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《Article》

The Two Orients for Greek Writers

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【Summary】

India was subdued by Darius I and incorporated into the vast Persian Empire at the end of the sixth century. This conquest stimulated the interest of Greeks living in Persian Asia Minor, such as Scylax, Hecataeus, Herodotus and Ctesias, whose accounts of India are known to us. The aim of this paper is to examine those accounts, and bring forward the authors' views of India, the Persian Empire, and the world.

The investigation, which focuses mainly on Herodotus and Ctesias due to the relative size and scope of their surviving works, points to the following: Ctesias' *Indica* was based on more direct and personal experience than Herodotus' Indian *logos*, since Ctesias stayed at the Persian court for a substantial length of time and likely had ample opportunity to experience aspects of Indian culture first hand. They had a similar image of India, but Ctesias' description of Indian tribes is more fantastical in nature than that of Herodotus', in spite of his having more direct experience. I subsequently hypothesise that Ctesias had a greater tendency to accept information which sounded 'irrational' to him, due to his prior knowledge of Indian 'marvels'. Lastly, the absence of a mortal king, which is a clue to understanding the historiography of Herodotus and Ctesias, gave readers the impression that India was 'a nation without history.'

In the late sixth century, Darius conquered the upper region of the Indus. ¹⁾ 'Most of Asia', Herodotus states (4. 44), 'was discovered by Darius, who desired to find out where the Indus meets the sea... After this circumnavigation, Darius subdued the Indians and made use of this sea.' India, when it was brought into the Persian Empire, drew the attention of contemporary Greek writers living in Asia Minor: Scylax, Hecataeus, Herodotus and Ctesias. ²⁾ From their work, we can come to know their views on India, the Persian Empire, and moreover, the world. This paper will therefore address two main points: their representation of the most remote Persian territory and the differences between India and central Persia for them.

Early Indian logographers

Scylax of Caryanda was a pioneer in two ways; he wrote the first Indian *logos* in Greek, and he was rumoured to have visited India. Herodotus talks about Scylax's voyage (4. 44 = *FGrH* 709 T 3a. Cf. T 4); in preparation for his Indian campaign, Darius sent an expedition to India, of which Scylax was a member. They set out from the city of Caspatyrus, sailed down the Indus to its mouth and returned to Suez in thirty months. Scylax allegedly completed some books after this voyage: the *Periplous*, the *Periodos Gês*, and *the Events in the Time of Heracleides King of Mylasa* (T 1).³⁾ Few fragments of his *Periplous* about India remain. They discuss its landscape, plants, political constitution and peoples.

After Scylax comes Hecataeus of Miletus. Although Hecataeus was called a great traveller (*FGrH* 1 T 12a), only a single reference to his journey is left today; Hecataeus is said by Herodotus to have visited Thebes in Egypt and shown his genealogy to a priest (2. 143 = T 4). Taking into consideration that even this encounter is called into question,⁴⁾ the possibility of Hecataeus' visit to India is safely ruled out and it can be assumed that he relied on his forerunners, especially Scylax. Only six of the fragments of his *Periodos Gês* that we possess today in Jacoby are concerned with India, all of which are extremely brief. These meagre sources mention a plant of the same name, *κονάρα* (F 296) as the *Periplous* of Scylax (F 3; F 4), and the city of Caspapyrus (F 295), which calls to mind the city of Caspatyrus, from where Scylax departed.

Herodotus was born in Halicarnassus in the middle of the fifth century. Although he was renowned as a great traveller, Herodotus evidently did not reach India.⁵⁾ His accounts of India are scattered throughout the *Histories* but the main body is in its third book (98-106), the so-called Indian *logos*.⁶⁾ Among the works of the early Indian logographers, only his work survives intact. Four Indian tribes and their mores are introduced here; Indians are divided into various ethnic groups, who have different languages; some of them are nomadic and others are not (3. 98); the southern Indians copulate in public, and have black skin and black semen (3. 101). Herodotus finishes these chapters with a notorious anecdote about the way that gold was mined and the existence of giant ants (3. 102-106).

