

PROCOPIUS MEETS HIS GOMME?
GREATREX ON THE *PERSIAN WARS*

Procopius of Caesarea: *The Persian Wars*. Translation, with Introduction and Notes. Edited by Geoffrey Greatrex. With Acknowledgements to Averil Cameron. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2022. XXVIII, 251 p. £ 75.00/\$ 99.99. ISBN: 978-1-107-16570-0.

Geoffrey Greatrex: Procopius of Caesarea, *The Persian Wars*. A Historical Commentary. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2022. XXXIII, 851 p. £ 140.00/\$ 180.00. ISBN: 978-1-107-05322-9.

Geoffrey Greatrex is well known for his work on both the Roman eastern frontier and Procopius, and he has now combined this expertise to provide a translation of Procopius' two books on the Persian wars and, in a separate volume, a massive commentary. Even if he had not drawn attention (p. XIII) to the inspiration of the great commentaries on classical historians by Arnold W. Gomme et al. (Thucydides) and Frank W. Walbank (Polybius), the example would have been apparent, though Greatrex's approach is in fact slightly closer to that of Simon Hornblower in his equally magisterial Thucydides commentary than to either of the earlier models.¹ To be authoritative, such commentaries require prolonged immersion in the text in question, and Greatrex has earned his spurs by publishing on these matters for the past three decades.

The Commentary

This is identified as a historical commentary, just as those of Gomme and Walbank (but not Hornblower), though all these included numerous discussions of language and style. A short Introduction (pp. 1–29) surveys what little is known about Procopius' life and the circumstances of the composi-

1 A.W. Gomme/A. Andrewes/K.J. Dover: A Historical Commentary on Thucydides. 5 vols. Oxford 1945–1981; F.W. Walbank: Historical Commentary on Polybius. 3 vols. Oxford 1957–1979; S. Hornblower: A Commentary on Thucydides. 3 vols. Oxford 1991–2008.

tion of the *Persian Wars*, aspects of his style, sources, the afterlife of his work, and relations between Rome and Persia in the sixth century. It also explains the structure of the commentary and its conventions (p. XXXIII): sections of the work are provided with introductions, before subsections receive their own introduction and finally the commentary proper proceeds by chapter and section, with a lemma quoting a passage of Greek followed by its translation. Among predecessors Gomme divided his commentary into sections with headings and occasionally added an introduction; his lemmata cited the Greek text subject to comment, but very rarely provided a translation. Walbank's approach was similar, with only the occasional translation for disputed or significant phrases. By contrast Hornblower usually introduced his sections and always translated the Greek lemmata. Greatrex has taken this last approach one stage further by separating issues of history and historiography in his introductions, and has recognized the declining knowledge of Greek among his readership by both translating every lemma and transliterating every Greek word or phrase quoted within his entries. There is clearly a danger of repetition of material between his various introductory passages, but Greatrex is quite right to err on the side of clarity rather than concision.

The detailed commentary occupies the bulk of the volume, 632 pages, being followed by three appendices that survey Persian and Arabic sources for Sasanian history (pp. 665–673), tabulate the evidence in the *Persian Wars* for the length of Procopius' stade (pp. 675–677), and translate the summary in Photius' *Bibliotheca* of Nonnosus' account of his embassy to the Ethiopians and Himyarites (pp. 679–685). Most sections in every chapter receive some comment; exceptions are rare (e.g. 2.5.18–25; 12.12–18; 19.39–42). There is a substantial bibliography (pp. 687–772), fifteen pages on ancient sources with their relevant modern translations and commentaries, and seventy pages of modern works that demonstrate the richness of the scholarly underpinning to the detailed discussions in the commentary.² There is a very useful *Index Locorum* (pp. 773–816) of passages from other authors referred to, so that it is easy to follow up examples of Thucydidean influence, language from the Septuagint, or parallels in Maurice's *Strategicon*, followed by a list of Latin terms (p. 817) in the text (*a secretis*, ἀσηκρήτις, 2.7.15; *veredi*, βερέδοι, 2.20.20 are missing), and a table of cross-references to the 'Regesten der

2 The only omission I have noted is that of T. W. Greenwood: *Sasanian Echoes and Apocalyptic Expectations: a Re-evaluation of the Armenian History Attributed to Sebeos*. In: *Muséon* 115, 2002, pp. 323–397, cited at pp. 668–669, nn. 10 and 11,

Kaiserurkunden des oströmischen Reiches' (p. 818). Finally, two indices of "Persons and Titles" (pp. 819–836) and of "Peoples and Places" (pp. 837–851) in Procopius' text; already in the prefatory material there are helpful tables that list these proper names as they appear in Procopius alongside the form used in the translation and commentary as well as other versions of the name, including modern place names. A minor regret is that there is no index either of people or places discussed in the commentary but not actually mentioned by Procopius in the text, e.g. the Hunnic leader Zilgibi, or of major issues under discussion or noted at disparate points, for example diplomatic practices, chronological vagueness, or Persian religion, though it would have been a challenge to construct such an aide. A consolidated list of favourite Procopian expressions and stylistic quirks would also have been of great assistance to anyone wishing to pursue the invitation to do further work on Procopius' linguistic choices. Such requests, however, are really inspired by the quality and richness of what is provided.

The commentary is a feast of information and everyone will gain significant knowledge somewhere from the discussions presented here. These naturally cover the military and diplomatic aspects that constitute the core of Procopius' narrative, but then range across his numerous digressions and excursions, for example on the Hephthalites in central Asia or Axumites in Ethiopia, and his information on the titles and offices of Persian nobility. Much of the discussion of Book 1 reprises two earlier publications,³ suitably updated to take account of developments in the past 25 years, but the treatment of Book 2 breaks new ground altogether. On the linguistic front, the 'Thesaurus Linguae Graecae' has been put to good use to identify connections, not just with the usual suspects, Herodotus and Thucydides, but also Aristophanes, an author popular among contemporary poets, Attic oratory, the Septuagint, and certain Patristic authors. Whether Procopius could always distinguish the precise pedigree of every word or expression is debatable, since in general composition he might just have drawn upon his memory bank of suitable terms, but he could certainly decorate a forensic speech with the language of Isocrates and Demosthenes or a Christian passage with the expressions that he would have known from regular attendance at church

3 G. Greatrex: *Rome and Persia at War, 502–532*. Leeds 1998 (Arca 37); id: *The Nika Riot: A Reappraisal*. In: *JHS* 117, 1997, pp. 60–86.

services; above all he knew when to be Herodotean or Thucydidean and had the knowledge to do so.

In such a massive enterprise there are bound to be minor glitches, while there will continue to be disagreements on topics that have been subject to scholarly debate. Occasionally a note may seem more like a display of knowledge, or of underpinning research, than an aide to Procopius: thus on p. 62 the king of the Hephthalites, whom Procopius refers to anonymously (1.3.17), is accorded a comment of ten lines in which possible variant names are recorded with relevant modern authorities before the discussion diverges onto the evidence of Theophanes Byzantinus. Whether this is completeness or overkill will be a subjective matter. If the discussion that follows seems long and overly critical, I would emphasize that it should not be seen to detract from the quality or importance of the commentary as a whole. Indeed, it is its very stature of the commentary that requires potential adjustments and corrections to be noted!

There are four substantive issues where I would question Greatrex's comments.

1. The Fort of Mindouos

1.1. The location of the fort of Mindouos or Mindon that Belisarius attempted to construct in 528 is said to be "uncertain, perhaps modern Kasriahmethayro" in the note to the translation (p. 56 n. 89), though the commentary (p. 172) is more definite, with the suggestion by Christopher Lillington-Martin to locate it at the traces of a fortlet close to Kasriahmethayro being said to be based on a powerful case. The situation is actually more complicated than Greatrex presents, since Lillington-Martin's views evolved: in his contribution to 'The Byzantinist', which Greatrex cited,⁴ Lillington-Martin did identify Mindouos with the remains of a small structure, with dimensions of 19 m x 26 m, located about 700 metres from Kasriahmethayro, 6.3 km east of Dara that resembles Roman watchtowers elsewhere on the frontier, but he subsequently postulated that the fort of Mindouos must be located on the actual site of the village of Kasriahmethayro, with the fortlet

4 Ch. Lillington-Martin: Hard and Soft Power on the Eastern Frontier: A Roman fortlet between Dara and Nisibis, Mesopotamia, Turkey, Prokopios' Mindouos? In: *The Byzantinist* 2, 2012, pp. 4–5 (= <https://oxfordbyzantinesociety.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/obsnews2012final.pdf>).

as a dependent watchtower.⁵ Lillington-Martin did not explain his change of mind nor present evidence for any ancient construction underneath the village, but an obvious problem with identifying the fortlet or watchtower with Mindouos is that it is difficult to see how it could have been referred to by Kavadh as an injury to Persia even greater than the construction of Dara (1.16.7): this forward observation post would have provided Dara with early warning about activity around Nisibis, but not greatly increased the threat to that city. Of course, Kavadh may well have been exaggerating wildly, but Greatrex offers no comment on this possibility.

1.2. If Procopius' statement is correct that Mindouos was "on the left as one goes towards Nisibis" (1.13.2) and the direction of travel is assumed to be from Dara,⁶ then it has to be located on the southern flank of the Tur Abdin plateau, where it was probably sited to secure one of the routes between the plateau, which the Romans controlled through forts and monasteries, and the region of Beth Arabaye around Nisibis. There might be some merit in the speculation of Anthony Comfort that it should be sought in the valley of the river Mygdon above Nisibis.⁷ Kavadh would have been right to view this as a most threatening development, since a strong Roman fortress in that area would have tightened the Roman noose around Nisibis, in particular by threatening its water supply from the river upstream, but the distance from Dara and proximity to Nisibis would have made it a very challenging project to accomplish. Granted that Greatrex was once inclined to

5 Ch. Lillington-Martin: Where was the Fortified Site of Mindouos Constructed?, an Oxford Master of Studies paper that is cited by E. Keser-Kayaalp and N. Erdoğan: Recent Research on Dara/Anastasiopolis. In: E. Rizos (ed.): *New Cities in Late Antiquity. Documents and Archaeology*. Turnhout 2017 (Bibliothèque de l'antiquité tardive 35), pp. 153–175 at p. 164 n. 61 as being available on academia.edu. Although this paper is not in fact currently available on academia.edu, I am very grateful to Christopher Lillington-Martin for providing me with a copy, and its discussion is presented in very similar terms in his Master of Studies seminar paper "Forts on Frontiers Facing βάρβαροι et al.", which is accessible on academia.edu (https://www.academia.edu/12688591/Forts_on_frontiers_facing_%CE%B2%CE%AC%CF%81%CE%B2%CE%B1%CF%81%CE%BF%CE%B9_et_al).

