

II. CONQUERORS OF THE WORLD

It is true that India was not completely *terra incognita* for the Greeks in the 5th and 4th centuries B.C. For a while Northwestern India and Ionian Greece had both been subjects of the Achaemenid empire, and there was necessarily some confrontation and exchange, although our evidence for it is rather scanty. For the majority of the Greeks, however, India seems to have been no more than a fairyland full of marvels. In the Greek literature of this period there are some scattered notices and a few more comprehensive accounts on India. In these, a skilled scholar can cull some useful information, but the picture gained by a contemporary reader hardly corresponded to Indian reality. All this I have fully discussed in my earlier book.¹

Consequently, only Alexander's Indian campaigns made the Western world really conscious of South Asia, of its vast extent and great rivers, of its marvels of nature, of its richness and flourishing economy, of its brave soldiers and large elephants. While earlier accounts (and tales) were certainly not forgotten, only this age defined India for the West in a way that was to endure many centuries, to a great extent even until the advent of the Portuguese to India.²

After defeating Darius at Gaugamela Alexander proceeded to the east,³ and in late summer 330 B.C. he began his advance to Bactria. The route led through Arachosia in late November (?), and he made his winter camp in Paropamisadae.⁴ In spring 329 he crossed over the Hindukush to Bactria and Sogdiana. The strong resistance he met kept him two years in the north, with winter quarters in Zariaspa in 329/328 and in Nautaca in 328/327, and only in spring 327 was he again able to cross the Hindukush. It took him one year to subjugate the country west of the Indus, although we do not have all the details, and the river was crossed only in spring 326. After a break in Taxila he proceeded to fight Porus. The battle took place at the Hydaspes during the rainy season in June 326.⁵ The march continued under heavy rains. After having been compelled to turn back from the Hyphasis, Alexander reached the Hydaspes again late in November. The river voyage down the Hydapes and the Indus lasted about ten months, or less, and in July 325 he

¹ Karttunen 1989a. See also the present chapter II.2.

² See Karttunen 1987.

³ I add here a brief summary of the main dates of Alexander's eastern campaigns for the benefit of those readers who are not too familiar with them.

⁴ The chronology is somewhat difficult. The above interpretation agrees with the texts (Strabo and Arrianus), but makes the march to the east suspiciously rapid. While some scholars deny the existence of a winter-camp in 330/329 (Tarn 1948, 65, Schachermayr 1973, 316), e.g. Robinson (1930) argued in its favour.

⁵ The Attic month of Munichion (April/May) in *Anab.* 5, 19, 3 must be an error because of *Anab.* 5, 9, 4 (just after the Summer solstice) and of the heavy rains reported during the battle. See Brunt 1983, 456f. Stein (1934, 85) built his chronology on Munichion without explaining the rains.

seems to have been at Patala. The army left first for Gedrosia, while the navy under Nearchus started from Patala in September/October 325. At the end of the year they met again in Carmania.

For the classical knowledge of India, the period of Alexander and that immediately following him is undoubtedly the most important. Accordingly, it has also been the most studied. At present, my intention is neither to attempt a new history of the Macedonian campaigns in Northwest India – there are already many, perhaps too many, of them⁶ – nor even to give a summary of them. Instead, I shall take up some particular subjects and questions which seem to me to shed some more light on the general issue of Indian campaigns and their significance for east–west contacts as well as for the Western image of India. At the same time I shall also attempt to elucidate some specific problems of philological and historical interpretation.

1. Alexander: The Man and the Legend

Alexander is one of those figures of classical antiquity who have ever since lived in the minds of people. His personality and his career have given rise to strong feelings in both directions. He has been the hero of conquerors (like Napoleon) and historians (like Tarn), but also the great rogue and reckless despot of history. For some Indian historians his Indian campaign seems to symbolize Western dominion of a much later period and it is discussed in a way where more than two thousand years seem to fade completely away.

It is happy to note that recently our image of Alexander has gained more sober dimensions. In many ways the idealized picture of classical antiquity itself, transmitted to us by such authors as Curtius Rufus and Plutarch, had, and sometimes still has, strongly influenced even the opinions of schooled historians.⁷ Not only a war hero, but a cultural hero, a philosopher on the throne, a benefactor of the barbarians, who had the good fortune to be conquered by him.

Well, the viewpoint was very much a Western one. However, little by little we have begun to learn that the barbarians – even the worst of them, as the general judgement went, the nomads of the steppes – were not necessarily the archenemies of all settled and

⁶ Just to mention a few examples, Droysen 1833 (a classic), Tarn 1948–1950 (entertaining), Wheeler 1968 (also entertaining, but important for Persia and India), Schachermayr 1973 (thorough, occasionally far-fetched), Seibert 1972 (useful as bibliography), and Bosworth 1988b (factual). A reference to Seibert 1972 also saves me from giving a full account of the history of research.

⁷ A classic of the romanticizing picture of Alexander, though not without criticism of sources, was Droysen 1833. See also McCrindle 1896, 48. According to Wecker (1916, 1292), Alexander's main motive in his conquests was a "lebendige Bewusstsein von der weltgeschichtlichen Mission des griechischen Geistes gegenüber den Barbaren"! Similar ideas could also be found in Tarn.

civilized people, and in fact had a civilization of their own.⁸ It is also true that in the first place it was not Greek civilization that Alexander brought to them, it was Greek (or Macedonian) arms and Greek domination. The intermingling of Greek and local culture, resulting in what can be styled Hellenism (see chapter I above), came only later, slowly and without much planning.⁹

Actually, the classical tradition of Alexander the civilizer is so curious that one is bound to wonder why there was no Holt much earlier to shake it.¹⁰ In spite of Plutarch,¹¹ it has been known for quite a long time that the Arachosians knew long before Alexander how to till their land. The Zoroastrians did not abandon their funerary customs in earnest,¹² and by forbidding them Alexander could only gain among them the fame of a great enemy of religion. More broad-minded Westerners could even then quite well understand such a thing as the relativity of funerary customs, which were quite often discussed in Greek ethnography (e.g. Herodotus 3, 38). One is also bound to ask what kind of civilizing it was, when the dwellers of a barren coast were forbidden to eat fish?¹³

There are other points where our idea of Alexander has changed and perhaps gained new dimensions. Arrianus is undoubtedly our best source, but even he (with his sources) was not free of idealizing tendencies.¹⁴ No longer can we follow Tarn and throw out such a well attested episode as the massacre of the Branchidae as unhistorical on the ground that it seems (or at least seemed to be to Tarn, who, to quote another giant of scholarship with sometimes very personal opinions, was himself a gentleman of the old school and would not admit in his hero anything unsuitable for a gentleman)¹⁵ not to be in accordance with the (supposed) character of Alexander.¹⁶ His character, however, belonged to

⁸ The old view is represented, among many, by Tarn 1951, 79, but see Holt 1989 and others.

⁹ See e.g. Holt 1989, *passim*, and also Schwarz's (1989b) comments on the same.

¹⁰ Fisch 1937, 134 & 136f. derived it from Onesicritus, who wanted to show Alexander as fulfilling the Diogenian idea of world-citizenship, and was followed by authors influenced by Cynic and Stoic ideas. Certainly Plutarch ascribed this policy to the wonderful power of philosophy (ὁ θαυμαστικῆς φιλοσοφίας).

¹¹ *De Alex. virt.* 1, 5, 328C. Anspach 1901, 1, divides the passage differently, so that Alexander taught Hyrcanians to till the land, Arachosians together with Sogdians to accept Greek-type funerals. A further passage in Tarn 1951, 48, note 5.

¹² See further Onesicritus (F 5 in Strabo 11, 11, 3) on dogs devouring the dying in Bactria, with Brown 1949, 51 & 70, Tarn 1951, 79, and Pearson 1960, 94. For a similar custom in Taxila, see Aristobulus F 42, among the Oreitai, Diodorus 17, 105, 2.

¹³ Pliny *N. H.* 6, 25, 95 *Ichthyophagos omnes Alexander vetuit piscibus vivere*. A bold hypothesis in Eggermont 1975, 66ff. See also Tarn 1951, who supposed that this does not actually refer to Alexander, but to the Indo-Greek period. Alexander wanted to arrange supplies, not only for his own navy under Nearchus, but also for the official vessels and merchantmen, which were supposed soon to be using the sea-route between Mesopotamia as the centre of Alexander's empire and his Indian satrapies.

¹⁴ It is perhaps useful to cite here the conclusion of Fisch (1937, 144): "The quest of *historical* Alexander, if the seeker be not simple-minded, is more likely to end in a philosophy of history than in the illusion that he has found what he sought." Brunt 1983, in his introduction and appendices to Arrianus, has taken a more critical standpoint than usual towards Arrianus.

¹⁵ Wheeler 1968, 26f.

¹⁶ See Tarn 1922 & 1948, 67 (with Appendix 13). Of course, I know that the episode is ignored by Arrianus, and given only by the authors of the Vulgate recension (fully in Curtius, in Diodorus it is

another world – as familiar as we are perhaps used to think it because of our long, but not always quite exact, tradition of classical heritage – the world, where the cruel side was still not so strange and unacceptable as it is to us. In this world cruel things happened in quite a casual manner. It was not rare that after the conquest of a city all the men were slaughtered, while the women and children were sold as slaves. What was totally improper for a British gentleman of the early 20th century was not so much so for a Macedonian gentleman (and professional soldier) of the fourth century B.C.¹⁷

Of course, it was not only the Branchidae (they are always mentioned separately as they were thought to be a type of Greeks). Much more blood was shed in Bactria-Sogdiana and in India. Nevertheless, it is certainly no use making Alexander a predecessor of Genghis Khan,¹⁸ that is, of our traditional Western image of the Mongolian conqueror.¹⁹ All the less so in an age when we have already learnt to correct our image of Genghis Khan, to see that there was much more to him than the author of an astonishingly quick strategy sometimes combined with ruthless massacres.

In both cases, of Macedonians and Mongols, massacres were used – horribly from our perspective, true, and with reason – as a preventive used on rebels in order to keep others from rebelling.²⁰ In both cases we also see clear attempts to establish a well-organized empire. Only Genghis Khan was more fortunate than Alexander as he had time

part of the lacuna, but mentioned in the list of contents for book 17). But while Arrianus with his authorities, Ptolemaeus and Aristobulus, represents the more reliable tradition, his relation to the Vulgate is not so straightforward. When Arrianus differs from the Vulgate, there are good grounds to think that he is right (e.g. on the starting-point of the naval venture in the Pañjab, see II.4). But when Arrianus is silent, and the Vulgate authors agree with each other, we must carefully consider the possibility that the Vulgate contains genuine information. Ptolemaeus sometimes passed over in silence less honourable episodes (such as the disaster in the Gedrosian desert, see Brunt 1983). It is not easy to imagine how such a major episode as the massacre of the Branchidae could just have been invented. Probably the account was already told by Callisthenes. After all, the Vulgate is not against Alexander, and does not follow historians writing against him. Often the propaganda that Alexander was avenging the wrong of the Persian wars must have seemed as hollow as in the case of the burning of the palace in Persepolis, at least to a literary audience. But perhaps it seemed different when an envoy came to Greece and announced that in the heart of the Persian empire and even in the farther east Alexander had been the avenger of wrong done to the Hellenes. It may have not been strictly true, but its propaganda value was undeniable.

17 On the discussion of the Branchidae episode, see the summaries in Karttunen 1989a, 55, and Seibert 1972, 144f. With Tarn, the episode has been deemed fiction e.g. by Pearson 1960, 240, and still by Schwarz 1989b, 139, but most recent studies seem to accept its historicity. See Parke 1985, Bernard 1985a, 123ff., and Pičikjan 1991.

18 There are, of course, more villains in the history. To quote one author with a markedly Indian bias, “the historian of India can regard him [Alexander] only as the precursor of these recognised scourges of mankind” (Mahmud of Ghazni, Tamerlan and Nadir Shah are meant). See Mookerji 1951, 53. At present, it is not my intention to go on recognising scourges.

19 This image is founded on Mediaeval Christian sources and on Islamic histories translated in Europe during the 17th and 18th centuries. In both cases he had a very bad press indeed.

20 This kind of tactics was not unknown to others, too, although the economic waste of massacre often restricted the extent of cruelty. In the wars between Greek city states killing men and selling women and children into slavery was a normal strategy aimed at eliminating a foe. Economically-minded Romans preferred slavery for all, but were acquainted with massacre, too. In India, Aśoka was shocked by the cruelty of the Kaliṅga war, and the Arthaśāstra 12, 1, 10ff. mentions the asuravijaya conquest.

to arrange his inheritance so that the empire did not break up after his death. In consequence, the conquered enjoyed the *pax Mongolica*, and for a long time Asian routes were safer than ever before (or after!).²¹ Further, there were no Parthians to spoil matters up for the Mongols, as far as this was in Hellenistic times not done, even without the Parthians, by the numerous wars between the successors of Alexander.

Let us consider a little further the traditions about Alexander as the great rogue of history. Some traces of this are found even in Hellenistic historiography.²² As was mentioned above, the first attempt to evaluate Alexander's career from an Eastern point of view took place among a number of Indian historians before the Second World War. Unfortunately, the results were not of very great use. The conclusion reached, that Indians fought back fiercely, and that the conquest of India was by no means an easy task, seems rather trivial, as this much is already clearly stated in primary sources and admitted by most serious historians. Why indeed should it not be admitted? Perhaps it was necessary to direct it against some Imperial scholars (like Vincent Smith). On the other hand, one has the impression that these Indian scholars somehow identified Alexander, as a Western conqueror, with the British colonial power in India. This perhaps explains such irrelevant passages where the "valour" or "gallantry" of Alexander is compared unfavourably (and wholly anachronistically) with that of his Indian opponents, or where an attempt is made to uncover nationalistic feelings or to find fault with their absence among the Indians of the fourth century B.C.²³

A more bold hypothesis on the same lines was attempted in 1938 by H. C. Seth. On weak evidence (the Ethiopian Alexander Romance) he suggested that Porus actually defeated Alexander and compelled him to retreat from India. Although this theory was not accepted at that time even by his more sober compatriots, it has found some support among a new generation of Indian scholars.²⁴ One of the main arguments of this theory was the claim that the Greek historians, as obdurate Western colonialists, unanimously distorted the history.²⁵ This is, of course, impossible. We have already pointed out that there was also an anti-Macedonian trend of Hellenistic historiography, which denounced Alexander, but while his motives are brought into question and his actual deeds are sometimes heavily criticized,²⁶ the extent of his military achievements was never called into question. There was also the tradition of the "flatterers of Alexander", and the Macedonian conqueror was often ascribed, and not only in such a spurious tradition as

²¹ On the *pax Mongolica* see e.g. Franke 1969 (with criticism of exaggerated use of this concept).

²² Ehippus and Nicobule, see chapter I above and Pearson 1960, 61ff.

²³ See e.g. Kumar 1937 and Tripathi 1940.

²⁴ It was condemned e.g. by Tripathi 1940, 545, note 37, but again repeated e.g. by Chattopadhyaya 1974, 21f. (cf. Karttunen 1989a, 58, note 421). For a more sober approach on the Indian side (but still with the anachronistic notion of patriotism) see Narain 1965.

²⁵ One is here bound to ask whether this kind of argument really belongs to the field of history, or perhaps rather to psychology. There are sad examples of people believing in forgeries of history unanimously committed. Leaving out some more individual (and sometimes tragic) cases, I refer only to those people who, and some of them probably in all sincerity, attempt to deny the Holocaust during the Second World War.

²⁶ See Fisch 1937, 140ff. on Peripatetic criticism of Alexander.

the *Alexander Romance*, with much greater conquests in India, extending as far as the Ganges and even Pāṭaliputra.²⁷

There is no need to discuss such ideas at greater length. But there is still some reason to modify the traditional conception of Alexander's accomplishments. Some recent studies have rightly pointed out that his eastern policy was more or less a failure, and he did not live long enough to amend it. The eastern provinces of the Achaemenid empire were no Gallia (and even Caesar had there much more to do before conquering than just coming and seeing),²⁸ a rapid attack and victory in the field could not pacify the country. After initial success in the northeast (Bactria–Sogdiana), Alexander had to fight long and hard in order to come out as the victor.

It has been suggested that Alexander's policy of founding military colonies, quite successful elsewhere, was here perhaps the root of difficulties.²⁹ Colonists made every effort to retire from what they apparently found extremely inhospitable lands. Repeated uprisings by the more or less forced colonists, longing for Greek customs and manners,³⁰ show their deep discontent with the colonies, which apparently were just strategic bases (*freni domitarum gentium*) more or less under direct royal administration. There is no evidence that these eastern bases were given any of the traditional rights of autonomy characteristic of the Greek poleis. In order to win over opinion in Greece to their side many of Alexander's successors took a much more liberal attitude to the traditional liberty of Greek cities and this might have to some extent been extended to what Tarn called the Farther East,³¹ too. On the other hand, they had too much to do in fighting for the more important (at least to them) European and Near Eastern dominions to give much thought to remote eastern provinces. When Seleucus finally emerged as the ruler of the Persian lands, he could for a while establish himself in the Northeast, but apparently his hold was never very firm. Under his successors Bactria, and soon Parthia too, seceded.

What was achieved depended very much on the policy Seleucus adopted. Alexander's attempts to draw his Graeco-Macedonian and Persian subjects closer did not succeed very well. Most of his own men were in constant opposition, and while it was probably necessary to adopt some of the Persian court etiquette in order to rule the Persians, this was a

²⁷ See below in II.3.

²⁸ Of course, I know well that the anecdote is in fact connected with a victory during the civil war, not with the Gallian conquests.

²⁹ Holt 1989. On the background to Alexander's foundations see Jähne 1992.

³⁰ Diodorus 18, 7, 1 ποθοῦντες μὲν τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν ἀγωγὴν καὶ διαίταν. Jähne 1992, 171f. points out that there is no evidence at all of colonists coming directly from the West, only of veterans and other replaceable people in and around Alexander's army supplemented by a large proportion of local people (synoecismus). A somewhat different viewpoint is given in Bernard 1985, 127ff.

³¹ Later there were Hellenistic colonists in Bactria (Ai Khanum). Were they still descendants of Alexander's colonists or a new settlement of the Seleucids? In any case, Ai Khanum has all the characteristics of a Greek polis (see VI.4 below). Another centre with Greek population certainly hailing from the fourth century was Kandahar. See further Holt 1989, 62f. (Ai Khanum), 87ff. (colonies in general), and 102 (Kandahar). Narain 1957 with his theory of a strong Greek population, who were settled there by the Achaemenids, but left hardly any traces in history before popping up as founders of the Graeco-Bactrian kingdom, is hardly acceptable. Cf. Bernard 1985a, 23ff.

source of constant chagrin to Greeks and especially to Macedonians. A Macedonian king was the leader of an army, consisting of free soldiers, and he was also dependent on their support. These soldiers did not like to see their king transformed into a Persian monarch, whose power was unlimited and who was entitled to god-like honours (*proskynesis*). They were, after all, not conquering an empire for themselves, but they just wanted to eliminate the old enemy and then return home as rich men with as great spoils as possible. The marriages arranged by Alexander between his officers and Persian noblewomen were all dissolved after his death. All but one. Seleucus kept Apama, who was to give birth to Antiochus I, and with her the Persian court etiquette. As a daughter of Bactrian nobleman (Spitamenes) Apama's position as the queen probably helped Seleucus to keep the North-east, at least for a while.³²

In India Alexander's situation was still worse.³³ Even at the beginning there was no rapid victory, and eventually he had to fight hard with most of the tribes.³⁴ And when the army went forward, many subjugated tribes rebelled again.³⁵ Probably it would have demanded several years of hard campaigning to subjugate them definitively, just as happened in Bactria–Sogdiana, but now the troops were completely exhausted from continuous warfare. That Alexander could establish some kind of supremacy in North-west India, even when he was himself no longer on the scene, depended very much on his few loyal and powerful Indian allies (Porus and Taxiles). Probably Alexander understood the situation very well, and so did Seleucus, too, when he established himself as Alexander's heir in the eastern provinces. With his hands full in the West, he simply could not afford the effort required to keep India. For him, the treaty with Candragupta was probably a very handy way of resolving the situation.

In spite of all this, the significance of Alexander's campaigns should not be underestimated. For India it extended only to the Northwest, and was soon forgotten.³⁶ But for the West the situation was different. In a way, the Indian expedition was really the culmination of a turning-point in Greek history. Rather the same could also be stated for the Near East and Iran. For Indian history, granted, it was much less, but not non-existent. Even if we do not ascribe it to his deliberate planning, in waste areas of Asia the final result of the process initiated by him was a long period of Hellenistic culture, of exchange and interaction between various civilizations, and this was clearly felt even in India (see further chapter VI). The world was no longer the same as it was before.

³² For a very long time the Seleucids had no success in this. Probably they were torn, as was Alexander, between the differing interests of Greek settlers and Iranian landowners. See also Tam 1951, 55, and Holt 1989, 100.

³³ This passage follows mainly Bosworth 1983.

³⁴ After e.g. McCrindle 1896, 350 this has been much emphasized by Indian historians, for instance Ray 1923, Tripathi 1940 (who, because of contrast, commits the error of claiming that Alexander met no difficulties in conquering Bactria–Sogdiana) and Narain 1965.

³⁵ E.g. Assaceniens, Arrianus, *Anab.* 5, 20, 7.

³⁶ Cf. e.g. Narain 1965 and 1992a, and even Smith 1904. Tam (1948, 142) speculated about the possibility of Alexander's example having inspired Candragupta Maurya (also Wheeler 1968, 128) and perhaps even the Han dynasty of China.