How then did Herodotus collect his materials? Referring to gigantic ants in the context of gold mining, he notes that the ants are smaller than dogs but bigger than foxes, they dig gold bearing sand and chase those disturbing them. He also adds that the Persian king has some of them. K. Karttunen reviews the previous studies of what the ants stand for, and concludes that it is impossible to identify them with some actual animal or human tribe. Instead, he stresses a similar mention of giant ants in Iranian and Indian traditions.⁷⁾ To be sure, Herodotus himself

admits his reliance on 'what the Persians said' (3. 105), and this suggests the possibility that one of his sources was hearsay in Persia. His claim that the ants were kept by the kings also might prove his dependency on rumour, because Herodotus was supposedly not allowed to enter the royal (and probably private) zoo. However, since he does not divulge his method of inquiry in other passages, he is considered to have borrowed the materials from his predecessors. Herodotus likely read or at least knew of Scylax' *Periplus* since he made mention of his expedition. Furthermore, Hecataeus and Herodotus refer to the same Indian tribe, the Gandarians (Hecat. F 294, Hdt. 3.91; 7. 66), and almost the same tribe name, the Calatiae (Hecat. F 298), the Callatae (Hdt. 3. 38) or the Callantiae (Hdt. 3. 97). These similarities imply that Herodotus shaped his view on India partly by collecting on his own what Persians reported, but mainly by using the works of his predecessors.

Ctesias was born in Cnidus in the middle of the fifth century, i.e. approximately half a century after Herodotus. Cnidus was famous for its school of medicine and Ctesias was also a physician. As a doctor, he spent some years at the Persian court, and perhaps by deceit, arrived back in the Aegean.⁸⁾ After this, he compiled some books, including the *Persica* and the *Indica*.⁹⁾ Although Ctesias' *Indica* is the most detailed Indian account before the campaign of Alexander, it is not highly thought of by some. Aristotle, for instance, dismisses him and accuses him of 'being unreliable', even though he himself borrowed occasionally from Ctesias without crediting his source (*Hist. an.* 8. 28 = *FGrH* 688 T 11f).¹⁰⁾ Nevertheless, as Jacoby rightly suggested, the *Indica* 'is a valuable document to examine the status of Greek knowledge about India before the time of the campaign of Alexander.'¹¹⁾

None of Ctesias' work, including the *Indica*, survives intact. However, at least, its outline is known from a number of references, citations and excerpts by subsequent authors. The *Indica* is replete with digressions and it is therefore difficult to understand the contents as a whole. According to Photius' summary, the *Indica* covers the landscape (F 45. 1-6), marvels (7-15), the Indian way of life and customs (16-32), poisons, medicines and other marvels (33-50).¹²⁾

Ctesias repeatedly boasts of his firsthand knowledge. The *Indica* finishes with a claim that his reports were extracted from what he personally saw or heard from witnesses (F 45. 51). If we are to believe him, Ctesias smelt the perfume of an Indian tree *κάρπιον*, and tasted Indian cheese and wine (F 45. 47; F 45. 48); he possessed two swords forged of iron collected from the bottom of an Indian spring, and observed the Persian king undertaking an experiment to avert clouds and hurricanes with the same iron (F 45. 9); he saw some Indians with truly white skin among the black-skinned (F 45. 19) and an Indian monster called *μαρτιχόρας* which was gifted to the King (F 45dβ).

Ctesias might have fabricated these passages just to persuade his readers that his work was

sufficiently credible, although he never actually experienced them. However J.M. Bigwood suggests that the *Indica* includes at least two accounts which imply his familiarity with Indian life. Ctesias claim to have seen elephants in Babylon obey Indian instructors and uproot palm trees, and also he knows that a well-trained elephant is powerful enough to tear down a wall (F 45. 7; F 45b). To be sure, elephants were not unfamiliar in the Aegean world in the age of Ctesias, but only few would have had the opportunity to see them with their own eyes.¹³⁾ Nevertheless, Ctesias, the first Greek writer to draw attention to Indian elephants, describes them by and large with accuracy, which suggests he did indeed observe them.¹⁴⁾ Furthermore, Ctesias also knows of a bird which 'speaks the Indian language like a human being, and if it is taught Greek, then it speaks that as well' (F 45 .8), a bird presumed to be a parrot. Given the fact that parrots were very rare in mainland Greece before the campaign of Alexander,¹⁵⁾ it is reasonably assumed that Ctesias saw a trained parrot at the Persian court or heard of it from someone who saw it.¹⁶⁾ In summary, there is a high probability Ctesias grounded the account on his own experience, as he himself claims.

