‘the Persians afraid for their palisades and for themselves’. Only here and at 27.46 in *Wars* i–ii does Procopius refer to a χαρακῶμα, *kharakōma*, ‘stockade, palisade’, both times in the plural. Other peoples are also said to employ them, e.g. the Moors at iii.8.25 or the Goths at v.19.2; the term is occasionally used for the Romans, e.g. at viii.13.30 and cf. *Peri Strat.* 6.12. Petersen 2013, 278–9, suggests that the term can be used to mean either ‘fortified camp’ or ‘stockade’. It could refer to a counter-wall (cf. v.16.16), but is more likely in the present case to refer to a defensive structure.

27.44 τῇ δὲ μετ’ ἐκείνην μοῖρα μὲν τοῦ στρατοῦ Χοσρόου ἐγκελευομένου ταῖς Βαρλαοῦ καλουμέναις πύλαις ἐπέσκηψεν, ‘but on the day after, part of the army at Khusro’s order attacked the gate named after Barlaus.’ This gate lay on the south side of the city, towards the south-east corner; from there the road proceeded to Carrhae. See Segal 1970, 190, cf. idem 1959, 36, suggesting that the name may come from a bishop Barlāhā, whose church was situated nearby. Luther 1997, 156 and n.218, is more circumspect. See fig. 29, p. 606 above.

27.46 καὶ πέντε κεντηνάρια πρὸς τῶν Ἐδεσσηνῶν ὁ Χοσρόης λαβὼν ἐν γράμμασιν αὐτοῖς τὴν ὁμολογίαν ἀπέλιπε τοῦ μηδὲν Ῥωμαίοις περαιτέρω λυμήνασθαι, ‘Khusro, taking five *centenaria* from the Edessenes, left them an agreement in writing that he would do no further harm to the Romans.’ See ii.26.39n on this sum, which represented a considerable climbdown by the king. On such written agree-

ments see Börm 2007, 156–7, noting Tabari's mention of such a document in Peroz's treaty with the Hephthalites, 876/115.

ii.28–30 Diplomacy and the War in Lazica

Just as one might have expected that the Eternal Peace would conclude the first book of the *Wars*, so one might suppose that this truce, concluded probably around April 545, would signal the end of the second book. But events relevant to the eastern frontier continued beyond this date, just as they had in 532, and so Procopius pursues his narrative, focusing henceforth for the most part on the unfinished war in Lazica, to which the truce did not apply. The somewhat disparate nature of the content, including a brief notice on the war waged between the Jafnids and the Naşrids (28.12–14), an attempt to seize Dara (28.31–44), and a notice on the fate of John the Cappadocian (30.49–54), resembles the concluding chapters of *Wars* vii, e.g. vii.29, where Procopius reports a series of incidents in 548 that have little direct bearing on the war in Italy. The concluding chapters of *Wars* i also range widely, as has been seen. In the absence of a definitive end to hostilities his account inevitably tends towards the annalistic, reporting the conflict for one year after another and inserting occasional notices on other more or less relevant contemporary events. Perhaps in an attempt to draw the strands together, at 28.15–30 he associates Khusro's plans to annex Lazica and seize Dara with the collaboration of two sinister brothers, Vahriz and Yazdgushnasp, cf. i.23.1, where he seeks to tie together plots against Justinian and Khusro, in effect justifying their presence in his work. Procopius is almost the only source to recount this phase of the war in Lazica; the truce of 545 attracts brief mentions elsewhere.

Bibliography: Braund 1994, 296–9, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 113, 123.

28.1–11 The Conclusion of a Truce (545)

While Justinian demanded that the Persians return Lazica to Roman hands following their capture of Petra, Khusro preferred to consolidate his gains by proposing a truce rather than a definitive peace. Procopius offers no details as to the nature of the truce, but Justinian is said to have accepted it without demur; he even handed over the required sum, twenty *centenaria*, forthwith and sent the doctor Tribunos to the Persian king, as requested. On the basis of Agathias' statement, ii.18.3, that the

truce between the two powers concluded ‘a little earlier’ excluded Lazica from its terms, it is generally inferred that this exclusion applied right from this first truce. This is quite likely, given that no complaints are reported from either side when hostilities continued unabated. Yet Khusro’s ambitious plans to expel the Lazi from their homeland (28.17–18), on the other hand, might have been more realistic had he believed that he could act without interference from the Romans; when Justinian did intervene upon Gubazes’ request, Khusro is described as being ‘shaken’ (29.13). Procopius’ complaints at viii.15.14–18 further give the impression that the renewed truce of 551 granted the Persians a free hand to consolidate their grip on Lazica. It is possible therefore that the truce left the status of Lazica ambiguous; in the end, it became clear that neither power was willing to relinquish its claims on the kingdom.

It is likely that the truce was concluded in spring 545, probably in April; the nineteenth year of Justinian’s reign (28.11) extends from 1 April 545 to 31 March 546, cf. ii.5.1n. It was later renewed in autumn 551 for a further five years; the Romans were obliged to make a payment also for the intervening eighteen months. See Proc. viii.15.1–13 with the detailed analysis in Greatrex 2003, 53–5.

Bibliography: Stein 1949, 502 and n.2, Braund 1994, 296, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 113, Dignas and Winter 2007, 40. Auler 1876, 24–6, argues that Procopius deliberately fails to report that the truce did not apply to Lazica. Colvin 2022, ch.6, on the other hand, thinks it unlikely that the truce excluded Lazica.

28.1 Ὑπὸ τὸν χρόνον τοῦτον Ῥωμαίων τετελευτήκασι στρατηγοὶ δύο, Ἰοῦστός τε ὁ βασιλέως ἀνεψιὸς καὶ Περάνιος ὁ Ἰβηρ, ‘Around this time two Roman commanders died, Justus the emperor’s cousin and Peranius the Iberian.’ The chronological formula is typically vague, cf. McCail 1966, 242, discussing ὑπὸ τὸν αὐτὸν χρόνον, *hypo ton auton khronon*, ‘around the same time’ in Agathias. Procopius uses the expression frequently towards the end of *Wars* vii, e.g. at 29.1, 30.3, 38.1, for synchronising events. See also i.20.1n.

The deaths are likely to have occurred later in 543, following Khusro’s withdrawal from Edessa, where Peranius had served (26.25, cf. ii.24.15n on Peranius more generally). Procopius reports that he died as the result of a hunting accident, presumably in the vicinity of the city. *PLRE* iii, Peranius, places his death in 544 because of its misdating of the siege of Edessa. Both Mesopotamia and Osrhoene offered rich hunting grounds,

whose population sometimes suffered from the depredations of wild animals, as Ps.-Josh. 85 reports, cf. PJT 102 n.479. Another leader from the Caucasus, Pharesmanes (on whom see i.8.3n), hunted extensively in the vicinity of Amida in 505/6, sometimes catching as many as forty wild boar in a day, Ps.-Josh. 90. Cf. Garsoïan and Mahé 1997, 22–5, on the importance of the hunt in Armenian society, Braund 1994, 253–4, on Iberian society; in both cases, Persian influence is clear.

On Justus see ii.24.15n; as noted there, he was a cousin, rather than a nephew, of Justinian. See further *PLRE* iii, Iustus 2.

28.2 διὸ δὴ ἀντ' αὐτῶν βασιλεὺς ἑτέρους καταστησάμενος ἔπεμψε Μάρκελλον τε, τὸν ἀδελφιδοῦν τὸν αὐτοῦ ἄρτι γενειάσκοντα, καὶ Κωνσταντιανόν, 'In their stead the emperor consequently appointed other generals, sending Marcellus, his own nephew, who had recently come of age, and Constantianus.' On the latter see ii.24.3n, cf. *PLRE* iii, Constantianus 1; as Procopius notes, he had hitherto acted as a diplomat. Marcellus was the son of Vigilantia, Justinian's sister, and Dulcidius, cf. *PLRE* iii, Marcellus 5. He enjoyed a successful career both under Justinian and during the reign of his elder brother, Justin II.

28.3 ἔπειτα δὲ Ἰουστινιανὸς βασιλεὺς πρέσβεις παρὰ Χοσρόην ἐπὶ τῇ ξυμβάσει Κωνσταντιανόν τε καὶ Σέργιον ἐπέμψεν. 'Then the Emperor Justinian sent Constantianus and Sergius as envoys to Khusrō to treat for peace.' Dewing (followed by Kaldellis, cf. García Romero, 288, 'de nuevo') strangely inserts 'a second time' in his translation, which is factually correct but absent from the Greek. Their first mission (of 542) is reported at ii.24.3, cf. the note *ad loc.* This one is *RKOR* 1300 (misdated to 544/5). Sections 3–11 are cited in *Exc. de leg. Rom.* 104.31–105.16.

28.4 οἱ δὲ αὐτὸν καταλαμβάνουσιν ἐν Ἀσσυρίοις, οὗ δὴ πολίσματα δύο Σελεύκειά τε καὶ Κτησιφῶν ἐστὶ, Μακεδόνων αὐτὰ δειμαμένων, 'They came upon him in Assyria, where the two cities of Seleucia and Ctesiphon lie, founded by the Macedonians.' On the term Assyria see ii.19.17n; here it refers clearly to Lower Mesopotamia, the heart of the Persian kingdom. Seleucia was founded on the right bank of the Tigris by Seleucus I (Nicator) c.300 B.C. as a rival to Babylon and rose to become the most populous city in the region. It fell to the Parthians in 141 B.C. and was sacked by the Romans twice in the second century A.D. Already in the fourth century the city was abandoned, but in its place had arisen a new conurbation, Veh-Ardashir (also known as

Kōkhē), to which Procopius is here evidently referring, cf. Amm. Marc. 24.5.3, identifying Seleucia with Coche (Kōkhē). The origins of Ctesiphon are less clear: Amm. Marc. 23.6.23 attributes it to a Parthian ruler Vardan (presumably Vardanes I, c. A.D. 39–45), but it was already important enough in 53 B.C. to be a target of Crassus' invasion, so Dio Cassius 40.20.3. See Paschou 1979, 158–60 on Zos. iii.23.3–4, Matthews 1989, 140–3, a vivid description of the cities, with den Boeft et al. 1998, 157–8, eidem 2002, 152–3, M. Morony, 'Beh-Ardašīr', *Elr* iv (1989), 93–4, J. Kröger, 'Ctesiphon', *Elr* vi (1993), 446–8, Hauser 2007, 468–9, 475, Cohen 2013, 157–73.

28.5 ἀμφω δὲ ταῦτα Τίγρης ποταμὸς διορίζει· οὐ γὰρ ἄλλην χώραν μεταξύ ἔχουσιν. 'The river Tigris divides the two cities, for there is no other territory between them.' Greg. Naz. *Or.* 5.10 (PG 35, 676C) describes them as appearing to constitute just one city, cf. Lib. *Or.* 18.244 with Matthews 1989, 141–2 (and map 4), den Boeft et al. 2002, 153.

28.8 χρῆναι δὲ ὑπὲρ τῆς αἰὶ ἐκεχειρίας χρήματά τε οἱ τὸν Ῥωμαίων αὐτοκράτορα δοῦναι καὶ τινὰ Τριβοῦνον ὄνομα ἱατρὸν πέμψαι, 'The Roman emperor, he added, must give him money for the ongoing truce and send him a doctor, Tribune by name.' See 28.10 on the sum involved. Khusro, like other Sasanian kings, held Roman medicine in high esteem: see Greatrex 2014c, 167–8, with further references. Procopius alludes to Tribune's services to Khusro also at *Wars* viii.10.11–16, where he reports that, having spent a year at the Persian court in 545–6, he was granted leave to make any request he wished; he therefore obtained the release of over 3000 captives. The doctor is mentioned also by PZ xii.7p and in rather garbled fashion by *Chr. Seert*, PO 7 (2011), 161–2, as 'Trikhoma'. See *PLRE* iii, Tribune 2, Tardieu 1989, 316–17, and PZT, 454 n.235. It is uncertain when Tribune's first service to Khusro, alluded to at 28.9 (cf. viii.10.13), took place.

28.10 ταῦτα ἐπεὶ βασιλεὺς Ἰουστινιανὸς ἤκουσε, τὸν τε Τριβοῦνον καὶ τὰ χρήματα εὐθύς ἐπέμψε ξυνιόντα ἐς κεντηνάρια εἴκοσιν. 'When the Emperor Justinian heard this, he immediately sent Tribune and the money, which amounted to twenty *centenaria*.' On the value of the twenty *centenaria* see i.22.3n. The sum concerned was for the entire five-year period, amounting thus to four *centenaria* per year. Evans 1996, 307, correctly argues that the emperor agreed to furnish the whole amount up front in order to avoid giving the impression of being obliged

to make annual payments and thus being a tributary; the same logic had underpinned the Eternal Peace. Justinian acted similarly in autumn 551, sending Yazdgushnasp back to Persia with 26 *centenaria*, much to Procopius' disgust: see *Wars* viii.15.12–19 with Greatrex 2003, 56–7. The annual sum corresponds closely to the 30,000 *solidi* agreed in the terms of the peace of 561/2, Men. Prot. frg.6.1.148–9, which equate to some 416.67 pounds of gold (i.e. just over four *centenaria*). See Stein 1919, 30 n.6 and Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 278 n.46.

On the date of the conclusion of the truce see 28.1–11n.

28.12–14 The Wars of al-Harith and al-Mundhir

The brief narrative of two battles between the phylarchs associated with each power sits awkwardly here: it is linked neither to the conclusion of the truce nor to the subsequent plans of Khusro. Procopius relates two episodes, the first involving a *razzia* by al-Mundhir that led to the death of one of al-Harith's sons, while in the second, soon afterwards, the Jafnid avenged himself in a full-scale battle, routing his adversary's forces and nearly capturing two of his sons. Apparently on the basis of al-Harith's personal loss, rather than his victory, Procopius revises his earlier negative judgement on the leader, concluding that his loyalty to the Romans was now quite evident, cf. i.17.47n and ii.19.26n. At viii.11.10 the Persian ambassador Yazdgushnasp alludes to al-Harith's victory during negotiations in Constantinople in 551. The brief notice resembles the somewhat disparate reports at vii.40, cf. viii.17.20–2, a summary of events in North Africa in the early 550s.

The date of the confrontations is unclear: they are merely placed 'a little later'. One would normally therefore suppose that they took place sometime before the next events related, i.e. in 546 or 547: see 28.31–44n on the attempt to capture Dara. If this is correct, then they are otherwise unattested, though no less significant for that: al-Harith seems to have had the upper hand henceforth. It has been argued, however, that the decisive victory of al-Harith here described might be identified with that reported by Michael the Syrian (ix.33, 323–4a/269), dated to June 554. Michael here describes the defeat of al-Mundhir during a raid near Chalcis in a battle in which a son of al-Harith was killed. Clearly the accounts differ: Procopius relates two engagements, while Michael has just one. On the other hand, both have the Jafnid ruler as the victor and note the loss of a son. The proposal must remain speculative for the moment, the more so since it is generally supposed that *Wars* i–ii were

completed in 550. Greatrex 2016b argues, however, for a possible later date, cf. i.20.13n.

Bibliography: Stein 1949, 503 and n.1, Shahîd 1995, 236–44, 263–4, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 129–30, Edwell 2015, 248, Greatrex 2016b.

28.12 Ὀλίγω δὲ ὕστερον Ἀρέθας τε καὶ Ἀλαμούνδαρος οἱ τῶν Σαρακηνῶν ἄρχοντες πόλεμον πρὸς ἀλλήλους κατὰ μόνας διέφερον, ‘A little later al-Harith and al-Mundhir, the chiefs of the Saracens, engaged in war against one another on their own.’ On the former, see the preceding note, on the latter see i.17.40n. On the expression κατὰ μόνας, *kata monas*, ‘on their own’ see ii.2.7n. On the vague formula ὀλίγω δὲ ὕστερον, *oligō hysteron*, ‘a little later’, see i.11.1n.

28.13 καὶ Ἀλαμούνδαρος μὲν ἓνα τῶν Ἀρέθα παίδων ἵππους νέμοντα ἐξ ἐπιδρομῆς ἐλὼν τῇ Ἀφροδίτῃ εὐθύς ἔθυσσε, ‘Al-Mundhir, having seized one of al-Harith’s sons pasturing horses in a lightning raid, immediately sacrificed him to Aphrodite.’ For ἐξ ἐπιδρομῆς, *ex epidromēs*, ‘in a lightning raid’ see i.7.3n. The sacrifice of a son of his bitter foe to Aphrodite, by which Procopius probably alludes to the Arabian deity al-‘Uzzā, can be seen as an attempt to signal the superiority of paganism to Christianity. The goddess’ victims, Lenski 2011, 247, notes, were supposed to be young and attractive. See further Shahîd 1995, 238, 722–6. Cf. PZ viii.5a, reporting the sacrifice by al-Mundhir of hundreds of nuns to ‘Uzzai, with PZT 298 n.71. For general discussion on human sacrifice among the Arab tribesmen see Lenski 2011, 257, Ward 2014, 37–8. On the importance of horses and cavalry to the Jafnids see Shahîd 1995, 239, idem 2002, 57–60.

Procopius concludes from this event that al-Harith was not betraying the Romans. Herwerden 1906, 45, finds the reasoning dubious, but presumably Procopius considered that such a personal loss, as well as the victory that followed it, clearly established the phylarch’s loyalty. See also Shahîd 1995, 238.

28.14 καὶ παρ’ ὀλίγον Ἀρέθας ἦλθε δύο τῶν Ἀλαμουνδάρου παίδων ζῶντας ἐλεῖν, οὐ μέντοι γε εἴλε, ‘Al-Harith came close to capturing alive two sons of al-Mundhir, but did not quite succeed.’ Shahîd 1995, 238–9, finds the remark critical, perceiving in it part of Procopius’ continuing bias against the Jafnids, despite his positive verdict immediately above. But the detail can also be seen in a positive light: not only had

al-Harith won a decisive victory, he had very nearly avenged the death of his own son. For the idiom παρ' ὀλίγον, *par' oligon*, 'nearly', cf. Thuc. vii.71.3 with *LSJ*, 1215, ὀλίγος, IV.9; it is common in Polybius, e.g. 2.55.4. For its use with ἔρχομαι, *erkhomai*, 'I go', in this context, 'I come near', cf. Dio Cassius 48.9.2.

28.15–30 Khusro's Plans against Dara and Lazica

Procopius weaves together the two main strands of Khusro's operations to gain the upper hand against Justinian; he attributes their execution to two brothers, faithful and devious henchmen of the Persian king, Vahriz (Phabrizus in Procopius) and Yazdgushnasp (Isdigousnas). The latter was a regular ambassador to Constantinople and continues to attract the author's criticisms in *Wars* viii, notably at 15.19–20. Other than the two brothers, however, there is no obvious link between the two plots hatched by the king. The advantages in consolidating the Persian grip on Lazica recall the arguments made by the Lazic envoys to Khusro at ii.15.27–9, cf. the notes *ad loc.*; the remarks on the relative unproductiveness of the kingdom likewise recall his assertions at 15.4–5, on which see the notes *ad loc.*

Sections 15–17 (up to Κόλχους, *Kolkhou*, 'the Colchians') are preserved only in the Constantinian *Excerpta*; there is therefore a lacuna in Dindorf's CSHB edition here, p.282. See *Exc. de leg. Rom.* 105.16–27 with Bauer 1891.

Bibliography: Braund 1994, 296–8, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 116–17, Stickler 2019, 162. Colvin 2022, ch.6, suggests that Procopius deliberately plays up these Persian plots in order to justify the subsequent Roman intervention in Lazica.

28.15 Χοσρόης δὲ, ὁ Περσῶν βασιλεὺς, ἐνδηλος γέγονε τὴν ἐκεχειρίαν νῶ δολερῶ πρὸς Ῥωμαίους πεποιημένος, 'It became clear, however, that the Persian king Khusro had concluded the truce with the Romans with treacherous intent.' The 'treacherous intent' recalls Psammetichus of Egypt at Hdt. ii.151.3, although he acted οὐδενὶ δολερῶ νόῳ, *oudenī dolerō noō*, 'with no treacherous intent'; cf. Proc. iv.21.4, v.1.25 and elsewhere. Cf. ii.11.4, 38 on the insincerity of Khusro.

28.16 τρίτῳ γὰρ τῆς ἐκεχειρίας ἐνιαυτῷ μηχανᾶται τοιάδε. 'For in the third year of the truce he contrived the following plan.' Since the

truce is likely to have come into effect in April 545 (see ii.28.1–11n), it follows that Khusro's plans date to 547/8, cf. e.g. Dignas and Winter 2007, 248 (placing the attempt on Dara in 547).

28.16 ἦστην ἐν Πέρσαις ἀδελφοὶ δύο, Φάβριζός τε καὶ Ἰσδιγούσνας, 'Among the Persians lived two brothers, Vahriz and Yazdgushnasp', for whom Procopius uses the Greek Phabrizus and Isdigousnas; see ii.28.15–30n. On their names and careers see *PLRE* iii, Phabrizus, Isdigousnas Zich, cf. Justi 1895, 340, 149, 'Yazdwsnasp 4', Gignoux 1986, nos. 988, 1048. Men. Prot., e.g. at frg.6.1.12–13, renders the latter's name as Ἰεσδεγουσνάφ (Iesdegousnaph), adding that he held the rank of Zikh, which may have been rather a family name. See also Diebler 1995, 198–200, Schmitt 2004, 672. Agath. iv.15.4 renders the former's as Οὐαφρίζης (Waphrizēs); Nöldeke 1879, 473, suggested that the name might equate to the Persian Barzin. Likewise Jackson Bonner 2015a, 105, identifies him with Firdausi's Ram Barzīn (cf. Börm 2007, 120 n.4) though in idem 2020, 195 n.132, he suggests that Procopius' name corresponds to the Persian Fariburz. See also i.12.10n, where Procopius mentions a Persian title *varizēs*: here again, a title may have been mistaken for a name, cf. Nöldeke 1879, 223 n.2 with Börm 2007, 140 n.7.

Yazdgushnasp served on several embassies to Constantinople; he died *en route* there in 567. His brother was responsible for quelling the revolt of Khusro's son Anasozadus (Anūš Zād), Proc. viii.10.19 (on which see ii.24.8n), and is last heard of serving in the Caucasus in 556. The characterisation of the brothers' wickedness is typically vehement and clichéd, cf. i.24.13n.

28.16 καὶ δόξαν ἐπὶ τῇ δεινότητι καὶ κακοτροπία πολλὴν ἔχοντε, 'They also enjoyed a great reputation for cunning and malice.' The word κακοτροπία, *kakotropia*, 'badness of habits, malice', first appears at Thuc. iii.83.1, describing the stasis at Corcyra, a well-known passage, cf. Jos. *A.J.* 17.17. It is a strong word, applied twice to Justinian at *Anecd.* 8.23, 27.

Throughout this section, when describing the two brothers, Procopius uses the dual forms, cf. i.12.21n. On the plans to expel the Lazi and colonise Lazica see 28.29–30n.

28.18 ἔρμαιον γὰρ καὶ λόγου πολλοῦ ἄξιον ἐφαίνετο εἶναι, 'It seemed to him that it would be a significant boon.' The term ἔρμαιον, *hermaion*, 'a gift of Hermes', hence 'an unexpected piece of good luck', is

quite rare in Procopius, but cf. v.28.20 for a very similar context; the present passage is cited in *Etym. Gud.* vol.2, p.527.2. Cf. also Suda Θ389 (= [Priscus], ed. Carolla, fig.70*, p.98.28), Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* iii.73.4.

28.18 ξύμφορον λογισαμένῳ τῇ Περσῶν ἀρχῇ κατὰ πολλὰ ἔσεσθαι τοῦτό γε, ‘since he reasoned that it (Lazica) would be an asset to the Persian kingdom in many respects’. Clearly the definitive annexation of Lazica would have been a considerable coup for the Persians and have strengthened their hand in the Caucasus; see ii.15 for the Lazi’s decision to throw in their lot with the Persians, dissatisfied with Roman rule and the administration of John Tzibus. In the following sections Procopius offers a plausible analysis of the benefits of control of Lazica. Whether it was necessary to deport the Lazi to attain these is doubted by Braund 1994, 297.

28.20 ἐπειδὴ γὰρ οἱ τούτων δὴ λογιμώτατοι τῶν βαρβάρων ὁμοῦ Γουργενῇ τῷ βασιλεῖ ἐς ἀπόστασιν εἶδον, ὥσπερ μοι ἐν τοῖς ἔμπροσθε λόγοις ἐρρήθη, ‘ever since the most distinguished among these barbarians had set their sights on revolt, as I reported earlier’. See i.12.2–5n on Gurgenes’ defection to the Romans in the 520s, cf. i.22.16n: many Iberians remained in Constantinople after the Eternal Peace of 532.

The expression ἐς ἀπόστασιν εἶδον, *es apostasin eidon*, ‘they set their sights on revolt’ is a Procopian coinage, cf. iii.10.29 (with εἰς, *eis*, in place of ἐς), iv.8.9 and elsewhere, cf. πρὸς ἀπόστασιν εἶδον, *pros apostasin eidon*, Suda, 1430, Zos. i.61.1.

28.20 οὔτε βασιλέα σφίσι καταστήσεσθαι τὸ ἐνθένδε ξυνεχώρουν Πέρσαι οὔτε αὐτογνωμονοῦντες Περσῶν κατήκοοι Ἰβηρες ἦσαν, ‘the Persians no longer allowed them to appoint a king for themselves, while the Iberians proved unwilling subjects of the Persians’. See i.22.16n for an Iberian King Zamanarzus, said by Theoph. 216 to have visited Justinian in 534/5. Toumanoff 1963, 371–3, argues that Procopius is mistaken to infer the abolition of the Iberian royal family: the ‘History of Vakhtang Gorgasali’ in *Kartlis Tskhovreba*, 204–6 (tr. Thomson, 223–5), gives the names of successors of Vakhtang Gorgasal (sometimes identified with Gurgenes), cf. Toumanoff 1963, 378, idem 1969, 29. Schleicher 2019, 84, plausibly suggests that various royal factions with limited authority co-existed, while at the same time the Persians tightened their grip on the kingdom, cf. Braund 1994, 283–4.

28.21 ἔνδηλοί τε Ἰβηρες ἦσαν δυσανασχετοῦντές τε ἰσχυρότατα, ‘It was clear that the Iberians most strenuously objected to their condition.’ Cf. Thuc. vii.71.6 for the participle δυσανασχετοῦντές, *dysanaskhetountes*, ‘bearing ill’.

28.22 καὶ πρὸς Οὐννων τῶν Λαζικῇ προσοίκων ἀδῆωτον μὲν τὴν Περσῶν ἀρχὴν ἐς αἰὶ ἔσεσθαι, ‘In addition, he reckoned that the Persian kingdom would never again be plundered by the Huns who live close to Lazica.’ See i.10.6n and ii.15.3n on the Huns in question. Khusro’s reasoning follows closely the arguments propounded by the Lazic ambassadors to him at ii.15.28–9: they urge him to invade, claiming that he will then be able to control the Hunnic invasions because the country acts as an ἐπιτείχισμα, *epiteikhisma*, ‘a bulwark’, against them, the same term as is used in this section. See further ii.15.29n.

28.23 μάλιστα δὲ πάντων κατὰ τοῦτο ξυνοίσειν πρὸς Λαζικῆς ἐπικράτησιν ἡλπίζε Πέρσαις, ὅτι δὴ ἐξ αὐτῆς ὁρμώμενοι δυνήσονται οὐδενὶ πόνῳ καταθέοντες καὶ πεζῇ καὶ ναυσὶ τὰ ἐπὶ τοῦ Εὐξείνου καλουμένου πόντου χωρία Καππαδόκας μὲν, ‘Above all, he hoped that the annexation of Lazica would benefit the Persians through the fact that they would be able to set out from there and effortlessly overrun, by both land and sea forces, the districts of Cappadocia next to the so-called Euxine Sea’. Khusro’s calculations continue to mirror the claims of the Lazi themselves at ii.15.27, where they suggest that he will be able to reach Constantinople by sea; here the king also envisages conquests along the Black Sea coast. Braund 1994, 297–8, is justifiably sceptical of Procopius’ description of Khusro’s plans; see further ii.15.27n.

