

history. But there is an abundance of curiosities and *mirabilia*, most notably the famous description of the giant, gold-digging ants (102,2) and the anatomical information on the camel (103). Herodotus describes very vaguely and generically the part of India beyond the Persian border; in fact, before the 3rd cent. BC the Greeks knew nothing about the southern subcontinent and the Ganges basin. The entire excursus has the rather marginal function of inserting into the geo-ethnographic description of the Persian empire some complementary information on its eastern periphery; in fact it links the description of the empire (chs. 89–96) to the chapters dedicated to the outermost regions of the world (107–16). For further information in Herodotus on the Indians and India see III 38,3–4 and IV 44. Herodotus cites ‘the Persians’ (105,1) as his source for the information about the extraction of gold. Otherwise he uses the anonymous ‘it is said’ (98,2; 99,1), interpreted by many as an allusion to written sources: e.g. Hecataeus, who may have read the *Periplous* of Scylax of Caryanda; Scylax had explored around 510 BC the Indus from Kaspatyrus (102,1 with note) down to the mouth of the river (IV 44; fragments of the *Periplous* in *FGrHist* 709). In general the *excursus* is useful evidence of the fanciful ideas about India entertained by 5th-cent. Greeks, and of the details of the Indian myth which Herodotus helped to spread, and which were later developed and completely reconstructed by the many Greek writers of *Indika*: from Ctesias (*FGrHist* 688 F 45–52) to the Alexander historians (Nearchus, Androstenes) and Megasthenes (*FGrHist* 715). Among later writers the most important is Arrian, who lived in the 2nd cent. AD. On Greek notions on India, from their origins to Alexander, Reese, *passim* (on Herodotus see pp. 3–6 and 57–71), is still fundamental; cf. the more recent I. Puskás, *Oikoumene*, IV (1983), 201–7; A. Dihle, in *Entretiens Fondation Hardt*, XXXV, 1988; K. Karttunen, *India in Early Greek Literature*, Helsinki 1989; D. Lenfant, *Τόποι*, V (1995), 307–36. See also the bibl. cited in the note on chs. 89–96. On Megasthenes’ *Indika*, and on the previous traditions see A. Zambrini, *ASNP* XII (1982), 71–149; XV (1985), 781–853; on the *Indika* of Arrian see *ASNP* XVIII (1987), 139–54. On India in the ancient world see G. Pollet (ed.), *India and the Ancient World*, Louvain 1987.

98,2. τῶν γὰρ ἡμεῖς ἴδμεν: cf. 60,4 with note. ἀτρεκές: cf. 4,2. ἐρημίη: Herodotus refers to the great Indian desert east of the Indus. For the relation between ἐρημίη and the uncertain in Herodotus, cf. H. Edelman, *Klio*, LII (1970), 79–86.  
 3. νομάδες: cf. 99,1. The tribes beyond the border, discussed in chs. 98–100, display elements characteristic of lack of civilization typical of Herodotus’ way of thinking: they are nomadic and they copulate in public; some eat meat, others are vegetarian. Aeschylus (*Suppl.* 284 ff.) knew of nomadic Indians who shared a border with the Ethiopians. ἔλεσι: some see in this word the Greek equivalent of *Sarasvatī*, ‘the swampy’, name of a small river south of Kashmir. τοῦ ποταμοῦ: the Indus, strangely mentioned by name only at IV 44,1. ἰχθύας: on the Ichthyophagi, cf. 19,1 with note. In Herodotus not only savages eat raw meat (I 202,3; III 99,1), but also the very civilized Egyptians (II 77,4). καλαμίνων: the cane reed, also known as ‘Indian cane’ (Ctesias, *FGrHist* 688 F 45b (14); Strabo XVII 3,5) or bamboo.

99,1. *Παδαίοι*: cf. [Tibullus], *Panegyricus Messallae* 144 f. Some see in the ethnic the Sanskrit *padja*, 'evil'; others the Dravidic population of the *Pandyas* of southern India. *νομαίοισι*: cf. 38,1 with note. *ὅς ἄν κάμη τῶν ἀστῶν...*: on this and other forms of cannibalism, cf. note on 38,4. *τηκόμενον τῆ νόσῳ*: this appears to be a rationalization by Herodotus. *ὁ δὲ ἄπαρνός ἐστι*: cf. VI 69,2: a sort of 'judicial' debate, not without some irony.