2. The Heritage of Wonder Stories

The old “knowledge” of India in the Greek West is represented by such authors as Scylax of Caryanda, Hecataeus of Miletus, Herodotus of Halicarnassus and Ctesias of Cnidus. As for all of them full discussion and references are given in Karttunen 1989a, we can here restrict ourselves to such points where this literary heritage influenced the thinking and observation of Alexander’s companions, especially of those men who wrote accounts of his Indian campaign. They were not, as we often tend to think, penetrating into the unknown. India already existed for them in many ways as a traditional image, not necessarily too much related to reality, but nevertheless guiding their way of observing it.³⁷ It even seems likely that the existing literature on India was consulted during the campaign. At least, this was done later, when the histories were written.³⁸

Of course, this does not mean that the historians of Alexander somehow gave a false account of India (or the part of India they saw). Mostly they told what they saw or heard from others during the Indian campaign, but at the same time they also interpreted it in the light of existing knowledge. In a way it was not very different from our habit of using travel guides and even attempting to find some background information about the countries where we travel. A nice parallel for this is found in the late 15th century. When Columbus sailed to his “India”, he had carefully studied the classical accounts of India (and those written by a few mediaeval travellers), and with the help of the information they provided tried to identify the islands he found in the Caribbean. Even the fabulous peoples he was able to locate in some more remote islands.³⁹

One essential side of the early literary (and probably also popular, folkloristic) image was the India of primitivistic idealization. This was a purely Greek conception, and had little to do with any actual knowledge.⁴⁰ Simple customs – virtuous, but at the same time primitive – natural wisdom and righteousness were part of this conception as were also the great fertility and abundance of nature, which yielded its fruits without labour, and the exceptional richness of the soil. The righteous barbarians of India – their kin are also met elsewhere – described by Herodotus and Ctesias have nothing to do with such Indian concepts as *vanaprastha*, *pravrajya* and *dharma*.⁴¹ Their real kinsmen are found in Greek

³⁷ Cf. Strabo 15, 1, 5. For a more general theme, Alexander enacting roles of Greek tradition, and historians giving him still more such roles, see Pearson 1960, 8ff.

³⁸ Strabo 15, 1, 26 states that about India Alexander had received many but obscure reports from a variety of sources.

³⁹ Laufer 1931.

⁴⁰ That some elements of this image were originally drawn from actual knowledge, does not make any difference for the period of Alexander or for any later influence it had. I have discussed such elements fully in Karttunen 1989a.

⁴¹ Many scholars have yielded to the temptation to see here a real connection. See e.g. Lassen 1874, 640 (1852, 635f.), Rawlinson 1926, 22f., Schwarz 1980, 79f., Vofchuk 1982ab, and Puskás 1983, 204f. In this context it must again be emphasized that the vegetarian tribe of India in Herodotus 3,

accounts (e.g. in Herodotus) of other ends of the known world, of Scythia, Germania, Libya, Ethiopia and Arabia.

Bearing this Western tradition in mind we see that even the wise men of India, met by Alexander's men in Taxila, could have a clearly Greek background, too, underlined further by the Cynic interpretation they received from Onesicritus (see chapter II.6). In the country of Musicanus, Onesicritus found his own Utopia, again much on traditional (Greek) lines, and the unwritten laws of Nearchus, as real as they perhaps were, suited very well the theme of primitivistic idealization. Another Utopia was sometimes located in the land of Sopeithes in the Pañjab.⁴²

India was also the land of superlatives and marvels. Gold-digging ants, Pygmies, dog-heads etc. were reported as to be found in India. For Alexander's men this was part of the common knowledge about India. They were known to be there, and naturally they were also discovered or, at least, heard of. Even Nearchus (F 8ab) took the bait and reported the skins of gold-digging ants he had seen (but see also the criticism of Nearchus in Brown 1949). A parallel case is seen in the Amazons met by Alexander in Middle Asia (notwithstanding Lysimachus⁴³ – we see that at least not *all* really believed in wonders, and in literary embellishment).⁴⁴

It was not always easy to tell the difference. Alexander's men actually *could* verify several accounts of Ctesias in India. Among these were talking parrots, and even the factual Nearchus (F 9) was quite impressed. In the case of elephants Ctesias had given an account which at least was not too far from the reality. He also reported on many dangerous and poisonous snakes of India, and the truth of this posed quite a nuisance to Alexander's men. While all these were true, and the list might be extended, why not also such points as which could not be directly verified? Probably the dog-heads and the terrible martichora of Ctesias were living in some more distant place.

In the literature dealing with Alexander's campaigns these old stories gained new force and fresh interpretation. That India was fertile, as it was expected to be at least since Herodotus, was easy to observe on the spot. In Hellenistic science we find much speculation about this exceptional fertility, its causes and its effects (see IV.4 below). It was, for instance, supposed that the favourable climate had a positive influence on the inhabitants, who were supposedly taller and healthier than others. But only the "scientific" way of argumentation was new; the same had already been said of the Indians by Ctesias.

In this context we may also note a related feature: the propagandist use of Greek mythology during the eastern campaigns. The divine ancestors of Alexander, Heracles

100 had hardly anything to do with Indian ascetics, Buddhist or otherwise (see Karttunen 1988 and 1989a.).

⁴² On the land of Musicanus, see Strabo 15, 1, 34 (Onesicritus F 24f.; cf. Brown 1949 and Pearson 1960, 100ff.); on the land of Sopeithes, Strabo 15, 1, 30 (Onesicritus F 21), Diodorus 17, 91 and Curtius 9, 1, 24ff., cf. McCrindle 1896, 219, note 2.

⁴³ This famous anecdote is given by Plutarch, *Alexander* 46 (T 8 of Onesicritus in the *FGrH*) and Diodorus 17, 77 (from Cleitarchus?). See Pearson 1960, 13, 93, 164f. & 220f., Pédech 1984, 87ff., and Bosworth 1988a, 65f.

⁴⁴ Cf. Arrianus, *Anab.* 5, 4, 3f. for a critical account of marvels. Further Pearson 1960, 95f.

and Dionysus, preceded him as conquerors of India.⁴⁵ As expected, traces of their alleged presence were easily found (Mount Merus with vines and ivy, the Bacchic customs of Nysa,⁴⁶ the cave of Prometheus, the unconquerable rock Aornus, the Sibai with skins and clubs). It soon became an established "fact" that Indians should worship Heracles and Dionysus.

We may also note that the ancients themselves were quite conscious of the real nature of these traditions: They were made up by the so-called "flatterers of Alexander".⁴⁷ Especially in the case of Heracles, theologically- or religiously-minded authors mostly condemned them as spurious. Another popular explanation proposed several different Heracles and even Dionysuses. At the same time, the poets made no scruples about singing the praises of the Indian conquests of both.⁴⁸ A curious twist of things was the theory, perhaps offered by Megasthenes (in Diodorus 2, 38), deriving the Greek legend of Dionysus having being bred in his father's thigh (μηρός) as being made up only in imitation of the name of Mount Merus in the Paropamisadae.⁴⁹

In the accounts about Dionysus and Heracles in India one gets the clear impression that the Heracles tradition was considered less trustworthy. This is not remarkable. Both were great travellers, but even before the rise of Indian traditions Dionysus had been commonly associated with the far East (Bactria in Euripides). The Heracles of Greek legends certainly had freed Prometheus in a cave situated in the Caucasus (Aeschylus), but originally this was very far from the *Indian* Caucasus of the Macedonians (see IV.3 below), and Heracles himself more properly belonged to the far West, where he had achieved his greatest labour in the land of Atlas, and where the so-called Pillars of Heracles still bore his memory. In literature we occasionally find traces of parallelism between Heracles in the West and Dionysus in the East. Whilst the one had conquered the extreme West, the other had subjugated the extreme East, and also erected *his* pillars at the mouths of the Ganges, the easternmost end of Asia in the Eratosthenian system. In this conception Alexander with his altars at the Hyphasis and at the mouths of the Indus, was thus clearly second to Dionysus, whom he had dared to emulate; and for Heracles there was no more room in the East.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ Strabo 11, 5, 5. See Karttunen 1989a, further Goukowsky 1978. Both gods had always been known as great travellers, but before Alexander India was never mentioned in connection with their travels.

⁴⁶ Despite Arrianus, *Ind.* 1, 4f., who was merely speculating, there is no reason to make of Nysa an early Greek colony (like Narain 1957, et al.). See Karttunen 1989a. In *Anab.* 5, 1 Arrianus introduced his account of Nysa with λέγουσι, thus indicating that it comes from the Vulgate.

⁴⁷ Strabo 15, 1, 9. See also Arrianus *Anab.* 4, 28, 2; 5, 3, 1ff. (from Eratosthenes) & *Ind.* 5, 8ff.

⁴⁸ On Heracles, see Strabo and Arrianus as quoted above in note 47; on Dionysus, Arrianus, *Anab.* 5, 1, and Diodorus 3, 63; for poets, Breloer & Bomer 1939 (index). Later the old confusion between India and Ethiopia brought a third Greek hero to India, see e.g. André & Filliozat 1986, index s.v. Perseus.

⁴⁹ *Meru*, famous in Indian mythic cosmography, is still found as an element in the names of some northwestern mountains. See Hinüber 1985, 1083.

⁵⁰ Dionysus' pillars in Dionysius Perieg. 623ff. (cf. Reinaud 1863, 150). In the 2nd century A.D. Aelius Aristides (41, 8) let Dionysus conquer India and Etruria, i.e. the east and the west.

A related theme was the stories of ancient expeditions to India like those of Cyrus⁵¹ and Semiramis (the first account by Ctesias, then in different versions).⁵² Partly we have here to do with ancient Near Eastern traditions reflected in Greek sources. Stories about great conquerors from the half-forgotten past were common, and originally these conquerors were not supposed to have reached India, which was still nearly unknown. In addition to Cyrus and Semiramis, we may quote such names as Sesostris, Tearcon and Idanthysus. With them, however, it was often expressly stated that although they were great conquerors, they did not reach India.⁵³ But they were described as world conquerors, and when the world expanded into something wider, their conquests, too, tended to expand, exactly as happened with Heracles and Dionysus.

Of course, the legends about the conquests of Greek gods and heroes belong in the same category as those of ancient Near Eastern monarchs, the difference existed only to the Greeks. For them, Heracles and Dionysus were *Greek* world conquerors. The parallel is not, of course, complete. It has been suggested that the Eastern stories of great conquerors of the past became popular in the Achaemenid period, when once such great peoples as the Egyptians, Assyrians and Babylonians were subject to the empire. A line which we would like to draw between purely mythical and history-based legends, between Heracles and Dionysus on the one hand, and Cyrus etc. on the other hand, did not exist for the Greeks.

Mostly these stories contain some kind of historical kernel, but often this history is hopelessly confused. Cyrus was the founder of the Achaemenid Empire, for Herodotus still a historical person, but soon shrouded in legend. Behind Semiramis lies a vague memory of the Assyrian queen Shammu-ramat, but the legend contains very little of her actual history (see Eilers 1971). In the legend of Sesostris, an earlier version of which was told by Herodotus, vague reminiscences of the real Sesostris and of Ramses the Great were mingled together. Tearcon or Tearcus was Tirhaqa (Taharka?), an Ethiopian (or Nubian?) conqueror, who ruled Egypt in the 7th century B.C., but who was in fact vanquished by the Assyrians. Idanthysus was remembered as the Scythian conqueror of the 7th (?) century. Classical historians were speculating about these traditions, but often we also hear the opposite: "India was never conquered save by Dionysus and Heracles",⁵⁴ and they were Greek heroes.

⁵¹ With a possible historical kernel, see Karttunen 1989a, 33f.

⁵² Strabo 15, 1, 5f, and 15, 2, 5; Arrianus, *Anab.* 6, 24, 2f. and *Ind.* 5, 4ff. & 9, 10f. See Brown 1955, 24ff. Arrianus, *Ind.* 1, 3 made the Assyrians and Medians rulers of the Paropamisadae. Daffinà 1990 shows rather convincingly that the account in Diodorus 2, 16–20 has been remodelled according to Alexander's history and is thus only partly derived from Ctesias. In 2, 7, 3 Diodorus actually referred to Alexander's historians in connection with the Babylon of Semiramis.

⁵³ Diodorus 1, 55, 2–4 makes Sesoësis actually attack India with his navy, proceed to cross the Ganges, and reach the eastern Ocean. For all these mythical conquerors see Borszák 1976, for Sesostris also Gunderson 1980, 22f., and Zambrini 1985, 791f.

⁵⁴ Megasthenes F 11a (Strabo 15, 1, 6). Later tradition (Ps.-Apollodorus, *Bibl.* 1, 9, 28) added to the list of mythical conquerors Medus, the son of Medeia and the (Greek) mythical founder of Media, who is said to have died during the march on India.

In the time of Alexander, historical sense was still rather vague. The real Indian conquest by Darius is never mentioned in the extant literature on Alexander. Was it actually remembered? Strabo (15, 1, 6) denies that the Persians ever conquered India. Herodotus' History was known, of course, but was he read so carefully? – with ancient books it was not so easy to check and make reference, and even he mentioned the Indian conquest very briefly (4, 44). Persian archives – if there were such still preserved, and if they were obtained by Alexander, and if they were then used (quite a lot of if's, and our evidence is rather conjectural) – were probably not so useful in historical studies. At least not for the Greeks.

3. The Macedonians on New Paths

Now we must consider the conquered and the conquerors themselves. The army which was led to India was really heterogenous. Its nucleus, headed by Alexander himself and a majority of his officers, consisted of Macedonians, members of this half-civilized, half-Greek (but already Greek-speaking) people living to the north of Greece. In Greece the pro-Macedonian party accepted them as Greeks (Hellenes), while their antagonists attempted to brand them as mere barbarians.⁵⁵ This was not very successful – in addition to language the Macedonians also professed Greek religion – and it is rather misleading that some modern historians of India have emphasized the supposed non-Greek (Macedonian) character of Alexander's campaign.⁵⁶ In his propaganda Alexander made much of the idea, propagated by Isocrates and others, of taking revenge on Persia for the Graeco-Persian wars of 150 years earlier and thus proclaimed his campaign a Greek venture.

⁵⁵ This dichotomy is well represented in the speeches of Isocrates and Demosthenes. The linguistic side of Greek ethnocentrism and the role of the Macedonians in it has been recently discussed by Leiwo 1996. As he rightly points out, the inclusion of the Macedonians had started at least as early as the early fifth century when the supposed descent of their royal house from Heracles was accepted and when they were admitted to the Olympic Games.

⁵⁶ In this connection I should like to answer the criticism of my earlier book (1989a) by Narain (1992b). He would like us to speak in ancient history not of countries but solely of peoples. With Greek and Roman sources this is rather difficult, as our sources themselves so often speak of countries. In addition, Greek and Greece are not only modern terms, and I would be very surprised to find an ancient historian really affected by the idea of the modern country and people so named. *Graecus* and *Graecia* were the Latin equivalents of Greek Hellen and Hellas. In English it is an established usage to use Latin forms (often in an anglicized form) for Greek names and as a non-English person I do not feel myself entitled to change it. I can only ask my Indologist readers to forget modern Greece and especially to forget where its boundaries now lie. In a way, Professor Narain seems himself to think too much in terms of the modern names and boundaries. In a passage apparently meant to be ironical he states that if Macedonians are called Greeks, they might as well be called Yugoslavians (the country still existed), which would be absurd, as the latter name is a modern creation. One is bound to ask whether he is unaware that Macedonia was an ancient name and that the greater part of ancient Macedonia lay inside the borders of modern Greece. *Ancient Macedonia* has thus nothing to do with the former Yugoslavia.

Under Alexander's father Philip the Macedonians had conquered Greece, and this was a constant source of troubles during Alexander's campaigns, as the army also contained many Greek contingents. In addition, there were many other peoples represented. There were light-armed Thracians and Carians, Phoenicians accustomed to the sea, Cypriotes and Egyptians. Even the most recent conquests had their share in the army as the place left vacant by demobilized troops – either sent home or left in newly-founded colonies – was filled by Persians and Bactrians. Soon there were Indians, too, beginning with a contingent from Nysa in the Paropamisadae.

Bactria had been difficult enough to subjugate and India proved to be still more difficult. Kings such as Taxiles and Porus were conquered with more or less ease, and became trusted allies, but tribal societies put up desperate resistance, and were conquered only with the utmost effort. Some scholars have pointed out that Alexander was unable to understand this kind of government.⁵⁷ The journey home, even to the more familiar West, was still longer than from Bactria, and we may suppose that the settlers in Alexander's probably small Indian foundations were no happier than those in Bactria. In the end, Bactria and Arachosia remained Greek (in the sense that they contained a sedentary Greek population), but we have no corresponding evidence for India. In later times Bucephala seems to have existed, but it might well have been a refoundation by the Indo-Greeks.

Next we must consider the country and peoples conquered by Alexander during his Indian campaigns. There are various problems involved. The country itself, the India of the Alexander literature, was not the same as the Āryāvarta of the Sanskrit sources. In many respects Northwest India still formed a separate entity.⁵⁸ In the western part there were also clear Iranian elements to be seen, e.g. in Taxila (in Aristobulus' account).⁵⁹ An important part of this country was held by the Ἀυτόνομοι Ἰνδοί of the Pañjab and Sind, the so-called Gaṇas or tribal states. The Cathaeans,⁶⁰ the Oxydracae, and the Mallians⁶¹ were said to be the three most prominent among them (Arrianus, *Anabasis* 5, 22, 1f.).

⁵⁷ So was apparently Plutarch, too, in his elaborate account of Alexander's being wounded among the Malli (*De Alex. virt.* 2, 343E & 344A). His point is to emphasize the fickleness of fortune: for Alexander it would have been no shame to die at the Hydaspes fighting against Porus, but now he was cast into an insignificant and barbarous place (εἰς χωρίον ἄσημον καὶ βάρβαρον), and within the walls of an obscure hamlet in a far-off land beside a barbarous river (ἐν ἐσχατιᾷ βαρβάρου παραποταμίας καὶ τείχεσιν ἀδόξου πόλιχνης). With less rhetoric, the stronghold of the Malli is still called a small town (πολίχνη, *ignobilis vicus*) by Strabo 15, 1, 33 and Curtius 9, 6, 11. The latter passage, part of Craterus' speech to Alexander, is perhaps the original context and the belittling seems to be due to rhetorical effect. Cf. Eggermont 1993, 69.

⁵⁸ This has been fully discussed by me in Karttunen 1989a.

⁵⁹ F 42 in Strabo 15, 1, 62, cf. Karttunen 1989a, 223ff.

⁶⁰ The name Cathaei (Καθαίοι, Arrianus, *Anab.* 5, 22) has been variously compared with Kṣatriya (e.g. McCrindle 1896, 347; perhaps the same as Rājanya known as a Pañjab people), with Kṣattri (a mixed caste, Lassen 1874, 167 = 1852, 158), with Kathiawar (where they supposedly had migrated, Rawlinson 1926, 59), and with the Vedic school of the Kāṇhakas (Hinüber 1985, 1095, Witzel 1987, 181f.). It is somewhat curious to find the Vedic school as a people, but there are other, and more convincing, instances such as Καμβισθόλοι < Kāpiṣṭhala and Μαδυανδῖνοι < Mādhyandina. The identity of the two other peoples offers no great problems, despite textual variants. On the Cathaei see further Anspach 1902, 30f., note 219, and Kroll 1919.

From Nearchus (F 11 in Arrianus, *Indica* 16, 6ff.) we have an account of Indian arms and weapons. These include long bows, javelins, broad and long swords (cf. Ctesias F 45, 9 on Indian swords), small shields of raw hide. While the Indians serving in the Persian army (Herodotus 7, 65) had reed bows, the long and strong Indian bow soon became famous, and in later Western literature Indians are often mentioned as a nation of archers (cf. VI.1 below). In India this long bow is often attested in later literature (epics) and art (on Gupta coins only, the bows depicted in Sāncī are smaller). In epic battle scenes the bow seems to be much more important than the sword.⁶² Horsemen use lance-like javelins and very small shields. Nearchus describes their bridles, too. Unfortunately, Herodotus (7, 86) only says that Indian cavalry had arms similar to infantry.

It is interesting to note the relation between the names of tribes and places, and the corresponding names of kings. This is not an uncommon feature, for instance in the *Mahābhārata* such names are often found as vṛddhi formations, which is further confirmed by a rule of Pāṇini.⁶³ When we attempt to explain the names given in Greek sources, it is important to keep in mind that they should preferably be compared with early MIA (and not OIA) forms,⁶⁴ and in Alexander's histories, dealing with the northwestern country, we must also count on possible Iranian influence. The country or a part of it had been ruled by the Achaemenids, which had undoubtedly left some traces. The interpreters used by Alexander were probably Iranians, and it might be due to them that many place names seem to have an Iranian form.⁶⁵

Thus we have Alexander's faithful ally King Taxiles (Ταξιίλης) ruling in Taxila (Τάξιλα; OIA Takṣaśilā),⁶⁶ with a personal name variously given as *Omphis* or

⁶¹ The identity of these two peoples poses no great problems, despite textual variants. While the name of the Μαλλοί is rather uniformly transmitted, to Arrianus' Ὀξυδράκται (*Anab.* 5, 22, 2; 6, 11, 3 etc.) we can quote Greek Συδράκται attested in Strabo 15, 1, 8 (but with v.l. Ὀξυδράκται) and Οὐδράκται in Arrianus, *Ind.* 4, 9 (in editions often emended to Ὀξυδράκται or Συδράκται), and Συδράκται in Diodorus 17, 98, 1; in Latin *Sudrae* in Curtius 9, 4, 15 etc., *Sydraci* in Pliny 6, 25, 92, *Sugambri* (a well-known Germanic people) in Justinus 12, 9, 3, and *Oxidragae* in the *Epit. Mett.* 78. In India the twin peoples Kṣudrakamālava and their army (*senā*) are mentioned as early as the 2nd century B.C. by Patañjali (*Mahābhāṣya* 4, 2, 45), and then in the *Mahābhārata* (e.g. 2, 48, 14, and 6, 47, 16). Though there is some geographical difficulty involved (the Mālavas were later living in Malwa in Central India) this identification was noted early and accepted by most scholars (e.g. Lassen 1874, 167 = 1852, 158, McCrindle 1896, 350f.; Smith 1903, 686, Tripathi 1940, 555, Stein 1942, 2024ff., especially 2030, Das Gupta 1966, 1ff., and Hinüber 1985, 1101. A different explanation by Eggermont 1993, 24f., 67 & 88, as Śatadruja and Madra is clearly inferior. Both Kṣudraka (Handa 1975) and Mālava (Das Gupta 1966) are attested by their coins.