28.25 Λαζῶν τὸ πλῆθος τῇ Περσῶν ἀρχῇ ἐπιεικῶς ἤχθετο. μονότροποι γὰρ, εἴπερ ἄλλοι τινές, οἱ Πέρσαι εἰσὶ καὶ τὰ ἐς τὴν δίαίταν ὑπεράγαν σκληροί. ‘The majority of the Lazi had naturally resented Persian rule because the Persians are single-minded beyond all others and excessively rigid in their daily routines.’ The syntax recalls i.11.32–3 where Procopius recounts how the Persians naturally resented Seoses because of his character. The first part of the passage is abridged by Suda, E2315, cf. de Boor 1914–19, 46.

The adjective μονότροπος, *monotropos*, used only here in Procopius, usually means ‘solitary’, but in this context should be rendered ‘single-minded’, cf. Lampe, s.v., 2. On the expression εἴπερ ἄλλοι τινές, *eiper*

alloi tines, see ii.15.8n. On the more forthright criticisms of Persian customs in this section and the next see Börm 2007, 271, 273, arguing that they are rare instances.

28.26 καὶ αὐτοῖς οἱ τε νόμοι δυσπρόσοδοί εἰσι πρὸς πάντων ἀνθρώπων, ‘Among them the laws are baffling to all people.’ Dewing takes the adjective δυσπρόσοδος, *dysprosodos*, ‘hard to get at’ more literally, but Kaldellis’ revised version prefers ‘inscrutable’, cf. García Romero’s ‘draconian’, 292. See Börm 2007, 248 n.1, preferring ‘inaccessible’, ‘incomprehensible’ or ‘strange’. Procopius generally uses the word in a literal sense, e.g. for an inaccessible fortification, as at ii.25.8, though cf. v.29.4. As Börm 2007, 273, notes, the historian is not generally explicitly critical of the Persians, cf. Schmitt 2004, 676.

28.26 ἐπεὶ Λαζοὶ μὲν Χριστιανοὶ εἰσι πάντων μάλιστα, Πέρσαις δὲ ἀπ’ ἐναντίας αὐτῶν τὰ ἐς τὸ θεῖον ἅπαντα ἔχει. ‘... because the Lazi are more Christian than anyone else, but the Persians take an opposite approach to the whole issue of religion’. Procopius describes the Iberians’ Christianity in similar terms at i.12.3, which similarly leads to tensions with the Persians; there, at 12.4, he emphasises the divergences in burial practices in particular. In general see Börm 2007, 178–200, on Procopius’ treatment of Persian religion. On Christianity among the Lazi see Vasiliev 1950, 258–61, Angeli Bertinelli 1989, 145–6, Seibt 1992, 141–2, Braund 1994, 281–2, Khrushkova 2006, 22–3, Stickler 2019, 162, cf. i.11.28n. Note also Priscus frg.44/34 (p.73.11) on the fifth-century king Gubazes displaying Christian symbols on a visit to Constantinople. See further Lordkipanidse and Brakmann 1994, 90–3, on the fourth-century origins of Christianity in the region, cf. *Aed.* iii.7.6 for an allusion to an old church (repaired by Justinian) in Lazica.

28.28 ἐκ δὲ Ῥωμαίων τῶν παραλίων ἅπαντα ταῖς ναυσὶν ἐπιεσέρχεται σφίσι, ‘Everything is brought to them by ship from Romans on the coast.’ Procopius repeats, almost *verbatim*, his assertions of the weakness of the Lazic economy from ii.15.5, on which see the note *ad loc.* Braun 1885, 188, notes that the verb ἐπε(ι)σέρχεται, *epe(i)serkhetai*, ‘is imported’, is used by Thuc. at ii.38.2.

28.29 ὧν δὴ ὁ Χοσρόης αἰσθόμενος προτερῆσαι ξὺν τῷ ἀσφαλεῖ, πρὶν τι ἐς αὐτὸν νεωτερίσειαν, ἐν σπουδῇ εἶχε. ‘Aware of this,

Khusro was keen to make a move in advance and in security, before they rose in revolt against him.’ Echoes of ii.2.11–12, where the Gothic envoys urge Khusro to anticipate Justinian’s attack in safety, προτερήσαντα ἐν τῷ ἀσφαλεῖ, *proterēsanta en tō asphaleī*, whereupon the king was keen, ἐν σπουδῇ εἶχε, *en spoudē eikhe*, to invade Roman territory. For the use of the verb προτερέω, *protereō*, ‘I anticipate’ before πρὶν, *prin*, ‘before’, see Smyth §2440. Dindorf’s emendation of the manuscripts’ reading νεωτερίσειν, *neōterisein*, is gratuitous: the conjunction πρὶν, *prin*, is usually followed (when the preceding clause is affirmative) by the infinitive, cf. e.g. *CGCG* 47.14, even if the future is unusual, though note *In Chananaeam et in Pharaonem* ch.3, PG 59.688, a work attributed to Severianus of Gabala (fourth century), which has Πρὶν γὰρ λύσειν τὴν φιλονεικίαν, εὐθέως ἀνέστειλε τὴν βλασφημίαν, ‘Before resolving the quarrel, he retracted his blasphemy’. A more likely emendation, if one be needed, is to the present infinitive νεωτερίζειν, *neōterizein*.

Khusro’s plan to deport the Lazi and install Persian colonists is doubted by Braund 1994, 297. As he notes, rumours of such a plan naturally favoured Roman interests in Lazica and encouraged the inhabitants to return to their earlier allegiance.

28.31–44 Yazdgushnasp’s Attempt to Seize Dara (547)

The Persian ambassador’s plot to set fire to the Roman frontier city and thus capture it was thwarted by George, a close collaborator of Belisarius (cf. ii.19.22–3), who had been informed of the plan in advance. The Romans may have been operating double-agents since, as Procopius reports, a supposed Roman deserter brought the news to George. Nothing further is known of this particular attempt, which is usually dated to 547, although 548 is possible. A general account of the procedures for meeting ambassadors at the frontier and escorting them from there is to be found in *De Cer.* i.89 (398–400), where the commander of Dara is instructed to ensure that a Persian ambassador not stay in the city with too many followers: see Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 124–5, for a translation and commentary. The episode is included in *Exc. de leg. gent.* 496.12–36, quoting sections 30–1, 38–44.

Bibliography: Stein 1949, 503–4, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 123, Nechaeva 2004, 141–2, Dignas and Winter 2007, 248, Nechaeva 2014, 140 n.163, Brodka 2016, 118–20. Colvin 2022, ch.6, is needlessly sceptical of Procopius’ account.

28.31 Ταῦτα ὁ Χοσρόης βεβουλευμένος ἰσδιγούσαναν, ὡς ἐπὶ πρεσβείᾳ δῆθεν τῷ λόγῳ, ἐς Βυζάντιον στέλλει, ‘Once he had formed this plan, Khusro sent Yazdgushnasp to Byzantium ostensibly on an embassy.’ On the use of δῆθεν, *dēthen*, ‘forsooth’, to cast doubt on something see ii.1.13n, 5.17n. Hauray places a full stop after στέλλει, *stellei*, ‘he sends, he sent’, while Dewing and Dindorf print a comma; either is possible.

28.31 καὶ οἱ Περσῶν ἀριστίνδην ἀπολεξάμενος πεντακοσίους ξυνέπεμψεν, ‘and he despatched with him five hundred Persians selected for their valour’. The adverb ἀριστίνδην, *aristindēn*, ‘according to worth or merit’, is common in Procopius, e.g. at iii.18.5, vi.11.2, cf. Priscus frg.53.2/44 (p.80.7) (= Evagr. *HE* ii.16), Zos. iv.40.1. Khusro’s instructions to his men follow in a lengthy series of indirect commands with the infinitive, giving a somewhat breathless feel. As Brodka 2016, 119, notes, Procopius relies mainly on surmise here, drawing out the Persians’ typical faithlessness.

28.32 προείρητο γὰρ τῷ Νισίβιδος πόλεως ἄρχοντι στρατιωτῶν πλήθος ἄγχιστά πη ἐγκρυφιάζοντι ἐν παρασκευῇ ἔχειν. ‘Earlier the commander of the city of Nisibis had been told to keep in readiness, hidden somewhere nearby, a mass of soldiers.’ The participle ἐγκρυφιάζοντι, *egkryphiazonti*, ‘keeping hidden’, may be a reminiscence of Ar. *Eq.* 822; he uses it also at iii.25.19 and *Anecd.* 1.36. It is not found otherwise in historical works. Procopius notes the proximity of Nisibis to Dara at i.10.14.

28.33 ἀλλὰ τις εὖ εἰδὼς τὰ πρασσόμενα, Ῥωμαῖος μὲν ἀνὴρ, αὐτόμολος δὲ ὀλίγῳ πρότερον ἐς Πέρσας ἦκων, τὸν πάντα λόγον Γεωργίῳ φράζει, ‘But someone who knew well what was going on, a Roman man who had come to the Persians as a deserter a little earlier, reported the whole matter to George.’ See ii.28.31–44n on the supposed deserter. As Procopius states, George had assisted Belisarius in his campaign against Sisauranon, ii.19.22–3, negotiating with the Persian garrison: evidently he was a Persian specialist, which may explain his presence on the frontier at this time. Nechaeva 2004, 142 n.17, mistakenly supposes George to have been the fake deserter, but she may be right in supposing him to be involved in running such missions. See further *PLRE* ii, Georgius 4, which speculates that he may have commanded the

Roman garrison at Dara. Brodka 2016, 118–19, suggests that George was Procopius' source for the episode.

28.34 Γεώργιος οὖν ἐν τοῖς Ῥωμαίων τε καὶ Περσῶν ὁρίοις ἀπαντήσας τῷ πρεσβευτῇ τούτῳ ἔφασκεν οὐ κατὰ πρεσβείαν τὰ ποιούμενα εἶναι, καὶ οὐ ποτε Πέρσας τοσούτους τὸ πλῆθος ἐν πόλει Ῥωμαίων αὐλίσασθαι. 'George therefore met this ambassador on the border between Roman and Persian territory and stated that he was not acting according to the norms of an embassy and that never had such a large mass of Persians taken up quarters in a Roman city.' George acts in accordance with the description of protocol laid out at *De Cer.* i.98.1–25 (i.89), meeting the Persian delegation on the frontier, and then ensuring that, when the ambassador comes to Dara, he is not followed by too many attendants; Yazdgushnasp is mentioned at i.98.118 (i.89), where his name is rendered as Iesdekes. See Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 275 n.6, for a survey of opinions as to the dating of the embassy described in *De Cer.*

28.35 χρῆν γὰρ τοὺς μὲν ἄλλους ἅπαντας ἐν χωρίῳ Ἀμμώδιος ἀπολιπεῖν, αὐτῷ δὲ ξὺν ὀλίγοις τισὶν ἐς πόλιν Δάρας ἐσιτητὰ εἶναι, 'He must therefore leave all the others in the village of Ammodius, while he himself, with a few companions, would be allowed into the city of Dara.' Ammodius lay 20 stades, just a few kilometres, from Dara, hard by the frontier itself: see i.13.15n. Procopius is fond of the verbal adjective ἐσιτητός, *esitētos*, 'accessible' (cf. *CGCG* 37.4 on the sense) generally used for gaining entry to a city, cf. e.g. ii.30.7, v.14.16.

28.39 τὰ μέντοι δῶρα παρὰ Χοσρόου, ἥπερ εἶθισται, καὶ γράμματα βασιλεῖ ἔδωκε, δι' ὧν ὁ Χοσρόης Ἰουστινιανὸν βασιλέα σημῆναι ἠξίου εἶ οἱ τὸ σῶμα ὑγιείας πέρι ὡς ἄριστα ἔχοι, 'However, he presented to the emperor gifts from Khusro, as is customary, and a letter, in which Khusro asked the Emperor Justinian to report as to whether his physical health was as excellent as it could be.' The presenting of gifts and the enquiry as to the emperor's health correspond closely to the description of *De Cer.* i.98.138–45 (i.89). On the nature of the gifts handed over see Diebler 1995, 209–11, who suggests that silver plates were often sent.

28.40 ὧν ἡμεῖς ἴσμεν, 'of whom we know', cf. i.1.7n, a Thucydidean turn of phrase common in Procopius, e.g. at i.12.3, 24.12, often used with superlatives.

28.41 ὥστε καὶ, ἡνίκα δὴ αὐτὸν ἐστιῶη, Βραδούκιον, ὅσπερ αὐτῷ ἐρμηνεύς εἶπετο, ξὺν αὐτῷ ἐπὶ τῆς στιβάδος κατέκλινε, ‘such that, whenever he (Justinian) entertained him (Yazdgushnasp), he invited Braducius, who followed him as an interpreter, to recline with him on the couch’. The honour paid to Braducius led to his execution in Persia: Khusro, Procopius reports at viii.11.8–9, inferred that Braducius must have betrayed the Persians, although he notes that some suspected Yazdgushnasp of bringing about his downfall. See further *PLRE* iii, Braducius, Nechaeva 2004, 143–4. The verb ἐστιῶη, *hestiōē*, ‘he entertained’, is an iterative optative, cf. *CGCG* 47.10.

The couch to which Procopius refers, the στιβάς, *stibas*, refers to a continuous semicircular couch on which the diners reclined together; this form of couch, known as the *stibadium* or *sigma*, was popular in Late Antiquity. See Dunbabin 2003, 43–6, 169–74, Malmberg 2005, 20–2, Stephenson 2016, 63–9. At iii.21.2–3 Procopius explains that banqueting halls where one reclined were known as the Delphix, whether at Carthage or at Constantinople, although Guillard 1969, 170–80, identifies the Delphix rather with the Tribunal of the Araia, an open court just outside the Triklinos of Nineteen couches (on which see i.24.9n). On the honour involved in proximity to the emperor see Malmberg 2005, 16–18.

28.41 πρᾶγμα πῶποτε οὐ γεγονὸς πρότερον ἐκ τοῦ παντὸς χρόνου, ‘a gesture with no precedent at any time’, more literally ‘a thing that had never before happened in all time’. A very emphatic statement, based perhaps on Dem. *Or.* 18 (*De Corona*), 203, cf. Proc. *Aed.* iv.2.14 (in a positive context), *Anecd.* 30.24 (in a highly negative one, concerning Theodora’s unprecedented gifts to the Persians).

28.42 βασιλεῖ ὁμοτράπεζον γεγονότα, ‘sharing a table with an emperor’. The phrasing recalls Hdt. iii.132.1 concerning the doctor Democedes at Darius’ court.

28.44 πλέον αὐτὰ κατατείνοντα ἢ ἐς χρυσοῦ κεντηνάρια δέκα εὐρήσει, ‘he would find that they (the gifts received by Yazdgushnasp from Justinian) reached a total of more than ten *centenaria*’. The ambassador evidently enriched himself considerably during his ten-month stay in the imperial capital. Nechaeva 2004, 143–4, cf. eadem 2012, 196, suggests that he may have been induced to serve Roman interests as a double-agent, which could account for the lavish gifts. Whether Procopius was aware of this or not, he was dissatisfied by the results, as is

clear likewise from his treatment of his embassy in 550–1: see viii.11.4–10, 15.1–20 (on this occasion noting the remarkable freedom of movement enjoyed by Yazdgushnasp) with Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 124.

The sentence is a mixed conditional, on which see *CGCG* 49.17, featuring a potential protasis with the verb in the optative (unusually with *ῥῑ*, *ēn*, but cf. ii.19.38n) and a future indicative apodosis.

29.1–30.48 The War in Lazica in 547–8

History

Procopius offers few clues as to the chronology of the renewed hostilities in Lazica, save that at 30.48 he concludes his narrative by stating that the end of the fourth year of the truce had been reached, i.e. March/April 549, which coincides (on 30 March) with the end of the twenty-third year of Justinian's reign. See ii.5.1n. It is necessary therefore to work backwards from this point. It is likely that Vahriz (Phabrizus) arrived at Petra in 547, at the same time as the plot against Dara, and tried to make away with the Lazic king Gubazes; the king, informed of the plot, turned to Justinian for help (29.1–9). The emperor accepted the request and despatched Dagisthaeus with 7000 regular soldiers and 1000 Tzani, who set about trying to recapture Petra. It would have taken time to assemble these forces and to despatch them to Lazica, and so it may be inferred that these arrived in spring 548. Although the Romans narrowly failed to seize Petra, which was relieved by Mihr-Mihroe, reprovisioned and regarrisoned, the Persians also ran into difficulties. By the end of the campaigning of 548 the Romans had inflicted several significant defeats on the Persians and had cut them off from contact with Petra. Stein 1949, 505, argues that the last events reported in ii.30 took place in early 549, inferring from Procopius' statement at 30.48 that they must have occurred shortly before. In fact, Procopius usually inserts these chronological markers at the start of a new campaigning season, as winter ends (cf. e.g. i.16.10, ii.5.1, v.7.37), so that one would therefore expect all the previous events to have taken place the previous calendar year, i.e. 548. For geographical orientation see fig. 30, p. 641.

Historiography

As Colvin 2013 convincingly demonstrates, Procopius almost certainly relied upon correspondence from the Roman command to draw up his

narrative of these events, cf. already Veh, 505, Börm 2007, 212 and n.3. This may help to account for the rather staccato feel of the final chapter, which constantly shifts between Roman, Lazic and Persian manoeuvres, as likewise for the more frequent repetition of certain expressions, e.g. the adverb ταύτη, *tautē*, ‘thus, so’, to be found six times in ii.30 (alongside two uses of the same word as a demonstrative adjective), or ἐνθένδε, *enthende*, ‘hence, next’ found seven times in the last two chapters. The rather formulaic ἐτύγχανε δὲ πολλῷ πρότερον, *etyngkhane de pollō proteron*, ‘it happened that much earlier’ occurs at both 29.29 and 30.29: see the notes *ad loc.* The concentration on Lazic affairs in these two chapters, pursued subsequently at the start of viii, is a sign, perhaps, of a growing realisation on Procopius’ part of the importance of this theatre of war, so Stickler 2019, 163–73, who sees analogies with the spread of the Peloponnesian war to Sicily in Thucydides’ work, vi–vii.

Bibliography: Stein 1949, 504–5, Braund 1994, 298–300, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 116–18, Colvin 2013, 583–3, Sartor 2018, Stickler 2019.

29.1 Ἔς τε Λαζικὴν πρῶτα μὲν ξύλα παμπληθῆ ἐς νηῶν ποίησιν ἐπιτηδείως ἔχοντα ἔπεμψεν, ‘Khusro first sent a huge mass of timber, suitable for ship-building, to Lazica.’ Braund 1994, 297–8 (cf. Colvin 2022, ch.6) is rightly sceptical of Procopius’ account: as he points out, Khusro had not ventured since 541 to build a fleet, and the region is in any case well provided with suitable timber. As noted above, ii.15.5n, Procopius underestimates Lazica’s intrinsic value. If there is any truth in the transport of timber to the region, it could have been for Petra’s defences, as Procopius reports that Khusro claimed.

29.2 ἔπειτα δὲ Περσῶν μαχίμους τριακοσίους ἀπολεξάμενος, Φάβριζόν τε, οὐπὲρ ἄρτίως ἐπεμνήσθην, αὐτοῖς ἐπιστήσας ἐνταῦθα στέλλει, ᾧ δὴ ἐπήγγελλε Γουβάζην ὡς λαθραιότατα διαχρήσασθαι, ‘Then he selected three hundred battle-ready men, along with Vahriz, whom I mentioned recently, and despatched them under his command, having instructed him to kill Gubazes as discreetly as possible.’ On Vahriz (Phabrizus) see ii.28.16n above, on Gubazes, the Lazic king, see ii.17.2n.

29.3 τὸ γὰρ ἐνθένδε αὐτῷ μελήσειν, ‘while he (Khusro) himself organised the following steps’. Braun 1894, 19, suggests the phrasing is derived from Hdt. iii.155.6, cf. Proc. vii.18.24.

29.4 ἐτύγχανε δὲ τῶν τις ἐν Κόλχοις λογίμων, Φαρσάνσης ὄνομα, τῷ Γουβάζῃ προσκεκρουκώς, ‘It happened that one of the Colchian nobles, Pharsanses by name, had clashed with Gubazes.’ Pharsanses went on to a high command in the war against Persia, cf. Agath. iv.13 with *PLRE* iii, Pharsanses.

29.5 ἐκοινολογεῖτό τε καὶ τὸν ἅπαντα λόγον ἐξενεγκὼν ἀνεπυνθάνετο τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ὅπη οἱ ἐπιχειρητέα ἐς τὴν πρᾶξιν εἶη, ‘having revealed to him the whole matter, (Vahriz) sought his (Pharsanses’) advice, asking the man how he should go about executing his mission’. Thucydides is the first to use the verbal adjective of ἐπιχειρέω, *epikheireō*, ‘I attempt’, e.g. at i.118.2. Procopius’ phrasing here seems to be echoed by Georg. Pach. xii.34 (vol.4, 607.25–6).

29.6 ὅπως οἱ ἀγγέλλοι ὅσα δὴ βασιλεῖ ἀμφὶ τῷ ξυνοίσουντι Λαζοῖς δοκοῦντα εἶη, ‘so as to announce to him (Gubazes) what the king was deciding about the future interests of the Lazi’. The sentence concludes with a periphrastic participle with the present optative of the verb ‘to be’, on which see *CGCG* 52.51 with 41.9, 19, cf. 40.14. On the preposition ἀμφί, *amphi*, ‘about’, in this context see Scheftlein 1893, 44. Cf. i.22.8 for a similar formulation.

29.7 ἐκ δὲ τοῦ ἐμφανοῦς ἐς ἀπόστασιν εἶδε, ‘but rather he (Gubazes) openly set his sights on revolt.’ On the expression see ii.28.20n.

29.9 ἀμῦναι δὲ σφίσι δυνάμει τῇ πάσῃ ἀπαλλαξείουσι τῆς Μήδων ἀρχῆς, ‘(Gubazes asked Justinian) to defend them, who now wished to be free of Persian (Medic) rule, with all his might.’ The verb ἀπαλλαξείω, *apallaxeioō*, ‘I wish to be delivered of’ is Thucydidean, cf. e.g. i.95.7. This short section (9–13) is cited in *Exc. de leg. gent.* 497.1–15.

29.10 περιχαρὴς γενόμενος, ‘he (Justinian) was overjoyed’. Cf. i.11.10n.

29.10 ἄνδρας ἑπτακισχιλίους καὶ Δαγισθαῖον ἄρχοντα καὶ Τζάνους χιλίους ἐς ἐπικουρίαν Λαζοῖς ἔπεμψεν, ‘He (Justinian) sent 7000 men and the commander Dagisthaeus with one thousand Tzani to assist the Lazi.’ On Dagisthaeus, described below at 29.33 as young and inexperienced, see *PLRE* iii, Dagisthaeus 2. He probably was appointed as *magister militum per Armeniam* to succeed Valerian, cf. Stein 1949, 505 n.2. His appointment is *RKOR* 1332. As noted at ii.29.1–30.48h, he is

likely to have arrived in Lazica in spring 548; Colvin 2022, ch.6, plausibly suggests that the troops proceeded to Trapezus by ship. On Tzanic contingents in the Roman army see i.15.25n.

29.13 οἷς δὴ ἄρχοντα Μερμερόην ἐπέστησεν, ‘for whom (the forces) he (Khusro) appointed Mihr-Mihroe as commander’. On this important Persian general see i.15.2n with *PLRE* iii, Mermeroes. Although he had been captured by the Roman commander John Troglita in Mesopotamia in the early 540s, his captivity had evidently not lasted long. Agathias ii.22.5 gives him an effusive obituary.

29.14–26 Caucasian Geography

Procopius’ description of the region in which the two great powers continued to vie for control until 556 builds on what he has already presented at i.10.1–3 and i.15.20–7, although his orientations can be hard to grasp. When we take into account i.15.26–7 it looks as though he envisaged that the Boas, as it starts to bend northwards rather than north-eastwards, constituted a sort of boundary between Iberia (on the right) and the Caucasus (presumably on the left), cf. viii.2.26. In the Caucasus, clearly perceived as a large region, he places a number of peoples, including the Alans (on whom see i.15.1n), the Abasgi and Zekhi (on whom see p. 642), and the Sabir Huns (on whom see i.15.1n). At this point Procopius conflates two rivers, the Boas/Akampsis and the Phasis, as he implicitly acknowledges at viii.2.6–9, where he refers to the mouth of the Boas/Akampsis on the Black Sea.

From 29.16 onwards he refers to the Phasis, noting correctly that most settlements lie on the north side of the river, i.e. to the right as one follows its flow westwards. To the south, on the other hand, the territory was sparsely inhabited; it was here (29.20) that Petra had been founded. His geographical survey then proceeds towards the south-west, entering Roman lands. At viii.2.3–5, 10, he refers to the same settlements, although in this case his account is proceeding eastwards from Trapezus. He returns to the theme of the contrast in population density between the regions north and south of the Phasis at viii.2.27–33, where he also discusses the Golden Fleece. He concludes his geographical description by insisting on the rugged nature of the Lazic landscape, a theme already highlighted at ii.15.32, cf. viii.13.5 (fig. 30).

There are close links between this section and viii.2–4, where the same ground is covered in greater detail. One might infer from his comments



Figure 30 Lazica and Iberia in the 540s

at viii.1.7 that certain members of the public remained disorientated by his account of campaigning in the region: he therefore justifies his much more extensive geographical description by insisting that this is necessary ‘so that (his readers) may not be obliged to hold discussions on matters (that remain) obscure to them, like shadow-boxers’.

Bibliography: Braund 1994, 290–2, 302–5, Colvin, Lordkipanidse and Murgulia 2014 (a useful overview of Lazic history and geography).

29.14 Βόας ὁ ποταμὸς ἔξουσιν ἄγχιστὰ πη τῶν Τζανικῆς ὁρίων ἐν Ἀρμενίοις, οἱ δὲ ἀμφὶ τὸ Φαράγγιον ὥκηνται. ‘The river Boas rises very close to the frontiers of Tzanica among the Armenians that inhabit Pharangium.’ Cf. i.15.20–30 on the river Boas (here incorrectly referred to as the Phasis), Pharangium and the Tzani, cf. i.15.21n. See also Colvin 2022, ch.6.

29.15 ἐνταῦθα ἔθνη ἄλλα τε πολλὰ καὶ Ἀλανοὶ τε καὶ Ἀβασγοὶ ὥκηνται Χριστιανοὶ τε καὶ Ῥωμαίοις φίλοι ἐκ παλαιοῦ ὄντες, Ζήχοι τε καὶ μετ’ αὐτοὺς Οὐννοὶ, οἱ Σάβειροι ἐπικαλοῦνται, ‘There live various peoples, among them the Alans and the Abasgi, who have long been Christians and friends of the Romans; also the Zekhi, and beyond them Huns known as Sabirs.’ See ii.29.14–26n on the Alans and Sabirs. At viii.3.12–21 Procopius furnishes more information on the Abasgi, situated along the Black Sea coast to the north of Phasis, modern Abkhazia, describing how Justinian converted them to Christianity and stamped out the practice of castrating boys for the Roman eunuch market. *NovJ.* 28.pr. ambiguously describes them in 535 as ‘ours’ (i.e. Roman) and ‘friendly’, cf. Braund 1994, 290–1. It is uncertain when during Justinian’s reign – presumably in the 530s or 540s – the Abasgi were brought more firmly within the Roman orbit: see Maas 2007, 77–9. While their conversion to Christianity seems to have been recent (though see Braund 1994, 264, for tenuous evidence of Christians in the region already in the fourth century), they are recorded as Roman allies in Arrian’s *Periplus* 11, cf. Braund 1994, 179–80. See Khrushkova 2006, 23. Colvin 2022, ch.5, suggests that Procopius revised his account of the Abasgi in *Wars* viii perhaps partly because of their defection to the Persians in the meantime.

The Zekhi lived beyond Pityus and the territory of the Abasgi, along the Black Sea coast. Procopius rightly reports, viii.4.1–2, that their kings had once been aligned with Rome, cf. Arrian, *Periplus* 18, who calls them Zilkhoi, with Braund 1994, 198, Silberman 1995, 51 n.191, Mitford 2018,

37–8 with vol.2, fig.24. By Justinian's reign, however, they were evidently independent.

