III. GREEK SOURCES

In the preceding chapter the scope and limits of the early contacts between India and the West were traced and an attempt was made to distinguish between reasonable ideas and good hypotheses on the one hand, and unfounded assumptions and wild speculation on the other. Important evidence was often obtained from early Greek authors, especially Herodotus. Now it is time to deal with these sources, to look for the reflection of these contacts in Greek literature. An important question here is the interrelation between the earliest Greek sources on India – Scylax, Hecataeus, Herodotus and Ctesias. Another question is the relation between information (fact or fiction) coming from the country itself and the role of Greek theory and interpretation. This will also be discussed in chapter V. among other questions of early Greek ethnography.

In this chapter I shall concentrate on those authors who really wrote about India, whilst some supposed contacts will be discussed in chapter IV. I shall also exclude from this discussion the fact that some early Greek authors also came somewhat near to the Northwest Indian – Central Asian sphere from a wholly different angle.[1] It is wholly clear that traditions about Arimaspeans and griffins nevertheless have little to do with India and do not have any place in a survey of the Greek accounts on India.[2] As both Homer and Aristeas are thus excluded from the number of Greek sources on India, our first authority will be Scylax.

1. Scylax of Caryanda

Scylax, ὁ παλαιὸς λογογράφος,[3] was perhaps not a Greek at all but a Carian, as he was a native of the Carian town of Caryanda. Yet he apparently wrote in Greek, in fact he seems to have been one of the very first authors who wrote Greek prose (perhaps he did not know Greek well enough to put his words into proper metre). Apart from what Herodotus says, we know very little about him.[4] He hailed from Caryanda and participated

[1] Aristeas and the authors who have depended upon him (e.g. Hdt in book 4). I shall come back to this in chapter VII.6.

[2] They are mentioned, though with necessary scepticism, e.g. by Lindegger (1979) and Schwarz (1966, 64).

[3] Stephanus in *FGrH* 709 T 2b.

in the expedition sent by Darius (see II.6.). Afterwards he wrote some kind of account of this expedition, perhaps also other books, although we know very little about them.[5]

Even our few fragments[6] tell us something about Scylax's book on the expedition. It was not a mere terse logbook, but contained accounts of people, the landscape and the natural conditions. It included not only his own observations and local information (ὄψις and ἀκοή), but also ideas from the literary tradition or folklore of the West.[7] The book certainly had some influence on Hecataeus, was not unknown to Herodotus, and was perhaps also read by Ctesias.[8] Therefore it has a definite place in the early evolution of Greek ethnographical literature.[9]

The book itself was probably a *Periplus* containing his route down the Indus, around Arabia and to Egypt.[10] According to a late source (a quotation by a scholiast) it was dedicated to Darius,[11] but this does not necessarily make it an official report written to the great king. In fact, we do not even know if Scylax ever wrote an official report. From Herodotus we gain our meagre knowledge of the expedition itself,[12] from Marcianus that Scylax like many other early authors did not count distances in stadia, but in how many days a ship needed to sail.[13]

Four of the five remaining fragments probably deal with India. The interesting account of the mountainous country by the Upper Indus preserved by Athenaeus[14] is also important, because the same author in the preceding chapter quotes a similar account from Hecataeus.[15] This perhaps gives some indication of the relation between the two authors. As to the plant κυνάρα mentioned by both authors, Reese showed that it cannot be an artichoke (κινάρα). It is very unlikely that artichokes could be found by the Indus at such an early date, as it is a Western species that is still rarely cultivated in the East. The fragments point much more likely to a thorny bush, and in a fragment of Theophrastus quoted by Reese κυνάρα is the same as κυνόσβατος, a rose.[16] Herzfeld did not care

[4] Hdt 4, 44 (T 3a) quoted in chapter II.5. The main authority on Scylax is still Gisinger 1929. See further Issberner 1888, Reese 1914, 39ff., Stein 1927 and Schiwek 1962, 8ff. More references in Gisinger 1929, 619f.

[5] See Gisinger 1929, 624ff. and especially 634f. A more critical standpoint was taken by Reese (1914, 44f.). For the apocryphal *Inner Periplus* see Gisinger 1929, 635ff.

[6] Edited by Jacoby, *FGrH* 709.

[7] We can note the common tendency to populate the ends of the world (especially the East) with fabulous peoples and other marvels. This will be discussed more fully in chapter V.2.

[8] Their interrelation will be discussed a little later.

[9] Gisinger 1929, 633f. and Müller 1972, 69f.

[10] Gisinger 1929, 625ff.

[11] T 4 Αἴλιος Δῖος ἐν τῷ Περὶ Ἀλεξανδρείας βιβλίῳ πρώτῳ φησὶν ὅτι Δαρείῳ προσεφώνησε Σκύλαξ τὸ φρόντισμα.

[12] Scylax F 1 = T 3a = Hdt 4, 44 quoted above (in II.5.).

[13] T 6.

[14] F 3 – 4. Jacoby, somewhat pedantically, makes it two fragments, but I treat it as one (following Gisinger 1929, 627).

[15] Hecataeus F 296. But in another context Athenaeus even connects Hecataeus, κυνάρα and Northern Iran twice (F 291 περὶ τὴν Ὑρκανίην θάλασσαν..., and F 292a) Χοράσμιοι...)

about the long distance between the Caspian Sea/Chorasmia (of Hecataeus F 291) and the Indus. He derived all these fragments from Scylax, and identified the κυνάρα as *Platanus orientalis* L., "the beautiful giant tree that characterizes the Alburz forests", still called *čināṙ* in Persian.[17] But I cannot see how Hyrcanian timber could have been used for building a fleet for the Indus as Herzfeld seems to suggest.

Another fragment perhaps founded on personal observation is given by Aristoteles,[18] who quotes Scylax on the great difference between an Indian king and his subjects. Unfortunately, we are not told what kind of difference it is, although the context at least makes it possible to think of an ethnic difference.[19] Here as always in Scylax and Hecataeus, *India* probably still means only the lower Indus country.

Philostratus and Tzetzes have preserved related fragments[20] which make Scylax the father of all Western legends about the fabulous peoples of India. The problem of the peoples themselves will be dealt with in a later chapter (V.2.), here we are interested in their significance for Scylax. First, it is very unlikely that Tzetzes in the 12th century A.D. still had the original text of Scylax, which was probably lost much earlier, and our fragment is quoted from some secondary source, which has also been lost.[21] Philostratus cannot come into the question, because Tzetzes gives some information that is missing in *Vita Apollonii*. As to Scylax himself, the fragment shows him as both using local information and interpreting it through Western traditions.

Our last fragment[22] can perhaps be connected with the preceding ones. It comes from Harpocration's lexicon and deals with subterranean people (ὑπὸ γῆν οἰκοῦντες), which, we learn, Scylax calls Τρωγλοδύται. As Philostratus just before his Scylax fragment mentions the Pygmies living under the earth,[23] it is possible that Scylax is also the source of Philostratus, and these Τρωγλοδύται are the same people as the Pygmies of Philostratus. But there is also an old tradition, beginning perhaps with Hecataeus,[24]

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16 Reese 1914, 47f. (note 5) followed by Gisinger 1929, 627. The erroneous identification had already been made by Athenaeus. Pearson (1939, 80) leaves it open ("whatever these may be, dog-roses or some variety of artichoke").

17 Herzfeld 1968, 286. But the *chinár* or plane is said to flourish also in Swat (H. G. Raverty quoted in Stacul 1987, 10).

18 *Politica* 7, 13, 1 = F 5 ὡσπερ ἐν Ἰνδοῖς φησι Σκύλαξ εἶναι τοὺς βασιλέας τοσοῦτον διαφέροντας τῶν ἀρχομένων.

19 In this case it can perhaps be (and has been) connected with Ctesias' account (F 45, 19), that there are both black Indians and a minority of white Indians.

20 F 7a (Philostratus) and 7b (Tzetzes). Quoted in chapter V.2.

21 Gisinger 1929, 624.

22 F 6 ὑπὸ γῆν οἰκοῦντες· <Ἀντιφῶν ἐν τῷ Περὶ ὁμονοίας>. λέγοι ἂν τοὺς ὑπὸ Σκύλακος ἐν τῷ Περίπλῳ λεγομένους Τρωγλοδύτας καὶ τοὺς ὑπὸ Ἡσιόδου κτλ.

23 Phil *V. Ap.* 3, 47 τοὺς δὲ Πυγμαίους οἰκεῖν μὲν ὑπογείους, κεῖσθαι δὲ ὑπὲρ τὸν Γάγγην, ζῶντας τρόπον ὃς πᾶσιν εἴρηται. At least the name Ganges cannot come from Scylax.

24 Hecataeus F 328 ab (343f. Nenci). The second fragment (from Eustathius) places these Πυγμαῖοι in Africa, but the words ἔστι δὲ ἔθνος γεωργικὸν ἀνθρώπων μικρῶν κατοικούντων εἰς τὰ ἀνωτάτω μέρη τῆς Αἰγυπτιακῆς γῆς πλησίον τοῦ Ὠκεανοῦ probably do not come from Hecataeus himself (they are excluded from the actual fragment by Jacoby and Nenci) as was

that these Pygmies lived to the south of Egypt,[25] and it is just there in later literature that we often meet the Troglodytae.

It is possible that Scylax was really referring to the Troglodytae in India.[26] But it is not so clear that everything Scylax mentions relates to India. He may also have made reference to them in Ethiopia or Nubia (the expedition ended in Egypt), and the whole fragment may come from the *Periplus* of Pseudo-Scylax.[27] Here we may once again have a case of an early confusion between the two Ethiopias. We may even ask if Scylax transferred African lore to India or Hecataeus Indian lore to Africa. I shall show later that at least in some cases Hecataeus seems to be the culprit.[28]

Scylax seems to have been an important precursor of Ionian ethnography, which used the traditional methods of ὄψις, ἀκόη and ἱστορίη and included all important topics of early ethnography. And yet both his person[29] as well as his work are extremely vague. The fragments of the work are so few that it must have been rare and consequently we cannot say much about its contents. In fact, these fragments are not necessarily derived from Scylax himself, but from some intermediate source. For Tzetzes and a late scholiast this is almost certain, and Philostratus too was probably using a similar secondary source. Athenaeus was a scholar who knew a great deal of obscure literature, but he introduced his Scylax fragment with the ambivalent statement Σκύλαξ δὲ ἢ Πολέμων γράφει. Therefore, it has been suggested that he actually acquired his information through Polemon.[30] Harpocration and even Aristoteles may well go back to some intermediary, and it has been a common opinion among scholars that Herodotus derived his information from Hecataeus.[31] And yet the fragments show that a book by Scylax, their ultimate source, did exist. But this book, I suspect, disappeared at an early date, and only some of its contents were given by an intermediary, perhaps Hecataeus, who will be our next concern.

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supposed earlier. See e.g. Reese 1914, 102 (and even Wüst 1959, 2065), where they are cited as being derived from Hecataeus.

25 Aristoteles (*Hist. an.* 8, 12, 597a 4ff.) calls them cave-dwellers (τρωγλοδύται), and as such they are also mentioned by Herodotus (4, 183) in Libya. Another tribe of cave-dwellers was mentioned in Scythia, see Pekkanen 1968, 113f., 123 and 148, and Aalto & Pekkanen 1979, s.v. *Trogodytae*.

26 But this does not necessarily mean that they are the crane fighting Pygmies of Homer (see also chapter V.2.).

27 See also the discussion in Reese 1914, 101f. and Gisinger 1929, 628f.

28 See chapter V.2. and 3.

29 A Carian Scylax, whose son according to a funerary inscription was buried in Athens (see Bengtson 1955, 303ff.), may have been our Scylax, but equally well he could have been some other man with the same Carian name.

30 See Issberner 1888, 7f., but also Diels 1887, 421ff. and Reese 1914, 47.

31 Beginning with Diels 1887, 420ff. It will soon become clear that I am not so certain of this.

2. *Hecataeus of Miletus*

When dealing with such early authors as Scylax and Hecataeus, it is important to keep in mind the uncertainty of any textual tradition before the Hellenistic period. A systematic collecting of books began only after the establishment of the Alexandrian library by Ptolemy Soter, and at that time the textual state of many old works was already hopelessly confused. Many were irrevocably lost, or perhaps preserved in only one manuscript in some remote library. Often works had had only a limited (local) circulation in the period, when no big libraries existed to be interested in them.

But the implications of this are different for Scylax and Hecataeus. As I have just suggested, we cannot be certain that the *Periplus* of Scylax was still extant in the Hellenistic period.[32] It may have been lost at an early date, and our meagre knowledge of it suggests that it had never been widely circulated. The home towns of our three earliest Greek authorities on India – Caryanda, Miletus and Halicarnassus – were all situated near each other. Therefore, it is possible that Hecataeus and Herodotus had access to some local tradition, be it a book by Scylax, or even an oral tradition about his participation in the Indian expedition.

Hecataeus[33] was much better known in the Greek world than Scylax, and yet it seems that the *Periegesis* of this Milesian scholar and politician was not widely known and used. Among the 374 fragments (Nenci) only one[34] comes from the period before Alexander. It has been suggested that the work was almost forgotten (except by Herodotus) until Eratosthenes recognized its importance.[35] On the other hand, its use by several authors like Aeschylus, Herodotus, the author of *Airs, Waters, Places,* Hellanicus, Damastes, Ctesias and others has been suggested.[36] In early times it was not particularly common to give clear references to the sources one had used. Be this as it may, the *Periegesis* was certainly preserved and it was acquired by the Alexandrian library, where the great third century librarians, Callimachus and Eratosthenes, knew of it and studied it.[37] Later Hecataeus gained some fame as an early author, used by Herodotus,[38] and as a source of obscure place-names, but despite this, the book was never widely read. The distribution of his fragments in literature shows that he was mostly

[32] A similar theory has been put forth even for the *Periegesis* of Hecataeus. This theory, however, has been completely rejected by Diels (1887, 412ff.). See also Jacoby 1912, 2673ff. and Pearson 1939, 34f.

[33] As general accounts on Hecataeus we can mention e.g. Jacoby 1912 and Pearson 1939 (with further references). Fragments of the *Periegesis* were edited by Jacoby, *FGrH* 1 and by Nenci. For his political career see Hdt 5, 36 (Nenci's T III) and 5, 125 (T IV).