⁶² See Hinüber 1985, 1126f. on possible Indian parallels for all these arms.

⁶³ P. 4, 1, 168. Cf. P. 4, 1, 170 & 174, and Lévi 1890a, 234f. and Stein 1920, 117. In the *Mahābhārata* Nala is called Naiśadha, the king of the Niśadhas, and in the South the dynastic name Śātavāhana was also used as a personal name. The same principle applied to women, too. For instance, the wife of Dhṛtarāṣṭra, a daughter of the king of Gandhāra, was known as Gāndhārī.

⁶⁴ While early identifications (by Lassen et al.) were mostly founded on OIA, this has been emphasized by Franke 1893 and 1902, more recently by Hinüber 1985.

⁶⁵ So the rivers Hydaspes, Hydraotes, Hyphasis/Hypanis, while Pliny and Ptolemy knew pure Indian forms for the same. See IV.4 below.

⁶⁶ He is often mentioned as Taxiles (without any personal name) by Arrianus, occasionally also by the authors of the Vulgate. See Berve 1926 and Stein 1934 for references, also Brunt 1983, 471f.

Mophis.⁶⁷ Curtius asserted that Taxiles was a hereditary name for the rulers of Taxila, and that Omphis had only just adopted it.⁶⁸ The people is called by Pliny the *Taxilae* (6, 23, 78 *cum urbe celebri*). The curious contraction in the middle of MIA (Pāli) *Takkhasilā* giving **Taksilā* could perhaps be due to the careless spelling of a foreign name, perhaps already established by Achaemenids and now adopted in Greek.⁶⁹

Taxiles' northern neighbour between the upper courses of the Indus and the Hydaspes was Abisares (Ἀβισάρης),⁷⁰ the king of the Abisaroi, clearly the same as the people of Abhisāras in the *Mahābhārata*. In Greek sources the people is mentioned by name by Arrianus (*Indica* 4, 12 Ἀβισσαρεῖς), in Latin by Pliny (6, 23, 77 *Abisari* Detl. for *abisuri* codd.).

West of the Indus Alexander fought against King Assacenus (Ἀσσακάνος),⁷¹ who ruled the Assacenoī (OIA *Aśvakāyana* as MIA **Assakāna*). With this OIA *Aśvakāyana*⁷² we can also explain Pliny's *Aspagani* (6, 23, 79) as the Northwestern MIA (Gāndhārī, with *śp/sp* < *śv*) form of the name. Another possibility is perhaps an Iranian form (Av. *aspa* 'horse', cf. Iranian forms for Pañjab rivers). In both cases the preference given by some scholars to the variant *Astacani* falls down.⁷³

Still further to the west King Cophaeus (Κωφαῖος) ruled the land on the upper course of the Cophes (Kabul).⁷⁴ His name, however, seems to be a Greek formation from the geographical name (OIA *Kubhā* for the river). Perhaps we have here an OIA *vṛddhi*

⁶⁷ Μῶφης in Diodorus 17, 86, 4, *Omphis* in Curtius 8, 12, 4 & 12 & 14; see also McCrindle 1896, 59, note 3. Lévi 1890b explained this as Āmbhi, but see criticism in Stein 1934, 78f. Stein prefers Mōphis as it is supported by *Mothis* of the *Epit. Mett.* 52. After an analysis still worth reading Breloer (1941b) ended up with the unacceptable OIA *amātya* 'minister', which he explains as a kind of honorific title, concluding with the confession that its exact meaning is unknown! This should be accepted as an explanation for what is expressly given as a personal name.

⁶⁸ Curtius 8, 12, 14 *sumpsit... more gentis suae nomen quod patris fuerat; Taxilen appellavere populares, sequente nomine imperium in quemcumque transiret*. Cf. *Epit. Mett.* 52 *Mothis, rex Indorum, qui postea Taxiles appellatus est*. Diodorus made Alexander grant him the name Taxiles, but Alexander was hardly needed to confirm an established local custom (McCrindle 1896, 59, note 3).

⁶⁹ It seems that a closer parallel to Greek Taxila is actually found in Indian sources, although never noticed in this connection. In an e-mail message in February 1997 Richard Salomon informed me that the name is spelled as Takṣaila both in a new Kharoṣṭhī manuscript and at least in one inscription. I heartily thank Professor Salomon for this interesting information.

⁷⁰ Often in Arrianus, *Anab.*, and Curtius; further in Strabo 15, 1, 28 and Diodorus 17, 87, 2 (as *Embisarus*). *Abissares* in the *Epit. Mett.* 56. See also Lassen 1874, 154f. (1852, 146), McCrindle 1896, 69, note 3, and 1901, 34, note 2, and Berve 1926.

⁷¹ Mentioned in Strabo 15, 1, 27; Curtius 8, 10, 22; and Arrianus, *Anab.* 4, 30, 5. A likely emendation changes Musicanus of Strabo 15, 1, 17 into Assacenus. See Berve 1926.

⁷² The name seems never to be directly attested in OIA. However, Pāṇini (4, 1, 99) teaches the suffix *-āyana* (*phak*) for gotra names, though *aśvaka* only comes as the 75th in the Gaṇa list of 84 such names. In P. 4, 1, 110 the sūtra itself names *aśvāyana* from *aśva*. See Tucci 1963. On *Aśmaka*, a late name perhaps wrongly derived from MIA *Assaka*, see Hinüber 1985, 1081f.

⁷³ E.g. Charpentier 1927, 119. The *Assaceni* and the *Astacenoī* have often been interpreted as different peoples. See also Tomaschek 1896, Marquart 1907, 247, André & Filliozat 1980, and 108 Hinüber 1985, 1081; and Hinüber 1986, 29 for NW MIA *śp/sp*.

⁷⁴ Arrianus, *Anab.* 4, 27, 4, cf. Ἀσσαγέτης of 4, 28, 6. Berve 1926.

formation for OIA Kubhā: *kaubh- > MIA *kobh-. The same name may also lie behind that of King Acuphis (Ἀκουφίς) of Nysa.⁷⁵

Perhaps we can here include Porus (Πῶρος) as OIA *Paurava* (MIA *Pora[va]*) as the king of the Puru country.⁷⁶ He is often mentioned in all longer accounts of Alexander's history, and became quite a famous person in Western tradition. A hardly acceptable theory claims that Porus corresponds to OIA *Parvataka*.⁷⁷ Occasionally Πῶρος is also met with as a Greek name (Diodorus 16, 15, 1 and 16, 2, 1, cf. Berve 1926), but here we seem to have an exact rendering of the famous dynastic name *Paurava*. In Indian literature there are numerous examples of this kind of dynastic (originally patronymic) name used for rulers instead of their personal names. In addition to the well-attested *Paurava*, the epics know e.g. *Bhārata*, *Kaurava*, *Pāṇḍava*, *Rāghava* (from *Bharata*, *Kuru*, *Pāṇḍu*, and *Raghu*).

In the lower Indus country the people ruled by Musicanus (Μουσικανός)⁷⁸ is called *Musicanī* by Curtius, though other historians of Alexander always speak of the land of Musicanus.

Somewhat later we have a further case. According to Megasthenes, the Maurya emperor Sandracottus (Σανδράκοττος; probably an early MIA form for OIA Candragupta) was also called Palibothrus (Παλίβοθρος) after his capital.⁷⁹ The name of the town, OIA *Pāṭaliputra*, is variously written as Παλιβόθρα (Strabo, Pliny and Ptolemy) or Παλίμβοθρα (Arrianus, *Ind.* 10, 5).⁸⁰ As an intervocalic -ṭ- is not supposed to disappear in MIA (cf. *Pāli Pāṭaliputta*), the Greek form cannot be directly derived from attested Indo-Aryan forms.

⁷⁵ Arrianus, *Anab.* 5, 1, 3 & 5, 2, 4; Plutarch, *Al.* 58. Berve 1926.

⁷⁶ On the name, see Lassen 1874, 154 (1852, 146), Hinüber 1985, 1102, for references Berve 1926 and Brunt 1983, 472f. For a curiosity concerning Porus, see Schwarz 1970, 281, note 82, and 1972, 101. There was another Porus, the "bad" one, sometimes called a nephew of the great Porus, ruling east of the Ravi (Arrianus, *Anab.* 5, 20, 6; 5, 21, 2f. & 5; Strabo 15, 1, 30; Diodorus 17, 91), and perhaps a later one in the time of Augustus (Strabo 15, 1, 4 and 73).

⁷⁷ Suggested by Seth 1941, accepted by Tam 1951, 46, and as a possibility by Narain 1965, 162, note. *Parvataka* is mentioned in Indian tradition as an ally of Candragupta Maurya. See *Mudrārākṣasa*, Hemacandra's *Pariśiṣṭaparvan*, and *Mahāvamsaśīkā*, where he is called Prince Pabbata. All these sources are rather late, but they represent the three different traditions on Candragupta, the Hindu, the Jaina, and the Buddhist. What is common to all three, must be, if not history, at least a very old tradition. Thus *Parvataka* may well be an authentic person in Candragupta's history, but this does not make him Porus. His name points to the mountains (in the *Mudrārākṣasa* he is also called *Parvateśvara* 'lord of mountains'), while Porus ruled on the plains. On equally slight grounds Prakash (1969) identified him with Abisares, but why should he necessarily be mentioned in Western sources, when even *Cāṇakya* is not?

⁷⁸ Onesicritus (F 24) in Strabo 15, 1, 34, Arrianus, *Anab.* 6, 15, 5; Curtius 9, 8, 8ff. With slight evidence Lassen (1874, 185) gives his people the OIA name *Mūsika*, which, however, belongs to the South and seems never to be attested as a Northwestern people (Dey s.v.). Berve 1926.

⁷⁹ Megasthenes F 18b (Strabo 15, 1, 35). Cf. Stein 1920, 117f., and Schwarz 1970, 290.

⁸⁰ The Greek nasal can perhaps be explained from Greek *πάλιν*, though much later Chinese evidence seems perhaps to point to a nasal in India, too (Hinüber 1985, 1114). See also Mayrhofer, *KEWA*.

For other Indian kings mentioned in Western histories – such as Arsaces (Ἀρσάκης),⁸¹ a hyparch under Abisares, Sopeithes (Σωπείθης),⁸² and Phegeus (Φηγεύς or *Phegelas*)⁸³ in the Pañjab, and Oxycanus/Porticanus (Ὀξικανός/Πορτικᾶνος)⁸⁴ and Sambus (Σάμβος)⁸⁵ in Sind – we have no clear Indian parallels, though Lassen and others have proposed their suggestions and surmises. In later tradition we meet King Pandion of the Pandaeon country (Pāṇḍya) in South India⁸⁶ and his neighbour King Cerobothras, OIA *Kera(la)putra*.⁸⁷

Looking to the east – and forced to turn back. Much has been written about the mutiny at Hyphasis and the reasons for it. Alexander was pushing forward, but his soldiers were already weary of constant fighting and still more constant rains.⁸⁸ The Indian allies, Phegeus and Porus, told Alexander disquieting stories about the mighty Prasii and Gangaridae (the Prācyas and the Ganges people) with their large armies and numerous elephants.⁸⁹ Curtius and Diodorus agree on 20,000 cavalry, 200,000 infantry, and 2,000

⁸¹ Arrianus, *Anab.* 5, 29, 4f. Lassen (1874, 174 = 1852, 165) connected him with the toponym Uraśā and referred to the land Οὔρασα of Ptolemy (7, 1, 45) between the Indus and the Bidaspes. Berve 1926. Though the name may well represent some IA name, it is also well known as an Iranian (Parthian) royal name and this might have affected its form.

⁸² Arrianus, *Anab.* 6, 2, 2; Strabo 15, 1, 30; Diodorus 17, 91, 4ff.; Curtius 9, 1, 24ff. Lévi 1890, 237f. identified him as Saubhūti. On him see e.g. Anspach 1902, 35ff., note 234, and Berve 1926.

⁸³ Diodorus 17, 93, 1, and Curtius 9, 1, 36ff. Lévi (1890, 239f.) identified him as Bhagala. Berve 1926.

⁸⁴ Oxycanus in Arrianus, *Anab.* 6, 16, 1f., Porticanus in Strabo 15, 1, 33, Diodorus 17, 102, 5 and Curtius 9, 8, 11f. Berve 1926. Relying partly on a corrupt sentence in Curtius, which could contain the name *Praesti* for his people, Lassen (1874, 187 = 1852, 178) explained Porticanus as MIA Pārthika < Prāthika, a MIA vrddhi formation for OIA *prastha*. But this is a mere conjecture. Eggermont 1975, 11f. derives both from two place-names attested in Ptolemy 7, 1, 57f. in the Indus country: Azeica (with a v.l. Axica) and Pardabathra. This is at least better than Cunningham's old attempt (1871, 219f.) to explain ancient personal names with the help of modern place-names, but in the end the identification of this king remains unresolved.

⁸⁵ Arrianus, *Anab.* 6, 16, 3f.; as Σάβος in Diodorus 17, 102, 6f. and Strabo 15, 1, 33; Curtius 9, 8, 13 & 17; Σάββος in Plutarch *Al.* 64. Wilson's (1841, 205) and Lassen's (1874, 175) Śambhu. On him see Anspach 1903, 34f., notes 377f., and Berve 1926. With his usual contempt for phonetic accuracy Eggermont (1975, 16ff. and 144) connected Sambus/Sabbas/Sabus with the OIA Sibi people (MIA Sivi), and constructed a conjectural earlier history for the king as Barsaentes' ally Samaxus (on him see Berve 1926) and as Alexander's satrap. Better is Humbach's (1978b, 238) suggestion Sāmba (perhaps 'sun').

⁸⁶ See Strabo 15, 1, 4 on his embassy to Augustus. On Megasthenes' Πανδαίη see Hinüber 1985, 1110.

⁸⁷ *Periplus* 54 Κηροβότρας; Ptol. 7, 1, 81 Κηροβόθρας; Pliny 6, 26, 104 *Caelobothras*. See Wecker 1922 and André & Filliozat 1980, 137f.

⁸⁸ See McCrindle 1896, 126, note 2, and various histories on Alexander (Schachermayr 1973 etc.). Ray 1923 is mainly just a summary of material from McCrindle 1896. Cary 1949 claimed that the continuous heavy monsoon rains undermined Macedonian morale to the extent that Alexander can be said to have been in fact defeated by the climate.

⁸⁹ Without naming these peoples briefly in Arrianus, *Anab.* 5, 25, 1. The Prasii in Curtius 9, 2, 3 and *Epit. Mett.* 68. For them Diodorus 17, 93, 2 has Tabraesii, while Plutarch (*Al.* 62, 3) has Pra(i)sii. Later the same name frequently in Megasthenes, who asserted that Pali(m)bothra was situated in their district (F 18a in Arrianus, *Ind.* 10, 5 and 18b in Strabo). This was identified as OIA Prācyā

war chariots, only the number of elephants is given differently as 3,000 or 4,000. The *Epitome Mettensis* agree on other numbers, but that of the elephants is corrupt. Probably we have here a tradition going back at least to Cleitarchus (though of course it is not necessarily historically correct).⁹⁰

We can easily understand Phegeus' and Porus' motives here. Both kings had been reinstated on their thrones by Alexander, as vassal kings, true, but after Alexander had returned to the distant West they would be relatively free once more. And while it was indeed very much in Porus' interest that his powerful eastern neighbours, too, be subjugated, this interest was already fading. The march went on and on and all the time he was obliged to follow his new master.

Here we also seem to have a glimpse, even if irritatingly vague, of the Māgadhan realm of the Nandas.⁹¹ Before the rise of the much greater Maurya empire it might have seemed powerful enough. There are two different traditions concerning this king in the West, both clearly founded on Indian traditions. One is found in the account of Phegeus, where the king is variously called Agrammes, Xandrames, and Sacrames(?).⁹² We are told that the father of this king had been a barber, who had had an affair with the former queen and murdered her husband the king. Therefore his son, Xandrames, was despised by his people.⁹³ According to O. Stein, "the question whether these narratives deserve to be taken as historically true, can be answered by stating that there hardly exists any reason why they should be invented." Alexander did not campaign against this king, and his disparaging him in no way added to Alexander's fame. An interesting parallel is offered by Plutarch (*Alexander* 62, 9), who makes Candragupta say that "Alexander could easily have conquered India as the king was despised and hated by his subjects for the wickedness of his disposition and the meanness of his origin".

The second tradition is found in the Western version of the Candragupta legend in Justinus.⁹⁴ The young Candragupta here had to flee from the king, whom he later over-

as early as Schlegel 1829, 32. See also McCrindle 1877, 57 & 205 notes and 1896, 365f. The second name is not known in Indian sources. It is attested as Gandaridae in Greek (Diodorus 17, 93, 2 & 18, 6, 1, Gandaridae Plutarch, *Al.* 62, 3), as Gangaridae in Latin (Curtius 9, 2, 3 and *Epit. Mett.* 68). For both see Stein 1929, 355ff. and the long article Treidler 1954, 2548ff., for the latter also McCrindle 1896, 364f.

90 Plutarch (*Al.* 62), however, gives an exaggerated version: 80,000 cavalry, 8,000 chariots, 6,000 elephants. Exaggerated, of course, is Pseudo-Callisthenes, too.

91 In this passage I am mainly following Stein 1929, 355ff. See also Eggermont 1971, 88ff., Schwarz 1970, 267f. & 274ff. and 1972b, 88ff.

92 *Agrammes* in Curtius 9, 2, 3, Ξανδράμης in Diodorus 17, 93, 2, and *Sacram(es?)* in *Epit. Mett.* 68. For these Stein 1929, 357 suggested Nandrames. Wilson's early guess *Candramas* was already rejected by Lassen 1874, 211. See Kienast 1967. On Nandrus in Justinus 15, 4, 1 see below.

93 So Curtius and Diodorus, indirectly also Plutarch. See Stein 1929, 358f. about Indian evidence for Nanda being despised (with reference to *Viṣṇupurāṇa* 4, 24, 4 & *Bhāgavatapurāṇa* 12, 1, 7 on a śūdra mother, further *Bṛhatkathāmañjarī* 1, 121 and *Kathāsaritsāgara* 1, 4, 114; in Hemacandra's *Parīśiṣṭaparvan* 6, 231 son of a courtesan and a barber; perhaps also in Merutunga's *Therāvalī*). His humble origin as a barber's son again in Helladius (in Photius, *Bibl.* 279, 530a B.), who ascribed this to Porus (perhaps here understood as a generic name for an Indian king). Cf. also Dio Chrysostomus 64, 19 (Favorinus F 94) and Libanius, *Orat.* 57, 52 (again on Porus).

94 Justinus 15, 4, 12ff. Cf. VI.1 below and Schwarz 1978.

threw. This king was called, with the corrected lection (of the MSS., instead of *Alexandrum* of early editions), *Nandrum*.⁹⁵

A curious problem, not of Alexander's history, but of later literary tradition concerning Alexander, is the claim that Alexander actually reached the Ganges. Our serious historians do not mention this, but otherwise it is met with quite often. Its origin lies perhaps in the pseudo-historical collection of letters, as the first mention seems to be in Strabo's reference to a letter supposedly written by Craterus to his mother Antipatra.⁹⁶ Craterus, of all people, knew exactly how far Alexander had advanced, but the letter was probably a fiction, concocted on the model of Alexander's letter to Olympias. Plutarch tells us how Alexander's "soldiers refused to pass the Ganges, when they saw the opposite bank covered with the army of the king of the Praisians." This tradition was also accepted by Justinus and others.⁹⁷

It is perhaps significant to have a common point in this respect between Plutarch and Justinus. These two are also the authors who preserved some elements of the Candragupta legend (cf. VI.1) in the West. Perhaps they had a common source not shared by other authors following the Vulgate. At least Plutarch elsewhere, too, deviates from the normal Vulgate. As far as we know, all contemporary histories repeated the (true) story of Alexander being forced to turn back from the Hyphasis. If the Ganges was mentioned at all, it was part of the unreachable country beyond. The tradition of Alexander reaching it is probably not very early. It might have arisen from a comparison between Alexander and Menander.⁹⁸ The Indo-Greek king probably did reach the Ganges, but Western historians were sceptical and unwilling to accept that he had actually proceeded farther to the east than had Alexander. And yet history (perhaps Apollodorus of Artemita) claimed that he had reached the Ganges. From this it was not a long step to stating that Alexander had reached the Ganges.

