The Date of the 'Anastasian Long Wall' in Thrace

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THE PANEGYRIC of Procopius of Caesarea on the building activities of the emperor Justinian has had a powerful and lasting impact, doubtless far greater than its author ever anticipated. We are still blinded by the scale and extent of Justinian's program. More significant, however, is the uncomfortable fact that, although perfectly aware of the encomiastic nature of the work, we are in no position to measure properly the extent of the author's exaggeration and misrepresentation. While it is suspected that much of the building for which Justinian is given credit in the *Buildings* should more correctly be assigned to his immediate predecessors, this is nearly always impossible to prove since the *Buildings* itself remains the solitary source for most of the construction and reconstruction of the age.[1]

What is now emerging, however, is a fuller picture of the building activity of the emperor Anastasius, whose reign covered almost the entire three decades prior to the elevation of Justin I in 518, the year which Procopius marks as beginning the reign of Justinian.[2] For example, while many inscriptions from buildings along the lower Danube have been recovered bearing the date of Anastasius, those of Justinian are few and far between despite the comprehensive impression created by Procopius.[3] Generally speaking, not counting the statements of Procopius of Gaza (*Pan.* 15–20) and Priscian (*Pan.* 184–85) on Anastasius' constructions, this emperor's achievement suffers by comparison with Justinian precisely because he had no Procopius to report minutely on the full range of his buildings. Yet

[1] A detailed archaeological/historical commentary on the *Buildings* is a major desideratum. For its background: G. Downey, "The Composition of Procopius' *De Aedificiis*," *TAPA* 78 (1947) 171–83, and "Notes on Procopius *De Aedificiis* Book I," *Studies Presented to David M. Robinson* II (St Louis 1953) 719–25; J. Irmscher, "Justinian als Bauherr in der Sicht der Literatur seiner Epoche," *Klio* 59 (1977) 225–29.

[2] Proc. *Aed.* 1.3.3. For Anastasius' buildings: C. CAPIZZI, *L'imperatore Anastasio* (OrientChristAnal 184 [1969]) 188–232 [hereafter 'Capizzi'].

[3] As evident in work to date, *e.g.*, V. Velkov, "La construction en Thrace à l'époque du Bas-Empire," *Archeologia* 10 (1958) 124; I. Barnea, "Contributions to Dobrudja History under Anastasius I," *Dacia* N.S. 4 (1960) 363–74, and "Nouvelle contribution à l'histoire de la Dobrudja sous Anastase I," *Dacia* N.S. 11 (1967) 355–56.

the tradition of our sources, which is uniformly hostile to the monophysite Anastasius, is unanimous in singling out what must have been regarded as his two greatest building achievements: the city of Dara on the Persian frontier, and the so-called 'Long Wall' in Thrace (*e.g.*, Evagr. *HE* 3.37–38).

After the resolution of the war with Persia in 505 Anastasius turned the hamlet of Dara, on the eastern frontier, into a mighty fortress protecting new churches, cisterns, and granaries. In his *Buildings*, however, Procopius (2.1.4–10) plays down the rôle of Anastasius at Dara and attempts to deceive his audience by crediting Justinian with much of the work we know was actually accomplished by Anastasius. To increase the significance of Justinian's contribution to Dara, Procopius deliberately distorts and exaggerates, but we are in no doubt today that Anastasius was responsible for building Dara, nor do we question the collective opinion of our sources that it was completed in 507 and designed to provide a forward base against Persia (Capizzi 216–21).

Although Procopius could gain ground by minimising the rôle of Anastasius at Dara, when he came to describe the 'Long Wall' in Thrace (hereafter 'the Anastasian Long Wall') he took far fewer liberties. According to Procopius (*Aed.* 4.9.6) the wall was built by Anastasius, and there were perhaps some in his audience who could recall the original event and, even if only through occasional sightings, were aware of its size and condition.

The wall itself extended across the peninsula of Thrace from the Black Sea to the Sea of Marmara at a point slightly west of Selymbria about 65 km from Constantinople. It is said to have been about 77 km in length (Capizzi 202–03) and corresponded roughly to the 'Chatalja Line' held by the Turks against the Bulgarians in the Balkan War of 1912/3. Although there are apparently considerable remains of the wall, they still await thorough exploration and analysis.[4]

Despite the statement of Procopius of Caesarea reinforced by that of Anastasius' own panegyrist Procopius of Gaza (*Pan.* 21), we no longer believe that Anastasius actually built the Anastasian Long Wall. Instead, it is now supposed that Anastasius merely refurbished or reinforced an already existing wall which must have been itself

[4] For an early exploration of the wall: C. Schuchhardt, "Die Anastasius-Mauer bei Constantinopel und die Dobrudscha-Wälle," *JdI* 16 (1901) 107–15; and for a recent one: R. M. HARRISON, "The Long Wall in Thrace," *Archaeologia Aeliana* 47 (1969) 33–38 (with plates), and (also with plates) "*To Makron Teichos*, The Long Wall in Thrace," *Roman Frontier Studies 1969* (Cardiff 1974) 245–48 [hereafter 'Harrison'] and earlier works there cited.

constructed some time in the fifth century.[5] Admittedly it is odd that such a mighty and important edifice is nowhere accredited to an earlier emperor, if it was actually built in the fifth century; likewise, we might reasonably expect contemporaries to be more impressed by the wall's original conception and construction rather than its subsequent reinforcement. Yet there is no record of its original construction if all Anastasius did was repair it.

A fifth-century construction date is assumed because of two unequivocal references to a 'Long Wall' in Thrace prior to the time of Anastasius: (a) chapter 65 of the *Life of Daniel the Stylite*[6] describing the escape of Zeno from a plot against his life in 469, and (b) fr. 16 of the historian Malchus (*FHG* IV 124) describing a sortie by the bodyguard of the Ostrogothic king Theodoric in 478. It is taken for granted that the 'Long Wall' referred to in both these passages is the wall stretching from the Euxine to the Sea of Marmara, forty miles west of Constantinople—that is to say, the very wall attributed to Anastasius as an original construction. The purpose of this study is to examine more closely these two pieces of evidence for a fifth-century Long Wall and to explore their implications for evaluating the precise rôle of Anastasius in the building of the Thracian Long Wall; which inevitably raises questions about the subsequent guarding of it.

I. The Chersonese 'Long Wall'

In addition to the Anastasian Long Wall, there were many other similarly designated walls in antiquity. The most celebrated of course were the Long Walls (τὰ μακρὰ τείχη) of Piraeus constructed by Themistocles (Thuc. 2.13.7, 17.3). Of particular concern for our present purposes, however, is the construction and maintenance of a wall across the neck of the Chersonese. According to Herodotus (6.36) the Athenian Miltiades built a wall from Pactye to Cardia. This wall seems to have fallen into ineffectiveness by 447 B.C. when Pericles set about reinforcing it to provide protection for the cities of the Chersonese

[5] *E.g.*, E. STEIN, *Histoire du Bas-Empire* II (Paris 1949) 89 [hereafter 'Stein']; Capizzi 204 (hesitantly); ALAN CAMERON, "The Date of Priscian's *De laude Anastasii*," *GRBS* 15 (1974) [hereafter 'Cameron'] 314; Harrison 245; R. Browning, *Byzantium and Bulgaria* (London 1975) 29. Alternatively, the fifth-century references to a 'Long Wall' have been taken to indicate the Anastasian Long Wall but regarded simply as anachronisms of later writers: *e.g.*, N. Baynes, "The Vita S. Danielis Stylitae," *EHR* 40 (1925) 400; B. Baldwin, "Malchus of Philadelphia," *DOP* 31 (1977) 106.