29.16 ἐπειδὴν δὲ ὁ ποταμὸς οὗτος ἀφίκεται ἵνα δὴ τοῦ τε Καυκάσου καὶ Ἰβηρίας τὰ ὄρια ἐστίν, ἐνταῦθα ἐπιγινόμενων οἱ καὶ ἄλλων ὑδάτων μείζων τε παρὰ πολὺ γίνεται καὶ Φᾶσις ἀντὶ Βόα τὸ ἐνθένδε καλούμενος φέρεται, 'When this river reaches the place where lie the boundaries of the Caucasus and Iberia, it is joined there by other waters and swells to a much greater size. From that point, known as the Phasis rather than the Boas, it flows on.' On the confusion between the Boas and the Phasis see ii.29.14–26n. Procopius refers here to the region of Sarapanis in eastern Lazica, where the Phasis emerges from the mountains into the plain. Mihr-Mihroe was obliged in 551 to retrace his steps to the region in order to cross the river and proceed along the north side, Proc. viii.13.3.

29.16 ναυσίπορος γεγενημένος ἄχρι ἐς τὸν Εὐξείνιον καλούμενον πόντον, 'becoming navigable for ships as far as the so-called Euxine Sea', i.e. the Black Sea. Cf. Strabo 11.3.4 on the river's navigability once swollen by tributaries, with Roller 2018, 641 and Kvirkvelia 2020, *ad init.*, and see also 30.23–7 on the breadth and depth of the river in its lower reaches.

29.18 κῶμαί τε γὰρ αἱ Λαζῶν πᾶσαι τοῦ ποταμοῦ ἐντὸς ἐνταῦθ' αἰσὶ καὶ πολίσματα ἐκ παλαιοῦ σφίσι ταύτη πεποιήνται, ἐν τοῖς Ἀρχαιοπόλιν, ἐχυρωτάτῃ οὕσῃ, Σεβαστόπόλιν τε ἐνταῦθα καὶ τὸ Πιτιοῦντος φρούριόν ἐστι Σκάνδα τε καὶ Σαραπανίς πρὸς τοῖς Ἰβηρίας ὁρίοις. 'For all the Lazic villages lie here, on this side of the river, as well as towns built by them here long ago, among which is Archaeopolis, a very secure place. Here also lie Sebastopolis and the fortress of Pityus, as well as Scanda and Sarapanis on the border with Iberia.' By 'this side of the river', lit. 'within', Procopius actually means the north bank, cf. (e.g.) viii.13.2, which is also the European side (viii.2.29); see also i.17.35n. On the contrasting population density on either side of the Phasis see ii.29.14–26n.

The settlements listed by Procopius nearly all feature in Justinian's proud presentation of places in and around Pontus Polemoniacus in *NovJ.* 28.pr. (535). Archaeopolis, modern Nokalakevi, is a well-defended hilltop site on the river Tekhuri just under 80 km north-east of Petra that had been inhabited already in the Hellenistic period; it never fell to the Persians, despite a determined attempt by Mihr-Mihroe in 551,

recounted by Procopius at viii.14.1–44, and a further siege in 552 (viii.17.17). See Braund 1994, 302–5 (with a plan), cf. Everill et al. 2010 (a short survey), Everill 2014. Sebastopolis (modern Sukhumi) and Pityus (modern Bichvinta/Pitsunda) were long-standing Roman outposts on the Black Sea coast beyond Petra. Justinian in *NovJ.* 28.pr describes them as *phrouria*, ‘fortresses’, rather than *poleis*, ‘cities’ (cf. Proc. viii.4.5 for the same term, as here, for Pityus). By 548, however, it appears that they had been razed by Roman forces to prevent them falling into Persian hands after the fall of Petra in 541, as Procopius describes at viii.4.4–6, albeit with no date. At some later point Justinian rebuilt Sebastopolis, as Procopius reports at *Aed.* iii.7.9. See Zuckerman 1991, 531–4, Braund 2000c, 1227–8, Roques 2011, 240–1 n.98. On Scanda and Sarapanis, which lie, as Procopius says, on the Iberian frontier, see i.12.15n.

29.18 πόλεις μέντοι ἀξιολογώταται ἐνταῦθά εἰσι Ῥοδόπολις καὶ Μοχέρησις. ‘The most notable cities here, however, are Rhodopolis and Mokheresis.’ Rhodopolis, the modern Vardtsikhe, lies in eastern Lazica. In *NovJ.* 28.pr. it is referred to, like Archaeopolis, as a ‘very large and ancient fortress’. It lies in the fertile region of Mokheresis, 12 km south-west of Kutaisi, at an important crossing of the Phasis. Like Scanda and Sarapanis it was an important bulwark against the Sasanians, but its situation in a plain left it vulnerable: the three forts were therefore razed to the ground in 551 when Mihr-Mihroe approached with a substantial army. See Braund 1994, 302–3, Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 119, Murghulia 2010, 60–1. The city of Mokheresis, which gave its name to the surrounding region, cf. Proc. viii.14.45–6, lies just west of Rhodopolis, also on the north side of the Phasis. It may well be identical to the Mourisius of *NovJ.* 28.8, where it is mentioned after Scanda and Sarapanis. See Braund 1994, 291, idem 2000a, 1261. It should not be identified, however, with the Mochora of *Notitia Dignitatum*, Or. 38.38, so Zuckerman 1991, 530–1.

In general Sarantis 2013b, 343, 346, offers a useful survey of the region’s fortifications, cf. Murghulia 2010, Colvin et al. 2014, 9–11.

29.19 εὐζώνῳ ἀνδρί, ‘for an active man’. For calculations of distance based on days travelled by ‘an active man’ see i.19.27n.

29.19 ταύτην προσοικοῦσι Ῥωμαῖοι τὴν χώραν, οἱ Ποντικοὶ ἐπικαλοῦνται. ‘The Romans known as Pontic inhabit the adjacent land.’

Procopius refers to the province of Pontus Polemoniacus, the focus of *NovJ.* 28 (535). Procopius often refers to provinces as peoples, cf. i.17.47n; note also i.10.1 and see Greatrex 2018b, 335.

29.20 Πέτραν Ἰουστινιανὸς [ὁ] βασιλεὺς τὴν πόλιν ἐν τοῖς κατ' ἐμὲ χρόνοις ἐδείματο, ‘the Emperor Justinian founded the city of Petra in my own day.’ See ii.15.10–12n, where he describes the city’s foundation and the impact of John’s administration.

29.22 ἐκ δὲ Πέτρας πόλεως ἰόντι εὐθὺς πρὸς ἄνεμον νότον οἱ Ῥωμαίων ὄροι ἐκδέχονται, χωρία τε πολυάνθρωπα ἐνταῦθα ἐστὶ, τό τε Ῥιζαῖον καλούμενον καὶ Ἀθηναὶ ἄλλα τε ἄττα μέχρι Τραπεζουντίων. ‘To the south of the city of Petra the Roman borderlands start immediately, where there are densely populated villages, as well as Rhizaeum, Athens and various others as far as Trapezus.’ Procopius surveys this same region at viii.2.3–5, 10, where he mentions Rhizaeum again, and Athens, here termed a κώμη, *kōmē*, ‘village’, a place named after a woman called Athenaea, he affirms, rather than after Athenian colonists. Both are ports on the Black Sea coast between Trapezus and Petra; Rhizaeum is two days’ journey from Trapezus (viii.2.3), while Athens lies 40 km further east. At viii.2.11 Procopius also mentions the ports of Arkhabis and Apsarus. On the sites of Rhizaeum (modern Rize) and Athens (modern Pazar) see Bryer and Winfield 1985, 331–4, Mitford 2018, 408–9. On the important city of Trapezus (modern Trabzon, the medieval Trebizond), a Roman base since the first century A.D., see Bryer and Winfield 1985, 178–250, Mitford 2018, 385–408. Though assigned to Helenopontus in *NovJ.* 28 (535), in the following year it is listed among the cities of Armenia I, *NovJ.* 31 (536). Building work there by Justinian in the 540s is attested both by *Aed.* iii.7.1 and inscriptions, on which see Bryer and Winfield 1985, 182, Mitford 2018, 402.

29.23 ἡνίκα μὲν οὖν ἐπηγάγοντο Χοσρόην Λαζοὶ Βόαν ποταμὸν διαβάντες τὸν τε Φᾶσιν ἐν δεξιᾷ ἔχοντες ἐς Πέτραν ἦλθον. ‘So when the Lazi led Khusro into their territory, they crossed the river Boas and, keeping the Phasis to their right, came to Petra.’ The reference to the Boas is in error for the Phasis, cf. ii.29.14–26n; presumably the Persians crossed the Phasis somewhere in its upper reaches, near the Iberian border and the fort of Sarapanis, as Mihr-Mihroe did in 551, *Proc.* viii.13.3. In fact, as Procopius goes on to recount at ii.30.37, the Phasis could be forded further downstream, but only the Lazi knew exactly where.

The Persians may have been content to proceed towards Petra on the south side of the Phasis: not only was the land relatively uninhabited, but there are fewer tributaries flowing into the river here. Mihr-Mihroe took the same route in 549 to relieve the city (30.1), as again, it seems, in 551 (viii.13.1–3). On the rugged nature of the terrain, here again emphasised by Procopius (24–5), see ii.15.32n.

29.25 κλεισούρας ἑλληνίζοντες τὰς τοιαύτας ὁδοὺς Ῥωμαῖοι καλοῦσιν, ‘the Romans call such roads *kleisourai* in Greek.’ Procopius defines a *kleisoura* elsewhere in his works, at *Aed.* iii.3.2, cf. iii.7.5, iv.2.17 for other uses. The term refers to a narrow pass through high mountains, as he describes here. See also Th. Sim. vii.14.8, Suda Κ1761, for the term. The Greek word has been derived from the Latin *clausura*, which also means a mountain pass, e.g. at Cassiodorus, *Variae* ii.19; Bjornlie’s translation has ‘border fortresses’ rather than ‘passes’, a reasonable interpretation, since the word later came to denote a fortification placed at just such a strategic place. See Napoli and Rebuffat 1993, esp.36–7, for a detailed discussion, with Dillemann 1962, 236, Roques 2011, 229 n.41. On the general issue of Latin terminology in Procopius (and other sixth-century authors, notably John the Lydian) see (e.g.) Dmitriev 2010, esp.41 on this passage, Moore 2018, 117.

29.27 Νῦν δὲ ὁ Γουβάζης μαθὼν τὴν Περσῶν ἔφοδον τῷ Δαγισθαίῳ ἐπέστελλε πέμψαι μὲν τινας, οἱ φυλάξουσιν τὸν στενωπὸν ἰσχυρότατα, ὃς ἐκτὸς Φάσιδος ποταμοῦ ἔστι, ‘Now Gubazes, once he learnt of the Persian approach, instructed Dagisthaeus to send some men to guard very stoutly the pass that lies on the far side of the river Phasis.’ Procopius resumes his narrative from 29.13. The ‘far side’ of the Phasis is the south side, cf. ii.29.18n.

It is significant that the Lazic king is in the position of giving orders to the Roman commander: on the collaboration of the two elements see Sartor 2018, esp. 268–9. There was subsequently friction between Gubazes and other Roman generals, such as Bessas, which culminated in his assassination in 555. See Braund 1994, 307–9, *PLRE* iii, Gubazes.

The location of the pass to which Procopius refers is uncertain. It could be in the vicinity of the fortress of Telephis, which Agathias describes as being guarded by Martin in 554 (ii.19.1–2). Destunis 1880, 235 n.5, suggests it lies at modern Ozurgeti.

29.28 αὐτὸς δὲ παντὶ τῷ Κόλχων στρατῷ ἐς τὰ Λαζικῆς ἔσχατα ἦλθεν, ὡς τὸν ἐνταῦθα στενωπὸν διαφυλάξων δυνάμει τῇ πάσῃ.

‘He himself went with the entire Colchian army to the borders of Lazica in order to protect the pass there with all his might.’ Almost certainly a reference to Sarapanis, cf. viii.16.17; he could not occupy the fortress, since it had been razed by the Lazi themselves, viii.13.20, probably following the capture of Petra. See i.12.15n on the fortress. Sartor 2018, 268, underlines how the Romans were content to leave the defence of eastern Lazica to their allies.

29.29 ἐτύγγανε δὲ πολλῶ πρότερον Ἀλανούς τε καὶ Σαβείρους ἐς ξυμμαχίαν ἐπαγόμενος, ‘It happened that much earlier he had invited the Alans and the Sabirs to an alliance.’ But hardly very much earlier: the deal depended on Justinian providing Gubazes with the three *centenaria* required to enlist the Alans and Sabirs, and the Lazic king had only just returned to the Roman fold, probably in the previous year, 547. Cf. v.24.12, a letter probably of March 537, which refers to the Roman attack on Sicily ‘much earlier’; the Roman occupation took place in the opening months of 536. See i.4.1n on the similarly vague formula οὐ πολλῶ ὕστερον, *ou pollō hysteron*, ‘not much later’. On the sum offered by Gubazes, three *centenaria*, see i.22.3n. Procopius describes irregular Roman (and Persian) payments to the Sabirs at viii.11.22–4.

29.29–30 are quoted at *Exc. de leg. gent.* 497.16–34, immediately followed by 30.28–9 (without the final sentence).

29.31 ἔφασκε δὲ καὶ οἱ αὐτῷ τὸ δημόσιον τὰς συντάξεις ὀφείλειν ἐνιαυτῶν δέκα, ἐπεὶ ἐν τοῖς σιλεντιαρίοις ἐν παλατίῳ τασσόμενος οὐδὲν κεκομισμένος ἐνθένδε εἶη, ἐξ οὗ δὴ ἐς γῆν τὴν Κολχίδα Χοσρόης ἦλθε, ‘He added that the treasury owed him ten years’ salary, since he was enrolled among the *silentiarii* of the palace, but he had received nothing of it from the moment that Khusro entered the land of Colchis.’ Gubazes, whose mother was Roman (Proc. viii.9.9), had evidently been granted the position of *silentiarius* some time earlier, perhaps when living in Constantinople before he became king of Lazica. See *PLRE* iii, Gubazes. On the office of *silentiarius* see 21.2, where Procopius explains it, with the note *ad loc.*

The chronology is problematic, as Stein 1949, 505–6 n.2, long ago noted. Khusro invaded Lazica in 541 (see ii.15–19n), while Procopius is here discussing events that probably took place in 548. Hence Gubazes appears to be exaggerating the salary he is owed, although it is possible that there had been delays in paying it even before 541, as Colvin 2022, ch.6, argues. See also Rubin, *PvK*, 401. Sartor 2018, 272 and n.91, suggests that the king might have used the salary to support his

troops, but doubtless he would have expected additional Roman contributions to ensure the defence of Lazica.

29.32 βασιλεὺς δὲ Ἰουστινιανὸς ἐπιτελέσειν μὲν διενοεῖτο τὴν αἴτησιν, ἐπιγενομένης δὲ οἱ ἀσχολίας τινὸς οὐκ ἔπεμψε τῷ καθήκοντι χρόνῳ τὰ χρήματα. ‘The Emperor Justinian meant to fulfil his request, but because some pressing business arose, he did not send the money at the appointed time.’ Rubin, *PvK*, 401, finds the reference to Justinian’s lack of time, ἀσχολία, *askholia*, mocking in tone, but the criticism is rather implicit: the emperor should have found the time to fulfil Gubazes’ request, as will become clear. Procopius alludes in more critical terms to the emperor’s preoccupation with theological matters in this period at vii.32.9, cf. 35.11, where it distracts him from the war in Italy.

29.33 Δαγισθαῖος δὲ (ἦν γὰρ τις νεανίας πόλεμόν τε διενεγκεῖν Μηδικὸν οὐδαμῇ ἀξιόχρεως) τοῖς παροῦσιν οὐκ ἐπιτηδείως ἐχρῆτο. ‘But Dagisthaeus – for he was a young man by no means competent to prosecute a Persian (Medic) war – did not react appropriately to the circumstances.’ Nothing further is known of Dagisthaeus’ age. Procopius is less negative towards the young Sittas and Belisarius, i.12.21, although they were defeated in their brief incursion into Persarmenia; he is critical, on the other hand, of the young brothers Cutzes and Buzes at i.13.5. Germanus’ son Justin, likewise described as a ‘young man’ in 549 (vii.32.14) receives rather more generous treatment. On this siege of Petra see Braund 1994, 298, Petersen 2013, 542, who dates it, however, to 549.

29.34 ἐς ἑκατὸν ἄνδρας, ὥσπερ τι πάρεργον διαχειρίζων, ἔπεμψε μόνους, ‘he sent only one hundred men, as though managing some trifle’. The use of the preposition ἐς (εἰς), *es (eis)*, ‘to’ with numbers is Thucydidean, cf. e.g. i.74.1 with Scheftlein 1893, 34.

29.34 κατ’ ἀρχὰς μὲν γὰρ οὐχ ἥσσους ἢ πεντακόσιοι καὶ χίλιοι ἦσαν, ‘For although at the outset they had numbered no fewer than 1500’. It is unclear what Procopius’ source is for this and subsequent conditions among the besieged. The city fell only in 551, after the publication of *Wars* i–vii, and there were few Persian survivors, cf. viii.11.63 with Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 118–19 and Petersen 2013, 543–4. The information must therefore come from Roman estimates, perhaps from Gubazes’ critical reports, cf. ii.29.40n.

29.35 πρὸς Ῥωμαίων δὲ καὶ Λαζῶν ἐν χρόνῳ πολλῷ τειχομαχούντων βαλλόμενοι τε καὶ ἀρετὴν ἐπιδεικνύμενοι μάλιστα πάντων ὧν ἡμεῖς ἴσμεν, ‘during the lengthy battle from the walls in which they displayed a courage greater than that of anyone we know of, they were struck by missiles of the Romans and Lazi’. A harking back to the work’s preface, in which Procopius had insisted on the remarkable deeds performed in Justinian’s wars, i.1.7, ‘the greatest marvels of any that we know by report’, cf. the note *ad loc.*, signalling the Herodotean and Thucydidean echoes. Throughout the *Wars*, e.g. at v.18.12, Procopius draws attention to notable feats of martial prowess, cf. Basso and Greatrex 2018, 67–9.

29.37 ἀλλὰ ξυνέβη τούτου δὴ τοῦ χώρου ἐντὸς οἴκημα εἶναι οὐδὲν τοῦ περιβόλου διεστηκός, ὃ δὴ ἐξικνεῖτο ἐς τὸ πεπτωκός ἐφεξῆς ὅλον, ‘But it happened that there was a house in this space right next to the circuit wall that extended for the whole length of the collapsed section.’ A parallel trench would tend to bring down the adjacent city wall (cf. 29.42 below) as a result of the horizontal loads involved. Normally this would also impact the building behind the wall, whose walls might well have been damaged; but the mound of rubble that remained would equally have barred the Romans’ way into the city.

That buildings were constructed right up against city walls is clear (e.g.) from *C. Th.* 15.1.41 (401), even if in earlier times the practice had been avoided. At Dura Europos various buildings in the military quarter in the south-west of the city were clearly directly linked to the wall, cf. James 2019, 145–50. Dagisthaeus’ attack may have focused on the same weakpoint that had been targeted by Khusro in 541, cf. ii.17.21n; see also viii.11.11–14, where Procopius places it on the west side of Petra.

29.40 διὸ δὴ ὁ Δαγισθαῖος βασιλεῖ μὲν τὰ ξυνεγεθέντα ἐδήλου, ἄθλα δὲ οἱ τῆς νίκης ἐν παρασκευῇ εἶναι προὔτεινετο, σημήνας ὅσοις δὴ αὐτόν τε καὶ τὸν ἀδελφὸν τὸν αὐτοῦ χρῆν βασιλεῖα δωρήσασθαι, ‘Dagisthaeus therefore reported the developments to the emperor, proposing that prizes be prepared for him for his victory and indicating what presents the emperor should give to him and his brother.’ Colvin 2013, 585–6, plausibly suggests that Procopius derived this information from Dagisthaeus’ upbeat reports to the emperor; less positive news was probably communicated by Gubazes. The identity of his brother, mentioned only here, is unknown, cf. *PLRE* iii, Anonymus 69. Overconfidence in Procopius usually precedes a failure, like that of the

defenders at Amida (i.7.17) or of the Persian commander before the battle of Dara (i.13.17); see Dahn 1865, 148.

29.43 καὶ εἰ μὲν Δαγισθαῖος εὐθύς ἤθελε πῦρ τοῖς θεμελίοις ἐνάψαι, οἶμαι εὐθυωρὸν σφίσι τὴν πόλιν ἀλῶναι, ‘And if Dagisthaeus had wanted immediately to set fire to the foundations, I think that the city would have fallen to the Romans forthwith.’ The dilatoriness of Roman commanders in Italy in 542, confident of their capture of Verona, is likewise criticised by Procopius at vii.3.14–22, cf. his criticisms (in very similar terms) of Bessas for failing to follow up his taking of Petra at viii.13.11–14, where he adds that Justinian tended to forgive such slackness. Veh, 504, considers Procopius to be casting the blame on the emperor in the present case, cf. Rance 2021, 105, but it is surely the general who is responsible for the missed opportunity. It is not surprising that Dagisthaeus’ incompetence gave rise to suspicions of treachery, as Procopius reports at viii.9.2–4, which led to his replacement by Bessas in late 549. The accusations were raised by the Lazi, cf. ii.29.34n.

30.1 Μερμερόης δὲ, ἐπεὶ τοὺς Ἰβηρίας ὄρους παντὶ τῷ Μήδων στρατῷ ἤμειψε, πρόσω ἐχώρει, ποταμὸν Φᾶσιν ἐν δεξιᾷ ἔχων. ‘Mihir-Mihroe, when he had passed the borderlands of Iberia with the whole Persian (Medic) army, continued to advance, keeping the river Phasis on his right.’ Procopius turns to events unfolding at the same time as Dagisthaeus’ siege of Petra (in 548). Wishing to relieve the city, the Persian commander naturally opted for the most direct route, which was also sparsely inhabited. See ii.29.23n.

30.2 Πέτραν γὰρ πόλιν καὶ Πέρσας τοὺς ἐνταῦθα διασώσασθαι ἐν σπουδῇ εἶχε, καίτοι καὶ μοῖρά τις τοῦ περιβόλου καταπεπτῶκει ἑξαπιναίως, ‘He was keen to save the city of Petra and the Persians there, even if a part of the circuit wall had suddenly collapsed.’ Procopius rather abruptly shifts his focus back to the siege of Petra; Mihir-Mihroe, of course, would have known little of the progress of the siege as he set off to rescue the defenders. Only at 30.8 does the narrative return to the Persian advance. On the common Procopian expression ἐν σπουδῇ εἶχε, *en spoudē eikhe*, lit. ‘he had in enthusiasm’, see i.15.12n.

30.3 ἄνδρες τε τοῦ Ῥωμαίων στρατοῦ ἐς πεντήκοντα ἐθελούσιοι ἐν τῇ πόλει γενόμενοι βασιλέα Ἰουστινιανὸν ἀνεβόων καλλίνικον. ‘Some fifty volunteers from the Roman army got within the city and

acclaimed the Emperor Justinian gloriously triumphant.’ See ii.8.29n for the acclamation.

30.4 ἡγεῖτο δὲ αὐτῶν νεανίας τις Ἀρμένιος γένος, Ἰωάννης ὄνομα, Θωμᾶ υἱός, ὃνπερ Γούζην ἐπὶ κλησιν ἐκάλουν. ‘Their leader was a young man of Armenian birth, John by name, the son of Thomas, whom they called Guzes.’ See *PLRE* iii, Ioannes *qui et* Guzes 44, Thomas 2. John served with distinction in the Lazic war until his death in combat at the storming of Petra in 551, having performed ‘amazing deeds’, viii.11.64 (cf. i.1.7).

30.5 οὗτος ὁ Θωμᾶς πολλὰ τῶν ἀμφὶ τὴν Λαζικὴν ὀχυρωμάτων ἐδείματο, βασιλέως οἱ ἐπαγγείλαντος, καὶ τῶν ἐκείνῃ στρατιωτῶν ἦρξεν, ἔμφρων τε βασιλεῖ ἔδοξεν εἶναι. ‘This Thomas had built many of the fortifications around Lazica on the emperor’s instructions and commanded the soldiers there, since he seemed to the emperor to be a prudent man.’ Thomas presumably exercised this command – no doubt as *magister militum* – in the 530s, before the outbreak of war, at which time he could also have undertaken this building work. So *PLRE* iii, Thomas 2. See also Zanini 2007, 391. Adontz 1970, 110–11, proposes to identify him with a Thomas, who in *NovJ.* 31.2 (536), is made governor of the newly created province of Armenia III and whose abilities are praised by the emperor, cf. Stein 1949, 471 n.2. See, however, *PLRE* iii, Thomas 6, which is more sceptical. The identification can remain only conjectural, but the high rank of Thomas in the *Novel*, that of *magnificentissimus* or *megaloprepestatos*, is not incompatible with service as *dux* or *magister militum*. See ii.29.18n on the fortifications of Lazica.

30.6 ἐπεὶ οὐδεὶς οἱ τῶν ἐκ τοῦ Ῥωμαίων στρατοῦ ἕτερος ἀμύνων ἦλθε, ‘since no one else from the Roman army came to defend him’. Another Armenian, Artabazes, had suffered a similar fate at Verona in 542: he had occupied the city in advance of the main Roman army, but, when no one came to support him, he was obliged to withdraw. See vii.3.6–22.

30.7 Πέρσης δὲ ἀνὴρ, Μιρράνης ὄνομα, ‘A Persian man, Mirranes by name’. See i.13.16n on the name Mihran, held by one of the seven leading families in the Sasanian kingdom.

30.7 θῶπας τε καὶ ἀπατηλοὺς προὔτεινέτο λόγους, ‘He proffered flattering and deceptive words.’ Perhaps quoted by Suda, Θ432, although

the verb there is the active present participle rather than the middle imperfect indicative, cf. Theodoridis 1998, xciii–xciv. Mirranes' ruse recalls that employed at Edessa in 543, cf. ii.26.45n.

30.8 Οἱ δ' [οἱ] ἀμφὶ Μερμερόην ἐπειδὴ ἀφίκοντο ἐς τὸν στενωπὸν, 'When Mihr-Mihroe arrived at the pass'. On the identity of the pass see ii.29.27n. The Greek text here, from which Haury rightly excised an unnecessary definite article, could mean either 'Mihr-Mihroe' or 'those with Mihr-Mihroe'. Whately 2016, 98, detects echoes of Herodotus' account of the defence of Thermopylae in the fierce resistance of the small Roman force in the pass, but there are no obvious verbal parallels.

30.11 ταῦτα Δαγισθαῖος μαθὼν αὐτίκα τὴν προσεδρείαν διέλυσεν, οὐδὲν τῷ στρατῷ ἐπιστείλας, ἐπὶ Φᾶσιν τε ποταμὸν ἤλαυνε, 'Once he learnt of this, Dagisthaeus raised the siege at once and, without issuing any orders to his army, hastened to the river Phasis.' Dagisthaeus thus withdrew northwards, towards the more populous part of Lazica. Procopius' judgement on his conduct may be unreasonably harsh: as Colvin 2022, ch.6, points out, even if he had captured the city, he might have struggled to hold it against Mihr-Mihroe, especially given the lack of available supplies.

30.14 Τζάνοι δὲ ληισάμενοι τὸ Ῥωμαίων στρατόπεδον εὐθὺ τοῦ Ῥιζαίου ἐχώρησαν. ἔνθεν δὲ ἐς Ἀθήνας ἐλθόντες διὰ Τραπεζοντίων ἐπ' οἴκου ἀπεκομίσθησαν, 'the Tzani plundered the Roman camp and marched directly to Rhizaeum. From there they went to Athens and returned home through the territory of Trapezus.' See ii.29.22n for these places. The Tzani, as is clear, even while serving with the Romans, had not abandoned their taste for plunder; their subjugation was, after all, fairly recent, cf. i.15.25n. On Tzanic territory, to the south of the Black Sea, see i.15.20n, 15.23n. Colvin 2022, ch.6, suggests, however, that Dagisthaeus may have deliberately left the Tzani near the camp in order to ambush the Persians, a plan that was successfully carried out.

30.15 οὗ δὴ ἀπολελειμμένους ἐκ τοῦ Περσῶν φυλακτηρίου τραυματίας μὲν καὶ ἀπομάχους γεγενημένους πεντήκοντα καὶ τριακοσίους εὖρον, ἀκραιφνεῖς δὲ πεντήκοντα καὶ ἑκατὸν μόνους, 'Here they found three hundred and fifty of the Persian garrison wounded and unfit for service and only one hundred and fifty

unharméd.’ At 29.34 Procopius reports that there were 1500 defenders at the start of the siege; it follows that some one thousand had been killed in action. See ii.29.34n for discussion. The determination of Persian defenders is underlined in the *Strategikon*, xi.1 (354) which notes their ability to conceal injuries and to cope with adversity, cf. Börm 2007, 170–1. The Romans who had been obliged to pay for the return of Amida in 505, having proved slack in their siege efforts, were likewise taken aback by the determination of the Persian garrison to hold out, despite the shortage of supplies: see i.9.2n, i.9.20–3n.