Four Indian logographers have been discussed so far. In consideration of the lack of much surviving source material from some logographers, the following sections will focus on the works of two Indian logographers: Herodotus and Ctesias. Their work is distinct in that the latter had more direct and personal experience than the former.

India in the world

Herodotus collected information from his predecessors and with his own ears, and melded it into his own image of the Persian Empire. In the well-known province list of Darius, the Indian Sattagydae and the Gandarians¹⁷⁾ were enrolled in the seventh *nomos* and paid 170 talents together with the Dadicae and the Aparytae; the Indians made up the twentieth *nomos* and paid 360 talents of gold flakes (3. 91; 3. 94). More significant is the fact that the Indian *logos* comes just after this list as one of Darius' provinces. The army list is presented in a similar fashion. In the context of Xerxes counting his men at Doriscus in Thrace before he invaded Greece, Herodotus catalogues Xerxes' army at length. In this list, he represents the Indians as a people wearing garments of 'tree wool', carrying bows of reed and iron-tipped arrows, and the Gandarians as a tribe armed with the same weapons as the Bactrians (7. 65-66).¹⁸⁾ Herodotus has certainly cast India as part of the Persian Empire in these catalogues. Let us take another and most interesting example: the Greeks and the Indians inhabited the two extremes, namely the westernmost and the easternmost parts of the Persian sphere. Both, however, are encountered in the famous chapter of '*nomos* is king of all' (3. 38); the Greeks,

who cremate the dead, and the Indian Callatiae, who have the custom of eating their fathers' corpses, were summoned by Darius and queried in regard to the practices just mentioned, as to their willingness to engage in the custom of the other group; the representatives of both groups reacted with revulsion and strongly refused. The Greeks and the Indians are represented by way of this experiment as distinctly separate peoples, but I would like to stress here that the inhabitants of these two distant lands are ultimately brought together as subjects before the Persian King. The Indians are always included in the Persian Empire in Herodotus' view.

Ctesias holds the distinction of being the first writer of an *Indica*. Although a first glance would suggest that the India of Ctesias seems to be isolated from other regions of the Persian Empire, a close reading shows the opposite.¹⁹⁾ His *Persica* narrates the battle between Semiramis and Stabrobates, the Indian king, and the alliance between the Indians and the Derbices during the fatal expedition of Cyrus (F 1b. 16-19; F 9. 7). At the same time, the *Indica* also alludes to the relationship between India and Persia several times. Ctesias received two Indian swords from the Persian king and his mother Parysatis (F 45. 9). He saw elephants not in India but in Babylon (F 45b). A number of gifts were brought to the Persian king from the Indian king: a μαρτιχόρας (F 45dβ), fragrant oil extracted from the tree κάρπιον (F 45. 47), poison made from the droppings of the bird δίκαιρον (F 45m) and dyed garments (F 45πγ). India and Persia are related in Ctesias' mind more directly than it would first appear.

India was recognised as a territory of the Persian Empire. How then did they grasp India's geographical location in the world? For instance, Herodotus does not 'know of the existence of any River called Ocean' and speculates that 'Homer or some early poet invented the name and inserted it into his poetry' (2. 23. Cf. 4. 8; 4. 36). Contrary to his predecessors, who commonly held the opinion that the world was surrounded by a waterway called Ocean, Herodotus rejected the notion of the legendary river and instead envisioned infinite land.²⁰⁾ He nevertheless held these lands to be uninhabited; 'The southern inland parts of Libya are desert without water, wild beasts, rain, forest; this region is wholly without moisture' (4. 185). 'Beyond [the country of the Androphagi next to Scythia] is true uninhabited desert, where not a single human race lives as far as anyone knows' (4. 18). Herodotus found 'empty space' at the edges of the earth.

Herodotus had the same idea regarding this most eastern edge. According to him, 'Indians live further east in Asia than anyone else; further east than any other known people about whom there is reliable information. Beyond them, the eastern part of India is sandy and uninhabitable' (3. 98); 'India lies at the most distant eastern limit of the world' (3. 106); 'Asia is inhabitable as far as India. Yet east of India it is empty, and no one can describe what the land is like' (4. 40). He repeats the idea that India lies in an *ἔσχατιά* (edge) of the *οἰκουμένη* (inhabited world). This idea

was not only held by Herodotus but was shared by his successor Ctesias: 'Beyond India there is no human habitation' (F 45. 4). The easternmost part of the Persian Empire was thus equated with the easternmost part of the inhabited world.