6 Previously Greatrex: Rome and Persia (note 3), p. 158, was prepared to consider that the starting point was to the south of Nisibis, in order to align with the information of Pseudo-Zachariah (see below); this speculation is ignored here.

7 A. Comfort: Fortresses of the Tur Abdin and the Confrontation between Rome and Persia. In: *AS* 67, 2017, pp. 181–229, at pp. 193–194, figs. 8 and 9.

consider a location on the lower course of the Mygdon,⁸ this issue might have merited specific comment.

1.3. A problem in trusting Procopius' information, however, is that Pseudo-Zachariah (9.2b) located the Roman defeat that ended this initiative in the desert of Thannuris, i.e. over 70 km south of Dara, whereas Procopius placed it at the building site (1.13.6); the names of the commanders involved proves that they are referring to the same event. In his previous discussion Greatrex correctly stated that it is difficult to disregard Pseudo-Zachariah's account, which preserves specific details about the battle,⁹ whereas Procopius skates over the defeat, perhaps because Belisarius escaped ingloriously with his cavalry forces while abandoning the infantry. He does refer once to this earlier discussion (p. 172), but only for the date of the campaign, which is not in doubt. This significant disagreement in our sources is now dismissed in a single sentence that suggests, implausibly, that the two authors might have been referring to separate events (p. 169). There has been a significant change of mind on this issue, but this is neither acknowledged nor explained.

1.4. 25 years ago, Greatrex accurately summarized the debate about Mindouos as that its site "eludes final resolution";¹⁰ this is the only safe conclusion.

2. The Battle of Dara, 530

2.1. With regard to the location of the 530 battle at Dara Greatrex (p. 180) appears to favour the traditional site, immediately to the south of the city walls, on the basis that *πύλη*, 'gate', in the singular is not used as a synonym for *πύλαι*, 'gates', a term that was applied to narrow defiles through mountains (e.g. the Cilician Gates through the Taurus north of Tarsus) or between mountains and the sea (Thermopylae).¹¹ As a result, the site of the battle should be sought "a stone's throw" from the city's south gate, "the gate that

8 Greatrex: Rome and Persia (note 3), p. 158.

9 Greatrex: Rome and Persia (note 3), pp. 156–159.

10 Greatrex: Rome and Persia (note 3), p. 159.

11 At 1.10.4 Procopius does refer to the Darial Pass through the Caucasus as a *πυλῖδα*, though the formulation of its name, *Καοπίδα*, clearly distinguishes it from Procopius' expression at 1.13.13.

lies opposite the city of Nisibis” (τῆς πόλεως, ἡ πόλις Νισίβιδος καταντικρὺ καίται: 1.13.13), where Belisarius had a defensive trench dug to protect his troops. This location is supported by Procopius’ statement that Belisarius made his pre-battle speech to the troops “in front of the circuit wall” (1.14.20; Greatrex’s commentary *ad loc.* does not discuss this supplementary evidence). On this basis it is right to reject the location 2.5 km to the south-east proposed by Lillington-Martin: although Lillington-Martin coined the name “Dara Gap” for the site, there is nothing that could be described as a defile and even the notion of a gap is uncertain, while Belisarius would not have recalled his troops from such a deployment in order to harangue them in front of the city walls.¹² Somewhat misleadingly, however, Greatrex states that the two locations are not that different and his plan of the battle (p. 184) places the Roman lines between 300 and 400 metres from the city; although “a stone’s throw” is obviously an imprecise term, its other use in Procopius, for the side of Hadrian’s Mausoleum at Rome (5.22.13), suggests a distance of not much more than 100 metres, which would fit with the location of the pre-battle harangue. Belisarius was well aware of the defensive advantages of fighting close to city walls (2.18.11–13)¹³ and will have exploited this at Dara to position his troops where they could secure some support from artillery mounted on the main towers; by contrast, digging a defensive ditch 2.5 km from the city, between the church at Ambar and the slopes of the Tur Abdin plateau, would have created a static Roman position that was vulnerable to being outflanked on its west, and hence isolated from Dara. It

12 Ch. Lillington-Martin: *Archaeological and Ancient Literary Evidence for a Battle near Dara Gap in AD 530: Topography, Texts and Trenches*. In: A. Lewin/P. Pellegrini (eds.): *The Late Roman Army in the Near East from Diocletian to the Arab Conquest*. Proceedings of a Colloquium held at Potenza, Acerenza and Matera, Italy (May 2005). Oxford 2007 (BAR International Series 1717), pp. 299–311; id.: *Procopius on the Struggle for Dara in 530 and Rome in 537–38: Reconciling Texts and Landscapes*. In: A. Sarantis/N. Christie (eds.): *War and Warfare in Late Antiquity: Current Perspectives*. Leiden/Boston 2013 (Late Antique Archaeology 8.2), pp. 599–630. Rejected independently by M. Petitjean: *Le combat de cavalerie dans le monde romain du Ier siècle a. Chr. au VIe siècle p. C.* (unpublished PhD thesis, Paris 2017); Michael Whitby: *The Wars of Justinian I*. Barnsley 2021, p. 128 n. 52 (Greatrex’s reference at p. 180 is incorrect) – I have not seen Petitjean’s thesis, although I understand it may be published in 2023.

13 Belisarius regarded his camp 42 stades (2.18.3), i.e. just under 9 km, from Nisibis as ideal for an attacking army, since the length of the Persian flight, in the event of a defeat, would enable the Romans to mingle with them and enter the city (2.18.14–15); Lillington-Martin’s site is sufficiently distant from the walls to create this risk.

is most unlikely that any of the field walls to the south of the city that I identified and have been located more precisely by Elif Keser-Kayaalp and Nihat Erdoğan existed in the early sixth century,¹⁴ so that these cannot be used to push the battlefield further from the actual city: when the Persians attempted to mine the south walls in 540 they must have started their tunnel relatively close to the main wall rather than several hundred metres away.

2.2. The configuration of the trench that Belisarius had dug to increase his troops' confidence, is disputed, with the debate evenly balanced between those who infer that the central section projected forwards and others who prefer to see this as withdrawn closer to the city walls. Procopius' description at 1.13.19, εὐθείας μὲν τὰ ἔσχατα τῆς ἀριστερᾶς ἢ ἔνερθεν ἦν τῆς ὀρθῆς κεραίας, is unclear: the εὐθείας [...] ἀριστερᾶς refers to the left or east end of the trench, while from comparison with 1.13.14 the ὀρθῆς κεραίας is one of the two perpendicular trenches in the middle of the earthwork, but ἔνερθεν, "up from below/beneath", could support either interpretation. Surprisingly, Greatrex does not discuss these difficulties at either 1.13.14 or 19, though earlier (p. 181) he cites with approval Maxime Petitjean's support for his own preference to have the trenches project forwards. In their translations Henry B. Dewing, followed by Anthony Kaldellis, and Greatrex all fudge the difficult clause ἢ ἔνερθεν ἦν τῆς ὀρθῆς κεραίας, each opting for "which/that joined the cross trench". To my mind this might be rendered 'which was in front of (literally 'from beneath') the perpendicular trench', viewing the disposition from the perspective of those standing on the walls, which could be compared to that of someone observing a ship sailing out, literally 'up', to sea. In this case the passage would be translated 'the extremity of the left straight section, which was in front of the perpendicular trench'.

2.3. On tactical grounds it seems likely to me that the central section of the trench was set back closer to the walls. First, in battles attacking sides might well push their opponents' centre backwards, a tendency exploited to devastating effect by Hannibal at Cannae and by Narses at Casilinum and to a certain extent Busta Gallorum; I would suggest that Belisarius designed his trench to take account of this. Second, with the central section withdrawn,

14 Michael Whitby: Procopius' Description of Dara (Buildings II.1–3). In: Ph. Freeman/D. Kennedy (eds.): The Defence of the Roman and Byzantine East. Proceedings of a Colloquium Held at the University of Sheffield in April 1986. Oxford 1986 (BAR International Series 297 = British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara Monograph 8.2), pp. 737–783, at p. 742; Keser-Kayaalp/Erdoğan (note 5). pp. 161–164.

the two Hunnic contingents stationed at the angle, which Greatrex (pp. 184, 201, following Sylvain Janniard) accepts were meant to be concealed from the enemy, would have been obscured to an extent by the troops stationed ahead of them along the outer elements of the ditch, whereas if the central section projected forwards the Hunnic units would be thrust visibly in the face of the Persians, so that their interventions in the battle would not have been as dramatic. Greatrex (p. 182) refers to a detailed discussion in his 1998 book, which in fact adds nothing to the commentary but confusingly appears to place the Hunnic contingents of Sunicas and Simmas behind the trench, whereas Procopius states that they were in front of it (1.13.20).¹⁵

2.4. Greatrex's disposition of the Roman troops in relation to the trench also calls for comment. In figures 11–14 he places the regular Roman cavalry beyond the end of the trenches, under John on the right and Buzes on the left, with only the infantry behind the trenches. Procopius, however, states that the units of cavalry and the infantry army were stationed “all along the trench”, πανταχῆ τῆς τάφρου (1.13.22), and there is no reason to interpret this to mean that they “were deployed on both sides of the trench” (p. 185) rather than stationed behind it. Procopius' statement that the eastern part of the trench extended to the hill (1.13.19) is at odds with Greatrex's plans where Buzes' cavalry is located between the end of the trench and the hills that are about 300 metres further. It is noticeable that, after the attention devoted to the trench in describing the Roman dispositions, it does not play a part in Procopius' account of the battle: the Persians knew it was there (1.14.15), and the Romans do not seem to have attempted to disguise it to create the sort of trap into which their own troops had fallen in 528.