30.16 παρὰ δόξαν ἀντεῖχον, ‘they put up with it against all expectation’ or ‘they resisted against all expectation’, a favourite idiom of Procopius, cf. i.7.4n.

30.17 ὁ τε Μερμερόης ἐπιτωθάζων δακρύων τε καὶ θρήνων ἀξίαν Ῥωμαίων τὴν πολιτείαν ἔφασκεν εἶναι, ‘Mihr-Mihroe mockingly declared that the Roman state merited tears and lamentations’ because of its inability to capture the city. The criticism is more likely Procopius’ own rather than Mihr-Mihroe’s, cf. Rubin, *PvK*, 401, Averil Cameron 1985, 149–50. Dahn 1865, 103–4, sees in it the wounded pride of a patriotic Roman.

30.19 θυλάκους λινούς, οἷς δὴ Πέρσαι τὰ ἐπιτήδεια σφίσιν ἐσεκομίσαντο ἐς γῆν τὴν Κολχίδα, ψάμμου ἐμπλησάμενος ἐς τῶν λίθων τὴν χώραν ἐτίθετο, οἱ δὲ ἐνταῦθα βαλλόμενοι ἀντὶ τοῦ τοίχου ἐγίνοντο. ‘He filled with sand the linen sacks in which the Persians had transported their supplies to Colchis and laid them in the place of the stones so that, once inserted there, they replaced the wall.’ Mihr-Mihroe in effect used sandbags to replace the sections of the wall that had collapsed. Procopius is interested by such resourcefulness: at vii.24.3–7 he describes how in 547 Belisarius was able to repair the fortifications of Rome despite, like Mihr-Mihroe, lacking gypsum, and being short of time. Cf. viii.11.27–8 on the new ram developed by the Sabirs during Bessas’ siege of Petra. Sand-filled sacks are referred to with similar vocabulary by Hdt. iii.105.1. On the logistics of Persian provisions see now Azarnouche and Petitjean, forthcoming, comm. *ad* 26.12B.

30.22 ἐν ταύτῃ τῇ πορείᾳ τῶν τις ἐν Λαζοῖς λογίμων, Φούβελις ὄνομα, Πέρσας αὐλιζομένους ἐνήδρευσε. ‘On this journey a noble among the Lazi, Phubelis by name, set an ambush for the Persians when

they were encamped.’ Phubelis is not otherwise known, cf. *PLRE* iii, Phoubelis. This brief notice (30.21–2) of a minor Roman and allied success is likely to stem from the sort of report discussed by Colvin 2013, cf. Greatrex 2021c; the narrative of Mihr-Mihroe’s withdrawal is taken up again at 30.30. The description of the capture of the horses resembles that at 28.12–14, another short report, this time on Arab affairs. Procopius offers more precision on the Persian retreat at 30.30–3: it appears that they headed southeastwards, towards Persarmenia. See Braund 1994, 298–9.

30.23 Ὁ δὲ Γουβάζης, μαθὼν ὅσα δὴ Ῥωμαίοις ἐν τε τῇ Πέτρᾳ καὶ τῷ στενωπῷ ξυνηνέχθη γενέσθαι, οὐδ’ ὥς ἔδεισεν, οὐδὲ τὴν ἐν τῷ κατ’ αὐτὸν στενωπῷ φυλακὴν εἶασεν, ἐνταῦθα σφίσι τὴν κεφαλὴν τῆς ἐλπίδος οἰόμενος εἶναι. ‘Gubazes, though informed about what had happened to the Romans at Petra and at the pass, was not fearful nonetheless, nor did he relax his guard of the pass in his care, believing that here lay their main source of hope.’ The Lazic king had stationed himself at the pass between Lazica and Iberia, barring access to and from his country. As he correctly reasoned, Mihr-Mihroe would be unable to turn north, into the populous part of Lazica, because the way was blocked by the Phasis.

For the sense of οὐδ’ ὥς, *oud’ hōs*, ‘nonetheless’, with the demonstrative adverb ὥς, see *CGCG* 57.2 n.1, cf. *Hdt.* iii.152.

30.25 ὁ γὰρ ποταμὸς οὗτος βάθους μὲν εἶπερ τις ἄλλος ἱκανώτατα ἔχει, εὐρὺς δὲ ἐπὶ πλεῖστον διήκει. ‘For this river is no less deep than any other while also being extremely wide.’ Cf. 29.16 on the Phasis’ navigability, 29.23 on the need for boats to cross it. On the expression εἴ(περ) τις ἄλλος, *ei(per) tis allos*, lit. ‘if any other’, see ii.15.8n.

30.26 τῆς μέντοι ρύμης αὐτῷ τοσοῦτον περίεστιν ὥστε δὴ ἐς τὴν θάλασσαν ἐκβαλὼν ἐπὶ μακρότατον κατὰ μόνας χωρεῖ, οὐδαμῇ ταύτῃ ἐπιμιγνύμενος, ‘Such is the strength of its current, furthermore, that when it flows into the sea, it proceeds as a distinct stream for a very long distance, not merging at all with the surrounding waters.’ Cf. Arrian, *Peripl.* 8.2, noting how the lightness of the waters of the Phasis leads to them not mixing with the those of the Black Sea, with Silberman 1995, 29 n.58.

Procopius makes a similar observation concerning the mouth of the Boas at viii.2.8–9: such is the force of its current, he reports, that it pushes shipping away from the coast. Cf. also viii.6.27–31 on currents in

the Bosporus; it appears that the historian had an interest in such matters, cf. Howard-Johnston 2000, 27–8, on instances of his interest in the control of water flows near fortifications. Rubin, *PvK*, 401 (cf. 505) supposes that the report is based on autopsy. According to Mikhailov and Mikhailova 2008, 124–7, in Antiquity the Phasis flowed into the Black Sea in a delta; even in the twentieth century, despite engineering work, the river continued to deposit large quantities of sediment at its mouth. Since the Black Sea has a low salinity in any case (cf. Amm. Marc. 22.8.46), largely the result of the many rivers that flow into it, it is possible that fresh water might still be found for up to 1–2 km from the coast. See also the satellite image in Braund 1994, 48, which shows the flow of sediment into the Black Sea at the mouth of the Phasis.

30.27 καὶ φυλακτῆρια μέντοι τοῦ ποταμοῦ ἐντὸς πεποιήνται πανταχόθι Λαζοί, ‘The Lazi had nonetheless built fortresses on the near side of the river.’ Procopius refers of course to the north bank, cf. 29.18. In 551 the Romans were able to transfer forces to the north bank using the ships they had at their disposal, Proc. viii.13.28.

30.28 βασιλεὺς δὲ Ἰουστινιανὸς Σαβείρων μὲν τῷ ἔθνει τὰ ξυγκείμενα χρήματα ἔπεμψε, Γουβάζην δὲ καὶ Λαζοὺς χρήμασιν ἄλλοις δεδῶρηται. ‘The Emperor Justinian sent the agreed sum of money to the Sabir people as well bestowing other sums on Gubazes and the Lazi.’ Procopius returns here to the payment mentioned at 29.29–32, on which see the note *ad loc.*; Justinian had omitted to send it at the agreed time. *Exc. de legat. gent.* 497.29–33 joins up 30.28–9 with 29.29–30, adding that Justinian sent the money to the Sabirs οὐ πολλῶ ὕστερον, *ou pollō hysteron*, ‘not much later’, presumably an insertion by the Constantinian excerptor – which also serves to mitigate Justinian’s negligence in not sending the money immediately. Colvin 2013, 583, plausibly suggests that the information in 30.28–9 stems from an imperial letter of which a copy was consulted by Procopius. See also the next note.

30.29 ἐτύγχανε δὲ πολλῶ πρότερον καὶ ἄλλο στράτευμα λόγου ἄξιον ἐς Λαζικήν πέμψας, οἱ οὐπω ἀφικόμενοι ἐνταῦθα ἔτυχον. ἦρχε δὲ αὐτῶν Ῥεκίθαγγος ἐκ Θράκης, ἀνὴρ ξυνετός τε καὶ ἀγαθὸς τὰ πολέμια. ‘Much earlier he had sent another considerable army to Lazica, which happened not yet to have arrived. Its commander was Rhecithangus from Thrace, an intelligent man and expert in warfare.’

Nothing further is known of this force; Rhcithangus was last heard of as *dux* in Phoenice Libanensis in 541, see ii.16.17n with *PLRE* iii, Rhcithangus. The vague backtracking in Procopius' account here, when one would have expected the despatch of the force to be mentioned earlier, at the time the force was sent, is perhaps an indication that Procopius was relying on an allusion in a letter he consulted: see the previous note. On the expression πολλῶ πρότερον, *pollō proteron*, 'much earlier', see ii.29.29n. The description of Rhcithangus' competence as a leader is a stock one, cf. i.6.15n, ii.19.15n.

30.31 ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ τὰ ἐν ποσὶ σφίσι γινόμενα μόλις ἀπέχρη ἐς τὴν δαπάνην τῇ στρατιᾷ ταύτῃ, οὐχ ἥσσον ἢ τρισμυρίοις οὖσι, 'But since what was to hand was scarcely enough for the maintenance of this army, which numbered no fewer than 30,000 men'. As Braund 1994, 299, observes, supply was a constant problem for the Persians in western Lazica: provisions had to be brought in overland from the interior. The risks of foraging are illustrated by the ambush laid by Phubelis, 30.22. As the war in the region dragged on, both sides built up considerable forces there: Agath. iii.17.4 refers to a Persian army of 60,000 in 556; late in the previous year, albeit in a rhetorical context, he alludes to a Roman army of more than 50,000, iii.8.2. See Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 121.

30.32 ἄνδρας οὖν ἐς πεντακισχίλιους ἀπολεξάμενος αὐτοῦ εἶασεν, οἷς δὴ ἄρχοντας ἄλλους τε τρεῖς καὶ Φάβριζον κατεστήσατο, 'Accordingly he selected 5000 men and left them there, for whom he appointed as commanders Vahriz and three others.' On Vahriz (Phabrizus) see ii.28.16n; he had in 547 been sent to assassinate Gubazes but failed, 29.2–8. Mihr-Mihroe's aim in leaving this force in southern Lazica was to keep lines of communication and supply with Petra open.

30.33 αὐτὸς δὲ τῷ ἄλλῳ στρατῷ ἐς τὴν Περσαρμενίαν ἐλθὼν ἡσύχαζεν ἐν τοῖς ἀμφὶ Δούβιος χωρίοις. 'He himself went with the rest of the army to Persarmenia and rested in the villages around Dvin.' Cf. ii.30.22n on Mihr-Mihroe's withdrawal to the south-east. The districts around Dvin (Dubios) – the word χωρίον, *khōrion*, can mean 'village' or 'region' – were prosperous, a good place for a substantial army to base itself. See ii.25.1n.

30.34 Οἱ δὲ πεντακισχίλιοι, ἐπεὶ ἐγγυτέρω τῶν Λαζικῆς ἐσχάτων ἦλθον, παρὰ ποταμὸν Φᾶσιν ἐστρατοπεδεύσαντο ἅπαντες, 'The

5000, when they drew near to the borders of Lazica, all encamped next to the river Phasis.’ The Persian force proceeded eastwards from Petra, no doubt following a route similar to that taken by Mihr-Mihroe to reach the city. It evidently headed somewhat north, in order to follow the river Phasis back eastwards, towards the borderlands with Iberia, where Gubazes had taken up position earlier in the year, probably in the vicinity of Sarapanis: see ii.29.28n.

30.35 ὧν δὴ ὁ Γουβάζης αἰσθόμενος τῷ Δαγισθαίῳ ἐπέστελλε βοηθεῖν ἐνταῦθα σπουδῇ· δράσειν γὰρ σφίσι τοὺς πολεμίους κακόν τι μέγα δυνατὰ ἔσσεσθαι. ‘Gubazes, when he noticed this, instructed Dagisthaeus to bring help there urgently because it would be possible for them to inflict great damage on the enemy.’ The phrasing recalls 29.27, where Gubazes likewise gave instructions to Dagisthaeus. It is likely, as Colvin 2013 suggests, that Procopius is relying on the king’s correspondence. On the collaboration of the two commanders see Sartor 2018, 268–9 (who dates the campaign to 549, however).

30.36 ἐν ἀριστερᾷ ἔχων ποταμὸν Φᾶσιν, ‘keeping the river Phasis to his left’. Dagisthaeus, proceeding eastwards, was thus following in the footsteps of the Persian army along the south bank of the Phasis. Gubazes, meanwhile, appears to have moved westwards along the north bank.

30.37 Λαζοὶ μέντοι ἐξεπιστάμενοι ἐνταῦθα διέβησαν ἑξαπιναίως καὶ ἀνεμίγνυντο τῷ Ῥωμαίων στρατῷ. ‘The Lazi, however, being aware of this (that the Phasis could here be forded), crossed over here suddenly and joined up with the Roman army.’ An impressive instance of local knowledge and collaboration between Lazi and Romans, cf. Sartor 2018, 269. See also Braund 1994, 299.

30.40 τετρακισχίλιοι δὲ καὶ μύριοι ἦσαν, ‘Their own forces numbered 14,000 men.’ Dagisthaeus had arrived with 7000 Romans and 1000 Tzani (29.10) and must have suffered some casualties during his unsuccessful siege of Petra. It follows that Gubazes’ army was no less numerous than the Romans’. Their victories first against 1000, then 4000 Persians, were unsurprising, given these odds.

30.41 οἱ μὲν οὖν Πέρσαι πολέμιον οὐδὲν ἐν νῷ ἔχοντες μακρόν τινα ὕπνον ἐκάθευδον, ‘The Persians, with no thoughts of the enemy,

were enjoying a lengthy sleep.’ The expression πολέμιον οὐδέν ἐν νῶ ἔχοντες, *polemion ouden en nō ekhontes*, lit. ‘having nothing hostile/of the enemy in mind’ is a Procopian coinage, cf. (e.g.) iii.2.8, vii.40.28. The treatment of the defenders’ torpor, underlined by the repetition of the word ὕπνος, *hypnos*, ‘sleep’, at 30.41–2, is rather more prosaic than that at i.7.23–4, cf. ii.27.19.

30.43 διὸ δὴ αὐτῶν οὐδενὶ ἐς ἀλκὴν ἰδεῖν ξυνηνέχθη, ἀλλ’ οἱ μὲν πλεῖστοι καταλαμβανόμενοι ἔθνησκον, τινὰς δὲ καὶ ἐζώγρησαν οἱ πολέμιοι, ‘Consequently not one of them had any thought of valour, but most were caught and killed; others their enemy captured.’ On the expression ἐς ἀλκὴν ὁράω, *es alkēn horaō*, ‘I look to valour’ see i.8.18n, a passage with further verbal parallels to this one. The sentence starts with the Persians as subject, but then switches to the Romans, here referred to as ‘the enemy’ (cf. 30.41). There is a considerable amount of repetition between the report on the victory over the one thousand (30.39) and this one (30.42–3). In both cases there is the same contrast between those killed and those taken alive; and each time Procopius switches subject between the two, using the same verb ζωγρέω, *zōgreō*, ‘I capture alive’. Thucydides reports the outcomes of battles with a similar contrast, e.g. at vii.41.4, but without changing subjects. In each instance Procopius indicates, using the verb διαφεύγω, *diapheugō*, ‘I flee, escape’, whether or how the enemy escaped (30.39, 43). In the first case he uses the verb ἐμπίπτω, *emipitō*, ‘I fall upon, strike’ (30.39), in the latter ἐπιπίπτω, *epipitō*, ‘I fall upon, assail’ (30.40, 42). It is likely that at least some of this formulaic phrasing is attributable to Procopius’ use of correspondence sent to Constantinople to report on events, cf. Colvin 2013, 576, 592–3, Greatrex 2021c.

30.44 τό τε στρατόπεδον Ῥωμαῖοι καὶ Λαζοὶ αἰροῦσι καὶ τὰ σημεῖα πάντα, ὅπλα τε πολλὰ καὶ χρήματα μεγάλα ἐλήϊσαντο, ‘The Romans and Lazi took the camp and all the standards, seizing as booty numerous weapons and large sums of money.’ A further element probably lifted from an upbeat report on the Roman victory, cf. 30.22 above on the horses seized from the Persians by Dagisthaeus and Phubelis. At vii.4.32 Procopius offers a comparable account, including a reference to the capture of standards, of a Roman defeat by Totila in 542. Mal. 18.16 gives a very similar description of a raid by Roman forces against the Naṣrids in 528.

30.45 ἔνθα δὴ καὶ ἄλλοις τισὶ Περσῶν ἐντυχόντες πολλοὺς ἔκτειναν. ‘There they came upon some other Persians and killed many of them.’ Having defeated the force left by Mihr-Mihroe in eastern Lazica (cf. 30.34), Dagisthaeus and Gubazes proceeded further east, beyond Sarapanis, into Iberian territory, where naturally the Persians did not expect them.

30.46 οὕτω μὲν ἐκ Λαζικῆς Πέρσαι ἀπήλλαξαν, Ῥωμαῖοι δὲ καὶ Λαζοὶ τὰ τε ἄλλα ἐπιτήδεια καὶ ἄλευρα παμπληθῆ ἐνταῦθα εὐρόντες ἅπαντα ἔκαυσαν ἅπερ ἐξ Ἰβηρίας οἱ βάρβαροι ἐπηγάγοντο. ‘Thus the Persians left Lazica, while the Romans and Lazi, once they discovered there a huge quantity of various supplies, including flour, which the barbarians had brought in from Iberia, burnt it all.’ Procopius, perhaps following the generals’ report, underlines the Roman success: the supplies, as he notes, were destined for Petra, which remained in Persian hands. On Mihr-Mihroe’s concern for the supplying of the city see 30.31. It is not clear where exactly this supply dump was situated; it is likely that it was in eastern Lazica, near the Phasis, presumably not far from the site of the Roman victory.

30.47 Λαζῶν τε πολλοὺς ἐλίποντο ἐν τῷ στενωπῷ, ‘They left many of the Lazi at the pass’, i.e. where Gubazes had stationed himself from the start, cf. ii.29.28n.

30.48 καὶ τέταρτον ἔτος ἐτελεύτα Ῥωμαίοις τῆς ἐς Πέρσας ἐκεχειρίας, τρίτον καὶ εἰκοστὸν ἔτος Ἰουστινιανοῦ βασιλέως τὴν αὐτοκράτορα ἀρχὴν ἔχοντος. ‘This was the end of the fourth year of the Romans’ truce with the Persians and of the twenty-third year of the reign of the Emperor Justinian.’ Since the truce had probably been concluded in April 545 (see ii.28–30n), Procopius should be referring here to spring 549. Although some have therefore inferred that the Roman victory must have occurred just before this, i.e. in early 549, the campaigning conditions in the region make it more likely that the events had taken place late the previous summer. See ii.29.1–30.48h, cf. i.16.10n on Procopius’ dating formulae. Rubin, *PvK*, 401, detects a trace of irony in the reference to a truce here, rather than a war, since these dating formulae usually refer to the year of the war in question (e.g. at v.7.37), cf. Kaldellis 2010b, 257, stressing the juxtaposition of bloody battles and a truce.

The chronological indicator inserted here is paralleled at iv.28.41, almost at the end of *Vandalic Wars*, cf. vii.39.29. In both other instances a few more events are narrated although, unlike the present case, they concern later developments.

30.49–54 The Fate of John the Cappadocian

Procopius returns at the end of the work to the fate of the former praetorian prefect, John the Cappadocian, the object of vitriolic criticism at i.24.12–15, whose swift fall from grace in 541 and subsequent exile to Egypt in 544 were narrated at i.25, a chapter apparently composed in 546/7, cf. i.25.43n. The return of John to Constantinople in the wake of the death of his bitter enemy, Theodora, in 548, gives Procopius the chance to update what he had reported earlier. As noted above, ii.28–30n, the last chapters of *Wars* ii, like those of book i, are rather disparate, but this brief report allows Procopius to tie up loose ends remaining from *Wars* i even if the subject has no bearing on wars between Rome and Persia. It is worth noting that the final parts of both *Vandalic Wars*, iv.28.42–52, and *Gothic Wars*, vii.40, are likewise somewhat brief and, at least in the latter case, not altogether relevant to the war in Italy. Given this brief final section on John, the reader who goes on immediately after this passage to *Vandalic Wars* would perhaps be surprised at their opening words: Ὁ μὲν οὖν Μηδικὸς πόλεμος Ἰουστινιανῷ βασιλεῖ ἐς τοῦτο ἐτελεύτα, ‘Such then was the conclusion of the Persian (Medic) war for the Emperor Justinian’. This transition may have been written at an earlier point and follows more naturally from i.22, cf. Greatrex 1995a, 3.

Scholars have assessed this coda in very different ways: for Averil Cameron 1985, 169, it is a less than satisfactory conclusion to the work, yet for Rubin, *PvK*, 402, it is ‘a brilliant concluding firework’ that contrasts John’s failings with Belisarius’ loyalty. Kaldellis 2010b, 257–8, argues that Procopius is attacking Justinian by proxy here, as at i.25: Justinian bears the blame for tolerating such a wicked minister and for allowing him to return to the capital. For him, the position of the episode is deliberate, highlighting the criticism of the emperor.

Bibliography: Greatrex 1995a, 9 and see i.25n, cf. Mal. 18.89 with *Exc. de insid.* frg. 47 (173.10–12).

30.49 Ἰωάννης δὲ ὁ Καππαδόκης ἐνιαυτῷ πρότερον βασιλεῖ ἐς Βυζάντιον μετὰπεμπτos ἦλθε, ‘In the previous year John the

Cappadocian was summoned by the emperor and went to Byzantium.’ Usually it is Belisarius that is summoned to the capital (in very similar terms), e.g. at i.21.2, ii.29.49, vii.17, often to undertake an important task (or having completed one).

30.49 τηνικάδε γὰρ Θεοδώρα τῇ βασιλίδι ἐπεγένετο ἡ τέλειος ἡμέρα τοῦ βίου, ‘for at this point the Empress Theodora had reached the last day of her life.’ The empress died, possibly of cancer, on 28 June 548: see *PLRE* iii, Theodora, Potter 2015, 202. The brevity of the notice is surprising, given the vitriol poured out by Procopius against her at *Anecd.* 9.1–28, but is comparable to the notice at *Wars* vii.30.4, where the context, however, following a description of various prodigies, may imply criticism, cf. Signes-Codoñer 2005, 50–7. On Theodora’s passionate hostility towards John see i.25.4–5n with Potter 2015, 184–5.

Kallenberg 1916b, 524, remarks on the change in Procopius’ vocabulary over time: this is the first instance of the adverb τηνικάδε, *tēnikade*, in the *Wars*: hitherto he has preferred the alternative τηνικαῦτα, *tēnikaŭta*, which has the same meaning (e.g. at i.26.7). As Kallenberg observes, τηνικάδε becomes more frequent towards the end of vii, e.g. at 37.23, 40.11. Since it is clear from the dating at 30.48 that Procopius was writing this part of the work in 549 or later, it is unsurprising that he here uses the same adverb as towards the end of the *Gothic Wars*.

30.50 ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ τῆς ἀκουσίου τιμῆς ἱερεὺς ἔμεινε, ‘but (he) remained a priest, an honour that he held against his will’. See i.25.31n for his forcible ordination at Artace, a suburb of Cyzicus. His return as a private citizen, rather than as an official, is confirmed by Mal. frg.47 (173.12).

30.51 φιλεῖ γὰρ τὸ δαιμόνιον, ὅπερ ἐς τοὺς ἀνθρώπους ὠραῖζεσθαι πέφυκεν, ‘for the divine power, which is naturally disposed to adopt a glorious appearance among men, loves ...’ The *daimonion*, ‘the divine power’, is a force invoked on several occasions by Procopius. Rubin, *PvK*, 333, finds in it elements of Christian influence: it is a diabolic force. Holcroft 1653, 68, actually translates it as ‘the devil’. But see Dahn 1865, 248–50, for a more nuanced treatment, cf. Brodka 2004, 33–4: its exact role in determining events is hard to pin down. Teuffel 1889, 290 n.1, points out that *Wars* vii.31.6 describes the same phenomenon, viz. the destabilising effects of sudden good fortune. At *Anecd.* 12.20 Procopius refers to a φάντασμα δαιμόνιον, *phantasma daimonion*, ‘divine apparition’ (cf. 30.50 for the *phantasma* in the present case) of a rather sinister nature

that appeared to courtiers to take the place of the Emperor Justinian in the palace. See also ii.9.12n.

The following clause surely qualifies the ‘divine power’, although some translations, such as those of Dewing–Kaldellis, 143, and García Romero, 307, take it rather as referring to what it dangles before men. The object of the present infinitive κρεμᾶν, *kremān*, ‘to suspend, keep in suspense’, however, is the implied pronoun αὐτούς, ‘those’, which is picked up by the relative pronoun οἷς, *hois*, ‘for whom’. Cf. Veh, 437.

30.52 καὶ τούτῳ γοῦν τῷ Ἰωάννῃ ἄλλας τε πολλὰς τερατολόγοι φαντάσεις ἐς αἰεὶ προὔλεγον καὶ ὥς χρῆν αὐτὸν τὸ τοῦ Αὐγούστου ἀμπίσχῃσθαι σχῆμα. ‘To this man John soothsayers continually foretold many fantasies, including a tale that he was fated to put on the robe of the Augustus.’ See i.25.8n for the prophecies that buoyed up John with hopes for the throne. As at i.25, there may be an Aristophanic flavour: the verb ἀμπίσχω, *ampiskhō*, ‘I clothe’, is used on several occasions by the playwright, e.g. *Ec.* 332.

30.53 ἦν δέ τις ἱερεὺς ἐν Βυζαντίῳ, Αὐγουστος ὄνομα, ὃς δὴ τῶν κειμηλίων τοῦ τῆς Σοφίας ἱεροῦ φυλακὴν εἶχεν. ‘But there was a priest called Augustus in Byzantium who guarded the treasures of the church of Sophia.’ The priest is not otherwise known; on the term ἱερεὺς, *hiereus*, see i.7.30n. His position in the church of Hagia Sophia might have been that of *skeuophylax*, ‘sacristan’, on which see *ODB* iii, 1909–10, so Destunis 1880, 245 n.25; another possibility would be one of the stewards or *oikonomoi* (referred to, e.g., in *NovJ.* 3.3 of 535). Alternatively, given the Greek terms Procopius uses here, viz. κειμήλιον, *keimēlion*, ‘treasure’ and φυλακή, *phylakē*, ‘guard’, the post could be that of *keimēliophylax*, i.e. ‘guardian of the treasury’ attested at Edessa in the fifth century, *Acts Chalc.* xi.73 (*ACO* ii.1.3, p.383) or *keimēliarkhēs*, attested in Constantinople in 536, *NovJ.* 40.1, tr. Sarris and Miller, 374, as ‘treasurer’.

As Kaldellis 2014, 143 n.279, points out, there is an inconsistency here with i.25.31, where John’s ordination is placed at Artace rather than Constantinople; it is possible, however, that Augustus had accompanied John to Artace.

30.54 ἡνίκα τοίνυν Ἰωάννης ἀποθριξάμενος τῆς ἱερωσύνης ἤξιωτο βίᾳ, ‘Now when John was deemed worthy of the priesthood and forcibly tonsured’. See i.25.31n for the occasion. On the aorist participle ἀποθριξάμενος, *apothrixamenos*, from the verb ἀποθρίζω, *apotherizō*, ‘I

cut off', see Pfeilschifter–Theisz on *Anecd.* 1.37 with i.17.12n; this particular form, which is not classical, is used for tonsuring.

30.54 τὸν τε φαινόλην καὶ τὸν χιτῶνα, 'the cloak and tunic'. The first word is glossed by the second in Photius' *Lexicon*, Φ18, so clearly the difference between the two garments was not great. Joh. Lyd. *De Mag.* i.7.3 describes the Roman toga as a sort of φαινόλη, *phainolē*, while Th. Sim. vii.6.4 uses the same term to refer to an 'unsightly cloak' worn by the austere patriarch of Constantinople, John the Faster.