[6] Ed. H. Delehaye, *AnalBoll* 32 (1913) 184 and *Les saints stylites* (Brussels 1923) 64.

against frequent Thracian invasions (Plut. *Per.* 19). Yet by 398 B.C. a new Chersonese wall was needed to halt these invasions. The construction of such a wall, under the impetus and supervision of the Spartan Dercylidas, was completed in four to five months (Xen. *Hell.* 3.2.8–10). There are indications of its existence in the age of Augustus (Strab. 7 fr. 56) and later (Plin. *HN* 4.11.48), but we are ignorant of the subsequent rôle and usefulness of the wall, at least until the turn of the fifth century A.D.[7]

In the course of narrating the rebellion of the Gothic general Gainas in A.D. 400, Zosimus (5.21.1), writing a century later in the time of Anastasius,[8] explains how Gainas penetrated the Long Wall into the Chersonese (διὰ τοῦ Μακροῦ τείχους ἐπὶ τὴν Χερρόνησον εἴσοδον) and arranged his troops opposite the forces of the enemy stationed along the Asia Minor coast. This makes plain that by the fifth century the 'Long Wall' across the Chersonese still stood and functioned as a protective barrier so that getting past it and into the Chersonese was a noteworthy feat. Indeed, it was precisely because this wall was damaged in the earthquake of 26 January 447 that the Huns were able to penetrate the Chersonese.[9]

Although the wall presumably was rebuilt after 447, it suffered from another seismic disturbance in the reign of Zeno, most probably in 478 (see Stein 787). An anonymous extract from an early Byzantine chronicle, perhaps from the original Malalas, recounts the damage caused by the earthquake in the Dardanelles—at Abydos, Lampsacus, Callipolis, Sestos, and Tenedos, while fifty towers of the 'Long Walls', to where people had fled, were knocked down (κατηνέχθη δὲ καὶ τῶν μακρῶν τειχῶν πύργοι ν' εἰς οὓς συνεχώσθησαν πάντες οἱ ἐκεῖσε φυγόντες).[10] The wall was presumably rebuilt soon after.

Zosimus' reference to the wall therefore presupposes that in Constantinople at the turn of the sixth century an historian's audience would not be confused by the Chersonese wall being referred to simply as τὸ μακρὸν τεῖχος.

[7] On the ancient and modern references to the Chersonese wall: Brandis, *RE* 3 (1889) 2242–51 *s.v.* "Chersonesus 1," esp. 2245, and L. Casson, *Macedonia, Thrace and Illyria* (Oxford 1926) 210–28, esp. 215–16.

[8] For the date: Alan Cameron, "The Date of Zosimus' *New History*," *Philologus* 113 (1969) 106–10, and F. Paschoud, *Zosime, Histoire nouvelle* I (Paris 1971) xvii–xx.

[9] Evagr. *HE* 1.17. For the earthquake, its date, and impact on the Huns' invasion: B. Croke, "Two Early Byzantine Earthquakes and their Liturgical Commemoration," *Byzantion* 51 (1981) 131–44.

[10] Printed first in A. Freund, *Beiträge zur antiochenischen und zur konstantinopolitanischen Stadtchronik* (Diss. Jena 1882) 39, reprinted by S. Lampros, Νέος Ἑλληνομνήμων 14 (1917–20) 307–08. I am indebted to Cyril Mango for reminding me of this extract.

A half-century after Zosimus the wall was again in need of repair. Procopius (*Aed.* 4.10.5–6) claimed it could now easily be scaled with an ordinary ladder and that its ramparts extending into the sea on each side were in a sorry state. Naturally Procopius' propensity to exaggerate in the *Buildings* must be borne in mind, particularly when one considers his representation of the wall across the Corinthian isthmus at precisely this time.[11] Justinian demolished the old Chersonese wall, so Procopius says (4.10.11), and proceeded to erect another with substantial *proboloi* jutting into the sea, and he furnished it with both a moat and a garrison (4.10.16–17). Procopius describes the wall interchangeably as singular (τὸ μακρὸν τεῖχος) and plural (τὰ μακρὰ τείχη). Despite the emperor's diligence, however, the wall failed its first test when in 541 the Cotrigur Huns crossed the Danube, bypassed the wall (ἐντὸς τῶν μακρῶν τειχῶν), and advanced into the Chersonese (Procop. *Wars* 2.4.8). So much for the garrison. We know too that in 559 a contingent of Zabergan's forces was sent to attack this very wall (Agath. *Hist.* 5.12.2–5).

It is clear that in the time of Anastasius and throughout the sixth century the people of Constantinople, the readers of Zosimus, Procopius, and Agathias, did not take the description 'Long Wall' as an unequivocal reference to the Anastasian Long Wall in Thrace. In fact, they also knew the wall across the Chersonese as τὸ μακρὸν τεῖχος/ τὰ μακρὰ τείχη. Consequently, it cannot be assumed that a reference to a 'Long Wall' in the fifth century can mean only the wall of Anastasius. Indeed, given our sources' unanimous ascription of the Thracian Long Wall to Anastasius' original construction, we must analyse closely the pre-Anastasian references in Malchus and the *Life of Daniel the Stylite*.

II. Fifth-Century References

To counteract the influence and pressure of Aspar and his Gothic coterie, the emperor Leo I appointed the Isaurian Zeno as *comes domesticorum* and gave the barbarian the hand of his daughter Ariadne. They married *ca* 466. Leo's confidence in relegating Aspar was evident by 468 when the general was bypassed for the massive ex-

[11] As discussed by R. Hohlfelder, "Trans-Isthmian Walls in the Age of Justinian," *GRBS* 18 (1977) 173–79. For the material evidence see Paul A. Clement in *Ancient Macedonia* II (Thessaloniki 1977) 135–37, *Hesperia* 45 (1976) 267–79; T. E. Gregory, *Hesperia* 48 (1979) 264–80.

pedition against the Vandals.[12] In the following year the Huns, under the leadership of Attila's son Dengizich, invaded Thrace.[13] Meanwhile, Zeno was appointed *magister militum per Thracias* and sent against the Huns. While on campaign he heard of a plot to murder him and he soon managed to escape to Serdica.[14]

It is in this context that chapter 65 of the *Life of Daniel the Stylite* fits. It describes an incident in the consulship of Zeno (469) and is worth quoting in full:

> About that time the pious Emperor Leo married his daughter Ariadne to Zeno (of whom we have spoken before) and also created him consul. And shortly afterwards when the barbarians created a disturbance in Thrace, he further appointed him commander-in-chief in Thrace. And in solemn procession he went up to Anaplus to the holy man and besought him as follows: "I am sending Zeno as general to Thrace because of the war which threatens; and now I beg you to pray on his behalf that he may be kept safe." The holy man said to the Emperor, "As he has the holy Trinity and the invincible weapon of the Holy Cross on his side he will return unharmed. However, a plot will be formed against him and he will be sorely troubled for a short time, but he shall come back without injury." The Emperor said, "Is it possible, I beg you, for anyone to survive a war without some labour and trouble?" When they had received a blessing and taken their leave they returned to the city. Then the aforesaid Zeno set out for the war and soon afterwards a plot was formed against him as the holy man had foretold, but by God's assistance he escaped and reached the Long Wall (καταλαμβάνει τὸ μακρὸν τεῖχος) and crossed from there and came to Pylae (κἀκεῖθεν διαπεράσας ἔρχεται ἐν Πύλαις) and later still he reached the city of the Chalcedonians.[15]

The geography explicit and implicit in the final section of this chapter is our prime concern here. Since this passage describes events associated with Zeno's flight on learning of the plot against him, it appears that he proceeded from Serdica to the 'Long Wall' and thence to Chalcedon *via* Pylai. Quite obviously the key postion in this route is Pylai.

The early Byzantine town of Pylai was located in the province of Bithynia in the southwestern sector of the Gulf of Nicomedia.[16] Honigmann located it near the Pythian hot springs (*Pythiae Thermae*)

[12] A. Lippold, *RE* 10A (1972) 156 *s.v.* "Zenon 17"; *PLRE* II 1201 *s.v.* "Zenon 7"; and W. Ensslin, *RE* 12 (1925) 1948–54 *s.v.* "Leo 3."

[13] For sources: *PLRE* II 354–55 *s.v.* "Dengizich."

[14] *Vita Dan. Styl.* ch. 65; Thphn. A.M. 5962 (116.30–31 de Boor) for Serdica.

[15] Transl. E. Dawes and N. Baynes, *Three Byzantine Saints* (London 1948) 46–47.

[16] W. Ramsay, *The Historical Geography of Asia Minor* (London 1890) 187, 201.

about ten km southwest of Yalova.[17] However, the recent discovery of the first epigraphical attestation of Pylai makes it more likely that the site is indicated by the remains of Karakilise, five km east of Yalova. It was perhaps the ancient Greek town of Strobilos.[18]

Pylai was certainly in existence by the fourth century since it is mentioned in the Peutinger Table. It was an important town, for it marked the beginning of the highway across Anatolia into Isauria and Cilicia, and seems to have been mainly used by emperors and high officials.[19] Hence it was a natural port of call for anyone fleeing to Isauria as Manuel I did in 830.[20] Nor was this event described in Daniel's *Vita* the only occasion when Zeno's presence at Pylai is recorded. It was from there that he sailed to Constantinople when returning from Isauria to claim his throne in 476.[21] Perhaps its most renowned appearance in Byzantine history, however, was when the vast expedition of Heraclius, bound for war against Persia, limped into Pylai in 622 after experiencing a severe storm during the crossing from Constantinople,[22] although it was also the site for one of Theodore of Sykeon's miracles (*v. Theod.Syk.* 131).

To reach Constantinople from Serdica by way of Pylai and Chalcedon, as outline in the *Vita* of Daniel, is a very roundabout route to say the least. Moreover, it implies that Zeno did not feel safe travelling back to the capital through Thrace, the quickest and most direct route. We cannot be absolutely certain what dictated his exact itinerary; we can nonetheless be fairly confident that Aspar was behind the plot, and it would scarcely have been wise for Zeno to return to Constantinople and the presence of Aspar.

The period of Zeno's flight and immediately afterwards—that is, 469–471—saw the ascendancy of Aspar and his family. It was during this time that Aspar had his son Patricius made *Caesar*,[23] and that Ardaburius incited the *magister militum* Anagast to revolt against Leo.[24] In 471, however, Leo seized the opportunity and treacherously

[17] E. Honigmann, "Bithyniaca," *Byzantion* 14 (1939) 625–27.

[18] S. Sahin, *Bithynische Studien* (Inschr.gr.Städte Kleinas. 7 [1978]) 30–39, with the refinements of L. Robert, "Un voyage d'Antiphilos de Byzance," *Journal des Savants* 1979, 257–94, esp. 269–75.

[19] See K. Miller, *Die Peutingersche Tafel* (Stuttgart 1962) 11 with Map ix. For the imperial court at Pylai: Const.Porph. *De caer.* 474, 493 (Bonn).

[20] J. B. Bury, *A History of the Eastern Roman Empire* (London 1912) 257.

[21] *Chron.Pasch.* 601.13; Jo.Mal. 379.16.

[22] Geo.Pis. *Pers.* 2.8–11, Thphn. A.M. 6113 (303.9 de Boor), with the useful notes of A. Stratos, *Byzantium in the Seventh Century* I (Amsterdam 1968) 359–60, and A. Pertusi, *Giorgio di Pisidia* (Ettal 1959) 148–50.

[23] *PLRE* II 842 *s.v.* "Iulius Patricius 15."

[24] *PLRE* II 75 *s.v.* "Anagastes."

arranged the murder of Aspar and his family.[25] It was only at this point that it could be considered safe for Zeno to re-emerge in public life in the imperial capital. It is scarcely surprising, therefore, to find that both Daniel's *Vita* (ch. 66) and Theophanes (A.M. 5964, 117.30 de Boor) state plainly that it was only after the murder of Aspar that Zeno returned to Constantinople from Chalcedon. In other words, Zeno had been in a sort of self-imposed exile, but holding the office of *magister militum per Orientem*, from the time of his evasion of the plot in 469 until his return from Chalcedon in 471.[26]

Consequently, it seems unlikely that Zeno, in fear of his life, should have travelled back from Serdica along the main highway to within forty miles of Constantinople—the site of the Anastasian Long Wall—then taken ship to Pylai to avoid the dangers of the capital until he could return to the city in safety. It would be more explicable and consistent to suppose that in 469 Zeno travelled south to Serdica (so Theophanes), joined the Egnatian Way, and came *via* Philippi to the edge of the Chersonese where the 'Long Wall' stood.[27] From there he could cross fairly directly, skirting the islands, to Pylai and on to his native Isauria and Antioch, where he is found not long after. This is a perfectly acceptable, or even preferable, route. It means, however, that the 'Long Wall' from which Zeno crossed to Pylai must have been that across the Chersonese, and that Zeno fled there by a roundabout route in order to bypass the designs of his enemies. There is therefore no good reason why ch. 65 of Daniel's *Vita* can refer *only* to the Anastasian Long Wall and thereby be held to imply the existence of that wall in 469.

We now turn to the other alleged reference to the Anastasian Long Wall before Anastasius. Malchus describes events in 478 after the promised Roman reinforcements had failed to rendezvous with the Ostrogothic king Theodoric Valamer.[28] Angered by this slight, Theodoric Valamer allied himself with another barbarian king, the *magister militum* Theodoric Strabo, and together they sought land from the Romans. The emperor Zeno was prepared to give Theodoric Valamer another chance by offering him gold, silver, and the supremely eligible Anicia Juliana as a wife. Since Theodoric was not tempted by this

[25] For the sources: *PLRE* II 168 *s.v.* "Fl. Ardabur Aspar."