Furthermore, Herodotus and Ctesias are in agreement in other ways. India has an uncountable population (Hdt. 3. 94; 5. 3, Ctes. F 45. 2), an extraordinarily hot climate (Hdt. 3. 104, Ctes. F 45. 12-13; F 45. 18), an abundant amount of gold, gigantic reeds and animals (Hdt. 3. 94; 3. 98; 3. 106, Ctes. F 45. 8; F 45. 10; F 45. 14; F 45. 27; F 45. 46; F 45iα-γ; F 45r), and black-skinned people (Hdt. 3. 101, Ctes. F 45. 19). Herodotus asserts, 'There is also an immense quantity of gold in India, whether dug out of the earth or washed down from the mountains by rivers or taken from the ants as I have shown' (3. 106); Ctesias talks about a spring which fills each year with liquid gold (F 45. 9), and large mountains abundant with gold but inhabited by gold-guarding griffins (F 45. 26).

In Herodotus' world, gold exists in abundance not only in India but also in other *ἔσχαται* as below.

- The Caspian Massagetae (1. 215): they have both gold and bronze in abundance.
 - The Ethiopians (3. 23. Cf. 3. 114): in the context that Cambyses planned to conquer the Ethiopians and sent the Ichthyophagi as spies, the Ethiopian king led them to a prison where all the prisoners were shackled with golden fetters.
 - The north of Europe (3. 116): there is gold in exceedingly large quantities.
 - The Agathyrsians on the Scythian borders (4. 104): they wear an abundance of gold jewellery.
- This uneven distribution of gold could be a natural extension of Herodotus' world view that 'the *ἔσχαται* of the *οἰκουμένη* have the most attractive products' (3. 106), and 'it is likely that the *ἔσχαται*, which enclose and surround all the rest, have in themselves what we think the finest and rarest' (3. 116).²¹⁾

Similarly, India has features common to other outlying regions. The following are some examples.

- Eating raw fish: an Indian tribe and a tribe west of the Caspian eat raw fish (Hdt. 3. 98; 1. 202).
- Killing no living things: an Indian tribe and the Libyan Atarantes kill no living things (Hdt. 3. 100; 4. 184).
- Black semen: the Indians and the Ethiopians produce black semen (Hdt. 3. 101).
- Cannibalism: cannibalism is practiced by the Massagetae (Hdt. 1. 216), the Issedones (4. 26), the Androphagi next to Scythia (4. 18; 4. 106), and by the Indian Callatae (3. 38) and the Indian Padaei (3. 99) as well, although their ways of cannibalising are different. While the Issedones and the Callatae eat their dead relatives, the Massagetae and the Padaei kill and eat their countrymen. The ways of the Androphagi in this regard are unknown.

- Intercourse in public: the Indians and the Caucasians have intercourse in public 'as herd animals do' (Hdt. 1. 203; 3. 101). The sex life of the Libyan Ausees is 'like that of beasts' (4. 180), which reminds us of the Ctesian Cynocephali (the Dog-heads), who copulate like dogs (F 45. 43).
- Longevity: Indians and Ethiopians live a long life (Ctes. F 45. 32; F 45. 43; F 52, Hdt. 3. 23; 3. 114).
- Griffins that disturb gold miners are mentioned to exist both in India and in the north of Europe (Ctes. F 45. 26, Hdt. 3. 116; 4. 27).
- Fat-tailed sheep: they inhabit India and Arabia (Ctes. F 45. 27, Hdt. 3. 113).
- Miraculous fountain: a fountain where everything sinks to the bottom is situated in India and in Ethiopia (Ctes. F 47a-b, Hdt. 3. 23).

We thus encounter 'Indian' characteristics in many places on the *ἔσχαται* of the *οἰκουμένη*. India was recognised as part of the Persian Empire, and at the same time, it was accepted as the 'Far East' both geographically and ideologically.

A paradox between Herodotus and Ctesias

Herodotus and Ctesias had a similar idea of India, but at the same time, their accounts diverge in some ways; most remarkably concerning the tribes they depicted.

