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ANCIENT GREEK VIEWS ON THE EXOTIC ANIMAL

LILIANE BODSON

1. Introduction

Stemming from the ancient Greek *exoticos* through Latin *exoticus*, the adjective 'exotic' had entered the English language by the end of the 16th century,¹ a few decades after the French equivalent 'exotique' was used by Rabelais (*Pantagruel*, 1552). Its meaning, although it evolved over time, can generally be defined as follows:

1. introduced from abroad, not indigenous.
2. of or pertaining to, or characteristic of a foreigner, or what is foreign.

'Exotic' applies to a wide range of beings or things originating in foreign countries and considered in relation to their new environment. They are then connoted as 'strange' or 'outlandish' in some cases, or 'having the attraction of the strange or foreign, glamorous' in others. While the term directs etymologically towards a geographical criterion ('outside, abroad'), it often includes a simultaneous reference to cultural standards and is therefore connected to the concept of 'otherness'. 'Exotic' and its derivatives 'exoticism' and 'exotism' (or their equivalents in other languages) are appropriate to express the viewpoints of native people in any part of the world about whatever or whoever comes from a distant land. Yet their modern definition has been largely shaped according to the European and Western vision of the non-Western, in particular tropical regions, peoples and cultures, since the late 15th and early 16th century, 'once the Age of

¹ Oxford English Dictionary (ed. 1989), 551–552.

exploration was under way, leading eventually to colonization and empire building',² with its far-reaching consequences.

Animals from distant lands (to say nothing of plants) played an important role in the process, as was shown by the enduring tradition of tributes and diplomatic gifts of exotic animals.³ Their ability to fascinate both the elite and the general public has proved to be a lasting and worldwide phenomenon. Although foreign animals were never as numerous in ancient Greece as they were later in Rome, the curiosity and interest they created there from the earliest period are evidenced in all three sources: archaeozoological findings, iconography, and written material. Ancient Greece was indeed the first European country known to have harboured African or Asian species such as monkey,⁴ cheetah (*Acinonyx jubatus*),⁵ domestic cat (*Felis silvestris* f. *catus*),⁶ camel (*Camelus ferus*),⁷ tiger (*Panthera tigris*),⁸ elephant (*Elephas maximus*),⁹ cock (*Gallus gallus*),¹⁰

² M. Robinson, Foreword, in R.J. Hoage and W.A. Deiss, ed., *New Worlds, New Animals. From Menagerie to Zoological Park...*, VIII.

³ L. Bodson, ed., *Les animaux exotiques dans les relations internationales: espèces, fonctions, significations*. Journée d'étude, Université de Liège, 22 mars 1997 (issued: 1998).

⁴ L. Morgan, *The Miniature Wall Painting of Thera*, 29, 39. Earliest literary Greek occurrence: Archilochus fr. 185,3. 187,2 West. Semonides fr. 7,71 West; etc. W.C. McDermott, *The Ape in Antiquity*, 23–28.

⁵ On vase paintings (ca. 550 and 470). References listed by A. Ashmead, *Expedition 20* (1978) 38–47 and G. Koch-Harnack, *Knabenliebe und Tiergeschenke*, 105–119.

⁶ Earliest Greek (archaeological) occurrence: relief of a cat facing a dog (ca. 510). Athens, National Museum of Archaeology, Inv. no. 3476. Compare with painted kylix, ca. 470 (Zurich, Private collection) in Koch-Harnack 114, fig. 49 (= Cat. no. 271). L. Bodson, *Ethnozootechnie* 40 (1987) 13–38.

⁷ Xen. Hell. 3,4,24.

⁸ See below, § 4 (n. 78); § 5 (n. 117–118).

⁹ Plut. Pyrrh. 26,9. Paus. 1,12,3. The elephants said by Iustinus 17,2,14 to have been lent by Ptolemy Ceraunus to Pyrrhus would have been of African origin (*Loxodonta africana*). See H.H. Scullard, *The Elephant in the Greek and Roman World*, 100–119.

¹⁰ Aristoph. *Birds* 483–485. J. Pollard, *Birds in Greek Life and Myth*, 88–89 (from the archaic period). Recent findings of cock remains in Bronze Age sites (Crete and

guineafowl (*Numida meleagris ptilorhyncha*),¹¹ pheasant (*Phasianus colchicus*),¹² peacock (*Pavo cristatus*),¹³ etc. on its soil. Some of these, namely the domestic cat, cock, guineafowl, pheasant and peacock, were acclimatized there and many others, which did not appear during antiquity, entered the European tradition through ancient Greek records: antelope and gazelle (*Tragelaphus* gen., *Gazella* gen.),¹⁴ hippopotamus (*Hippopotamus amphibius*),¹⁵ hyaena (*Crocuta crocuta*),¹⁶ African and Indian rhinoceros (*Diceros bicornis*; *Rhinoceros unicornis*),¹⁷ dromedary (*Camelus dromedarius*),¹⁸ panther (*Panthera pardus*),¹⁹ giraffe (*Giraffa camelopardalis*),²⁰ etc. Moreover, the word *exoticos*, from which the English 'exotic' or the French 'exotique' came by way of the Latin *exoticus*, was coined by the Greeks.

This paper will first survey the uses and meanings of the Greek term *exoticos* and then focus on reports and other statements concerning foreign animals in an attempt to provide some insight into the ancient Greek way of conceiving exoticism with respect to species from distant lands.

mainland Greece) are discussed by D.S. Reese, in *Kommos I, Part 1. The Kommos Region, Ecology, and Minoan Industries*, 194–204.

11 Soph. fr. 830a Radt.

12 Aristoph. *Clouds* 109. Pollard 93–94.

13 See below, § 6 (Pyrilampes).

14 Morgan 53, 59 (antelopes). Hdt. 4,192 (antelopes and gazelles). G. Camps, *Espacio, Tiempo y Forma. II. Historia Antiqua* 1 (1988) 209–221.

15 Hdt. 2,71.

16 Hdt. 4,192.

17 *Diceros bicornis*: F. Jacoby, *FGrHist.* 627 F 2,32. Cf. E. Rice, *The Grand Procession of Ptolemy Philadelphus*, 98. *Rhinoceros unicornis*: Aristot. *H.A.* 1,499b19. *P.A.* 3,663a19,23.

18 Aristot. *H.A.* 1,499a14–17.

19 Oppianus *Cyn.* 3,63–77. Preliminary remark on *pardalis* (since Hom. *Il.* 17,20. etc.) and *panther* (since Hdt. 4,192. etc.) in Bodson 1998, 143. On lion, see hereafter, n. 42.