[26] *PLRE* II 1201–02 *s.v.* "Zenon 7"; *cf.* Baynes (*supra* n.5) 401 and Ensslin (*supra* n.12) 1958.

[27] For the extension of the Egnatian Way into the Gallipoli peninsula: F. O'Sullivan, *The Egnatian Way* (London 1972) 127–28.

[28] Malchus fr. 16 (*FHG* IV 123). For detailed background: J. B. Bury, *History of the Later Roman Empire*[2] I (London 1923) 413–16, and Stein 10–15.

proposal, the emperor decided on war and announced that he would be leading the army himself, an unusual step. This prospect inspired immense enthusiasm among the soldiers, so we are told. Malchus then describes the early Roman successes: they all participated keenly in the war, capturing the spies sent by Theodoric, and the section of Valamer's bodyguard which came to the Long Wall (*μοιρὰν ἐλθοῦσαν ἐπὶ τὸ μακρὸν τεῖχος*) was superbly repelled by those on the watch there (*οἱ ἐκεῖ φυλάττοντες*).

The geography of these events is not completely clear. Theodoric Strabo had been given the title *magister militum* by the emperor Leo and had settled his people in Thrace where he remained. With the accession of Zeno in January 474 he revolted and, as John of Antioch informs us, he "killed the *magister militum* of Thrace, Heraclius the son of Florus, near the wall of the Chersonese (*πρὸς τὸ Χερρονήσου τεῖχος*) and proceeded to open war."[29] It appears that Strabo and his people were located in southern Thrace, perhaps in the river valleys, and were kept out of the Chersonese by the Long Wall. It was perhaps to the protection of the Long Wall that Heraclius was fleeing (as people did after the earthquake in 478) when he was cut down in 474.

Strabo continued to increase his power and domain in Thrace and later tried to be reconciled with Zeno, but his overtures were rebuffed (Malchus fr. 11 [*FHG* IV 120]). Meanwhile, Theodoric Valamer was stationed with his Goths at Novae in Lower Moesia but had won the office of *magister militum* for his services to Zeno.[30] In 478 he was summoned by the emperor to deal with the growing threat posed by Strabo and marched from Marcianople (Malchus fr. 15 [*FHG* IV 122]). It was at Mount Sondis, in the vicinity of Adrianople, that the forces of Strabo and Theodoric Valamer came together. It was from there too that ambassadors were sent back and forth to Constantinople and from there that part of Theodoric Valamer's bodyguard set out for the Long Wall, as described by Malchus in fr. 16. Shortly after the repulsion of this section of Theodoric Valamer's bodyguard, when hostilities had ceased, Theodoric Strabo is found in the Rhodope region (Malchus fr. 17 [*FHG* IV 124]). It seems that the Ostrogoths had remained in or near the Hebrus valley throughout these machinations.

Again we have to ask whether the 'Long Wall' mentioned by Malchus can only be the Anastasian Long Wall. Once again the answer is

[29] Fr. 210 (*FHG* II 618). I therefore accept *διέποντα* for *διέπων* (see *PLRE* II 1074 *s.v.* "Theodericus 5" and 542 *s.v.* "Heracleius 4").

[30] *PLRE* II 1079 *s.v.* "Theodericus 7."

that it is equally likely, if not more so, to be the Chersonese Wall. What this implies is that the sortie of part of Theodoric Valamer's bodyguard was, like that of Zabergan's Huns in 559, a small-scale diversionary foray south to the Chersonese Long Wall. It was not a major thrust against the capital through a breach of the Anastasian Long Wall 65 kilometers west of the city. Indeed when Theodoric Strabo decided to march on Constantinople in 481 he is not said to have encountered any Long Wall or garrison to hinder his progress as he advanced straight to the city.[31] In short, it must be stressed that Malchus does not necessarily refer to the Anastasian Long Wall: he can even more readily mean the Long Wall across the neck of the Chersonese.

To review the argument thus far: since the wall across the Chersonese was known in the fifth and sixth centuries as the 'Long Wall' and since the references to a 'Long Wall' in Malchus and the *Life* of Daniel cannot be shown to exclude this wall on grounds of topography or context, there is the strong likelihood that the wall referred to in both is actually that across the Chersonese. So the case for insisting that Anastasius built the Anastasian Long Wall *de novo*, as all the sources say, becomes very persuasive if not completely assured.

III. The Absence of the Wall

In the late fourth century the Goths confronted the Romans repeatedly in the Balkans. In 376, after they had been permitted across the Danube, the Goths set out and easily penetrated to Constantinople (Eun. fr. 42 [*FHG* IV 33]), and after their crushing victory at Adrianople in August 378 they quickly advanced on Constantinople once again.[32] From the 420's to the 450's it was the turn of the Huns. They invaded Thrace in 422 and threatened to besiege the capital.[33] In 442 they broke into Thrace once again[34] and in the 'Great Invasion' of 447 inflicted considerable destruction on the provinces of Thrace, advancing into the Chersonese, after the Long Wall had recently been damaged in an earthquake, and to the hastily reconstructed walls of Constantinople.[35] In the latter part of the fifth cen-

[31] For sources: *PLRE* II 1076 *s.v.* "Theodericus 5."

[32] Amm.Marc. 31.16.4–7; Socr. *HE* 4.38; Soz. *HE* 7.1.

[33] Theod. *HE* 5.37 with B. Croke, "Evidence for the Hun Invasion of Thrace in A.D. 422," *GRBS* 18 (1977) 349–50.

[34] O. J. Maenchen-Helfen, *The World of the Huns* (Berkeley 1973) 111.

[35] Maenchen-Helfen (*supra* n.34) 112–25 discusses the sources and chronology fully.

tury it was the turn of the Ostrogoths and then the Bulgars to wreak havoc in the hinterland of the imperial capital. Theodoric Strabo laid siege to Constantinople, as we have noted, in 481. Theodoric Valamer too was able to ravage freely throughout Thrace at about the same time and advanced unhindered to the walls of the city in 486.[36] The Bulgars defeated the Romans in 493 and 499 and penetrated Thrace in 502 without opposition.[37] Throughout these successive invasions from the late fourth to the beginning of the sixth century, there is not a single mention of any Long Wall in Thrace from the Black Sea to the Propontis designed to prevent the barbarians from reaching the walls of Constantinople—that is, excluding (as it is here proposed we must) the references in Malchus and the *Vita* of Daniel the Stylite.