2.5. On the plan of the city (p. 499, fig. 28; *Translation* p. 156), the *borrea* or granaries are wrongly labelled as a cistern, even though he cites my 1987 discussion where I followed the correct identification by Marlia Mundell Mango, who noted the similarity of the structure to the Hadrianic granaries at Patara;¹⁶ their solid walls distinguish them from the various cisterns at

15 Greatrex: *Rome and Persia* (note 3), p. 173 n. 12. In principle one might expect to have this important issue fully discussed in the definitive commentary.

16 Michael Whitby: *Procopius' Description of Dara* (note 14), p. 750; M. Mundell Mango's revised edition of G.L. Bell: *The Churches and Monasteries of the Tur Abdin*. London 1982, pp. 103–104. In the plan in his 1998 book (see above, note 3) Greatrex had in fact labelled the structure correctly (p. 172).

Dara. On Greatrex's plans an unlabelled structure is marked just inside the west wall that should be named as a cistern.

3. The Plague

3.1. Procopius' long 'Thucydidean' account of the arrival of bubonic plague in Constantinople in 542 receives close consideration from Greatrex. Procopius does not comment in the *Wars*, however, on what impact the plague may have had on Roman military operations in 542 or 543, though he does observe that all the Persian army had been struck during its time in Adarbiganon (2.24.8) and that royal fear of the plague influenced Khusro to leave Adarbiganon for Assyria where the plague had not yet taken hold (2.24.12). This silence about the Roman army merits discussion in the context of the possible severity of its impact on Roman military performance and recruitment, which some scholars regard as very significant; even if I have doubts about the extreme conclusions, I accept that the plague will have caused some disruption to military life, at least initially.¹⁷ Greatrex offers no comment at all, though he is prepared to speculate that Khusro cut short his invasion of Euphratesia because of fears about the plague's approach (pp. 7, 27, 561).

3.2. It is in fact clear that by the end of May the plague had not reached the Roman forces based at Hierapolis and Europus, or Khusro's army nearby, since the Persian army only came into danger during its time in Adarbiganon; if the plague had affected its soldiers in 542, they would have carried the disease with them back to the Tigris valley and further. This is important information: whereas the plague spread rapidly by sea through the presence of infected rats on board a ship, by land its progression was much slower and more sporadic. Although the plague had probably reached the coast of

17 Major impact: e.g. J.L. Teall: *The Barbarians in Roman Armies*. In: *Speculum* 40, 1965, pp. 294–322, at pp. 321–322; A. Fotiou: *Recruitment Shortages in Sixth-Century Byzantium*. In: *Byzantion* 58, 1988, pp. 65–77, at p. 67. Doubts: Michael Whitby: *Recruitment in Late Roman Armies from Justinian to Heraclius* (ca. 565–615). In: Averil Cameron (ed.): *The Byzantine and Early Islamic Near East*. Vol. III: *States, Resources and Armies*. Princeton, NJ 1995 (*Studies in Late Antiquity and Early Islam* 1.3), pp. 61–125, at pp. 92–103.

Palestine in August 541,¹⁸ nine months later it had still not travelled the 600 km from Gaza to Hierapolis, or a shorter distance from ports such as Laodicea and Seleucia further north. Undoubtedly the plague did reach the Roman eastern armies at some point in 542, both in their quarters in cities such as Hierapolis and in camps while on campaign, since in both places stores of food will have attracted rats. Perhaps mortality among serving soldiers was lower than in civilian populations, because of the availability of medical care or their general fitness and health, but, as our recent experience of a pandemic has shown, even an epidemic with a relatively low mortality rate does cause significant disruption. If an unnamed king merits ten lines of commentary, Procopius' silence about the plague and the Roman army deserves some comment.

3.3. The information about Khusro in Adarbiganon is interesting for the progression of the plague and the state of the Roman-Persian frontier, but these aspects are not discussed by Greatrex. Whereas Khusro's army in Adarbiganon was under threat, in Assyria, i.e. the Tigris valley, the plague was not yet "settled", *οὐπω ἐνδεδημήκει* (2.24.12). I offered speculative comments on this in a recent article:¹⁹ the disease had probably travelled rapidly by sea from Constantinople to Lazica, perhaps in May 542 and then gradually made its way inland and upwards. Granted its progression over land in the Levant, it would be unwise to postulate that in Transcaucasia it covered more than twice the distance in about half the time, so that it was probably threatening Khusro's forces in mid 543.

4. The Chronology of 542–545

4.1. The problem in these years is that Procopius failed to mention explicitly the end of one campaign year, so that an assumption has to be made about where this should fall. The traditional view was that the long account of the plague (2.22–23) effectively masks a year end, with the following events in Adarbiganon and Persarmenia occurring in 543 and the siege of Edessa in

18 Cf. D. C. Stathakopoulos: Travelling with the Plague. In: R. Macrides (ed.): *Travel in the Byzantine World. Papers from the Thirty-Fourth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Birmingham, April 2000*. Aldershot 2002 (Publications of the Society for the Promotion of Byzantine Studies 10), pp. 99–118, at pp. 101–102.

19 Michael Whitby: Procopius' Missing Year. In: *Byzantion* 91, 2021, pp. 413–421.

544. In 1999, however, Ewald Kislinger and Dionysios Stathakopoulos argued that these dates should be late 542 and 543, with the missing year-end having to be located during the negotiations for a truce that followed Khusro's failure at Edessa; this revision has secured some adherents, including Greatrex.²⁰ Greatrex and myself have already disagreed on this, a discussion that he summarises (p. 589) by stating that his recent article has provided "a detailed refutation" of my arguments in favour of the traditional chronology.²¹ This is scarcely the case, since Greatrex opened this response by conceding that "there is no way to resolve this issue definitively: either interpretation is possible, given the limits of the evidence. We can only discuss the balance of probabilities."²² This is exactly the position that I had set out, but Greatrex's preference for the new chronology solidified in the *Commentary* as assumptions have become facts. In such a work it would have been prudent to have presented both possible chronologies, as he in fact did at the end of his own article, and to have refrained from labelling as misguided supporters of the traditional chronology, especially those who wrote before publication of the Kislinger and Stathakopoulos' article.²³

4.2. This is not the place to set out in detail why I continue to find Greatrex's assumptions unconvincing and the traditional chronology more plausible, so I simply note the salient issues. First, after crossing the Euphrates no earlier than the end of May 542, Khusro was not in a hurry to march east to campaign in Adarbiganon: instead he turned south to march down the Euphrates and indeed may have returned to the vicinity of Ctesiphon before deciding what to do next. Second, as set out above, the plague is likely to have taken over a year to travel at least 1,000 km from the Black Sea coast to Takht-I Suleiman, crossing from Roman-aligned to Persian territory, to approach there in the middle of 543, rather than the four or five months allowed by

20 E. Kislinger/D. Stathakopoulos: Pest und Perserkriege bei Prokop. Chronologische Überlegungen zum Geschehen 540–545. In: *Byzantion* 69, 1999, pp. 76–98; G. Greatrex/S. N. C. Lieu (eds.): *The Roman Eastern Frontier and the Persian Wars. Part II. AD 363–630. A Narrative Sourcebook*. London/New York 2002, pp. 112–113, 116.

21 G. Greatrex: Roman Campaigns and Negotiations in the East, 542–545. In: *Studia Ceranea* 11, 2021, pp. 569–578; see also Michael Whitby: *The Wars* (see note 12 above), pp. 152–153, 157.

22 Greatrex, *ibid.*, p. 570.

23 *Ibid.*, p. 576.

Greatrex. Third, Procopius' practice is to insert material that is not part of the main military narrative at the end of a campaign year, as Greatrex acknowledges (p. 503); there is no cogent reason for him to have departed from this practice when describing the plague's impact on Constantinople. This long account might help to explain his silence about the plague's arrival in the Roman army: since he had already described the plague's ravages, there was no need to repeat this, while disruption to military life meant that there were no major campaign initiatives to report in the latter part of 542. Fourth, there is no basis for the assumption that Procopius' statement "In the following year, Khusro the son of Kavadh, invaded Roman territory for the fourth time" (2.26.1) must refer to consecutive invasions.²⁴ Fifth, Greatrex assumes, but does not prove, that the peace negotiations after the siege of Edessa must have taken well over a year, even though both Justinian and Khusro had already been moving towards an agreement; there is little discussion of these alleged delays in the commentary.

4.3. These points do not disprove the Kislinger-Stathakopoulos hypothesis, merely make it much less plausible to my mind than the traditional chronology. Greatrex's commentary, which aspires to be a Thucydidean *ketema es aei*, 'possession for eternity', should have presented both possibilities on this matter, as it does on a number of points where alternative interpretations are possible (e.g. pp. 180–181 on the site of the Dara battle).

Specific Points

p. 37, 1.1.6–17. No reference is provided for Julian's Homeric comparison for emperor Constantius (or. 2.53a), though this can be tracked down via the *Index Locorum* at p.783.

p. 47, 1.2.7. Greatrex attributes Yazdgard I's poor reputation in Persian sources to power struggles between the crown and nobility, but his sympathetic attitude towards Persia's Christians was probably also a factor.

p. 70, 1.4.16. The extra details about the pearl story that Cedrenus preserves might just have been his own, or an intermediary's, embellishment of Procopius' account rather than proof of independent access to Procopius' source.