20 F. Jacoby, *FGrHist.* 627 F 2,32. Cf. Rice 97–98.

2. Greek *exoticos*, Latin *exoticus*

The adjective *exoticos* was formed by the addition of the suffix *-ticos* ('in connection with, relating to') to the adverb *exo* 'outside'.²¹ It means 'foreign, alien'. It retained the same meaning when borrowed into Latin²² and was therefore inherited by modern languages such as English and French. The 40 or so extant occurrences of *exoticos* retrieved from the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (UCI, CD-ROM #D) are found in literature (including Church Fathers and early Byzantine historians) and in documentary texts either on stones or on papyri, all dated from the Roman Empire. Indeed, as far as is known now, the occurrences of *exoticos* do not go back farther than the second century A.D., while, puzzling as this may be, the derived (Latin) *exoticus* is evidenced as early as the second century B.C., in Plautus' plays.²³

Exoticos was applied to living organisms and inanimate objects in a fairly wide range of contexts. As regards living organisms, it described mainly people: deemed foreign or strangers to the family circle, friends, colleagues, etc. (in administrative laws and regulations²⁴ and in private usage, namely epitaphs in Asia minor),²⁵ and also plant: *Anchusa tinctoria*,

21 P. Chantraine, *La formation des noms en grec ancien*, 1933, 394–396 (N.B. *exoticos* is not listed by Chantraine).

22 M. Fruyt, *Problèmes méthodologiques de dérivation à propos des suffixes latins en ...cus*, 89, 113, 245.

23 Plautus *Mostellaria* 42 (parfumes). *Epidicus* 232 (women's garment). *Menaechmi* 236 (Sicily against mainland Greece). Compare Apuleius *Met.* 1,1,5 (Latin as second language of a Greek-native speaker). Etc.

24 E.g. I.G. II², no. 1368, l. 55 = Fr. Sokolowski, *Lois sacrées des cités grecques*, no. 51, l. 55 (Athens, before 178 A.D.). I.G.R.R. IV, n° 353 c, l. 12 (Pergamon, between 117 and 138). Iustinianus Nov. 22,20,2. Constantinus (VII) Porphyrogenetus *De ceremoniis aulae Byzantinae* 2,52.

25 E.g. I.K. 17, n° 3322, l. 4 (Ephesos); n° 3448, ll. 9–10 (Maşat, Chondria); 23, n° 219, l. 6 (Smyrna. 2nd cent. A.D.); 28, n° 393, l. 5 (Iasos, Caria. Roman Empire). T.A.M. II, n° 601 a, l. 7. b, ll. 12 and 21–22 (Tlos, Lycia. 140–141 A.D.); III, n° 425, l. 2 (Termessos, Pisidia); V, n° 1311, l. 5 (Hyrcanis, Lydia). M.A.M.A. III, n° 743, ll. 3–4 (Cilicia. Roman Empire).

'oxtongue-like plant' used as dye in a formula.²⁶ When applied to inanimate objects, it characterized locations: grounds, fields, and estates,²⁷ towns,²⁸ courthouses;²⁹ occasions: banquets,³⁰ wars;³¹ learned matters,³² especially in literature.³³

In some contexts related to human beings, *exoticos* was used as the opposite of *suggenes* 'of the same kin, descent, akin to',³⁴ while in others, it was coordinated with *xenos*.³⁵ Both *exoticos* and *xenos* shared a similar general meaning ('foreigner, foreign') but were not interchangeable. The latter (initially) stressed the idea: 'Greek-speaking foreign(-er)', the former: 'non-Greek-speaking foreign(-er)'. It is worth remembering that the earliest and usual word for this concept had been *barbaros*: 'non-Greek-speaking', literally: 'speaking *bar bar bar*' after the Greek onomatopoeia for the inarticulate sounds made by birds.³⁶ It appeared in Homer's *Iliad* (*barbarophonos* 'speaking a foreign tongue')³⁷ and prevailed over such terms as *alloglossos*, *allophonos*, *alloglossos*, etc. Two different aspects of the notion 'foreigner, foreign' were thus underscored depending on the adjective: sociological in *barbaros* versus locative and geographical in *exoticos*.

26 P. Holm. 17, l. 32 (4th cent. A.D.).

27 E.g. P. Oxy. I, 136, ll. 9, 16, 19, 26, 44 (A.D. 583); VI, 999 (A.D. 616/7); XVI, 2019, col. 1, l. 4 (6th cent. A.D.); 2038, col. 2, ll. 20, 21 (6th–7th cent. A.D.); XVIII, 2196, l. 5 (?A.D. 586); 2204, l. 6 (6th cent. A.D.); XIX, 2243 (a), verso of col. I–II, l. 88 (A.D. 590); LVIII, 3952, ll. 19, 29 (before August 29, 610). P. Iand. IV, 63, l. 3 (early 7th cent. A.D.).

28 Iohannes Malalas Chronographia 18 Niebuhr (p. 449, l. 11).

29 E.g. Basilius Regulae fusius tractatae 9,2 (P.G. XXXI, col. 944 A).

30 *Lectio facilior* in some manuscripts of Epictetus' Encheiridion (by Arrian) 33,6.

31 E.g. Iohannes Chrysostomus In S. Eustathium Antiochenum 3 (P.G. XLIX–L, col. 602). Iohannes Lydus De Ostentis 12 (48A).

32 Iamblichus Vita Pythagorica 21.

33 Iohannes Lydus De Magistratibus 40.

34 See above, n. 25 (I.K. 28 n° 393, l. 5. M.A.M.A. III, n° 743, l. 3–4).

35 [Athanasius] Epistula II ad Castorem 3 (P.G. XXVIII, col. 884 A).

36 Chantraine, Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque, 1968, 164–165.

37 Hom. Il. 2,867.

When used to refer to a plant or to inanimate objects, *exoticos* defined them as coming or being from abroad, namely a different environment. At this point, there is no evidence that the adjective was applied (anymore than *exoticus* in Latin) to any animal name. If it had been, its meaning would have been in all likelihood (the restriction of the *e silentio* argument notwithstanding) just the same as in terms of plants, towns, or wars, that is, locative and geographical with very little, if any, of what is now understood by the words 'exotic, exoticism'.

3. Reports on Asian and African faunas

Information on African and Asian animals reached Greece as early as the Bronze Age. Carved objects imported from Egypt and Asia to the Aegean islands (Crete, Thera, etc.) and to mainland Greece as well, or created according to Egyptian and Asian models, and wall paintings (also after Egyptian and Asian models) depicted foreign animals: baboons (carved on seals made of hippopotamus ivory),³⁸ antelopes,³⁹ monkeys,⁴⁰ felines,⁴¹ etc. The lion, however, should not be considered as 'foreign' to mainland Greece, after the enticing conclusions put forward by Angela von den Driesch and Knut Usener on the basis of archaeological, environmental and biological data.⁴² It is also worth recalling that the Greek settlement of Asia minor and North Africa acquainted the long-term residents somewhat with indigenous faunas and created a scale of the various ways the local animal species were perceived to be 'exotic'.