30.54 ἐξ τοῦτο τε αὐτῷ ἀπεκρίθη, οἶμαι, ἡ πρόρρησις. 'Thus, I believe, the prophecy found its fulfilment for him.' Procopius is by no means prepared to rule out the accuracy of prophecies or portents, cf. (e.g.) viii.21.17. On the issue generally see Dahn 1865, 167–70, 251. As Destunis 1880, 246 n.27, observes, the magi, in their advice to Astyages at Hdt. i.120, interpret – wrongly, it is true – a mundane event in Cyrus' childhood as fulfilling prophecies of future greatness.

*Perso-Arabic Sources on Sasanian History*¹

In this Appendix an effort has been made to render accurately the names of Arabic and Persian authors, e.g. al-Ṭabarī or al-Dīnawarī. In the Commentary, on the other hand, I have preferred simpler forms of their names, e.g. Tabarī or Dinawarī.

The commentary regularly invokes Arabic and Persian sources – referred to for brevity's sake as oriental or Perso-Arabic – on Persian history, with which Procopius' material is then compared. As was noted in the Introduction (section [4][b], p. 18), it is uncertain how he might have gained access to this material; oral sources, such as refugees from Persia, are a possibility, as well as stories he might have heard when in Mesopotamia. It is in any case important to offer some discussion of these works, many of which may be unfamiliar to the reader. Moreover, unlike many of the Syriac writings cited, almost none of them is contemporary with the events in question; indeed, they nearly all date from at least two centuries later. As will emerge, however, this temporal distance does not preclude them from preserving important material on Late Antique Persian history. Just like later Greek chronicles, such as that of Theophanes, and Syriac chronicles, such as that of Michael the Syrian, Arabic and Persian sources incorporate earlier accounts into their own works. Whereas discussions of the classical and Syriac sources can readily be found, the reliability of the Perso-Arab histories requires some analysis here.² Armenian and Georgian sources, which have less to say on the period covered by Procopius, do not necessitate a detailed discussion. The one exception to this, the so-called *Epic Histories*, is treated at i.5.10–40.³

¹ The term 'Perso-Arabic' is adopted following Wiesehöfer 1996, 159. Hoyland, *HKP*, 1–23, offers an admirable introduction to the issues discussed here.

² Greatrex 1998, ch.4, offers an overview of the principal sources, cf. idem and Lieu 2002, xxi–xxvii and Treadgold 2007, 2013. See also Howard-Johnston 2010.

³ See comm. *ad loc.*, cf. Traina 2001, Börm 2007, 55–7, Traina 2018. On Armenian sources for Procopius see Traina 2001, idem 2018; Rapp 2009, 2014 on Georgian (Iberian) sources.

Procopius offers his reader, especially in the opening chapters of *The Persian Wars*, what one might term ‘true entertaining stories about their (i.e. the Persians’) kings’; the quotation in fact comes from the Arab author Ibn al-Nadīm referring to a work devoted to biographies of the Sasanian rulers.⁴ Some of Procopius’ stories, such as that of the escape of King Kavadh from captivity among the Hephthalites (i.6.1–9), closely resemble those to be found in later Arabic and Persian sources, e.g. the history of the later Arabic historian al-Ṭabarī.⁵ It is natural to infer that he has gained access to one or more Persian sources that have also been preserved in the Perso-Arabic tradition. Scholars have long posited the existence of a Sasanian ‘Book of Kings’ that would have transmitted such information: this is generally referred to as the *Khwadāynāmag* (‘Book of Lords’, the equivalent of the later Persian *Shāhnāmāh*, the ‘Book of Kings’) although this title is never actually attested in Middle Persian. The issue of the *Khwadāynāmag* continues to provoke lively debate among historians. While all are prepared to believe in the existence of a work concerning the Sasanian kings – in fact, covering the whole of Persian history, starting in mythical times and reaching up to the Sasanians⁶ – it remains unclear exactly what sort of a work it was. Nor is it certain when exactly it was composed, although none would date it to before the sixth century; it may have been compiled under Khusro I or his grandson, Khusro II.

The vexed questions surrounding the *Khwadāynāmag* will not be resolved here. We shall aim instead first to survey the issue of Sasanian sources and their relationship to this postulated work. We can then proceed to consider how material from the sixth century may have been transmitted to subsequent authors, whether writing in Greek, Syriac, Armenian, Arabic or Persian.

That some sort of record of events from the Sasanian period survived to be translated and then exploited by Arabic authors is clear. But should we identify this material with the *Khwadāynāmag* or what is referred to sometimes rather loosely as ‘the *Khwadāynāmag* tradition’? Some of what is reported in later Arabic sources has a Christian slant and is on occasion critical of certain Persian kings (and positive concerning others, such as

⁴ Hämeen-Anttila 2018, 32, for the quotation, noting also that ‘true’ in this sense means ‘not purporting to be fiction’. Proc. *Wars* i.1–6, 11, 23 represents his most detailed incursions into Persian history, cf. ii.24.1–10, viii.10.8–22.

⁵ Cf. Hoyland, *HKP*, 138–9, who illustrates this phenomenon for the episode of Peroz and the Hephthalite king (Proc. i.4) by a blended translation from Tabari, Eutychius and Ibn Qutayba.

⁶ See Hämeen-Anttila 2018, 61, 223–4, on this, cf. Wiesehöfer 2005, 139, Hoyland, *HKP*, 1–2.

Yazdgerd I, who treated Christians well). It is therefore unlikely that everything to do with Sasanian Persia related by al-Ṭabarī and others should be ascribed to the *Khwadāy-nāmag*. Because some scholars have sought to build up a picture of the *Khwadāy-nāmag* from these later authors, they have sometimes been inclined to posit the existence of a wide-ranging work that might have incorporated Christian elements or other traditions, e.g. concerning the noble families of the Persian kingdom. While this possibility cannot be excluded, there is no need to postulate such an expansive work; there are, furthermore, convincing reasons for supposing that the *Khwadāy-nāmag* was concise and restricted to a few biographical details relating to each Sasanian king. Of course, the *Khwadāy-nāmag* was not the only work composed under the Sasanians. A few others that seem to date back to the period, such as (perhaps) the *Letter of Tansar* and the *Shahrestānīhā ī Ērānshahr*, have survived, the latter in Middle Persian; most of them are very short.⁷ Still others no doubt existed and may well have related stories concerning various Persian kings; the titles of works noted by some Arab writers would seem to indicate this (such as the one quoted above). Others again may have dealt with the noble families, including (e.g.) the revolt of Bahrām Chūbīn in the 590s. In the light of all these points it seems safer to work on the assumption that while material preserved in al-Ṭabarī and other later Perso-Arabic sources may go back to Sasanian sources, we should not assume that it is necessarily derived from the nebulous *Khwadāy-nāmag*.⁸

⁷ On other Sasanian works see Hämeen-Anttila 2018, 30–9, 225–6, including an account of Bahrām Chūbīn's revolt, cf. Börm 2007, 66. Daryaei 2009, 107–15, offers a survey of Sasanian Middle Persian texts, cf. Macuch 2009, esp. 172–80. The *Letter of Tansar* is translated by Boyce 1968; see also Macuch 2009, 181 and n.214, Gariboldi 2015, 49, *ODLA*, s.v. Given the layers of transmission of the work, it remains open to doubt whether it really does go back to the Sasanian period. On the *Shahrestānīhā ī Ērānshahr*, which incorporates some post-Sasanian material, see Macuch 2009, 179–80. Worthy of mention too is the *Kārnāmag ī Anūshirwān* ('The book of (Khusro) Anūshirwān's deeds'), also referred to as *Sirat-Anūshirwān* ('The Life of Anūshirwān'), tr. in Grignaschi 1966, on which see Rubin 1995, 277–80, Macuch 2009, 182, Gariboldi 2015, 53–60. Note also the *Kārnāmag-i Ardashir Pāpagān*, written in Middle Persian about the founder of the Sasanian dynasty, the final version of which was put together in the ninth century or later, on which see Grenet 2003, 25–32 and Jackson Bonner 2020, 31–3.

⁸ We are thus following the minimalist approach of Hämeen-Anttila 2018 who sets out a powerful case, see esp. ch.6, cf. Hoyland, *HKP*, 21–3, 149–50, for similar scepticism about the *Khwadāy-nāmag*. Howard-Johnston 2010, 342–3, proposes a far more wide-ranging *Khwadāy-nāmag*, cf. Wieshöfer 2005, 139–47, who argues that the work was unofficial and incorporated various strands and traditions. Shahbazi 1990 represents a more speculative and maximalist interpretation. On accounts associated with noble families, e.g. concerning Bahrām Chūbīn's revolt, see Hämeen-Anttila 2018, 33, cf. Peacock 2007, 117–19, Pourshariati 2010b, 373–4 (speculative), Jackson Bonner 2015a, 54, Hoyland, *HKP*, 20–2 with 118 n.450. An illustration of the contrasting approaches to the issue is furnished by Rubin 2008a, 40–3 and Hämeen-Anttila

Thus when we find detailed accounts of Sasanian history in later Perso-Arabic works we should not immediately seek to draw conclusions as to the nature of the lost *Khwadāy-nāmag*. On the other hand, even if the work was just a comparatively dry summary of the Sasanian kings, we must not suppose that it was all that survived from the period. As the lists in later Arabic sources indicate, other works were known and quoted. Moreover, at various stages, possibly already late under the Sasanian dynasty and, more likely, while being translated into Arabic, the *Khwadāy-nāmag* was fleshed out with additional material and (in some versions) adapted to certain chronological systems.⁹ For our purposes therefore it is not necessary to determine whether a particular account stems from the *Khwadāy-nāmag* itself or some other tradition (which may in any case have been grafted onto an adaptation of the work subsequently).

Whether one takes a broader or narrower view of the *Khwadāy-nāmag*, the fact remains that a number of later writers evidently cite material that goes back, in some form, to Sasanian sources. The first to be considered is *Agathias*, who wrote, of course, in Greek and continued Procopius' account of Justinian's wars. In two sections of his *Histories* (ii.25–7, iv.24–30) he draws on material obtained from 'the royal annals' through an interpreter, Sergius. Despite the doubts of some recent scholars, elements of his account may indeed reflect the *Khwadāy-nāmag*, although he has clearly added in comments of his own and may have drawn on other sources as well.¹⁰ Although it is of tangential relevance for our purposes, it is worth noting in passing that a Sasanian source which concentrated on the ruling dynasty was used by an Armenian historian of the mid seventh century. It is now often referred to as *The History of Khosrov*, alluding to Khusro II (590–628), of whose reign the work offers a particularly detailed account, while its author is commonly known as *Pseudo-Sebeos*.

2018, 37–8, both discussing a citation found in Ḥamza and al-Mas'ūdī concerning biographical accounts of Sasanian kings: Rubin considers this to refer to the *Khwadāy-nāmag*, but Hämeen-Anttila observes that this title is not actually given.

⁹ Wiesehöfer 1996, 158–9, classifies the Perso-Arabic sources as 'tertiary' since, as he rightly emphasises, they were subject to changes both late in the Sasanian period and during the process of translation into Arabic. As will be noted later, some accounts then underwent a retranslation into (Classical/New) Persian. See also Rezakhani 2015, 11–12/65–6, noting the suggestion that the *Khwadāy-nāmag* was 'a genre of legendary history writing' rather than a particular text.

¹⁰ See Hämeen-Anttila 2018, 14–21, for a detailed discussion, countering the scepticism of Greenwood 2002, 330–3, cf. Jackson Bonner 2015a, 55. Hoyland, *HKP*, 8–9, argues that Agathias preserves remarkably little information derived from Persian sources. Howard-Johnston 2010, 314, 341 follows the conventional view, viz. that Agathias did draw on the *Khwadāy-nāmag*, cf. the valuable commentary of Averil Cameron 1969–70.

But Pseudo-Sebeos' use of Persian material appears to have been indirect; other Armenian writers, such as T'ovma Arcruni and Movsēs Dasxuranc'i, likewise had access to this intermediary. Since their accounts concentrate on the late sixth and early seventh centuries, we may leave them to one side here.¹¹

It remains to deal with the later Persian and Arabic histories. A huge body of material was translated from various languages into Arabic from the mid eighth century to the eleventh. Much of this material was subsequently lost, so that all that sometimes remains is a title of a work that once existed as a translation and perhaps a few quotations. Because titles are often imprecise and quotations may not be attributed, it is difficult to reconstruct which works exactly were translated. A key figure, it is supposed, was Ibn al-Muqaffa', a Muslim convert and prolific translator from Persian of the mid eighth century. Yet although later writers list a series of works that he translated or composed, most are no longer extant; among those that have been lost is the one that purported to render the *Khwadāynāmag*, although it does not follow from this that later quotations from him necessarily derive from this specific work.¹² While subsequent Arabic and Persian historians are likely to have made use of Ibn al-Muqaffa', a number of other translations of the *Khwadāynāmag* are also recorded. It is clear that varying, sometimes conflicting, accounts of Sasanian history were thus preserved. Whether Ibn al-Muqaffa' was the intermediary through which they all passed is therefore doubtful, still more so is the idea that they all derived from the *Khwadāynāmag*.¹³

A range of Arabic and Persian sources relate Sasanian affairs of the period covered by Procopius. Leaving the debate about the *Khwadāynāmag* to one side, we have already observed that contrasting accounts have survived. Scholars have long engaged in *Quellenforschung* in order to trace the origins of these accounts. Here it may suffice to provide an overview of the Perso-Arabic authors in question while noting that the first to engage in this research, Theodor Nöldeke, suggested the presence of two separate traditions. One of these is represented by Ibn Qutayba, Eutychius and what is known as MS Sprenger 30, an anonymous work dating from later than the mid ninth century, while the other

¹¹ See Greenwood 2002, 334–46, for details, cf. Howard-Johnston 2010, 82–3, 121. See also Hoyland, *HKP*, 15–18, on parallels between Armenian, Syriac and Arabic sources.

¹² See Hämeen-Anttila 2018, ch.3, esp.89–92, cf. Wiesehöfer 1996, 224–5, Jackson Bonner 2015a, 45–7, Hoyland, *HKP*, 138–41, Hämeen-Anttila 2019, 163–4.

¹³ Hämeen-Anttila 2018, ch.3, cf. Jackson Bonner 2015a, 47 (= idem 2015c, 264), Hoyland, *HKP*, 13–14. See also Rubin 2008a, 49, on the multiplicity of translations in the tenth century of what purported to be the *Khwadāynāmag*.

is transmitted by al-Ya‘qūbī, al-Dīnawarī, and Firdawsī’s verse *Shāhnāmāh*; al-Tha‘alibī and al-Mas‘ūdī’s works probably also belong to this tradition. Al-Ṭabarī and MS Sprenger 30 offer similar accounts and probably drew (perhaps indirectly) on a common source.¹⁴ To enter into further detail on such issues of *Quellenforschung* would be to complicate matters gratuitously and to exceed by far the competence of the present writer; moreover, they have already been explored by scholars at some length. But before reviewing the Perso-Arabic sources that illuminate Sasanian history, it is worth signalling one enigmatic source among them in particular, the *Nihāyat al-irab fī akhbār al-furs wa’l-‘arab* (‘The apogee of desire in the accounts of the Persians and Arabs’), to which the Commentary makes reference on several occasions. This work claims to be derived from Ibn al-Muqaffa‘ and covers both southern Arabian and Persian history, synchronising the two. It contains serious anachronisms, to be sure, but on occasion it parallels the accounts of al-Ṭabarī and MS Sprenger 30; furthermore, at some points it adds material not to be found in these two sources, but which is present in al-Dīnawarī. The work may go back to the late eighth or ninth century, although it also contains later accretions.¹⁵

Our survey omits authors who are not cited in our Commentary, such as Ibn Qutayba and MS Sprenger 30, the last of which has not been translated in any case. It will proceed in chronological order. *Al-Dīnawarī* (d. 891) was an Iranian scholar whose *al-Akhbār al-ṭiwāl* (‘The book of lengthy histories’) narrated Persian history with an emphasis on the reigns of its kings; he writes in a high style and is much less interested in the history of the wider Islamic world, which may explain the modest impact his work had on later writers.¹⁶ *Eutychius*, a Christian author known also as Sa‘īd ibn Batrīq (d. 940), in his *Kitāb al-Ta’rikh* (Annals),

¹⁴ Nöldeke 1879, xxi with Grignaschi 1973, Rubin 2005, 55–9, idem 2008b, esp. 57–61, Zakeri 2008, Jackson Bonner 2015a, 46–9 (cf. idem 2015c, 259–65), Hämeen-Anttila 2018, ch.3. Grignaschi challenged Nöldeke’s hypothesis, but see the counter-arguments of Rubin 1995, 238–9, followed by a detailed analysis, cf. Gariboldi 2015, 55–9. A more complex analysis of different traditions was proposed by Rubin (though not published), on which see Wood 2016, 411–12.

¹⁵ Hämeen-Anttila 2018, 81, 92–9, cf. Grignaschi 1973, 115–16, Rubin 2005, 60–1, 69–70, noting the diversity of reactions to this source. Browne 1900 offers a summary of the work and a translation of certain parts, upon which we have for the most part relied; as Rubin 1995, 237, notes, parts of the work remain unpublished. See further Jackson Bonner 2015a, 23–4, 41–2, noting common elements between al-Dīnawarī and the *Nihāya*, cf. Grignaschi 1969, 29. Note also Hoyland, *HKP*, 141 n.36.

¹⁶ See Jackson Bonner 2015a, ch.1, on his life and career, cf. Hämeen-Anttila 2018, 110. Jackson Bonner 2015a, ch.2, discusses his sources in detail. See also Pourshariati 2010a. Robert Hoyland suggests to us that al-Dīnawarī’s origins in western Iran may help account for the limited impact of his work: there was more interest in Persian history in eastern Iran.

recounted world history, including that of the Sasanians. Writing in Egypt, he exploited a wide range of sources, all in Arabic translation; among them was at least one concerned with Sasanian history that shows clear similarities to a source used by al-Ṭabarī, which some naturally associate with the *Khwadāynāmag*.¹⁷ Little is known of the life of *Aḥmad al-Ya'qūbī* (d. c.910); his account of Persian history is strongly weighted towards the Sasanian dynasty, offering little but dates for its predecessors. He appears to have had access to more extensive accounts on certain topics, such as the prophet Mani and Bahrām Chūbin.¹⁸ *Al-Ṭabarī* (839–923), a contemporary of Eutychius, is probably the best known of Islamic historians and the author of voluminous legal, theological and historical works. In his massive world history from Creation up to the tenth century he rarely specifies his sources, but he undoubtedly had access to Persian works of various kinds.¹⁹ The *Murūj al-dhahab* ('Meadows of gold') of *al-Mas'ūdī* (d. 956) likewise offers a world history from Creation, incorporating Sasanian material on Persia. Some of this is found also later in Firdawsī's poem.²⁰ *Ḥamza al-Isfahānī* (d. c.960s) was a Persian writer interested in the chronology of various earlier dynasties and particularly in pre-Islamic Iran. He appears to have drawn on both oral sources and lost written works.²¹

The Christian work, the *Chronicle of Seert*, also deserves to be included here. The chronicle, composed around 1000 and preserved in an incomplete state, is built up from a number of layers of material covering from 250 to 650, albeit with gaps. It emanates from the Christian community

¹⁷ Howard-Johnston 2010, 331–4, cf. Hämeen-Anttila 2018, 110–14. Gariboldi 2006, 121–5, considers in detail the relation between al-Ṭabarī's and Eutychius' (similar) accounts of Kavadh and the Mazdakites.

¹⁸ Hämeen-Anttila 2018, 108–10, Hoyland, *HKP*, 106–7, cf. Anthony 2016. See also now the introduction to the tr. of Gordon et al. 2018, 9–22. Hoyland, *HKP*, 107–34, translates the sections of al-Ya'qūbī concerned with Sasanian history.

¹⁹ Howard-Johnston 2010, 366–9, cf. Robinson 2003, 34–5, Hämeen-Anttila 2018, 114–15. Different versions of al-Ṭabarī's work may have been in circulation, so Daniel 2008, 272–4, which further complicates the issue of the transmission of his expansive work. The English translation of Bosworth 1999 makes this probably the most accessible Arabic source, now supplemented by Hoyland, *HKP*. Note however the downbeat assessment of what can be gleaned from his work in Howard-Johnston 1995, 169–71.

²⁰ Robinson 2003, 36, Hämeen-Anttila 2018, 115–17. Hoyland, *HKP*, 79–105, offers a translation from another of al-Mas'ūdī's works, 'The Instructive Overview', which is a more compact version of the 'Meadows'.

²¹ Hämeen-Anttila 2018, 117–21, Hoyland, *HKP*, 25–6, cf. Pourshariati 2007. Ḥamza provides a list of the sources he used on the Sasanians, which some have seen as renditions of the *Khwadāynāmag*, on which see Hämeen-Anttila 2018, 60–1. Hoyland, *HKP*, 26–78, translates the portions of Ḥamza devoted to Sasanian history. See also Luther 2016, 651–4, discussing Ḥamza in the context of Proc. i.2.1–10, the guardianship of Yazdgerd I over the young Theodosius II.

of northern Iraq and incorporates accounts from a range of Syriac sources as well as, it is suggested, a Persian source focussing on the Sasanian kings; hence it has been associated with the *Khwadāynāmag*, although we have seen that such an inference is problematic.²² A further Christian chronicle should be mentioned, although it is generally discussed in relation to Syriac, rather than Middle Persian, sources. It was drawn up by *Agapius*, also known as Mahbūb son of Constantine of Manbij (Hierapolis), in the 940s, and presents some parallels to the works of Eutychius and the *Chronicle of Seert*.²³

The authors discussed in the last paragraph wrote in Arabic. But the late ninth century gave rise to a flourishing of Persian literature, composed now in New (or Classical), rather than Middle, Persian; with it went a renewed interest in Persian history. While some elements that found their way into works in New Persian may stem from oral traditions, much was translated from Arabic back into Persian. Several 'Books of Kings', i.e. *Shāhnāmah*, were produced, the most famous by the poet Firdawsī. His work preserves a prose preface, which testifies to the existence of earlier similar projects. From the preface it emerges that various sources were brought to bear in the composition of a prose *Shāhnāmah* (now lost); while some of these works may have been in Persian, others are likely to have been in Arabic.²⁴ Among the writers whose work has been preserved is *Bal'amī* (fl. 963), who translated al-Ṭabarī's work but added material to it as well as abridging it. He refers to a 'great *Shāhnāmah*', the identity of which remains uncertain.²⁵ The prose historian *al-Tha'libī* (d. 1038), writing in Arabic, and the poet *Firdawsī* (c. 940–1020), who wrote in New Persian, may be considered together, since they shared a number of sources. Among them was probably the lost prose *Shāhnāmah*, but they also had access to earlier Pahlavi writings, such as the *Kār-nāmāg ī Ardashīr ī Pābagān* ('Book of the deeds of

²² See Rubin 2008b, 63–6, Howard-Johnston 2010, 324–7, Wood 2013, 171–4, cf. idem 2016, 415. Hoyland, *HKP*, 144–50 offers a useful translation of the *Chronicle* concerning the reign of Kavadh and argues that the work need not have used Sasanian material but may rather have incorporated later Muslim accounts of Persian history: as he notes, the error in making Balash a son, rather than a brother, of Peroz is one that a Persian source is unlikely to have made.

²³ See Howard-Johnston 2010, 196 with Wood 2016, 411. Cf. Pirone's recent translation, 2013, 17–20.

²⁴ Hämeen-Anttila 2018, 131, 141–6.

²⁵ Hämeen-Anttila 2018, 147–8, cf. Robinson 2003, 203, noting the popularity of Bal'amī's work, perhaps linked to the fact that he abridged al-Ṭabarī's quite drastically. On Bal'amī's sources beyond al-Ṭabarī see Daniel 2008, 269; for more detail see Peacock 2007, esp. chs.3–4. Such are the differences between his work and al-Ṭabarī's that he concludes, 167, that it must actually be regarded as independent. It is pleasant in this context to recall discussions with Zeev Rubin on the importance of Bal'amī in the early 1990s; note also the positive assessment of Howard-Johnston 1995, 171–2, of his worth.

Ardashir, son of Papak').²⁶ Both make changes to this work, which Firdawsī expanded on considerably. Although the historian was writing after the poet, he was not dependent on him; rather the two were relying on a common source when their accounts resemble one another. Oral sources may have contributed to Firdawsī's versified epic, but their importance should not be overstated.²⁷

This short Appendix is intended merely as a basic overview of the later Perso-Arabic sources that are cited intermittently in the commentary. As is clear from our remarks there, the similarity between certain parts of Procopius' narrative and strands of the Perso-Arabic tradition suggest that he had access to Persian sources; indeed, he mentions himself at i.6.9 that the Persians disagree among themselves (as to the fate of Kavadh's wife in the Hephthalite prison).²⁸ Some elements may be linked to the nebulous *Khwadāynāmag*, but it is unlikely that they all are. Certain parts may well have been mediated by a Syriac source that adopts a pro-Christian perspective, perceptible in the favourable treatment of Yazdgerd I and Balash.²⁹

²⁶ Ed. and tr. Grenet 2003. See Jackson Bonner 2015a, 50–2 and Hämeen-Anttila 2018, 39, on the work, cf. n.7, p. 667. The latter discusses how it was later used by al-Dīnawarī.

²⁷ Hämeen-Anttila 2018, 148–67, cf. Howard-Johnston 2010, 349–53.

²⁸ See Börm 2007, 55, cf. 64–8 for his overview of the Perso-Arabic sources. Oral informants, such as Kavadh, grandson of King Kavadh, who went on to serve in the Roman army, will have been a valuable source for the historian, cf. Börm 2007, 53–4. Whether Procopius had any knowledge of the Persian language remains uncertain: see Börm 2007, 148–51.

²⁹ See Jackson Bonner 2015a, 54–6, for a useful discussion of specific cases relevant to Procopius, cf. 76–83, 103–7. See also Wood 2016, 413–16, discussing the blending of Christian and Persian history in the late sixth century, cf. Hoyland, *HKP*, 16–17, 144–5.

The Length of Procopius' Stade

The detailed investigations of Denis Feissel have established that Procopius' stade is, in essence, a proxy for the Roman mile (which corresponds to 1472m). Procopius works on an equivalence of 7 stades to one Roman mile. On certain occasions, he refers to a day's journey, a distance that he calculates (at iii.1.17) as 210 stades, although Hdt. iv.101.3 had preferred 200. As Feissel observes, Procopius' figure allows for the convenient equivalence of 7 stades = 1 (Roman) mile, so that 30 miles = 210 stades = 1 day's journey.¹ Although on occasion his calculation of distances is awry when compared to modern maps, there is no reason to question these equivalences, as some scholars have; other authors of the period, such as John the Lydian, explicitly adopt the same system.² It follows that the variable nature of the ancient stade is of little relevance to Procopius, who was essentially working from Roman miles and converting them, often rounding his figures, into stades.³ In the following table we therefore assume the equivalences noted above and calculate distances in km on the basis of 1 Roman mile = 1.472 km, following Feissel 2002, 384.

¹ See Feissel 2002, 392, cf. already Haury 1906, 297 (an important and often overlooked contribution).

² *De Mens.* i.12 (6.10), cf. Feissel 2002, 384 and n.14. As Feissel 2002, 391, notes, both Dillemann 1962, 228, and D. Roques, in his translation of *Vandalic Wars*, had proposed variations in Procopius' calculation of the stade. See Lillington-Martin 2013, 608–10, however, correcting some of the distances in Dillemann.

³ So Feissel 2002, 384. See Bauslauth 1979, esp. 5 n.22 (on Thucydides), Fraser 1996, 76 n.2, on the classical stade. Conversions to modern distances on the basis purely of Procopius' stade can be problematic therefore, e.g. for his figure for the distance from Amida to Siphrios at i.8.10, which he puts at 350 stades. PJT 67 n.320 equate this to 90 km, while Luther 1997, 192, prefers 65 km. In fact, 50 Roman miles would correspond to 73.6 km, although in Dillemann 1963, fig.31, the distance is closer to 62 km.

