

Critical thinking on procopius on the buildings and the secret history

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



Justinian I was a Byzantine emperor between 527-565. He was focused on regaining the former Roman provinces that had been lost to the barbarian invaders. In 534, Justinian conquered the Vandals in Carthage Africa and enjoyed victory for some time over the Ostrogoths in Italy in 540. By 562, Justinian had garnered control over the entire Italy preventing the attempted invasion of Bulgars, Huns and Avars. Justinian is credited with reorganizing the imperial government and commissioning the reform and implementation of what was called the Code of Justinian. However, Justinian's attempts to root out corruption led to a revolt in Constantinople that almost toppled his government. His wife, Theodora played a significant role in helping him quell the dissent. Other achievements of Justinian include his rebuilding of cities and other public projects such as the church of Hagia Sophia. Hagia Sophia is one of the finest and most famous buildings in the world (Thayer, 2012).

In the book, *The Secrets of History*, numerous evils of Justinian as a leader of the Roman emperor are penned down. The evils that Justinian commits in this account are a result of his character. The evils documented include those committed by his wife Theodora. First, there is the accusation of Theodora plotting secretly to murder Amasontha whom she suspected of being a potential rival for the queenship. She secretly plotted for Amasontha to be dispatched as an ambassador only to be killed on the way. In the same way, Theodora, Justinian's wife is accused of treating servants in the palace without respect. She openly wheedle servants and killed people without following the channeled procedure. Justinian on his part is described as a " monstrous demon." The book says that he killed almost a trillion people

during his reign. For example, in Libya over million people were slain in his attempt to conquer the region. He also killed many people in Italy, Persia, and Egypt. According to this account, while Justianian was en emperor, the empire was awash with blood. Justinian is also accused of mismanagement the funds of the empire from wealth to destitution (Artwater, 2009).

Procopius is not a reliable source for history because it based on individual accounts or diary that cannot be substantiated. First, Procopius's first account of Justinian was favorable, and this beats logic why the second one is not favorable. In fact, there is nothing positive that comes out of the second anecdote. One can make the argument that Procopius's account is a primary source but cannot be passed without questioning as a gospel truth. Compared with *On the buildings*, *Secrets of History* of sounds more like a tabloid than a valid historical account. This is the reason *On the buildings* is more of a trust worthy source than the *Secrets of History*. Moreover, on the building garners its validity from the fact that a lot of the accounts can be proven by historical excavations made on the building sights. This is not possible with the *Secrets of history* since no one had access to the Justinian court.

In order to find validity amidst Procopius's inconsistent portrayal of Justinian rule, one would have compare Procopius's depiction with the work of other writers. It only through this that finding a common ground is possible.

Similarly, one could figure out the differences and reconcile them by pointing out reasons why there could have been a change in perception. Still, this will be only an attempt. In my view, the work of other historians would provide the perfect answer.

Works Cited

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