This situation is a striking contrast to extant accounts of invasions in the reigns of Justinian and his successors. Here the Anastasian Long Wall appears as a sort of barrier whose breaching marked a turning point in a particular invasion. For example, in 559 Zabergan and his Huns who had been blocked by the Chersonese Long Wall[38] turned towards Constantinople and were able to penetrate the Anastasian Long Wall because it was apparently unmanned and had not been repaired since an earthquake (probably that of 551) damaged it (Agath. 2.15–17). Consternation followed in Constantinople. The aged general Belisarius was recalled from retirement. He gathered together a motley crew of peasants and makeshift soldiers and in the end succeeded in outwitting the barbarians. Soon after, extraordinary as it seems, Justinian and a host of citizens spent the period from Easter until August actually rebuilding the Long Wall.[39]

By 577 the Long Wall remained in good repair so that the Avars reached only that far in aiming at Constantinople.[40] In 581 the wall marked the furthest point of Slavic invasion in that year (Jo.Eph. *HE* 2.6.25). When the new emperor Maurice refused a demand for increased tribute in 583 the Chagan of the Avars began his destructive raids in Illyricum and Thrace. The Avars captured Singidunum, Anchialus, and many other cities, but were blocked by the Anastasian

[36] *PLRE* II 1080–81 *s.v.* "Theodericus 5."

[37] For a detailed analysis of these invasions: B. Croke, "Justinian's Bulgar Victory Celebration," *Byzantinoslavica* 41 (1980) 188–95.

[38] Agath. 5.12.1–4. Despite constant attack with siege engines and ladders the Huns were not able in the end to penetrate the walls (5.21.1–23.4).

[39] Agath. 5.13.1–20.5; Thphn. A.M. 6051 (233.4ff de Boor) with Alan Cameron, *Circus Factions* (Oxford 1977) 108, 120. For the rebuilding: Procop. *Aed.* 4.9.6–13.

[40] *Avares Thracias vastant et regiam urbem a muro longo obsident*, John of Biclar *Chron.* 577.1 (*MGH AA* XI 215).

Long Wall.[41] Once again the next year (584) the Avars propelled their Slavic allies on a wave of destruction towards Constantinople, but they reached only as far as the Long Wall. Comentiolus was sent against them and some faction partisans despatched to reinforce the contingents at the Long Wall.[42] Yet again in 585 the Slavs invaded, yet again we hear that the Long Wall marked the outermost limit of their foray (Thphyl. 1.7.1). In 587 the Avars swooped on Thrace once more, worked their way through the Haemus and reached as far as the Anastasian Long Wall where Ansimuth and his contingent had retreated to challenge them.[43]

With the conclusion of peace with Persia in 591 the Roman emperor was free to launch a serious counter-offensive in the Balkans which successfully diverted the Slavs and Avars for most of the ensuing decade. In 600, however, the barbarians once again were able to rampage in Thrace, and the incompetent Comentiolus fled to the safety of the Long Wall while Maurice took the *excubitors* and recruits from among the Blues and Greens and sent them to the wall.[44] During the reign of Phocas (602–610) and the early years of Heraclius (610–18) the Slavs and Avars consolidated their possession of the Balkan provinces while the imperial forces were too stretched and impotent to hinder them. This equilibrium was disrupted in 619 by the so-called 'Avar surprise'.[45] Heraclius agreed to make peace with the Chagan of the Avars and travelled beyond the Long Wall (ἔξω τοῦ Μακροῦ τείχους) to Selymbria for the occasion (Thphn. A.M. 6110 [301.28 de Boor]). Meanwhile, the treacherous Chagan had sent a contingent to hide in the bushes near the Long Wall and attack the emperor from the rear. Heraclius was apprised of this and retreated to the safety of the Long Wall.[46] The Avars were later able to advance beyond the wall to Constantinople itself but were warded off by the city's divine protectress.[47]

[41] Thphyl. 1.4.8; Thphn. A.M. 6075 (252.30–253.14 de Boor); Evagr. *HE* 6.10. For the chronology of this and subsequent invasions: J. B. Bury, *A History of the Later Roman Empire* II (London 1889) 119ff, and P. Lemerle, "Invasions et migrations dans les Balkans," *RHist* 211 (1954) 265–308.

[42] Thphn. A.M. 6076 (254.3–12 de Boor) with Cameron (*supra* n.39) 108.

[43] Thphn. A.M. 6079 (258.7ff de Boor); Evagr. *HE* 6.10; Thphyl. 2.12.7.

[44] Thphyl. 7.14.11, 7.15.7; Thphn. A.M. 6092 (299.19–21 de Boor).

[45] The date of this episode is much disputed. N. H. Baynes, "The Date of the Avar Surprise," *BZ* 21 (1912) 110–28, argued for 617. Stratos (*supra* n.22) 147–48 and 361–62 opts for 623 (the date given in the *Chronicon Paschale*), but 619 (the date of Theophanes) seems preferable: see Bury (*supra* n.41) 222–23.

[46] Niceph.Patr. *Hist.* 13.16ff de Boor; *Chron.Pasch.* 712.21–713.5.

[47] On which: Averil Cameron, "The Virgin's Robe: An Episode in the History of Early Seventh-Century Constantinople," *Byzantion* 49 (1979) 42–56.

It was becoming increasingly difficult for the Romans to maintain effective defences on several fronts. The preoccupation with Persia led to the neglect of the Balkans, and so it appears that by 626 the Anastasian Long Wall was more or less abandoned and the Avars were able to bring their army and all their heavy machinery to the walls of Constantinople without any hindrance.[48]

Although not absolutely decisive by itself, the fact that the Anastasian Long Wall assumes a significant rôle against external enemies only in the sixth century (and is nowhere mentioned in accounts of invasions in the period before Anastasius where its construction or existence would be relevant) suggests that the unanimous ascription of the wall to Anastasius is in fact correct.

Furthermore, if Anastasius was responsible for the original construction of the wall, it is understandable why it is referred to by the seventh-century Alexandrian author of the *Chronicon Paschale* as τὸ μακρὸν τὸ λεγόμενον Ἀναστασιακόν (610.7–8). Since it is clear that as late as the early sixth century (the date of Zosimus' history) the Chersonese Long Wall was known simply as τὸ μακρὸν τεῖχος, there was need to avoid confusion between the two different 'Long Walls' in Thrace so relatively close to Constantinople. Hence the walls are subsequently referred to as the 'Chersonese Long Wall' (τὸ Χερρονήσου καλούμενον μακρὸν τεῖχος)[49] and the 'Anastasian Long Wall' (*Chron.Pasch.*; Thphn. A.M. 6051 [de Boor 233.9]) where the distinction is not otherwise clear from the context. Such a distinction does not appear in any source prior to the sixth century. Until then there was only one 'Long Wall'.

All in all, the available evidence suggests that the Anastasian Long Wall did not exist in the fifth century but was built by the emperor Anastasius (491–518) who is credited with the achievement by *all* the extant sources. It remains to consider these sources and what they tell us about the background to the construction.

IV. Context of Construction

The source closest to the construction of the wall is Procopius of Gaza, who in his panegyric on Anastasius describes the magnificent feat of constructing a wall that surpasses that of Themistocles (*Anast.* 21); Procopius describes its purpose as deflecting the advance of bar-

[48] For details: Stratos (*supra* n.22) 173–96.
[49] Evagr. *HE* 1.17, *cf.* Jo.Ant. fr. 210 (*FHG* IV 618).

barians and repelling enemy attacks. Procopius of Caesarea, writing in the middle of the sixth century, recounts how those whose homes were built in the suburbs of Constantinople were outside the city walls and an easy prey for barbarians in search of loot; Anastasius decided to put an end to this by building the Long Wall (*Aed.* 4.9.4–6). Evagrius (*HE* 3.38), at the end of the sixth century, says the wall was designed to check the inroads of barbarians from the north; to which Zonaras (3.140.15–141.4 Bonn) adds specifically 'Mysians', Bulgarians, and Scythians. For determining a likely date for the wall's construction, it therefore becomes important to consider the context of the invasions which precipitated it.