Besides iconography, archaeozoological remains also support the notion that the ancient Greeks were interested in animals from remote countries. Shells from the Red Sea, ostrich eggs, hippopotamus teeth, and antelope antlers were excavated from the 7th-century level of the Samian

38 M. Vandervondelen, *Studia varia Bruxellensia* 3 (1994) 175–183.

39 See above, n. 14.

40 See above, n. 4.

41 See above, n. 5, 19.

42 A. von den Driesch, Chloe. *Beihefte zu Daphnis* 20 (1994) 5–20. K. Usener, *Symbolae Osloenses* 69 (1994) 5–33.

sanctuary of the goddess Hera.⁴³ These findings do not imply that the animals were ever brought to the island alive, but they do confirm that there was some degree of curiosity about and knowledge of the corresponding species, even if the Greek awareness of such species as the hippopotamus or ostrich may not be ascertained. (Compare the so-called unicorn's horn and the medieval or later views about the animal species it was supposed to come from, with the animal, namely narwhal: *Monodon monoceros*, it actually came from).

As regards textual evidence, non-European animals were occasionally mentioned by many Greek poets and prose writers. To start with the so-called 'Bible of the Greeks', Homer referred to the jackal,⁴⁴ Asian wild ass,⁴⁵ big cats,⁴⁶ etc. The satirical writer Archilochus alluded to monkeys,⁴⁷ among other animals. However, extensive, if not systematic reviews of foreign fauna were presented by authors who travelled or sojourned abroad, such as Hecataios of Miletus,⁴⁸ Herodotus,⁴⁹ Xenophon,⁵⁰ Ctesias,⁵¹ Megasthenes,⁵² Nearchos,⁵³ etc., whatever their purpose, or those who relied on these predecessors for their sources: Diodorus of Sicily,⁵⁴

43 J. Boessneck – A. von den Driesch, MDAI (A) 96 (1981) 245–248. 98 (1983) 21–24.

44 Hom. Il. 11,474–481.

45 Hom. Il. 2,852.

46 Hom. Il. 3,17; 10,29; 13,103.

47 See above, n. 4.

48 Kl.-E. Müller, Geschichte der antiken Ethnographie I, 94–101. Kl. Karttunen, India in Early Greek Literature, 1989, 69–73 and *passim*.

49 Müller I, 101–131. Karttunen, 1989, 73–79 and *passim*.

50 Even though more occasionally than the other authors listed here. See e.g. his Anabasis. On Xenophon's India: Karttunen, 1989, 87–88.

51 Müller I, 145–146 and n. 313; 189 and n. 119. Karttunen, 1989, 80–85 and *passim*.

52 Müller I, 245–252. Karttunen, 1989, 96–99 and *passim*.

53 Müller I, 236–240. Karttunen, 1989, 90–91 and *passim*; India and the Hellenistic World, 1997, 41–44 and *passim*.

54 Müller II, 25. Karttunen, 1997, 326 and *passim*.

Strabo,⁵⁵ Arrian,⁵⁶ etc. Not all these works have survived, but the remaining fragments of lost works attest to the attention paid to animals by both the authors themselves and the readers who cited their accounts. Whether complete or not, the evidence contained in them raises too many questions to be thoroughly surveyed here. Selected examples will hopefully throw enough light on the matter.

Eleven chapters of Herodotus' *Aiguptiakos logos* were devoted to animals considered sacred in Egyptian religious belief.⁵⁷ He reviewed them not for the sake of zoology, but of ethnography, probably working on the basis of both written and oral sources and his own observations which, for all the 19th and 20th century *Quellenforschung*, are still open to investigation. In addition to cats, ibises, hippopotamus and other snakes, he talked of crocodiles⁵⁸ at some length. As he mentioned in II.69, the latter were known at least to the Ionians who had extended their name for 'lizard': *crocodeilos* to it. Nonetheless, it is most likely that the crocodile was not familiar to all his intended readership. It could have inspired him in time to make some comparisons⁵⁹ or other remarks infused with his didactic vividness. He made comments, criticisms,⁶⁰ and judgments of his own,⁶¹ in Book II as elsewhere in his work. Nothing of the like is found in his chapters on crocodiles nor even the Greek word for 'surprise or wonder' (*thauma* and derivatives) which also conveyed the feeling of unfamiliarity and strangeness inspired by an odd object or spectacle. As is well known,⁶²

⁵⁵ Müller II, 107–123. Karttunen, 1997, 326 and *passim*.

⁵⁶ Müller II, 154–157. Karttunen, 1997, 21, 327 and *passim*.

⁵⁷ Hdt. 2,66–76.

⁵⁸ Hdt. 2,68–70.

⁵⁹ As in e.g. 2,35–36 (comparison of Egyptian and foreign customs).

⁶⁰ Hdt. 2,15–18 (if we agree with the opinion, ... if we follow this account, we can show that ... and I myself judge ... our judgment concerning the matter is this... My opinion, that ... is attested by...). 24 (having condemned the opinions proposed, I must now set forth what I myself think...).

⁶¹ Hdt. 2,4 (to my mind); 12 (I believe ... I am fully persuaded); 109 (to my thinking...).

⁶² H. Barth, *Klio* 50 (1968) 93–95 (still essential). A.B. Lloyd, *Herodotus Book II. Introduction*, 141–147.

Herodotus' 'taste for *thômata*'⁶³ is a pervasive characteristic of the *Histories*. The extensive account on Egypt was justified at once because 'nowhere are there so many marvellous things (*pleista thômasia*).⁶⁴ Herodotus saw them in all kinds of topics and occasions: natural phenomena (e.g. climate of Egypt,⁶⁵ the causes of the River Nile's recurrent flooding,⁶⁶ etc.), man-made works,⁶⁷ He marvelled incidentally at the tail size and shape of Arabian sheep breeds in his Book III.⁶⁸ He would have been fully justified in stating his point of view even briefly about such an unusual animal species as the crocodile. Actually, he refrained from any personal comments not by chance or accident as might perhaps be thought at first reading, but purposely as one is entitled to conclude from his avoiding the word *thauma* on this particular occasion.

His chapters on crocodile (II.68–70) were articulated in three sections, each complementing one aspect: 1) zoological (68: anatomy, breeding behaviour, environment: on land and in the water, cooperation between crocodile and sandpiper); 2) anthropological (69: its sacred status to the dwellers around Thebes and Elephantine); and 3) practical (70: techniques of crocodile hunting in the areas where it was not sacred). In this final section, he alluded to 'many and various ways of crocodile hunting' and decided to 'write only that one way' which he thought 'most worthy of *mention*' (not of *wonder*, as he said in other cases).