[34] F 313 (Nenci) from Hdt 2, 143.

[35] Jacoby 1912, 2700f. and Brown 1965, 61f.

[36] Jacoby 1912, 2700.

[37] For Callimachus see Nenci's T XXVIII (and Diels 1887, 413ff.), for Eratosthenes T XIV and XV.

[38] A stylistic dependence has been noticed by classical grammarians, see Diels 1887, 426f. and Jacoby 1912, 2675f.

known only to antiquarian scholars and lexicographers.

Another difference between Scylax and Hecataeus is that we seem to know quite a lot about the contents of the *Periegesis*. In some modern studies we even find fairly detailed accounts of it. But unfortunately, the case is not as clear as has been assumed. A great deal has been based on the assumption that Herodotus used his predecessor extensively.[39] True, Herodotus did quote him once, in fact he is the only prose author mentioned by Herodotus by name[40] and several common points between his text and Hecataeus' fragments show further that he was not used only once. The fragments are so scanty that their silence is no proof against such dependence. When such evidence is missing, however, we cannot make any definite pronouncements.[41]

Scholars have drawn many conclusions from the supposed relation between them. As Herodotus tells us so much about Eastern history and ethnography, it has been concluded that Hecataeus must also have discussed these themes extensively. The idea that through Herodotus we "know" the older work, has often led to a kind of neglect of the fragments. They are used and studied, true, but only as additional evidence, a check for evaluating Herodotean "paraphrases".

If we put Herodotus aside and turn to the fragments for information, our idea of Hecataeus becomes rather different. There are plenty of fragments (374 in Nenci), but they are mostly short and contain only chorographical information occasionally supplemented by aitia and etymology. Very significant is the absence of history among the fragments. Without the hypothesis of Herodotus' paraphrasing of Hecataeus, there is no evidence at all that the latter made his *Periegesis* a history.[42] This idea is furthest advanced by Drews, who categorically denies any historical content in the *Periegesis*, and supposes that the work contained only the kind of material we see in the fragments.[43] According to Drews, the best proof for an Egyptian history written by Hecataeus, the account of the 345 generations of *piromeis* shown by the priests in Thebes to Hecataeus and compared by him with his own short line of 16 generations, could very well belong, not to the *Periegesis* at all, but to the preface of Hecataeus' other work, the *Genealogies*.[44]

This is an important remark, but we still cannot categorically deny that Hecataeus "did not write a history of the East, or of any of the Eastern peoples".[45] Even if his work was not a history in our (or even an ancient) sense, history was also one element of ethnography. We can probably safely call the *Periegesis* a geography (and ethnography), but

[39] Diels 1887, 420ff. (especially 429ff.) and after him e.g. Jacoby 1912, 2675ff. and 1913, 392ff., Pearson 1939, 82ff., Brown 1965, 62f., Evans 1982, 142f. and others.

[40] Evans 1982, 145. Several poets are mentioned by Herodotus. See also Panofsky 1885, 2ff.

[41] Pearson 1939, 81ff. It is good to keep in mind Jacoby's (1912, 2676) general comment: "Es ist eine ausserordentlich difficile Frage, und die Herausschälung Hekatäischen Gutes – zunächst einmal der Περίοδος – darf nur mit äusserster Vorsicht versucht werden."

[42] Cf. Jacoby 1912, 2683f. and Pearson 1939, 82. On the contents of the *Periegesis* see also Jacoby 1912, 2686ff.

[43] Drews 1973, 12ff.

[44] Hdt 2, 143; Drews 1973, 13.

[45] Drews 1973, 14.

we do not know if the historical element went beyond simple *aitia*.

Drews has turned to the fragments, but like many of his predecessors, has failed to evaluate them properly. They are not only short and similar to each other, they are also likely to give a rather one-sided picture of the original work. Among the 374 fragments of the *Periegesis*, no less than 304 come from the same source, the geographical lexicon of Stephanus of Byzance (or rather the epitome of this lost work).[46] This has great significance. Primarily, it means that the fragments are textually very unreliable as they come from a late and often corrupt source (of which there is not even a really critical edition).[47] Furthermore, the fragments are also schematic and one-sided in their content. The fact that they contain merely chorographical information with some etymologies may be because the *Periegesis* did not contain much else, but this was also the very kind of information that Stephanus was looking for and culled from many other books. Our idea of, for instance, Strabo or Arrianus would be heavily distorted if it were founded solely on the quotations and references in Stephanus.[48]

There are further problems connected with the relation between Hecataeus and Stephanus. It is not always so clear what is from Hecataeus and what from Stephanus himself.[49] And we do not have even Stephanus himself, but a rather unreliable epitome of Stephanus. It is possible that the original Stephanus actually contained more from Hecataeus, but it is equally possible that some information which did not derive from Hecataeus has only come into his fragments in the epitome. Moreover, there is the question of the transferring of information from a periegesis to a lexicon,[50] for we do not know when and how it took place.

Mostly it seems to have been taken for granted that Stephanus worked with Hecataeus' *Periegesis* at hand, but I am not so sure of this. The schematic nature of his references to Hecataeus[51] could well be explained by his use of some older lexicon. The fragments of Hecataeus come from so few authorities that the book may well have been a rarity. Although archaic literature was fashionable and much quoted in late antiquity, the quotations very often came from secondary sources. The number of those who actually read archaic authors (with the few obvious exceptions such as Homer) was probably very limited.

With a lost work like the *Periegesis* the fragments are our only primary material. But we should be cautious of being over-optimistic about them. They are not the work itself and cannot replace it. Although in many cases they give some idea of the style and

[46] Nenci 1954, xiv, note 1.

[47] Cf. my discussion of the name Κασπάπυρος/τυρος in chapter II.6. above and in Karttunen *forthcoming* b.

[48] I have discussed Stephanus and his sources more fully in Karttunen *forthcoming* b.

[49] This is also emphasized by Pearson 1939, 38ff.

[50] Cf. Diels 1887, 418, note 1 (suggesting that the definition given by Stephanus for a name quoted from Hecataeus does not come directly from Hecataeus, also Pearson 1939, 38ff.). See further Diels 1887, 427f. and Karttunen *forthcoming* b.

[51] There is considerably more variation when he is referring, for instance, to the *Bassarica* of Dionysius.

contents of the original, and tell what themes were dealt with, they cannot tell us what was not there. It is a common error to take the fragments as the work itself, to think that they give a fair picture of it, that what they do not say was not there. This error has often been made with the *Periegesis*.

Such generalizations are dangerous even with the chorographical material. The *Periegesis* evidently contained more places and more information about them than is given in the fragments, especially in the short references of Stephanus. This much comes out of the few longer fragments. Trüdinger mentions fragments where some information is given about dress, natural conditions and the way of living.[52] Surely there was more also about the easternmost parts of the οἰκουμένη. Our seven fragments are not all Hecataeus knew of India, but, unfortunately, we do not know more. It is tempting indeed to add Herodotus' Indian logos, but there is not enough evidence to show that Herodotus was simply paraphrasing his predecessor. I shall come back to this point soon.

Those seven fragments are meagre indeed. They mention Γανδάραι as Indian people and call their country Γανδαρική.[53] In this country there was the town Κασπάπυρος,[54] in India another town Ἀργάντη.[55] Then we have two peoples, Καλατίαι[56] and Ὠπίαι,[57] and the short note that κυνάρα grows near the Indus.[58] All seem to refer to Northwest India, the country dominated by the Achaemenids.

Even this meagre amount of information cannot be accepted without criticism. It has been pointed out that the word "town" (πόλις) in Stephanus (or his epitomist) is no proof that Hecataeus used it. Sometimes he apparently did, but sometimes he seems to have spoken rather of regions.[59] Herodotus also calls his Κασπάτυρος a town, but with Ἀργάντη we cannot know for certain. It would be curious if Hecataeus really called Γανδάραι an Ἰνδῶν ἔθνος, as India probably meant only the lower Indus country, but the words come from Stephanus and may not belong to Hecataeus at all.[60] With a later conception of India they are correct enough. One also wonders if he really mentioned

[52] Trüdinger 1918, 8ff. His references are to Müller's edition, in Jacoby/Nenci the fragments mentioned are 287/300 and 358/240 on dress, 90/99, 291/304 and 292a/305 on nature and 328ab/343f., 335/351, 323ab/336f. and 154/165 on life. This shows that Hecataeus did include ethnographic information in his work, but it might be too much to call his work "eine Art erster *Allgemeiner Völkerkunde*" (Müller 1972, 95, italics his). It has also been suggested that Herodotus was the first real ethnographer, although Hecataeus was a kind of starting-point for this development (Jacoby 1912, 2683).

[53] Fragments 294ab (Jacoby) = 307–308 (Nenci).

[54] F 295 (Jacoby) = 309 (Nenci), on the name see our chapter II.

[55] F 297 (Jacoby) = 310 (Nenci) Ἀργάντη· πόλις Ἰνδίας, ὡς Ἑκαταῖος.

[56] F 298 (Jacoby) = 311 (Nenci) Καλατίαι· γένος Ἰνδικόν. Ἑκαταῖος Ἀσίᾳ.

[57] F 299 (Jacoby) = 312 (Nenci) Ὠπίαι· ἔθνος Ἰνδικόν. Ἑκαταῖος Ἀσίᾳ "ἐν δ' αὐτοῖς κτλ."

[58] F 296 (Jacoby) = part of 305 (Nenci; rest is Jacoby's F 292a). Related fragments of Scylax were discussed in the preceding chapter.

[59] Pearson 1939, 43. Diels (1887, 418) supposes that such definitions as (his example) Καπύα, *πόλις Ἰταλίας* are always added by Stephanus. For India, Stephanus' words in F 297 πόλις Ἰνδίας are hardly from Hecataeus, as the form Ἰνδία is attested only from a much later period. See Reese 1914, 54 and Wecker 1916, 1268.

[60] Breloer 1941, 11 emphasizes that their country in Hecataeus did not belong to India (Sind), but he does not mention the words Ἰνδῶν ἔθνος at all.

ἄκανθα κυνάρα in three different places. For Ὠπίαι we have a precious quotation apparently in Hecataeus' own words.[61]

We have still to discuss more fully the relation between the earliest Greek accounts of India by Scylax, Hecataeus and Herodotus. First, however, we should introduce Herodotus.

3. Herodotus of Halicarnassus

Herodotus is the first representative of both history and ethnography whose text is still intact.[62] Furthermore, the Indian logos[63] included in his work is the first preserved Western account we have of this country. Herodotus defined India as the easternmost country still inhabited by men, beyond it is only desert.[64] Deserts as the extreme confines of earth in each direction seem to have been a literary commonplace in Herodotus' day,[65] but actually the Thar desert in the east as well as the Sahara in the south may well have been among the starting points for such a topos.

Herodotus describes a people living near the mouth of the Indus, they eat raw fish and use reeds for their clothes and boats.[66] Then he mentions two more easterly peoples, namely the nomadic Παδαῖοι, among whom it is customary to eat the sick and the old,[67] and an unnamed people commonly identified with Indian ascetics, as they are told to abstain from killing, and eat wild plants and live without houses.[68] They have black skin and black semen, just like the Ethiopians, and they live in the far south and have never been subject to Darius.[69] Then follows a long description of the gold-digging ants and the curious method of obtaining gold from them.[70] All this is concluded with some general considerations about the differences between central (e.g. Greece) and distant

[61] F 299 (312 Nenci) ἐν δ' αὐτοῖς οἰκέουσιν ἄνθρωποι παρὰ τὸν Ἰνδὸν ποταμὸν Ὠπίαι, ἐν δὲ τεῖχος βασιλήιον. μέχρι τούτου Ὠπίαι. ἀπὸ δὲ τούτου ἐρημίη μέχρις Ἰνδῶν.

[62] There is no end of studies on Herodotus. See e.g. Jacoby 1913 and Evans 1982 and their references. In the following pages I shall not refer to Trüdinger 1918 (14ff. dealing with Herodotus), as he mainly follows Jacoby.

[63] Hdt 3, 98–106.

[64] Hdt 3, 98 and 4, 40. The Indian desert had been mentioned by Hecataeus earlier, see above.

[65] Edelmann 1970.

[66] Hdt 3, 98.

[67] Hdt 3, 99, see also chapter VIII.2.

[68] But see also what Rossellini & Saïd (1978, 955f. and passim) have said about the idea of three peoples eating raw flesh, human flesh and wild plants respectively.

[69] Hdt 3, 100f.

[70] Hdt 3, 102 – 105, see also chapter VII.6. and 7.

(e.g. India) countries. As examples of the richness of the remote India, the huge size of its many animals, its gold and the wool growing on its trees (cotton) are mentioned.[71]

In addition to this account, incidental information is given about Indian dogs, Indian soldiers, taxes paid by Indians, the dense population of India, exploration of the Indus, and the Καλλατίαι who eat their dead parents.[72] All this contains very little that we could easily recognize in Indian sources. For Herodotus, India is no longer merely the lower Indus country, but a general name for the whole southeast beyond Hindukush and Gedrosia,[73] although the older (and apparently official Achaemenian) meaning is still used, too.[74] But from the Indian viewpoint, his knowledge is still limited to the northwest. He had no idea concerning the peoples living beyond the Indian desert. Gold-digging ants are found beyond the Achaemenian boundary, but they belong to Central Asia, not to India. Indian cannibals live probably quite close to the Achaemenian dominion, because Darius could easily summon them before him. The Asiatic Ethiopians do not belong to the Dravidian South, but probably to Gedrosia, because they served in Xerxes' army together with the people of Sind.[75] The "ascetics" are said to live far from the Achaemenian boundary, but this does not necessarily carry us very far when we consider the dimensions of India.

In his own way Herodotus was a critical author, although this may often be difficult to concede. In his historical studies he was always asking for reasons, but for him reasons were always individual. To him, avarice and revenge were the causes of wars.[76] In ethnography, too, he asked questions, and always tried to back up the theory with actual circumstances as he had seen them or as they had been described to him.[77] He had travelled widely[78] and used many local informants (the so-called ἐπιχώριοι-citations). But he also preferred his own rational explanations, and was often critical of local traditions, especially in connection with marvels.[79] The religious *interpretatio Graeca* is

[71] Hdt 3, 106. Characteristics like these in early ethnography are discussed in chapter V.1., in Karttunen 1988 and Rossellini & Saïd 1978, 955ff.