100. *οὔτε τι σπεύρουσι...*: the hypothesis that Herodotus refers here to the Brahmins, the Garmanes, or the Pramni, ascetic sects known to the Greeks and idealized by them only after Alexander, has no basis; see Nearchus, *FGrHist* 133 F 33; Onesicritus, *ibid.* 134 F 17a–b; Aristobulus, *ibid.* 139 F 41; Megasthenes, *ibid.* 715 F 33. Vegetarianism was widespread in India, especially among the Buddhists. *φροντίζει δὲ οὐδεὶς...*: the Babylonians behaved differently (I 197).

101,1. *μείξις*: copulation in public, even with courtesans, was considered indecent by the Greeks; see e.g. Xenophon, *Anab.* V 4,33; *Dissoi Logoi* II 4 Robinson; Plato, *Hipp. Ma.* 299a; [Demosthenes] 59,33.

2. *ἡ γονή*: cf. 109,1 and note on 97,2. This belief was criticized by Aristotle, *Hist. An.* 523a18; *De Gen. Animal.* 736a19. *θορήν*: cf. Alcman 24 [14] B 3 DK; for *θορός*, 'fish milk', see Herod. II 93,1.

102,1. *Κασπατύρω... πρόσουροι*: north Indians belonging to the twentieth *νομός* of the Persian empire (94,2). Kaspatyrus (cf. IV 44,2), already known to Hecataeus (*Κασπάπ*:- *FGrHist* 1 F 295; on this disputed fragment see Jacoby's commentary), was the point of departure of the famous voyage of Scylax, whose initial report was probably the source of Hecataeus and in turn of Herodotus (see note on chs. 98–106). It has been variously located: at Puškalāvātī, Peshawar, or Multan; see G. Tucci, *East & West*, XXVII (1977), 16 f.; P. Daffinà, *AAntHung* XXVIII (1980), 1–8. The *Πακτυϊκὴ* of India (cf. IV 44,2; not to be confused with that of III 93,1), inhabited by the Pactyes (VII 67,2; 68; cf. 85,1), would correspond to the upper Indus, between the Hindu Kush and Multan (modern northern Pakistan). On the ethnical *pakhtun* in Gandhara see I. Puskás, *AUB* V–VI (1977–8), 77; on Vedic *Paktaḥ* see Daffinà, *op. cit.* *οἱ Βακτρίοισι...*: northern Indians, related to the Bactrians, called Derdaoī by Megasthenes, *FGrHist* 715 F 23b; cf. Pliny, *NH* XI 111; the area occupied by them probably corresponds to modern Dardistan. *ἐρημὴ διὰ τὴν ψάμμον*: cf. note on 98,2. The modern gold-fields of northern Pakistan are not located in the desert areas.

2. *μύρμηκες*...: see also 104,1 and 105. One of the most famous Herodotean *mirabilia*; modified and enlarged, the story enjoyed great success in antiquity until the late Roman period, starting perhaps with Sophocles who, it seems, placed the ants in Ethiopia (fr. 29 Radt); cf. Nearchus, *FGrHist* 133 F 8; Megasthenes, *ibid.* 715 F 23a–b; it was taken up again in the Middle Ages (e.g. in the epistle of 'Prester John' to Frederick II). Herodotus follows a motif centred on the theme of a treasure guarded by fabulous animals and the dangers that its theft involves. The Greeks usually set such legends in the furthest regions of the known

world, which they believed to be extremely rich in precious materials: cf. e.g. the spices and birds of Arabia (chs. 107; 110–11), the gold and the griffins in the land of the Arimaspeans (116,1). Borrowed from Herodotus, griffins, Arimaspeans, and huge ants were joined in a famous passage of Goethe's *Faust* (7093–111). Similar motifs also existed in other literatures or folk-tales of the ancient world: the *Mahābhārata*, for instance, mentions the *pipīllika* ('gold of the ants': cf. χρυσὸν τὸν μυρμηκίαν in Heliiodorus, *Aethiopica* X 26) precisely in relation to northern India. Some scholars think that the description of Herodotus reflects real animals: e.g. marmots (numerous in the auriferous areas of Dardistan), badgers, pangolins, anteaters; or even human beings: miners who can easily be compared to ants; on the subject cf. e.g. Theogenes, *FGrHist* 300 F 1; Strabo VIII 6,16. See Aly, p. 108; R. Hennig, *RhM* LXXIX (1930), 326–32; G. W. Regenos, *CJ* XXXIV (1938–9), 425–6; E. S. McCartney, *CJ* XLIX (1953–4), 234; G. Karsay, *AUB* V–VI (1977–8), 61–72; I. Puskás, *ibid.* 73–87.