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 575–576; there is no discussion of this unfounded claim in the *Commentary*.

p. 79, 1.5.2. Vahram Tchobin was not the only non-Sasanid to occupy the Persian throne, since Shahrvaraz, who ruled for forty days in 630, was also from outside the dynasty.

pp. 101–102, 1.7.3. Discussion of Kavadh's invasion route would have been helpful, as was provided in *Rome and Persia at War* (note 3 above) pp. 80–81. It is possible to make some observations about the rate of progress of this royal expedition, which is said to have been engaged in “a lightning campaign”: the Roman frontier was crossed on 22nd August and Amida reached on 5th October, a total of 45 days during which the king overawed Theodosiopolis into surrender and accepted the submission of Martyropolis without resistance. In all he will have covered a bit over 300 km; even allowing a couple of weeks for his dealings with the two cities, which might be too much, his rapid advance only managed to average about 10–12 km a day.

p. 108, 1.7.12. Greatrex suggests that the *περίβολος*, ‘circuit wall’, should be interpreted as the outer *proteichisma*, but this is unlikely since in the following two sections it must refer to the main wall, which Kavadh failed to batter down and then attempted to overtop with his siege mound.

p. 116, 1.8.1. It is unclear why the army of the *magister militum per Orientem* had to be mobilised at Antioch; Hierapolis, much closer to the frontier, is a more likely location.

p. 118, 1.8.6–20. It is uncertain how successful Areobindus' campaign in 503 really was: he only penetrated as far as Nisibis, where he drove back some disorganized local forces, but was forced to abandon camp and flee as soon as Persian reinforcements arrived. It is not evident that Procopius has, as claimed (p. 120), omitted anything of significance, or that he deliberately downplayed Anastasian successes to increase the glory of Justinian's achievements and Belisarius' victory at Dara in 530, as stated at *Rome and Persia at War* pp. 75–76.

p. 120, 1.8.10. The provision by Procopius in this section of two different measurement units, days' journey and stades, may well reflect a desire for stylistic variation (cf. 1.4.20–29, for three different words used for fisherman) rather than different sources.

p. 121, 1.8.10. If Arzamon is located at Apadna (map at p. 98), the route from it to Constantina did not have to cross the Tur Abdin.

p. 121, 1.8.14. The choice of “picnicking” to describe the Roman army taking its lunch, either at Tricameron in 533 or here, is unnecessarily flippant.

p. 122, 1.8.19. Greatrex rightly notes that Procopius omits Kavadh’s invasion of 504, which secured a considerable ransom from Edessa, even though he could not capture the city, and ravaged as far as the Euphrates; this silence is at odds with the belief that Procopius was belittling Anastasian achievements.

p. 140, 1.10.19. Although Pseudo-Zachariah 7.6b refers to the proposed fortress that was to be located at Dara as a place of refuge for the army, it is misguided to describe the reasons for its construction as “largely defensive”, since Pseudo-Zachariah 7.6.a records that the generals were reacting to the difficulty they had in besieging Nisibis, the sort of problems that had afflicted Areobindus during his attack in 503. The security of Dara as a forward base would enable the Romans to be much more aggressive, which is why the Persians were so upset by its construction.

p. 142, 1.11.1–30, “Historiography” (cf. p. 157, 1.12.1–19, “Historiography”). It seems very unlikely that Procopius would decide not to record events in Lazica because these had been “widely reported by the chroniclers” and so were well-known. There is no indication that Procopius anywhere relied on such external accounts to complement his own, which was after all intended to be a permanent record of events. Pseudo-Zachariah demonstrates that he omits various events, for example Belisarius’ failed attempt to build a fort in the Melabasa hills at the eastern end of the Tur Abdin.

pp. 200–204. The provision of five plans for the different phases of the battle of Dara is much clearer than attempts to present the complexities in one or two plans.

p. 225, 1.17–18, “History”. The fact that Roman forts along the Euphrates did not attempt to oppose Azarethes’ advance does not prove that they were dilapidated; this was not the function of their small garrisons.

p. 236, 1.17.24. At Diocletian’s division of Mesopotamia, the eastern or northern part continued to be called Mesopotamia while it was the western part that became Osrhoene.

p. 237, 1.17.25. The same route was also used by Khusro in 542, though for part of his advance he may have marched along the east bank of the river.

p. 241, 1.17.40. It would have been helpful to have spelled out the possible implications of assigning a fifty-year period for the supremacy of al-Mundhir rather than referring to a contribution to a Festschrift that is not widely available.

p. 257, 1.18.32. Granted that Maurice's *Strategicon* (11.1) advised Romans on how to reduce casualties from superior Persian firepower, the comment about a lesser discrepancy in the firepower of the two sides might be interpreted to suggest that at Callinicum the Persians were not as dominant as usual. This was certainly not the case.

pp. 310–311, 1.21.5. The note provides a cross-reference to the discussion at 1.8.22 but then just repeats its information.

p. 321, 1.22.13. The comment that “Rufinus had supported Khusro’s adoption by Kavadh” is a bit obscure, since Khusro was already Kavadh’s son; Pseudo-Zachariah 9.7a in fact refers to Rufinus’ advice that Kavadh should choose Khusro as successor.

p. 324, 1.23–25, “History”. The fall of John the Cappadocian in 541 was orchestrated by parvenus similar to himself (e.g. Antonina, Theodora), so it is difficult to see how the plot demonstrates continuing tensions between traditional aristocrats and the parvenus, though these are very likely to have existed. What it does demonstrate is the constant competition for influence with Justinian in the polyocracy at his court.

p. 347, 1.24.19. Greatrex’s supports the suggestion of Rene Pfeilschifter that towards the end of the Nika Riot Justinian dismissed the senators from the palace in order to create space there for the reinforcements arriving from Thrace.²⁵ This is implausible, since these troops were still fighting their way towards the city centre and there was no guarantee that they would succeed in reaching the palace. If space was lacking, which I think unlikely, the senators could quickly have been sent back to their houses after the troops had arrived.

p. 351, 1.24.30. The location of the Placilliana and Heleniana palaces is not indicated; the former, also known as the Flacilliana, was in the eleventh

25 R. Pfeilschifter: *Der Kaiser und Konstantinopel. Kommunikation und Konfliktaustrag in einer spätantiken Metropole*. Berlin/Boston 2013 (Millennium-Studien 44), pp. 192–194.

region near the Holy Apostles, while the latter was in the twelfth region on the southern slopes of the Xerolophus hill west of the forum of Arcadius.

p. 363, 1.25.10. It might have been noted that, although Procopius denigrates the rough cloak adopted by the disgraced John as a garment suitable for a pagan priest, it could equally have been worn by a Christian ascetic.

p. 373, 1.26. The digression in the second paragraph on the attempted coup in Africa in the late 530s obscures the discussion of the coup at Dara.

pp. 388–389, 2.2.11. It would have been worth referring to the reflections on *καίρως* at Evagrius, HE 3.25.

p. 409, 2.4.5. The belief that Potidaea was ruined before the Huns captured it depends on Procopius *Buildings* 4.3.22; it would be prudent to be cautious of such assertions, unless there is external corroboration, since they are clearly designed to highlight Justinian’s reconstruction at the site.

p. 411, 2.4.6. On “myriads”, it would have been worth referring to Conor Whately’s discussion,²⁶ which is cited elsewhere. The exaggeration was obviously intended to underline the gravity of this raid.

p. 412, 2.4.8. The Huns must have seized the vessels to make their initial crossing to Asia from Sestus to Abydos, not the other way round.

pp. 415–416, 2.4.26. Khusro’s similar treatment of the ambassador Theodore in 576 might have been noted.

p. 420, 2.5.1. Procopius’ statement that Khusro’s invasion “conspicuously violated”, or “clearly broke” the 532 agreement is relevant to discussion of his attitude to responsibility for the breakdown of peace (pp. 378–379), but the connection is not made.

p. 421, 2.5.4. Although a journey of no more than 100 km might seem short for “an active man” in three days, it is likely that the march from opposite Circesium to Zenobia would have taken the royal army much longer.

p. 428, 2.6.1. Greatrex states that *ὄνομα*, ‘name’, has generally been omitted in translations, but Kaldellis, “nominally”, had already corrected Dewing on this detail.

26 C. Whately: Some Observations on Procopius’ Use of Numbers in Descriptions of Combat in *Wars* 1–7. In: *Phoenix* 69, 2015, pp. 394–411.

p. 431, 2.6.10. It is improbable that a rock located 140 metres from the circuit wall could have posed the existential threat that Procopius describes and which led to the capture of the city. A rock this far from the defences could not have been defended for long by 300 men against determined assailants, as Procopius suggests (2.8.13), since they would easily have been isolated. The fatal rock is more likely to have been near a section of wall on the steep slopes of Orocasias, where the earthquakes of the late 520s might have contributed to changes in the terrain.

p. 439, 2.7.19. Granted that Greatrex assumes, plausibly, that Bishop Megas spent one day in Antioch on his mission, that would leave him with three days each way, not two, for the travel between Antioch and Beroea. This is another indication that Procopius' journey time for an active man (2.7.2) was not necessarily achieved in practice by individuals or armies.

p. 445. The plan of Antioch identifies the walls on either side of the Iron Gate as Justinianic. The earliest phases of the Iron Gate are pre-Justinianic and the walls either side of it were probably part of the late antique circuit.

p. 447, 2.8.9. The possible width of the upper rampart wall in a late Roman fort can be inferred from the Gertrude Bell photograph of the southern walls at Dara, where there was probably scarcely room for more than two people. This might seem a weak defence, but it meant that even if besiegers managed to secure a foothold on a section of the curtain wall they would find it difficult to mount a strong attack on the adjacent towers that prevented them from expanding on their success.

p. 449, 2.8.17. It is true that cavalry forces, if they remained on horseback, would have been of limited use inside a city, but Roman cavalry were trained to dismount to fight on foot, as they did effectively at Callinicum in 531.

p. 462, 2.10.9. There is no basis for the assertion that Justinian built walls on several sides of Antioch. A suitably cautious conclusion from *Buildings* 2.10.10–12 would be that his efforts were focused on the vicinity of the weak point on Orocasias.