He treated animals from other foreign countries, for instance *Libya*,⁶⁹ in the same way: listing them, pointing out features he considered worth noticing, and refraining from personal comment. Whatever their zoological value, his structured accounts on foreign animals were written with the self-restraint to be expected from a naturalist.

63 Lloyd 141.

64 Hdt. 2,35.

65 Hdt. 2,13–14.

66 Hdt. 2,21 ('marvellous' as opposed to 'scientific').

67 E.g. Hdt. 2,148; 175.

68 Hdt. 3,113. Karttunen, 1989, 167–168.

69 Hdt. 4,191–192.

Later authors (from Xenophon⁷⁰ to Arrian, etc.), when dealing with overseas countries and faunas, did not depart from Herodotus' practice. To take one further example, the earliest extant Greek description of a giraffe comes from Agatharchides' lost *On the Erythraean Sea*.⁷¹ It reads as follows in Photios' quotation:

'In the country of the Trogodytes there is also found the animal Greeks call camelopard, an animal that, like its name, has in a certain sense a composite nature. For it has the spotted coat of a leopard and is the size of a camel and very fast, and its neck is so long that it obtains its food from the tops of trees.'

Neutral in tone and elementary as it was, it stated the main points: name, distinctive physical characteristics (size, colour, swiftness) based on a comparison with better known species, effects on feeding habits, in a way which is remarkably congruous with the modern requirements of this type of short notice. Compare with the entry from a contemporary all-public dictionary⁷² geared to a readership likely to be more acquainted with the giraffe than Agatharchides' own readers:

'an extremely tall African animal with a very long neck and legs and pale brown fur with dark spots, which eats the leaves from the branches of trees.'

Other instances taken from Herodotus, Agatharchides or any other Greek historian-geographer-ethnographer before or after would simply provide further evidence that the ancient Greeks, when reporting on foreign countries and recording their animals, considered them in terms of their native environment only and did not assess them in terms of exoticism, except for the word '*thauma*'. As has been seen, it did not mean 'foreigner, foreign', but 'wonder, marvel, curiosity' and therefore referred to the un-

⁷⁰ E.g. Anab. 1,5.2–3. On Diodorus Siculus: Z. Kádár, Acta Class. Univ. Scientiarum Debrecensis 13 (1977) 41–44. On Strabo: Kádár, ibidem, 24 (1988) 51–56. See above, n. 48–56.

⁷¹ Ch. Müller, FHGr. 159 (= fr. 72).

⁷² Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English, 1987, 437.

familiar or strange. The fact is that this kind of reaction could be experienced in considering even 'the meaner animals' (Peck) or 'for examining the less valued animals' (Balme), since, in Aristotle's own terms (PA 1, 645a18) for defining the field of biological research, 'in all natural things there is somewhat of the marvellous (*thaumaston*)'.⁷³ Yet, as for the animal world, the marvellous and wonderful was probably never further highlighted than in alien species, not only as regards ancient Greek antiquity but also later periods.⁷⁴

Before looking at the animals imported to mainland Greece, a brief mention should be made of the special occasions when foreign animals were offered to kings as tribute.

4. Foreign Animals as Royal Gifts

Although this did not usually happen on Greek soil, it did occur in contexts which call for analysis in terms of Greek history. Indeed, one involves Alexander the Great, the other Ptolemy II Philadelphus. As pointed out above, animals played an important role in politics and diplomatic exchanges in ancient as in modern times. The earliest records go back to the mid-third millenium in Egypt. Other examples come from Mesopotamia and Assyria,⁷⁵ Persia,⁷⁶ India,⁷⁷ to mention only a few countries where such presents were common.

⁷³ A.L. Peck, *Aristotle Parts of Animals* (Loeb Class. Library), 99. D.M. Balme, *Aristotle De Partibus Animalium I and De generatione Animalium I* (with Passages from II.1–3). With a Report on Recent Works and an Additional Bibliography by A. Gotthelf, 18, l. 18.

⁷⁴ See Cl. Kappler, *Monstres, démons et merveilles*, 52–53. M. Campbell, *The Witness and the Other World. Exotic European Travel Writing 400–1600*, 104–106. J. Céard, *La nature et les prodiges. L'insolite au XVI^e siècle*, 2nd ed., 3–59. P. Findlen, *Possessing Nature. Museums, Collecting, and Scientific Culture in Early Modern Italy*, 17–47. A. Schnapper, *Le géant, la licorne et la tulipe. Collections et collectionneurs dans la France du XVII^e siècle*, 9–13.

⁷⁵ Br. Lion, *La circulation des animaux au Proche-Orient antique*, in D. Charpin and F. Joannès, ed., *La circulation des biens, des personnes et des idées dans le Proche-Orient ancien. Actes de la XXXVIII^e Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale* (Paris, 8–10 juillet 1991), 357–365.

The Greeks, who rightly or wrongly did not admire their native fauna as they did the African and Asian species and who, by no means, could compete with oriental splendours, did not present foreign rulers with European animals. The only record of a foreign animal seemingly involved in public relations between Greece and Asia concerns the tiger sent by Seleucos I to the Athenians. The evidence is so thin, as will be seen later, that it is of limited use to modern historians.⁷⁸ Conversely, two Hellenistic monarchs, Alexander the Great and Ptolemy II Philadelphus, were both remembered for the foreign animals they were given.

4.1. Alexander the Great

Alexander, while on his way to India, was presented by local kings and chiefs with specimens of indigenous breeds of domestic animals and samples of wild species, all selected for their inherent traits or those acquired by training. When such presents came from vanquished peoples, it is not always clear whether they were mandatory or freely conceded gifts. Ancient historians, however, recorded them all as gifts,⁷⁹ even if only for the sake of Alexander's legendary charisma. He was given dromadaries and Indian elephants in Persia.⁸⁰ He received many Indian hounds, a breed which is still regarded as the ancestor of the modern mastiff: two from the king of Albania,⁸¹ one from Poros⁸² and a pack of one hundred fifty from

⁷⁶ H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg, Gifts in the Persian Empire, in P. Briant – Cl. Herrenschildt, ed., *Le tribut dans l'Empire perse. Actes de la Table ronde de Paris, 12–13 Décembre 1986*, 129–146. Cf. (Greek viewpoint) M.C. Miller, *Athens and Persia in the Fifth Century B.C. A Study in Cultural Receptivity*, 1997, 109–133. L. Mitchell, *Greek Bearing Gifts in the Fifth Century B.C. The Public Use of Private Relationships in the Greek World 435–323 BC*, 111–133.

⁷⁷ Aelianus *On Animals* 4,41; also 8,1 (at the end); 15,14; etc. Compare with Cassius Dio, 54,9,8. F. Jacoby, *FGrHist.* 90 F 100. J.R. Morgan, *CQ* 38 (1988) 267–269.

⁷⁸ See below, n. 117–118.