3. *παρέλκειν*: to pull on either side of the female; or to help, from both sides, to carry the load of gold (cf. 105,2).

103. *ἐπισταμένοισι*...: Herodotus does not want to treat what the Greeks already knew. Camels were known to the Greeks since archaic times; for camels in Lydia in 546 BC see I 80,2–5; on Arabian camels see III 9,1; VII 86,2; 87; 184,4; on camels in the army of Xerxes and Mardonius see VII 83,2; 125; IX 81,2. The Greeks knew better the Arabian racing dromedaries (*δρομάς κάμηλος*) with only one hump; the 'Bactrian' variety with two humps is depicted in the bas-reliefs of Persepolis. *τέσσαρας*...: double femoral bones and double knees in each of the back legs. The mistake, which Aristotle, *Hist. An.* 499a20, exposes well, probably derived from the false impression created by the camel when bending on its knees to enable loading.

104,2. *θερμότατος*...: Herodotus argues, on the assumption that the earth is flat and India is in the extreme east, that it must be the country closest to the rising sun; he therefore concludes that the maximal heat must be at dawn, the medial at midday, and the minimal at sunset; the opposite would occur in the west: cf. IV 181,3–4. This does not exclude the possibility that genuine information on the climate of India could have reached the Greek world; see M. Cary, *CR* XXXIII (1919), 148 f. For a completely different notion see Ctesias, *FGrHist* 688 F 45 (18). *οὐ μεσαμβρίας*...: although Herodotus was well aware of the astronomical division of the day (from dawn to dusk) into twelve hours—a division that he believed the Greeks learned from the Babylonians, together with the sundial (II 109,3)—he uses here the division into four parts in everyday use in Greece at the time: early morning (*ὁ ἑωθινός*), late morning (*οὐ ἀγορῆς διαλύσιος*)—about eleven o'clock, in any event before the midday heat—midday (*μεσαμβρία*, and cf. *μεσοῦσα δὲ ἡ ἡμέρη*), and afternoon (*ἀποκλινομένης δὲ τῆς μεσαμβρίας*). Cf. IV 181,3–4, where the word used for early morning is *ὄρθρος*, 'dawn', and for the peak hours of the market (from about 9 until 11 a.m.) *ἀγορῆς πληθούσης* (cf. II 173,1; VII 223,1). Elsewhere Herodotus

uses the Homeric word *δείλη* (*Il.* XXI 111, etc.) for 'afternoon', which he divides into 'first' (*πρωίη*, VIII 6,1) and 'late' (*ὀψίη*, VII 167,1; VIII 9).

105,1. *ὑπὸ Περσέων*: cf. para. 2. According to Fehling's well-known 'rule', p. 101, Herodotus, when dealing with peoples from the outer 'ring', usually quotes as a source a people of the inner 'ring'; e.g. when talking about the populations beyond the Danube, he quotes the Thracians as a source.

106,1. *αἱ δ' ἔσχαται*: see chs. 114–16; on Ethiopia as an extremity of the world cf. 25,1; for *ἔσχαται* in the more common sense of the peripheral area of the territory of a *polis* or a district see VI 127,2. See M. Casevitz, in A. Rousselle (ed.), *Frontières terrestres, frontières célestes dans l'antiquité*, Perpignan–Paris 1995, pp. 19–30. *κάλλιστα... ἔλαχε*: there must exist in this world an equal distribution of good and evil; Greece is poor (VII 102,1) but has an ideal climate (for Ionia see I 142,1). It is a first hint at 'divine providence' (cf. 108,2).

2. *Νησαίων*...: big and famous horses used by Persian kings and nobles, especially in cult processions. They were bred in Media, in the plain of Nisaea (cf. Bis. inscr. §13), situated by Hellenistic sources to the south of Ecbatana (see e.g. Diod. XVII 110,6; Strabo XI 13,7; Arrian VII 13,1). *Νίσος* was said to be the Greek translation of the original toponym *Καταστιγώνα* (Suidas, s.v. *ἵππος Νισαῖος*); cf. R. Hanslik, *RE* XVII 1, 1936, coll. 712–13. *χρυσὸς ἄπλητος*: in fact India is not rich in gold.