pp. 470–471, 2.11.7. The obvious contemporary parallel for τρητός used of a mountain defile is Petra Pertusa in Italy, on the passage of the via Flaminia through the Appenines.

p. 498, 2.13.15. Procopius' statement that Kavadh granted the bishop of Constantina all the food he had collected for the siege of the city is implausible, since shortage of supplies contributed to his withdrawal (Pseudo-Joshua 58).

p. 524, 2.16.10. The comment in Belisarius' speech that Justinian was far removed from events and so could not respond to opportunities is a simple statement of the realities of life in a world with relatively slow communications, so suggestions that it might be indirect criticism of Justinian, or even a metaphorical allusion to his prioritisation of other matters, are implausible.

p. 537, 2.19.2. Although Sisauranon was technically only half a day's journey from Roman territory, this measured the time it took to climb the four kilometres to the fort of Rhabdion, which was so remote that Procopius could suggest, inaccurately, that it constituted an enclave in Persian territory (*Buildings* 2.4.10–11). Procopius does not in fact claim that he had visited Rhabdion, merely that he had spoken to some local inhabitants (*Buildings* 2.4.3), which could have happened at Dara; in any case, even if he had claimed a visit, it would be imprudent to trust his claim to autopsy, any more than it is for occasions when Herodotus seeks to validate dubious information by asserting that he had seen it.

p. 539, 2.19.14. The comment on Dewing's translation is obscure, since he actually translated the text as "the Assyrians"; clearer to rephrase as "the Assyrians", as Dewing translates, rather than 'Assyria'".

p. 540, 2.19.19. It is not clear why τότε, 'then', indicates some "narrative confusion". Belisarius had been besieging Sisauranon for some time, and after the dispatch of the raiding parties across the Tigris he managed to capture some of the Persian defenders who were desperately seeking food.

p. 542, 2.19.25. I am not convinced by the suggestion of awkwardness in the narrative here. In the previous section Belisarius had razed the defences of Sisauranon, but has not yet returned to Roman territory, presumably maintaining his forward position to await the return of his raiding parties or identify other ways to hurt the Persians. The transition from his activities to those of al-Harith is managed by a natural μὲν [...] δὲ contrast, after which Procopius concludes his account of the campaign by describing the end of the raid and the decision by Belisarius to send back the contingents from the local forces in Lebanon.

p. 554. It is a pity that Europus, which is pivotal to the events of early summer 542, is not marked on the map at p. 417, though its general location can be inferred.

p. 564, 2.21.32. It is unlikely that Khusro could have reached Callinicum before the end of June, considering that on his march north he had been at Perozshapur on 18th April. It could even have been slightly later, and the fact that farmers harvested crops in May does not mean that they would not have continued to bring them to market in their neighbouring city over the following months.

p. 582, 2.23.5. It would have been worth noting that this information about Justinian's actions indicates that the emperor probably did not catch the plague in its early ravages in the capital.

p. 589, 2.24.1. There is no discussion of the route taken by Khusro to reach Adarbiganon. On Greatrex's assumption that he continued directly from his 542 march into Euphratesia, he would probably have taken the Keli Shin pass, as the army supporting Khusro II did in 590.

p. 591, 2.24.5. Here Greatrex appears to accept, correctly, that there is no conclusive evidence for dating events either to 542 or to 543, in contrast to his normal assertions that 543 is wrong.

p. 593, 2.24.10. It might be noted that Kaldellis dated the appointment of Martin to winter 542/543. It is slightly unfair to accuse the editors of the "Regesten der Kaiserurkunden" of "misdating" the appointment to 543, since there are two possible chronologies for events.

p. 594, 2.24.11. A cross-reference to the similar formulation at 2.4.26 would be in order.

p. 605, 2.26–27, "Historiography". There is no discussion of the implications for Procopius' collection of information and composition of the later addition of further details about the siege of Edessa (8.14.35–37). The comment that, despite the plague, the war in Mesopotamia ended with a Roman success begs a number of questions. There is no indication in Procopius' account that the citizens of Edessa had been seriously weakened by the plague that must have affected them over the preceding two years.

p. 614, 2.26.44. I think it unlikely that the Romans attempted to raise the height of their wall opposite the mound by building on top of the circuit wall there, since, if it was constructed like the circuit wall at Dara, it would not

have been thick enough to support any further weight. It is more likely that the defenders rapidly built a separate brick structure on the inner face of the wall.

p. 622, 2.28–30. Since Khusro did not regard Lazica as rightfully belonging to the Romans, there is no reason to suppose that his agreement to do no further harm to the Romans would cover activities in Transcaucasia.

p. 623, 2.28.1. The criticism of PLRE III for “misdating” the siege of Edessa to 544 is unfair; as has been pointed out, two chronologies are available for these events and PLRE was published long before the earlier chronology was even suggested.

p. 641. The river Boas/Akampsis, which is important for the discussion on 640, is unfortunately not marked on the map.

In a few comments either the full lemma is not translated or the translation covers more than the lemma. I have noted the following: 1.2.11; 1.12.7; 1.18.21; 2.2.11; 2.4.8; 2.11.4; 2.21.17; 2.22.3; 2.25.32; 2.27.19.

There are a very few copy-editing glitches:

p. 89, 1.6.3–4. Inverted comma missing to close translation of the quotation.

p. 89. The lemma labelled 6.8 in fact relates to 1.6.6.

p. 102, 1.7.4 (second lemma). “however” used incorrectly for ‘but’.

p. 157, second paragraph, fourth line. After the end of the USSR in 1991, and especially in current circumstances, it is insensitive to use the term “the Ukraine”.

p. 231, 1.17.7. ‘*Geography* of’ is probably what has been omitted between “The” and “Ananias”.

pp. 271–272. Six lemmata that should be labelled 19.3 are listed as 19.2.

p. 502, 2.13.26. The comma after *σφίλα* in the lemma must be a typo.

p. 562, line 2. The reference should be to Whately 2015, not 2016.

p. 580. The second lemma numbered 22.35 is in fact 22.36.

p.615. The header should read ‘ii.26.45–27.3’.

By placing himself in the succession of Gomme and Walbank, Greatrex has invited the application of the very highest standards to his work. Although the commentary might not always reach the Olympian heights of his models, this is still a labour of fundamental importance for both Procopius and the history of Roman-Persian interactions in the first half of the sixth century.

He will undoubtedly return to some of the specific issues and there is a possibility that he will extend his work to embrace Book 8, since at p. 593 he refers to a future commentary on 8.10.8–22, though whether this will be a commentary on all the Persian chapters in Book 8, or even on the whole Book, is unclear. I look forward to further debate on a number of the major issues!

The Translation

Greatrex's predecessors in compiling major commentaries did not accompany them with a translation and his decision to abandon precedent might be questioned. Dewing's complete translation of Procopius' works in the Loeb has its flaws, but for the *Wars* most of these have been ironed out in the revision by Anthony Kaldellis, and it would have been possible for Greatrex to discuss his further corrections and improvements in the commentary, with a consolidated list of proposed changes at the end.²⁷ Instead he has taken the opportunity to resurrect, revise, and fill out the translation of extracts that Averil Cameron published in the short-lived 'The Great Histories series' in 1967.²⁸ This is preceded by the same "Table of Names" (pp. XIII–XXIII) as in the *Commentary*, and a short introduction (pp. 1–15) that essentially abridges that in the *Commentary*. Somewhat bizarrely the translation, which naturally has the same thirty plans, is followed by an Appendix (pp. 211–218) in which Photius' summary of Nonnosus' account of his embassy is presented in the same translation as published in the *Commentary*. The volume ends with the indices of "Persons and Titles" (pp. 219–236), and "Peoples and Places" (pp. 237–251) that are used in the *Commentary*. In the Preface to the *Commentary* (pp. XI–XIV; p. XIII), but surprisingly not in the Preface to the *Translation* (pp. IX–X) where it might have been more

27 Procopius: History of the Wars. The Anecdota or Secret History. On Buildings. With an English Translation by H. B. Dewing. 7 vols. Cambridge, MA 1914–1940 (Loeb Classical Library 48/81/107/173/217/290/343); Prokopios: The Wars of Justinian. Translated by H. B. Dewing. Revised and Modernized, with an Introduction and Notes, by A. Kaldellis. Maps and Genealogies by I. Mladjov. Indianapolis, IN 2014.

28 Procopius: History of the Wars, Secret History, and Buildings. Newly Translated, Edited, Abridged, and with an Introduction by Averil Cameron. New York 1967 (The Great Histories Series 12).

appropriate, Greatrex comments that he has drawn on translations into German, Spanish and Polish, as well as a forthcoming one into French.

Individual approaches to translation differ. In comparing Greatrex (hereafter G) with the previous translations into English by Dewing (D), Kaldellis (K),²⁹ I have attempted to apply the guidance given by the General Editors of the esteemed Liverpool series, “Translated Texts for Historians”, that translations should represent the ancient text as accurately as possible and be couched in good English. Although Greatrex does not discuss his approach, it is unlikely to be different from this, since he has produced a translation that reads well and, in the main, adheres reasonably closely to Procopius’ text.

1. Corrections and other improvements by Greatrex

1.1.3 *ἅπανσι* [...] *τοῖς πεπραγμένοις*: G’s “everything that happened” is more precise than D-K’s “all the events to be described”.

1.1.9 *κεκλιμένοις*: G’s “leaning” reflects the Homeric antecedent (*Iliad* 11.371), whereas there is no justification for D-K’s “seeking safety behind”.

1.5.1 *ἐπὶ τὸ βιαιότερον*: G’s “more autocratic” or D’s “more high-handed” are preferable to K’s literal “more violent”, since this leads into Kavadh’s disruption of the kingdom by imposing unpopular Mazdakite practices.

1.5.28 *ἅλον*: G’s “the whole thing”, referring to the flayed skin stuffed with straw, reflects this, whereas D-K omit this.