[72] On dogs see Hdt 1, 192 and 7, 187 (see also chapter VII.3.); on soldiers 7, 65f., 70 and 86; 8, 113 and 9, 31; on taxes 3, 91 and 94; on population 5, 3; on Indus exploration 4, 44; and on cannibals 3, 38 (see also chapter VIII.2).

[73] He already calls the people apparently living in Gandara "Indians" (3, 102), and extends the name to beyond the Achaemenian dominions in the east (3, 101).

[74] In the catalogue of Xerxes' army and in the tax list, the narrow sense is clearly meant. This seems to indicate that these accounts go back ultimately to Persian sources.

[75] Hdt 7, 70. The Eastern Ethiopians will be discussed in chapter V.3.

[76] Cf. his considerations on the origins of wars between Europe (Greece) and Asia in 1, 1ff.

[77] For the role of ethnographic theory see chapter V.1.

[78] He did not give any account of his travels, but often mentions that he had seen a particular place. Thus, we know he had been e.g. in Egypt, Kyrene, Near East and Mesopotamia, Asia Minor and Southern Italy. See Jacoby 1913, 247ff.

[79] Thus, for instance, 3, 115 shows him as a good scholar, who considers critically what was said about distant countries (this time in Europe), tries to find out more about them, and uses a sound linguistic argument for dismissing a reputed distant place-name because it seems to be Greek (Ἠριδανός). See also his discussion of the different theories about the floods and sources of the Nile in 2, 20ff. Some part of these may come from Hecataeus, but it was also Hecataeus whose book probably inspired him to

there, as well as the tendency to see the ends of the known worlds as full of superlatives and marvels. He was also worried about how much his readers would swallow, and purposely leaves out some incredible things – of course we can also see in this a literary device.[80]

As regards India, Herodotus' own reasoning can be seen in the text, though sometimes it may also come from the elder rationalist Hecataeus. Thus, it is not necessary to explain how it was that Scylax sailed down the Indus eastwards, as according to the geographical ideas of both Hecataeus and Herodotus the Indus flowed to the east. And when he says that the sun in India is hot in the morning and becomes cooler during the day,[81] this is to suit the idea of a flat earth, and any experience of Moorcroft's seems rather unnecessary.[82]

There remains the old question of Herodotus' sources. After Jacoby it is no longer possible to think that he depended solely on Greek written sources.[83] Herodotus' own observations and oral sources (ἐπιχώριοι) have a very important role both in the ethnographical and in the historical parts of his work. Of course, he had also read a great deal and used written sources when feasible. With India the situation is slightly different from elsewhere. Herodotus was never himself in India or anywhere near it, and in addition to Hecataeus there was the old explorer Scylax as a possible source. It was Schwanbeck, the brilliant pioneer of Graeco-Indian studies, who seems to have been the first to suggest the idea that everything goes back to Scylax,[84] that in a way we have both Scylax's and Hecataeus' accounts preserved in Herodotus. The argument continues that Herodotus in his Indian logos, as well as in his other ethnographical passages, was just paraphrasing Hecataeus, while Hecataeus could have no other source for India than Scylax. This has been followed and expounded by many,[85] and it still seems to be the general opinion. To some extent it may be true, but I think it must be modified.

Of course, it is not important that there are no references to Scylax among the fragments of Hecataeus, nor any to Scylax or Hecataeus in Herodotus' Indian logos. At that time they were not even expected to mention their sources and give references. A reference was given only occasionally, and only when one had reason to criticize his predecessor. There were no laws of copyright, the charges of plagiarism came only in the imperial period.[86] There is no reason to blame Herodotus if he used his predecessors without acknowledgement, and apparently he borrowed rather often.[87] It is also difficult

debates (cf. Jacoby 1912, 2676ff.

[80] Hdt 1, 193, cf. Ctesias F 45, 51.

[81] Hdt 3, 104, cf. Ctesias F 45, 18.

[82] As suggested by Rawlinson (1862, 410) and Cary (1919). But Rawlinson added the important remark that Herodotus was happy (as well as any ancient ethnographer or, come to that, any of us would be) when he found his own theory (or his Greek tradition) coincided with local information.

[83] Jacoby 1913, 392ff. This older view was represented e.g. by Panofsky 1885.

[84] Schwanbeck 1846, 5ff.

[85] E.g. Lassen 1852, 630f., Reese 1914, 41, 56f. and 61ff., Jacoby 1912, 2689f. and 1913, 402 and 430, Gisinger 1929, 629f. and Schiwek 1962, 12ff.

[86] See Jacoby 1912, 2676f., Pearson 1939, 22ff. and Brown 1965, 62.

to prove (or disprove) as the predecessors are lost. But there are similar cases in later literature. Aristoteles refers to Ctesias several times when criticizing him, but I suspect that he also used him several times without mentioning the fact. At least we know that he used Herodotus in this way, as was shown by Diels.[88]

In the chapter on Hecataeus I have already mentioned his relation to Herodotus. One direct reference and several common points in Herodotus' Egyptian logos and Hecataeus' fragments show clearly that Herodotus did use the *Periegesis*.[89] But it has also been noted several times that we cannot say how much Herodotus actually did derive from his predecessor.[90] As far as we know, he most likely had other sources too, and not only literary ones. He was in Egypt himself, too, and often added his own observations. The question becomes even more difficult when we think of other Herodotean logoi, e.g. Scythia[91] and Libya, where a great dependence on Hecataeus is also suggested. After having shown the comparative independence of Herodotus in the Egyptian logos, Jacoby stated that in the three logoi (India, Libya and Scythia) he is most dependent, most probably on Hecataeus.[92] As far as India is concerned, we must also consider Scylax as the first source of information.

Concerning the relation between Hecataeus and Scylax, three points are usually mentioned. First, both seem to mention κυνάρα as growing near the Indus.[93] Secondly, it has been suggested that Hecataeus' fragments on India, the Persian and Arabian coast and the Red Sea reflect Scylax's route.[94] Some even add Hecataeus' fragments on Northern Iran, supposing that Scylax also described his route from Persia to India.[95] The third argument is of a more general kind. As there was no other written account on India other than that of Scylax, Hecataeus must have gained his information from Scylax.[96]

A relation between Scylax and Herodotus is more problematic. Herodotus' text and Scylax' fragments have nothing in common. On the other hand, our principal testimony concerning the expedition in which Scylax participated, comes from Herodotus. But while Scylax apparently wrote about fabulous peoples living in India, Hecataeus and Herodotus located some of the same peoples in Africa. It seems likely that though Herodotus had heard of Scylax and the expedition, he had probably never read a work by

87 An exact reference by Herodotus (like that to Hecataeus in 2, 143) is rare. If he gives a reference at all, it is mostly of the general type, "the Greeks say", "the Ionians say", etc. But even here the real source may sometimes (but not always) be literary (Panofsky 1885, 11ff. and Jacoby 1912, 2678f.).

88 Diels 1887, 430f. (he mentions also a passage, where Herodotus is mentioned by name, and criticized). See also Reese 1914, 98ff.

89 See e.g. Diels 1887, 429ff.

90 Jacoby 1913, 395ff. and Pearson 1939, 81f.

91 Here there is also the possibility (or even the probability) of Herodotus using Aristeas. See Bolton 1962.

92 Jacoby 1913, 477.

93 E.g. Reese 1914, 41.

94 E.g. Reese 1914, 47.

95 Gisinger 1929, 629 and Herzfeld 1968, 286.

96 Reese 1914, passim (e.g. 41).

Scylax. In this connection we may also note a singular defect in Herodotus' account: he mentions no mountains in India,[97] while there are mountains on both sides of the Indus in a fragment of Scylax.

It is often claimed that Herodotus is wholly dependent on Hecataeus even in his Indian logos. This is first justified by his supposed general dependence on Hecataeus, especially in the ethnographic passages. It has been suggested that he had Hecataeus' book with him during his travels, and therefore his text is often a debate with the older author. Where he had not been himself, he was content to paraphrase Hecataeus.[98] As Aeschylus probably culled his geographical information from Hecataeus (at least he did not get it from Herodotus), the common points in Aeschylus and Herodotus (for instance on Libya) come from Hecataeus.[99] Then there is the question of inconsistencies in Herodotus. In the Indian logos he speaks of the river (the Indus) without naming it, and later says that northern Indians living in the country of Pactyica resemble the Bactrians in their mode of life without giving anywhere an account of the Bactrian mode of life. This is often supposed to be the result of his careless paraphrasing of Hecataeus.[100] In some cases this might be true, but on the other hand there is no reason why there should not be inconsistencies in as large a work as Herodotus' *Histories*.

There are two points in Herodotus which are also found in Hecataeus' fragments on India. The name Κασπάπυρος/τυρος is mentioned by both, and connected by Herodotus with the starting point of the expedition described by Scylax. Another common point is the people Καλλατίαι (with variants), mentioned in a fragment of Hecataeus and described by Herodotus.

But there are also several weak points among these arguments. I shall not try to deny that Hecataeus might have read Scylax, and that Herodotus probably used Hecataeus even on India. But when it is plainly stated that all the information given by these three comes solely from Scylax, that Hecataeus and Herodotus brought nothing new,[101] I most certainly disagree. We have already seen that the question of the κυνάρα is rather confused. Athenaeus using Hecataeus mentions it three times, each time placing it in a different geographical context, and it is possible that the briefest reference (to India) is just a misunderstanding. It has also been noted that arguments for the North Iranian κυνάρα going back to Scylax are weak. If Hecataeus really gave three different accounts based on the one given by Scylax, his work clearly could not have been a reliable source for Scylax. But perhaps he was not so dependent on Scylax.

The expedition which included Scylax in its crew opened a sea route between India and Egypt, and both destinations could obviously be reached from Mesopotamia. It has been shown in chapter II.7. that the eastern part of the route was soon opened up to trade

[97] Noticed by Bunbury 1879, 229. At least in this respect Ctesias seems to be better informed (F 45, 14 ὅτι ὁ Ἰνδὸς ποταμὸς ῥέων διὰ πεδίων καὶ δι' ὀρέων ῥεῖ)

[98] Jacoby 1912, 2675ff. and 2725.

[99] Jacoby 1912, 2680f.

[100] The Indus left unmentioned in Hdt 3, 98, and the Bactrian mode of life is referred to in Hdt 3, 102 (quoted in chapter II.5.). See also Jacoby 1912, 2682.

[101] Expressly stated by Schwanbeck 1846, 7, implicitly by many others. See e.g. Schiwek 1962, 11 and Lindegger 1982, 22f.

with India, and the Suez inscription shows that the southern part was also used. The existence of these routes must have been common knowledge in the empire. Is it then so obvious that a book by Scylax was really the only way Greeks could get some knowledge?

Actually there are several pieces of information which can only be applied to Scylax' route with difficulty. Schiwek suggested that as Hecataeus acquired his information from Scylax, his fragments on the Gulf region *prove* that Scylax sailed back from Egypt to Persia.[102] This is circular reasoning and unnecessary in the light of the evidence. The Suez inscription shows no more than that the route around Arabia was used, and from Herodotus' account of the expedition we know that it was used more than once. Therefore Hecataeus may well have had other sources of information besides Scylax, though we may also note that the few fragments of Scylax do not prove that he wrote only about what he had seen himself.

The relation between Hecataeus and Herodotus is better attested, but not necessarily complete. Even with the best argument related to India (Καλλατίαι) we can make two objections. First, it is not certain that Hecataeus' book contained such stories as were told by Herodotus, though we can assume that Hecataeus is a likely source for Herodotus (but not necessarily Scylax for Hecataeus) in this particular case. But the relevant passage is from another part of his book (3, 38), not from the Indian logos,[103] where (3, 99) there is a related account (but with important differences) of an Indian people who practised cannibalism. I shall discuss them more fully in chapter VIII.2.

The complete chain of dependence between Scylax, Hecataeus and Herodotus seemed sound enough in a period (19th and early 20th century) when there was a general tendency to try and derive as much as possible from earlier Greek authors, an inclination to make Greek culture and literature as hermetic as possible. And yet, though the early ethnography was greatly bound to the theory, it was constantly using primary sources even when they were foreign.

Was it really so extremely rare to use sources other than literary Greek ones, when such sources were probably easily available? Surely it was not difficult to find some information about India in the Achaemenian empire. People had been there and told their experiences and there were probably various tales and beliefs current about the far east of the empire and the country beyond. And these sources were easily available to an inquisitive Greek. Some Persians (and other subjects of the Achaemenids) spoke Greek, and there were Greeks serving the empire (perhaps even in India) who would have given their accounts when they returned home. Both Hecataeus and Herodotus were born on the eastern coast where such people could most easily be met. Was it really necessary for them to have Greek literary sources for everything they wrote? The boundary between Persia and Greece fluctuated and the empire always included Greek subjects, such as, in fact, Scylax, Hecataeus and Herodotus.

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[102] Schiwek 1962, 16f.

[103] They are mentioned again in a somewhat suspect sentence in Hdt 3, 97 (see Jacoby 1912, 2682), but even this does not belong to the Indian logos (3, 98–105).

It is true that Herodotus probably did not know any foreign languages.[104] But it is absurd to imagine a linguistic and cultural barrier so great that no information could come over. When a Themistocles could become fluent in Persian in one year,[105] when there were Greek scribes at Persepolis and Greek physicians even in the imperial court, numerous Greek cities under the great king and whole towns transferred with their citizens to Mesopotamia, Iran and Central Asia, when there were many Greek soldiers serving under Darius and Xerxes (and later Achaemenids) – is it really feasible to derive everything written by such apparently much travelled men as Hecataeus and Herodotus[106] from their Greek literary predecessors? Could they really keep themselves from adding much that they had seen or heard from others? When writing about Egypt at least they did not. Of course, both had never been to India – Herodotus did not fail to tell where he had actually been – and did not know many languages, but there was probably no shortage of Greek speaking informants who would be well informed even about the farthest provinces in the east. Did they not ask questions and write some of the answers down in their books?

Clearly they must have done. Herodotus expressly says that his account of the ant-gold was derived from the Persians.[107] This may be from Hecataeus, it is true, but then it was Hecataeus who got it from the Persians. In any case, it can hardly be from Scylax, who was in India himself. Other sources than Scylax are also necessary for the Herodotean accounts of taxes and Xerxes' army. When India became an Achaemenian province, the Persians obviously had both knowledge and tales about the country. Either Herodotus or Hecataeus (or both) asked questions and some of the answers we can read in Herodotus.