Herodotus details a total of five tribes in the *Histories*. They are characterised as follows:

- The Callatae (3. 38; 3. 97): they eat their parents' bodies and use the same seed as Ethiopians.²²⁾
- An anonymous tribe (3. 98): they live in marshes, eat raw fish, use boats made of a single reed, and wear clothes made from rushes.
- The Padaei (3. 99): they live a nomadic life, eat raw meat, kill and eat each other.
- An anonymous tribe (3. 100): they neither kill living things nor cultivate nor have houses nor take care of the ill. They live on wild plants.
- An anonymous tribe (3. 102): they live at the border of Caspatyrus and Pactyce, to the north of the rest of the Indians. Their way of life is quasi-Bactrian. They are gold miners and the most war-like among the Indians.

While the Herodotean Indians have a 'monstrous' custom (i.e. cannibalism), yet are lacking 'monstrous' features,²³⁾ Ctesias enumerates various strange peoples as below.²⁴⁾

- The Pygmies (F 45. 21-23; F 45f α - γ): they are very small, black-skinned, long-and-thick-penised, flat-nosed, and ugly; they grow their hair and beards long.
- The Cynocephali (F 45. 37; F 45. 40-43; F 45p α - γ): they are dog-headed, and live in the

mountains. They understand human languages, but they do not speak them. Instead, they are described as barking like dogs. They do not live in houses with beds, but caves with litters of straw; they hunt animals and cook in the sun. Their men do not bathe, but the women bathe once a month when they are menstruating. They have tails like dogs and copulate like dogs.

- An anonymous tribe (F 45. 44): they neither work nor eat corn nor drink water. Their children have no anus, do not evacuate, but vomit instead.
- An anonymous tribe (F 45. 50): their women conceive only once and their children have fine teeth; they have white hair up to the age of thirty, but from that time it begins to turn dark; they have eight fingers on each hand and also eight toes on each foot.

Besides grotesque peoples, Ctesias mentions mythical animals, such as a unicorn (F 45. 45) and a *μαρτιχώρας* (F 45. 15; 45dα-δ).

A paradox can be pointed out here that the India of Ctesias appears to be a more fantastic world than that of Herodotus, although Ctesias had more direct and personal experience than Herodotus. How can this paradox be explained? It is worth remembering that Herodotus also put some fabled tribes and animals in the *Histories*: the one-eyed men in the north of Europe (3. 116; 4. 27), the goat-footed men and the men who hibernate for six months to the north of Scythia (4. 25), the Cynocephali, unicorns, the Acephali, the wild people in Libya (4. 191), and so on. But he doubts the existence of some of them by saying, 'I am not convinced that there can be a race of one-eyed men who are in other respects identical in nature to the rest of mankind' (3. 116) and 'I am dubious about what they report' (4. 25).

Furthermore, Herodotus sometimes strives to rationalise what was incredible to him. After Herodotus introduces a traditional Dodonean folk tale concerning a dove with a human voice that told both the Dodoneans and the Libyans to construct oracles of Zeus, he rejects this and instead expresses his own opinion that the dove was a metaphor for a barbarian woman who spoke Greek like a bird: after all 'how could a dove speak in a human voice?' (2. 55-57). Herodotus had a criterion for fantastic fables; as D. Lenfant pinpoints, he recognises the clear gap between humans and animals, and 'insistently rejects what he considers as incredible legends.'²⁵ More significantly, however, Herodotus introduces these kinds of tales despite the fact that he considers them difficult to believe, and he never refers to any strange creatures in his Indian *logos*. Did Herodotus have the opportunity to obtain such kinds of information about India?

On the other hand, Ctesias must have had more exposure to such knowledge, because he had more access to Indian materials. Scholars argue that some of his grotesque creatures appear in Indian and Persian traditions as well and assume that he was influenced by them.²⁶ To explore Ctesias' attitude to the information he obtained, I would here like to examine the contradicting

opinions of Herodotus and Ctesias regarding the Indian climate. Herodotus states in the context of the gold mining that the daytime temperature of India is the hottest 'from sunrise to the hour of market-closing', and gets cooler after midday 'as the sun goes away' (3. 104). This sentence demonstrates that India was, in the world view of Herodotus, situated in the 'Far East', i.e. the closest to the point from which the sun rises. Although he shared the notion of the Indian location in the 'Far East' and its excessive temperatures, Ctesias contrastingly reports it to be cooler in the morning than in the afternoon (F 45. 18).