1.9.21 *ἐνδεεστέρωσ ἢ κατὰ τὴν χρείαν*: G’s “insufficient for their needs” renders this correctly, recording that Glones had put the Persians on starvation rations, whereas D-K’s “more sparingly than were needed/was necessary” wrongly suggests that he could have been more generous with supplies.

1.17.22. G notes D’s omission of *ἓν*, “one”, although this had already been corrected by K.

1.20.1 *μέτρον οὐκ ἐχούση*: G’s “on a large scale” is a possible alternative to D-K’s “outrageously”, for which ‘immoderately’ would be preferable.

29 D-K refers to where Kaldellis had preserved Dewing’s version.

1.24.8 τῶν δὲ πολιτῶν εἴ τι καθαρὸν: G's "any noble citizen" is preferable to D's "all of the citizens who were sane-minded" and K's "all law-abiding citizens", though 'sound' would be preferable to "noble" since Procopius was probably not just referring to the aristocracy here but to all those whose sound common sense ensured they were free from factional passions.

1.24.10 ἡ κατάστασις ἐκείνη προσαγορεύεται: G's "the event has taken its name" is preferable to D's "the insurrection has been called by this name" or K's looser "this was the name that the uprising would bear", especially for *κατάστασις*, 'event' or even 'affair'.

2.3.9 ἐπὶ τὰ πρότερα ἦθη: G's "to their previous temper" plausibly applies this ambiguous phrase to the inhabitants' attitude, as he explains (*Commentary*, p. 394), although he accepts that D-K's "to their former homes" is possible; 'to their previous state' might preserve the ambiguity.

2.5.4. Here and elsewhere G translates Procopius' references to peoples such as the Syrians as indicating the relevant province, whereas D-K retain the peoples.

2.5.13 καθαρὸς ἄρτους: G's "white loaves" corrects D's "clean loaves" and K's "pure loaves".

2.7.28. G's "lack of sense" for ἀγνωμοσύνης is an improvement on D's "want of consideration" and K's "ingratitude", which are not so good as a contrast to ἀσθένειαν, 'weakness'; 'lack of judgment' would also be possible.

2.8.10 κατὰ τὴν τῆς ἄκρας ὑπερβολήν: G's "down from the heights of the hill" improves D-K's "along the crest of the hill", which makes less sense in practical terms, since the Persians were exploiting that fact that they could fire down on the defenders, both from the nearby rock and also at places where the walls dropped down the steep contours of the mountain.

2.8.24 δῆ: G includes "evidently", omitted in D-K.

2.13.13 ἐνδελεχέστατα: As G notes in his commentary, the superlative adverb should be translated "perpetually" rather than "completely" as in D-K.

2.13.21 τάφρου: G corrects K, who had wrongly changed D's "trench" to "moat".

2.18.7 ὡς ἦμιστα: G corrects the error that K had introduced into D's translation by ignoring the negative.

2.18.17 *δηλονότι*: G’s “obviously” is preferable to D-K’s “as they surely would”. In G’s translation it is Peter and John, as part of Belisarius’ instructions, who are to be aware of the probably Persian tactics, whereas D-K wrongly assign this awareness to Belisarius.

2.18.18. G notes a correction to D’s apparatus; K had already changed D’s “gourds” to “cucumbers” for *σικύους*.

2.19.31 *ἀρχμηρά*: G’s “parched” is preferable to D-K’s “dry and hot”.

2.20.20 *ἀνεψιός*: Although K had in most places corrected D’s “nephew” to “cousin”, here he wrongly retained “nephew”.

2.21.2 *τὰ ἐς τὴν ἡσυχίαν ὑπηρετοῦντα*: D-K’s “privy counsellor” is unlikely to mean much now, even to readers in the United Kingdom, so that G’s “saw to the emperor’s tranquillity” is a decided improvement.

2.21.3 *σινδόνων*: G’s “fine cloth” is preferable to D-K’s “heavy cloth”, since Belisarius will have wanted his tent to be impressive.

2.22.21 *οἱ μέντοι τῷ τῆς παραφροσύνης ἀλόντες κακῶ ἀγρυπνία τε καὶ φαντασία πολλῇ εἶχοντο*: G’s “But those afflicted by the frenzy were seized by terrible sleeplessness and multiple hallucinations” is in most respects preferable to D’s “But those who were seized with delirium suffered from insomnia and were victims of a distorted imagination” or K’s “Those gripped by the madness of dementia, on the other hand, could not sleep and became delusional”, except for attaching *κακῶ*, “terrible”, to the feminine *ἀγρυπνία* rather than the preceding words.

2.25.7 *ἐς τοῦ ὄρους τὰ ἔσχατα*: G’s “at the foot of the mountain” improves on “extremity” (D) or “extreme end” (K), as G explains (*Commentary*, pp. 599–600).

2.28.3. As G points out (*Commentary*, p. 624), there is nothing in the Greek to justify D-K’s “a second time”, even though this was indeed the second embassy.

2.28.25 *μονότροποι*: G’s “single-minded”, citing Lampe s. v. 2, is an improvement on D-K’s “singular in their ways”, but ‘constant’ (also Lampe s. v. 2) might be even better, since the problem for the Laz was the inflexibility of the Persians.

2.30.51. G plausibly argues that the *ὅπερ* clause must describe the divine power rather than what it dangles before men, as D-K interpreted.

2. Some emendations considered or adopted by Greatrex

1.18.16. G plausibly adopts the emendation suggested to him by Richard Burgess of *ταῦτά*, “the same”, for the manuscripts’ *ταῦτα*, “these things”. As a result, Hermogenes is shown to agree with Belisarius rather than side with the impatient troops, a difficulty that D-K smoothed over by adding “also” to their translation. It is slightly confusing that G, although accepting the emendation, prints the lemma with the reading of the manuscripts.

2.4.5. G accepts the suggestion in Donald S. Robertson’s review of Dewing’s translation that Jakob Haury’s text (*ἦν οἱ παλαιοὶ Ποτίδαιαν ἐκάλουν, ὅσα γε ἡμᾶς εἰδέναι*) οὐ τειχομαχῆσαντες πρότερον should be repunctuated as (*ἦν οἱ παλαιοὶ Ποτίδαιαν ἐκάλουν, ὅσα γε ἡμᾶς εἰδέναι οὐ τειχομαχῆσαντες πρότερον*), so that the qualification *ὅσα γε ἡμᾶς εἰδέναι*, “as far as we know”, applies to the besieging skills of the Hunnic raiders rather than to the name of the city that had been called Cassandrea since the end of the fourth century BC. This is possible, although Procopius might be wanting to suggest a certain cleverness on his part in knowing the old name (even if it is the name in Thucydides).

2.15.34. The deletion of the *harpax* *πρόπονοι* does not really change the sense, since the Laz are saying that they will be both leaders or guides on the journey and the first-movers or ground-breakers in the labour of clearance; the balance of *πρόπονοι* [...] *ἡγεμόνες* might favour retention.

2.21.2 *ἐπιτρέψουσι* (Haury) or *ἐπιστρέψουσι* (manuscripts). G seems to be attracted by the manuscripts’ reading, though Haury’s simple emendation offers much better sense.

2.22.16. Acceptance of the reading *ἄχρι ἐς πέρασ*, “until the end” in one manuscript does make far better sense of the comment about the progression of the plague than the majority reading *ἄχρις ἑσπέρας* “until evening”, and the change is minimal.

3. Predecessors preferable to Greatrex

These improvements are outnumbered by places where Downey and/or Kaldellis present a translation that renders Procopius’ Greek more fully or precisely than Greatrex while still offering a good English version.

3.1. Words omitted by Greatrex

1.1.2 ὁμοίας: K’s “similar” or D’s “of the same sort” are needed.

1.1.15 παρ’ αὐτὸ μάλιστα τῶν ὠτων τὸ δεξιόν: D offers “about opposite the right ear” and K “all the way to the right ear”, which attempt to incorporate μάλιστα, which G’s “beside the right ear” ignores; “very close to the right ear” might be suitable.

1.5.18 πολλὰ: D-K represent this through “heaped”.

1.20.2 τούτου: “this” Ethiopian army, as D-K, rather than “the” G.

1.24.55 πολλὰ: D’s “at length” or K’s “severely” represent this.

2.1.13 δῆ: D-K’s “he alleged” captures the force of the word, which G disregards.

2.5.26 ζύμπασαν: “whole” (D-K).

2.7.15 ἐτύγχανε: D-K “It happened that”.

2.7.16 ἅπανσι: D “everybody”, K “everyone”.

2.7.28 εὔ τε καὶ καλῶς: D-K’s “well and suitably” renders both elements, whereas G restricted himself to “well”.

2.9.8 τῷ λόγῳ: D-K “in/with words”; G also omits this at 2.9.10.

2.9.12 τῷ χρόνῳ: D offers “based on age” and K “in point of years”.

2.9.13 ἀεὶ: D-K “every time”.

2.11.15 πολλῶ: D-K “much gold”.

2.11.17 ξυνηνέχθη: D “it befell that” (D) or K “took place there”.

2.11.17 πολλῶ: “great” (D), “bright” (K).

2.12.8 ἀπάντων: D-K “all”.

2.12.28 τὴν βασιλείαν: “to the kingdom” (D), “on the throne” (K).

2.14.3 τῶν ἀρχόντων: D-K “of the magistrates”.

2.14.9 Μαρτίνος γὰρ: D’s “For Martin” gets this right, whereas K’s “Martin, by contrast” wrongly introduced an adversative, which G corrects, although he omits the γὰρ which explains why Martin was not among the commanders being sent out at this time. None of the three translations attempts to include

ἔτυχεν, ‘it happened’, which is part of the explanation for why Martin was already in the East.

2.18.9 τῷ ἄλλῳ: D-K “every other”.

2.19.32 ὥρα θερούς: D-K “in the summer season”.

2.20.18 εὐθύ, [...] πάντα: D-K “straight [...] all”.

2.20.26 νῦν: D-K “immediately”.

2.21.14 ἀπάντων: D-K “all”.

2.21.20 πολλάς: D-K “many”, which is needed to underline the exaggerated myriads of the barbarians the Romans would have to face.