To sum up, Hecataeus may have read and used Scylax, but everything he wrote about the easternmost parts can hardly be traced to Scylax. Herodotus did not use a book by Scylax at all, though he may have got some point mentioned in it from Hecataeus. Hecataeus' book he certainly knew and perhaps used it for India, but we cannot say how much. It is not necessary at all that everything in his Indian logos goes back to the older author. Therefore we can ascribe some piece of information to Scylax (or Hecataeus) only if it is expressly mentioned among his fragments.

There is also the possibility that Ctesias used either Scylax or Hecataeus, and it is Ctesias we must discuss next.

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[104] Jacoby 1913, 277.

[105] Thuc. 1, 138, Cornelius Nepos, *Them.* 2, 10.

[106] For their travels see Jacoby 1912, 2689f. and 1913, 247ff.

[107] Hdt 3, 105 τὸν μὲν δὴ πλέω τοῦ χρυσοῦ οὕτω [οἱ] Ἰνδοὶ κτῶνται, ὡς Πέρσαι φασί.

4. Ctesias of Cnidus

Among the early Greek authors writing about India, Ctesias is perhaps the most controversial figure. He was a physician[108] of the Cnidian[109] medical school and like others before him (Democedes) he spent a long time in the east serving the great king[110] as a court physician. He is said to have spent seventeen years there and during his spare hours he collected historical and ethnographical information. After he had retired to Greece – in the early fourth century (398/397 B.C.) – he wrote at least two works: a long account of Persian history (*Persica,* in no less than 23 books) and a short ethnographical piece about India (*Indica,* one book only). Unfortunately, the books themselves are lost, but some idea of them is provided by the many fragments preserved in later literature and the summaries made by the Byzantine patriarch, Photius, in the ninth century.

Ctesias has a bad reputation, which is supported both by the fragments themselves and the verdict of classical authors, who could still read the original works intact. Unquestionably, he had a vivid imagination and a predilection for the dramatic and marvellous. But the question is what kind of material did he present in his works, his own inventions or existing tales? As I have already stated on several occasions,[111] I do not think Ctesias was the liar he is often made out to be, rather he used – more or less uncritically, it is true – the oriental traditions he had access to. It is not my intention to make him a reliable historian, which he certainly was not. Whereas Herodotus was sceptical towards the tales and local traditions, and freely used *interpretatio Graeca,* Ctesias seems to have listened to everything with attention and credulity and then wrote these accounts in his books.[112] Sometimes he gave a Greek interpretation, but in most cases he did not invent the tales himself, at least no more than was usual and accepted according to the literary conventions of his times. To us, he is often valuable just because he has preserved these oriental tales.[113] Instead of a critical history, a Greek viewpoint or mere fiction, he allows us to gain a glimpse of oriental legendary history, as in the case of Semiramis. I have dealt with these points extensively elsewhere,[114] and shall here be brief, but in order to use Ctesianic evidence, even with some reserve in the other chapters of this study, I feel it is necessary to substantiate these claims, at least to some extent.

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[108] For the life of Ctesias see Jacoby 1922, 2033ff., Brown 1973, 77ff. and Brown 1978a, passim.

[109] Cnidus was a Dorian town on a promontory in southern Caria, quite near Caryanda and Halicarnassus. It was also near Cos, the birthplace of Hippocrates. See Brown 1973, 78.

[110] Artaxerxes Mnemon, perhaps already Darius II. See Brown 1973, 79, and especially Brown 1978a, passim.

[111] See Karttunen 1977, 1981, 1984 and *forthcoming* a.

[112] In this I follow Schwanbeck (1846, 8f.), who wrote about the *Indica*: "Sola enim ea narravit quae ex Persis audivit, quibus fortasse addidit nonnulla, quae apud Scylacem legit."

[113] This is the reason why the remains of the *Persica* have been lately studied by several scholars. See e.g. P'jankov 1965, König 1972 and Schmitt 1979.

[114] See especially Karttunen *forthcoming* a.

First, there is the testimony of the classical authors. Beginning with Aristoteles they simply made him out to be a liar. The critical historians discarded him, and he was mainly used by those authors who were known to have the same defects as Ctesias himself, i. e. credulity and a predilection for the marvellous.[115] Aristoteles calls him unreliable and a liar.[116] Strabo lists him among the unreliable authors who write more or less pure fiction.[117] Plutarchus is distrustful of him,[118] and Lucianus plainly states that Ctesias had neither seen nor heard what he wrote about in his *Indica*.[119] It is no wonder that Gellius found his book among other half-forgotten volumes full of marvellous tales in a second-hand bookshop in Brundisium.[120]

But we cannot always use modern criteria when judging ancient authors. The word "liar" was not necessarily as bad as it is now; it has been suggested in fact that the Greek ψεῦδος did not mean a lie but a conscious fiction.[121] Literary conventions also affect criticism. Thus criticizing and denouncing older authors, and especially one's own sources was a common game in which the main purpose was to show one's own independence and excellence in comparison with one's predecessors. In the early period this was the only connection in which the authorities used were mentioned at all (for instance in Herodotus). This was also done by Aristoteles, who evidently often used Ctesias for Indian animals, but mentions him by name only when criticizing him.[122] He did the same with Herodotus, using him without mentioning his source, and yet on another occasion judging him untrustworthy.[123] It seems that other authors, too, used Herodotus without acknowledging him.[124]

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115 E.g. Diodorus, Aelianus and Photius

116 *H. An.* 2, 1, p. 501a 24 (Jacoby's F 45dα) for Ctesias): εἰ δεῖ πιστεῦσαι Κτησίᾳ; 3, 22, p. 523a 26 (F 48a): ψευδὲς δ' ἐστὶ καὶ ὃ Κτησίας γέγραφε; 8, 28, p. 606a 8 (Jacoby's T 11f): ὥς φησι Κτησίας, οὐκ ὢν ἀξιόπιστος; *Gen. An.* 2, 2, p. 736a 2 (F48b): Κτησίας γὰρ ὁ Κνίδιος ἃ ... εἴρηκε, φανερός ἐστι ἐψευσμένος.

117 Strabo 1, 2, 35 and 11, 6, 3 (this perhaps going back to Eratosthenes), both given by Jacoby as T11a and b, see also Reese 1914, 97f.

118 Jacoby T 11d and e.

119 Lucianus, *Ver. Narr.* 1, 3: Κτησίας ὁ Κτησιόχου ὁ Κνίδιος, ὃς συνέγραφεν περὶ τῆς Ἰνδῶν χώρας καὶ τῶν παρ' αὐτοῖς ἃ μήτε αὐτὸς εἶδεν μήτε ἄλλου ἀληθεύοντος ἤκουσεν.

120 Gellius, *N. A.* 9, 4. In addition to Ctesias, he mentions i. a. Aristeas and Onesicritus. Unfortunately, this lively and interesting account is somewhat spoiled by the fact that his account of the contents of these books is apparently not compiled from the books, but imitated from Pliny or Pliny's Greek source (see Bolton 1962, 27ff.).

121 Schwartz 1896, 10.

122 For Aristoteles' dependency on Ctesias see chapter III.7.

123 That Herodotus was used without acknowledgment in several passages of *H. An.* dealing with Egyptian animals (the hippopotamus and the crocodile, from Hdt 2, 68) and the cinnamon bird (from Hdt 3, 111), was shown by Diels (1887, 429ff. and 438 note, other instances given in Reese 1914, 98). Despite this, in *H. An.* 1, 13, 616a he gives οἱ ἐκ τῶν τόπων ἐκείνων as his source, though his account is clearly from Herodotus 3, 111. And yet, in *Gen. An.* 3, 5, 765b 5, he scolded Herodotus with hard words: καὶ οἱ ἁλιεῖς περὶ κυήσεως τῶν ἰχθύων τὸν εὐήθη λέγουσι λόγον καὶ τεθρυλημένον, ὅνπερ καὶ Ἡρόδοτος ὁ μυθολόγος...

124 Cf. Murray 1972, 204ff.

From our point of view, as well as from that of his classical critics, Ctesias was highly uncritical. But here, too, we must somewhat modify our judgement. The tradition of criticism and scientific investigation was firmly implanted into Greek culture only by Aristoteles and his pupils. To some extent we can even trace it back from Aristoteles, to Socrates, to the Sophists and ultimately to the Ionian rational philosophers and logographers. But these beginnings were still deficient in method. Criticism was often mere scepticism, most likely the Sophists did not believe even such Indian marvels of Ctesias as the parrot and the elephant. Herodotus made an attempt to deal critically with his material,[125] but often he just had no means of deciding one way or the other, and thus swallowed some incredible things, and at the same time occasionally suspected or threw away what was true. The further we travel, the more likely it is that the number of real things that look like marvels will increase, and this seems to have been very much the case with India. Not only Herodotus and Ctesias,[126] but even the companions of Alexander and Megasthenes could recount so many (and often real, as we now can say) marvels of India that they too were branded liars by later critics. The same is true for some other early ethnographers, too. In the passages mentioned above, Strabo lists Herodotus and Hellanicus beside Ctesias, and in the second passage he also adds οἱ τὰ Ἰνδικὰ συγγράψαντες. In another well-known passage the same author (again following Eratosthenes) dismisses most of the later literature on India as untrustworthy.[127]

If Ctesias was fond of marvels, so were others,[128] for instance Herodotus and Megasthenes. One difference is that a great part of what we have of Megasthenes is preserved by such reasonable authors as Strabo and Arrianus, while Ctesias has suffered at the hands of collectors of *mirabilia*. I have analysed the distribution of the fragments of Ctesias elsewhere, and shown how authors who were interested in marvels and did not take criticism too seriously clearly dominate.[129] In the same article I have also discussed the excerpt from his *Indica* in Photius' *Bibliotheca*,[130] the predilection of the learned patriarch for marvels and the unevenness of his excerpts.[131] Nevertheless, when we compare what Ctesias says he has seen himself and what he has only heard from others, we find that, with the curious exception of the terrible martichora, Ctesias comes off

125 That Herodotus is so often our example depends naturally on the fact that we have his work in its entirety, while most of the early ethnographers are lost.

126 Who had seen two real Indian marvels himself, viz. the talking parrot and the elephant. See also Karttunen 1981. For a similar account of the parrot in later literature, see Nearchus F 9.

127 Strabo 2, 1, 9, c. 70 ἅπαντες μὲν τοίνυν οἱ περὶ τῆς Ἰνδικῆς γράψαντες ὡς ἐπὶ τὸ πολὺ ψευδολόγοι γεγόνασι, καθ' ὑπερβολήν δὲ Δείμαχος, τὰ δὲ δεύτερα λέγει Μεγασθένης, Ὀνησίκριτος δὲ καὶ Νέαρχος καὶ ἄλλοι τοιοῦτοι παραψελλίζοντες ἤδη. The ancient critics of Megasthenes had already been discussed in Schwanbeck 1846, 59ff.

128 Trüdinger (1918, 45) spoke of a θαυμάσια-ethnography, of which Ctesias' *Indica* is the only extant representative.

129 Karttunen *forthcoming* a. In addition to the fragments we find many marvels apparently derived from Ctesias (but of course without any reference) in the apocryphal *Alexander's Letter to Aristoteles about India*. See Gunderson 1980.

130 Codex 72 contains both *Persica* and *Indica*, and is one of the longest in the whole work.

131 See Krumbholz 1895, 214ff. and especially Hägg 1975, 199ff.

rather well.[132] All this does not make Ctesias a reliable historian, but at least we can scrutinize his tales and see what he has probably acquired from eastern sources.

The judgement of modern scholarship on Ctesias has often been stern. As his *Persica* was clearly not a critical history, and as the *Indica* was simply full of marvels,[133] Ctesias was considered hardly worth noticing.[134] But there has been an undercurrent of thought that perhaps after all we have been too hard on Ctesias, especially with his *Indica*.[135] I have already stated, why I accept the latter opinion. The position of Ctesias at the Achaemenian court gave him an opportunity to collect information – fact and fancy alike – about the eastern parts of the empire and the lands beyond. Indian products brought to the court are often mentioned in the fragments. Several fragments show that in addition to the marvels he was so fond of, Ctesias made some attempt to find out the facts about the animals and plants of India and to explain its many wonders. As a physician he was also interested in the products of the country and the medical uses ascribed to them. No clear organizing principle is, however, apparent in his *Indica*.[136]

There is also the question of the extent of Ctesias' geographical knowledge of India. Unfortunately, his fragments contain hardly anything from which we can infer any definite conclusions – very few geographical names are given, for instance. He knew, of course, the Indian desert and subscribed to the common belief of its being the eastern end of the inhabited world.[137] Yet it has been supposed that his geographical knowledge was greater than that of Herodotus. For Herodotus the desert was the uninhabited end of the world, but Ctesias knew of people living in or visiting the desert.[138]

There is also the famous case of the river *Hyparchus/Hypobarus/Spabarus*[139]

[132] Pointed out already by Schauffelberger (1845, 25ff.), discussed in Karttunen *forthcoming* a. See also Jacoby 1922, 2037f. who has a defence even for the martichora.

[133] Actually, the Photius excerpt also includes chapters which perhaps contained less marvellous information (e.g. on the manners and customs of the Indians), but we have no fragments, and Photius has given us only chapter headings. Among other chapters Photius did not find interesting enough to make a more extensive excerpt, are those on elephants, Indian dogs and falconry. These three are known from fragments, which clearly show that Ctesias used genuine Eastern information (see Karttunen 1981 and chapter VII.2. and 3. of the present study).

[134] Among those interested in classical accounts of India who dismiss Ctesias, one can mention e.g. Schlegel 1820, 148f., Mannert 1829, 12, Müller 1844, 8f., Bunbury 1879, 339ff., Chantraine 1949, Brown 1955, 22 (and passim) and 1965, 60 (but more favourably 1973, 83), Nilakanta Sastri 1967, 80 and Kumar 1974.

[135] Such an opinion is expressed in addition to the older scholars, who still knew little about India (like Weyrauch 1814 and Malte-Brun 1819) by Wilson (1836, 6), Heeren (1843, 7f.), Schauffelberger (1845, 9ff.), Lassen (1852, 636ff.), McCrindle (1882, 3ff.), Rohde (1900, 189), Jacoby (1922, 2037ff.), Charpentier (1933, xif., a short, but instructive note), Bowman (1938a, 133f. = 1938b, 7), Bigwood (1965, 264), Lambrick (1975, 101) and Vofchuk (1982a).