The departure of Theodoric Valamer and his Ostrogoths for Italy in 489 opened the way for the Bulgars to invade and settle in Thrace. Their first attack was launched in 493, during which they killed the Roman general Julian.[50] In 499 a large Roman contingent–15,000 troops and 520 wagons–was sent from Constantinople to challenge the Bulgars, but the imperial forces were annihilated; for one contemporary, the Illyrian Marcellinus, this disaster signified the end of the *Illyriciana virtus* of the soldiery (Marcell.com. *s.a.* 499 [*MGH AA* XI 95]). In 502 the by now *consueta gens* of the Bulgars devastated Thrace without any Roman opposition.[51] Clearly the Roman army had become completely powerless to check barbarian raids in the Balkans and the disastrous defeat by Mundo and the Ostrogoths in 505 only sealed the Roman decline.[52] The next time we hear of barbarians in the Balkans is not until 517, and they are far from Constantinople (Marcell.com. *s.a.* 517 [*MGH AA* XI 99–100]). By 530 the Romans were regaining the initiative and securing the Thracian provinces once again.[53] The turning point in the safety of Constantinople seems to come in the period after 502–505. It is sensible to infer therefore that it was a renewed determination on the part of the Romans, represented among other things by the construction of the Anastasian Long Wall, which was prosecuted in the wake of events in 499 and 502.

This brings us finally to the only direct evidence we have for dating the wall, a statement in the *Chronicon Paschale* under the year 512 in

[50] *PLRE* II 639 *s.v.* "Julianus 15," perhaps identical with "Julianus 23" buried at Serdica.

[51] Marcell.com. *s.a.* 502.1 (*MGH AA* XI 96). It was perhaps in this invasion that Anastasius' nephew Pompeius was defeated at Adrianople (Jord. *Rom.* 356 with Cameron [*supra* n.39] 314 n.10). Others prefer, for no good reason, 517 (*e.g.*, *PLRE* II 898 *s.v.* "Pompeius 2").

[52] For sources: *PLRE* II 767–68 *s.v.* "Mundo."

[53] Thphn. A.M. 6032 (219.10–14 de Boor), Jo.Mal. 451.3–16, with Croke (*supra* n.37).

a fifth indiction: *τούτῳ τῷ ἔτει ἐκτίσθη τὸ μακρὸν τεῖχος τὸ λεγόμενον Ἀναστασιακόν* (610.7–8). The Paschal chronicler thereby affixes a date of 512 to the wall, placing it after the monophysite riots in that year.

Since the wall is already mentioned by Procopius of Gaza in his panegyric (21) written much earlier than 512,[54] the date given by the Easter Chronicle is almost certainly incorrect. Consequently Bury proposed that the source of the chronicle listed the wall's construction in the previous fifth indiction, *i.e.* 497, and this is the date now generally agreed on.[55] There are two difficulties with it, however. In the first place this date makes less sense in the light of the subsequent Roman defeats in 499, 502, and 505. Second, and more important, it would predate Priscian's *Panegyric* on Anastasius written about 503.[56] It is scarcely possible that Priscian would pass up such an opportunity to concentrate on this important achievement of Anastasius. Certainly Procopius of Gaza did not. The fact that Priscian fails to mention the wall suggests the simple reason that it was not yet built. On the other hand, the date 497 has been held plausible precisely because the wall is mentioned by Procopius of Gaza in his panegyric, thought to date in or soon after 501. The date of this panegyric rests ultimately on the assumption that it must have been composed soon after the last datable event described, *viz.* the abolition of pantomime dancing in 502.[57] Yet it must be admitted that we have no way of dating certain Anastasian constructions mentioned by Procopius of Gaza. Hence, such an assumption provides only a *terminus post quem*, not an exact date. It is quite possible that the panegyric was delivered three or four years later without diminishing the significance of the achievements described. If anything, the failure to mention the important construction of Dara to an audience in Gaza suggests that Procopius was writing before 507.

The *Chronicon Paschale*'s date of 512 for the Anastasian Wall is a mistake, but there is no reason for arguing that it is in the correct indiction but the wrong cycle and should be 497. On balance, the wall

[54] As established by C. Kempen, *Procopii Gazaei in imperatorem Anastasium panegyricus* (Diss. Bonn 1918) xxii–xxv. Kempen's final verdict is "haud ita multo post a. 501." He should have said 502, the year in which pantomimes were abolished, much to Procopius' delight (*Pan.* 16).

[55] Bury (*supra* n.28) 435, followed by Capizzi 203 and Cameron 314. However, A. H. M. Jones, *The Later Roman Empire* (Oxford 1964) 231, prefers the date proposed here, 503/4.

[56] For this date: Cameron 313–16. The discussion of A. Chauvot, "Observations sur la date de l'*Éloge d' Anastase* de Priscien de Césarée," *Latomus* 36 (1977) 539–50, suggesting 513 is no advance; he sees no significance in Priscian's omission of the wall.

[57] No importance can be attached to the fact that the Long Wall is the last construction listed by Procopius, as Kempen suggests (*supra* n.54) xxii n.3.

fits best between the date of Priscian's panegyric (502/3) and that of Procopius of Gaza (503–506). If the wall was built in 503/4 it was doubtless precipitated by the sight of the *consueta gens* of the Bulgars beginning to plunder at will in the previous year.

Thus the Long Wall was built by Anastasius after all. It is to be hoped that one day systematic exploration and study of the remains will cast further light on the fate of the wall.

APPENDIX: THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE WALL

The construction of the Anastasian Long Wall in the early sixth century was not an isolated or hasty reflex response to barbarian pressure. Rather it appears to have been part of a wider administrative reorganization; it will be convenient here to collect the testimonies.

The area known as the 'Long Wall', presumably that between the wall and the city walls of Constantinople, was placed under the jurisdiction of two *vicarii*, a civil one responsible to the Praetorian Prefect of the East and a military one responsible to one of the *magistri militum praesentales*.[58] It was probably at this time too that Anastasius abolished the vicariate of Thrace.[59] In other words, *Longus Murus*/Μακρὸν Τεῖχος became more or less a separate province.

The civil and military vicars of the Long Wall could never agree, a common problem in late Roman administration, so Justinian decided to combine them into a single 'Justinianic Praetor for Thrace' (*Nov.* 26). Despite the title, the praetor's jurisdiction did not extend beyond the province of the 'Long Wall', for Justinian also restored the vicariate of Thrace itself. It is unclear how long this separate province existed, but it certainly had a useful function as long as barbarian pressure on Constantinople continued. We find clear reference in the *Miracula* of Saint Demetrius to its survival in the seventh century and an apparent indication from the eighth too.[60] Throughout most of the seventh and the early part of the eighth centuries, however, the former Thracian and Illyrian provinces were settled by invading tribes, particularly the Slavs. Yet we hear of no major attacks on Constantinople emanating from Thrace. It is not unlikely that during this period the wall fell into disuse and neglect. There is no mention of the wall itself between 619 and 755.