2.21.28 σφίσιν: D-K “in their eyes” or just ‘to them’.

2.22.37 μείζων: D “to an unusual size”, K “very large”.

2.23.19 ἅπασιν: D-K “all”.

2.26.23 ἀτεχνῶς: D-K “right”, which emphasises that the earth was being piled directly on the felled trees; it might be worth considering the minor emendation to ἀτέχνως, to mean that the earth was piled ‘indiscriminately’ on the trees.

2.26.24 ἐς ἀεὶ: D-K point to the continuous nature of the mound’s internal bonding through “kept laying”.

2.26.29 διαρκῶς: D-K “adequate”.

2.26.36 τὰ πολλά: D-K “most”.

2.26.46 ἐνθενδε: D-K “from there”.

2.29.2 Περσῶν: D-K “of the Persians”.

2.30.27 πανταχόθι: D-K “all along”.

2.30.52 ἄλλας: ‘other’. Only D attempts to reflect this with “such”.

3.2. Weaker translation than the Greek word

1.6.6 ποτε νυκτὸς ἐπιλαβούσης: This is correctly and fully represented by D-K’s “one day as night drew near”, in contrast to G’s “One night”.

1.18.9 τὸν τε κίνδυνον κατορρωδήσαντες: D-K's "were terrified at the danger" is preferable to G's "were overcome by fear", though 'shuddered/quivered in fright at the danger' might be better still.

1.20.10 διαφερόντως ἀγαθός: D-K's "exceptionally able" captures this better than G's "very experienced", relevant since the sentence contains another exaggerating adverb in παντάπασιν, "utterly".

1.23.14 ὑπερφυῶς: D's "exceedingly" or K's "furiously" are stronger than G's "very".

1.26.2 δεινῶς: D's "mightily" or K's "badly" are stronger than G's "very".

2.8.10 ἰσχυρότατα: D-K's "most vigorously" represents the superlative, as opposed to G's "hard".

2.15.32 ὑπερφυῶς: again, G has "very", D-K "extremely" (as G has at 2.25.18).

2.16.6 ἐν τῷ παρόντι: D-K's "at the present/this time" covers this more completely than G's "now".

2.18.24 ἐξ φυγῆν ὄρμητο: D-K's "beat a hasty retreat" appropriately offers an element of speed, whereas G's "turned to flight" is more neutral.

2.22.1 ἐπισκήπτουσιν: the verb indicates an attack or assault (cf. G's translations at 2.22.5, 23.21 etc.), so that here his "came from" is too weak. D's "scourges" is preferable to K's "calamities", though both capture the hostile sense.

2.25.35 ἀλίγα: D-K's "some little" notes the limited nature of the achievement of Justus and Peranius better than G's "some", whether that is applied to the quantity of plunder they secured (D-K) or the part of the country they ravaged (G).

2.27.23 ὑπαντιάσαντες: D-K's "confronted" is more appropriate than G's "met".

2.27.42 ἰσχυρότατα: D-K's "most vigorously" represents the superlative, which G's "hard" ignores.

3.3. Other observations

1.1.6 ἀληθῶς: D-K's "on the truth" is preferable to G's "really".

1.3.17 *λόσω οὐδεν*: In his *Commentary* (p. 62) G notes that this favourite Procopian phrase does often refer to a senseless action; D's "wantonly" is a bit dated, but 'senselessly' is better than K's and G's "recklessly".

1.5.4 *ἐφ' ἑκάτερα*: D-K's "on both sides" is closer than G's "favouring different conclusions".

1.5.40 *ἡ τῶν Ἀρμενίων συγγραφῆ*: Granted that in his introductory remarks (*Commentary*, p. 81) G refers to this as a "Composition of the Armenians", which he accepts was a written source, it is strange that here he translates as "The account of the Armenians", which, with the lower-case "account" could easily be interpreted as an oral report; D has "the Armenian History", K "the *History of the Armenians*."

1.7.5. All three translations render *δίκαιος* as "just"; this is not wrong, but 'righteous' might reflect Jacob's holy status better; cf. also 2.13.13.

1.7.5 *ὅς τὰ ἐς τὸ θεῖον ἐς τὸ ἀκριβὲς ἤσκητο*: Procopius may be referring to the strict training, *askesis*, that holy men like Jacob endured before acquiring their status. D's "who had trained himself with exactitude in matters pertaining to religion" captures some of this, though "with exactitude" is a bit clunky; K's "who was very focused on the practice of religion" is too loose, while G's "who was far advanced in religious knowledge and practice" introduces "knowledge" that is not in the Greek. Something along the lines of 'who had trained himself strictly in divine matters' might be preferable.

1.8.1 *τότε*: G's "At the time of which I was speaking" is a considerable and unnecessary expansion; "At that time" (D-K) or just 'then', as G uses elsewhere (e.g. 1.19.1) is better.

1.11.2 *μέριμνά τις*: "a sort of anxiety" (D) or "a concern" (K) is better than G's "the thought", though in the commentary lemma he quotes "(or worry)" as an alternative.

1.11.3. G glosses *ὁ νόμος* correctly but unnecessarily as "the law of succession".

1.11.22 *δηλῶν*: K's "explained" comes closest, whereas D's "and his meaning was" does not capture the fact that Probus was clarifying the basis for his opinion, while G's "reminded" introduces a different aspect.

1.11.34 *τὰ Περσῶν νόμιμα*: K's "the customs of the Persians" is preferable to D's "the institutions of the Persians" or G's "the Persian way of life".

1.13.9 στρατιάν λόγου πολλοῦ ἀξίαν: D’s “very formidable army” or K’s “formidable army” is preferable to G’s “very considerable army”; ‘most notable’ would be an alternative.

1.15.23. G discusses whether ἐκ τοῦ ἐπὶ πλεῖστον should be interpreted temporally, as D “for a long time” or geographically as he prefers, “over a wide area”, though the parallel of 1.24.16 which he cites suggests that ‘as a rule’ would be preferable, to refer to the tendency of the Tzani to make unexpected attacks; K’s “got used to making” conveys this sense.

1.19.13 ἀνθρώπων παντελῶς ἔρημος: D’s “completely destitute of human habitation” or K’s “completely destitute of human presence” are preferable to G’s “completely desolate”, though better still is ‘completely uninhabited’, extrapolating from G’s translation of ἔρημος ἀνθρώπων at 1.19.3, which he might have adapted.

1.20.3 ἐν τινι τῶν ἐκείνη φρουρίων: D-K’s “in one of the fortresses/forts there” preserves the periphrasis, as opposed to G’s “in a fortress there”.

1.20.12 χώραν ἀμειψαμένοις ἔρημόν τε καὶ χρόνου πολλοῦ ὁδὸν κατατείνουσιν: D’s “to cross a country which was a desert and which extended so far that a long time was required for a journey across it” is accurate if slightly laboured, but preferable to K’s “to enter a desert that extended over such a distance that it required much time to cross”; G’s “leave their country and go on a long and lonely journey” distorts the sense. An improvement might be ‘to cross a region that was a desert and extended for several days’ journey’.

1.22.9 ζυνταραχθεῖς τε καὶ θυμῷ πολλῷ ἤδη ἐχόμενος: D-K’s “much perturbed/shaken up by this, and, already filled with anger” is better than G’s “up in arms at this and in a great passion” since the supposed death of the friendly Rufinus would have upset Khusro.

1.22.13 κείμενός τε πρηγής: D-K’s “lying prone” is sufficient, as opposed to G’s “with his face touching the floor”, which departs some way from the Greek (cf. also 2.7.34).

1.24.17 ἔταιρίζεσθαι τὸν δῆμον: As G rightly notes (*Commentary*, p. 345), the expression harks back to Herodotus’ account of Cleisthenes’ actions in 508/507 BC, but his “to associate himself with the people” inverts the direction of travel, as opposed to D’s “to win the people to his side” or K’s “win the populace back to his side”.

1.24.31 οὐχ ἥμισυα: D-K's "not least" avoids the repetition of "lead [...] lead" in G's version.

1.25.23 ὥς: It is most unlikely that Antonina was actually going to continue directly to the eastern frontier after entrapping John, since she needed to be sure that he did not foil the plan by appealing to Justinian (which would probably have worked, as Procopius comments at 1.25.30). It is therefore preferable to translate ὥς by "as if", as D-K do.

2.1.1 σκήψεις: G translates as singular "an excuse", whereas at 2.1.11 he rightly offers "pretexts", as D-K have in both places.

2.3.6 ἔσχε καθ' ὅ τι τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς ἦθη ἐνδείζοιτο: All translations are challenged by the implications of καθ' ὅ τι. D offered "gained the opportunity of displaying his inward character", K "was able to display the content of his character", and G "displayed his character whenever he had the chance", with D-K rendering τὰ τῆς ψυχῆς ἦθη more closely than G. Elements from all might suggest, 'took whatever chance he had to display his inner character'.

2.3.10 διαβολαῖς: D-K's "slanders" is better than G's "accusations".

2.3.19 ἐν δυσχωραῖς χαλεπαῖς τε καὶ κρημνώδεσιν: K's "on extremely rough terrain full of precipices" improves on D's "extremely difficult ground where precipices abounded", whereas G's "rough terrain that was both dangerous and mountainous" renders χαλεπαῖς τε more closely but ignores the meaning of κρημνώδεσιν, 'with cliffs' or perhaps 'craggy'.

2.3.30 πολλὰ [...] ἐλιπάρει: K's "strongly advised" is preferable to D's "earnestly entreated" with regard to πολλὰ, which G's "urgently besought" renders imprecisely, but 'entreated/begged' are better for ἐλιπάρει; 'frequently entreated' or 'repeatedly begged' might be better still.

2.4.18 τίθεσθαι ἢ τῶν πραγμάτων νενόμικε φύσει: D's "the nature of things is such as to make" is preferable to K's version that omits 'such', since this reflects the periphrasis in νενόμικε, while G's "the nature of things makes" weakens this element even further.