[136] Reese's (1914, 73ff.) attempt to find an organizing principle is hardly convincing. This had already been noted by Trüdinger (1918, 45), who ascribes the disorder of *Indica* to the Ionian "Reiz der ποικιλότης", which is discernible even in Photius' epitome, and by Jacoby (1922, 2038).

[137] F 45, 4 περὶ τοῦ μὴ οἰκεῖν ἐπέκεινα αὐτῶν ἀνθρώπους.

[138] F 45, 17 (περὶ τοῦ ἱεροῦ χωρίου τοῦ ἐν τῇ ἀοικήτῳ).

[139] These are the variants given by Photius (F 45, 36), Pliny (F 45o) and Psellus (*De electro* publ. by Maas 1922). As I have already stated in Karttunen 1977 (60f.), I prefer the last variant. It is supported by

flowing from the northern mountains to the eastern ocean. As *we* know that the Indus flows to the south – and of course the Indus was known by Ctesias – and the Ganges to the east, it is quite natural to think that the river intended must be the Ganges (why not equally well the Yamunā?). This has often been suggested.[140] But we do not know in which direction Ctesias believed the Indus flowed. Herodotus and probably Hecataeus concluded that it must flow to the east. If Ctesias had more or less the same geographical idea – which is likely – then he would conclude that any river that was beyond the Indus would necessarily flow towards the Eastern Ocean. We can only infer that Ctesias' informant did not speak of the river as a tributary of the Indus (it may still have been one), but we cannot identify it.[141] It seems likely that Ctesias' India comprised the Pañjab, but it may well have ended there as the Ganges is just a hypothesis.

There is also the *Mount Sardo* of Ctesias,[142] often identified with the *Sardonyx Mountains* of Ptolemy,[143] variously identified with part of Vindhya or Satpura.[144] But there is so great a gap between Ctesias and Ptolemy, that if Ptolemy was not citing Ctesias (and this is unlikely), his geography cannot be used in order to explain Ctesias. Although Satpura seems to be known for its precious stones[145] it was probably much too far away for Ctesias to have heard of it. If we attempt to place his *Mount Sardo* on a map – and it is perhaps wiser not to – it could perhaps be another chain known for its precious stones and would be near enough the desert of Rajasthan – the Aravalli.

We may conclude that it seems possible that Ctesias had slightly extended the sphere of India known to the Greeks, but the details still depend too much on conjectural hypotheses.

In addition to the *Indica* there is a shorter account of India among the fragments of the *Persica*. It is included in the account of the legendary Indian campaign of Semiramis.[146] It has been attempted to show that the main descriptive part of this account (3-4) does not come from Ctesias.[147] As this short and rather general account contains similar statements to Diodor's main account of India,[148] it has been suggested that he simply copied it from

Schulze's etymology OP *vispabara* (given in a note to Maas 1922, 306) and Nonnus' Ὕσπορος. See also Johnston 1942, 29f. and 32ff.

140 First by Weyrauch 1814, 387f., then Lassen 1852, 559, Kiessling 1916, 329f., Herrmann 1938, 17f. and Johnston 1942, 34f. By contrast, Bunbury (1879, 340) denied any knowledge of the Ganges in Ctesias.

141 But see Schafer 1964, 499 (even the Ganges is more likely than his own guess, the tributary of the Sarasvatī called the Dṛṣadvatī).

142 F 45, 17 τό ὄρος τῆς Σαρδοῦς, see also 45, 11 on mountains where both sard and onyx are found (περὶ τῶν ὀρῶν τῶν μεγάλων, ἐξ ὧν ἥ τε σαρδὼ ὀρύσσεται καὶ οἱ ὄνυχες καὶ ἄλλαι σφραγῖδες), and a third instance 45, 33. Lindegger (1982, 105 note 1) identifies them with the Himalayas.

143 Thus Lassen 1852, 557, McCrindle 1885, 77 and Herrmann 1920.

144 Vindhya by Johnston 1941, 216f. (but see Vogel's [1952, 226f.] criticism), Satpura by McCrindle 1885, 77 and Herrmann 1920.

145 Noted already by Lassen (1847, 242f.).

146 F 1b, 16 from Diodorus 2, 16.

147 Krumbholz 1886, 325 and especially 1889, 292ff.

there. On the other hand, however, this short account of India as a beautiful country with many rivers, giving two crops a year, breeding many strong elephants and yielding great amounts of gold, silver, iron and copper as well as numerous precious stones, could very well be from Ctesias. It contains nothing which he could not have written, and many points we meet again among the fragments of the *Indica*.[149]

There is also the question of the sources used by Ctesias. It has often been suggested that he was wholly dependent on Greek literature, taking from it everything that was curious enough and transferring it to India. Certainly, there are cases where some tales located in other countries seem to have influenced him.[150] On the other hand, quite frequently we can point to more or less correct information, which Ctesias himself tells us he obtained in the Persian court, sometimes from people who had been in India.

As to the earlier Greek sources on India, it has often been noted that Ctesias and Herodotus are wholly different.[151] Probably Ctesias consciously avoided themes mentioned by his predecessor. In the few fragments of Scylax, the fabulous peoples of India form a link between him and Ctesias, and it may be that there really was some relation between them.[152] But to suggest that Ctesias found Scylax's description in Hecataeus is hardly likely. It would mean that there could not have been much in common between Hecataeus and Herodotus' Indian logos. This is, of course, possible. But then it was precisely Hecataeus who located in Africa some of the same fabulous peoples Scylax and Ctesias mention in India.

The answer seems to be the same as given in the case of our earlier authorities. A total dependence on literary Greek sources is unnecessary and unlikely, though there is hardly any Greek author in whose work it is wholly lacking. Ctesias knew and used at least some of his predecessors, and combined what he found (or left out) from them with what he had seen and learned in the Achaemenian court.

5. Incidental Notes

Scylax, Hecataeus, Herodotus and Ctesias were the four authors who told the Greeks of the Classical period the little they knew of India. As far as we know, there were no other accounts of India before Alexander's expedition. Among other early ethnographical

148 Diodorus 2, 35ff.

149 Similarly stated by König 1972, 147.

150 See the discussion of griffins in chapter VII.7., but also what I have written about African and Indian dog-heads and miraculous springs in Karttunen 1984 and 1985 (and again in chapter VII.8. and 9. of the present study).

151 Reese 1914, 86f.

152 Reese 1914, 89f. On Ctesias and Hecataeus see ibid. 87f.

authors just one fragment of **Hellanicus**[153] (late fifth century) is related to India. As we know nothing of its context it may well have been in some of his known works; there is no need (and no right) to presume an *Indica* by Hellanicus.[154] From a fragment of **Theopompus** (born c. 378 B.C.) quoted by Strabo,[155] one could infer that there was more literature about India (οἱ τὰ Ἰνδικὰ συγγράψαντες), but as was shown by Reese, his work may well be late enough to refer to the first histories of Alexander's Indian campaign.[156] Another question is how did Theopompus himself emulate these authors. Did he write on India or on other subjects? We have no fragments to tell us.

In literature other than ethnographical we meet India and Indians only in some incidental notes, and generally they add very little to our picture of Greek knowledge on India. The references in poetry have never even been collected.[157] Before the middle of the fifth century **Aeschylus**[158] (525/4–456 B.C.) mentions Indians among other remote peoples: they live beyond Ethiopia[159] and ride on camels. As Aeschylus was clearly writing before Herodotus, this seems to be the first account of Bactrian camels in Greece.[160] His geographical knowledge is often supposed to come from Hecataeus.

The common belief in the fabulous richness of India is clearly seen in **Sophocles'** (c. 496–406 B.C.) reference to Indian gold.[161] The lost works of Sophocles have apparently contained more references. According to Pliny, he ascribed the origin of amber to the tears shed by the birds of Meleager, weeping over Meleager somewhere beyond India.[162] Of course this fiction probably originated in Greece, as amber does not properly belong to

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153 On Hellanicus in general see Gudeman 1913 and Pearson 1939, 152ff.

154 Such has been suggested by Gudeman (1913, 130, followed by Reese [1914, 92f.]), but see my discussion in Karttunen 1985, 57f. Reese and, alas, myself have wrongly attributed Gudeman 1913 to Jacoby.

155 Strabo 1, 2, 35, c. 43: Θεόπομπος δὲ ἐξομολογεῖται φήσας ὅτι καὶ μύθους ἐν ταῖς ἱστορίαις ἐρεῖ, κρεῖττον ἢ ὡς Ἡρόδοτος καὶ Κτησίας καὶ Ἑλλάνικος καὶ οἱ τὰ Ἰνδικὰ συγγράψαντες.

156 Reese 1914, 97f.

157 Reese 1914 (30ff. text and 92ff. analysis) contains only the notes by prose authors. The Aeschylus passage is given by Reese (1914, 3) as an uncertain fragment of Hecataeus.

158 Aeschylus, *Suppl.* 284–286:

Ἰνδάς τ' ἀκούω νομάδας ἱπποβάμοσιν
εἶναι καμήλοις ἀστραβιζούσας χθόνα
παρ' Αἰθίοψιν ἀστυγειτονουμένας.

159 This shows the common confusion between India and Ethiopia, if the Eastern Ethiopians of Herodotus are not meant. The reading Ἰνδάς is in fact an emendation for MS Ἰνδους. Another emendation (τοίας) eliminates the Indians wholly from the picture. See Friis Johansen & Whittle 1980, 2, 226f.

160 It is possible that Aeschylus got it from Hecataeus, but we cannot be certain (as was Reese 1914, 65). In any case, he is the first in extant Greek literature to mention camels (Friis Johansen & Whittle 1980, 2, 227.

161 *Antigone* 1037ff.

κερδαίνετ', ἐμπολᾶτε τἀπὸ Σάρδεων
ἤλεκτρον, εἰ βούλεσθε, καὶ τὸν Ἰνδικὸν
χρυσόν, τάφῳ δ' ἐκεῖνον οὐχὶ κρύψετε.

162 Radt F 830a (Nauck p. 219) from *N. H.* 37, 40: *Hic [Sophocles] ultra Indiam fieri [electrum] dixit e lacrimis meleagridum avium Meleagrum deflentium.*

India.[163] Another fragment of Sophocles probably refers to the gold-digging ants of Herodotus,[164] but as it comes from a play called *Aethiopes,* it is hardly connected with India. But it is not certain that Sophocles really located the gold-digging ants in Ethiopia either;[165] we are not in fact given any location. In a fragment of *Triptolemus* preserved by Athenaeus we perhaps meet India again disguised as Ethiopia.[166] If his ὀρίνδης resembling sesame really means rice (and this was at least the opinion of Athenaeus), this is one of the first references to it in the West.

The third classical tragedian, Euripides, did not mention India in his extant works. The same silence is met in other fifth and fourth century works of poetry (for instance in Aristophanes and Pindarus); it seems that India even as a legendary country was not very popular in the period before Alexander's campaign. Even where it would have been natural to mention it, India is not given, either in the lists of Persian soldiers in Aeschylus' *Persai,*[167] or in the wanderings of Io,[168] or even in the wanderings of Dionysus.[169]

Among the prose authors **Xenophon** (c. 428/7 – c. 354 B.C.) mentions India or Indians several times. In the *Cynegeticus* Indian hunting dogs are mentioned twice,[170] and in the *Cyropaedia* there are four passages which deal with Indians. They contain typical features common to the Indians of literature: they are known for their righteousness[171] and are very rich.[172] That they were allied with the Persians was, of course, common knowledge; the first Indians seen in Greece were soldiers in Xerxes' army, and it is quite possible that Xenophon had himself seen Indian soldiers during his "Anabasis". But it is a bad mistake to try and interpret the passages of the *Cyropaedia* as history,[173]

[163] For supposed Indian amber see Ctesias F 45, 36 and 45 (also Psellus *de electro,* see Maas 1924) and uncertain F 65 (*putat ... Ctesias hunc* [Eridanum] *in India esse*). According to Laufer (1919, 523), two Chinese texts mention amber as brought from Northwest India (*Ki-pin*), but its real origin may be further in the west. Ctesias' (and Sophocles') account might be explained purely as Greek speculation (Kiessling 1016), or as some other product than real amber (e.g. Wilson 1836, 62, Johnston 1942, 30ff. and Lambrick 1975, 102 suggest various Indian gums and resins).

[164] Radt F 29.

[165] As supposed by Reese (1914, 70), but see Radt's note to the fragment.

[166] F 552 (Nauck) = 609 (Radt) from Athenaeus 3, p. 110e ὀρίνδον δ' ἄρτον μέμνηται Σοφοκλῆς ἐν Τριπτολέμῳ, ἤτοι τοῦ ἐξ ὀρύζης γινομένου ἢ ἀπὸ τοῦ ἐν Αἰθιοπίᾳ γιγνομένου σπέρματος. ὅ ἐστιν ὅμοιον σησάμῳ. Similarly, without giving a source, Hesychius: ὀρίνδην· ἄρτον παρὰ Αἰθιοψι. καὶ σπέρμα παραπλήσιον σησάμῳ, ὅπερ ἔψοντες σιτοῦνται. τινὲς δὲ ὄρυζαν; and Pollux. All these are quoted by Nauck and Radt ad l. The identification as the Eastern Ethiopians of Gedrosia has been suggested by Pisani (1940, 97).

[167] *Persai* 12ff. and 302ff. The Bactrians are mentioned three times, in 306, 318 and 732.

[168] Aesch., *Prom.* 786ff. The one-eyed Arimaspeans are mentioned in 805.

[169] Euripides, *Bacchae* 13ff. Here Bactria is the most distant place mentioned (in 15). It is also mentioned in his *Io* 217.

[170] See chapter VII.3.

[171] In the *Cyropaedia* 2, 4, 1ff. the king of the Indians is asked to mediate in a war between the Medians and the Assyrians. The righteousness of Indians (and of other remote peoples) was a τόπος in Greek ethnography (see chapter V.1.).

[172] In the *Cyropaedia* 3, 2, 25ff. a loan is requested of them. Other passages about Indians are 1, 5, 2f. and 6, 2, 1f. and 9. See Reese 1914, 30ff. and 95f.

