This book introduces the Age of Justinian, which was both the last Roman century and the first flowering of Byzantine culture. Dominated by the policies and personality of emperor Justinian I (r. 527–565), this period of grand achievements and far-reaching failures witnessed the transformation of the Mediterranean world. In this volume, twenty specialists explore the most important aspects of the age, including warfare, urbanism, economy and the mechanics and theory of empire. They also discuss the impact of the great plague, the codification of Roman law, and the religious controversies of the day. Consideration is given to imperial relations with the papacy, northern barbarians, the Persians, and other eastern peoples, shedding new light on a dramatic and highly significant historical period.

Michael Maas is Professor of History and Director of the Program in Ancient Mediterranean Civilizations at Rice University.
The Cambridge Companion to

The Age of Justinian

Edited by

Michael Maas

Rice University
This book is dedicated with great respect and affection

to Peter Brown

on the occasion of his seventieth birthday.
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Contributors

JOSEPH D. ALCHERMES is Associate Professor in the Department of Art History and Architectural Studies at Connecticut College.

LESLIE BRUBAKER is Reader in Byzantine Art History and Director of the Centre for Byzantine, Ottoman, and Modern Greek Studies at the University of Birmingham.

BRIAN CROKE is Executive Director of the Catholic Education Commission, Sydney.

FRED M. DONNER is Professor of Near Eastern History in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations and the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago.

PATRICK T. R. GRAY is Professor of Religious Studies in the School of Arts and Letters in the Atkinson Faculty of York University, Toronto.

GEOFFREY GREATREX is Associate Professor and Chair of the Department of Classics and Religious Studies at the University of Ottawa.

JOHN HALDON is Professor of Byzantine History in the Centre for Byzantine, Ottoman, and Modern Greek Studies and Head of the School of Historical Studies at the University of Birmingham.

KENNETH HOLUM is Professor of History at the University of Maryland.

PEREGRINE HORDEN is Reader in Medieval History, Royal Holloway, University of London.
Contributors

CAROLINE HUMFRESS is Lecturer in Late Antique and Early Medieval History at Birkbeck College, London.

DEREK KRUEGER is Professor and Head of the Department of Religious Studies at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

NICHOLAS DE LANGE is Professor of Hebrew and Jewish Studies at the University of Cambridge.

A. D. LEE is Senior Lecturer in Classical Studies at the University of Nottingham.

MICHAEL MAAS is Professor of History at Rice University.

CHARLES PAZDERNIK is Assistant Professor of Classics at Grand Valley State University in Allendale, Michigan.

WALTER POHL is Director of the Institute of Medieval Research at the Austrian Academy of Sciences and teaches medieval history at the University of Vienna.

LUCAS VAN ROMPAY is Professor of Eastern Christianity in the Department of Religion at Duke University.

CLAIRE SOTINEL is Maître de Conférences in Roman History at the University of Bordeaux.

CLAUDIA RAPP is Associate Professor in the History Department at the University of California at Los Angeles.

CHRISTIAN WILDBERG is Professor of Classics at Princeton University.
ABBREVIATIONS

ACO Acta conciliorum oecumenicorum
ANRW Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt
AnTard Antiquité Tardive
BMGS Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies
BSOAS Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies
BZ Byzantinische Zeitschrift
CCSG Corpus christianorum, series graeca
CCSL Corpus christianorum, series latina
CFHB Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae
ChHist Church History
CollAvell Collectio Avellana
CSCO Corpus scriptorum christianorum orientalium
CSCO/Copt Scriptores Coptici
CSCO/Syr Scriptores Syri
CSEL Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum
DOP Dumbarton Oaks Papers
EI Encyclopedia of Islam, new edition
Elr Encyclopedia of Iran
FHO Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum
GOTR Greek Orthodox Theological Review
IstMitt Istanbuler Mitteilungen
ABBREVIATIONS

JGR Jus Graeco-romanum
JÖB Jarhrbuch der Österreichischen Byzantinistik
JEChrSt Journal of Early Christian Studies
JHS Journal of Hellenic Studies
JRA Journal of Roman Archeology
JRS Journal of Roman Studies
MélRom Mélanges d’archéologie et d’histoire, Ecole française de Rome
MGH AA Monumenta Germaniae historica. Auctores antiquissimi
MittIÖG Mitteilungen des Instituts für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung
OCP Orientalia christiana periodica
ODB Oxford Dictionary of Byzantium
PG Patrologiae cursus completus, series graeca
PL Patrologiae cursus completus, series latina
PO Patrologia orientalis
PLRE Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire
RIDA Revue internationale des droits de l’antiquité
SC Sources Chrétiennes
TM Travaux et mémoires. Centre de recherche d’histoire et civilization de Byzance

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Anonymous of Piacenza (see Piacenza Pilgrim).