⁷⁹ On the definition and status of 'gift', 'tribute', 'tax', etc., see e.g. W. Helck, *Abgaben und Steuern*, in *Lexikon der Ägyptologie I*, col. 3–12. W. Boochs, *Tribut*, *ibidem VI*, col. 762–764.

⁸⁰ Curtius 5,2,10. On elephants: Karttunen, 1997, 187–201.

⁸¹ Plinius Maior 8,149 (summarized by Solinus 15,7).

Sopeithes while in India.⁸³ They had been known to the Greeks in the early 5th century, since Xerxes had packs of Indian hounds in his army.⁸⁴ Their physical strength and bold fighting manner made them highly appreciated by Greek big game hunters.⁸⁵ They were indeed able to dominate lions and elephants, as was soon demonstrated to Alexander,⁸⁶ himself a devotee of hunting. As a highly skilled horseman, he was offered Indian thoroughbred horses.⁸⁷ He received elephants, sheep and cattle as well.⁸⁸ It is worth noticing that, for a time, he had thought of sending heads of remarkable cattle species back to Macedonia to be acclimatized and used there in agriculture.⁸⁹ Furthermore, two Indian tribes (Mallians and Oxydracae) gave him lions and tigers 'all of great size and all tame',⁹⁰ both properties adding to their natural and symbolic value. Whatever the species, the animals received by Alexander from his Persian and Indian counterparts were highly appreciated, given his curiosity about foreign fauna.⁹¹ Second and perhaps more important, the symbolic value of lion, tiger, mastiff, etc., as regards the attributes (power, strength, courage, endurance, etc.,⁹²) theoretically expected from the ideal monarch made them suitable gifts to

82 Pollux 5,43–44.

83 Diod. Sic., 17,92. Strabo, 15,1,31 (700 C.). Karttunen, 1989, 163–167; 1997, 174–175.

84 Hdt. 7,187; see also 3,32.

85 F. Jacoby, FGrHist. 688 F 45,10. Xen. Cyn. 10,1. Aelianus On Animals 4,19; 8,1. Plinius Maior 8,150.

86 Curtius 9,1,31–33. Plinius Maior 8,149–150. Plut. Soll. Anim. 15 (Mor. 970 F).

87 Curtius 9,8,1–2. Karttunen, 1997, 178–179.

88 Arrianus Anab. 5,3,5. On cattle, sheep, etc.: Karttunen, 1997, 181–184.

89 Arrianus Anab. 4,25,4. Karttunen, 1997, 181.

90 Curtius 9,8,1–2 (see above, n. 87). Compare with Aelianus On Animals 15,14: (my italics) *trained* tigers and *tame* panthers offered by the Indians to their king. Karttunen, 1997, 170–173.

91 L. Bodson, Ancient History 22 (1991) 127–138.

92 See e.g. Hom. Il. 5,136–139; 11,113–119; 20,164–173. cf. Aristot. H.A. 1,488b16–17.

Alexander who was the supreme embodiment of these qualities in the view of his contemporaries.

4.2. Ptolemy II Philadelphus

Ptolemy II Philadelphus, second ruler of Hellenized Alexandria (282–246), was also much famed for the interest (perhaps influenced by Alexander) he took in animals. This was extensively evidenced in his elephant hunting,⁹³ the private collection of animals he housed in the royal garden and outbuildings,⁹⁴ and the parades (e.g. the great procession of *Ptolemaeia* which took place between 280 and 270)⁹⁵ publicly exhibiting hundreds of domestic and wild animals gathered from all over the known world.⁹⁶ Some of these species were sent to him by foreign chiefs, for instance the Ammonite Tubias, as tribute from abroad.⁹⁷ Others were supplied by free-lance hunters enticed by Ptolemy's princely rewards to those who helped him enlarge his collection with unusual creatures. One of, if not the most, extraordinary was the giant (*ca.* 13 metres long) python (*Python sebae*) trapped in the upper Nile valley and taken to Alexandria where it was soon exhibited to the public and to distinguished foreign visitors.⁹⁸ All were amazed not only by its size and the conditions of its capture,⁹⁹ but also by its progressive tameness (achieved by depriving it of

⁹³ Diod. Sic. 3,36,3. Strabo 16,4,5 (769–770 C.); 17,1,5 (789 C.); etc. Scullard 126–133. J. Desanges, *Recherches sur l'activité des Méditerranéens aux confins de l'Afrique* (VI^e siècle avant J.-C. – IV^e siècle après J.-C.), 252–279. Burstein 42.

⁹⁴ H.M. Hubbell, *CJ* 31 (1935–1936) 68–76.

⁹⁵ Rice 4–5. V. Foertmeyer, *Historia* 37 (1988) 90–104: in 275/74. J. Köhler, *Pompai. Untersuchungen zur hellenistischen Festkultur*, 36: in 279/78.

⁹⁶ F. Jacoby, *FGrHist.* 627 F 2,32.

⁹⁷ PCZ 59075 (13 mai 257 B.C., according to Cl. Orrieux, *Les papyrus de Zénon*, 43. see also his *Zénon de Caunos, parémidémós, et le destin grec*, 99. 158–162). Rice 86.

⁹⁸ Diod. Sic. 3,36,3–37,8 (possibly after Agatharchides: Ch. Müller, *FHistGr.* 162–165 [= fr. 78]). Woelk 185–188. Burstein 126–132.

⁹⁹ Diod. Sic., 3,37,7.

food).¹⁰⁰ Both made it 'a true wonder' (*thauma*)¹⁰¹ which fulfilled the king's own desire for distinctive animals. It became a landmark in the history of his collection and added to his reputation both at home and abroad.

5. Asian and African animals imported to Greece

As long as foreign animals were described or characterized in their original context, their indigenous status was self-evident. Once they were compared to the fauna of another country and, especially, when they were taken there, the way they had been perceived was modified. The vocabulary shows signs of that change.

Indeed, the Greeks named foreign animals after their native countries, either real as with the pheasant: *Phasianos* 'bird of the River Phasos' (as it is still reminded in the modern languages deriving their name for it from the 'Greco-latin' term),¹⁰² or supposed: *Persikos* 'bird from Persia' or *Medikos* 'bird from Media' used of farmyard cock¹⁰³ and of peacock¹⁰⁴ as long as their actual origin was unidentified. Peacocks were termed *Indikoi* 'birds from India'¹⁰⁵ (if not earlier) when Alexander saw them upon reaching the Indus valley. Indeed, 'he was, wrote Aelian,¹⁰⁶ struck at the sight of (my italics) *these birds in India* (and in his admiration for their beauty threatened the severest penalties for any man who slew one).' On the same occasion,

¹⁰⁰ G. Jennison, *Animals for Show and Pleasure in Ancient Rome*, 36. Ch.R.S. Pitman, *A Guide to the Snakes of Uganda*, 58.