Since we now know the spherical nature of the earth, we can judge that Ctesias' report is more accurate. However, for the ancient Greeks who naively believed in a flat earth, the Herodotean theory would have sounded more 'rational'. Ctesias nevertheless alleges that it is hotter during the afternoon. The examination of the dove with a human voice implies that Herodotus got to know the information concerning the Indian hotness, which sounds 'irrational', and rationalised it according to his universal view, when he explained it.²⁷⁾ Ctesias, on the other hand, accepted even what was an 'irrational' story for him (but, in this case, rational for us), although he omitted 'those of more extraordinary nature' (F 45. 51).

It is worth discussing why Ctesias regarded these 'irrational' stories as acceptable. One reason is, of course, that he was more naively trusting and less inquiring than Herodotus, but another reason could be derived from the discussions so far. He witnessed some aspects of Indian life, but his first hand knowledge was limited. It can be reasonably supposed that Ctesias, a Persian servant who was probably not allowed free travel, had never seen actual Indian society. He therefore had to depend mainly on his informants when he constructed a comprehensive image of India. Ctesias, who experienced some Indian 'marvels', a gigantic animal (i.e. an elephant) and perhaps a hybrid of a human and a bird (i.e. a parrot), had a greater belief in the Pygmies and the Cynocephali and other 'marvellous' creatures. This conclusion paradoxically implies how difficult it was for them to grasp the actual Indian world.

India and Persia: the two Orients

D. Lenfant repeatedly argues that Herodotus and Ctesias give the impression of India being 'a nation without history'.²⁸⁾ What then is the difference between India 'the Far East' and Persia 'the Near East', given that India was recognised as part of the Persian Empire, 'a nation with history'?

In answer to this, I would like to review briefly the method of historiography employed by Herodotus and Ctesias, while keeping in mind that this is quite a debatable issue. Herodotus' *Histories* is occasionally criticised for being full of 'digressions'. In fact Herodotus himself

asserts that in his book (*logos*) he purposely included such digressions from the outset (4. 30). Because of these digressions, the composition of the *Histories* is tangled like a multi-layered Chinese puzzle. However, his *logos* was not a mere miscellany of various *logoi*; all the *logoi* relate to the campaigns of the Persian kings.²⁹⁾ The passage, ‘The next business of my history is then to inquire of the personality of Cyrus, who brought down Croesus, and how the Persians came to be rulers of Asia’ (1. 95), demonstrates Lydian *logos* was incorporated into the history of Cyrus. Even the single-book Egyptian *logos* is a prelude to the Egyptian campaign of Cambyses, which is sandwiched between the two sentences: ‘Cambyses prepared an expedition against Egypt, taking some of the Greeks under his rule together with the other subjects into his army’ (2. 1) and ‘It was against this Amasis [king of Egypt] that Cambyses led an army of his subjects’ (3. 1). The Indian *logos*, the Scythian *logos*, the Libyan *logos*, the Thracian *logos*, and even Greek history are swallowed by a sequence of the campaigns of Darius. Needless to say, the main theme of Books 7-9 is the great expedition of Xerxes. Herodotus thus based his chronology of the *Histories* on the reigns of the four Persian kings.

A simplified and more systematic version of this method was adopted by Ctesias, as can be seen in the *Bibliotheca*. Photius sometimes tells us where a book begins and ends with such sentences as, ‘The twelfth book begins with the reign of Cambyses’ (F 13. 9), ‘Amestris also died at a very old age, as did Artaxerxes after a reign of forty-two years. The seventeenth book ends and the eighteenth book begins’ (F 14. 46), and ‘In the nineteenth book, Ctesias describes how Ochus Dariaios [i.e. Darius II] died of illness in Babylon after his thirty-five-year reign’ (F 16. 57). Although we do not know if the segments of the books were made by Ctesias himself, these sentences clearly show the function of the kings’ accession and death as milestones in the *Persica*. This prompts the hypothesis that Ctesias tied the events of the *Persica* to the reigns of the kings, an idea supported by the catalogue of kings appended at the end of the *Persica* (F 33. 76). In addition, Photius comments on the *Persica* that ‘Ctesias does not steer the narrative into inappropriate digressions like Herodotus,’ and ‘The pleasure given by Ctesias’ account consists mainly in the structure of his narratives’ (T 13). The *Persica* was a chronological *res gestae* of the Persian kings.³⁰⁾