We can pass quickly over the question of Alexander's intentions: whether his conquests were aimed at consolidating the Achaemenid Eastern border⁹⁹ or at subduing all the inhabited earth.¹⁰⁰ There is no evidence at all that Achaemenid power ever extended to the Pañjab. Of the Achaemenid background in the Northwest, there is very little to be seen in literature on Alexander. The use of the term hyparch in Arrianus (for Assacenus and

⁹⁵ First shown by Gutschmid 1857. Though he made it quite clear that he was superseding an editorial conjecture by a reading founded on MSS. evidence, most scholars have taken his lection as a mere emendation (even when accepting it, e.g. Stein 1929, 357). This has caused some hesitation finally suppressed by Trautmann 1970 (see also Bussagli 1956, 243ff.). Seel's edition 1935 reads *Nandrum*. The name *Nanda* seems to be attested in the West as early as an Elamite Persepolis Fortification Tablet in the form *hh.na-an-da* (see Schmitt 1988, 85).

⁹⁶ Strabo 15, 1, 35. Quoted in the *FGrH* as 721 F 11. On the letter collection see Merkelbach 1954.

⁹⁷ Plutarch, *Al.* 62; Justinus 12, 8 (does not mention the Ganges, but apparently follows the same tradition as Plutarch); Diodorus 2, 37 (hardly from Megasthenes) & 17, 108, 3; the *Periplus* 47; Lucanus, *Pharsalia* 10, 33. See also McCrindle 1896, 323 and Tarn 1951, 155.

⁹⁸ Strabo 11, 11, 1 and 15, 1, 3 shows that such a comparison was actually made.

⁹⁹ So Foucher 1938 & 1947, 254ff., Tarn 1948, 85ff. Tarn (1948, 129f.) emphasizes that at the end of other campaigns of his, too, Alexander had turned back without reaching the sea.

¹⁰⁰ See Karttunen 1989a, 57ff., and Narain 1965, 155f.

Taxiles) is inconclusive. Pliny (6, 26, 98) actually said that in the south Achaemenid rule did not extend to the mouths of the Indus. In archaeology, too, Achaemenid rule in India has left few traces, but the period is not very well attested in excavations.¹⁰¹

In addition to smaller material finds the most striking example is the presence of the Aramaic language and of the Aramaic-based Kharoṣṭhī script in Northwest India. Both are attested only in the Mauryan period (Aśoka), but it is rather improbable that Alexander brought Aramaic with him. Even this is just possible, in the form of the Persian chancellery he had adopted, and therefore we cannot be quite sure, but as Aramaic was the official language of the Achaemenid Empire, it is hardly thinkable that even the Indian provinces could have been ruled without it. Another feature probably due to Achaemenid influence is the beginning of the (punch marked) coinage, which seems to have its origins in Northwest India in the fifth century B.C.¹⁰² For archaeological evidence, see also chapter II.5 below.

It is often suggested, and is quite likely, that Achaemenid domination in India, established by Darius the Great in the late 6th century, had later waned into something merely nominal. Still, there were ties and communications to the West. In neighbouring Arachosia Achaemenid rule certainly lasted until the end of their empire. Some Indian troops and elephants fought, and fought well, under Darius Codomannus at Gaugamela.¹⁰³ Strabo (15, 1, 6) mentions Indian Hydracae (Oxydracae of the Pañjab?) serving as mercenaries in the Persian army. Barsaentes, the Achaemenid satrap of Arachosia fled to the Indians living on the western side of the Indus, but they seized him and sent him back to Alexander.¹⁰⁴ Taxiles contacted Alexander when he was still far from India.¹⁰⁵ The Indian Sisicottus had deserted to Bactria, and then served Alexander.¹⁰⁶ Arrianus used the subordinate term hyparch for Indian princes such as Taxiles; only Porus was called a king.

A few words must be said about the opposition of the Brahmans in Sind, although I have no new explanation to offer and no intention of entering a criticism of the conjectural hypotheses in Eggermont 1975. We may ask what was the exact position of Brahmans in the Northwest? They were instigating rebellion against Alexander,¹⁰⁷ but were they priests leading a national uprising? In Greek sources they seem to be a tribe! The city of the Brahmans is mentioned by Arrianus, and the country of the Brahmans with the town Harmatelia is referred to by Diodorus.¹⁰⁸ But so apparently were the Śūdras and the

¹⁰¹ For instance in Taxila, which was certainly an important place during the Achaemenid period, Marshall (1955, 677f.) could only report a few Persian seals found in the Bhir Mound and an Assyrian seal of the 7th or 6th century in a first-century A.D. building in Sirkap.

¹⁰² Cribb 1985, briefly also in Karttunen 1989a, 30f.

¹⁰³ Arrianus, *Anab.* 3, 8, 3f.; 3, 11, 5f.; 3, 13, 1; 3, 14, 5, and 3, 15, 1.

¹⁰⁴ Arrianus, *Anab.* 3, 25, 8. Perhaps Taxiles was involved.

¹⁰⁵ Diodorus 17, 86, 4, and Curtius 8, 12, 4f. Stein 1934, 82 denies the historicity of this contact.

¹⁰⁶ Arrianus, *Anab.* 4, 30, 4. On him see Berve 1926 and Charpentier 1928, 902.

¹⁰⁷ See Arrianus, *Anab.* 6, 16, 5 and 6, 17, 2.

¹⁰⁸ Arrianus, *Anab.* 6, 7, 4, cf. McCrindle 1896, 143, note 1; Diodorus 17, 103. See Schwarz 1980, 103ff.

Kṣatriyas, too, and this even in Indian sources. According to Indian sources, North-western Brahmans earned their living as soldiers.¹⁰⁹

In later classical sources Brahmans and philosophers were often confused. Plutarch calls the rebels philosophers (*Alexander* 59, 8) and Gymnosophistai (64). The well-known tradition of the questions Alexander posed to the Gymnosophistai¹¹⁰ is related to them, and not to the ascetics of Taxila.

It is often and understandably emphasized that Alexander's campaign left no traces in India.¹¹¹ This is not to be wondered at, but it is also not quite true. No traces of it are to be found in Indian literature. Chronologically, Greek rule was a brief episode, and it passed quickly away with the rise of the Mauryas. It is no wonder that our Indian sources do not mention Alexander: The truth is that we have hardly any contemporary (even in a broad sense) Indian sources interested in northwestern affairs, or, come to that, in history at all. The few extant sources which might be styled more or less contemporary are mostly concerned with religion or science (especially grammar), and historical references are scarce and accidental. Much more than Alexander is left out, and, as to that, material of much greater importance. Even of the mighty empire of the Mauryas, which at least was a really important period in Indian history, we learn very little from Indian sources, and even this little comes mainly from much later sources and is heavily wrapped up in legends.

On the other hand, the heritage of Alexander can occasionally be seen in Indian history. The most immediate result of his campaign was that it shattered the tribal stability of the Pañjab and the Indus country. It is often supposed that it was his campaign which pushed several tribes to move, so that we later find them in much more eastern regions.¹¹² But this is perhaps not so clear. We have no direct evidence of these migrations. Might it be that they were only due to the Indo-Greek (or even Parthian or Saka) conquests? One could also imagine some forgotten settlement policy of the Mauryas, perhaps learnt from the Achaemenids.¹¹³ Less likely is the suggestion that such peoples as the Mālavas and the Ābhīras came to the east as soldiers (mercenaries) of the Indo-Greek army in the second century B.C.¹¹⁴

In one case at least we have evidence that the tribe was still living in its original western home long after the time of Alexander. In addition to Western evidence,¹¹⁵ the existence of the Sibis is well attested in the Northwest, but also in Rajasthan, where for a

¹⁰⁹ Karttunen 1989a, 227f.

¹¹⁰ E.g. in Plutarch, *Al.* 64, then often in various versions of the Alexander legend.

¹¹¹ E.g. by Narain 1965, 162.

¹¹² Mālavas in Rajasthan and Malwa (Das Gupta 1966), Sibis in Rajasthan (see below), Ābhīras in Gujarat etc.

¹¹³ On supposed Achaemenid influence in Mauryan India see Karttunen 1989a, 55f. (with further references). Its main proponent was Wheeler (1968, 128ff. & 1974), earlier e.g. Rawlinson 1926, 63.

¹¹⁴ Tarn 1951, 171f., on hill tribes 239f.

¹¹⁵ Arrianus, *Ind.* 5, 12; Diodorus 17, 96, 1f.; Curtius 9, 4, 2f.; Strabo 15, 1, 33; etc. See Anspach 1903, 12, note 300, Wecker 1923, 2069f., and Eggermont 1993, 21ff.

while they had their own coinage.¹¹⁶ Unfortunately, we cannot say whether merely part of the tribe migrated to the east, while the rest kept their original lands. A place-name does not indicate that the people originally giving that name still existed in that place.

Another result was that it was probably the changed situation in the Northwest which made it possible for Candragupta to start his uprising there, and perhaps it also helped the Mauryas to annex this country to their empire (cf. VI.1 below). There has been much speculation about Alexander's possible influence as Candragupta's model for building an empire.¹¹⁷

However, a more important result even for India was that Alexander's campaign brought the Greeks (and Macedonians) to Asia, a development which resulted in the extension of Hellenistic civilization and economy from Libya to Bactria. While it must be emphasized that the creation of Hellenism was no deliberate intention of the Seleucids,¹¹⁸ the impact of both was clearly felt as far as India. And without Alexander, there would have been no Indo-Greeks, either.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁶ All the Indian evidence has been collected and presented by Dani (1964). On the one hand, in Baluchistan there is still a place called Sibi between Sukkur and Quetta, and in Mediaeval sources a region in Sind is called Siwistan. Sibipura is mentioned in an inscription dated 403 A.D. and found in Shorkot 30 miles above the junction of the Chenab with the Ravi. According to Dani (and before him, Vogel 1912), the modern name *Shor-kot* (with *kot* 'fort') might go back to this. In OIA literature the Sibis (and especially King Sibi) are mentioned rather often, in some cases in a north-western context. On the other hand, a coin, dated by Dani on palaeographical grounds to the first century B.C./A.D., has been found in the region of Chittor in Rajasthan with the lection "of the Sibi people of the Madhyamikā country" (*majhikāya sibirjanapadasya*).

¹¹⁷ Plainly exaggerated Bevan 1902, 295f., reserved Narain 1965, 163f.

¹¹⁸ Cf. Tarn 1951, 5.

¹¹⁹ More than a hundred years ago Lassen (1874, 126f. more or less following his earlier edition 1852, 118f.) saw the importance of Alexander's campaigns for India in three ways. First, the histories of Alexander offer the first direct side-view into ancient India, second, his campaign was a prerequisite for subsequent diplomatic relations and thus for Megasthenes' book. Thirdly, the same prerequisite is seen in Graeco-Bactrian and Indo-Greek history. We see that two of these were not important for India, but are for the Indologist and Indian historian.

4. Sailing down the Indus

Nearchus of Crete was the trusted friend and admiral of Alexander who conducted the famous naval expedition down the Indus and along the coast to the Gulf.¹²⁰ He was a Cretan naturalised at Amphipolis, and he therefore considered himself a Macedonian.¹²¹ He is also one of the most important and best-preserved Hellenistic authors dealing with India. It is very fortunate for us that Arrian decided to excerpt his book so fully; without him we would only have a few fragments on India.

While Nearchus' account mostly seems to have been straightforward and reliable as far as naval matters and observations on the coasts are concerned, his fragments also show that he was not free of human feelings. He was seemingly very proud of Alexander's confidence in him, and wanted to make as much as possible out of it. It has been shown that Nearchus had literary ambitions, too. In his work an undeniably factual and experienced account seems to be seasoned with literary reminiscences. Like every Greek author he had read his Homer,¹²² but mainly he seems to have followed the model set by early Ionian ethnographers, especially Herodotus.¹²³

There is no end of studies of the topography of the voyage,¹²⁴ and therefore there is no need to discuss it here in detail. Without placing too much reliance on them, however, Neubert (1928) with his special stadions, and the opposite hypothesis of Berthelot (1935) must be mentioned. In addition to the report of the voyage itself (perhaps with an account of Alexander's land march through Gedrosia), Nearchus' book seems to have contained a rather full account of Northwest India. It is often quoted by Strabo and Arrianus (in the *Indica*) in their descriptions of the country.

Another participant in this voyage was Onesicritus, probably of Astypalaia. His role in the expedition is somewhat problematic. What was his relation to Nearchus, who perhaps published his account as polemics against Onesicritus? Arrianus accused the latter of presenting himself as an admiral, though he was only a steersman.¹²⁵ A considerable

¹²⁰ On this see e.g. Brown 1949, 105ff., Pearson 1960, 112ff., Schiwiek 1962, 20ff., Wirth 1972, Arora 1984, Pédech 1984, 183ff., also the commentary of Arrianus' epitome in Hinüber 1985, 1129ff. It must be noted that the Testimonia in the *FGrH* do not include all the information on Nearchus, see e.g. Arrianus, *Anab.* 6, 5, 4f.

¹²¹ Pearson 1960, 113, with note 5.

¹²² Pearson 1960, 131ff., has shown that e.g. the dramatic meeting with Alexander in Carmania (Arrianus, *Ind.* 33ff.) and the account of a mysterious island visited personally by Nearchus (*Ind.* 31 and Strabo 15, 2, 13) were modelled after the *Odyssey*.

¹²³ Pearson 1960, 118ff., and Murray 1972, 205f.

¹²⁴ I. a. Vincent 1797, Tomaschek 1890, Neubert 1928, recently Dobbins 1992, and the authors who dealt with eastern place names in the *RE*.

¹²⁵ See Arrianus, *Anab.* 6, 2, 3 (Onesicritus F 27) τῆς δὲ αὐτοῦ νεὼς κυβερνήτης (ἦν) Ὀνησίκριτος, ὃς ἐν τῇ ξυγγραφῇ, ἦντινα ὑπὲρ Ἀλεξάνδρου ξυνέγραψε, καὶ τοῦτο ἐψεύσατο, ναύαρχον ἑαυτὸν εἶναι γράσας, κυβερνήτην ὄντα.

number of fragments are preserved of his book,¹²⁶ which seems to have been an idealizing history of Alexander. Our best sources for it are Strabo and Pliny, while Arrianus probably never read him. The sea venture was probably described only as one episode. Our knowledge of his version is scanty, the only account being Pliny's reference to the summary given by King Juba.¹²⁷

Much has been concluded about the style and reliability of Onesicritus, but no clear idea of the work can be formed from the fragments. Its general theme was the education or development of Alexander (πῶς Ἀλέξανδρος ἤχθη), and it was apparently written with a great literary ambition. As a particular model, the *Cyrupaedia* and other works of Xenophon have been often named.¹²⁸ History and exactness were of secondary interest, although he added much from his personal experience. The ancient verdict on him was generally rather negative,¹²⁹ but so it was of Megasthenes, too. In any case his book was widely read.

The navy was built on the Hydaspes, when Alexander had retraced his steps after the disappointment at the Hyphasis. It was the place where stood the twin cities Bucephala and Nicaea, founded by Alexander immediately after his victory over Porus.¹³⁰ It was a time when at least the northern Pañjab was still covered by forests so that ship-building posed no problems.¹³¹ According to Arrianus, the total of the vessels was nearly two thousand, but Diodorus, here moderate contrary to his normal custom, gives only 1,000, and Arrianus himself in his *Indica*, here using Nearchus instead of Ptolemaeus, no more than 800.¹³² Adequate crews were supplied by seafaring peoples such as the Phoenicians, Cypriotes, Carians and Egyptians, who served in the army.¹³³

¹²⁶ *FGrH* 134. On its title and contents, see Brown 1949, 13ff., and Pearson 1960, 83ff.

¹²⁷ *FGrH* 275, F 28 (and 29). Cf. Brown 1949, 105ff., Pearson 1960, 107ff., and Pédech 1984, 127ff.

¹²⁸ E.g. Brown 1949, 13ff. On page 22 Brown suggests that the end of Onesicritus' book must have been less politically involved than that of the *Cyrupaedia*. In 305, the alternative would not have been safe. However, we do not know whether Onesicritus was as wise as that. After all, we hear no more of him after he had finished his work.

¹²⁹ However, see Strabo 15, 1, 28.

¹³⁰ So Arrianus, *Anab.* 5, 29, 5, and 6, 1, 1; Strabo 15, 1, 17 (Aristobulus F 35). The Vulgate (Diodorus 17, 95, 3ff.; Curtius 9, 3, 20ff.; Justinus 12, 9) make this happen on the Acesines, but their reference to the towns proves that Arrianus is right as concerns the Hydaspes. See e.g. Anspach 1903, 3, note 272.

¹³¹ Strabo 11, 7, 4 (Eratosthenes) and 15, 1, 29; Diodorus 17, 89, 4ff.; Curtius 9, 1, 3f. Cf. McCrindle 1896, 131, note 1.

¹³² Arrianus, *Anab.* 6, 2, 4; Diodorus 17, 95, 5; Arrianus, *Ind.* 19, 7. Cf. McCrindle 1896, 134, note 1, and Brunt 1983, 519. The latter mentions the possibility that 800 in the *Ind.* might perhaps stand for 1,800, which is near enough to the round figure 2,000.

¹³³ Arrianus, *Anab.* 6, 1, 6, *Ind.* 18, 1. In an attempt to criticize my earlier book (1989a) Garzilli (*forthcoming*) seems to suppose that these Phoenicians, Cypriotes, Carians and Egyptians were found by Alexander already living in the Pañjab and thus providing evidence for earlier contacts of the country with the West. However, that these people belonged to Alexander's invasion army, as in any case seems to me more likely, is expressly asserted by Arrianus in both passages.

From the beginning Nearchus was the admiral, and Alexander's own ship was steered by Onesicritus.¹³⁴ As Arrianus seems here to follow Ptolemaeus, instead of Nearchus (who probably had an axe to grind with Onesicritus) as in the *Indica*, this seems to be true. The voyage downriver began at the end of October 326 B.C. After the war against the Malloi and the Oxydracae, and after the dangerous confluence of the Hydaspes and the Acesines, little before the confluence of the Acesines and the Hydraotes, when Alexander was recovering from his wound, the navy was repaired and new vessels were built.¹³⁵

During most of the river voyage Alexander was himself on board, although part of the army, understandably including the elephants, followed on the bank of the river. In the Indus delta, two voyages of reconnaissance were made from Patala, so that Alexander himself could see the sea and, so to say, round up his conquests in this corner in a more satisfactory way than in the east. Afterwards, Alexander began the difficult land march through Gedrosia to Carmania,¹³⁶ while Nearchus commanded the navy on the coastal voyage. After some delay it began in late September or early October 325 B.C.¹³⁷

The conflicting accounts of Nearchus and Onesicritus could perhaps be explained supposing that Onesicritus gained the higher command only at this stage (but see his T 5). The passages relating to the situation at the beginning of the voyage, on the Hydaspes, would then be wholly irrelevant. In his note on the sea voyage Curtius mentions Nearchus and Onesicritus as making the venture together. His account is perhaps not too reliable, but this is also certainly the case with Plutarch who states the opposite.¹³⁸ Pliny also refers to Nearchus and Onesicritus as sharing command. Still, two admirals with equal command seems impossible in a venture like this and, as a trusted friend of Alexander, Nearchus must have been Onesicritus' superior.¹³⁹

The sea voyage itself touched Iran more than India, to which only the very beginning related. The question, how far the country west of the Indus belonged to India, is discussed in chapter IV.2. But leaving exact geographical definitions aside, it is reasonable to consider Gedrosia¹⁴⁰ here in connection with India. This difference was not always made. The account of the Ichthyophagi was an important part of classical India literature. As there was also a people called the Ichthyophagi – the name refers only to their way of life

¹³⁴ Arrianus, *Anab.* 6, 2, 3 τοῦ μὲν δὴ ναυτικοῦ παντὸς Νέαρχος αὐτῷ ἐξηγήετο, τῆς δὲ αὐτοῦ νεῶς κυβερνήτης (ἦν) Ὀνησίκριτος.

¹³⁵ Arrianus, *Anab.* 6, 14, 4. An attempt to decide how much of Arrianus' account of the river voyage comes from Nearchus has been made by Pédech 1984, 175ff.

¹³⁶ On this march see Strasburger 1952 and 1954. Cary 1949 pointed out that while inland Gedrosia is by no means void of passable roads, the difficulty for Alexander's army lay in the attempt to keep close to the coast and thus in contact with the fleet. This attempt, however, soon failed.

¹³⁷ Brunt 1983, 466.

¹³⁸ Curtius 9, 10, 3 and Plutarch, *Al.* 66, 3. See further Strabo 15, 2, 4.

¹³⁹ Pearson 1960, 83, and Pédech 1984, 73f. It is true that the history of ancient Greece knows of several attempts at shared command, but these generally ended miserably, while the venture of Alexander's navy was a success.

¹⁴⁰ Strabo 15, 2, 3 & 8; Arrianus, *Anab.* 6, 23, 2. McCrindle 1896, 169, note 2, and Kiessling 1912, 895ff.

(cf. Chelonophagi, Omophagi) – on the Ethiopian coast of the Red Sea, as told by Agatharchides, they became one additional element in the old confusion between India and Ethiopia.¹⁴¹

The Gedrosian Ichthyophagi, whom Alexander supposedly forbade to eat fish (but it was Nearchus, not Alexander, who met them on the Gedrosian coast), are perhaps also mentioned in the *Mahābhārata*, where a fish-eating people is mentioned in the right geographical context.¹⁴² Their Greek name, Ichthyophagi (Ἰχθυοφάγοι), signifies simply ‘fish-eaters’, and was also used for a coastal fisher people by the Red Sea and later for other such peoples as well.