¹⁰¹ Diodorus Siculus 3,37,7.

¹⁰² See above, n. 12.

¹⁰³ Aristoph. *Birds* 483–485; cf. 277, 707. D'A.W. Thompson, *A Glossary of Greek Birds*, 38–39.

¹⁰⁴ *Scholia recentiora Aristoph Ois. 707* (ed. Fr. Dübner, *Scholia Graeca in Aristophanem*, 225–226).

¹⁰⁵ Aelianus *On Animals* 5,32; 13,18; 16,2. Cf. Curtius 9,1,13. Karttunen, 1997, 207–209.

¹⁰⁶ Aelianus *On Animals* 5,21.

the Greeks also discovered another Indian bird: the parrot.¹⁰⁷ At first a rarity, it had become so common around the eastern Mediterranean by the end of the 1st century and early second century A.D. that Arrian¹⁰⁸ felt free to skip over the first, now lost, description of the species by Nearchos (4th century) who had defined it 'as a wonder' (*thauma*), when observing it in its natural habitat.¹⁰⁹

At the same time, foreign animals could be given more specific names. The cock was given a Greek name: *alektruon*, literally 'turning aside, warding off, defending'¹¹⁰ after the fighting temper observed in the male.¹¹¹ Conversely, the parrot and the peacock were given names adapted from the languages spoken in their native countries: (the parrot) *psittacos*,¹¹² (the peacock) *tahos*,¹¹³ a spelling much discussed by ancient Greek grammarians and lexicographers.¹¹⁴ (The Greek name for guineafowl, *meleagrides*, is based upon a mythological etymology and requires further investigation.)¹¹⁵

Additional information on the status accorded foreign animals introduced into Greece is assumed from the causes and circumstances of the various species' first arrival and from the role they were to play there for whatever period of time. However, most of this information is of little significance due to the shortage of relevant evidence. The war elephants which entered Macedonia and Epirus in the first decades of the 3rd century B.C. were hardly mentioned by ancient historians and were not commented

¹⁰⁷ Aristot. H.A. 7 (8),597b28. Aelianus On Animals 16,2. Thompson 336. Karttunen, 1997, 202–205.

¹⁰⁸ Arrianus Indica 15,8.

¹⁰⁹ Thompson 335–338. Pollard 137–138. J.M.C. Toynbee, Animals in Roman Art and Life, 247–249. J.M. Bigwood, CQ 43 (1993) 321–327.

¹¹⁰ Chantraine, 1968, 58.

¹¹¹ J.P. Kruijt, Behaviour Suppl. 12 (1964) 37–39.

¹¹² Chantraine, 1968 [1980], 1292.

¹¹³ First occurrence: Aristoph. Ach. 63.

¹¹⁴ Tryphon Alexandrinus, fr. 5 Velsen. Seleucus, fr. 1 Funaioli. Etc. Chantraine, 1968 [1977], 1098.

¹¹⁵ Thompson 197–200. Pollard 94–95.

upon in terms of their exoticism.¹¹⁶ Seleucus' tiger sent to the Athenians *ca.* 306–4, probably as a diplomatic gift,¹¹⁷ faded from view except for two brief and out-of-context fragments from comic plays.¹¹⁸ Cheetahs taken either from Africa through Egypt¹¹⁹ or from Asia¹²⁰ were painted on Greek vases between *ca.* the mid-6th century and the early 5th century.¹²¹ Domestic cats imported from Egypt (or the Middle-East)¹²² were represented on monuments and vase paintings as early as *ca.* 510.¹²³ Both species were shown with ephebes. Ann Ashmead, in her study of *Greek Cats*, believed these animals to be the youth's pets, thereby playing the same role as roosters, hares, etc.¹²⁴ Koch-Harnack, who studied them in the context of the Greek pederastic relationship, gave them a symbolic meaning.¹²⁵ She related the cheetah's abilities as a hunter with the specific value of hunting in the Greek educational system. Due to the absence of any written evidence concerning the arrival of these felines, the reasons for and occasions of their choice, etc., there is no way to confirm this otherwise plausible explanation. Pheasants were bred and reared by Leogoras, the father of the orator Andocides, in mid-5th century Athens, and soon became

116 Scullard 98–100.

117 Explained differently by modern historians: e.g. W.S. Ferguson, *Hellenistic Athens. An Historical Essay*, 69. A. Mehl, *Seleukos Nikator und sein Reich I*, 220. S. Sherwin-White and A. Kuhrt, *From Samarkhand to Sardis. A New Approach to the Seleucid Empire*, 93.

118 Philemon (born *ca.* 365–360. 1st victory in 327) fr. 49 Kassel-Austin. Alexis (*ca.* 372–270) fr. 207, 3 K.–A.

119 *Acinonyx jubatus* (cf. P. Jackson *et al.*, *Les félins*, 39–44).

120 *Acinonyx jubatus venaticus* (cf. Jackson 127–128).

121 See above, n. 5.

122 J. Clutton-Brock, *Cats Ancient and Modern*, 6–13. Jackson 251–255.

123 See above, n. 6.

124 Ashmead 38–47.

125 Koch-Harnack 107–119.

a source of profit and fame to him.¹²⁶ But nothing is mentioned about the coming of pheasants to Greece. The cock's introduction into Greece has been traditionally placed in the 7th century B.C. on the basis of archeological evidence and related by modern scholarship to the Asian influence on Greek religion, in particular on Pythagoreanism.¹²⁷ The matter needs to be reexamined, however, especially in view of recent archaeozoological findings in both Crete and mainland Greece supposedly coming from the Bronze Age.¹²⁸ The peacock, although some questions still require further investigation, is the only species better documented as regards its reception by the Greeks.

6. The case of Pyrilampes' peacocks

There has been much discussion recently concerning the peacock's arrival on the island of Samos where it became sacred to the goddess Hera,¹²⁹ or its alleged role as Persian diplomatic gift to Athenian embassies in the second half of the 5th century.¹³⁰ No definite conclusion has yet been reached. Since this does not relate to the particular point here under examination, it will not be the object of further discussion.

The history of the peacock in mainland Greece is linked to Pyrilampes,¹³¹ an Athenian aristocrat of the highest rank,¹³² Plato's maternal great-

¹²⁶ Aristoph. *Clouds* 109. Cf. J.K. Davies, *Athenian Propertied Families*, 30–31 (n° 828, VI B). Compare with F. Jacoby, *FGrHist.* 234 F 2 (pheasant breeding in Ptomelaic Alexandria).

¹²⁷ Cl. Nauerth, Hahn, in *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum* 13, col. 365.

¹²⁸ See above, n. 10.

¹²⁹ F. Jacoby, *FGrHist.* 541 F 2. E.g. Karttunen, 1989, 27. M.C. Miller, *Archaeological News* 15 (1990) 2.