The succession of kings functions as a key to the historiography of Herodotus and Ctesias, and marks the passage of time. The first *logos* of the *Histories*, the Lydian *logos*, is a record of the rise and fall of dynasties from the Heraclidae to the Mermnadae, or a continuing saga of the kings from Candaules up to Croesus (1. 6-94). Between Egypt, the most ancient or among the most ancient nations (2. 2; 2. 15), and Scythia, the youngest country (4. 5), Herodotus discovered many contrasts,³¹⁾ but both of them have kings who are discussed in different ways. The Egyptian *logos* narrates at length the achievements of the kings who reigned ‘after the 330

kings following Min' (2. 100-182.). In Scythian *logos*, Herodotus implies the continuation of the kings 'from the time of the first king Targiteus until the invasion of Darius' (4. 7), whose deeds are not put in chronological order. Herodotus thus refers to kings in most of his *logoi*, but does not mention a single king of India.³²⁾

Contrary to Herodotus, Ctesias repeatedly mentions the existence of the Indian king and the insurmountable distance between him and his subjects.³³⁾ The Ctesian India is full of various tribes and appears absolutely chaotic at first sight, but in actuality it is well organised.³⁴⁾ The Ctesian Indians are known for their distinguished justice (F 45. 16; F 45. 20; F 45. 23; F 45. 30; F 45. 37; F 45. 43; F 45pβ; F 45pγ), and the king is influential and strict in this regard. The king resides in a royal palace with a garden (F 45. 35); he has the right to interrogate suspected criminals with a truth drug (F 45. 31); he enjoys the privilege of possessing a peculiar kind of inflammable oil (F 45. 46); only the king and his relatives are allowed to own special perfumed oil (F 45. 47); he may not become heavily drunk (F 50). For their part, the Indian subjects devote themselves to their king faithfully enough to offer him money, gifts, weapons and military services (F 45. 23; F 45. 30; F 45. 41; F 45. 50). Ctesias, unlike Herodotus, thus places a king in the *Indica*. However, a comparison with the *Persica* and the Persian history in the *Histories* makes it more notable that the *Indica* does not reveal the name of the king, and moreover does not refer to his accession or death.³⁵⁾ This gives the reader an impression that the Indian king would never change, and that in turn, India would never change.

Herodotus and Ctesias do not agree on the existence of an Indian king, but neither mention the king's name or the succession of kingship. Indeed Ctesias only once refers to the name of an Indian king, Stabrobates, but it is not in the *Indica* but in the context of the war between Semiramis and the Indians in the *Persica* (F 1b. 16. 2; F 1b. 17. 4). The *Indica* refers to no change of the Indian king and infers nothing about whether the Indian kingship had been inherited from Stabrobates or not. The progress of time in the accounts of Persia is marked by the succession of kings, which is absent in the accounts of India.

However, at least five descriptions of events can be found, from which we can develop a chronology of India.

- During the Assyrian age, the Indians led by Stabrobates fought against the Assyrians under Semiramis.
- In the middle of the sixth century, the Indians supported the Derbices in the battle against Cyrus.
- In the late sixth century, India was conquered by Darius I.
- In 480, the Indians joined the expedition of Xerxes.
- Around the end of the fifth century, the Indians sent some gifts to a Persian king presumed to

be Artaxerxes II.

From the perspective of Herodotus and Ctesias, India, the easternmost territory of the Persian Empire, was situated in the 'Far East', not only in terms of geography but also ideologically. It was difficult for them to gain a real understanding of the Indian world. Although India was recognised as part of the Persian Empire, there was a clear difference between India and Persia: time never passes in India. I propose that this notion has its roots in the absence of a 'mortal' king. However, India is firmly anchored historically within the context of Assyria and Persia. The 'Far East' was without history, until it came into contact with the 'Near East'.