[173] This was done e.g. by Prakash (1969, 133ff.).

as the whole work was actually an educational novel, and one of the first examples of prose fiction. Its connection to actual history is extremely loose though Cyrus of course was a historical person.[174] Furthermore, as the richness of India was already a τόπος,[175] I do not accept that a loose connection between the Indians and the Lydians could make the former a kind of banker living somewhere in Asia Minor.[176] Probably – and the reference to righteousness seems to prove it – Xenophon was thinking of real Indians without concerning himself too much with geography.

In the **Hippocratic corpus** a direct reference to India is found only in one text (*On the Diseases of Women*), where pepper is mentioned three times as "the Indian medicine".[177] As the text in question comes from Cnidus, the hometown of Ctesias, Filliozat put forward the possibility that Ctesias could be the original source for the medical use of pepper in Greece.[178] But Ctesias was not the only physician of Cnidus, the Cnidian medical school being famous in his times. Moreover, we do not know if Ctesias ever came back to Cnidus from Persia, where he could have learnt about pepper and its use. In an earlier chapter (II.7.) we saw that it is by no means impossible or even improbable that a valuable and easily transportable article like pepper could reach Greece (and especially the Greek cities of Asia Minor) in the fifth century. A Ctesias is wholly unnecessary here, despite his interest in Indian medicines. And we do not find any of the medicines mentioned among his fragments in the Hippocratic corpus. Anyway, in the Hippocratic corpus[179] we have the first mention of pepper (and its Indian name πέπερι) in the West. Soon the spice is mentioned by Antiphanes and Aristoteles.[180]

Another work of the Hippocratic corpus, *Περὶ ἀέρων ὑδάτων τόπων* (*On Airs, Waters, Places*), does not deal with India, but is otherwise of exceptional importance for the history of early Greek ethnography and of ethnographical theory. As India was one of the favourite countries dealt with by other ethnographers, it also has great importance for the history of the literature on India.[181] Trüdinger calls it the "Brücke zu den verlorenen jonischen Ethnographie"[182] and though written by a physician it contains a strong ethno-

[174] See Schwartz 1896, 46ff. and Mallowan in Gershevitch 1985, 417f.

[175] E.g. in Herodotus and Sophocles.

[176] As suggested by König 1972, 38. If König's thesis is accepted, why not the Σίνδοι living at the eastern end of the Black Sea. But then we could also think of real Indian bankers living in Mesopotamia.

[177] *Morb. Mul.* 1, 81 κόκκους ἑκλέψαντα ὅσον τρεῖς ἰνδικοῦ φαρμακοῦ, τοῦ τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν, ὃ καλέεται πέπερι; 2, 158; and 2, 205 ἑκλέψας κόκκους τριήκοντα, τὸ ἰνδικὸν, ὃ καλέουσιν οἱ Πέρσαι πέπερι. In *Morb. Mul.* 2, 185 an ἰνδικὸν φάρμακον against foul breath (κακὸν ἐκ τοῦ στόματος) is mentioned without any Indian ingredients (dill, anise and myrrh). See also Filliozat 1964, 253ff. and Tola & Dragonetti 1982, 5f.

[178] Filliozat 1981, 99f.

[179] The new concordance of the *Corpus* shows that there are several more passages where pepper is mentioned without it being specified as Indian. The total number of occurrences of the word πέπερι in the corpus is thus 17, of which 8 come from *Morb. Mul.*, 4 from *Epid.*, 3 from *Morb.* and one from *Acut. Sp.* and *Nat. Mul.*

[180] Miller 1969, 82.

[181] Trüdinger 1918, 37ff. and Zambrini 1982, 109ff.

[182] Trüdinger 1918, 7.

graphic tendency, especially in chapters 12–24. Its main approach lies in an attempt to explain the differences between peoples by nature, from a supposed relationship between the natural conditions, climate and characteristics of the inhabitants of a country.[183] A kind of ideal relationship was apparently found in Ionia, an idea certainly not unknown in earlier ethnography (for instance in Herodotus), and thus the author sets about collecting evidence of the supposed inferiority of foreigners.[184]

The great promoter of Atomistic philosophy, **Democritus** (c. 500 – c. 428 B.C.), was also known as a great traveller who had visited several countries, according to a late tradition, even India.[185] The question of philosophical travelling in India will be taken up in chapter IV.2, now it is enough to note that among his fragments there is only one connected with India.[186] Like the Hellanicus fragment mentioned above, it deals with the miraculous fountain or river called *Silas*,[187] and does not presume any personal knowledge. His philosophy apparently contained nothing we should consider as Indian (see also IV.2.).

The lost history of **Ephorus** (c. 405–330 B.C.) contained a geographical section, and a fragment preserved by several authors[188] says that he mentioned India as the easternmost country of the known world. This has already been stated by Herodotus and Ctesias, and the fragments give nothing new. We do not know if Ephorus included any description of this easternmost country in his work.

6. Companions of Alexander

Alexander's campaign opened a new period in the history of Indo-Western contacts. A great army of Macedonians and Greeks made a major campaign of nearly two years in Northwestern India, and the staff included several scientifically and literarily oriented men, serving under a king who had been a pupil of Aristoteles. The books written by participants of the expedition itself were already sufficient to give a wholly new dimension to the Western conception of India. For the first time the Northwestern country became well-known from first-hand accounts,[189] and even countries beyond were not

[183] See the table in Backhaus 1976, 183.

[184] Backhaus 1976, 181, on idealizing Ionian conditions ibid. 172 and 177f.

[185] Sources collected in Tola & Dragonetti 1982, 4f.

[186] It is given in Reese 1914, 30, discussed ib. 93f.

[187] This will be discussed in chapter VII.9.

[188] Given in Reese 1914, 32, discussed ib. 96f.

[189] There was probably already an earlier first-hand account by Scylax, but after reading what Herodotus and the fragments of Ctesias have to say about India one could hardly say that Scylax had made it "well-known". Probably very few people had ever read his book.

wholly unknown. It is a great loss both for history in general and for Graeco-Indian studies in particular that not a single volume of this early literature about Alexander's campaign has been preserved. Of early ethnography we have at least Herodotus intact, but in Alexander's histories we have to content ourselves with the fragments.[190] These fragments are not always very numerous or representative, and in many cases it is very difficult task to keep the fragments of one author separate from those of another.

The relation of the extant historians to these early authors has been established rather well. The so-called court historians Ptolemy and Aristobulus together with Nearchus are Arrianus' principal sources, while Cleitarchus often seems to be behind the so-called vulgate tradition of Diodorus (book 17), Curtius, Justinus (the epitome of Pompeius Trogus' lost history), the *Epitome Mettensis,* and to some extent also Plutarchus. Onesicritus is known mostly from works which do not deal with history (like Strabo and Pliny), while others are to a large extent lost.[191]

From our present point of view, the historians of Alexander are important in two ways. First, they give much fresh information on the very country we are trying to study, and are chronologically very close to our main authorities. Second, they were not merely explorers in an unknown country writing down exactly what they saw. They knew the earlier literature (and oral tradition too) on India and used it, sometimes polemizing, sometimes confirming, sometimes simply imitating. The revolution did not go deep enough to change the established conception of India very much.[192]

One of the oldest and, thanks to Arrianus, best-known representatives of this literature is the account **Nearchus of Creta**[193] wrote about his sailing down the Indus and along the coast to Susa.[194] The book is thus not a history of Alexander but an account of a voyage and the countries seen during it, more or less in the spirit of Ionian ethnography. As the voyage itself began in India, the work contained what appears to have been a lengthy account of India.[195] Nature and ethnography are well represented among the fragments. The sober Nearchus[196] seems to have mostly restricted his account to what he had himself seen, yet there are some traces that he, too, knew older literature, especially Herodotus.[197] It is a good indication of his reliability that he does not claim to have seen the gold-digging ants himself, yet he saw their skins brought to Alexander's camp.[198] Though it seems clear that he saw some skins and heard a description of the animal which somehow resembled the gold-digging ant – and Megasthenes confirms that there really

[190] The fragments are edited by Jacoby in *FGrH* vol. II, translated by Robinson (1952) and discussed by Pearson (1960).

[191] See e.g. Bosworth's useful summary of sources (Bosworth 1988, 295ff.).

[192] See also chapter VII.1.

[193] For Nearchus see Berve 1935 and Pearson 1960, 112ff.

[194] On the voyage, see Hennig 1944, 199ff. and Schiwek 1962, 20ff.

[195] On this, see also Vofchuk 1982c and Hinüber's commentary to Arrianus (in Hinüber 1985).

[196] The fragments confirm quite well the good testimony the classical authors give of his reliability. "No one ever accused him of distorting the facts" says Pearson (1960, 112). Arrianus, for instance, seems to take his truthfulness for granted (ibid.).

[197] See F 17 and the discussion in Pearson 1960, 118ff. and Murray 1972, 205f.

[198] F 8 a and b, from Arrianus and Strabo.

were ant gold stories told in or about Northwest India – yet it is hardly possible that the earlier tradition about these ants as told by Herodotus was unknown to him.[199]

The most important of Nearchus' subordinates[200] was undoubtedly **Onesicritus of Astypalaea**,[201] that ἀρχικυβερνήτης τῶν παραδόξων, a man who was wholly different from his commander. He was kin to Ctesias, fond of the dramatic and the marvellous, and also one of the notorious "flatterers of Alexander".[202] He was credited by his contemporaries with a lively imagination, credulity and literary ambitions.[203] With all his faults he was the literary man of the troop, and even knew philosophy. He was able to give his work what he himself and some of his critics considered good style, but as an eye-witness account it was felt to be highly suspect. Often he was more interested in his own ideas and their reception by his audience than in giving a reliable picture of all he had seen and done.

Onesicritus was probably more bound to Greek literary traditions than his colleagues. He knew the older literature and through it he knew what India was like. Apparently, he was not ready to reject the traditions on the grounds of a mere first-hand account. Nevertheless, his fragments are not wholly without value as they reflect also the literary conception of India. Despite his bad reputation he was often read by later generations, and thus influenced the concept of India in later times. Moreover, as a pupil of the Cynic Diogenes[204] he had a philosophical ideal to follow, and the still remote and fabulous country of India gave him good occasion to make literary use of this ideal. We can clearly see it in the account of his meeting with the Gymnosophists and again in the idealizing description of the country of Musicanus; both contain clear utopian tendencies.[205]

And yet, as was the case with Ctesias and Megasthenes, the verdict of the ancient critics may have been slightly exaggerated in the case of Onesicritus, too. It seems that the real marvels of the Indian natural world, as well as the Persian and local traditions available to the Greek authors, contained so much that was incredible that often an account told

[199] The gold-digging ants will be discussed in chapter VII.6.

[200] In addition, Androsthenes of Thasus (3 to 5 fragments in *FGrH* 711), Orthagoras (5 fragments in *FGrH* 713), and perhaps also Sosandros (without fragments in *FGrH* 714) participated and wrote about the voyage, but we know very little about them and their works. See e.g. Berve 1926, 2, 40 (Androsthenes) and 294 (Orthagoras) and Schwarz 1966, 70. Androsthenes later explored the southern coasts of the Gulf (see Bowersock 1986).

[201] The basic work on Onesicritus is still Brown 1949. See also Pearson 1960, 83ff.

[202] On flatterers see e.g. Strabo 11, 5, 5 and 15, 1, 9, on Onesicritus as one of them Jacoby's T 7 and 8 for Onesicritus.

[203] Later authors tell anecdotes about what Alexander (Lucianus in T 7) and Lysimachus (Plutarchus in T 8) said about his work.

[204] This is attested by Strabo (Jacoby's T 2 for Onesicritus), Diogenes Laertius (T 3) and Plutarchus (T 5a).

[205] See Brown 1949, 24ff. (ch. II. Onesicritus and the Cynics) and 54ff. (ch. III. Onesicritus and the Utopian Literature). In Indological literature his fragments have often been studied with little respect for these philosophical and utopian tendencies. But see also Schwarz's study on the meeting with the Gymnosophists, where a general correspondence between Onesicritus' description and the real Indian ascetics is shown (Schwarz 1980, 86ff.), without overlooking the presence of an inevitable philosophical *interpretatio Graeca* (ibid. 93ff.).

in good faith was branded as a lie by critics.[206] Onesicritus was in India, too, and recounted at some length what he had seen there. As the works of his companions are also preserved only in fragments, his fragments are equally worth studying.[207]

According to classical authors, the most reliable of Alexander's historians was **Ptolemy**. His book is to some extent preserved by Arrianus, who took it as one of his main authorities on Alexander's campaigns.[208] But in addition to a short account of the river Acesines (F 22) his fragments on India only deal with the military details of the campaign.[209] Another of Arrianus' main sources, and similarly valued by most critics was **Aristobulus**.[210] From his work Arrianus and Strabo have preserved many fragments dealing especially with nature and anecdotal details.[211] I shall be referring to them quite frequently. Among the less known literarily active companions of Alexander there is **Chares of Mytilene**, said to have had similar uncritical tendencies to Ctesias and Onesicritus.[212] Among the four fragments about India we have from his work, two deal with religion.[213] Among the five (or eight) fragments of the Bematist **Baeton** there is some geographical information on India and an account of a fabulous people.[214] Of **Polycleitus of Larissa**,[215] we do not know for certain if he participated in Alexander's expedition, though at least some fragments seem to be founded on eye witness accounts. Two small fragments deal with Indian animals.[216] There are also several other historians of Alexander, but their extant fragments (as published in *FGrH*) do not deal with India.

It remains to say some words about **Cleitarchus**. Fortunately, it is not my task to intervene in the controversy about Cleitarchus. Several problems are involved. Did he participate in Alexander's expedition or not? Did he use Aristobulus as his main source or vice versa? Was he more or less a contemporary of other early historians of Alexander, or

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[206] Strabo 15, 1, 28, c. 698 Ὀνησίκριτος, ὃν οὐκ Ἀλεξάνδρου μᾶλλον ἢ τῶν παραδόξων ἀρχικυβερνήτην προσείποι τις ἄν. πάντες μὲν γὰρ οἱ περὶ Ἀλέξανδρον τὸ θαυμαστὸν ἀντὶ τἀληθοῦς ἀπεδέχοντο μᾶλλον, ὑπερβάλλεσθαι δὲ δοκεῖ τοὺς τοσούτους ἐκεῖνος τῇ τερατολογίᾳ. But after this he comes precisely to the point we are stressing here: λέγει δ' οὖν τινα καὶ πιθανὰ καὶ μνήμης ἄξια, ὥστε καὶ ἀπιστοῦντα μὴ παρελθεῖν αὐτά.