2.4.26 ταῦτα ἐπεὶ ὁ Χοσρόης ἀπενεχθέντα εἶδεν: D-K's "Chosroes saw this message" is closer than G's "Khusro had read this", though does not completely capture the sense of ἀπενεχθέντα, 'what had been brought'.

2.7.14 ἔργω ταῦτα ἐπιτελεῖν: G's "to fulfil their part of the deal" is similar to D's "to carry out this agreement", though perhaps more colloquial, while

K's "to carry them out" is preferable since the agreement has just been mentioned in the previous clause and no noun is needed, but none of these attempts to render ἔργω, 'in practice'; 'to fulfil this/these in practice' would suffice.

2.7.19 ἀνόσια: K's "unholy" captures the religious dimension better than D's "outrageously" or G's "disgracefully" (at 2.10.5 G translates the superlative as "most impious").

2.7.19. Granted that G notes the relevance of the repetition of οὐ δέον at 2.7.22, which he translates as "needless" (better than D-K's "wrongfully"), it would have been preferable to have used 'needlessly' here.

2.9.5 ἀτοβοῖ: D-K's "at the first cry" is better than G's "without a blow" since even a success at the first shout might have involved some blows.

2.9.7 τερατευόμενος τε καὶ διαθρυπτόμενος: G's "This was the fanciful and deceitful tale" introduces the notion that Khusro is telling a story, though "fanciful" for τερατευόμενος improves on D's "Such high-sounding and airy words" and certainly on K's "Such bizarre and affected words"; 'fanciful and airy words' might combine the best of these versions.

2.11.17 κατ' αὐτὸν: D-K's "above him", namely the bishop, is better than G's "above it", which suggests he is emending to κατ' αὐτὸ to refer to the wood.

2.12.11. G introduces "ostensibly" into the account of Abgar's hunting expedition; there is nothing in the Greek to support this, and Abgar was indeed attempting to capture animals.

2.12.30 διὰ τοῦτο: G translates with both "by this means" and "for the following reason"; the former is wrong and, in any case, unnecessary.

2.13.23 τὸν πάντα λόγον: D-K translate as "everything", whereas G introduces an idea of deception with "the whole ruse". No such ruse has been mentioned, and 'the whole story' of the Persian tunnel is what is meant.

2.14.5 μέντοι: Neither D-K's "Thus" nor G's "So", reflects the adversative force; 'however' would be appropriate for this transition from the description of the city of New Antioch in Persia and the portent that had foreshadowed the fate of the Roman city.

2.14.5 ἄσπερ: G's "even though", for the relative pronoun introduces a qualification to the clause about the law, whereas Procopius is just making a statement of fact.

2.15.25 τοῖς ἀναγκαίαις: D-K’s “necessities of life” is preferable to G’s “basic produce”.

2.15.35 ἐπεφήμιζεν: K’s “his disinformation claimed” rightly recognizes that Khusro is alleging why he was making this expedition, which neither D’s “kept saying in explanation” nor G’s “put it about” captures, although ‘alleged’ would be quite sufficient rather than K’s expansion.

2.18.6 ἀυτοκράτορα: D-K’s “supreme commander in the war” is closer than G’s “to direct the war himself”.

2.19.10 ἐς ὄλεθρον φέρει: D-K’s “leads to destruction” is closer than G’s “brings destruction”.

2.19.35 βουλήν προῖθηκεν: D-K’s “opened a discussion” is preferable to G’s “invited a discussion”.

2.19.44 ἔς τε θόρυβον καθιστάμενοι [...] ἤξιον: D’s “becoming disorderly, they demanded” is preferable to K’s “becoming loud and insubordinate, they demanded”, which makes too much of ἔς τε θόρυβον καθιστάμενοι, while G’s “In the ensuing disorder they decided” might suggest that the disorder was a general matter rather than the behaviour of those demanding that Belisarius retreat. As G notes, ἤξιον can be translated as both “demanded” and “decided”; he adduces parallels from books 1 and 3 for his preference “decided”, but they cannot be decisive for the interpretation here.

2.19.45. Although the Persians removed corpses on pack animals, it is more likely that wounded men were carried back on carts, so that ὑποζύγια, literally ‘yoke animals’, is more likely to imply carts, as D-K translate.

2.20.14 ἐπιλιπόντος: An aorist rather than a present participle, so D’s “had failed” or K’s “had run out” are preferable to G’s “was failing”.

2.22.2 ἢ λόγῳ εἰπεῖν ἢ διανοίᾳ λογίσασθαι: D’s “to express in words or conceive in thought” is better than K’s rather loose “to give a rational account, or even to cope with it mentally”, while G’s “giving a reason or conceiving one in the imagination” misses the contrast of λόγῳ [...] διανοίᾳ.

2.22.3 περιεβάλλετο: “embraced” (D-K) is more accurate than G’s “was spread”; it is also worth retaining the mild adversative force of δὲ at the start of the clause, which G disregards.

2.22.19 τῶν εἰωθότων: As G notes this can be translated either as “usual habits”, as he does, or as “those who were familiar to them” (D) or “loved ones”

(K); the Thucydidean precedent for victims of the Athenian plague forgetting their friends, which G cites, in fact favours D-K's interpretation.

2.22.23 ἀντεῖχον: Although G's "stood up [...] to" is possible, the use of ἀντέχοντες at 2.23.9, where he translates "keep up with", supports the idea of keeping going here, which D represents by "held out in performance" and K by "continued to perform".

2.22.24 ἐκπίπτοντας καὶ καλινδουμένους [...] ἀντικαθίστων: D's "kept putting" or K's "kept falling" capture the repetitive nature of the activity represented by the imperfect tenses better than G's "had to put [...] had fallen".

2.23.11 ἐλύπει: K's "bring grief" or better D's "distressed" are preferable to G's "did harm".

2.23.19 ἐπεκώμαζεν: D's "was running riot" was not improved by K's "was careering about"; G's "ran riot" followed D, but D's imperfect is preferable.

2.24.11 ταῦτα ἐπεὶ ἀπενεχθέντα οἱ ἄρχοντες τὰ γράμματα εἶδον: Again (cf. 2.4.26) none of the translations completely captures the sense of ἀπενεχθέντα, 'what has been brought'.

2.26.28 τεχνῖται: G translates as "specialists", namely siege engineers. It does, however, seem unlikely that poliorcetic experts would have been tasked with the physical construction of a siege mound, for which Khusro needed skilled craftsmen to ensure his structure was solid and stable. D's "artisans" or K's "builders" are more appropriate.

2.26.40. G glosses ταῦτα with "options", which fits the context, though D-K's "words" is weaker, and hence more appropriate since there is no noun in the Greek.

2.27.1 διώρυχα: G translates as "trench", but D-K's "tunnel" has to be preferred since the defenders of Edessa were digging a concealed passage under the mound, not an open trench.

2.27.7 οὐδένα ἀνιέντες καιρόν: G translates "without losing an opportunity", but cites the parallel at 2.25.31, where he translates "losing no time"; this would be better here too. D-K have "not slackening their efforts for a moment" here and "wasting not a moment" at 2.25.31; the latter would also suit the context here.

2.27.36 περιρραντηρίοις: D-K’s “whisk” adopts one of Liddle/Scott/Jones’s definitions; G’s “sprinkler” is not wrong, since the boiling oil was being sprinkled, but might suggest garden equipment.

2.28.14. There is nothing in the Greek to justify G’s modifying “quite”; D’s “did not actually” captures the force of the γε in μέντοι γε better than K’s laconic “but did not” while omitting the μέντοι.

2.28.26 δυσπρόσοδοί: Henning Börm’s suggestions, commended by G, include “inaccessible”, which resembles Dewing’s “difficult of access”; G’s “baf-fling” might suggest that the laws could be accessed, but were then found to be incomprehensible.

2.29.2. D-K preserve the structure of Procopius’ sentence, which G distorts unnecessarily by attaching Vahriz to ἀπολεξάμενος rather than ἐπιστήσας.

2.30.34. D preserves the comparative force of ἐγγυτέρω, ‘nearer’, which is dropped by K’s and G’s, “near”.

2.30.46 ἄλευρα παμπληθῆ: D-K’s “great quantities (or amounts) of flour” represents this correctly, whereas G’s “a huge quantity of various supplies, including flour” transfers “huge quantity” to the preceding ἄλλα ἐπιτήδεια, with the result that he has to omit ἄλλα; better would be ‘other supplies including great quantities of flour’.

These comments are based on the passages that Greatrex cites in his lemmata in the *Commentary*, which represent no more than 20% of the Greek text, though I have looked at a few other passages to confirm that my observations are representative. Some might seem pedantic, and I would accept that not every superlative has to be translated as such or that every word in the Greek can always be reflected in a translation while preserving the quality of English. At many points it is not a case that Greatrex is in error, only that he could easily have represented Procopius’ Greek more precisely without sacrificing the quality of his English version in any way. An obvious conclusion from the above comments is that Greatrex has not produced the definitive English translation of *Wars* 1–2 since, despite some genuine improvements and corrections, these are outnumbered by places where his version is inferior to those of Dewing and/or Kaldellis. If he felt that he could not stick too closely to their versions, so that change was necessary, that would be a pity. Whatever the reason, his translation cannot be recommended

ahead of Kaldellis' revision of Dewing, whatever the errors that this does contain, and the fact that it presents the whole of the *Wars* in a single volume is also an advantage; those who appreciate the convenience of a parallel text and translation are not served too badly by Dewing's Loeb, even if his expression will sometimes strike contemporary readers as a bit dated. If the commentary had printed a consolidate lists of proposed corrections to Dewing and Kaldellis and of changes to the text, it would have been easy for all those with the earlier versions to keep this by their texts. As it is, all three versions will often need to be consulted.

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Michael Whitby: Procopius Meets His Gomme? Greatex on the *Persian Wars*. In: Plekos 25, 2023, S. 89–125 (URL: <https://www.plekos.uni-muenchen.de/2023/r-procopius.pdf>).

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