Notes

- 1) For the geographical definition of Persian India, see Bivar (1988); Karttunen (1989: 32-38); Lenfant (2004: CXXIX-CXLIII).
- 2) For Indian logographers, including those of the post-Alexander age, see Mund-Dopchie and Vanbaelen (1989); Gómez Espelosín (1995). Although Alexander's campaign provided Greeks with much new information on India, a number of similarities between their Indian accounts and those of their forerunners are recognisable.
- 3) Scylax's intellectual background is far from clear, but Karttunen (1989: 65) assumes that he was a native Carian although he wrote in Greek. If the Heracleides in his book means the Heracleides of Mylasa son of Ibanollis in Herodotus' *Histories* (5. 121), who was captain of the ambush against the Persians, it can be conjectured that Scylax had an interest in not only world-wide exploration but also Carian local history.
- 4) West (1991). Despite the scarcity of evidence, Jacoby (1912: 2689) believes that Hecataeus had probably been to Egypt, Asia Minor, and the Black Sea area.
- 5) Herodotus sometimes gives accounts on his own autopsy. According to his claims, he had been to Asia Minor, parts of the Near East, the Phoenician and Syrian coast including Cyprus, Egypt, Cyrene, the Black Sea area, Thrace, Macedonia, the Aegean islands, the Greek mainland, south Italy and Sicily. See Jacoby (1913: 253).
- 6) For the Indian *logos* of Herodotus, see Reese (1914: 57-71); Zambrini (1982: 115-126); Karttunen (1989: 73-79); Dihle (1990); Schneider (2004: 305-308).
- 7) Karttunen (1989: 171-177).
- 8) For the details of his life, see Jacoby (1922); Brown (1978); Eck (1990); Dorati (1995); Lenfant (2004: VII-XXIV); Tuplin (2004: 319-321).
- 9) For the *Indica* of Ctesias, see Reese (1914: 71-92); Jacoby (1922: 2037-2039); Zambrini (1982: 126-134); Karttunen (1989: 80-85); Bigwood (1989); Lenfant (1991: 117-122); Lenfant (1995); Lenfant (2004: CXXXVIII-CLLVIII); Auberger (1995a: 340-347); Auberger (1995b); Schneider (2004: 305-308); Tuplin (2004).
- 10) Karttunen (1989: 94); Karttunen (1997: 635). For other critics, see T 11b (Strabo), T 11g (Arrian), T 11h (Lucian).
- 11) Jacoby (1922: 2039).
- 12) Cf. Bigwood (1989: 312).
- 13) For instance, Herodotus knew of African elephants (4. 191), but he made no mention of Indian elephants.
- 14) Bigwood (1993a).

- 15) Bigwood (1993b).
- 16) We are not sure of which Oriental languages Ctesias managed to acquire, but at least according to Herodotus (3. 38), a Greek-Indian interpreter worked at the Persian court.
- 17) Gandara and Sattagydia likely belonged to northwest India. See Karttunen (1989: 33).
- 18) See Armayor (1978: 8): these catalogues reflect 'Herodotus' own Greek traditions, Ionian geography, logography, and epic and lyric poetry'.
- 19) Cf. Lenfant (2004: CLVII).
- 20) For Herodotus' attitude toward his predecessors, see Romm (1992: 32-41); Thomas (2000: 75-101).
- 21) For the ἐσχαταὶ in Herodotus, see Karttunen (2002).
- 22) I presume here that the Callatiae (3. 38) and the Callantiae (3. 97) indicate the same tribe.
- 23) Ctesias (F 45κγ) disputes the existence of Indian cannibalism.
- 24) I exclude here the disputable fragments of F 46a-b and F 51a-b, which are sometimes not attributed to Ctesias. Cf. Lenfant (2004: 327 and 329-330).
- 25) Lenfant (1999: 211).
- 26) Karttunen (1989: 80-85); Auberger (1995b: 47-51); Lenfant (1995: 315-324); Lenfant (2004: CXLVI-CLII).
- 27) Herodotus' account on the reason of the summer flood of the Nile (Hdt. 2. 19-24) can be another example of his wrong rationalisation.
- 28) Lenfant (1991: 117); Lenfant (1995: 331); Lenfant (2004: CLVIII).
- 29) Cf. Jacoby (1913: 347-352); Lattimore (1958).
- 30) Dionysius of Miletus is supposed to have been the first chronological writer of a *res gestae* of the Persian kings, although little is known about his *Persica*. See Moggi (1972).
- 31) For the symmetrical contrast between Egypt and Scythia, see Hartog (1988: 14-19); Hartog (2001).
- 32) Arabia also has a king (3. 4-9), although he is not mentioned in the Arabian *logos* (3. 107-113). In Thrace, which has no single ruler, Herodotus noted the lack of a king (5. 3).
- 33) Scylax (F 5) also refers to the strong Indian monarchy.
- 34) Cf. Lenfant (1991: 118-119); Lenfant (1995: 331-332); Lenfant (2004: CLVIII); Auberger (1995a: 341-345); Auberger (1995b: 53-54).
- 35) Cf. Auberger (1995a: 340).

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