The emperor Constantine V (741–775) pursued a vigorous policy of re-establishing Byzantine power in the Balkans. Bolstering and reorganizing defences was a necessary part of such a plan. Nicephorus informs us how in

[58] Justinian *Nov.* 26 *praef.* with Jones (*supra* n.55) 656.

[59] Jones (*supra* n.55) 263 and 1126 n.60.

[60] *Mirac.sanct.Dem.* II (Migne, *PG* 116.1361). In 780 in the reign of Constantine VI and Irene a man's tomb was unearthed ἐν τοῖς Μακροῖς τείχεσι τῆς Θράκης (Thphn. A.M. 6273 [455.12–17 de Boor])—perhaps the district rather than the wall itself.

756 Constantine began to rebuild the cities of Thrace where the Syrians and Armenians transported from the newly pacified East had been settled. Consequently the Bulgars demanded a subsidy, but Constantine refused. Thereupon they set about destroying the villages of Thrace near their border and proceeded to the Long Wall. It is not unreasonable to believe that a refurbishment of the Anastasian Long Wall formed part of Constantine's activities of reconquest and rehellenisation in the Balkans.[61]

In Byzantine sources there is no mention of the wall or its region in the period after 800. There is, by contrast, frequent but puzzling recording of it in Arab sources. There are four different Arab lists of Roman themes/provinces which include as a separate province the area between the Long Wall and Constantinople. They call it by the name of 'Tafla' and similar variants. This is how, for example, Ibn al Fakir describes it in about 902:[62]

> And the first of the three [provinces] beyond the Khalig [Bosporus–Golden Horn–Sea of Marmara] is called Talaya (?) which is the district of al Kustantiniya [Constantinople]; and its boundary on the eastern side is the Khalig, which starts from the sea of the Chazars and extends to the sea of Al Sham [Syria], and on the south the sea of Al Sham, and on the west a wall which reaches from the sea of Al Sham to the sea of the Chazars and is called Makron Teichos, the meaning of which is 'the long wall'; and the length of it is four days' journey, and it is about two days' journey from Al Kustantiniya. And most of this district consists of the estates of the king and the patricians and meadows for their cattle and draught animals.

Although this designation of a separate province is usually doubted,[63] there is no need for skepticism. The Arab writers are describing what was the actual situation in the mid-eighth century, as it had been since the reform of Anastasius at the time of the Long Wall's construction.[64] That no such separate province appears in later Byzantine documents, like the *Kletorologion* of Philotheus, is merely the reflection of the changed situation. By the time of Philotheus and, later still, of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, the former region of 'Tafala' had become incorporated into the Thracian theme, created by Constantine IV *ca* 681 as a response to the upsurge of Bulgarian power and destructiveness.[65]

One further point is worth remarking on here. The name 'Tafala' has been thought close enough to derive from τάφρος but the possibility dismissed because the Long Wall had no ditch.[66] This is not entirely true. Evagrius (*HE*

[61] Niceph.patr. 66.15–19; Thphn. A.M. 6247 (429.18–30 de Boor) with V. Vesevliev, "Die Feldzüge des Kaisers Konstantin V gegen die Bulgaren," *Études balkaniques* 7 (1971) 5–17 (reprinted in *Bulgarisch-Byzantinische Aufsätze* [London 1978]).

[62] Trans. E. Brooks, "Arab Lists of the Byzantine Themes," *JHS* 21 (1901) 72–73.

[63] *E.g.*, A. Pertusi, "Il preteso thema bizantino di 'Talaja' (o Tajala o Tafala) e la regione suburbana di Constantinopoli," *BZ* 49 (1956) 85–95.

[64] For sensible comment on this matter: A. Toynbee, *Constantine Porphyrogenitus and His World* (London 1973) 273–74; also J. B. Bury, *The Imperial Administrative System in the Ninth Century* (London 1911) 67–68.

[65] The theme of Thrace was created some time between 680 and 687: D. Obolensky, "Byzantium and Its Northern Neighbours," *CMH* IV.1 (1966) 489; Browning (*supra* n.5) 47.

[66] By Bury (*supra* n.64) 68 and R. Janin, *Constantinople byzantine*[2] (Paris 1964) 261–62.

3.38) describes the wall as having a deep ditch filled with water so that the region of 'Long Wall' (including Constantinople) became more or less an island completely surrounded by water (*τήν τε πόλιν μικροῦ νῆσον ἀντὶ χερρονήσου ποιῆσαν, τούς τε βουλομένους διαπορθμεῦον ἀσφαλέστατα ἀπὸ τοῦ καλουμένου Πόντου ἐς τὴν Προποντίδα καὶ τὴν Θρᾴκιον θάλατταν*). Although this information has generally gone unnoticed there is no good reason to doubt its authenticity.[67] There is no record of a water defence as part of the Long Wall in other extant sources. This may mean it was impractical (and wasteful) to keep full, so that it dried up leaving a deep ditch. Briefly, it may be that the Arabic name 'Tafala' derives from *τάφρος* after all.

If in fact the Anastasian Long Wall was repaired by Constantine V, it soon became ineffective once again, as it proved no obstacle to the Bulgars. Krum easily approached the walls of Constantinople in 813, and Symeon made several similar assaults in the early tenth century.[68] Meanwhile Russian attacks on Constantinople in 860 and 911 had demonstrated the uselessness of such a wall against a sea-going enemy. It was not until the later tenth century that the Byzantines gained the upper hand in their continuing struggle with the Bulgars. The Anastasian Long Wall may have been rebuilt in the reigns of Basil II the 'Bulgar-slayer' (976–1025) and his innocuous brother Constantine VIII. At least some towers were rebuilt, as a surviving inscription makes clear. Time and the ravages of barbarians had necessitated this rebuilding:

> *θαυμαστ[ὸν] ἔργ[ο]ν ἠπήλισεν [ὁ] χρ[ό]νος,*
> *οὐ χρ[ό]ν[ο]ς μ[ό]ν[ο]ν πλῆθος δὲ τῶν βαρβάρων . . .*[69]

Yet throughout the period of its effective existence we know little of how the wall was manned. The original military vicar, in the time of Anastasius, doubtless had a regular force under his command stationed at the wall. By the time of Justinian in 559 and later in 583 and 601—that is, whenever the wall was needed to serve its purpose—recruits had to be hastily gathered and despatched to the wall, as we have seen.[70] In the tenth century, so it is argued, there was a permanent Long Wall garrison under the control of the 'count' or 'domestic' of the walls.

Bury regards the *κόμης τῶν τειχέων* as the direct descendent of the Justinianic 'praetor', and in this he is followed by Guilland.[71] On close inspection, however, the evidence suggests the contrary. In the *Kletorologion* of Philotheos (late ninth century) and in the *Book of Ceremonies* (mid tenth) there occurs an official who is variously entitled *ὁ δομέστικος τῶν τειχέων* (*Caer.* 2.52 [715, 719, 772]; *Klet.* 715.22, 772.12), *ὁ δομέστικος τοῦ τείχους* (*Caer.*

[67] Capizzi 203. Furthermore, even the most preliminary exploration has exposed a ditch—ten feet wide and up to three feet deep (Harrison 246).