There were some other members of the crew who were literarily active. One of them was Androstenes of Thasos,¹⁴³ who was Nearchus’ trierarch. Like the admiral himself, he came from Macedonian Amphipolis and was of Greek origin. Later we meet him in charge of an independent expedition to Tylus (Bahrain) in connection with Alexander’s planned Arabian expedition.¹⁴⁴ There are only five fragments preserved of his book, mainly dealing with nature. Generally they are compatible with the fuller accounts we have by Nearchus and Onesicritus, and contain some interesting additional information. According to Athenaeus (in F 1), the name of his work was the Παράπλους τῆς Ἰνδικῆς, but the extant fragments deal with the Gulf region (with the possible exception of F 1). Pearson suggests that Theophrastus obtained his account of mangroves from him.¹⁴⁵

We must not pass over Sosander, “the steersman who wrote (an account of sailing) down the India.”¹⁴⁶ Unfortunately, this short reference is all that we know about him. There are no fragments at all from his work. Most likely he, too, was a member of Nearchus’ expedition, but the question remains unresolved. Dihle suggests that he might have been a contemporary of Diodorus of Samos, a later sailor, who seems to have explored the Indian West coast (according to Ptolemy, “from India to Limyrike”) and whom Dihle dates to the 2nd century B.C.¹⁴⁷

From the list of trierarchs given by Arrianus (*Ind.* 18) we might suppose that Medeios of Larisa,¹⁴⁸ too, participated at least in the riverine part of the voyage.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴¹ On this confusion see Dihle 1965 and Karttunen 1989a, 134ff.

¹⁴² *Mbh.* 2, 29, 9 (the western conquests by Nakula):

sūdrābhīragaṇās caiva ye cāśritya sarasvatīm |

vartayanti ca ye matsyair ye ca parvatavāsinaḥ ||

Somewhat later, in śloka 15 the “highly dangerous barbarians who live by the gulf” (*sāgarakuṣi-sthān mlecchān paramadāruṇān*) are mentioned together with the Pahlavas and the Barbaras.

¹⁴³ *FGrH* 711. See also Bretzl 1903, 139ff., and Bowersock 1986.

¹⁴⁴ Arrianus, *Anab.* 7, 20, 7, cf. *Ind.* 43, 8f.

¹⁴⁵ Pearson 1960, 142, note 104.

¹⁴⁶ *FGrH* 714, T 1 Σώσανδρος ὁ κυβερνήτης (ὁ) τὰ κατὰ τὴν Ἰνδικὴν γράψας (from Marcianus of Heracleia, who wrote an epitome of the lost Periplus written by Menippus of Pergamon in 26 B.C.).

¹⁴⁷ Dihle 1978, 565 (note 63 on Sosander).

¹⁴⁸ On Medeios (*FGrH* 129) see Pearson 1960, 68ff.

¹⁴⁹ It is not sure, however. In a note *ad l.* Brunt (1983, 357) remarks that there were no triremes, so that a trierarchy was merely an honorific title. This list (*Ind.* 18, 3–10) further includes Nearchus,

Unfortunately, our few fragments of his Alexander history contain nothing about this naval venture, or, to come to that, about India. Later we meet him as an admiral of Antigonos', and he commanded Demetrius' fleet at the battle of Salamis in Cyprus in 307 B.C.¹⁵⁰

Another trierarch, Eumenes of Kardia, was then Alexander's secretary and the reputed author of the so-called royal Ephemerids,¹⁵¹ but again no fragments on India are found. In subsequent wars he fought under Polyperchon and was killed in 317 B.C. (see VI.1 below).

Among the number of trierarchs was also Archias of Pella, a Macedonian and Nearchus' future lieutenant. He is mentioned several times during the coastal voyage, and later he was, like Androstenes, entrusted with the exploration of Arabian coasts. However, he seems to have written nothing.¹⁵²

With Orthagoras we are in a better situation.¹⁵³ No evidence of his whereabouts is preserved, but an examination of the five extant fragments shows that he really must have participated in Nearchus' venture. A definite *terminus ante quem* is given by the fact that F 5 comes from Strabo. Jacoby puts him in the first century B.C. without stating his grounds.¹⁵⁴ Aelianus (*N. A.* 16, 35) called his book by the name Ἰνδοῖ λόγους.

Fragment 1 comes from Philostratus' *Vita Apollonii* (2, 17) and deals with the giant snakes of the Acesines. This fragment is somewhat uncertain, as the manuscripts read Pythagoras instead of Orthagoras. But there is no Pythagoras attested in Greek India literature, and the fragment suits very well among those of Orthagoras. From F 2 we know that Philostratus had certainly read Orthagoras (or at least somebody who had) and a corruption OP > ΠY is not too difficult to accept. The fragment also contains a reference to Nearchus (F 12), apparently both said more or less the same.

Fragment 2, too, comes from Philostratus (*V. Ap.* 3, 53), and on this occasion giving the right name to the author. It is concerned with Patala and the mouth(s) of the Indus (cf. Onesicritus F 26). Further it is stated that the Great Bear is invisible in the sea (cf. Onesicritus F 10). An account is given of a small island called Biblos, of large pearl oysters (perhaps Nearchus F 28, but this is on the Gulf), and of the country of the Oreitae. It thus seems more or less to follow the route taken by Nearchus. It is difficult to say how long Philostratus actually followed Orthagoras; there is another reference to Damis in his text (before Biblos).

Androstenes, and Ptolemaeus. Onesicritus is mentioned (in 18, 9 quoted above) as a helmsman, not as a trierarch, and Nearchus also as the admiral.

¹⁵⁰ In the same battle there fought another naval officer turned historian viz. Marsyas of Pella, but we do not know whether he was in India with Alexander. The meagre remains of his Macedonian history (*FGrH* 135) contain nothing about India. See Pearson 1960, 253f.

¹⁵¹ *FGrH* 117.

¹⁵² With Nearchus in Arrianus, *Ind.* 27, 8 – 28, 7 and 34, 6 – 35, 3, exploring Arabia, *Anab.* 7, 20, 7. See also Berve 1926. In the *FGrH* he would have belonged to the 5th volume, which was never published.

¹⁵³ *FGrH* 713.

¹⁵⁴ He has been accepted as a member of Nearchus' crew by Pédech 1984, 189. See also Dihle 1978, 565, note 63.

Fragment 3 (from Aelianus, *N. A.* 16, 35) mentions the village of Coÿtha (Κόυθα),¹⁵⁵ where goats are fed with dried fish. According to Nearchus (in Arrianus, *Ind.* 26, 7 and 29, 13), the Ichthyophagi feed their sheep with fish, which gives them a queer taste.¹⁵⁶

In fragment 4 (also from Aelianus, *N. A.* 17, 6) Orthagoras and Onesicritus (F 31) are quoted together as authorities for the sea monsters (whales) of the Gedrosian coast. Nearchus F 30 and 31 and Arrianus, *Indica* 30 (part of Nearchus F 1) can be quoted as parallels. For these sea monsters see also chapter V.4 below.

Our fifth and last fragment comes from Strabo (16, 3, 5). It is an account of the coasts and tides of Carmania and the Arabian Sea. Again a comparison with Onesicritus and Nearchus (F 27) provides good parallels. This is one of the subjects which seem to have been dealt with by all participants in the voyage.

In our sources the coastal voyage is described as a real adventure. While it certainly was exploration of unknown waters for the Macedonians, they were still not really opening a new route. On several occasions we hear of the employment of local pilots. One of these pilots we even know by name, a Gedrosian (not an Ichthyophag) called Hydraces, who was taken on board at Mosarna and who promised to take them as far as Carmania.¹⁵⁷

5. Alexander and Archaeology

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the significance of archaeology for the history of Alexander's Indian campaigns, especially the excavations carried out in places visited by Alexander. While their yield is generally rather meagre, at some sites layers corresponding to the time of Alexander's Indian expedition have been found. It is worth the effort to look at them and see what they can add to our present knowledge. The story of archaeology will be continued in chapter VI.4.

No Alexandria or a city with any other name founded by Alexander has so far been found in South Asia. It is possible – thinking of the brief time that Northwest India remained under Macedonian rule – that they, unlike similar foundations in Arachosia and Bactria, soon lost their Greek population and were already forgotten before the advent of

¹⁵⁵ Lassen 1858, 342 on the name is entirely unconvincing (*kaivarta*, a mixed caste of fishers, here in a freely composed MIA form). Perhaps Aelianus' Coÿtha was the same as Nearchus' Cyÿza (Κύιζα) in Arrianus, *Ind.* 27, 6.

¹⁵⁶ This can be confirmed by modern experience. In the 1970s Finnish pig breeders found that the small Baltic herring was cheap and good feed for their animals. The only problem was that it gave a queer taste to the meat, and soon they were unable to sell their ham and pork and had to return to more traditional feeding stuffs.

¹⁵⁷ See Nearchus on the motives of this exploration in Arrianus, *Ind.* 32, 10ff.; on Hydraces *ibid.* 27, 1; on pilots in general *ibid.* 30, 3; 31, 3; and probably 32, 7; also Strabo 15, 2, 12 and 16, 3, 7.

the Indo-Greeks. On Bucephala, see below. But outside India we seem to have at least two Alexandrias excavated in the Farther East.

The most important Hellenistic site in the East was found in Bactria outside the Indian boundaries. Ai Khanum, at least, was a full Greek polis. But was it really founded by Alexander (and consequently called Alexandria by the Oxus), or only later by Bactrian Greeks (Narain)? In early reports the first opinion was favoured, but since then a later date has gained more support and this seems to be supported by a better interpretation of the archaeological material. The question remains open. I shall discuss other aspects of Ai Khanum in chapter VI.3 below.

In Arachosia Kandahar, or the site called Old Kandahar, was most probably one of several Alexandrias (that of Arachosia).¹⁵⁸ On rather slight grounds Tam attempted to place Alexandria-in-Arachosia in Ghazni, but later excavations have shown that Kandahar must have been an important centre, while the Ghazni area has shown no Hellenistic antiquities. Alexander visited the place on his route to Bactria in autumn 330, but his histories do not mention the foundation. He was in haste and hardly even had time to found a city then. Alexandria in Arachosia, however, is attested in geographical works and therefore must have existed. It was also called Arachotoi. Arachosia had an important place among eastern satrapies, and it may well be that Alexandria was founded later on Alexander's orders at an already inhabited site.¹⁵⁹

Kandahar is remarkable because it, like Ai Khanum, has yielded some Greek inscriptions. For the dedicatory inscription found in the late 1970s a lection containing the name of Alexander as its founder hero has been suggested. Unfortunately, only *A* is actually seen on the damaged stone. Therefore it is not capable of providing proof (as supposed by Oikonomides 1984a), and though the possibility cannot be denied, little can be built on it. But even if Alexander is not the founder hero, the inscription is Greek and very early. The Greek versions of Aśokan inscriptions found at Kandahar bear out the existence of a Greek population there long before the coming of the Indo-Greeks. On these inscriptions see also VI.5 below.

This brings us to the problem of Alexander's foundations in general. Did they prosper and continue in the Hellenistic Farther East as in the West? Were they real towns or just little more than temporary military camps.¹⁶⁰ At least the Greek Aśokan inscriptions and the above-mentioned dedication in Kandahar testify to a Greek-speaking population in Arachosia even in the third century B.C., when it was still under Mauryan rule before the coming of the Indo-Greeks. It is hardly thinkable that Seleucus, with his hands full in the west, had time to make his own foundations so far in the east, before he ceded the lands to Candragupta Maurya. We must still count on Alexander.

Alexander's route to India passed through the Paropamisadae. In Western sources this country was variously included in India and in Ariana (see IV.2), but the population

¹⁵⁸ See e.g. Fischer 1967, Wheeler 1968, 65ff., Bernard 1974b and Vogelsang 1985.

¹⁵⁹ Vogelsang 1985, 64f. mentions several Achaemenid finds from Old Kandahar.

¹⁶⁰ Sceptic Narain 1987, 125ff., Holt 1989 is critical, but more optimistic, though perhaps giving too much weight to onomastic evidence. Very positive is Tam 1951, 5ff., also 118f. and 168f. (but see also 18, 35). For a recent discussion see Jähne 1992 and II.1 above.

was always said to be Indian. In archaeology, the most important site of this area is Begram. It has been famous since the excavations conducted by the French in the 1930s, but most of it seems to belong only to the Kushan period.¹⁶¹ It was the *Καπίσα* of Ptolemy (6, 18, 4; also in Pliny) and the OIA *Kapiśa*, often mentioned in Indian sources and by Chinese pilgrims.¹⁶² A fortress of *Kāpiśakāni* is mentioned in an Old Persian inscription (DB III, 60f.), but there seems to be no archaeological evidence from the Achaemenid period.¹⁶³

There were two cities founded by Alexander in the Paropamisadae, Alexandria sub Caucaso and Nicaea, both (or at least Alexandria) founded during the winter of 330/329.¹⁶⁴ The actual site of Begram seems to be incongruent with classical accounts about the former and thus was hardly the Alexandria sub Caucaso. The first Europeans who reported about the antiquities of Begram Masson and Court supposed that they had found Alexandria, but since their first critics the majority of scholars seem to have preferred Nicaea.¹⁶⁵ More recently, however, Bernard (1982b) has again strongly argued in favour of the identity of Alexandria with Begram.

The road to India normally went through the Khyber Pass, though it is said to be easy to defend against hostile intruders.¹⁶⁶ For Alexander the problem did not exist as Taxiles was already his ally and the prince of Peucelaotis was thus between two fires. He let his main army under Hephæstio use this route, while he himself took the more difficult northern route. This brought him to the beautiful valley of Swat (ancient *Uḍḍiyāna*).

Quite an effort was needed to conquer the strongholds of the Swat and our histories devote much space to this part of the campaign. Fortunately, exactly this part of the topography of Alexander's eastern campaigns is known rather well. The first survey of the Swat was conducted in 1926 by Aurel Stein (1927), who was already able to identify several places mentioned in Alexander's histories. Since the late 1950s (Tucci 1958) Italian archaeologists have been working on several sites at Swat uncovering more or less detailed information from prehistoric times until the modern period. Three of these sites deserve special attention here.

¹⁶¹ The main publications on these excavations are Hackin 1939 & 1954, and Ghirshman 1946. See also Wheeler 1968, 95ff. for a summary (and criticism of excavation technique).

¹⁶² That *Kapiśa* was Begram was definitely shown by Foucher in 1922 (Hackin 1939, 5).

¹⁶³ According to Allchin & Hammond 1978, 214ff., the easternmost area of rich Achaemenid finds (beside the Oxus treasure) is Seistan, while Eastern Afghanistan is still poorer than Charsada and Taxila in Pakistan. Numerous Russian excavations in northern Bactria and Sogdiana have somewhat changed the situation, but lie beyond our present sphere of interest. The attempt by Bernard (1974b, 176ff.) to show that the name *Kapisa* was used both of Begram and Kandahar is interesting, but the evidence seems rather slight.

¹⁶⁴ See Arrianus, *Anab.* 3, 28, 4 for Alexandria, and 4, 22, 4ff. for both. Alexandria also in Diodorus 17, 83, 1, and Curtius 7, 3, 23; unnamed in Strabo 15, 2, 10, and Plutarch, *De Alex. virt.* 1, 5, 328f.

¹⁶⁵ Early opinions are summarized in Hackin 1939, 3ff. The first to suggest Nicaea were Jacquet (1837) and Wilson (1841) and, according to Hackin, the identification "n'est plus contestée". See also Stein 1937a, 243. Tam 1951, 97ff. and 460ff., made Alexandria-Kapisa a double city west of Begram, but in a note (page 540) he seems to have repudiated this identification.

¹⁶⁶ Cary 1949, 197. On this and other routes, see Foucher 1942, 1947, Tam 1951, 136, and Caroe 1958.

Of particular interest for Alexander's history are the remains found at the site of Bir-kot Ghwandai (Tucci's Barikot) in Central Swat. Aurel Stein suggested that it was the ancient Bazira (Βάζιρα), the southern fort of the Swat. Italian excavations have here unearthed a Hellenistic wall (with Indo-Greek coins *in situ*), some Western-style pottery and an inscribed sherd with Greek letters (cf. chapter VI.5 below).¹⁶⁷ In its neighbourhood was the famous rock fort Aornus (Ἀόρνος).¹⁶⁸

Another interesting site in the Swat region is Udegram, according to Stein the ancient Ora (Ὠρα) in the Swat valley opposite the lands of King Abisares.¹⁶⁹ This, too, has been excavated by the Italians.

The capital of the country, however was Massaga, the great city of the Assaceni, laid under siege and finally conquered by Alexander himself, while his officers were given the task of subduing Bazira and Ora. All these towns were then given a Macedonian garrison and their fortifications were repaired. After a detailed discussion Tucci ended up suggesting that the ancient remains overlooking the village of Aligram (with an Islamic name, the village of Ali) opposite Mingora mark the site of ancient Massaga, but on a later occasion located it near Chakdarra south of Bir-kot Ghwandai.¹⁷⁰ Mingora (with the site Butkara),

¹⁶⁷ On Bazira, see Arrianus, *Anab.* 4, 27, 5ff., on Alexander's fortifications there, *ibid.* 4, 28, 4. Curtius 8, 10, 22, calls it Beira. See Stein 1927, 426ff. For the excavations at Bīr-kōt Ghwandai (started in 1968, since 1984 on historical levels) see e.g. Callieri 1984 (sherd), 1990 (pottery) and Callieri et al. 1992, 6ff. (fortification wall). The name has been explained by Stein as Bīr < *Baira < *Bayira < *Bajira = Bazira (OIA Vajirasthāna, Tucci 1958, 296). Also Eggermont 1970, 66f.

¹⁶⁸ Its location has been an extremely disputed point in the topography of Alexander's eastern campaigns. Perhaps the most accepted suggestion came from A. Stein (1927, 437ff.) Pir-Sar, with the local name Urna/Unra/Una (suggesting ὤρα < OIA *avarṇa 'colourless'). It has been accepted e.g. by Eggermont 1970, 90ff., and Hinüber 1985, 1102f. The problem is that it is rather distant from the Swat centres and not at all so high and difficult of access as indicated in classical sources. Referring to a letter written in 1972 by Sir Olaf Caroe, Eggermont 1984, 191f., rejected Pirsar and suggested Mount Ilam southeast of Bir-kot Ghwandai and Udegram. Tucci 1977, 52ff., also thought that Ilam is at least a possibility beside Pirsar. The problem with Ilam is that it is far from the Indus, while Aornus should be situated on its bank. For the name Tucci refers to Dahlgvist's (1962, 120ff.) *aurṇavābha*. Dahlgvist, however, rejects its historicity and attempts to explain it from Vedic Vṛtra myths. Earlier scholars had sought for Aornus still farther to the south: Court (1836, 395) suggested a location opposite Attock, Abbott (1863) Mahaban, Cunningham (1871, 49ff.) Ranigat (explaining Aornos as Raja Vara!). Cunningham's solution has been accepted by Lassen 1874, 148f. (with the somewhat better etymology *āvaraṇa* 'fortification', hailing from Wilson 1841, 192), Abbot's by McCrindle 1896, 335ff. Wilson (1841) himself emphasized Aornus as an invincible fort and therefore supposed that it could have stood on any hill (followed by Bunbury 1879, 496).

¹⁶⁹ Arrianus, *Anab.* 4, 27, 5ff.; *Hora* in Curtius 8, 11, 1. A. Stein 1927, 433ff. (combining Ude-grām with Uḍḍiyāna/Oḍḍiyāna and this with Ōra), O. Stein 1939, 1317f., Tucci 1958, 288. A different suggestion about the location of Ora by Caroe has been criticized by Eggermont 1970, 67.

¹⁷⁰ Arrianus, *Anab.* 4, 26, 1, and *Ind.* 1, 8 Μάσσαγα (or Μάσσακα), Strabo 15, 1, 27 Μασόγα (so MSS.) with the people *Mazagae* in Curtius 8, 10, 22. Probably the same as OIA Māsakāvati, quoted as an example to Pāṇini 4, 2, 85 and 6, 3, 119. For early opinions see e.g. Lassen 1874, 138 & 145, McCrindle 1896, 194f. & 334f. and 1901, 33, note 2. Stein (1927, 425f.) was unable to locate it exactly, but rightly surmised that it was lower down in the valley than had been suspected in earlier studies. Tucci 1958, 42ff., especially 49 (Aligram), 1963, 27 (near Chakdarra), see further Tucci 1977, 41f. Eggermont 1970, 66, quoted Caroe for a location about 8 miles north of Chakdarra.

which has yielded rich archaeological finds, was later the capital of Swat, mentioned in Chinese sources.¹⁷¹

From Swat Alexander descended to the ancient country of Gandhāra, Gandāra of the Achaemenids. There one of the most important sites of our period is Chārsada, corresponding to the town (and region) called Peucelaotis by the Greeks.¹⁷² The name¹⁷³ would seem to be derived from MIA *Pukk(h)alaoti (cf. Pāli Pokkharāvati and OIA Puṣkalāvati/Puṣkarāvati ‘the lotus town’).¹⁷⁴ In MIA, *ao* seems difficult linguistically, but the distorted form of this name in relation to the Indian origin is perhaps due to the influence of the Macedonian personal name Πευκόλαος (and Peukestas). A long time ago Bunbury noted that the end might be affected by such common Greek names as Pelasgiotis and Histiaeotis.¹⁷⁵

The town was taken by Alexander after a siege of 30 days and turned into a Macedonian garrison with Philippus as commander.¹⁷⁶ The site of Chārsada contains several mounds with remains of several ancient towns. After some preliminary work carried out by Marshall at the beginning of this century it was excavated in the 1940s and again in 1958 by Wheeler, and later by Pakistani archaeologists. The main account of the excavations is Wheeler 1962, summarized in Wheeler 1968, 95ff. Wheeler compares the remains he found there with the accounts of Alexander historians, and finds what he thinks are clear parallels.