¹³⁰ E.g. E. Badian, *JHS* 107 (1987) 14. E.L. Bowie, *JHS* 108 (1988) 185. P. Cartledge, *Fowl Play: A Curious Lawsuit in Classical Athens* (*Antiphon XVI*, fr. 57–9 Thalheim), in P. Cartledge *et al.*, ed., *Nomos, Essays in Athenian Law, Politics and Society*, 47. Miller, 1990, 2; 1997, 110, 129, 189–192, 216.

¹³¹ Cartledge 53.

¹³² Davies 329–331 (n° 8792, VIII).

uncle and father-in-law,¹³³ Pericles' close friend,¹³⁴ and ambassador to the Great King and other Asian rulers.¹³⁵ What may be said about his peacocks comes mainly from two short fragments,¹³⁶ all that remains of Antiphon's acclaimed speech *Against Erasistratos about Peacocks*¹³⁷ (written between 419/8 and 411/10)¹³⁸. They were cited by Athenaeus¹³⁹ and referred to by Aelian,¹⁴⁰ who both added some further comments. These pieces of evidence may be summarized as follows:

The birds, probably only one breeding pair, were brought by Pyrilampes from Persia to Athens in the second half of the 5th century. As his fellow citizen Leogoras had turned to pheasant fancying, he initiated peacock breeding in mainland Greece and succeeded well enough to make special use of his birds, provided that there is some truth to the scoffs of anonymous comic poets alluded to by Plutarch. Indeed, Pyrilampes was suspected of using his birds to suborn Athenian ladies for Pericles.¹⁴¹ Demos, Pyrilampes' son, inherited the rearing facilities and was the first to achieve peacock acclimatization in Greece.¹⁴² The species was still uncommon at the end of the 5th century and all the more admired since its natural beauty, intensified by the attractiveness of its oriental origin, excited a great deal of public interest. Greeks, both men and women, came from all over the country to pay a visit to Demos' peacock aviary on the days it was open to the public for a fee. Many people were eager to buy eggs and to start breeding peacocks on their own, even though this was an expensive endeavor.

133 Plat. Parm. 126 A–C, etc.

134 Plut. Life of Pericles 13,15. A. Podlecki, *Pericles and his Circle*, 110.

135 Plat. Charm. 158 A. J. Hofstetter, *Die Griechen in Persien. Prosopographie der Griechen im persischen Reich vor Alexander*, 159–160 (n° 278).

136 Antiphon fr. 58 (57)–59 (58) Blass – Thalheim (p. 118–119).

137 [Plut.] *Lives of the Ten Orators* (Mor. 833 D).

138 K.J. Dover, *CQ* 44 (1950) 54–55: between 419/18 and 411/10. Cartledge 59–60: in 415.

139 Ath. 9,397 C–D.

140 Aelianus *On Animals* 5,21.

141 Miller, 1990, 2.

142 Ath. 9,397 C.

our. This was not due to the peacock breeding itself, but to the permanent security guards who had to be housed in the breeding area to protect the birds from being stolen. By the end of the 5th century or so, a pair of peacocks was still valued at 1000 drachmas (the average daily wage of a worker was 1 drachma).

Over the course of the 4th century, peacocks were definitively acclimatized so as to be 'as usual as quails' (provided that there is no comic exaggeration in Antiphanes' remark).¹⁴³ Their cost had decreased proportionally, but not their renown. Despite the moralizing concerning the bird's so-called pride and vanity,¹⁴⁴ it continued to be the object of admiration. As long as peacocks were rare and costly, they were regarded as meaningful signs of wealth and prestige. When more common, they were not deprived of their glory, but were considered as the most praiseworthy of all foreign species up to the end of Greek antiquity.¹⁴⁵ They were also the only animals, to the best of my knowledge, to have been characterized somewhat in terms of exoticism. Indeed, Aelian wrote in his main chapter on peacocks:¹⁴⁶

Λέγεται δὲ ἐκ βαρβάρων ἐς Ἑλληνας κομισθῆναι.

(in Schofield's translation):

It (= the peacock) is said to have been brought to Greece from foreign lands.

As is well known, nations used to be given ethnic names by the ancient Greek authors: *hoi Athenaioi* instead of *hai Athenai*, *hoi Aiguptioi*

¹⁴³ Antiphanes (*ca.* 408 – *ca.* 334) fr. 203, 1–2 K.–A. Quail breeding as an ordinary practice in Classical Athens: Plat. Euthyd. 290 D. Aristoph. fr. 253 K.–A. Etc. See Thompson 216–217.

¹⁴⁴ Ovid Met. 13,802; Ars am. 1,627. Martial 14,67,2. Etc.

¹⁴⁵ Aelianus On Animals 5,21. Dion. Perieg. Ixeut. 1,28. Manuel Philis De animalium proprietate 187–214. The implicit criticism in Eupolis fr. 41 K.–A. might have been inspired by the peacock's call.

¹⁴⁶ Aelianus On Animals 5,21.

instead of *hè Aiguptos*, etc.¹⁴⁷ In my opinion, although the geographical equivalent must often be preferred in modern translations, it should be dismissed here. Schofield's translation does not do full justice to the sentence which simultaneously opposed and related not two different areas, but their inhabitants, namely: 'Greeks' and 'non-Greek-speaking foreigners'. The name *barbaros* did not restrict the meaning to the geographical criterion of location, as *exoticos* would have done. Explicitly referring to peoples themselves rather than any other aspect (land and location) underlined both the peacocks' foreign origin and the cultural process underlying their coming to and reception in Greece.

An ancient Greek judgement formally expressed on foreign animals as regards their origin has not been identified at this point. However, the existing evidence does provide some information concerning the criteria on which it might implicitly have been based. They are basically of two types: zoological and anthropological.

7. Zoological criteria

7.1. Geographical location

The first zoological criterion is connected with geography and location. Coming from a remote country gave the foreign animals the distinctive appeal of regions still little known and mysterious. The Greek proverb: 'Africa always brings something new' was cited twice by Aristotle himself precisely in his biological treatises¹⁴⁸ and by later writers¹⁴⁹ to emphasize the amazing diversity of African fauna. And India, which was

¹⁴⁷ E.g. Isocrates 11,28.

¹⁴⁸ Aristot. H.A. 7 (8),606b18–20; G.A. 2,746b8–11. Cf. Plinius Maior 8,42.