[68] G. Ostrogorsky, *History of the Byzantine State* (New Brunswick 1969) 199–201, 262–67.

[69] Schuchhardt (*supra* n.4) 114 (also recording other inscriptions, on towers of the wall, from the same period).

[70] In general see Cameron (*supra* n.39) ch. 6.

[71] Bury (*supra* n.64) 68; R. Guilland, "Études sur l'histoire administrative de l'empire romain: le comte des murs," *Byzantion* 34 (1964) 17.

2.15 [589]), ὁ κόμης τῶν τειχέων (*Caer.* 1.1 [6]; 2.52 [714, 728, 731, 752]; *Klet.* 714.2, 728.4, 731.21, 752.20), or τεχεώτης (*Caer.* 1.65 [295]; 2.15 [589]). Further, it is apparent that this official and his office so closely parallel that of the 'domestic/count of the *noumera*' that both were probably created together in the eighth century (Bury 68, Guilland 20). In any event, to judge from the *Kletorologion* and the *Book of Ceremonies*, the rôle of the κόμης/δομέστικος of the walls plainly required his location in Constantinople (so Toynbee). Yet he is invariably associated with the Anastasian Long Wall.[72]

There is, let it be said, simply no evidence to support this, and it appears that Bury's ascription of the 'count of the walls' to the Long Wall has simply been taken for granted. Bury's only reason for so assigning him is that he is styled ἄρχων τοῦ τειχίου by Theophanes (A.M. 6211 [401.1 de Boor]), and since the Anastasian Long Wall is often singular (and the city walls only plural), then it can only refer to the Long Wall. This is an oversimplification. The Long Wall is as often plural as singular,[73] which is odd since it was certainly only a single wall. Likewise, the Chersonese Long Wall—again a single wall—is found in the plural as well as the singular.[74] On the other hand the land walls of Theodosius at Constantinople are sometimes designated simply as the 'city wall' or 'Theodosian wall'.[75] In other words, Byzantine writers did not aim for literal accuracy in this respect, and this may well reflect the unconscious influence of Thucydides' account of Themistocles' 'Long Walls'. Any argument built on a writer's differentiation between 'wall' and 'walls' is therefore not likely to carry much weight. Indeed the fragility of such a proposition is evidenced by the very example which Bury cites—Theophanes' description of Nicetas in 718 as ἄρχων τοῦ τειχίου: in describing the very same event Nicephorus calls him ἄρχων τῶν τειχέων (56.5). Both accounts were derived from a common source, but it is pure assumption to claim as Bury does (68) that the singular "comes no doubt from the common source."

There is, then, no hard evidence that the 'Count of the Walls' was ever associated with the Anastasian Long Wall, or that he was the descendent of the Justinianic praetor. Still, it is strange that the Justinianic praetor is not heard of after 536 soon after the office was established. In the Hun attack of 557 there is no sign of any permanent garrison at the wall, let alone the praetor. The reappearance of the 'Vicar of Thrace', abolished by Anastasius when setting up the 'Vicars of the Long Walls' (Jones 1126 n.20, Stein 466), may well suggest that the position of praetor had proved impractical and ineffectual. In the accounts of the later assaults on the Long Wall in 583 and 600, there is again no sign of the praetor or any particular official entrusted with co-ordinating and supervising the defence of the wall. It is Justinian himself who takes charge of the rebuilding in 559. It has also been taken for granted

[72] Bury 67, Guilland 17, Toynbee (*supra* n.64) 274, Cameron (*supra* n.39) 114.

[73] *E.g.*, Proc. *Aed.* 4.9.6, *Wars* 4.10.22, 74.43, Agath. 5.13.5, 20.8, *vs* Proc. *Aed.* 4.9.10, *Chron. pasch.* 610.7.

[74] Proc. *Wars* 2.4.8 *vs* Zos. 5.21.1, Jo.Ant. fr.210 (*FHG* IV 618).

[75] *E.g.*, Theophl. 8.8.7, 9.4; 8.9.13; Jo.Mal. 490.10.

that the ἄρχων τῶν τειχέων was responsible, like the later-attested *comes/domesticus*, for the Long Wall (*supra* n.72). Again the evidence contradicts. Theophanes and Nicephorus describe an abortive conspiracy in 718 against the new emperor Leo III. Among the conspirators was a certain Nicetas Anthrax, ἄρχων τῶν τειχέων/τοῦ τειχίου. The significance of Nicetas' involvement is manifest in the statement that he was to be responsible for letting the plotters into the city (τὴν πόλιν ἀνοιγνύναι, Niceph.patr. 55.6). Obviously Nicetas' responsibility involved access to the city itself. Since the *officium* of the 'Count of the Walls' included the gate attendants (πορτάριοι),[76] it is only reasonable to think that Nicetas was in fact what is otherwise known as a κόμης τῶν τειχέων. There is no other record of a 'Count of the Walls' being described as ἄρχων. Perhaps in this instance Nicephorus and Theophanes (or their common source) simply preferred ἄρχων to the latinate κόμης or δομέστικος. Such preference is commonplace among Byzantine writers. If so, this would make Nicetas the first attested 'Count of the Walls', and only serves to reinforce the point that this official was responsible for the walls of Constantinople, not the Anastasian Long Wall.

Finally, we need to ask how long before Nicetas did the 'Count of the Walls' exist? Surely the context lies in a period when the walls of the city were gravely threatened and required a special official to undertake responsibility for their maintenance and defence. The years 619 and 626 would obviously provide such an occasion, but no evidence can be adduced. Also appropriate would be the great Arab sieges of 674–678 and 717–718 when the 'Greek fire' proved so effective. In view of the fact that the first 'Count of the Walls' (Nicetas) is attested just a few months after the second Arab siege, which ended in August 718, it was probably preparations for this particular siege that gave rise to the creation of the κόμης.[77] Moreover, it may be possible to be even more precise. Preparations for the Arab siege began when it became clear in 714 to the purposeful but hapless Anastasius II that the threat was serious. Both Nicephorus (49.25–50.13) and Theophanes (A.M. 6206 [383–84 de Boor]) record his insistence that anyone in Constantinople who could not stand up to a three-year siege should leave. In addition he began building ships, filling the granaries, providing weapons, and repairing the walls. On balance it is quite likely that this was the occasion for re-establishing the city's defences under an officer called the 'Count of the Walls'. It probably means too that Nicetas was in fact the very first κόμης τῶν τειχέων.[78]

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[76] *Caer.* 2.52 (719) with Guilland (*supra* n.71) 21. Not therefore "the officers in charge of the various gates along the Long Walls" (Cameron [*supra* n.39] 114, *cf.* Toynbee 274).

[77] For the siege: R. Guilland, "L'expédition de Maslama contre Constantinople (717–18)," *Études byzantines* (Paris 1959) 109ff.

[78] Stein 747 n.2 believes that the κόμης was instituted in the sixth century when the praetor was abolished and the vicariate of Thrace restored.