The highest and most ancient mound of Chārsada is the Bala Hisar or High Fort. Wheeler placed its foundation in about the sixth century B.C. and went on to identify the level of Alexander’s invasion. From a comparison with the finds similar to those of Chārsada first level at neighbouring sites, especially in Swat, Stacul (1990) has shown that the beginning must be placed much earlier, but he still more or less agrees with Wheeler’s later chronology. According to Wheeler, Bala Hisar has revealed the ramparts besieged by

¹⁷¹ Tucci 1958, 286f.

¹⁷² Its location is clearly indicated by Ptolemy and Xuanzang and identified as Chārsada by Cunningham (1871, 42) and never really contested. Stein (1938, 1393) also connects it with the Pactyice of Hecataeus and Herodotus, but see Karttunen 1989a, 43ff. On Peucelaitis/Chārsada see further Stein 1938, 1392ff., Foucher 1947, 206, and Hinüber 1985, 1084.

¹⁷³ After examining a number of MS. variants editors have decided in favour of Πευκελαῶτις or -λαίτις of Arrianus (*Anab.* 4, 22, 7 & 4, 28, 6 and *Ind.* 1, 8 & 4, 11), Πευκολαίτις of Strabo (15, 1, 27), and *Peucolaitis* or *Peucolis* of Pliny (6, 21, 62 & 6, 25, 94, with the people *Peucolitae* in 6, 23, 78); the people of Πευκαλείς in Dionysius Perieg. 1143. Ptolemy 7, 1, 44 (Προκλαίς) and the Periplus 47f. (Ποκλαίεις, with variant Πρόκλαίς) seem to have a different (later) tradition as in the names of the Pañjab rivers.

¹⁷⁴ Cunningham 1871, 42 “Pukkalaoti, which is the Pāli, or spoken form of the Sanskrit Pushkalvati.” This early custom of calling inscriptional and surmised colloquial Prakrits Pāli, apparently led McCrindle 1896, 59, note 5, to claim that Pukkalaoti is the Pāli form of the name. Unfortunately, he was wrong, *Pukkalaoti remains unattested.

¹⁷⁵ For Peucolaos and Peukestas see Berve 1926, for *-otis* Bunbury 1879, 498. Tam 1951, 244f., suspected that the name Peucolaos could be of Indo-Greek origin and derived from Peucelaotis. He fails to show, however, how Indo-Greek names could be introduced into Alexander’s history by Curtius. He also claims (1951, 237) that the graecized name must be a later invention, not used during Alexander’s campaign, but I fail to see why it could not have been invented right then.

¹⁷⁶ Arrianus, *Anab.* 4, 28, 6.

Alexander and even some direct traces of the siege. The remains in the Shaikhan Deri mound, excavated by A. H. Dani in 1963–64, have revealed remains of the subsequent Indo-Greek town.

The most famous town in ancient Northwest India, in Alexander's histories, in Indian and Chinese literature, and archaeologically is without doubt Taxila (MIA Takk(h)asilā, OIA Takṣaśilā).¹⁷⁷ Its location in the east of Gandhāra and of the Indus, clearly indicated in sources, was identified by Cunningham in 1863–64 with the extensive ruins northeast of Rawalpindi (now on the western outskirts of Islamabad).¹⁷⁸ A major question is still, which one among the various mounds was the town actually visited by Alexander? Was it really the Bhir Mound (with Mauryan occupation), as suggested by Marshall, or perhaps the Hathial Mound (with occupation contemporary with the Achaemenids), whose importance has only lately been understood? Marshall's chronology for the different mounds has been corrected by later excavations.

As the remains of the late fourth century Taxila are, at least partly, unexcavated, we cannot really say whether it indeed was "the muddy village" as Wheeler (1968) preferred to have it, but the importance and richness ascribed to Taxila and Taxiles by Alexander's historians hardly supports this. Taxila was also to be an important eastern centre in Alexander's empire. Beside Taxiles, who continued his rule under Alexander, a Macedonian garrison was left there.¹⁷⁹

Many accounts tell us of the numerous towns in the Pañjab. In the country of Porus, between the Hydaspes and the Acesines(?), there were no less than 300 towns,¹⁸⁰ and in the dominions given to him by Alexander, extending from the Hydaspes to the Hyphasis, more than 2,000.¹⁸¹ Strabo gives the number of towns between the Hydaspes and the Hypanis (Hyphasis) as no fewer than 5,000.¹⁸²

After Taxila, however, the archaeological evidence comes to an end. No remains belonging to the Alexander period seem to have been found in the Pañjab and Sind. Topographical field studies (such as those by J. Abbot, A. Cunningham, M. A. Stein, and B. Breloer) have been important as they can eliminate some trivial errors and impossible hypotheses, but generally their yield has not been very remarkable. Among early scholars, too much weight was placed on modern place-names and their often superficial similarity to the names given in ancient texts.¹⁸³ The problem of missing maps can be seen in his-

¹⁷⁷ On the name, see II.3 above. On Taxila see e.g. McCrindle 1896, 342ff., Anspach 1901, 35, note 102, and especially Marshall 1951, Wheeler 1968, 102ff., Dani 1986, Dar 1984, Erdosy 1990, and Karttunen 1990a.

¹⁷⁸ Cunningham 1871, 88ff., where earlier theories, mainly locating Taxila in Manikyala, southeast of Rawalpindi, are also discussed.

¹⁷⁹ Arrianus, *Anab.* 5, 8, 3, see further Strabo 15, 1, 28.

¹⁸⁰ Strabo 15, 1, 29.

¹⁸¹ Arrianus, *Anab.* 6, 2, 1.

¹⁸² Strabo 15, 1, 33, the same number in Pliny 6. Pearson 1960, 106, claims that Strabo's source is here Onesicritus.

¹⁸³ This is very often the case with Cunningham (e.g. 1871), and the erroneous method was then taken to the utmost limit by some scholars who remained safely in their studies in Europe (e.g. Saint-Martin 1858–60).

tories on Alexander as in all ancient histories. A further problem lies in the many changes which have taken place during more than two thousand years,¹⁸⁴ not to speak of the still more radical changes during the last hundred years or so, caused by such phenomena as deforestation and erosion.

An example of a question much discussed in topographical studies without any final clarity being achieved, is the place where Alexander crossed the Hydaspes and fought the famous battle with Porus and where the twin cities of Bucephala and Nicaea were founded. Scholars have come forward with what they thought to be certain, decisive solutions, but the result was only that we seem to have two certain locations quite far apart.¹⁸⁵ Another argument concerned the unconquerable (and yet conquered by Alexander) rock castle of Aornus and its identification (see above).

We are unable to say whether the town Bhadrāśva, 'dear horse', mentioned in some Buddhist sources really was the Indian name for Alexandria Bucephala, the foundation of Alexander by the Hydaspes.¹⁸⁶ Opposite it was founded a town called Nicaea.¹⁸⁷ Of Nicaea we hear no more, but Bucephala was supposed (Tarn 1951) to be a polis and the major Indo-Greek centre in the Pañjab. Several texts of the Roman period mention it.¹⁸⁸

East of the Ravi (Hydraotes) was Sangala (Σάγγαλα), the stronghold of the Cathaeans.¹⁸⁹ A similarity in names led some early scholars to identify it with Śākala (MIA Sāgala, Greek Σάγγαλα), the famous capital of Menander, but this was clearly situated between the Ravi and the Chenab.¹⁹⁰

There was a further Alexandria at the Acesines,¹⁹¹ and another Alexandria at the confluence of the Acesines and the Indus.¹⁹² On them we have no later evidence, and they were probably soon deserted. Perhaps there were no longer a sufficient number of veterans to populate these new foundations (so many were left in Bactria and Sogdiana).

184 Especially river courses. See Lambrick 1975 et al.

185 See e.g. Abbott 1848–49, Cunningham 1871, Schubert 1901, Anspach 1902, 5f., Smith 1904, A. Stein 1932, Breloer 1933, 121ff. & 1941a, 79ff., and a summary of their theories in Seibert 1972, 158ff.

186 See Lamotte 1950, who suggested this identification, and Daffinà 1995, 10f.

187 On both see Arrianus, *Anab.* 5, 19, 4; 5, 20, 2 and 5, 29, 5; Strabo 15, 1, 29; Diodorus 17, 89, 6 and 95, 5; Curtius 9, 3, 23; Plutarch, *Al.* 61 (Onesicritus F 20) and *De. Alex. virt.* 1, 5, 328f.; Justinus 12, 8; Gellius 5, 2 (Chares F 18); also Cunningham 1871, 134ff., McCrindle 1896, 110 and 1901, 35, Stein 1936, 243ff. The Vulgate authors locate them erroneously on the Acesines.

188 Aelianus, *Nat. An.* 16, 3 mentioned Macedonians who settled in India, in Bucephala and other cities founded by Alexander. The *Periplus* 47 has Bucephalus Alexandria as contemporary, and its location is indicated in Ptolemy 7, 1, 46, and the *Tab. Peut.* Pliny 6, 23, 77 says that Bucephala was the capital of the region.

189 Arrianus, *Anab.* 5, 22, 2ff.

190 Śākala/Sāgala is well attested in Sanskrit (*Mahābhārata*), Pali (*Milindapañha* and the *Jātakas*), Chinese (Xuanzang), and Greek (Ptolemy 7, 1, 46) sources. The two places were identified e.g. by Cunningham 1871, 151ff. (and a renewed attempt by Hutchinson 1932), shown to be different by Rodgers in a paper (*Proc. of Asiatic Society of Bengal* 1896) not seen by me, but accepted by most scholars (e.g. Smith 1904, Fleet 1906, Herrmann 1920, 1731 & 1740, and Law 1969; independently McCrindle 1896, 347f.). See also VI.4 below.

191 Arrianus, *Anab.* 5, 29, 3.

192 Arrianus, *Anab.* 6, 15, 2, and, with an error with respect to the rivers, Curtius 9, 8, 8.

In one case we read of a foundation settled by Arachosians. When Eudamus came to the West with his 150 elephants, he perhaps also brought a great number of settlers. It is no wonder if there is nothing to be found of such short-lived settlements.

In earlier studies a rare series of coins is often quoted as evidence of Alexander's influence in Northwest India. They are Greek-style coins with a Macedonian-looking head of a ruler and the Greek lection ΣΩΦΥΤΟΥ. They came from the Pañjab, and therefore it was supposed that these coins represent Hellenizing imitations struck by the Pañjab king Sopeithes/Sopithes in the time of Alexander (or soon after).¹⁹³ However, it finally came out that just like the Athenian owls and some Graeco-Bactrian coins reported from the Pañjab, these, too, in truth hail from the dealers of Rawalpindi, and the real provenance is to the north of the Hindukush.¹⁹⁴ The unique and peculiar, and as such rather unlikely, Sopeithes series thus definitely falls down. With it also falls Lévi's often quoted hypothesis that Sopeithes/Sophytes is Saubhūti, king of Saubhūta.¹⁹⁵ At present it is not so important who was the Sophytes of the coins.¹⁹⁶

The real Indian coins of this period were still punch-marked and not yet following the western model. Western (Hellenistic) coinage was probably only introduced by the Indo-Greeks in the 2nd century B.C. Still we may note the passage of Curtius (8, 12, 43), where Alexander presents 80 talents of silver to Taxiles and his courtiers. According to Plutarch (*Al.* 59), he gave no less than 1,000 talents of coined money.

Despite the lack of archaeological evidence this is the best place for a remark about the literary tradition of Alexander's altars on the bank of the Hyphasis.¹⁹⁷ Earlier their remains were eagerly sought for, but probably they were washed away by the river, which is known to have changed its course several times. From histories of Alexander we see that it was customary to mark the turning-points by erecting altars. The first were put up at the very beginning of the campaign, in northwestern Asia Minor, where Alexander first landed on the Asian coast.¹⁹⁸ Alexander as well as several legendary conquerors are said also to have erected such in Sogdiana,¹⁹⁹ Alexander also at the mouth of the Indus.²⁰⁰ According to Plutarch (*Al.* 62), the kings of the Praisioi, which in fact should refer to the Mauryas, worshipped at these altars at the Hyphasis even in those days. This can hardly

¹⁹³ On him see Arrianus, *Anab.* 6, 2, 2, Strabo 15, 1, 30, and Curtius 9, 1, 24ff. Sophytes coins ascribed to him e.g. by Cunningham 1871, 133, McCrindle 1901, 37, and Macdonald in Rapson 1922, 347f. (who was still able to lead astray Brunt 1983, note ad l.).

¹⁹⁴ Whitehead 1943 and Mookerji 1947.

¹⁹⁵ Lévi 1890, 237ff. Mookerji 1947 also remarks that while Saubhūti is correct grammar, rightly founded on Pāṇini, he is not history, but a hypothesis.

¹⁹⁶ Narain (1957) makes him an semi-independent half-Greek Achaemenid satrap, but a later origin is much more likely. Bernard 1985a, 27f., and Holt 1989, 96f. suggests an unknown satrap of Bactria-Sogdiana at the end of the 4th century B.C.

¹⁹⁷ On their foundation by Alexander, see Strabo 2, 5, 5; Diodorus 17, 95, 1f. (important); Curtius 9, 3, 19; Arrianus, *Anab.* 5, 29, 1; Plutarch, *Al.* 62; Justinus 12, 8. Further McCrindle 1896, 348f.

¹⁹⁸ Arrianus, *Anab.* 1, 11, 7.

¹⁹⁹ Pliny 6, 18, 49 *ultra Sogdiani... et in ultimis eorum finibus Alexandria... arae ibi sunt ab Hercule ac Libero patre constitutae, item Cyro et Samiramide atque Alexandro: finis omnium eorum ductus ab illa parte terrarum, includente flumine Iaxarte.*

²⁰⁰ Diodorus 17, 104, 1. They were dedicated to Tethys and Oceanus.

be true, either in the time of the Maurya dynasty or in that of Plutarch, as such.²⁰¹ If it is not just literary embellishment, perhaps he had heard something about the Indo-Greeks. In later literature it is claimed that there were also pillars and altars erected by Dionysus in India, a parallel to those by Heracles in the extreme West, and Strabo thought that Alexander had imitated them.²⁰²

In Sind Alexander is said to have founded so many cities that we can be quite sure that most of them did not survive as Greek cities (if they ever really were such) through the period of Mauryan supremacy following the pact between Seleucus and Candragupta. Unfortunately, the extant historians of Alexander's campaign are much more interested in the country west of the Indus and in the Pañjab than in Sind, and there is not much information available about the foundations in Sind.²⁰³ There were probably several Alexandrias here, too, but it has been suggested that only Patala, an already existing town fortified by Alexander,²⁰⁴ did actually survive. This is perhaps supported by some Indian evidence of an Alexandria in Sind.²⁰⁵ Unfortunately, though Sind is no longer the archaeological *terra incognita* it once used to be, excavated material remains seem to have nothing to offer us.²⁰⁶

The name Πάταλα, according to Arrianus (*Ind.* 2, 6) the Indian name for the whole delta, according to other sources a place on the upper part of it,²⁰⁷ has been compared with OIA (and MIA) *pātāla*, normally used as a name for the underworld. It is, however, also used as a geographical name, and some evidence points to the west of India, even to the mouths of the Indus.²⁰⁸

West of the Indus, Alexander set up a foundation in the town of Rhambakia among the Oreitai, and populated it with Arachosians.²⁰⁹ It seems that there were more foundations during the march to the west, but again our sources are insufficiently clear. There must have been at least one garrison in Gedrosia.

201 Treidler 1954, 2556 seems to think so.

202 E.g. Diodorus 1, 20, 1; Dionysius Periegetes 620ff.; Strabo 3, 5, 5f.; Tzetzes 8, 211, 582ff. See Pfister 1959, 8ff. and II.2 above. Strabo 16, 4, 4 mentioned a pillar of Sesostris on the Red Sea coast.

203 See Arrianus, *Anab.* 6, 17, 4. On a "New Barce" see Justinus 12, 10. Pearson 1960, 108f.

204 Arrianus, *Anab.* 6, 20, 1.

205 Sircar 1965a, chapter VI.7 below.

206 See e.g. Lohuizen-de Leeuw 1979.

207 Arrianus, *Anab.* 5, 4, 1 (Πάταλα καλεῖται τῆ Ἰνδῶν φωνῆ) and 6, 17ff., Strabo 15, 1, 33, and Marcianus 1, 32; Pliny 6, 26, 100. The island (formed by delta branches) Παταληνῆ νῆσος in Strabo 15, 1, 32, Dionysius Perieg. 1093, and *Patala insula* Pliny 6, 23, 71f., 76 & 80. For the country Παταληνῆ χώρα in Strabo 15, 1, 13 and Marcianus 1, 32, and *Patalene regio* in Mela 3, 71. In Curtius 9, 8, 28 the people of *Patalii* and their king Moeris. Perhaps also Potana of Agatharchides F 105b.

208 Hinüber 1985, 1085, Parpola 1975. On the Patala of classical sources see also Cunningham 1871, 235ff., McCrindle 1896, 356f., Treidler 1953, 1036f. & 1965, 489ff., and Eggermont 1975, 24ff.

209 Arrianus, *Anab.* 6, 21, 5; Curtius 9, 10, 7 (mentions the Arachosians); Diodorus 17, 104, 8; but see McCrindle 1896, 262, note 2, Eggermont 1975, 133.

6. The Naked Ascetics of India

The first Western knowledge of Indian ascetics was obtained by Alexander's men in Taxila. The so-called ascetics in Herodotus, those who ate only wild plants, did not kill animals, and had no houses, were a primitive people of the far end of the world described according to the fixed pattern of early Greek ethnography. They ate wild plants and abstained from killing because they did not know how to till the soil and how to hunt. Living without houses, too, is a common feature of remote primitive peoples. They went off into the wilderness to die alone, because they, like other remote peoples, had no civilized funeral customs. When we are further told that they had sexual intercourse in public in the manner of animals, I must confess that this kind of sect in India – if it really was such – has entirely escaped my notice.²¹⁰

Indian philosophers, Brahmans, monks and ascetics have fascinated both ancient authors and their modern interpreters so much that there is no end to the number of sources and studies. There are a great number of primary sources,²¹¹ and they have been discussed again and again.²¹² After Taxila Brahmans were found in Sind, too, and soon Megasthenes brought fresh information. Later the Indian Brahmans or Gymnosophists had a long afterlife as one of the favourite subjects of popular philosophy (especially Cynicism), which was then suited to Christian purposes, too. The Alexander legend was also fascinated with them. Various spurious versions of the meeting between Alexander himself or his men and these Indian sages appeared, the earliest of them attested in papyri. In the Roman period the Hellenistic literary tradition was enriched by new information acquired from Indian embassies to Rome.

²¹⁰ Herodotus 3, 100f. They were identified as Indian ascetics (*vānaprastha*) by Lassen 1852, 635 (= 1874, 640), followed by many others (e.g. Reese 1914, 66f., Stein 1932, 314, Skurzak 1948, 18ff., and Vofchuk 1982b, 93ff.). For criticism of this opinion see Rossellini & Saïd 1978 and Karttunen 1988. Like eating habits and absence of houses, sexual intercourse in public is a *τόπος*, too, emphasizing the absence of institutionalized marriage. The Indian vegetarians of Mela (3, 64 *quidam nullum animal occidere, nulla carne vesci optimum existimant*) are clearly derived from Herodotus.

²¹¹ Taxilan ascetics in Aristobulus F 41 (Strabo 15, 1, 61); Nearchus F 23 (Strabo 15, 1, 66); Onesicritus F 17a (Strabo 15, 1, 63ff.); other accounts in Strabo 15, 1, 39 (Megasthenes F 19b) and 15, 1, 70f. (Pramnae and Gymnetes); Arrianus, *Ind.* 11, 1ff. (Megasthenes F 19a); Diodorus 2, 40; Curtius 8, 9, 31ff. (cf. McCrindle 1896, 190 notes); Pliny 7, 2, 22; Plutarch, *Al.* 64f. (with Onesicritus F 17b); Alexander Polyhistor F 18 in Clement of Alexandria, *Strom.* 3, 6, 60; Pseudo-Origenes, *Philosoph.* 24 in McCrindle 1877, 120ff. Greek sources (with more) collected in Breloer & Bömer 1939, Latin in André & Filliozat 1986.

²¹² See e.g. Lassen 1833, 1874, 704ff. (1852, 699ff.) and 1858, McCrindle 1877, 97ff. & 1896, 386ff., Tomaschek 1899, 804ff., Wecker 1916, 1307ff. & 1310f., Stein 1920, 277ff. & 1932, 313ff., Wilcken 1923, Pfister often, Tam 1951, 429ff., Skurzak 1948 etc., Brown 1949, 21ff., Dziech 1949–53 (only more or less different versions of the same), Treidler 1954, 1686f., Pearson 1960, 259f., Bongard-Levin 1973 & 1981, Schwarz 1976 & 1980, 86ff., Christol 1981, Vofchuk 1982b–1992, etc.