¹⁴⁹ Anaxilas fr. 27 K.–A. Compare Zenobius, 2,51 Leutsch – Schneidewin. Diogenianus, 1,68 *idem*. Apostolius 10,75 Leutsch. A.V. van Stekelenburg, Akroterion 33 (1988) 114–120.

initially confused with Africa,¹⁵⁰ was no less fascinating and valued for its own animal species.¹⁵¹

7.2. Physical properties

Physical properties: size (pythons,¹⁵² tigers), shape and colour (peacocks, cocks, pheasants), strength (Indian hounds,¹⁵³ tigers, pythons¹⁵⁴) made foreign species remarkable in themselves and even more striking when compared with Euro-Mediterranean species. The peacock's beauty surpassed that of all other foreign animals.¹⁵⁵ Yet cocks and pheasants were also explicitly praised for their aesthetic qualities, as is clear from Solon's supposed reply to the Lydian king Croesus 'sitting on his throne in magnificent array' and asking if he had ever seen anything more beautiful: 'Yes, Solon would have said, cocks and pheasants and peacocks; for they shine in nature's colours, which are ten thousand times more beautiful.'¹⁵⁶ The anecdote's authenticity has been rightly questioned by modern historians on the basis of chronology.¹⁵⁷ Yet, whether true or not, Solon's statement still evidences the delight taken by the Greeks in observing these bird species. Aesthetic qualities, although they varied from one species to another and were perceived differently depending on people's sensibilities, overall inspired the admiration for foreign animals.

¹⁵⁰ Karttunen, 1989, 134–138.

¹⁵¹ J. Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought. Geography, Exploration, and Fiction*, 82, 89.

¹⁵² See above, § 4.2.

¹⁵³ Aristot. H.A. 7 (8),607a3–8.

¹⁵⁴ See above, § 4.2.

¹⁵⁵ Antiphon fr. 58 (57) Bl. – Th. Strattis fr. 28 K.–A. Antiphanes fr. 173, 5 K.–A. Aelianus *On Animals* 5,21.

¹⁵⁶ Diogenes Laertius *Lives of Eminent Philosophers*: Solon 1,51.

¹⁵⁷ K. Freeman, *The Work and Life of Solon*, 184–187.

7.3. Animal behaviour

Innate behaviour traits or those acquired after taming were also of utmost importance. Such birds as cocks¹⁵⁸ and parrots¹⁵⁹ provided pleasure through their singing and 'talking'. The peacock's spreading its long feathers¹⁶⁰ was a spectacle the ancient Greeks never stopped marvelling at (regardless of their moralists' anthropocentric prejudices). Indian dogs were praised for their courage and unflagging determination. Tameness in lions, tigers¹⁶¹ or python¹⁶² was all the more impressive as their nature could incite them to harm man.

8. Anthropological criteria

8.1. Individual and collective psychology

The rare beauty of some foreign species and the unexpected behaviour of others filled the ancient Greeks with wonder (*thauma*)¹⁶³ in all senses of the word. The more these species (lions, tigers, pythons) were naturally frightening, the more, once they were tamed and trained, they were the objects of wonder.¹⁶⁴ This feeling of strangeness combined with admiration was too widely expressed to be accidental. It probably represents the most explicit and significant clue as regards the ancient Greek view of exoticism.

8.2. Sociological and cultural features

Exotic animals had a strong sociological impact. Indeed, they were first linked to the mighty and affluent: upper-class Athenians (Pyrilampes

¹⁵⁸ See above, n. 103.

¹⁵⁹ See above, n. 107.

¹⁶⁰ See above, n. 136, 145.

¹⁶¹ See above, § 4.1 (n. 90).

¹⁶² See above, § 4.2 (n. 98–100).

¹⁶³ See above, § 3.

¹⁶⁴ See above, e.g. § 4.2 (n. 101).

and Demos; Leogoras),¹⁶⁵ and kings such as Alexander,¹⁶⁶ Ptolemy II,¹⁶⁷ and Seleucus.¹⁶⁸ Royal or private owners did not enjoy these species only as a sign of their rank and, in the case of the Athenian aviaries, a possible source of earnings, but wanted them to be exhibited both as a display of their power and for educational purposes.¹⁶⁹ This is quite clear in Diodorus' account of Ptolemy's presentation of his python.

Some modern scholars, who took Pliny the Elder's chapters on Alexander's sponsorship of biological science at face value or who relied upon Ptolemy II's wide-ranging interest in science, suggested that research programmes had been conducted on the 'exotic' animals either by Aristotle and his disciples in Athens or by some Alexandrian scientists.¹⁷⁰ For all his attention to natural resources, Alexander's political and financial involvement in collecting specimens remains highly problematic.¹⁷¹ On the other hand, there is no evidence thus far of any large-scale investigation supported by the Ptolemies as regards the animal kingdom. Nonetheless, holding foreign animals, sometimes for years, necessarily increased zoological knowledge and, as for acclimatized species, technical expertise in rearing methods.¹⁷² This empirical knowledge and expertise fostered modern zoology and encouraged its worldwide exploration of the animal world resumed by the end of the 15th century on a wide scale. Three features which have significantly stimulated Western interest in keeping foreign animals down to the 20th century are thus noticeable in Greek antiquity: 1)

165 See above, § 6.

166 See above, § 4.1.

167 See above, § 4.2.

168 See above, *ad n.* 78, 117–118.

169 See above, § 4.2. § 6. Compare with aims and purposes of modern zoological gardens discussed in the papers collected by Hoage and Deiss (above, n. 2). Also G. Mitman, *Osiris* 11 (1996) 117–121.

170 Hubbell 69–70 (not without some final reservations). C. Schneider, *Kulturgeschichte des Hellenismus*, 535.

171 J.S. Romm, *AJPh* 110 (1989) 566–575. J.M. Bigwood, *AJPh* 114 (1993) 537–555.

172 See M.A. Osborne, *The Role of Exotic Animals in the Scientific and Political Culture of Nineteenth Century France*, in Bodson 1998, 21–29.

the owner's prestige, 2) gratification of public curiosity, 3) zoology and acclimatization.

9. Conclusion

The ancient Greeks did not feel the need to describe the animals imported from distant lands to their own country with a specialized word. The word *exoticos* did not apply to animals as far as may be judged from extant evidence. Earlier and more common adjectives for 'foreign, alien, etc.' were not used either, with one exception. The meaningful occurrence of *barbaros* specifying the foreign origin of peacocks in terms not of country, but of people, i.e. those who had these birds originally, confirms the notion that the Greeks were not unaware of some key aspects of the multi-faceted issue of the foreign, that is surprising and wonderful (*thaumasios*), animal. Indeed, numerous, albeit scattered, pieces of evidence show that both geographical and cultural data were involved in defining its particular status on the basis of zoological and anthropological criteria which eventually have proved to be universal.

At the 'Age of exploration', when a new term became necessary to fully express the proper condition of 'what was introduced from abroad' including animal species, *exoticos* entered modern languages in anglicized, gallicized, etc., forms: 'exotic', 'exotique'. Since that time, they have clarified attitudes and motivations which, although not evidenced by *exoticos* itself, determined the ancient Greek way of thinking about and dealing with 'the animals from remote lands'.

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