

PROCOPIUS IN ESPERANTO

Geoffrey Greatrex

Work on Procopius in the international language Esperanto is limited essentially to studies published by the author of this contribution, but it is worth noting that more is being undertaken at the moment.

It is not necessary to survey the broader field of late antique research in Esperanto, since already one has been produced, both in English and in French, which was published in the programme for the Tenth Biennial Shifting Frontiers in Late Antiquity conference, held in Ottawa, Canada, in March 2013. An Esperanto version subsequently was published in the journal *Beletra Almanako*.¹ Two papers given by the present author at the *Internacia Kongresa Universitato*, one in Rotterdam in 2008, the other in Reykjavik in 2013, concern Procopius, the former—a survey of Justinian’s reign through the lens of Procopius—more than the latter.² While many of the points made in the earlier paper are discussed in other contributions, such as the analogy between Procopius and the Soviet general Volkogonov, it is perhaps worth signalling one aspect of the conclusion that has not been taken up elsewhere. The argument there is made, through a comparison with Napoleon’s conduct during his Italian campaign in the 1790s, that even what one might take to be the most romantic and implausible details furnished by Procopius in

¹ Greatrex (2013a), (2013b).

² Greatrex (2008), (2013c).

the *Anecdota* concerning Belisarius' precipitate retreat from Persian territory in 541 need not be false. Relying on Napoleon's correspondence, the author demonstrates that Belisarius would hardly be the only commander in history to have allowed military decisions to be subordinated to personal considerations: the young French general likewise interrupted his operations against the Austrians in order to rush into the arms of his beloved Josephine.³ There are also general points relevant to Procopius made in the author's article of 1998 that considers *assessores* and historians in late antiquity that complement the English-language article on lawyers and historians that appeared in English three years later; an English translation of the Esperanto article is available in this case.⁴

While engaged in preparing commentaries on the *Persian Wars* in English and French, the same author is undertaking a translation of the work into Esperanto, which will include brief notes. Some extracts of the author are likely also to feature in a planned *Helena Antologio*, an anthology of ancient Greek prose.

University of Ottawa

greatrex@uottawa.ca

³ Greatrex (2008) 68–9.

⁴ See Greatrex (1998) and (2001).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Greatrex, G. (1998) ‘Assessores kaj historiistoj en la malfrua romia imperio’, *Jura Tribuno Internacia* 2: 33–48. Available with English translation at:
<https://www.ruor.uottawa.ca/handle/10393/19977>
- (2001) ‘Lawyers and Historians in Late Antiquity’, in R. Mathisen, ed., *Law, Society and Authority in Late Antiquity* (Oxford) 148–61.
- (2008) ‘Prokopio de Cezareo, enigma historiisto de la epoko de Justiniano’, in J. A. Vergara, ed., *Internacia Kongresa Universitato, 61a sessio* (Rotterdam) 56–72. Available at:
<https://www.ruor.uottawa.ca/handle/10393/12754>
- (2013a) ‘Esperanto and Late Antiquity’, in *Shifting Frontiers in Late Antiquity X: Shifting Genres in Late Antiquity*, conference programme, 100–1. Available at:
<https://www.ruor.uottawa.ca/handle/10393/23938>
- (2013b) ‘L’Espéranto et l’Antiquité tardive’, in *Frontières en fluctuation X: les genres en transition dans l’Antiquité tardive*, conference programme, 102–3. Available at:
<https://www.ruor.uottawa.ca/handle/10393/23938>
- (2013c) ‘La du sortoj de la romia imperio’, in A. Wandel and R. McCoy, edd., *Internacia Kongresa Universitato, 66a sessio* (Reykjavik) 67–96.
- (2014) ‘Esperanto kaj la Malfrua Antikvo’, *Beletra Almanako* 20: 94–6.