Indian sages were known by so many different names in the West that we must begin with a survey of these various names²¹³ They include Gymnosophistai, Gymnetes, Indian sages or Sophists or Philosophers, Brachmanes, Sarmanes (Garmanes), Samanaioi, Semnoi, Gennoi, Hylobioi (Allobioi), and Pramnae.

The word Gymnosophist (in the plural γυμνοσοφισταί), the naked sophist, was actually never used by Alexander's contemporaries, at least not in the extant fragments, but afterwards it became one of the most common names for Indian philosophers. The nakedness of the sages seen in Taxila had been specially emphasized by Alexander's companions²¹⁴ and thus the name is rather obvious, though perhaps invented only later. It was much used in the Roman period,²¹⁵ in the texts of the Alexander legend, and in the Middle Ages. It also occurs in a fragment of Cleitarchus (F 6 in Diogenes Laertius *Prooem.* 6). It is, of course, quite possible that Diogenes here used the fashionable word, though his source had something else, but the history of Cleitarchus with its great popularity could also well have been the real origin of the word.

The name Gymnetes (γυμνήτεες)²¹⁶ is mentioned by Strabo (15, 1, 70) as a subdivision of the Pramnae. The name is evidently related to the Gymnosophists, both referring to nakedness by the Greek word γυμνός. The passage undoubtedly goes back to some historian of Alexander or to Megasthenes (cf. below under the Pramnae). In Pliny (7, 2, 28 referring to Crates) the *Gymnetae* are a long-lived people (*macrobii*, surpassing a hundred years). With their frugal lifestyle the Indian sages were considered in the West to be long-lived. Lucianus (*Macrobii* 4) ascribes the long life of the Brahmins to their diet.

At first, during and after Alexander's campaigns, these Indian wise men were simply called by a Greek term, either Sophists or Philosophers. The first word, σοφιστής, is attested e.g. in Arrianus and Strabo,²¹⁷ the second, φιλόσοφος, in Strabo, Diodorus and Athenaeus.²¹⁸ In Megasthenes' sevenfold division of Indian society (F 19) the first class was called philosophers by Diodorus and Strabo, sophists by Arrianus. Arrianus seems here to follow the usage of Alexander's historians, with whom he was so familiar, while Diodorus and Strabo have preserved Megasthenes' word.²¹⁹ In Latin we often meet,

²¹³ For earlier opinions see e.g. Lassen 1833, Stein 1933, Christol 1981.

²¹⁴ Cf. Theophrastus, *H. pl.* 4, 4, 5 "Indian sages who wear no clothes" (τῶν Ἰνδῶν οἱ σοφοὶ μὴ ἀμπεχόμενοι), Arrianus, *Ind.* 11, 7 γυμνοὶ οἱ σοφισταί. The word itself, γυμνοσοφισταί, is quoted from an Aristotelean fragment (by Christol 1981), but the passage in question (Diogenes Laertius 1, 1) refers to Sotion (2nd century B.C.) as well.

²¹⁵ In Breloer & Bömer 1939 e.g. Alexander Polyhistor F 92 in Diog. L. 9, 11, 61; Philo of Alexandria, *De Somniis* 2, 56, *De Abs.* 182 etc.; Plutarch, *Alex.* 64; Pliny 7, 2, 22.

²¹⁶ The Greek word γυμνής or γυμνητής is also used for a type of light-armed foot-soldier.

²¹⁷ Arrianus, *Ind.* 11 (Megasthenes F 19a), 15, 12 (Nearchus F 10a); Strabo 15, 1, 45 (Nearchus F 10b); 15, 1, 61 (Aristobulus F 41) and 15, 1, 66ff. (Onesicritus F 17a).

²¹⁸ Strabo 15, 1, 39 (Megasthenes F 19b), 15, 1, 58 (Megasthenes F 33) and 15, 1, 68; Diodorus 2, 40 (also from Megasthenes) Athenaeus 10, 49, 437a (Chares F 19a).

²¹⁹ Therefore I find Breloer's claim (1934, 144f.) that the word 'sophist' refers particularly to ascetics, and the word 'philosopher' to Brahmins, is hardly acceptable. Aristobulus (F 41) expressly called Brahmins sophists, while it is not at all so clear that Megasthenes' (F 33) philosophers living in the mountains and worshipping Dionysus are Brahmins and not ascetics. As often (cf. Brunt 1983,

beside *gymnosophistae*, simply *sapientes*.²²⁰ In late sources also the Iranian term *Magi* is occasionally used.²²¹

The word commonly rendered as Brachmanes is attested in Greek since the historians of Alexander as *βραχμᾶνες*, in late sources occasionally also with a different declension as *βραχμάναι*, -νοι; in Latin as *Bragmanae* or *Bragmanes*.²²² All these forms are easily derived from the OIA *brāhmaṇa*. The variant *βραμεναι* in the Greek inscriptions of Aśoka may reflect a current Northwestern MIA form, while the Greek and Latin literary forms are rather close to the standard *brāhmaṇa*. As a formal denomination *brāhmaṇa* is used, beside OIA, rather often in MIA, too, and where it has been affected by linguistic development, it normally affects the first syllable (*bamhaṇa* etc.). In the Northwest, however, the initial *br-* seems to be preserved,²²³ and if the exceptional *βραμεναι* cannot be explained through Aramaic influence, we perhaps have here an unattested early MIA form. We cannot, however, place too much weight on it, as it might also be affected by the analogous *σραμεναι*. The two terms are used as a pair often enough, not only in the West, but in Aśokan inscriptions and in the Pāli canon.

The Indian term for wandering monks is attested in Western literature both in its OIA (if not Northwest MIA) form and in the MIA form. Thus Megasthenes' *Sarmanes* (**Σαρμᾶνες* or *Σαρμᾶνες* as Strabo's *Γαρμᾶνες* can probably be restored; the word is attested with *Σ* in Clement of Alexandria)²²⁴ corresponds to OIA *śramaṇa*; more closely rendered as *Σραμεναι* in the Greek inscriptions of Aśoka.²²⁵ In late tradition we also meet Bactrian *Samanaei* (*Σαμαναῖοι* in Bardesanes; Clement of Alexandria) corresponding to MIA (Pāli) *samaṇa*.²²⁶

443) Breloer is reading his own ideas into the texts. The difference between Diodorus–Strabo on the one hand, and Arrianus on the other, has also been pointed out by Timmer 1930, 73.

220 Thus e.g. Cicero, *Tusc. disp.* 5, 77, and Curtius 8, 9, 31 (*unum agreste et horridum gens est, quod sapientes vocant*). On Cicero cf. Vofchuk 1986b.

221 E.g. Pausanias 4, 32, 4. A people called *βραχμάναι μάγοι* in South India in Ptolemy 7, 1, 74. See below.

222 *βραχμᾶνες* e.g. in Strabo 15, 1, 59 (Megasthenes F 33); 15, 1, 70; Dio Chrysostomus, *Orat.* 35, 22 and 49, 7; Arrianus, *Anab.* 6, 7, 4; 6, 16, 5; *βραχμάναι* in Ptolemy 7, 1, 74; *βραχμᾶναι* in Clemens Alex., *Strom.* 1, 15, 71 & 3, 60, 2 (Alexander Polyh. F 18); *βραχμάνοι* in Damascius, *Vita Isidori* 67 (uncertain); *Brachmanae* in Tertullianus, *Apolog.* 42, 1; Ammianus 28, 1, 13; *Bracmani* in Apuleius, *Flor.* 15, 13; *Bragmanae* in Pliny 6, 21, 64; Jerome, *Epist.* 107, 8; *Bragmanes* in Fulgentius, *De aet. mundi* 10 (with variant *bracmani*). See Lassen 1833, 176ff.; Breloer & Bomer 1939, Index.

223 Thus *brama* for *Brahma* is attested in inscriptions, see Hinüber 1986, 118.

224 *Γαρμᾶνες* Strabo 15, 1, 59 (Megasthenes F 33); *Σαρμᾶναι* Clemens Alex. *Strom.* 1, 15, 71. The emendation *Σαρμᾶνες* for Strabo was first suggested by Schwanbeck 1846, 46, note 44, and accepted by most scholars. Dziech 1951, 65, pointed out that a lunatic sigma (C instead of Σ) can easily change into Γ. Meile 1941b suggested *Ζαρμᾶνες* instead. See also Christol 1981, 40.

225 For Greek see Christol 1981, 39. In Aramaic the word is, according to Humbach (e.g. 1978, 96) and Ito (1977, 154), rendered in an Iranian word as 'rzwš 'pious men'. According to Ito this can be vocalized as arzūš and derived from Avestan *erezu-uwša 'who has right insight' (erezu known as a personal name).

226 *Σαμαναῖοι* Bardesanes in Porphyrius; Clemens Alex. *Strom.* 1, 15, 71 (Samanaei of Bactria and Gymnosophists of India, the latter divided into Brachmanai and Sarmanai).

There used to be a lively discussion about the exact nature of the Sarmanes, whether they were Buddhist or Brahmanist, but now it seems clear that the word referred to wandering monks in general, including different groups. The Samanaei, however, are clearly Buddhists.²²⁷

The important book of Clement of Alexandria further contains a fragment of Alexander Polyhistor about Σεμνοί, celibate monks and nuns, who worshipped a kind of pyramid (σέβουσί τινα πυραμίδα). The “pyramid” naturally calls to mind Buddhist stūpa, and Semnoi have accordingly been identified as Buddhists.²²⁸ Buddhists, however, are not naked, and in order to accept this we must suppose that γυμνοί was just added due to the Greek conviction that all Indian sages *were* naked. Further, the Σεμνοί are also found as a geographical name.²²⁹

In Greek the word Σεμνοί is no more than the plural of σεμνός ‘revered, venerable’ and can easily have been affected by it. In Hesychius’ lexicon the word Γεννοί is glossed as οφλ γυμνοσοφισταί and explained by several scholars as Jainas.²³⁰ As Σ/Γ and Μ/Ν are both easily confused, it is possible that this is the real origin of the Σεμνοί.²³¹

The Greek name Hylobioi (ὕλόβιοι ‘forest-dwellers’) was used by Megasthenes to designate the Sarmanes of the forest (ὕλη).²³² They are the most honoured class of the Sarmanes and seem to correspond to the forest ascetics of Indian sources (vanaprastha).²³³ One problem is that the Vanaprasthas are Brāhmaṇas following the third stage of life (vānaprastha), while the hylobioi are a sub-division of the Sarmanes, presented as opposite to the Brachmanes. However, the most detailed Western accounts of the life of Indian Brahmins (Megasthenes F 19 & 33) contain, in addition to some veiled indication

²²⁷ Sarmanes as Buddhist e.g. Schwanbeck 1846, 45ff., Brahmanist Lassen 1833, 184ff. & 1874, 705ff., see Beal 1880, Stein 1920, 279f., Timmer 1930, 84ff. & 96ff., and Christol 1981. For the identity of the Samanaei as Buddhists, accepted at least since the early 19th century (references in Lassen 1833, 184f.) see e.g. Dihle 1964b.

²²⁸ Alexander Polyh. F 18 in Clemens Alex., *Strom.* 3, 60, 2; explained as Buddhists e.g. by Lassen 1858, 356f. Wecker 1923, 1354, and Christol 1981, 39. It is difficult to accept the arguments of Lassen (though accepted by Wecker). Claiming that Greek σεμνός is here used as a translation of OIA *arhant-*, he tries to explain the nakedness away, supposing that it stands here for OIA *digambara*, properly the name of the naked Jainas, but occasionally also used for clothed Buddhists. We must bear in mind that when Lassen wrote this, it was still supposed that Jainism was merely a form of Buddhism (Schubring 1962, 1ff.).

²²⁹ Σεμνοί as a people on the eastern coast of Taprobane in Ptolemy 7, 4, 9 (first suggested by Wecker 1923, 1468, it has been restored by Renou against Σεννοί of earlier editions, but is not without support in the MSS. tradition). Further, a town Σέμνη on the Limyric coast of India in Ptolemy 7, 1, 8 (cf. McCrindle 1885, 52 and Wecker 1923, 1354).

²³⁰ Apparently for the first time by M. Schmidt in his Hesychius edition of 1867, then e.g. Gray & Schuyler 1901, 197, Lüders 1905, 433, with some hesitation also Stein 1920, 293f. and Schubring 1962, 2, note 1.

²³¹ I here follow Dihle 1964a, 21, but hesitate to accept with him that Alexander/Clement on Σεμνοί and Hesychius on Γεννοί were both ultimately derived from Megasthenes.

²³² Megasthenes F 33 in Strabo 15, 1, 60; the related passage in Clemens Alex., *Strom.* 1, 15, 71, 5 has an apparently corrupt reading ἀλλόβιοι. Long ago Beal 1880 attempted to explain the name Hylobioi from *Alobhiya*, supposedly derived from *alubdha* (!).

²³³ So identified e.g. by Lassen 1833, 178 and 1874, 711, McCrindle 1901, 67, note 1; Stein 1920, 286f. & 1932, 316f., and Timmer 1930, 98ff. See also Skurzak 1956, 97f., and 1961.

of the brahmacārya, only the life of the grhastha stage, and nothing really resembling the two later stages, the vānaprastha and the sannyāsa, as described in the Dharmaśāstras.²³⁴ Megasthenes was mainly explaining (and interpreting for a Greek audience) what he had seen, and therefore it is possible that he placed more emphasis on their actual life-style than on doctrinal differences.

The Pramnae (πράμναι of Strabo 15, 1, 70) with their several subdivisions have aroused much discussion. The passage is given without a reference, but probably comes from some historian of Alexander. Some have explained the word as a corruption of *σράμ(α)ναι, which is, however, unattested.²³⁵ It is close to Aśoka's σραμεναι, true, but this word is attested only in Indian inscriptions, and we cannot be sure that it was ever known in Greek literature. The standard form of OIA śramaṇa in Greek was probably Σαρμᾶνες, in Strabo early corrupted into Γαρμᾶνες (g is attested in all manuscripts). Another hypothesis²³⁶ explains them as prāmāṇikas as 'followers of the various philosophical systems' (from prāmāṇa 'means of right knowledge'), supposedly disparaged by those Brahmans who performed Vedic rites. This has been rightly criticized by Barnett (1931). He remarked that whilst the two words, Pramnae and prāmāṇikas, are not that close, Vedic Brahmans also had their pramāṇas, and the word prāmāṇika itself was never used in this way, meaning essentially an 'authoritative, credible' person. As a fourth argument he noted that in fact Strabo did not refer to an opposition between the Pramnae and ritualists, as rituals are not mentioned at all. The real opposition is not between two kinds of Brahmans but between Brahmans and sectarians. *Σράμναι he rejects, too, as a corruption Σ > Π seems rather unlikely to him and *σράμναι a not too good rendering for śramaṇa beside the already existing σαρμᾶνες.

This far we can well agree, though the priority of γαρμᾶνες to πράμναι, both corrupt words in Strabo, one referring to Megasthenes, the other without a reference, is not that clear. However, Barnett's own suggestion, prajñā or prājñā, is no more convincing. Of course, Indian sectarians did strive to attain prajñā (for which I find Barnett's 'practical cleverness' a rather inadequate rendering), but I wonder if the word really was distasteful to orthodox Brahmans because it was so much used by sectarians. Further, one single passage from the *Bhagavadgītā* (17, 14) is insufficient to prove his supposed use of prājñā as a denomination for sectarians. After such meagre evidence he presented the elaborate and entirely conjectural chain from prajñāḥ/prājñāḥ to πράμναι through *πράκναι as a supposed Greek rendering of the Northwestern MIA form corresponding to what he called the normal MIA resulting in Greek *πράγναι. This *πράκναι he then changed to πράμναι because of the similarity of the Greek minuscules κ and μ.²³⁷

Barnett's defects were aptly pointed out by Stein (1933), who presented an elaborated version of the *σράμ(α)ναι hypothesis. Noting the common palaeographical variant

²³⁴ Cf. Skurzak 1948, 7ff.

²³⁵ Bohlen 1827, 34; McCrindle 1901, 76, note 2; Bongard-Levin 1981, 32.

²³⁶ Lassen 1833, 183f., followed by Weber 1871, 627, Bevan 1922, 379, and Arora 1982b, 474

²³⁷ The hypothesis is so far-fetched that it hardly calls for detailed criticism. It remains to say that with his NW *praknai Barnett followed Grierson's Paiśācī hypothesis, which has become obsolete with Hinüber 1981. We no longer accept praknai as a Northwestern form.

Π for Π and its closeness to Γ, he constructed a development Πράμναι < Γράμναι < Σράμναι = σραμεναι/σαρμᾶναι/-νες (> γαρμᾶνες) as Greek renderings of śramaṇa. Possible, perhaps, but not very convincing.

It is important to bear in mind the clear difference between the Indian philosophers of Taxila and the fighting Brahmans of the lower Indus valley. For historians of Alexander the latter are a tribe, entirely different from the ascetics of Taxila, though both were later called Gymnosophists.²³⁸

There are four sources for the naked ascetics of Taxila. The main account comes from Onesicritus, who visited them on behalf of Alexander. The fragment is preserved by Strabo, who also gives a different account by Aristobulus. These two accounts are clearly independent, though both describe the same group of ascetics and name Calanus, who then accompanied Alexander to the West.²³⁹ Arrianus (*Anab.* 7, 2, 2ff.; also Strabo 15, 1, 68) preferred Megasthenes, who pretended to give Indian criticism of Calanus (it might also have been his own Greek speculation),²⁴⁰ and of the account of Nearchus we have only one incomplete reference.²⁴¹

Two naked ascetics, Dandamis (with the *v. l.* Mandanis) and Calanus, are mentioned by name. Suggested explanations for the first name are rather disappointing.²⁴² Josephus claims that in India Calanus means a philosopher, while others explain it as an Indian word of address, καλέ meaning the same as Greek χαῖρε. Plutarch also reveals his personal name as Sphines.²⁴³ For this OIA *kalyāṇam* was long ago suggested,²⁴⁴ and this, as a Northwestern form is to be expected, is now practically confirmed by the coins of the Indo-Greek king Telephus (see VI.6), where Greek εὐεργέτου is prākṛitised as *kalano-kramasa*, corresponding to OIA *kalyāṇakarmasya*.²⁴⁵

Both names are found in the account of Onesicritus, and with him we must briefly consider the problem of interpreters. They are rarely mentioned (as here by Onesicritus), but nevertheless were often employed without further ado. Some cases are found in Herodotus (e.g. the Scythian account and Indian Kalatians). Alexander needed an inter-

²³⁸ E.g. Plutarch (*Al.* 64) calls the rebellious Brahmans Gymnosophists.

²³⁹ Onesicritus F 17a in Strabo 15, 1, 63–65, with much shorter F 17b in Plutarch. Aristobulus F 41 in Strabo 15, 1, 61. On these see e.g. Brown 1949, 45ff., Pearson 1960, 176, Pédech 1984, 104ff., and Vofchuk 1986a. Skurzak 1974, as far as I am able to see through his Polish, seems to explain these as two different groups.

²⁴⁰ Megasthenes F 34b in Arrianus, *Anab.* 7, 2, 2ff.; also F 34a in Strabo 15, 1, 68.

²⁴¹ F 23 in Strabo 15, 1, 66. See Vofchuk 1982c, 288ff.

²⁴² Cf. Schwarz 1980, 96.

²⁴³ Josephus, *Contra Ap.* 179 (quoting Clearchus): καλοῦνται δέ, ὡς φασιν, οἱ φιλόσοφοι παρὰ μὲν Ἰνδοῖς Καλανοί; Plutarch, *Al.* 65, 5 with the name Σφίνης. Lassen 1833, 176 & 1874, 701 (< sphīna = sphīta 'glücklich') is not too convincing.

²⁴⁴ Schlegel 1829, 27, then e.g. Fick 1938, 5 (referring to Hilka for several attested OIA personal names containing *kalyāṇa*), and Schwarz 1980, 98.

²⁴⁵ For these coins see Bopparachchi 1991, 344. The MIA personal name Kalana (in the genitive *kalanasa*) is mentioned four times in inscribed gold objects from Dalverzin-Tepe and explained by Vorobjova-Desjatovskaja 1976, 77f., as *Kalyāṇa*.

preter with Taxiles.²⁴⁶ Iranian forms for the Indian rivers given in the histories of Alexander (such as Hydraspes, Hydraotes and Hyphasis, see IV.2 below), opposed to the more Indian forms in the *Geography* of Ptolemy (7, 1), point to Iranian interpreters. Only occasionally do we meet interpreters in our sources. In Bactria Pharnuches, a Lycian interpreter, was given the command of a military expedition,²⁴⁷ and Nearchus had an interpreter among the Ichthyophagi (Arrianus, *Ind.* 28).

The Gymnosophists of Taxila have been variously ascribed to this sect or that. Their teachings are too general and with too Cynical a colouring to allow us to draw any conclusions. The Cynic connection of the Gymnosophists, already apparent in Onesicritus,²⁴⁸ was quite clear in later tradition, too. In one passage (*De Alex. virt.* 2, 10, 332B) Plutarch stated that the Gymnosophists were more frugal in their life-style than Diogenes as they had no need of a wallet, and he adds that because of Alexander Diogenes was known to them and they to Diogenes.