Passage	Span of measurement	Distance (in stades)	Theoretical equivalent (actual distance), km
i.8.10	Amida to Siphrios	c.350	74 (62)
i.8.22	Amida to river Nymphios	c.300	64 (80 + 20 = 100)
i.9.14	Amida to Thilasama	40	8 (10)
i.10.4, 7	Caspian Gates to Iberia	50	11 (?)
i.10.14	Nisibis to Dara	98	21 (26)
i.10.14	Dara to Persian frontier	28	6 (10.4?)
i.13.15	Dara to Ammodius	20	4 (7.7)
i.15.9	Octava to Satala	56	12 (?)
i.17.4	Theodosiopolis to sources of Euphrates and Tigris	42	9 (40)
i.17.7	Area of marsh on Upper Euphrates	20 × 50	4 × 10.5 (?)
i.18.8	Chalcis to Gabbula	110	23 (48)
i.19.3	Aelas to Iotabe	1000	210 (200?)
i.19.22	Adulis to the sea	20	4 (7?)
i.21.6	Amida to Martyropolis	240	See note to i.8.22
i.21.9	Martyropolis to Attachas	100	21 (32)
ii.5.29	Sura to Sergiopolis	126	26.5 (25)
ii.11.1	Antioch to Seleucia (Pieria)	130	27.3 (29)
ii.12.1	Chalcis to Beroea	84	20.6 (27)
ii.12.4	Obbanes to Barbalissus	40	8.4 (?)
ii.18.3	Nisibis to Belisarius' camp	c.42	c.10.3
ii.18.16	Nisibis to units of Peter and John	10	2 (?)
ii.25.5	Dubios to Anglon	c.120	25 (125)
ii.26.11	Edessa to Persian camp	7	1.5 (?)

As the table shows, Procopius' figures are often not far off the mark; but when they are wrong, it is in general because he has underestimated the difference, sometimes by a large margin. This tendency has been observed by other scholars, notably at *Aed.* i.5.13, in the case of the Golden Horn at Constantinople.⁴

⁴ See Roques 2011, 131 n.117. As he points out, such a remarkable error concerning a distance at the heart of the empire, is puzzling. Cf. Dillemann 1962, 228, signalling similar underestimates on the eastern frontier.

Nonnosus and Roman Missions to Southern Arabia and Ethiopia

Introduction

The brief summary that the ninth-century patriarch Photius gives of Nonnosus' work provides a fascinating glimpse of a series of Roman embassies to southern Arabia and Ethiopia. Some of the details concern people mentioned by Procopius, notably the phylarch Caïsus (Qays), which is why we offer here a full translation of Photius' notes. In order to follow his account, however, it is necessary to examine more closely the relationship between three diplomatic missions he recounts and the ones mentioned by Procopius and Malalas. The embassies may be presented as follows:¹

Embassies Described by Nonnosus

- A. Abrames' (Abraham's) first mission to Qays, the grandson of Ḥarith, who ruled over the Kindites and Ma'add (§4). Abraham made a treaty with him and brought his son Mu'āwiya back to Constantinople as a hostage.
- B. Nonnosus' mission to Qays and Kālēb (§5): his brief was to persuade Qays to come to the Emperor Justinian, which he failed to do, and to visit Kālēb and the Ḥimyarites.
- C. Abraham's second mission to Qays (§8), in which he succeeded in convincing him to come to Constantinople himself, leaving his kingdom to his two brothers, 'Amr and Yazīd. Qays, who had come with many of his own retainers, was then made phylarch of 'the Palestines'.

¹ This analysis is essentially that of Greatrex 1998, 236–7, cf. Millar 2010, 207–8. We omit from this sequence an earlier embassy mentioned by Nonnosus (§2) from the reign of Anastasius and another dated to 524 (§3).

Procopius' Embassy (i.20.9–11)

- D. The envoy Julian was instructed to persuade Sumūyafa' Ashwa' to restore Qays to his chieftdom over the Ma'add and to urge the Ethiopian ruler to help the Romans reduce their dependence on the Persians for imports, particularly of silk.

Malalas' Embassy (18.56, cf. Theoph. 244–5)

- E. Theophanes' version of Malalas gives the envoy's name as Julian; this emissary visited the court of the Ethiopian ('Indian') ruler, i.e. Kālēb, and succeeded in persuading him to open hostilities with the Persians. The account contains a detailed description of the Axumite court.

The difficulty lies in determining the relationship between these various diplomatic missions. Many chronologies have been proposed, most recently by Bowersock 2013, 143 (cf. idem 2012b, 289–90), albeit without discussion of earlier views. The most detailed recent treatment of the issue is that of Beaucamp 2010, whose analysis will be followed here.

Procopius' embassy takes place during the reign of Sumūyafa' Ashwa', i.e. after 525 and before Abraha seized power, i.e. sometime in the early 530s. Joëlle Beaucamp insists that it must have occurred in 531, since it is placed in his account between the Roman defeat at Callinicum and Kavadh's death in September that year, but this places undue weight on the historian's chronology; more cautiously, it may be dated to 530 or 531, at any rate before the war with Persia ended in 532.² Given that Malalas mentions Julian in his account, it is most likely that the mission he describes derives from his report; the account even slips into the first person on occasion.³ Missions D and E would thus be one and the same. The date of Julian's embassy is not clear in Malalas, but is likely to be 530 or 531. Although one has the impression from Malalas that Julian's visit to the Ethiopian court was a remarkable success, given the willingness of the king immediately to declare war on Persia, this is only an apparent discrepancy with Procopius' more critical portrayal of the mission's outcome: much was promised, as Julian no doubt proudly reported, but in the end, as Procopius describes, little delivered. See Greatrex 1998, 237–8, Marasco 2000, 271, Beaucamp 2010, 198–203.

Two schools of thought exist as to how Nonnosus' three missions fit with that of Julian recounted by Procopius and Malalas. One favours a

² See i.19–20h and i.20.9n *contra* Beaucamp 2010, 200.

³ Cf. Nechaeva 2014, 153.

compressed chronology, by which the three embassies follow in quick succession in the late 520s and early 530s, evidently overlapping with Julian's; Irfan Shahîd (1995, 155–60, cf. idem 1960a, Marasco 2000, 271–2) indeed argued that B and D were part of the same mission.⁴ A significant obstacle to such an interpretation lies in the very different position of Qays as described by Procopius and Nonnosus: in the latter's account he is a powerful phylarch, reluctant to give up his power, while in the former he is a wandering renegade. It is therefore more plausible to envisage that Nonnosus and his father undertook their missions to Qays later in the 530s, following the conclusion of the Eternal Peace with Persia, or even subsequently. By then he had become an important ruler in central Arabia who might, Justinian reasoned, be of more use to the empire within it than operating on its margins. Thus Greatrex 1998, 237–8, followed by Beaucamp 2010, 204–6, both with reference to earlier scholarship, cf. Robin 2012b, 41–3. See also Millar 2010, 208–9, Fisher 2015, 237–9. It is possible to push the chronological limits further, as Robin (forthcoming a) does: he suggests that Justinian may have wanted to withdraw the powerful Qays from his rulership of the Ma'add in central Arabia in order to conciliate Abraha in Ḥimyar after the Persian invasion of 540.⁵

The translation that follows uses the text in Henry 1959, 4–7. His French translation has been taken into account, as has that of Freese, *The Library of Photius*, vol.1 (London, 1920) and that of Wilson (1994), 27–9. Richard Burgess made important improvements to our original translation. Bevan offers a partial translation in Fisher 2015, 238–9. The paragraph numbers are our own insertion for ease of reference.

Nonnosus

(1) Read: a *History* of Nonnosus, in which is recounted his embassy to the Ethiopians and Amerites (Homerites, i.e. Ḥimyarites) and Saracens, very powerful peoples at that time, as well as to other eastern peoples.

(2) Justinian governed the Roman empire at this time and the phylarch of the Saracens was Qays (Caïsus), a descendant of al-Harith (Arethas),

⁴ This is also assumed in Bowersock 2013, 109, cf. Robin 1996, 672, Treadgold 2007a, 256 n.101. It is more likely, however, that Julian, like Nonnosus, published his own account of his embassy, cf. Shahîd 1960a, 63, Nechaeva 2014, 142–3.

⁵ See Robin (forthcoming a), II.g.2 and II.h, the latter section on the date of the end of Kālēb's (Ellesthaeus') reign.

who had himself been phylarch.⁶ Nonnosus' grandfather was sent to al-Harith by the then Emperor Anastasius and concluded a peace treaty with him.⁷ (3) Moreover the father of Nonnosus, whose name was Abrames (Abraham),⁸ also went on an embassy to al-Mundhir (Alamundarus), the phylarch of the Saracens, and rescued two Roman commanders, Timostratus and John, who had been captured according to the rules of war.⁹ This rescue of the commanders was undertaken for the Emperor Justin.

(4) Now Caïsus, to whom Nonnosus was sent, was the leader of two of the most notable peoples among the Saracens, the Khindeni (Kindites) and the Maadēni (Ma'add).¹⁰ But before Nonnosus was chosen as ambassador, his father too had been sent to this Qays by the Emperor Justinian and made a peace treaty with him, the result of which was that he took the son of Qays, who was called Mu'āwiya (Mavias), as a hostage and brought him back to Justinian in Byzantium.¹¹

(5) Nonnosus subsequently went on an embassy with the following two objectives: to bring Qays to the emperor, if possible, and to reach the king of the Auxomitaie (Axumites), whose ruler at this time was Elesbaas. In addition to these two (aims), he was also to visit the Homerites.¹²

⁶ See the note to Proc. i.20.9 on this Caïsus. As noted there, he has been identified by Robin 2008a, 176, cf. Zwettler 2000, 258, with Qays b. Salama in the Arabic tradition, who is also described as a grandson of the Hujrid ruler al-Harith (Harith, Arethas), who had held sway over the Kindites. But Robin has now proposed to identify him with a nephew of al-Harith from the banū Kābsha, whose brother Yazid (cf. §8 and n.14) revolted against Abraha in 547.

The al-Harith (Arethas) here referred to, who was killed by al-Mundhir in 528 (Mal. 18.26), had been an important Roman ally. See (e.g.) Shahid 1960a, 71–2, Robin 2008a, 170, 175, cf. Fisher 2011, 84–91, idem 2015, 221, 232–3.

⁷ Nonnosus' grandfather was called Euphrasius, *PLRE* ii, Euphrasius 3, cf. Bowersock 2013, 137. On the treaty he arranged c.502, probably with both Kindite and Jafnid leaders, see Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 51–2, Haarer 2006, 33–6, Robin 2012c, 74–5, Bowersock 2013, 137–8, *RKOR* 273.

⁸ *PLRE* ii, Abramius; he was a priest, as is clear from PZ viii.3a. Bowersock 2013, 136, speculates that the family may have been Arab. On the specialisation of some families in diplomatic affairs see Nechaeva 2014, 127–31.

⁹ See *PLRE* ii, Ioannes 70, Timostratus, cf. Greatrex and Lieu 2002, 79, *RKOR* 539. They were captured perhaps in 523, perhaps a little earlier, then released as a result of negotiations at the 'Conference of Ramla' the following year, on which see Shahid 1964, Bowersock 2013, 138–9. See Proc. i.17.44, with the note *ad loc.*, and PZ viii.3a.

¹⁰ Nonnosus uses the term *genos*, which could be translated as 'tribe'. See Zwettler 2000, 258 and n.62, on its meaning here: the Kindites and the Ma'add are perhaps larger and looser groupings than 'tribes', cf. i.19.14n. On the Kindites see Robin 2012c, esp. 101–2 and note Hoyland 2001, 49–50, on this episode.

¹¹ Bowersock 2013, 139, confuses this episode with the Conference of Ramla of 524, alluding to *Mart. Ar.* 25. The date of this embassy is most likely during the 530s, after the Eternal Peace of 532, as noted above. Shahid 1995, 155–6, places it however in 528, as does Robin 2012b, 71.

¹² Elesbaas is Procopius' Hellesthaeus, i.e. 'Ella 'Aṣbeḥa, Kālēb. See i.20.1n. This mission is *RKOR* 786.

(6) Auxumis (Axum) is a very large city and is a sort of capital for the whole of Ethiopia; it lies to the south and east of the Roman empire.¹³

(7) Nonnosus survived many plots of foreign peoples, as well as many dangerous animals, on his journey; he also encountered rugged terrain and frequent crises. Nevertheless he accomplished his mission and was able to return home safely.

(8) [Nonnosus says] that, after Abrames went on another embassy to him, Qays divided his phylarchate between his brothers 'Amr (Ambrus) and Yazid (Iezidus) and came to Byzantium.¹⁴ He obtained from the emperor the chieftainship of the Palestines for himself and brought a vast contingent of his own subordinates with him.¹⁵

(9) He says the ancients used to call what are now called sandals *arbylae* (boots) and a turban a *phasōlis*.¹⁶

(10) [He says] that most of the Saracens, both those in the Palm Grove (Phoinikōn) and those beyond the Palm Grove and the mountains called Taurēnoi,¹⁷ regard a particular place as sacred because it is dedicated to one or other of their gods and they gather there twice every year.¹⁸ (11) One of these festivals lasts an entire month, concluding almost

¹³ On Axum see i.19.22n.

¹⁴ See Robin 2008a, 176, noting that in the Arabic tradition Qays b. Salama had a brother called Yazid, who led an expedition against the Naṣrid ruler al-Mundhir, cf. idem 2012b, 43. But a further Qays, a nephew of al-Harith (§2 above), also had a brother Yazid, so he is another candidate for identification with Nonnosus' Qays; he revolted against the Ḥimyarite king Abraha and is referred to in the Mārib dam inscription of 547. See Robin 2008a, 176 n.57 (*contra*), but cf. idem 2012c, 80, idem (forthcoming a), section II.g.2 (more hesitant). Either identification might therefore fit here. The fact that Qays came to Constantinople once inclined scholars to identify him instead with Imru' al-Qays, another grandson of the same Ḥujrid leader al-Harith, a famous poet reported by the Arabic tradition to have visited the imperial capital: see (e.g.) Sartre 1982a, 173–5, but cf. Robin 2012c, 78–9. See also i.20.9n.

¹⁵ It is uncertain how Qays' phylarchate, apparently wide-ranging in nature, impacted on the phylarchate of Palaestina III earlier granted to Abū Karib (see Proc. i.19.10). See Sartre 1982a, 175–6, who supposes that he supplanted Abū Karib for part of the 530s; Shahid 1995, 159–60 (cf. idem 1960a, 68–9) sees the two as occupying concurrent posts, with Qays' being more honorific, cf. idem 2002, 34, arguing that the *hēgēmonia* here referred to by Nonnosus refers to a higher office than a mere *phylarchia*. So also Bowersock 2013, III, 140–1.

¹⁶ See Marasco 2000, 273–4, on these terms and the patriarch Photius' interest in such issues, cf. Wilson 1994, 29 n.1. The term 'turban', *phakiolion*, occurs also in Malalas' account of Julian's embassy to the Axumite court, i8.56 (384.6). See also Henry's note *ad loc.*, 5 n.2.

¹⁷ Not otherwise known, cf. Henry 1959, 194. Christian Robin suggests (pers. comm.) that the reference could be to Ṭūr Sinaï, i.e. Mt Sinaï; but Jabal Thawr, south of Mecca, is surely just as plausible.

¹⁸ Cf. Proc. ii.16.18 and the note *ad loc.* with Hoyland 2001, 161–3, on such periods of sacred truce, cf. Ioh 2014, 476–8, noting festivals at this time of year, when the truce allowed pilgrimages to occur in safety. The identity of the sanctuary is unknown, cf. Crone 1987, 137 n.19, though it may well have been in north-western Arabia, 197 and n.117. She also discusses the various fairs of western Arabia, 151–2.

in the middle of spring, when the sun crosses Taurus.¹⁹ The other festival lasts for two months and is celebrated after the summer solstice.²⁰

(12) He says that during these festivals they are all at peace, not only with one another, but also with all the people living among them. They say that even the animals live in peace with men, and even among themselves. He also recounts many other surprising things, hardly different from myths.

(13) [Nonnosus says] that Adulis is fifteen days' journey from Axum.²¹ As they were leaving Axum, Nonnosus and his companions witnessed an amazing spectacle near a place called Awē, which lies between Axum and Adulis:²² a not inconsiderable herd of elephants,²³ almost five thousand in number. These elephants were feeding in a large plain. It was not easy for any of the inhabitants to approach them nor to keep them away from their feeding grounds. This spectacle did indeed happen to them *en route*.²⁴

(14) It is necessary also to mention the climate changes²⁵ between Awē and Axum, which lead to opposite experiences of summer and winter. For when the sun is crossing Cancer, Leo and Virgo,²⁶ as far (south) as Awē summer and dryness dominate the air, as they do for us, but from Awē to Axum and the rest of Ethiopia stormy weather takes over. It does not last for the whole day, but rather begins each day in the afternoon, when it clouds over and the countryside is inundated by violent rainstorms. It is right at this point that the Nile reaches its peak, flooding Egypt and irrigating the land. But when the sun is crossing Capricorn, Aquarius and Pisces,²⁷ the land of the Adulitans as far (south) as Awē is

¹⁹ Cf. Geminus i.13 on the use of signs of the zodiac for measuring time and for this equivalence for spring.

²⁰ See ii.16.18n on the summer truce and Robin 2019, 38, on this passage.

²¹ See i.19.22n.

²² Cosmas ii.60 refers to a people called Αὔα, Awa/Ava, conquered by an unnamed Axumite king (in his transcription of an inscription from Adulis), which ought to correspond to the place mentioned here. An identification with the modern city Adwa has been proposed, cf. *EAE* i, 105–7, Marasco 2000, 276 (associating it with nearby Yeha), Bowersock 2013, 49. Burstein 1997, 35, suggests a location 'somewhere on the Ethiopian plateau'.

²³ See *EAE* ii, 255–9, on elephants in Ethiopia, plentiful in the sixth century, with Charles 2018, 174–5.

²⁴ On the wonder occasioned by African elephants see Burstein 1992, 55–7, cf. Gagos 1989, 273–6 with pl.7b and Timothy of Gaza, *On Animals*, 24, Marc. com. a.496 (noting the arrival of an elephant at Anastasius' court in Constantinople in the 490s). See also Bowersock 2013, 49, 142. *Peripl. Mar. Erythr.* 4 mentions Adulis as a centre for the export of ivory, which came from a town inland called Koloē, between Adulis and Axum; this would correspond approximately to the region here described by Nonnosus. See also Casson 1989, 106–8.

²⁵ Literally, 'the mixing of airs'.

²⁶ I.e. June, July and August. Cf. Geminus i.9, 14.

²⁷ I.e. December, January and February. Cf. Geminus i.9, 16.

conversely inundated by rain, while for those from Awē as far as Axum and the rest of Ethiopia it is summer, and the land at that time provides them with seasonal crops.²⁸

(15) [Nonnosus says] that the following thing happened to him – it is a wonder just to hear about it – when he was sailing from Farsan and had reached the last of the islands.²⁹ He encountered certain beings with a human shape and appearance, but very short and with black skin and thick hair all over their bodies. Women of similar appearance followed the men, as did the children, who were even shorter than the men among them. They were all naked, except that both adult men and women alike covered their private parts with a small piece of skin. They displayed no wildness or savagery, but instead had human speech, a language utterly unknown both to all their neighbours and even more so to Nonnosus' entourage. They lived off shellfish and fish that are thrown up by the sea onto the island. They had no courage, but rather, upon seeing the men with us, cowered under (the bushes) as we do when we see particularly large animals.³⁰

²⁸ See *EAE* i, 753–6, on the Ethiopian climate, stressing the wide variation between regions (generally depending on elevation).

²⁹ The Farasan islands, lying off the Arabian coast north-east of Adulis, referred to also at *Mart. Ar.* 29.6, which claims that they contributed seven ships to Kālēb's invasion fleet of 525. They had once been occupied by the Romans, cf. Hatke 2011, 266, Villeneuve 2007. Their name is also applied to a people occupying the nearby Arabian mainland; in this context they are referred to in south Arabian inscriptions. See Schiettecatte 2008, §16 (with fig.1 for a useful map), Hatke 2011, 219–20.

³⁰ Marasco 2000, 279–80, notes parallels between this description and Ctesias' portrayal of a Pygmy people in India, cf. Ctesias, *Indica*, frg.45fα (ed. and tr. Lenfant, 191–3, tr. in Nichols, 63–4) derived (like Nonnosus' text) from Photius, *Bibliotheca*, in this case 72 (p.137 in Henry 1959). The patriarch clearly had a particular interest in such marvellous sights, cf. Ruffing 2011, 363–4.

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Godidiscus, a Goth; experienced in military matters; accompanies army despatched to Amida by Anastasius I, **i.8.3**

Gubazes (Lazic king), surrenders himself and his people to Khusro, **ii.17.2**; Khusro plots to have him killed, **ii.28.30**; attempt by Vahriz to kill Gubazes thwarted by the Lazic nobleman Pharsanses; in response, Gubazes revolts and begs for Justinian's forgiveness and aid; Justinian sends a force under the command of Dagisthaeus to assist Gubazes; upon Dagisthaeus' arrival, both men lay siege to Petra; Gubazes plans to continue the siege of Petra while also addressing the threat of Mihr-Mihroe's approaching Persian army, **ii.29.2–13, 27–32**; despite Dagisthaeus' setbacks, Gubazes remains unperturbed, believing the terrain to be in his favour; Gubazes receives Justinian's promised financial aid, but further help does not arrive; Gubazes and Dagisthaeus join forces and destroy Persian force left on the Lazic border by Mihr-Mihroe, **ii.30.23–45**

Gurgenes (Iberian king), following Kavadh's order to comply with Persian customs, the king seeks an alliance with the Romans; unable to withstand the Persian army sent against him, he flees along with the leading Iberians to the borders of Lazica, **i.12.4–13**; reference to the revolt of Gurgenes, **ii.15.6**

Gusanastades, Persian general or *kanarang*; advises the usurper Blases to execute Kavadh,

i.5.4–6; following Kavadh's resumption of the throne, he is killed; his relative Adergudunbades, the first Persian to swear allegiance to Kavadh, assumes Gusanastades' office, **i.6.12–18**

H

al-Harith, son of Jabala; ruler of the Saracens in Arabia; made king by Justinian over many tribes in order to match the strength of the Persian-allied al-Mundhir; unable to prevent al-Mundhir's incursions into Roman territory, **i.17.47–48**; his forces join Belisarius' army and are present at the battle by the Euphrates river; suspected of treachery, **i.18.7, 26–35**; boundary dispute with al-Mundhir, **ii.1.3–7**; leading a large Saracen force, he joins Belisarius in Mesopotamia, **ii.16.5**; sent by Belisarius to plunder Assyria and to assess the military situation therein; fearing the loss of his plunder, he avoids rejoining Belisarius and returns to Roman territory via another route; escapes punishment despite Belisarius' learning of his disobedience; Khusro informed of al-Harith's depredations, **ii.19.11–30, 46–47**; engages in a war with al-Mundhir, gaining a victory over the latter, **ii.28.12–14**; his descendant Caisus (Qays); receives Nonnosus' grandfather and concludes a peace treaty, **§2**

Hellesthaeus (Elesbaas), Christian king of the Ethiopians; launches expedition against the Homerites to prevent planned persecution of Christians; defeats Homerites in battle and places a Christian Homerite, Esimiphaeus, on the throne as his client king; Esimiphaeus soon deposed, and despite multiple attempts, Hellesthaeus is unable to restore him; agrees to aid Justinian against the Persians by providing an alternative source for the purchase of silk; unable to keep his promise, **i.20.1–12**; king of the Auxumitae (Axumites), **§5**

Hermogenes, *magister officiorum* under Justinian; formerly *assessor* of Vitalian; sent by emperor to Dara to assist Belisarius and his army; prepares for and participates in the battle for Dara, **i.13–14**; returns to Byzantium, **i.16.10**; supports Belisarius in his desire to avoid battle with the Persians by the Euphrates, **i.18.16**; following the battle at the Euphrates, he unsuccessfully treats with Khusro concerning peace, **i.21.1**; despatched on another embassy, he accompanies Sittas' army as it marches

against the Persian army at Martyropolis; both fear for Martyropolis' security, having occupied it after the abortive Persian siege, **i.21.10, 23**; sent on multiple embassies with Rufinus to Khusro, **i.22.1, 16**

Hestia, identified with the Persian fire-divinity, **ii.24.2**

Honorius (Western Roman emperor, 395–423), his support in securing Theodosius II's future unlikely, given trouble in Italy, **i.2.4**

Hypatius, *magister militum praesentalis* under his uncle Anastasius I; one of four supreme commanders in charge of the Roman army despatched to Amida; he and Patricius encamp with their forces at Siphrios, some distance from Amida; defeat an advance force of Hephthalites only to have their own forces destroyed by the Persian army, **i.8.2–19**; sent to Kavadh as part of a Roman delegation; his character questioned by Persian and Roman ambassadors alike, leading to his removal from office, **i.11.24–39**; dismissed unwillingly from the palace during the Nika revolt; forcefully removed from his home by the insurrectionists and proclaimed emperor; captured and handed over to Justinian, following the defeat of his supporters in the hippodrome; remains defiant in the face of death, maintaining his innocence; his privileges and wealth are restored to his offspring, **i.24.19ff**

I

Ildiger, in the army of Martin, the *magister militum per Orientem*, **ii.24.13**

Iphigenia, daughter of Agamemnon; her flight from the temple of Artemis with Orestes and Pylades; temple built for her by Orestes, **i.17.11–19**

Irenaeus, Roman general sent to Lazica by Justinian, **i.12.14**

Isaac, Narses' and Aratius' youngest brother; deserts to the Romans, betraying the fortress of Bolum to them, **i.15.31–32**; commands army units at Theodosiopolis, **ii.24.14**; rescues his brother Narses at the battle of Anglon, but is mortally wounded in the process, **ii.25.24–25**

Isis, revered by the Blemmyes and Nobatae, **i.19.35**

J

Jabala, father of al-Harith, **i.17.47**

Jacob, ascetic residing at Endielon; miraculous encounter with certain Hephthalites; granted any request by Kavadh, he receives

permission to shelter any war-time fugitives, **i.7.5–11**

Jason, tale of Medea and Jason set in the middle of Colchis, **ii.17.2**

Jesus, see **Christ**

John (father of Artabanes), son slays Sittas in battle; member of the Arsacid family; slain by his supposed friend Buzes, **ii.3.25–31**

John (son of Basil), Edessene noble; given as a hostage to Khusro by Belisarius, **i.21.27–33**

John (son of Lucas), Roman commander captured and ransomed by al-Mundhir, **i.17.44**; released by Almundarus (al-Mundhir) to the ambassador Abrames (Abraham), **§2**

John (son of Nicetas), Roman co-commander at the battle for Dara, **i.13.21**; urges Belisarius to retire from his invasion of Mesopotamia, **ii.19.36–44**; encamps with his troops at Phison, a fort near Martyropolis, **ii.24.15**

John (son of Rufinus), sent on an embassy to Khusro, **ii.7.15**

John (tyrant of Dara), stationed among the regular infantry at Dara; seizes control of the city for himself, but soon deposed and killed, **i.26.5–12**

John Guzes, an Armenian; son of Thomas; exploits at the siege of Petra, **ii.30.3–6**

John the Cappadocian, praetorian prefect under Justinian; his background and character; deprived of office during the Nika revolt, but soon restored, **i. 24.11–18**; **i.25.1**; account of his downfall at the hands of Antonina, Theodora, and his unwitting daughter Euphemia; deprived once more of prefecture and ordained a priest at Cyzicus against his will; despite these setbacks, he bides his time until he can return to office; having been suspected of killing the bishop of Cyzicus, he is imprisoned and flogged; escorted to Antinous, where he is once more imprisoned, **i.25.3ff**; summoned by Justinian to Byzantium, where he remains a priest; tale of Augustus' robe, **ii.30.49–54**

John the Glutton, bodyguard of Belisarius; co-commander of the Roman forces accompanying al-Harith's army into Assyria; deceived by al-Harith, **ii.19.15–16, 28–29**; encamps with his troops at Phison, a fort near Martyropolis, **ii.24.15**

John Troglita, commander of troops in Mesopotamia; captures the interpreter of Vitigis' envoys and imprisons him at Constantia, **ii.14.12**; ill-prepared for an

attack, he is defeated by the Persians at Nisibis, **ii.18.16ff**

John Tzibus, Roman commander sent to Lazica; character and origins; convinces Justinian to construct Petra, from where he establishes a monopoly on all trade in the region, **ii.15.9–12**; protects Petra from Persian attack but is eventually killed in battle; Khuro seizes John's considerable wealth, **ii.17.4–16, 28**; reference to John's monopoly on trade and to his responsibility for the Lazic revolt, **ii.29.21**