Cosmas Indicopleustes (first half of the sixth century). An Alexandrian merchant who traveled on the Red Sea and possibly went to India, Cosmas wrote the *Christian Topography*, which describes his voyages and attempts to refute Ptolemaic and Aristotelian astronomy, believing that the world’s shape imitates the tabernacle of Moses. *The Christian Topography of Cosmas*, trans. William McCrindle (London, 1897).


John the Lydian (John Lydus), 490–c. 565. A bureaucrat in the praetorian praefecture in Constantinople and an antiquarian scholar. He wrote three treatises that preserve much information from earlier sources while responding to contemporary controversies. *On Offices (De magistratibus)* is translated as *Ioannes Lydus On Powers or The Magistracies of the Roman State* by Anastasius C. Bandy (Philadelphia,
Select List of Ancient Sources

1983). *On Months* and *On Portents* have not yet been translated into English.


Marcellinus Comes (Count Marcellinus). Sixth-century functionary at Justinian’s court, he wrote a chronicle covering the eastern Mediterranean world during the years 379–534. As an eyewitness to events and a user of public documents, he is an important source for the reigns of Anastasius, Justin I, and Justinian. Brian Croke, *Chronicle of Marcellinus: Translation and Commentary* (Sydney, 1995).

Menander Protector. This late-sixth–century historian was a member of the palace guard under the emperor Maurice (r. 582–602). He composed a continuation of Agathias’s *History* covering the period from 558–582. His work survives only as excerpts for a tenth–century Byzantine encyclopedia. R. C. Blockley, *The History of Menander the Guardsman* (Liverpool, 1985).

*Paschal Chronicle (Easter Chronicle)*. The author of this early-seventh–century chronicle covering the Creation to 629 is unknown. It contains material on the Age of Justinian not found elsewhere. Michael Whitby and Mary Whitby, trans., *Chronicon Paschale 284–628 AD* (Liverpool, 1989).


Procopius of Caesarea. The most important historian of Justinian’s reign and an eyewitness to many events. His *Wars*, in eight books, deals with the Vandalic, Gothic, and Persian conflicts; *Buildings* celebrates Justinian’s public works; and the *Secret History* or *Anecdota* is a vicious attack on the emperor, his court, and his policies. All Procopius’s works are translated by H. B. Dewing and G. Downey (Cambridge, Mass., 1914–1940). *The Secret History*, trans., G. A. Williamson (London, 1966).


*Suda*. A lexicon written about 1000 that compiles much information about earlier historians and other writers. The *Suda* is now being translated online: www.stoa.org/sol.
Select List of Ancient Sources


CHRONOLOGY

C. 482 Birth of Justinian
C. 495 Justinian comes to Constantinople
518 Anastasius dies, Justin I becomes emperor
521 Consulship of Justinian
C. 525 Marriage of Justinian and Theodora
527 Justinian becomes emperor
528 Law codification begins
529 First version of Justinian’s Code appears; Academy in Athens closed; Samaritan revolt
531 Khusro I becomes Great King of Persia
532 Nika revolt; Eternal Peace with Persia signed
533 Digest published; Belisarius defeats Vandals
534 Belisarius celebrates triumph in Constantinople
535 Attack on Ostrogothic kingdom begins
537 Hagia Sophia dedicated in Constantinople
540 Khusro invades Syria and sacks Antioch
542 Plague epidemic begins; Jacob Baradaeus organizes anti-Chalcedonian church
545 Truce with Persia
546 Justinian issues edict condemning the Three Chapters
548 Death of Theodora
550 Attack on Visigothic Spain begins
551 Breach between Justinian and Pope Vigilius
552 Narses defeats Goths in Italy
553 Franks invade Italy; Fifth Ecumenical Council condemns Three Chapters
554 Italy pacified and reorganized through the “Pragmatic Sanction”; silkworm eggs smuggled into Roman empire
558 Dome of Hagia Sophia collapses; Avar envoys in Constantinople
Chronology

559  Slavs and Kotrigur Huns attack Constantinople and are stopped by Belisarius
562  Fifty Years Peace (Eternal Peace) with Persia
565  Justinian endorses apthartodocetism; Justinian dies, Nov. 14.; Justin II becomes emperor
568  Lombards invade Italy
c. 570  Birth of Muhammad
578  Tiberius Constantine becomes emperor
579  Khusro I dies
580  Slav invasion of Greece
582  Maurice becomes emperor
591  Maurice restores Khusro II to Persian throne
590  Gregory the Great becomes pope
602  Phocas overthrows Maurice and becomes emperor
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*© Professor J. F. Haldon 1999*
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