While to the Gymnosophists were ascribed Cynic doctrines and motives, either deliberately or through misunderstanding caused by cultural differences and difficulties in interpreting, what was actually seen in Taxila were real Indian sages. Their appearance and their ascetic exercises were probably more or less correctly described. Because of their nakedness, the Jains have been a favourite suggestion.²⁴⁹ But there were many smaller sects, of whom we do not know the details, and it is very possible that nakedness was not restricted to the Jains. We may here also note Le Valley's different hypothesis (school of Sañjaya), but in the details he fails to convince his reader.²⁵⁰

It is perhaps impossible to identify these philosophers reliably. What is told in more or less contemporary Indian sources is mainly concerned with the Ganges country; in the Northwest there might have been completely unknown sects. In any case our evidence is so mutilated and vague that one should not be too certain. Still it seems likely that all the

²⁴⁶ Curtius 8, 12, 9. On the question of interpreters in general see Balsdon (1979, 137ff.), who has rightly remarked that ancient historians carried out similar editing as a modern TV news crew would cut out of the picture interpreters and other unimportant persons. The famous scene of Alexander's exchange of words with the defeated Porus is always described (by Arrianus, Curtius, Diodorus, and Plutarch) as taking place without interpreters, but surely they were present. Mosley 1971, gives an interesting collection of references to language contacts and interpreters in Greece. See also Schwarz 1980, 94, and Karttunen 1989a, 110.

²⁴⁷ Arrianus, *Anab.* 4, 3, 7; Pearson 1960, 209.

²⁴⁸ See e.g. Brown 1949, 24ff., Pearson 1960, 99, and Pédech 1984, 93ff.

²⁴⁹ The idea is close, but rarely proposed because of difficulties (see Stein 1920, 292ff.). They have been identified as Jains i.a. by Arora (1982b, 473). Stein's criticism seems partly misplaced. Commenting on ascetic practices described by Aristobulus he claims that "solche Übungen nackter Asketen sind schwerlich auf die jainistische Richtung zu beziehen". However, penances such as exposing oneself to the scorching sun or to cold, and standing with one foot lifted up and both arms raised are all quoted from the Śvetāmbara canon by Schubring (1962, 278).

²⁵⁰ Le Valley 1992. His article, which is actually a summary of his 1987 dissertation, reveals a singular lack of understanding of Greek literature and thought, accusing ancient authors of "shameless plagiarizing" and "blatant propaganda".

ascetics of this particular community represented one and the same sect despite some differences of opinion they (like Dandamis and Calanus) might have had.²⁵¹

Schwarz (1980, 103) is too much surprised by their habit of entering women's apartments.²⁵² In addition to Brahmans, many sectarian monks acted as family priests, and visiting inner apartments did not necessarily mean breaking the vow of brahmacārya. It is also true that only in the idealistic literature of a religious nature were the vows always strictly kept, and one is not bound to believe in them literally. In farces (the *Mattavilāsa* and the *Bhagavadajjukīya*), in narrative literature (such as the *Pañcatantra*) and in the *Prabodhacandrodaya* (which is much later, of course) these vows seem to be broken quite often by the less pious members of Buddhist and Jaina orders, and often exactly because they had free access to women's apartments. One also notes that the Taxilan sages made their bhikṣāgamana in the evening, which, together with the nakedness, rules out Buddhists.²⁵³

Although Megasthenes properly belongs to our next chapter, we must briefly discuss here his account of Indian philosophers. It is mainly given in three long fragments,²⁵⁴ and has been preserved rather well.²⁵⁵ It has often been emphasized that here the scene is eastern India (Magadha), which is partly true, but at the same time Megasthenes was all the time commenting on and criticizing the historians of Alexander and their accounts of Northwest India.²⁵⁶ This is seen directly in the passage (F 34ab) where the life and suicide of Calanus were criticized. The criticism is given as an Indian viewpoint, but seems at least partly to hail from the Greek rationalizing of Megasthenes himself.²⁵⁷

In his famous account of seven classes (III.3 below) Megasthenes had philosophers as the first class, including both Brahmans and Sarmanes.²⁵⁸ It has been a source of some misunderstanding that both Schwanbeck and Müller (though not Jacoby) give *Indica* 11, 7f. as part of Megasthenes' account, though a reference to Nearchus (F 6) is expressly given by Arrianus. Megasthenes did not say that his philosophers were naked sophists spending their life in ascetic exercises.²⁵⁹ Like Vedic Brahmans these philosophers per-

²⁵¹ Schwarz (1980, 97) makes Dandamis an orthodox Brahman, but Calanus a sectarian (which he clearly was). So also R. C. Jain in his edition of McCrindle 1877.

²⁵² Strabo 15, 1, 66, but see Pearson 1960, 98.

²⁵³ But not Jainas (Schubring 1962, 270f.).

²⁵⁴ Breloer 1939 suggested an unnamed Megasthenian fragment in Philostratus (*V. Ap.* 2, 30) dealing with the rules of admission to their order. The account is interesting, and Breloer's notes contain much of importance, but he completely fails to convince me that this really hailed from Megasthenes.

²⁵⁵ Lassen 1874, 705ff. (= 1852, 699ff.), Stein 1920 & 1932, Timmer 1930, 70ff., and Skurzak 1956.

²⁵⁶ Cf. Stein 1932, 313, on his relation to Alexander's historians.

²⁵⁷ Megasthenes F 34a in Strabo 15, 1, 68, and F 34b in Arrianus, *Anab.* 7, 2, 2. Cf. Timmer 1930, 105ff.

²⁵⁸ Megasthenes F 19a in Arrianus, *Ind.* 11, F 19b in Strabo 15, 1, 39; without reference in Diodorus 2, 40, 1-3. That it therefore does not strictly correspond to the first varṇa of ancient Indian society has been pointed out by Stein 1932, 322.

²⁵⁹ This has been discussed as Megasthenian e.g. by Skurzak, 1948, 52f., 1961, and still 1979, 70. He gives this as an additional account of the Hylobioi (F 33), without explaining why their valkala garments are here exchanged for nakedness.

form sacrifices, they are advisers to kings and serve them as prophets.²⁶⁰ Unknown in Indian sources is the claim that he who has three times erred in his prophecies must keep silence for life, although voluntary vows of silence are not unknown in literature and the very word *muni* has been explained as 'the silent one'.

At the end of the account of seven classes philosophers were pointed out as a kind of exception to the system of strict heredity and endogamy, but the sources differ in the details.²⁶¹

The detailed account of these philosophers is given separately by Strabo and probably this was the case with Megasthenes, too. They were of several different kinds (on names, see above), each with different functions in Indian society.²⁶² The main division was between the Brachmanes and Sarmanes. While the former seem more or less to correspond to Indian Brahmans, the latter have several sub-divisions. The first and most appreciated were the Hylobioi (ὕλοβιοι), whom we have already discussed. Next to them came the physicians (ιατρικοί), who in India also tended to form a separate group.²⁶³ Lower groups are wandering diviners (μαντικοί) and enchanters, who also conducted rites for the dead.²⁶⁴

Next after Megasthenes came Alexander Polyhistor, a first-century author of a little-known *Indica* and many other works. His two fragments (F 18 & 94, both in Clement of Alexandria) dealing with Indian sages contain much that is unknown in the remains of the literature on Alexander or of Megasthenes.²⁶⁵ He was the first Western author to mention reincarnation (παλιγγενεσία) among Indian doctrines, and he described the sect of the Semnoi mentioned above.²⁶⁶

While the Indian sages were honoured in the West because of their frugal life and their supposed, but poorly known, wisdom, there was also a tendency to interpret them, in contradiction to Megasthenes, as a distinct people. The Brachmans of Sind met by Alexander seem to be a tribe, and we have quoted above Cicero and Curtius about a tribe

²⁶⁰ See Stein 1922, 281ff. & 286ff., and 1932, 314f., for Indian parallels. Conducting sacrifices for others was such a fundamental duty for Vedic Brahmans that I cannot understand why precisely this feature has been taken by Skurzak 1979, 69ff., as a pre-Vedic Magadhan peculiarity supported by Mesopotamian parallels.

²⁶¹ According to Arrianus, *Ind.* 12, 9, the first class was open to all, which probably was true in the case of the Sarmanes. Strabo 15, 1, 49, only gave the right of intermarriage with other classes to Brahmans, and in Diodorus 2, 41, 5, the first class seems to be as closed as the rest. Cf. Timmer 1930, 112f.

²⁶² Megasthenes F 33 Strabo 15, 1, 58–60.

²⁶³ See V.5 below, Stein 1932, 317f., and Timmer 1930, 101ff. The healer theme was further developed by Philostratus, *V. Ap.* 3, 38f.

²⁶⁴ Timmer 1930, 103ff. For another account of divination in India see Pliny 12, 11, 24, cf. Lassen 1858, 338, and André & Filliozat 1986, *ad l.*

²⁶⁵ However, Dihle 1964a, 21, claims that everything in Clemens Alex. 3, 60, 2–4, goes back to Megasthenes.

²⁶⁶ In another passage Clement of Alexandria (1, 15, 71) even referred to the Buddha by name (Βούττα). As this follows after his account of the Brachmanes and Sarmanes early scholars often ascribed this, too, to Megasthenes (even Stein 1932, 319f.), but in fact the same passage also includes the Bactrian Samanaei. We can thus safely conclude that early Hellenistic literature knew hardly anything about the Buddha.

(*gens*) of sages (*sapientes*). In Ptolemy, the Gymnosophists are a tribe living between the Indus and the Ganges (7, 1, 51), while Βραχμάναι μάγοι with their capital Brama inhabit eastern India (7, 1, 74).²⁶⁷

The description of the Brahmans in the *Vita Apollonii* of Philostratus (certainly containing much fantasy) and still more some accounts of the Roman period (e.g. Dio Chrysostomus, Bardesanes, Pseudo-Palladius and a few patristic authors) contain fresh information which no longer belongs to the Hellenistic period. Therefore, their discussion must be postponed to a future study.

7. Self-immolation on the Fire: Philosophers and Widows

In the West the self-immolating Indian philosophers, such as were seen by Alexander's men, were a sensation, which was remembered for a very long time. Combined with a widow becoming a *satī* (a pious woman, often anglicized as *suttee*) the custom aroused great interest and admiration and was often discussed in literature. In the Roman period a reference to their ascetism and to their self-chosen funeral pyre was understood by every educated reader.

Several classical authors tell how Calanus, one of the philosophers of Taxila, joined Alexander's retinue and followed him to Susa and Babylon, but then fell ill and decided to commit suicide in the fire.²⁶⁸ Alexander himself and his whole army were watching while Calanus ascended his pyre. Therefore Richard Fick's fantastic hypothesis of a pretended suicide cannot be accepted,²⁶⁹ our classical sources are clear and numerous enough to be relied on. In addition to Calanus, Zarmarus or Zarmanochegas, too, was too early to be explained by a mediaeval Indian tradition, and there cannot be serious doubt about his death. He was a member of the Indian embassy to Augustus at the end of the first century B.C. and he committed suicide by fire in Athens, which is also attested in several sources.²⁷⁰ We hear that his grave was later on display in Athens. Moreover, this Indian

²⁶⁷ On Magoi in India cf. also Τάβασοι, ἔθνος μάγων in Ptolemy 7, 1, 65. The name has been explained as OIA *tāpasa* 'ascetic' (e.g. McCrindle 1885, 158, Tomaszek 1899, 805, and Herrmann 1932b, 1843f.). See also additional notes (in the reprint) to McCrindle 1885, 349 & 381ff.

²⁶⁸ See Arrianus, *Anab.* 7, 3; Diodorus 17, 107; Chares F 19a in Athenaeus 10, 437; Josephus *Bella* 7, 351ff.; Plutarch, *Al.* 69; Lucianus, *De morte Peregr.* 25; Curtius 8, 9, 32; Mela 3, 65; Philo Alex., *De Abr.* 182; Valerius Max. 1, 8, Lucanus, *Phars.* 3, 240ff., etc. The immense after-life of this story can be traced from extracts given in Breloer & Bomer 1939 and André & Filliozat 1986.

²⁶⁹ Fick 1938. One thinks of the *Man Who Died* by Lawrence, but while this is literature, Fick presented his idea as a piece of scholarship. The Germanic parallel mentioned by Breloer (1939, 277, note 4) is hardly pertinent because of the central role of a dagger in his Herulic rite, wholly missing in accounts of the deaths of Calanus and Zarmanochegas.

²⁷⁰ Strabo 15, 1, 4 & 15, 1, 73 (Nicolaus Damascenus F 100); Cassius Dio 54, 9, 8–10. On him, see Balsdon 1979, 251, and Schwarz 1985.

custom was later imitated by the Greek Cynic philosopher (or rather charlatan) Peregrinus Proteus who ascended a pyre at Olympia in 167 A.D.²⁷¹

We need not make too much of those authors who claim that this kind of suicide was the rule among Indian philosophers. The case of Calanus soon became famous and was used as a literary τόπος. This was therefore not necessarily genuine information about an Indian custom, but merely abstracted from the tragic end of Calanus. Megasthenes²⁷² knew better, though his criticism was probably excessive. He purportedly referred to the opinion of Brahmins, though we are not sure whether he really consulted them in this matter. The arguments are suspiciously Greek and take too direct a position against Greek literary accounts. It has also been suggested that his criticism did not really have any Indian authority, but should be considered as purely Greek literary discussion.²⁷³ This theme was later elaborated by Pseudo-Palladius.

In any case, from the end of Calanus and Zarmanochegas we may deduce that, even if not the rule, the custom was certainly not unknown, and was occasionally practised. Occasionally scholars have emphasized somewhat too strongly its supposed un-Indian character. In Indian Dharma literature it is often mentioned as forbidden, but what was not occasionally done was not forbidden. Actually it must have been practised in ancient times, and there are also direct references to it. A collection of these has been presented by Hillebrandt, who found express references to suicide by fire in such texts as the *Vasiṣṭha-dharmasūtra*, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, the *Mahābhārata*, the *Kathāsaritsāgara*, the *Mudrārākṣasa*, and the *Daśakumāracarita*.²⁷⁴ In the first of these texts it is actually stated that through the pyre one is capable of reaching the world of Brahma (*agnipraveśād brahmalokaḥ*), and the others, too, present suicide as a religious act. In Buddhism suicide by fire seems to be more common in Chinese tradition, but there are a few examples in Indian sources, too.²⁷⁵ For the Jainas religious suicide was not rare, but the only permitted means was fasting to death.²⁷⁶

In Greece, too, a philosophical suicide was not entirely unknown. Thus Empedocles committed suicide and, in a way, Socrates, too. But what was understood as a regular custom of the exotic ascetics was considered something entirely different, and as such it aroused much more interest and admiration. The details of such a suicide were often further developed, as is seen for instance in Onesicritus' and Zeno's accounts of slowly roasting Brahmins.²⁷⁷

²⁷¹ Mentioned by Lucianus, *De morte Peregr.* and confirmed by Philostratus, *Vit. Soph.* 2, 1, 33. Several modern sources on him are listed in the *KIP* s.v. Peregrinus.

²⁷² Megasthenes F 34a in Strabo 15, 1, 68 and F 34b in Arrianus, *Anabasis* 7, 2.

²⁷³ Brown 1960. See also Pliny 6, 22, 66 (with McCrindle 1877, 136).

²⁷⁴ Hillebrandt 1917, 5ff. See also Timmer 1930, 109ff., Schwarz 1980, 98ff., and Vofchuk 1986b, 146ff. See further *KA* 13, 2, 1–4.

²⁷⁵ Filliozat 1963 (35 and passim) and Berglie & Suneson 1986.

²⁷⁶ Schubring 1962, 388.

²⁷⁷ Onesicritus F 18 in Lucianus, *De morte Peregr.* 25, and Zeno F 241 in Clemens Alex., *Strom.* 2, 20, 125 (in Breloer & Bomer 1939, 31). See Fisch 1937, 134.

A related theme was the burning of royal women on the pyre of their dead husbands in India.²⁷⁸ This was first observed by the companions of Alexander in the Pañjab, though the exact location of the accounts differ.²⁷⁹ Diodorus and Nicolaus Damascenus assert that though this cruel custom was not compulsory, a widow had to lead a miserable life as an excommunicated person. The explanation offered by Onesicritus for the custom – that wives were thus prevented from poisoning their husbands – seems to be purely Greek speculation as is often the case when Onesicritus is explaining causes. In later literature Indian *satis* were a common theme.²⁸⁰

The idea of the pious wife becoming a *sati*²⁸¹ was not completely unknown in Greece, although only one example was quoted in tradition early enough to be uninfluenced by India (as, for instance, the case of Dido). Euadne was the wife of Capaneus, one of the Seven against Thebes, who committed *hybris* and was killed by a thunderbolt from Zeus. The wife is said to have rushed onto his pyre, and was lauded by poets as an example of conjugal fidelity.²⁸²

The story of the two wives of Ceteus (Κητεύς),²⁸³ the Indian king who fought with Eumenes and was killed in the battle against Antigonos in 316 B.C., is told by Diodorus. After the battle, the story goes on, his two wives were competing for the honour of being

²⁷⁸ There was a parallel custom in Thracia, where wives, however, were killed.

²⁷⁹ Aristobulus F 42 in Strabo 15, 1, 62 (one of the strange customs in Taxila), Onesicritus F 21 in Strabo 15, 1, 30 (in the country of Sopeithes), Diodorus 17, 91, 3 (among the Cathaeans).

²⁸⁰ Nicolaus Damascenus F 124 (in Stobaeus, *Anthol.*), Philo, *de Abrah.* 182f., Cicero, *Tusc. disp.* 5, 78, Propertius 3, 13, 15ff., Aelianus, *V. H.* 6, 18. See also Lassen 1858, 347f., McCrindle 1896, 369f. and 1901, 202ff. and notes, Arora 1982b, 475f., Heckel & Yardley 1981 (especially on Roman sources), Vofchuk 1986b, 149ff., and 1988, 143ff., and Garzilli (*forthcoming*). For references to later history, see e.g. Sharma 1988 and Leslie in Leslie 1991, 175ff.

²⁸¹ In Indian terminology OIA *sati* (Anglo-Indian *suttee*) is a 'pious woman', in late usage mainly referring to a widow ascending her husband's pyre. This could be done in two ways, by burning herself together with her husband after his death (*sahagamana* or *sahamarana*), or by following him later (*anumarana*). See Leslie in Leslie 1991, 177. A slightly different custom was the so-called *jauhar* of the Rājputs, who, facing a hopeless battle, fought to the death, while their wives killed (burned) themselves and their children (ibid. 176). In Indian sources it seems not to be attested before the early second millennium A.D., but curiously we meet a similar account in Curtius 9, 4, 6, and Arrianus, *Anab.* 6, 7, 6, in the Pañjab, but Diodorus 17, 96, 4f. places the blame for burning and killing on Alexander. Cf. Eggermont 1993, 34f. *Additional note:* Starting with the Cathaeans (with whom Sopeithes was connected) Garzilli (*forthcoming*) argued that the custom may have originated among the Kāthaka school of Yajurvedic Brahmins, in any case located in the Northwest. This is possible, but I cannot follow her when she identifies Taxila as a town of the Cathaeans; when she further claims that its location is unknown she has simply misunderstood the archaeological evidence. Its location is well known (though the archaeological interpretation of the remains is a subject of contention), but Aristobulus' account is in a way appended to his description of Taxila (παρά τισι δ'ἀκούειν φησί; we see that he did not claim to be an eye-witness) which also allows for the custom a location elsewhere in the Pañjab.

²⁸² E.g. Euripides, *Suppl.* 980ff., Vergil, *Aeneis* 6, 447; the story in Apollodorus 3, 79, cf. *KP* s.v. Euadne. Herodotus (5, 5) tells of a Thracian tribe that after the death of a man his wives contended for the right of dying with him, and the selected wife was then killed in the funeral by the closest relative. Similar customs can also be quoted from the Scythians and other ancient peoples.

²⁸³ Probably shortened by the Greeks from some combined Kṣatriya name ending in *-ketu* 'banner' (give examples). So already Schlegel, 1820c, 249, followed by Lassen 1, 592 & 1858, 347. Wecker 1922, 362 (s.v.) still added nothing.

burnt with their husband.²⁸⁴ The refusal to allow a pregnant woman to become a satī gives here a genuinely Indian impression.²⁸⁵

The Indian evidence for the custom is mostly much later, though the earliest case is found in the *Mahābhārata*. Arora (1982b, 477) quotes from the first millennium A.D. several examples of Satīs, but also of royal women who lived on as honoured widows. We might suppose that the custom originated among the Kṣatriyas, and only later spread among other classes. Perhaps it was also geographically confined to the Northwest. In any case, it seems that later, too, the Kṣatriyas were often the most eager upholders of the custom. With the Brahmans, this was the case only rather late.²⁸⁶

In the West the custom was a cause of great fascination, and this fascination endured for a long time. Although occasional criticism was suggested in Antiquity as well as in the early modern period, Western travellers of the 16th to the 18th or early 19th centuries were often as eager spectators round the pyres as the men of Alexander had been at the death of Calanus and the wife of Ceteus.²⁸⁷

²⁸⁴ Diodorus 19, 30. An echo of this is found e.g. in Valerius Maximus 2, 6, 14, and Plutarch, *Moralia* 499C. In the Loeb edition this has been erroneously ascribed to Megasthenes, because the editor had misunderstood Rawlinson 1926, 59, where satī is briefly discussed in the chapter dealing with Megasthenes, though not actually ascribed to him.

²⁸⁵ Such a restriction is quoted by Sharma 1988, 32, from the *Mitākṣara* and other late texts.

²⁸⁶ Sharma 1988, 29f. and Leslie in Leslie 1991, 187f.

²⁸⁷ See e.g. Sharma 1988, 20f.



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