Julian, brother of Summus, **ii.1.10**; sent by Justinian as an envoy to both the Ethiopians and Homerites, **i.20.9**; Justinian's private secretary; sent on an embassy with John, son of Rufinus, to Khuro; arrives at Antioch where he forbids any financial transactions with Khuro and accuses Ephraem, the city's bishop, of treason, **ii.7.15–16**

Justin I (Roman emperor, 518–527), uncle of Justinian, **i.11.10**; accompanies the army sent by Anastasius I to Amida; will succeed Anastasius I as emperor, **i.8.3**; acquires the purple despite the presence of Anastasius I's relatives; dissuaded from adopting Kavadh's son Khuro by his *quaestor* Proculus; counter-proposal delivered by his envoys Rufinus and Hypatius not well received; Rufinus denounces Hypatius to Justin I, prompting the emperor to strip him of his command, **i.11.1ff**; promises to support the Iberian king Gurgenes' revolt against the Persians; despatches Probus to Bosphorus to recruit a Hunnic army to aid the Iberians; sends the general Peter to help Gurgenes; following the flight of the leading Iberians to Byzantium, Peter instructed to defend Lazica; sends an army under Irenaeus to Lazica; order to garrison two Lazic fortresses on the border with Iberia disregarded; Justinian shares the imperial power with his uncle; appoints Belisarius commander of the troops at Dara and Procopius chosen as his adviser, **i.12.5ff**; dies after declaring Justinian co-Augustus; his nephew becomes sole emperor, **i.13.13**; during Justin I's reign, a devastating earthquake shakes Antioch, **ii.14.6**; digression on Justin I's relationship with the Roman general Peter, **ii.15.7–8**; commissions the ambassador Abrames (Abraham) to rescue John and Timostratus, **§2**

Justinian (Roman emperor, 527–565), his wars recorded by Procopius, **i.1.1**; nephew of Justin I; his uncle's expected successor,

i.11.10; Sittas and Belisarius in his personal bodyguard, **i.12.21**; succeeds Justin I as emperor; orders Belisarius to construct a fort at Minduos; having appointed Belisarius *magister militum per Orientem*, he orders him to campaign against the Persians **i.13.1–9**; has reigned for four years, **i.16.10**; appoints al-Harith king over numerous Saracen tribes, **i.17.47**; his bodyguard Peter is the infantry commander at the battle by the Euphrates, **i.18.6**; desire to secure an alliance with both the Ethiopians and Homerites; inhabitants of Iotabe become Roman subjects; appoints Abu Karib phylarch of the Saracens in Palestine; gifted the Palm Grove by the phylarchate; orders the destruction of the temples at Philae, **i.19.1–10, 36**; despatches Julian to arrange an economic and military alliance with the Ethiopians and Homerites, **i.20.9ff**; orders Belisarius to campaign against the Vandals; appoints Sittas to replace Belisarius in the East; receives information from a Persian spy and uses him to spread disinformation amongst the Persians, **i.21.2–14**; falsely believed to have executed his envoy Rufinus; rescinds decision to surrender Lazic fortresses; 'Endless Peace' made in the sixth year of his reign, **i.22.9–17**; receives the supposed grandson of Kavadh, **i.23.24**; his actions during the Nika revolt, **i.24.17ff**; his high opinion of John the Cappadocian; slandered by Antonina during her plot to effect the downfall of John the Cappadocian, **i.25.5, 15**; sends gifts to Khuro following the latter's tongue-in-cheek claims of facilitating Justinian's victories, **i.26.3–4**; Belisarius' campaigning in Italy motivates Khuro to violate his treaty with Justinian; delegates the resolution of the Strata dispute to Strategius; accused of violating the treaty by Khuro, **ii.1.1ff**; denounced by Vitigis' envoys before Khuro, **ii.2.5ff**; makes Symeon master of certain Armenian villages; following Symeon's murder, he bestows the villages and the rulership of the Armenians upon Amazaspes; makes Acacius ruler of Armenia after he accuses Amazaspes of treachery and kills him; denounced by the Armenian envoys before Khuro; thirteenth year of his reign, **ii.3.1–5, 44ff**; sends Anastasius of Dara to dissuade Khuro from waging war, **ii.4.14ff**; near the end of Justinian's thirteenth year, Khuro violates the 'Endless Peace'; Anastasius of Dara sent to Justinian to inform him of Khuro's location, **ii.5.1,**

27; hearing of Khuro's invasion, he sends his cousin Germanus eastward, **ii.6.9**; sends an embassy to Khuro, **ii.7.15**; his name shouted by the young Antiochenes during the siege of the city, **ii.8.29**; Khuro shifts the blame for the atrocities at Sura to Justinian, **ii.9.11**; accused by Khuro of breaking the truce despite the Roman envoys' claims to the contrary; envoys sent to Justinian to reach a final peace settlement, **ii.10.15ff**; Justinian's devotion to the Greens, **ii.11.32**; agrees to the arrangements made between the Roman envoys and Khuro; refuses to adhere to the agreement after Khuro's abortive attack on Dara, **ii.13.1, 29**; sends John Tzibus to Lazica; convinced by Tzibus to build Petra; Justinian fortifies the city, **ii.15.9–10**; **ii.17.3**; ignores Candidus' supplications; sends Belisarius against Khuro's army; failure to protect the emperor's lands used as leverage by Belisarius to encourage the Roman officers at Hierapolis to join him, **ii.20.3, 20ff**; accused by Khuro of failing to treat for peace, **ii.21.1**; orders Valerian, Martin, and others to invade Persarmenia after learning of Persia's internal problems, **ii.24.9**; Khuro's fourth invasion motivated not by animosity towards Justinian, but towards the Christian God; Justinian fails to uphold his generals' promises to Khuro, **ii.26.2, 46**; appoints Marcellus and Constantianus generals; despatches the latter and Sergius to Khuro to treat for peace; sends money and Tribunus to Khuro as part of a five-year truce; truce arranged in his nineteenth year; treats the ambassador Yazdgushnasp well, **ii.28.2–11, 39–44**; at Gubazes' request, he sends aid to the Lazi; reference to his founding of Petra; Gubazes implores Justinian for financial assistance, **ii.29.9–10, 20–32**; his name acclaimed at the siege of Petra; money promised to Gubazes and the Sabirs arrives, but not the army sent to Lazica; victory of Gubazes and Dagisthaeus occurs in the twenty-third year of Justinian's reign, **ii.30.3, 28–29, 48**; rules the Roman empire at the time of the phylarchate of Caïsus (Qays), **§2**; sends Nonnosus' father to make a peace treaty with Qays; Mavias (Mu'āwiya), the son of Qays taken to Byzantium as a hostage, **§4**

Justus, cousin of Justinian; helps deliver Hypatius to Justinian, **i.24.53**; following Khuro's entry in Euphratesia, he takes refuge with Buzes in Hierapolis; they urge Belisarius to come and help defend the

city; Justus remains behind in Hierapolis after Belisarius summons everyone to gather at Europus, **ii.20.20–28**; he and his fellow officers bivouac with their troops at Phison in preparation for an invasion of Persarmenia; unable to join forces with those already in enemy territory; invades and plunders Taraunon, **ii.24.15–20**; **ii.25.35**; dies by illness, **ii.28.1**

K

Kaoses, eldest son of Kavadh; by law his successor, but disapproved of by his father, **i.11.3**; prevented from claiming the throne by Mebodes; his brother Khuro is made king, **i.21.20–22**; reference to Kavadh's hatred for him, **ii.9.12**

katholikos, title for Dvin's bishop, **ii.25.4**

Kavadh (Persian king, 488–496/7, 498/9–531), son of Peroz; does not accompany his father on the expedition against the Hephthalites; said to have received Peroz's pearl; as Peroz's only surviving son, he succeeds him; stops paying yearly tribute to the Hephthalites, **i.4.2, 16, 34–35**; disaffection with his rule leads to his deposition; incarcerated in the prison of Oblivion, **i.5.1–6**; escapes from Oblivion with the assistance of his wife and friend Seoses; flees to the Hephthalites and, having returned with an army, reclaims his throne, **i.6.1ff**; Anastasius I denies his request for a loan to repay the Hephthalite king; invades Roman territory and besieges Amida; interaction with the Syrian ascetic Jacob; siege and capture of Amida; kindness towards Amidene prisoners, **i.7.1ff**; defeats the army of Patricius and Hypatius near Amida; retires homeward to meet invading Huns, **i.8.8–19**; reference to his treatment towards Amida, **i.9.19**; seizes control of the Caspian Gates; displeased with the building of Dara but mollified with gifts of money from Anastasius I, **i.10.12–17**; wants Khuro to succeed him; proposes that Justin I adopt Khuro as his son in return for peace in the hope that this will secure Khuro's position; negotiations between Roman and Persian envoys break down and his proposal comes to naught; Seoses, his friend and one of the envoys, accused of sabotaging the peace talks; does not prevent the downfall and death of Seoses, **i.11.1ff**; attempt to impose Persian customs upon the Iberians motivates their king to seek Roman assistance; despatches Boes with a Persian army against the

- Iberians, **i.12.1–13**; sends an army to invade Roman-controlled Armenia; deprived of gold supply from mine at Pharangium, **i.15.1, 27–28**; informs Rufinus of the concessions necessary for peace, **i.16.1ff**; punishes Peroz for his defeat at Dara; accepts al-Mundhir's advice on invading Roman territory, **i.17.26–40**; implements al-Mundhir's advice for his next invasion of Roman territory; Belisarius garrisons the towns of Mesopotamia to protect them; Persian custom of the arrows and baskets illustrates Kavadh's displeasure with Azarethes, the commander of the Persian army; **i.18.1–4, 51–55**; Hermogenes fails to reach a peace agreement with Kavadh; having fallen ill, he consults Mebodes about the succession of Khusro; Persian nobles accept Kavadh's will, which designates Khusro as his heir; news of Kavadh's death reaches the Persian army at Martyropolis, **i.21.1, 17–26**; instability of his son Khusro; plot to replace Khusro with another of Kavadh's line fails; Kavadh's grandson received by Justinian, **i.23.1–6, 24**; Kavadh's son Khusro invades Roman territory and destroys Sura, **ii.5.1, 27**; reference to Kavadh's hatred of Kaoses, **ii.9.12**; envoys address Khusro as the son of Kavadh, **ii.10.10**; reference to Kavadh's desire to capture Edessa and Constantia; deterred from attacking Edessa by the magi and decides to spare Constantia, **ii.13.8–15**; Gubazes performs obeisance to Kavadh's son Khusro, **ii.17.2**; Kavadh's son invades Roman territory, **ii.20.1**; Kavadh's son invades Roman territory for the fourth time; Kavadh once healed by the Roman doctor Stephanus, **ii.26.1, 31**
- Kavadh (son of Zames)**, grandson of Kavadh; plot to depose Khusro and place him on throne fails; Adergudunbades disregards Khusro's order to kill Kavadh and raises him in secret; given resources to flee when no longer able to be hidden; Adergudunbades' own son Varrames betrays his father's secret to Khusro; man claiming to be Kavadh arrives at Byzantium and is well received by Justinian **i.23.4–14, 23–24**
- Khanaranges**, co-commander of an invading Persian army; lays siege to Martyropolis; deceived into believing a hostile Hunnic army was on its way to attack him, **i.21.4–15**
- Khusro I (Persian King, 531–579)**, favourite son of Kavadh; desiring to ensure Khusro's succession, Kavadh proposes to Justin I that he adopt Khusro as his son; the *quaestor* Proculus advises Justin I and Justinian against this proposal; an alternative solution put forth by the Roman envoys incenses their Persian counterparts and Khusro; Seoses denounced to Kavadh for conspiring with his counterpart Hypatius to sabotage the peace and Khusro's adoption, **i.11.5–31**; named in Kavadh's will as his heir; succeeds to the throne with the assistance of Mebodes; his succession announced to the Persian army at Martyropolis, **i.21.17ff**; receives a Roman embassy despatched to negotiate a peace; refuses to ratify the treaty after Justinian's about-face regarding a term of the treaty; persuaded by the envoy Rufinus to postpone further fighting; receives another Roman embassy and agrees to a peace treaty, known as the 'Endless Peace', **i.22.1ff**; instability of Khusro; uncovers a plot to depose him; kills the usurper Zames; his *kanarang* Adergudunbades disregards Khusro's order to kill Zames' son, Kavadh; informed of Adergudunbades' disloyalty by the latter's son, Varrames; devises a plan to kill Adergudunbades and appoints Varrames in his place; misled by Zabergan into killing Mebodes, **i.23.1ff**; his tongue-in-cheek claims of facilitating Justinian's victories in Libya, **i.26.1–4**; wants to attack the Romans because of Belisarius' absence in Italy; accuses Justinian of violating the peace treaty, **ii.1.1ff**; receives the envoys of Vitigis, who urge him to attack the Romans; motivated by their speech to break the treaty with Rome, **ii.2.1ff**; receives an Armenian embassy asking for aid against the Romans; determines to resume hostilities with the Romans, terminating the 'Endless Peace', **ii.3.32ff**; Anastasius of Dara sent to Khusro by Justinian to deter him from waging war; detains Anastasius and sends no reply to Justinian, **ii.4.14ff**; invades Roman territory near the end of Justinian's thirteenth year as emperor; besieges Sura and captures it through subterfuge; sends Anastasius back to Justinian to report on Khusro's whereabouts; takes Euphemia, a captive from Sura, as his wife; has Candidus sign a promissory note to pay for the freed captives of Sura, **ii.5.1ff**; Khusro's invasion leads Buzes to devise a defensive strategy for the city of Hierapolis; Germanus fears his presence at Antioch will draw undue attention from Khusro; the Antiochene council decides to pay Khusro; Megas sent by the Antiochenes to negotiate with Khusro; Khusro extracts a ransom from

the inhabitants of Hierapolis; persuaded by Megas to receive a set amount of gold in exchange for leaving Roman territory, **ii.6.4ff**; departing from Hierapolis, Khusro proceeds to Beroea as Megas travels back to Antioch with his proposal; the Beroeans flee to their acropolis following their inability to pay in full the ransom demanded by Khusro; Khusro devastates the city and besieges the acropolis; embassy sent by Justinian to Khusro forbids Antiochenes from paying any money to the Persians; Ephraem, bishop of Antioch, accused by Roman envoy of intending to betray the city to Khusro; unsuccessful in his mission, Megas meets Khusro at Beroea and chastises the king for his actions; despite Khusro's reproaches, Megas persuades him to spare the remaining inhabitants, **ii.7.1ff**; Khusro lays siege to Antioch after his interpreter Paul is nearly killed; siege and fall of Antioch, **ii.8.1ff**; dissimulation of Khusro in his interactions with the envoys from Antioch and its exposure after the fall of Sura; takes the surviving Antiochenes captive, seizes the city's wealth, and sets Antioch ablaze, **ii.9.1ff**; accuses Justinian of breaking the peace after having the same accusation leveled against him; Khusro's demand of an immediate payment and a yearly sum in return for peace accepted by the envoys, **ii.10.10ff**; visits Seleucia; Roman envoys suspect his desire to see Apamea is merely a pretext to plunder the city; orders the burning of the shrine of the archangel Michael following the killing of a Persian notable; arriving at Apamea, he meets Thomas, the city's bishop, who assures him that the Apameans will not resist; denudes the city of all its wealth contrary to his earlier promises; holds games in the city's hippodrome; impales a Persian accused of rape, **ii.11.1ff**; extracts a ransom from Chalcis despite his agreement; seized with a desire to capture Edessa; illness precludes him from besieging the city, but he still receives a payment from the Edessenes, **ii.12.1–6, 31–33**; receives a letter from Justinian agreeing to ratify the peace; offers to ransom all his Antiochene captives; declines money from inhabitants of Carrhae because of their non-Christian beliefs; accepts money from Constantia; besieges Dara; having failed to capture the city, he negotiates a financial settlement; his conduct causes Justinian to reject the peace, **ii.13.1ff**; builds a city in Assyria to house his Antiochene captives,

calling it 'Khusro's Antioch'; Belisarius despatched to the East to thwart any further invasions by Khusro, **ii.14.1ff**; at the invitation of the Lazi, Khusro marches to Lazica; disaffected with the Romans, the Lazi had sent envoys to Khusro to seek his help; Khusro agreed and gathered his invasion force under the pretext of marching against an enemy in Iberia, **ii.15.1ff**; absence from Mesopotamia induces Belisarius to attack Persian territory, **ii.16.3**; invades Lazica and accepts the surrender of Lazica and Gubazes, its king; sends most of his army to attack the Roman garrison at Lazic Petra; following the defeat of his general Aniabedes, Khusro himself besieges Petra and captures it, **ii.17.1ff**; despite Khusro's absence on campaign, Belisarius assumes that he has left his territory well protected, **ii.18.7–9**; having captured Petra, Khusro learns of Belisarius' invasion, as well as the predations of al-Harith, **ii.19.47–49**; launches his third invasion of Roman territory; punishes Candidus, the bishop of Sergiopolis, for failing to pay what he had earlier promised; decides to seize Sergiopolis following the inability of its inhabitants to meet his demands; forewarned of his plan, the inhabitants foil his scheme; besieges Sergiopolis but lifts siege after his soldiers are overcome by thirst; having entered Euphratesia, he desires to plunder Palestine and Jerusalem; fearing the advance of Khusro, Justus and Buzes urge Belisarius to join them at Hierapolis; Belisarius gathers his forces at Europus, intent on confronting Khusro, **ii.20.1ff**; Khusro halts his advance upon learning of Belisarius' presence at Europus; sends Abandanes to Belisarius under the pretext of discussing the agreed-upon peace but with the purpose of assessing his opponent; Abandanes informs Belisarius of Khusro's grievances; the envoy returns to Khusro and urges him to withdraw, having been impressed by Belisarius' demeanor; Khusro bridges the Euphrates and marches across with Belisarius following suit; receives envoys from Belisarius, promising safe passage through Roman territory and the ratification of the earlier peace agreement; as a guarantee, given John of Edessa as a hostage; violates the agreement by capturing Callinicum, destroying the city and enslaving those within; Khusro's Armenian allies return to the Romans, **ii.21.1ff**; marches to

Ardabiganon, intending to invade Roman territory through Persarmenia; awaits the arrival of Roman envoys; bishop of Dvin sent to Valerian to expedite the peace talks, assuring him of his influence over Khuro; the bishop's brother tells Valerian that because of internal difficulties Khuro is eager to make peace; Khuro, in fear of the plague, marches back to Assyria, **ii.24.1–12**; invades Roman territory for the fourth time, motivated by his hatred of the Christian God; determined to capture Edessa, he marches to the city; fear of failing to capture the city motivates Khuro to demand a ransom; his interpreter Paul urges the Edessenes to send an embassy to Khuro; on their second visit to the Persian camp, Khuro demands the wealth of the entire city; he lays siege to Edessa, following the envoys' refusal to agree to impossible demands; envoys despatched again to Khuro; once more he puts forth unreasonable demands; the siege continues; envoys sent to Khuro rebuffed; Edessenes ask Martin to treat for peace with the Persians; Martin told that it is not Khuro but Justinian who does not want peace, **i.26.1ff**; siege of Edessa continues; Persians demand the resumption of peace talks; Khuro suspects the Romans of subterfuge and continues with his attack upon the city; Khuro's interpreter Paul calls upon Martin to make a peace agreement; Khuro receives a ransom in return for promising no further harm to the Romans, **ii.27.1ff**; receives the envoys Constantianus and Sergius to discuss peace; Khuro sets forth his demands; a five-year truce established; Khuro does not intend to abide by the truce; plots to seize Dara and re-populate Lazica with Persian settlers; his plans for Lazica driven by strategic concerns; Yazdgushnasp sent by him to carry out the plot to seize Dara, but is foiled in his attempt; Yazdgushnasp continues on to Byzantium where he presents Justinian with gifts and a letter from Khuro, **ii.28.ff**; timber sent to Lazica under the guise of being building material for Petra; despatches Vahriz to Lazica to kill Gubazes; sends Mihr-Mihroe to relieve the besieged garrison at Petra; reference to Khuro's earlier invasion of Lazica; Gubazes informs Justinian that he had not received his salary since Khuro invaded Lazica, **ii.29.1–3, 13–31**

L

- Libelarius**, a Thracian; Roman commander of an abortive invasion of the territory surrounding Nisibis; aforementioned failure leads to his dismissal, **i.12.23–24**
Longinus, co-commander of the Isaurians in Belisarius' army, **i.18.7**
Lucas, father of the John captured by al-Mundhir, **i.17.44**

M

- Mamas**, bishop of Dara; assists in the overthrow of the tyrant John, **i.26.8**
Marcellus (Justinian's nephew), appointed to a generalship by the emperor, **ii.28.2**
Marcellus (Roman commander), at the battle for Dara, **i.13.21**
Marcellus (Roman palace guard commander), sent by Theodora to Rufiniana with orders to kill John the Cappadocian if guilty of treason; wounded while attacking John by one of the latter's bodyguards, **i.25.24–29**
Maria, wife of Hypatius; fails to stop the mob from proclaiming her husband emperor, **i.24.23–24**
Martin, given to the Persians as a hostage, **i.21.27**; defends Dara against Khuro, **ii.13.16ff**; returning to Byzantium from Italy, immediately sent to the East, **ii.14.9**; ordered to invade Persarmenia, he encamps with his forces at Citharizon; invades enemy territory following the news that other Roman commanders had already done so, **ii.24.10–19**; holds the centre of the Roman army at the battle of Anglon, **ii.25.17**; present at the siege of Edessa; misled by the besiegers during his peace talks with them; falls ill; arranges settlement with Khuro to end the siege, **ii.26.25, 44–46; ii.27.5–6, 27, 45–46**
Mebodes, despatched as an envoy by Kavadh to discuss peace with his Roman counterparts; accuses his fellow envoy Seoses of sabotaging the peace talks, **i.11.25–31**; advises Kavadh on how to ensure the succession of his son Khuro; prevents Kaoses from claiming the throne and secures the election of Khuro, **i.21.17–22**; downfall and death during Khuro's reign at the hands of Zabergan, **i.23.25–29**
Medea, tale of Jason and Medea set in the middle of Colchis, **ii.17.2**
Megas, bishop of Beroea; entreats Khuro to spare the Roman East from harm; witnesses the ransom paid to Khuro by the citizens

of Hierapolis; Khuro eventually agrees to leave Roman territory for a fixed sum of gold, **ii.6.17–25**; unable to persuade the Antiochenes to pay any money to Khuro; chastises Khuro for his cruel treatment towards the Beroeans and convinces him to spare the survivors from further harm, **ii.7.1–34**; informs Khuro of the Antiochenes' refusal to pay any ransom, **ii.8.1**

Mihr-Mihroe, a Persian; commander of army tasked with invading Roman-controlled Armenia; camp in Persarmenia attacked and plundered by Roman forces; invades Roman territory and defeated at Satala, **i.15.1–17**; shares command of Persian army that invades Mesopotamia, **i.21.4**; leads Persian army to lift the siege of Lazic Petra, **ii.29.13**; having defeated the Roman force guarding the pass to Petra, he arrives to find the siege abandoned; after reinforcing the garrison and ordering the repair of the circuit wall, he departs with the remainder of his army by a different route; some of his troops ambushed by Phubelis and Dagisthaeus; having selected a force to supply the garrison with sufficient provisions, he withdraws from Lazica with the bulk of his army, **ii.30.1–33**

mirranes, Persian name for the rank of 'commander in chief'; held by the Persian Peroz at the battle for Dara; **i.13.16**; **i.14.1ff**; the *mirranes* Peroz punished by Kavadh for his failure to defeat the Romans at Dara, **i.17.26–33**; reference to the battle at Dara, **i.18.6**

Mirranes, a Persian; commander of the garrison at Petra; deceives Dagisthaeus into believing that he will surrender the city, **ii.30.7**

Molatzes, shares command with Theoctistus of the troops in Lebanon; arrives at Antioch to provide assistance against Khuro; flees with soldiers during the siege, **ii.8.2, 17**

Mu'awiya (Mavias), the son of Qays; sent as a hostage to Byzantium, **§4**

al-Mundhir, son of Sakkike; leads Saracens accompanying Persian army; king of the Saracens; advises Kavadh on invasion route into Roman territory; description of personality, **i.17.1, 30–48**; invades and withdraws from Roman territory along with Persian army, **i.18.1ff**; dispute with rival al-Harith over territory; sought as ally by Justinian, **ii.1.2–13**; **ii.3.47**; allegedly violates the peace between Rome and Persia, **ii.4.21**; poses ongoing threat to Syria and the Levant,

ii.16.17; **ii.19.34**; engages in conflict with his rival al-Harith, **ii.28.12–14**; phylarch of the Saracens in possession of two captured Roman commanders, **§2**

Mundus, *magister militum per Illyricum* under Justinian; along with Belisarius, assists in suppressing the Nika revolt, **i.24.40–43, 52**

N

Nabedes, general of the soldiers stationed in Nisibis; second only to Khuro in reputation and standing; defeats a Roman force near the city, having caught them ill-prepared to fight, **ii.18.9, 16ff**; holds post of commander in Persarmenia; despatches the bishop of Dvin to press the Romans on the matter of peace, **ii.24.6**; hearing of the Roman invasion of Persarmenia, Nabedes entrenches his forces at Anglon; inflicts defeat upon the Romans at Anglon, **ii.25.6–10ff**

Narses (Justinian's treasurer), a Persarmenian, **i.15.31**; sent by Theodora with Marcellus to Rufinianae to discern John the Cappadocian's intentions and, if necessary, kill him, **i.25.24–27**

Narses (Persarmenian defector), he and his brother Aratius defeat Sittas and Belisarius in battle; both men would later desert to the Romans, **i.12.21–22**; deserts along with Aratius and their mother; well received by the emperor's treasurer Narses, a compatriot, **i.15.31**; carries out the destruction of the temples at Philae on Justinian's order, imprisoning the priests and sending the statues to Byzantium, **i.19.37**; gathers soldiers for the planned invasion of Persarmenia; his brother Isaac in command of the army units at Theodosiopolis, **ii.24.12–14**; frustrated that Nabedes had withdrawn his entire force to Anglon; first to engage with the Persians at Anglon; dies in battle, **i.25.11–28**

Nicetas, father of the Roman commander John, **i.13.21**; **ii.19.36**; **ii.24.15**

Nonnosus, his *History* in which he recounts his embassy to the Ethiopians, Amerites (Homerites) and Saracens, **§1**; his grandfather sent by Anastasius I on an embassy to al-Harith; his father, Abrames (Abraham) sent by Justin I to rescue two Roman commanders from al-Mundhir, **§2**; despatched to Caïsus (Qays) as an ambassador; his father had previously made a peace treaty with Caïsus, **§4**; instructed to bring Caïsus to the emperor and to meet