[207] Some of his accounts on India have lately been studied by Vofchuk (1984 and 1986), who has shown some good Indian parallels, but somewhat neglected his ties with the Greek tradition. See also Schwarz 1976.

[208] Arrianus, *Anabasis* 1, Prologue (Jacoby's T 1 for Ptolemy). On Ptolemy see e.g. Pearson 1960, 188.

[209] F 18–26 and uncertain F 35.

[210] On him see Pearson 1960, 150ff.

[211] F 34ff. on India.

[212] Berve 1926, 2, 405f. and Pearson 1960, 50ff.

[213] *FGrH* 125 F 17 on the Indian god Soroadeios (cf. Goossens 1953) and F 19 on the death of Calanus. F 16 and 18 also on India.

[214] *FGrH* 119 F 5 (from Pliny) on *silvestres homines aversis post crura plantis* (the ὀπισθοδάκτυλοι of Megasthenes F 27 and 28). On Baeton see Berve 1926, 99f.

[215] See Pearson 1960, 70ff.

[216] *FGrH* 128 F 9 on lizards and F 10 on tortoises.

did he belong to a later Hellenistic age? How great was his real influence on the extant histories? According to the traditional view propagated by such scholars as K. Müller, Ed. Schwartz and F. Jacoby[217] he was both early (writing 310/300 B.C.) and important. Although he perhaps did not personally participate in the expedition,[218] he was a contemporary and lived in the fourth century.[219] All this was questioned by Tarn, who made Aristobulus the most important historian. According to Tarn, Cleitarchus was a secondary figure who relied upon him,[220] and wrote later in 280/270 or perhaps 270/260 B.C.[221] Brown deservedly criticized Tarn from the traditional viewpoint, although he also pointed out some of his merits.[222] The question was taken up by Hamilton,[223] who rejects one by one Tarn's arguments, as well as the extremely late date (late in the first century B.C.) suggested for Cleitarchus by Gitti.[224] At the same time, Pearson took up Tarn's arguments and tried to confirm his date,[225] but again met with little general approval.[226]

As an author Cleitarchus was akin to Ctesias and Onesicritus, fond of the entertaining, the dramatic and the marvellous. He too knew, and often used, older literature and τόποι, both for India and other countries.[227] India is well represented among his fragments, thirteen of them[228] are related mostly to the wonders of Indian nature.

Although not a historian of Alexander, **Patrocles**[229] can be mentioned here as a contemporary (or somewhat later) who dealt with India. He was a high-ranking officer under Seleucus Nicator and Antiochus Soter, and made an important expedition to the shores of the Caspian Sea (in 280s). We do not know the precise contents of his book – no doubt he described this expedition, but there are also several fragments connected with India. Furthermore, Strabo mentions him several times[230] as the best authority on India. The actual fragments are purely geographical and do not interest us here.

We cannot say with any confidence which of the above-mentioned authors was the last to write his book, but after them we encounter a long silence. We know that the Hellenistic authors dealt with Alexander and his campaigns, but in addition to some

217 References in Brown 1950, 134.

218 Brown 1950, 134 and Hamilton 1961, 449.

219 Brown 1950, 135ff.

220 Tarn 1950, 86f. and 131ff. and passim. Similar ideas were put forward earlier, see references in Hamilton 1961, 448 note 4.

221 Tarn 1950, 21.

222 Brown 1950.

223 Hamilton 1961. For other scholars who discuss the problem of Cleitarchus, see references in Hamilton.

224 Hamilton 1961, 455ff. A late date (second century B.C.) has also been suggested by Eggermont (1975, 67, 114 and 128).

225 Pearson 1960, 212ff.

226 Brown 1962, 199.

227 Brown 1950, 148ff.

228 F 6 and 17–27.

229 See Gisinger 1949.

230 On three occasions, collected by Jacoby as T 5 for Patrocles. This praise seems to go back to Eratosthenes.

names and still fewer fragments we know nothing of their works.[231] Although the so-called *Alexander Romance* of Pseudo-Callisthenes came into existence much later, some of its components were already extant.[232] For our purposes the period offers nothing.

After the long gap came the extant historians of Alexander, beginning with Diodorus. The histories of Diodorus, Curtius, Arrianus, Plutarchus and Justinus do not interest us anymore as independent sources on (Northwest) India, but together with some geographers and authors on *naturalia*[233] they give us most of our fragments from earlier authors.

7. Scientists on India

An important side effect of Alexander's campaign was the amount of geographical and scientific material collected. The pupil of Aristoteles, knew how to maximize the scientific and propaganda value of his campaigns by bringing with his staff a good selection of historians, philosophers, geographers, botanists and other scientific men.[234] In some fields the material collected was very important for the research of the early Hellenistic period.

But for the old master all this seems to have come too late. Although there are scattered remarks on India in the works of **Aristoteles** (384–322 B.C.),[235] especially on Indian animals, nearly everything can be derived from Ctesias,[236] or some other source written before the Indian expedition.[237] That Aristoteles obtained zoological information from Alexander's campaign is more or less stated by Pliny;[238] however, in the authentic

[231] See the short survey in Pearson 1960, 243ff.

[232] There is a good possibility that *Alexander's Letter to Aristoteles* belongs to the Hellenistic period, but Gunderson's (1980) thesis ascribing it to the late fourth century is hardly acceptable. For our purpose it is important only as a source of material probably going back to Ctesias (though it is silent as to its sources). As was shown by Merkelbach, the original version of the so-called *Letter Romance* also belongs to the Hellenistic period (testified by a papyrus from the first century B.C.). See Gunderson 1980, 28ff.

[233] Especially Strabo, Pliny and Aelianus. The collectors of *curiosa* (like Athenaeus) and *mirabilia* have also contributed their share.

[234] Tarn 1948, 13.

[235] Collected in Reese 1914, 32–34.

[236] Bolchert 1908, 19 and Reese 1914, 99f. Even the small and deadly poisonous Indian snake (*H. An.* 8, 29, p. 607a 34), though not found among the fragments of Ctesias (as stressed by Reese, 1914, 103), could well have been in his original work. Ctesias was very fond of such snakes.

[237] Such a source is probably involved in the many cases where Aristoteles criticizes and corrects Ctesias.

[238] *N. H.* 8, 17, 44 states that Alexander ordered thousands of people in Greece and Asia to send information to Aristoteles, and 10, 85, 185 seems to indicate some correspondence between Aristoteles

works there is only one notice where such a collaboration is made probable.[239] If Aristoteles attained some information from the campaign, it came too late to be used in most of his work, and the idea of India in them still reflects previous knowledge.

Aristoteles survived his pupil by one year and probably had an opportunity to see an elephant[240] himself, as Alexander is said to have sent one to Greece. But nothing in his account on elephants shows a personal knowledge of the animal.[241] Unfortunately, we are very poorly informed on Greek zoology after Aristoteles, and therefore cannot say how much the results of the Indian campaign were used. When we again have extant sources (such as Pliny and Aelianus in the Imperial period), the accounts of Alexander's campaign are given along with those of Ctesias, but Hellenistic zoologists (like Theophrastus and Strato) are rarely mentioned.

With botany we are better off. Aristoteles' pupil **Theophrastus** (c. 370–288/5 B.C.) made full use of material collected by Alexander's men and incorporated it into his great *History of Plants,* which for a long time was the standard work in the field of botany. This work contains a section on Indian plants[242] and many scattered references, and more are found in his other botanical work, *De causis plantarum,*[243] and some minor works.[244]

The geographical information Alexander's historians gained from the campaign was collected and discussed late in the third century B.C. by **Eratosthenes** (c. 275–194 B.C.), who dedicated the first part (σφραγίς) of his *Geography* to India. His critical judgements about Alexander's historians often had an influence on later writers, for instance Strabo and Arrianus.[245] These two give us most of his fragments on India. For a long time he defined the Western conception of the physical geography of India, he also dealt with botanic geography and climatology,[246] and from him originates much of the criticism against earlier authors like Megasthenes and Daimachus found in such authors as Strabo.

At present the most interesting part of the remains of Eratosthenes is the fragment[247] where he ascribes everything the historians of Alexander had written about the campaigns and worship of Heracles and Dionysus in India to their own Greek imagination. He also

and the army, but only about Persia.

239 *H. An.* 8, 9, p. 396a 3 states the amount of fodder for an elephant in Macedonian medimni (ὁ δ' ἐλέφας ἐσθίει πλεῖστον μὲν μεδίμνους Μακεδονικοὺς ἐννέα ἐπὶ μιᾶς ἐδωδῆς).

240 The Aristotelian account of the elephant (as it is found scattered over several of his works) is discussed in Scullard 1974, 37ff.

241 As supposed e.g. by Schlegel 1820, 162f.

242 *H. Pl.* 4, 4, 4–11.

243 Theophrastus' botanical information on India was studied by Bretzl (1903).

244 These are never mentioned in connection with India. I have checked only the short book *On Stones,* and found two passages connected with Alexander's campaign and India: ch. 36 on pearl and 38 on coral and bamboo (cf. *H. Pl.* 4, 11, 13). To these can be added ch. 35 on Bactrian semi-precious stones.

245 Cf. *Anab.* 5, 5, 1 ἀλλὰ ὑπὲρ Ἰνδῶν ... ἐπὶ δὲ ὅσα Μεγασθένης τε καὶ Ἐρατοσθένης, δοκίμω ἄνδρε, ξυνεγραψάτην.

246 See e.g. F III B 12 (Berger p. 232f.).

247 Eratosthenes F I B 24 from Arrianus *Anab.* 5, 3, 1f.

mentions a third case. In Caucasus (i.e. Paropamisus/Hindukush) the historians of Alexander claimed a cave was found where, according to a tradition claimed to have been told by the local people, Prometheus was held imprisoned. It is easy to agree with Eratosthenes' doubts about this kind of local tradition of a purely Greek myth originally connected not with Paropanisus-Caucasus but with Caucasus proper.

8. Megasthenes and Later Sources

After the death of Alexander, India clearly belonged to the sphere of Hellenistic politics, but with the rise of the Mauryas direct Hellenistic dominion ended even in the Northwest. A new power in the east soon established its relations with the West, diplomatic exchange was started, accompanied, at least in the West, with literary activity.[248]

The most important was of course **Megasthenes**, the Seleucid ambassador to the Mauryan court. In later classical literature his *Indica* was, together with some historians of Alexander mentioned above, the leading authority on India in spite of the frequent criticism and serious doubts raised concerning his reliability. The many fragments give rather a good picture of his work although several important details are missing. His account has been studied with interest. He had a great deal of first-hand knowledge not only of the Northwestern country, but even of India proper. But we must always keep in mind that he was still a Greek writing to his compatriots and using Greek literary conventions. There are also more problems and difficulties involved than the straightforward approach of studies on Megasthenes supposes.[249]

It was the great work of Schwanbeck to collect the fragments, analyse them and show that it really was India that Megasthenes had written about.[250] He is not to be blamed if sometimes he was too optimistic and tried to see an objective and reliable account of Indian reality in everything. In this he was followed by Lassen,[251] McCrindle[252] and many others. In the 20th century Breloer[253] and Timmer[254] made similar attempts to show that much of Megasthenes originated either in Indian reality or in Indian theory. This line has been followed by many scholars, especially those interested in Indian history,[255] and of course such an approach has unearthed many important things.[256]

[248] Cf. chapter II.8. and Schwarz 1968 and 1970.

[249] Zambrini 1982, 71ff. contains a critical evaluation of the studies on Megasthenes.

[250] Schwanbeck 1846, cf. Zambrini 1982, 73ff.

[251] Lassen 1852, 663ff.

[252] McCrindle 1877.

[253] E.g. in Breloer 1929, 1934 and 1935, cf. Zambrini 1982, 86ff.

[254] Timmer 1930, cf. Zambrini 1982, 82ff. Timmer's views were mostly still accepted by Jong 1973, 126f. For a somewhat related approach see Schwarz 1970, 283ff.

Megasthenes was indeed in India, and whatever his motives and prejudices were, he could hardly fail to give a considerable amount of information which corresponded to the actual situation (or the Indian theory).[257]

But this is not all. It was not really revolutionary[258] that Stein ascribed idealistic tendencies to Megasthenes.[259] These may still be explained from an Indian point of view.[260] However, Stein's main work on Megasthenes[261] was more important than his thesis because it showed the great extent to which Megasthenes was bound to his Greek background. This Greek viewpoint has been represented even more clearly by Brown,[262] and more recently by Murray[263] and Zambrini.[264] After them it has become wholly clear that Megasthenes was a Greek author bound to Greek ideas, Greek literary conventions and the tradition of Greek ethnographical writing on Egypt and India.[265] Both the very idea of writing a book on India and the way he realized it were inspired by the Greek ethnographic tradition, and especially the earlier book by Hecataeus of Abdera on Egypt.[266] Just as Hecataeus lent his support to Ptolemaic propaganda by describing Egypt as an ideal country, Megasthenes was in a way doing the same service for his own monarch, although his India was not under Seleucus' rule.[267] In doing this he freely used *interpretatio Graeca,* borrowing much from his predecessors and adapting Indian reality as he knew it to his political and literary needs. He was not consciously distorting his view of India, but he placed his Indian experiences within a Greek ideological framework and projected a Greek utopia onto India.[268] His accounts of Indian protohistory,[269] the

255 It is a serious problem for Indologists interested in Megasthenes and unable to read his fragments in Greek that they are still bound to use McCrindle 1877. Although Schwanbeck's edition (McCrindle's basic text) was a remarkable achievement in the 1840s, it has been wholly superseded by Jacoby (*FGrH* 715). A related problem is that too often everything ascribed by Schwanbeck to Megasthenes has been accepted without any criticism. The controversy between Majumdar (1958 and 1960) and Sethna (1960) is a rare exception.

256 One recent attempt to defend the straightforward field observer interpretation of Megasthenes is Sachse 1981, but as far as I can follow her Polish text she fails to give adequate arguments against interpretations stressing the Greek background. In many other respects her study contains valuable observations on Megasthenes and his relation to Indian reality (see also Sachse 1982).