- the king of the Auxomitae (Axumites), §5; throughout his mission, he endures many travails, §7; states that Caisus divided his phylarchate between his two brothers, §8; states distance of Adulis from Axum; observes large herd of elephants, §13; relates strange encounter with anthropomorphic beings on the last of the Farsan islands, §15
- O**
- Odenathus**, husband of Zenobia; ruler of the Saracens situated in the area of the city Zenobia; as an ally of Romans, he recovers the eastern empire for them, ii.5.5–6
- Olybrius**, emperor of the West; Areobindus's father-in-law, i.8.1
- Orestes**, digression on his flight from the temple of Artemis among the Taurians and his role in the building of the temple of Artemis at Golden Comana, i.17.11–19
- Origen**, senator of Byzantium; during the Nika revolt he advises his fellow senators to exercise caution, i.24.26–31
- Osiris**, revered by the Blemmyes and Nobatae, i.19.35
- Osrhoes**, ancient king from the area of Edessa; Osrhoene's name derived from him, i.17.24
- P**
- Pacurius**, king of Persia during the time of a truceless war of thirty-two years with the Armenians and their king Arsaces; through efforts of the Armenians, the two peoples become allies; rumours of rebellion lead Pacurius to summon and detain Arsaces despite his protests of innocence; avails himself of a magi stratagem to have Arsaces indict himself; imprisons Arsaces in the prison of Oblivion; as a reward for his services, Pacurius grants the request of a close friend of Arsaces to minister to him for one day, despite this being against Persian law, i.5.10ff
- Patriciolus**, father of Vitalian; accompanies the Roman army sent to Amida, i.8.3
- Patricius the Phrygian**, *magister militum praesentalis* under Anastasius I; one of four supreme commanders in charge of the Roman army despatched to Amida; Patricius and Hypatius encamp with their forces at Siphrios, some distance from Amida; defeat an advance force of Hephthalites only to have their own forces destroyed by the Persian army, i.8.2–19; ambushes Glones near the village of Thilasamon, i.9.5–19
- Paul**, interpreter of Khuro; Roman educated at Antioch; delivers Khuro's demands to the citizens of Hierapolis, ii.6.22–23; despatched by Khuro to extort money from the Beroeans, ii.7.5; delivers Khuro's demands to the Antiochenes; nearly killed by them, ii.8.4–7; presents Khuro's demands to the Chalcidians; extorts money from the Edessenes, ii.12.1, 33; at the siege of Edessa Peter relays Khuro's wish to meet with some of the city's notables, ii.26.14; informs the Edessenes of Rhecinarius' arrival; negotiates a peace agreement with Martin, ii.27.24, 45
- Peranious**, eldest brother of the Iberian king, Gurgenes; flees to the borders of Lazica with his brother, i.12.11; bivouacs with troops at Phison in preparation for an invasion of Persarmenia; he and Justus plunder Taraunon ii.24.15; ii.25.35; at Edessa during Khuro's siege of the city; Khuro demands that Peranious and Peter be surrendered to him; drives the Persians away from the area of Edessa known as the Tripyrgia, ii.26.25, 38; ii.27.42; suffers a deadly fall from his horse while hunting, ii.28.1
- Peroz (Persian king, 459–484)**, goes to war with the Hephthalites over boundary dispute; his army entrapped by the Hephthalites; extricates the army by agreeing to show obeisance to the Hephthalite king and by pledging never to campaign against them again; magi devise a way for Peroz only to appear to show obeisance to the king, i.3.1ff; disregards his pledges and launches a second expedition against the Hephthalites; he and his army destroyed; digression on his famous pearl; Persia becomes a tributary of the Hephthalites, i.4.1ff; having deposed his son Kavadh, the Persians elevate Peroz's brother Blases to the throne, i.5.2; reference to the doctor Stephanus curing his son Kavadh, ii.26.31
- Peroz (Persian general)**, commander in chief or *mirranes* of the Persian army marching against Dara; his arrogant missive to Belisarius, i.13.16–18; exchanges letters with Belisarius and Hermogenes; addresses his troops before battle; defeated by Belisarius, i.14.1ff; punished by Kavadh for his defeat at Dara; his failure shatters Kavadh's confidence in his generals, i.17.26–29, 33; deprived of their ownership of certain Armenian villages, Peroz's sons murder the new owner, Symeon, i.18.6

Peter (Roman general), despatched to Lazica to assist Gubazes; having been summoned back to Byzantium, instructed to guard Lazica from Persia, **i.12.9–14**; taken captive as a child from the region of Arzanene by the future emperor Justin I; his rise under Justin I and his character, **ii.15.6–8**; urges Belisarius to invade Persian territory, **ii.16.16**; having disregarded Belisarius' strategy regarding the capture of Nisibis, he and John Troglita defeated by Persians stationed there, **ii.18.16ff**; Peter arrives at Theodosiopolis in preparation for the invasion of Persarmenia; invades without informing the other commanders, **ii.24.13–18**; commands the right wing of the Roman army at the battle of Anglon, **ii.25.17**; present at Edessa during Khuro's siege of the city; launches an attack against the builders of an artificial hill; his surrender demanded by Khuro, **ii.26.25–27, 38**

Pharas, a Herul; fights for the Romans at the battle for Dara, **i.13.19–28**; **i.14.32–43**

Pharesmanes, a Colchian; accompanies the Roman army sent to Amida, **i.8.3**

Pharsanes, Colchian noble at odds with Gubazes; Vahriz enlists his aid in plotting against Gubazes, but Pharsanes betrays the plot to the latter, **ii.29.4–7**

Philemuth, a Herul leader; he and Verus arrive at Khorzianene, near Martin's camp; upon learning of Peter's sudden invasion of Persarmenia, they follow him, **ii.24.14–18**

Phocas, a patrician; replaces John the Cappadocian as praetorian prefect, **i.24.18**

Phubelis, Lazic noble; he and Dagisthaeus ambush some of Mihr-Mihroe's men, **ii.30.22**

Pityaxes, Persian commander at the battle for Dara; in charge of the right wing of the Persian army; Kadiseni among those under his command, **i.13.16**; **i.14.32, 38**

Pompey, nephew of Anastasius I; unwillingly sent home from the palace during the Nika revolt; he and Hypatius are handed over as prisoners to Justinian and are killed; their privileges and wealth restored to their sons, **i.24.19–21, 53–58**

Priapus, god revered by the Blemmyes and Nobatae, **i.19.35**

Probus, patrician and nephew of Anastasius I; sent by Justin I to Bosphorus to recruit a Hunnic army but is unsuccessful, **i.12.6–9**

Procopius (of Caesarea), author of the history; purpose of the work; his suitability for the

task and his avoidance of bias and prejudice, **i.1.1–5**; chosen as Belisarius' adviser, **i.12.24**; witnesses the place among the Cappadocians that resembles that of the Taurians, **i.17.17**; living in Byzantium when the plague reaches the city, **ii.22.9**

Proculus, the *quaestor* of Justin I; dissuades the emperor and Justinian from adopting Khuro's son Kavadh; fears that in doing so, the Persians will have a claim to the imperial throne, **i.11.11–30**

Pylades, flees with Orestes and Iphigenia, **i.17.11**

Q

Qays (Caïsus), flees into exile after killing a relative of Esimiphaeus; Justinian's intention to make him phylarch of the Maddeni, **i.20.9–10**; phylarch of the Saracens during the reign of Justinian; a descendant of al-Harith, **§2**; leader of the Khindeni (Kindites) and the Maadēni (Ma'add); makes a peace treaty with Nonnosus' father, an ambassador of Justinian; his son Mavias (Mu'awiya) taken as a hostage to Byzantium, **§4**; to be brought to the emperor by Nonnosus, **§5**; before going to Byzantium, he divides his phylarchate between his brothers Ambrus ('Amr) and Izidus (Yazid), **§8**

R

referendarius, official in charge of imperial responses; post held by Theodore under Justinian, **ii.23.6**

Rhacinarius, envoy despatched from Byzantium to Edessa to discuss peace with the besieging Persians; initially his arrival is hidden from the Romans by the Persians, **ii.27.24–27**

Rhecithangus, a Thracian and competent soldier, **ii.30.29**; shares command of the troops in Lebanon with Theoctistus; both unwilling to leave the districts under their protection exposed to Saracen attack; their objections dismissed by Belisarius, **ii.16.17**; with little achieved during the invasion, both commanders plead with Belisarius to permit them to return to Lebanon, **ii.19.33–34, 39**; commands an army sent to Lazica to aid Gubazes, **ii.30.29**

Rufinus, patrician; son of Silvanus; sent with Hypatius as envoys to discuss peace with their Persian counterparts; Rufinus denounces Hypatius to Justinian following the failure of the talks, **i.11.24**,

- 38; despatched to Hierapolis to await the possibility of further talks with the Persians, **i.13.11**; Belisarius asserts the truthfulness of his claim that Rome desired peace by emphasizing the presence of the envoy Rufinus, **i.14.8**; following the battle at Dara, Rufinus treats with Kavadh and returns to Byzantium with the king's proposal for peace; his brother Timostratus' capture and ransom, **i.17.44**; sent on an embassy to Khusro; tasked with obtaining Justinian's approval for one of the peace terms enumerated by Khusro; false rumour concerning his death nearly leads to a resumption of hostilities; peace talks break down; Rufinus still able to extract some concessions from Khusro; denounced before Justinian by his fellow ambassadors because of his successes; sent once more as an envoy to Khusro and the 'Endless Peace' established, **i.22.1ff**; his son John sent on an embassy to Khusro, **ii.7.15**
- S**
- Sakkike**, parent of al-Mundhir, **i.17.1**
- Senecius**, bodyguard of Sittas given to the Persians as a hostage, **i.21.27**
- Seoses**, friend of Kavadh; helps Kavadh escape from the prison of Oblivion; following Kavadh's return to the throne, he is appointed *advastadaran salanes*, an office only held by him, **i.6.3–10, 18–19**; sent with Mebodes as an envoy to the Romans; accused by Mebodes of sabotaging the peace talks; his arrogance and unique office the real causes behind his downfall and death, **i.11.25–38**
- Sergius (St)**, city of Sergiopolis named after this saint, **ii.5.29**
- Sergius**, an Edessene and rhetor; sent with Constantianus on an embassy to Khusro, **ii.24.3–4**; both sent a second time to treat with Khusro, **ii.28.2–6**
- Silvanus**, father of Rufinus, **i.11.24; i.16.4**
- Sittas**, personal bodyguard of Justinian; he and Belisarius plunder Persarmenia; during a subsequent invasion, both defeated in battle by Narses and Aratius, **i.12.20–22**; holds the office of *magister militum praesentalis* and in command of the entire Roman army in Armenia; he and Dorotheus launch a surprise attack upon a Persian camp; they inflict a defeat upon a larger Persian force at Satala; his successes against the Tzani; reference to his conflict with Aratius and Narses, **i.15.3–31**; ordered by Justinian to guard the East; encamps with his forces at Attachas after the Persians lay siege to Martyropolis; negotiates with the besieging Persian army, apprising them of Justinian's desire for a truce and urging them to lift the siege; offers hostages as a sign of good faith, **i.21.3–10, 23–27**; sent against the Armenians after Acacius murdered; facing pressure from the emperor, he abandons his policy of rapprochement and prepares for war; death at the battle of Oenochalakon; encomium on Sittas; Buzes despatched to Armenia as his replacement; mentioned in the Armenian ambassadors' speech to Khusro, **ii.3.8–28, 52**
- Solomon**, an Armenian; may have killed Sittas, **ii.3.27**
- Stephanacius**, shares command with Longinus of the Isaurians at the battle by the Euphrates, **i.18.7**
- Stephanus**, doctor with ties to Khusro's family; accompanies envoys sent to Khusro and entreats the king to spare Edessa, **ii.26.31–37**
- Strategius**, a patrician; oversees the imperial treasury; advises Justinian on the disputed ownership of the land called Strata, **ii.1.9–11**
- Summus**, commands the soldiers in Palestine; brother of the envoy Julian; advises Justinian on the disputed ownership of the land called Strata; accused by Khusro of trying to persuade al-Mundhir to defect to the Romans, **ii.1.9–13**
- Sunicas**, Massagete (Hun) commander; fights with the Romans at the battle for Dara, **i.13.20**; kills the Persian commander Baresmanas and his standard-bearer during the battle, **i.14.39–50**
- Symeon**, a Persarmenian; works the Persian gold-mine near the fortress Pharangium; defects to the Romans, handing over Pharangium as well, **i.15.27–28**; persuades Justinian to make him master of certain Armenian villages; killed by the former masters; following his murder, Justinian hands over the villages to Amasaspes, Symeon's nephew, **ii.3.1–3**
- T**
- Tatian**, steward in charge of the camp finances; witnesses the portent of the standards, **ii.10.2**
- Theoctistus**, shares command with Molatzes of the troops in Lebanon; arrives at Antioch

- to provide assistance against Khusrō; flees with soldiers during the siege, **ii.8.2, 17**; shares command of the troops in Lebanon with Rhēcithangus; both unwilling to leave the districts under their protection exposed to Saracen attack in order to participate in Belisarius' invasion; their objections dismissed by Belisarius, **ii.16.17**; with little achieved during the invasion, both commanders plead with Belisarius to permit them to return to Lebanon, **ii.19.33–39**; accompanies Martin's army to the fort of Citharizon, **ii.24.13**
- Theoderic (Gothic leader)**, departs Thrace for Italy, **i.8.3**
- Theodora**, Justinian's consort; advises against fleeing Byzantium during the Nika revolt, **i.24.32–37**; her hatred for John the Cappadocian, **i.25.4–7**; endorses Antonina's scheme against John; denounces him before Justinian and entrusts Narses and Marcellus with executing him if necessary; John's cowardice only aids Theodora's plot, **i.25.11–30**; her death, **ii.30.49**
- Theodore (of Dara)**, trained in the science called mechanics; counters the tunnel efforts of the Persian besiegers, **ii.13.26**
- Theodore (referendarius)**, holds the office of imperial responses under Justinian; tasked with overseeing the burial of victims of the plague, **ii.23.6–8**
- Theodosius I (Roman emperor, 379–95)**, receives the abdication of the Armenian king Arsaces, **ii.3.35**
- Theodosius II (Roman emperor, 408–450)**, son of Arcadius; his father secures his safety and succession by making him the ward of Yazdgerd I; the latter fulfils his role faithfully, **i.2.1–10**; his *magister militum per Orientem*, Anatolius, successfully arranges a peace with the Persian king Bahram, **i.2.11ff**; city of Theodosiopolis named after him, **i.10.18**
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Persians (Book II), al-Mundhir claims his dispute with al-Harith does not violate the treaty between the Persians and Romans; Justinian advised not to provide the Persians with a pretext for war over the Saracens' dispute; Persians accuse the emperor of breaking the treaty, **ii.1.4ff**; Vitigis' envoys urge Khusro to recognize the dangers facing the Persians if they do not take action to stop Rome's expanding power, **ii.2.4-11**; Acacius accuses Amazaspes of plotting to surrender Theodosiopolis and other fortresses to the Persians; unrest in Armenia occurs during the peace between the Persians and Romans; Armenian envoys seek Khusro's aid, appealing to their shared history and warning him of the dangers posed by Justinian; Khusro seeks advice of the Persian nobles; Persians resume hostilities with the Romans, **ii.3.4-8, 32ff**; Persians break the peace not long after the Huns ravage Greece; Procopius states that he will tell how the Persians invaded Roman territory, **ii.4.12-13**; Procopius discloses the invasion route of the Persians; reference to the recovery of the Roman East by Odenathus from the Persians; Khusro and the Persians capture Sura through treachery, **ii.5.1ff**; Buzes outlines his strategy to defend Hierapolis from the Persians; hearing of the Persian advance, Justinian sends his cousin Germanus eastward; sent by the Antiochenes to negotiate with Khusro, Megas, the bishop of Beroea, finds the Persians near Hierapolis; inhabitants of Hierapolis pays a ransom to the Persian army, **ii.6.3ff**; while Megas returns to Antioch to relay Khusro's demands, the Persians march to Beroea; they destroy the city and lay siege to the acropolis after failing to receive the demanded ransom; Ephraem, the bishop of Antioch, flees to Cilicia, fearing the Persian advance; Khusro places the blame for the Persians killed at Beroea upon Megas and his fellow citizens, **ii.7.1-22**; Persians march against Antioch and besiege the city after talks fail; narration of the siege and the city's fall, **ii.8.8ff**; Khusro blames Antiochenes for the destruction and death brought upon their city; at Khusro's orders, the Persians enslave the survivors, seize the city's wealth, and set Antioch ablaze, **ii.9.1-17**; Persians spare some structures in Antioch from destruction; envoys to Khusro claim his actions will bring no advantage to the Persians; in exchange for peace, Khusro demands a yearly sum as compensation for

guarding the Caspian Gate and for turning a blind eye to the building of Dara; Khusrō dismisses the envoy's accusations that the Persians desire to make Rome a tributary state **ii.10.6ff**; noble Persian killed by Antiochene at Tretus; Persians march to Apamea where they meet no resistance, **ii.11.7–24**; digression on the time when Edessa was under the power of the Persians, **ii.12.27–28**; Persians besiege Dara but fail to capture it; Khusrō and the Persian army return home after extracting a ransom from Dara, **ii.13.20ff**; Persians forbidden from leading away captives who escaped to Khusrō's Antioch and claimed by a relative there; Justinian despatches Belisarius against the Persians, **ii.14.4–8**; disaffected with the Romans, the Lazi send envoys to the Persians to offer their allegiance and invite them to enter their territory; securing Khusrō's aid, the Lazi promise to guide the Persians through Lazic territory; Khusrō shares his plans with certain trusted Persians, **ii.15.12ff**; Belisarius' forces fear the very name of the Persians, **ii.16.2**; having marched into Lazica, Khusrō receives the surrender of Gubazes and his kingdom; Persian force advances upon Petra but driven back by its garrison; Khusrō and his army lay siege to Petra; garrison surrenders to the Persians, **ii.17.1ff**; high standing of the general Nabedes among the Persians; Belisarius fears engagement near Nisibis will favour the Persian forces; John and Peter ignore Belisarius and are routed by Nabedes and his Persians; Romans saved from annihilation with the arrival of Belisarius' forces; Peter's captured standard mockingly displayed from Nisibis, **ii.18.9ff**; Persians at Sisauranon besieged by Belisarius; they surrender and are sent to Italy to campaign against the Goths, **ii.19.1–25**; Persians invade Roman territory a third time; fail to capture Sergiopolis by treachery; siege of the city unsuccessful; hearing of the Persian invasion, Justinian despatches Belisarius to the East **ii.20.1ff**; Persians refer to the Roman emperor as 'Caesar'; Khusrō warned that defeat in battle would not only bring shame upon the Persians but also result in the destruction of his army; Khusrō decides to retreat with his forces across the Euphrates and return to Persia; outnumbered by the Persians and aware of his troops' fear, Belisarius does not impede the Persians' crossing of the Euphrates; digression on Persian ability to cross rivers with ease; in a message to

Belisarius, Khusrō claims that he has done a favour for the Romans by withdrawing the Persian army, **ii.21.9–22**; on the fire temple at Adarbiganon which the Persians honour first among the gods; plague attacks the Persians while Khusrō awaits the arrival of the Roman envoys at Adarbiganon; brother of the bishop of Dvin informs Valerian that Khusrō and the Persian army have been affected by the plague, **ii.24.2–8**; district of Dvin imports commodities from the Persians; hearing of the Roman invasion of Persarmenia, Nabedes and his army entrench themselves near Anglon; Persians emerge victorious at the battle of Anglon, **ii.25.1ff**; Persians come to the aid of the Huns tasked by Khusrō with seizing sheep by the wall of Edessa; envoys sent to the Persian camp dismissed by Zabergan after offering too small a ransom; told to return after deliberating amongst themselves; Khusrō threatens envoys that they will suffer much more than previous cities if they do not surrender all their wealth; Persians proceed with the siege of Edessa following the breakdown of talks; envoys from Edessa unable to resume talks given the progress made by the Persians in the siege; Roman general Martin misled by Persian officers in his attempt to reach a peace agreement, **ii.26.7ff**; Romans work to undermine the siege mound being built by the Persians; waiting for the mound's completion, Persian officers stall for time by discussing peace proposals with Martin; failure to prevent the Romans from destroying the siege mound; Persians continue to prosecute the siege; following a defeat in battle, they demand a resumption of peace talks; suspicious of the Romans' reply to the Persians, Khusrō resumes the siege; following another defeat, Martin and the Persian commanders reach a settlement; Khusrō and the Persians return home, **ii.27.1ff**; Persians once under the rule of the Macedonians; Khusrō and Justinian agree to a five-year truce; Persians and Romans do not participate in the conflict between al-Harith and al-Mundhir; conflict convinces the Romans that al-Harith has not been betraying their interests to the Persians; enlisting the aid of two infamous Persians, Khusrō plans to capture Dara and re-settle Lazica with Persians to strengthen the strategic position of his kingdom; decision to replace the Lazi populace with Persian settlers a result of religious differences and the former's trade

ties with Rome; Persians fail to capture Dara because their plot was betrayed to the Romans by a deserter, **ii.28.4–37**; faced with a Lazic revolt, Persians stationed at Petra ordered to prepare for a siege; knowing that he cannot defeat the Persians alone, Gubazes asks Justinian for aid; Persians at Petra besieged by a force of Romans and Lazi; when the Persians had been guided through Lazica, the guides ensured that they did not show the Persians the Lazi's homes; with the approach of a Persian army under Mihr-Mihroe, the Romans and Lazi decide to impede Mihr-Mihroe and continue the siege; having formed an alliance with Gubazes, the Alans and Sabirs agree to prevent the Persians from traveling through Iberia; Persian garrison continues to withstand the siege; **ii.29.8–41**; Mihr-Mihroe eager to save the Persians stationed at Petra; Persian garrison continues to resist the Romans; Mihr-Mihroe defeats the Romans guarding the pass to Petra; Romans abandon the siege at Petra; Persian garrison routed by the Tzani after entering the abandoned Roman camp and flee back to Petra; having arrived at Petra, Mihr-Mihroe resupplies and reinforces the garrison before departing; some of Mihr-Mihroe's Persians ambushed by a force of Romans and Lazi; Persians unable to harm Lazic territory because they cannot cross the Phasis river; Mihr-Mihroe sends his remaining supplies to the garrison at Petra and returns to Persarmenia with most of his army; Romans and Lazi surprise and destroy Persian force left behind to transport the supplies; supplies burned and Persians prevented from transporting further supplies to Petra; fourth year of the truce between the Persians and Romans comes to a close **ii.30.1–48**

Petra (City of), in Lazica by the Euxine Sea; strengthened under Justinian; John Tzibus monopolises trade in the region, using the city as his base of operation, **ii.15.10–11**; **ii.17.3**; Khusrō lays siege to the city and eventually captures it despite its strong fortifications **ii.17.13ff**; Khusrō leaves behind a garrison and returns to Persia, **ii.19.47–48**; wood destined for shipbuilding presented as construction material for Petra; Vahriz foiled in his attempt to lure Gubazes to Petra and kill him; Vahriz returns home, instructing the city's garrison to remain vigilant and prepared for enemy attacks; forces of Dagisthaeus and Gubazes lay siege to the

city; they devise a plan to maintain the siege and impede Persian reinforcements, **ii.29.1ff**; Mihr-Mihroe marches to save Petra while garrison commander deceives the besieging Romans; Mihr-Mihroe's approach causes Dagisthaeus to abandon siege of Petra; Gubazes, learning of Dagisthaeus' retreat from Petra, remains unperturbed, as his territory remains protected; Mihr-Mihroe ensures Petra is well-provisioned and withdraws with the bulk of his army by another route; Gubazes and Dagisthaeus defeat force left behind by Mihr-Mihroe, burn any supplies bound for Petra, and cut off the city from further supplies, **ii.30.1–47**

Petra (City of), ancient capital of the king of the Arabs, **i.19.20**

Pharangium (Fortress of) in Persarmenia; acquired by the Romans through a local named Symeon, **i.15.18, 29**; Khusrō demands and subsequently acquires the fortress as part of the 'Endless Peace' agreement, **i.22.3, 18**; the murder of Symeon and other family members results in the flight of the Armenians to the fortress, **ii.3.1, 7**; close to the source of the Boas river, **ii.29.4**

Phasis (river), its source, **i.15.20–15** becomes the Phasis river at the boundaries of the Caucasus and Iberia; its course through Lazica; the Lazi protect their homes from the prying eyes of Khusrō's army by not crossing the river; Dagisthaeus instructed by Gubazes to send soldiers to guard pass on the far side of the river, **ii.29.16–27**; Mihr-Mihroe keeps river on his right as he marches to Petra; Dagisthaeus abandons the siege of Petra and flees to the Phasis; Persians unable to cross the river by foot because of its size and strong current; Persians and Lazi encamp on opposite sides of the river; Lazi ford river and link up with Roman reinforcements, **ii.30.1, 11, 23–37**

Philae, island near the city of Elephantine; its temples are erected by Diocletian and subsequently demolished by Justinian; its name inspired by its shared worship space, **i.19.34–37**

Phison (Fort of), near the borders of Martyropolis, **ii.24.15**

Phoenice, Roman commanders fear leaving district unprotected, **ii.16.17**; **ii.19.39**

Pityus (Fortress of), in Lazica, **ii.29.18**

Placilliana, palace in Byzantium, **i.24.30**

Pontic Romans, inhabit land adjacent to the Lazic borderlands, **ii.29.19**

Pontus, visited by Orestes, **i.17.14**

Potidaea (City of), ancients' name for the city of Cassandrea, **ii.4.5**

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Red Sea, digression on its location, the Arabian Gulf, and shipbuilding, **i.19.18ff**; Armenian envoys claim it is under Roman control, **ii.3.41**

Rhizaeum, south of Lazic Petra, **ii.29.22**; Tzani return home via Rhizaeum, **ii.30.14**

Rhodopolis (City of), in Lazica, **ii.29.18**

Romans, passim**Rome (City of)**, the toparch of Edessa, Abgar, travels to the city in the time of Augustus to secure an alliance, **ii.12.9–19**

Rome (Empire of), *passim***Rufiniana**, suburb of Byzantium; location of the plot to entrap John the Cappadocian, **i.25.21–24**

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Sabirs (See also Huns), accompany the army of Mihr-Mihroe, **i.15.1**; capture a Roman spy, **i.15.6**; dwell near the Caucasus mountains, **ii.29.15**; form alliance with Gubazes in exchange for money; receive promised money from Justinian, **ii.29.29**; **ii.30.28**

Samosata (City of), by the Euphrates; located in what was formerly called Commagene, **i.17.22–23**

Saracens, large contingent under al-Mundhir accompanies Persian army led by Azarethes; al-Mundhir, king of the Persian Saracens, offers to guide Persian army through unfortified Roman territory; the tribes allied to Rome unable to match the strength of al-Mundhir's forces; Justinian attempts to rectify this imbalance by appointing al-Harith, the ruler of the Saracens in Arabia, king over as many tribes as he can, **i.17.1, 30–47**; army under al-Harith joins the Roman commanders Longinus and Stephanacius; Belisarius and his Persian counterpart arrange their forces, including their respective Saracens, before battle; al-Harith's Saracens are routed by the best of the Persian army, **i.18.7, 26–35**; occupy the coastline beyond the frontier of Palestine; Saracens residing in the Palm Grove and beyond, **i.19.7–15**; not explicitly mentioned in the peace treaty between the Romans and Persians; dispute over the ownership of the land called Strata; Saracens under the rule of Odenathus, **ii.5.5–6**; some receive an annual payment from the Romans, **ii.10.23**; large army of Saracens join Belisarius' forces in

Mesopotamia; the summer solstice truce, **ii.16.5, 18**; Belisarius sends them to plunder the districts of Assyria, while he lays siege to Sisauranon; end of the sacred truce; failure to hear from the Saracens Belisarius had despatched to plunder Assyria, **ii.19.11–18, 33–39**; tasked by Khusrō with capturing any Edessene fugitives, **ii.27.30**; war between the Saracens of al-Harith and al-Mundhir; the former's forces inflicts a decisive defeat on the latter's, **ii.28.12–14**; Nonnosus' *History* recounts an embassy to the Saracens, **§1**; their phylarch Qays (Caisus); their phylarch al-Mundhir (Alamundarus), **§2**; the Kindites (Khindenī) and Ma'add (Maadēnī) tribes, **§4**; Saracens residing in the the Palm Grove (Phoinikōn) and the Taurēnoi mountains; in spring and after the summer solstice, they participate in sacred festivals during which a truce is imposed, **§§10–12**

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Satala (Town of), in Roman-controlled Armenia; location of battle between Mihr-Mihroe and Sittas, **i.15.9–17**

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Seleucia (City of), on the Mediterranean coast; its distance from Antioch and Khusrō's brief visit there, **ii.11.1**

Sergiopolis (City of), city subject to Rome; its distance from Sura; Khusrō sends word to Candidus, its bishop, demanding a ransom for the captives taken at Sura, **ii.5.29ff**; Khusrō seizes the treasures of the city's church after the bishop fails to produce the promised ransom; dissatisfied with the spoils, Khusrō attempts to capture the city but is foiled by a Christian Saracen among his own forces, **ii.20.2–16**

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Soinae (Gate of), part of Edessa's wall, **ii.27.41**

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Sophia (Church of), burns down during the Nika insurrection, **i.24.9**; its treasures guarded by the priest Augustus, **ii.30.53**

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St Julian (Sanctuary of), near the walls of

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Sunitae, neighbours of the Alans; part of Mihr-

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Sura (City of), where Belisarius' army,

shadowing al-Mundhir and Azarethes, spends the night, **i.18.14**; Khusro's siege and deceitful capture of the city, **ii.5.8ff**; its fate influences Buzes' strategy of defence for Hierapolis, **ii.6.2**; story of captive noble woman from Sura, **ii.9.9**; Candidus attempts to assuage Khusro's anger over his failure to pay the city's ransom, **ii.20.3**; **Sycae**, its towers filled with people killed by the plague, **ii.23.9**

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