257 See e.g. the notes on Arrianus' *Indica* (and the many Megasthenes fragments it contains) in Hinüber 1985. On the role of Indian theory and ideals see Timmer 1930, 299f.

258 See e.g. Timmer 1930, 46ff. and 301.

259 Stein 1922 passim (41f. on exceptional honesty, 69ff. no script in India, 90ff. no alcohol, 109ff. no slaves, 127 the exclusion of peasants from war, 204 no trials about deposits, no witnesses).

260 Most of the points mentioned in the preceding note also correspond to the Indian ideal as stated in the Dharmaśāstras.

261 Stein 1932, cf. Zambrini 1982, 90ff.

262 Brown 1955 and 1957, cf. Zambrini 1982, 92ff., again in Brown 1973, 141ff.

263 Murray 1970 (esp. 166ff.) and 1972, cf. Zambrini 1982, 97ff.

264 Zambrini 1982, 1983 and 1985. See also Vernière 1987.

265 A survey of this tradition and its relation to Megasthenes is given by Zambrini 1982, 102ff. See also the long discussion of Greek sources in Megasthenes in Stein 1932, 236ff.

266 Murray 1970, 166ff and Zambrini 1982, 140ff., see also Dihle 1962 and Arora 1982a.

267 Zambrini 1985, 795ff.

268 Zambrini 1985, 797f.

rigid division of society into classes, the gods Heracles and Dionysus, the king's possession of all land, the exclusion of peasants from war, unwritten laws, the rarity of thefts can all be given Indian explanations showing that Megasthenes was not writing fiction. He was, however, selecting precisely those points which corresponded well to the Greek conception of an ideal state.[270] The same approach is also met with in Hecataeus of Abdera.

Often the mission of Megasthenes has been dealt with too confidently. Scholars have read between the lines when the lines themselves are not too clear.[271] Arrianus says that he visited the Mauryan court several times, but were they just short visits or a long embassy?[272] And where precisely did he go? Recently, Eggermont has raised an interesting point claiming that Megasthenes in fact never went as far as Pāṭaliputra. There is a passage where Megasthenes is reported as having met Candragupta in his camp,[273] and according to Eggermont this was the only time he met the Indian monarch. The camp was probably situated somewhere near Mathurā, as Megasthenes seems to be well informed about this region.[274] The idea is interesting and reminds us how little we actually know of Megasthenes. But unfortunately for the theory, there is also a testimony, not mentioned by Eggermont, where it is clearly stated that Megasthenes went to Pāṭaliputra.[275] Nevertheless, we may still note that Arrianus finds it necessary to stress that Megasthenes did not travel extensively in India.[276]

When Megasthenes was using Greek sources in addition to Hecataeus' book on Egypt, those by the historians of Alexander dealing with Northwest India were closest to him. And it seems that he used them often, more often than has been supposed at least by those who believe in a straightforward observer of the Mauryan empire. Thus it was not that he saw two Indian cults and, using the then common and accepted method of *interpretatio Graeca,* identified them with Greek Heracles and Dionysus. Surely he knew the history of Alexander's campaign when he first went to India and from it he knew also beforehand that precisely those two Greek gods had preceded Alexander as conquerors of

[269] Müller 1972, 250ff. and Zambrini 1985, 783ff. As Greek mythological prehistory was supposed to be universal and true, there was a general tendency in classical ethnography to more or less ignore what the nations said about their origin and history and attempt instead to fit everything into a Greek scheme. See Bickerman 1952, 68ff.

[270] Zambrini 1985, 785ff. and 797ff. See also Müller 1972, 248ff. For an Indian explanation of various idealistic customs see e.g. Timmer 1930, 240ff.

[271] E.g. in Arrianus, *Anab.* 5, 6, 2 and *Indica* 5, 3 (together Jacoby's T 2 for Megasthenes).

[272] Stein (1932, 231f. and 233) fails to give any convincing arguments for his idea that Megasthenes lived for a long period, perhaps ten years, in Pāṭaliputra. The idea of several short visits is supported e.g. by Brown (1957, 15). The very idea of a permanent ambassador accredited for years in a foreign capital is rather modern and as unfamiliar in Greece as it was in India.

[273] F 32 (from Strabo) γενόμενος γοῦν ἐν τῷ Σανδροκόττου στρατοπέδῳ...

[274] Eggermont 1986, 160ff.

[275] Strabo 2, 1, 9, c. 70 (T 2c), probably from Eratosthenes) ἐπέμφθησαν μὲν γὰρ εἰς τὰ Παλίμβοθρα ὁ μὲν Μεγασθένης πρὸς Σανδρόκοττον, ὁ δὲ Δηίμαχος...

[276] *Ind.* 5, 3 ἀλλ' οὐδὲ Μεγασθένης πολλὴν δοκέει μοι ἐπελθεῖν τῆς Ἰνδῶν χώρης, πλήν γε ‹δὴ› ὅτι πλεῦνα ἢ οἱ ξὺν Ἀλεξάνδρῳ τῷ Φιλίππου ἐπελθόντες and again in *Ind.* 7, 1 οὐδὲ πολλοστὸν μέρος τῆς Ἰνδῶν γῆς ἐπελθών.

India. Without doubt he observed Indian cults, but he was already sure he would find Heracles and Dionysus worshipped there.[277] The curious claim that there is no slavery in India as well as some other idealizing features seem to originate in the country of Musicanus, the Cynic ideal state created, apparently in loose connection with actual facts, by Onesicritus.[278] Megasthenes' account of the Calanus story is probably also founded on Onesicritus, though the younger author gave it a different interpretation.[279] It has also been suggested that the account of the seven "castes"[280] was perhaps already in Onesicritus.[281] When Megasthenes claims that there are no written laws in India and that the Indians do not know about writing, this can, despite the Indian explanations offered,[282] hardly be wholly independent of a similar account of the unwritten laws of the country around the Indus given by Nearchus.[283] But when Nearchus also mentioned that writing was used for other purposes, it was probably an idealizing addition by Megasthenes to suggest that they do not know writing at all.[284]

In spite of all this, Megasthenes' work was probably full of authentic and precise observations about India. In a way he was no worse than a modern European who goes to India for the first time and reads some travel books and other accounts of the country beforehand. Both see the country with their own eyes, but they interpret (and to some extent even select) what they see in the light of those books and more generally in the light of their own culture. But for our present purpose Megasthenes is important just because he derives so much from the historians of Alexander as well as their predecessors, authors who describe only northwestern parts of the country.[285]

The *Indica* of Megasthenes dominated the later literature on India so much that we know very little of the other Hellenistic embassies. The reliability of their accounts was severely questioned, but so was that of Megasthenes, too, and therefore we cannot say why they did not survive. Perhaps their books were literarily inferior to Megasthenes, perhaps they were also shorter.[286] In any case, very little is preserved of their works.

From **Dionysius**, sent to India by Ptolemy Philadelphus, we have just one testimony[287] and one rather suspect fragment.[288] It is even possible that he never wrote a

277 This will be discussed in chapter VIII.5.

278 Onesicritus F 22 and 24, both from Strabo. See Brown 1949, 54ff.

279 See Brown 1960.

280 Its origin has been variously sought in Greek political philosophy (Zambrini 802ff.), in Egypt (or Greek accounts of Egypt, which does not necessarily make any difference to the preceding; e.g. Arora 1982, 138) or in India (e.g. Timmer 1930, 53ff., most recently Falk 1982). Probably it contains an interpretation of Indian reality that is strongly influenced by Greek theory. A division of society into priests, soldiers and several producing castes was already common in Greek social and ethnographic utopias (see Verniere 1987).

281 Breloer 1934, 150ff. ascribed Pliny *N. H.* 6, 22, 66 to Onesicritus, cf. Zambrini 1985, 808f.

282 See e.g. Rocher 1957, Derrett 1968, 780f. (important) and Goyal 1985, 82ff.

283 Nearchus F 23 from Strabo.

284 See also Stein 1922, 69ff.

285 The account of fabulous peoples by Megasthenes is clearly related to Ctesias, as will be seen later.

286 Cf. Schwarz 1969, 296.

287 T 1 of Jacoby (*FGrH* 717), in two versions, from Pliny and Solinus.

book, although the historicity of his mission need not be doubted.[289] Our only reference to a book by Dionysius the ambassador comes in fact from Pliny (Solinus depends on him) and Pliny was not always overstrict about his references. It is possible that as there were two books by Hellenistic ambassadors to India, he included the third ambassador supposing that he, too, had written a book.[290]

We are somewhat better off with the second Seleucid ambassador, **Daimachus of Plataea**,[291] who was a successor of Megasthenes at the Mauryan court. Strabo[292] clearly states that there was a book by him and there are five fragments from it (plus one uncertain) dealing with geography (F 2–3) and fabulous peoples (F 5). A short fragment (F 4) preserved by Athenaeus mentions yellow pigeons from the *Indica* of Daimachus, and a lexicograph cites its second book (F 1). Therefore it cannot have been very short, though it would be shorter than Megasthenes' work with its four books mentioned in the fragments. The meagre fragments of Daimachus do not allow us to form any idea of its contents.

The famous anecdote quoted by Athenaeus[293] from the historian Hegesander about diplomatic correspondence between Amitrochates (Bindusāra) and Antiochus[294] is sometimes also ascribed to Deimachus, and it may well be that Hegesander quoted it from him. But no ambassador visiting India is needed to provide an anecdote which may have been well-known in court circles.

Considering Eggermont's theory about Megasthenes we must also note that nobody confirms that Dionysius or Deimachus also visited Pāṭaliputra. Both were sent to the Mauryan court, but either of them may have met the Indian monarch at some other place. The scanty remains of their works do not help us here.

In Jacoby's great work we meet some other Hellenistic authors who wrote about India, but mostly our knowledge about them is extremely sketchy. Thus **Tauron** and **Eudoxus** are only quoted by Pliny as sources for two fabulous peoples.[295] We do not

[288] F 1 from *Scholia Apoll. Rhodii*, but Dionysius, whom this fragment about Dionysus is ascribed to, may as well be Dionysius Scythobrachion or Dionysius, author of *Bassarica* (both possibilities mentioned by Jacoby in apparatus ad l.).

[289] As was pointed out by Bunbury (1879, 568), it is very natural that Ptolemy wanted to look after his own interests in the country behind the territory of his constant enemy. But we do not know the exact date of his embassy and the monarch (Bindusāra or Aśoka) whose court he visited.

[290] Pliny *N. H.* 6, 21, 58 (Jacoby's T 1) *etenim patefacta est [India] non modo Alexandri Magni armis regumque qui successere ei, circumuectis etiam in Hyrcanium mare et Caspium Seleuco et Antiocho praefectoque classis eorum Patrocle, uerum et aliis auctoribus Graecis, qui cum regibus Indicis morati, sicut Megasthenes et* ***Dionysius a Philadelpho missus,*** *ex ea causa uires quoque gentium prodidere.*

[291] On Daimachus (Δαίμαχος or Δημαχος) see Schwarz 1969. Other works perhaps written by him are dealt with *ibid.* 297ff. but the attempt to connect them with India seems rather speculative.

[292] Strabo 2, 1, 9, c. 70 (Jacoby's T 1 for Daimachus) from Eratosthenes.

[293] *Deipnosophistae* 13, 652f. Jacoby gives it as uncertain F 6 of Daimachus.

[294] See also Schwarz 1969, 293f.

[295] Tauron *FGrH* 710 F 1 (the only one by him) *Choromandarum gentem vocat Tauron silvestrem, sine voce, stridoris horrendi, hirtis corporibus, oculis glaucis, dentibus caninis. Eudoxus in meridianis Indiae viris plantas esse cubitales, feminis adeo parvas, ut Struthopodes appellentur.*

know who this Eudoxus actually was. As he located his Struthopodes in South India, Eudoxus of Cnidus (died 338 B.C.) is out of question. Eudoxus of Cyzicus (late second century B.C.) would fit well as probably the first Greek who visited South India himself, but there is no evidence that he wrote anything. Pliny and Stephanus quote **Demodamas** (of Halicarnassus or Miletus, probably from the early third century B.C.) as an authority on India.[296] Jacoby ascribes them to an *Indica*,[297] but a history of Alexander is perhaps a more likely alternative.[298] Pliny and Agatharchides also mention **Basilis** (some time before 130 B.C.) as an author who dealt with India (and Ethiopia), and a fragment preserved by Athenaeus confirms that the *Indica* of Basilis contained an account of Pygmies fighting against cranes.[299] Of the author we unfortunately know nothing.[300]

Only from the first century B.C. and the Imperial period do we have complete accounts on India preserved intact. But in most cases the country they deal with is precisely the India of Alexander and Megasthenes. This early India was in a way canonized as the literary India, and more recent information seems to lack the former's literary prestige.[301] Therefore, the accounts we have by Diodorus, Strabo and Arrianus contain little information about their own time, but at the same time they are important sources for earlier literature. It was rather exceptional when Pliny used some more or less contemporary information, finding it necessary to excuse himself for doing this. The contemporary information was of course used in the *Periplus maris Erythraei*, and to some extent also by Ptolemy,[302] but they were not considered "literature" in the strict sense of the word.

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296 *FGrH* 428 F 2–3.

297 In brackets and with a question mark.

298 At least F 2 is connected with Alexander.

299 Athenaeus 9, 43, p. 390B (*FGrH* 718 F 1) Βάσιλις δ' ἐν τῷ δευτέρῳ τῶν Ἰνδικῶν "οἱ μικροί" φησίν "ἄνδρες οἱ ταῖς γεράνοις διαπολεμοῦντες πέρδιξιν ὀχήματι χρῶνται."

300 Wecker's (1916, 1294) suggestion that he was perhaps a Ptolemaic ambassador to India seems to be a mere guess.

301 See Dihle 1964 and Schwarz 1975, 192ff.

302 He also combined much information culled from the historians of Alexander with contemporary material, thus confusing many things. See Eggermont 1966a, 258ff. Another confusing feature in Ptolemy is that geographical names or clusters of names are sometimes moved from their original location to a new one farther off. For this "law of the migration of toponyms" in his Indian geography see Eggermont 1966a, 275ff., 1970, 77ff. (especially 82f.) and later studies by Eggermont (but also the severe criticism in Goukowski 1981, 108ff.). The methodological discussion in Pekkanen 1968, 18ff., is also noteworthy.