3. *εἶρια*: cf. 47,2 with note; flax is a herbaceous plant, not a 'tree'.

107–13. The second digression on the Arabs and Arabia (the first is in ch. 8) is essentially dedicated to the harvesting of spices and is linked with the *excursus* on India through the motif of the fabulous treasures of the extreme regions of the world. Spices are the treasure of Arabia, and are also guarded by strange and dangerous animals; according to Pliny, *NH* XII 85, such stories had been invented in order to raise the price of spices. The Arabian *excursus* is similar to the Indian in its structure: from its main theme branch out, through association of ideas, several sub-digressions on natural history not devoid of interest. On the Arabian spices see Agatharchides of Cnidos, *On the Erythraean Sea* (ed. S. M. Burstein), London 1989; for a structuralist analysis of the perfumes of Arabia cf. M. Detienne, *Les Jardins d'Adonis*, Paris 1972, pp. 19–68.

107,1. *λιβανωτός*...: the five main spices of Arabia (*θυμιάματα*, 'incenses', or *θυώματα*, 'perfumes': cf. 113,1); almost all of them were unknown to Greek writers before Herodotus; they came especially from southern Arabia, along the caravan routes to the Mediterranean coast of Sinai (cf. ch. 5). Other spices came also from Ethiopia, Syria, and India; therefore *μούνη χωρέων πασέων* is incorrect. Among other important spices not mentioned by Herodotus in this chapter are nard, ginger, and mastic. Cf. Theophrastus, *Hist. Plant.* IV 4,14; IX 4,1–10; 5,13; and Pliny, *NH* XII 51 ff. The Greeks were acquainted with these spices through the Phoenicians, and knew that their names were of eastern origin (111,2; 112). The *λιβανωτός* (*lbnh* in Royal Aramaic and Hebrew; *lbnt* in Punic) is olibanum or

incense, an aromatic resin produced from plants of the same name (cf. the *v.l.* at IV 75,3) that grow in Arabia and eastern Africa. In antiquity it was used for cult purposes (see I 183,2; II 40,3; VI 97,2), for embalming (II 86,5), or as an unguent (IV 75,3). It was introduced to Christian cult under Constantine. *σμύρνη*: *mr* Hebrew; myrrh, a resin that oozes from small trees that grow on the African coast of the Red Sea. It was used as perfumed unguent, for cult purposes, for embalming (II 40,3; 86,5 with note; cf. 73,3–4), and as a medicament (VII 181,2). See G. van Beek, *Biblical Archaeologist*, XXIII (1960), 70–95. *κασίη*: *kesia* neo-Babylonian, *qsyh* (?) Hebrew; cassia, a leguminous aromatic plant with several species; some of them produce the Egyptian senna; it was also used for embalming (II 86,5). *κινάμωμον*: cf. 111,2; *kmmn* Hebrew; the cinnamon-tree is an aromatic plant from the bark of which various types of cinnamon and of camphor are obtained; see, however, R. Henning, *Klio*, XXXII (1939), 325–30, against the identification of the Herodotean cinnamon-tree with cinnamon. Ethiopia, together with Arabia, was considered in Hellenistic times the ‘cinnamophorous’ country par excellence; cf. the passages in *FGrHist* 673 (*Anhang*) F 95, 124, 155c–d. For the different notions of the ancients on the origin of cassia and cinnamon see L. Casson, *Ancient Trade and Society*, Detroit 1984, pp. 225–46, and *Periplus Maris Erythraei* (ed. L. Casson), Princeton 1989, pp. 122–4. *λήδανον*: cf. ch. 112; an aromatic resin-gum that oozes from rock rose, a branchy bush of the cistus family (*Cistus salvifolius*).

2. *ὄφεις ὑπόπτεροι*: cf. 108,1; 109; poisonous but non-winged snakes that can be found where the cinnamon plant grows, according to Theophrastus, *Hist. Plant.* IX 5,2. Herodotus had already said that he had seen the spines and the vertebrae of the winged snakes of Arabia, killed by the ibises during spring invasions into Egypt; see II 75–6 with notes; on snake invasions also in Scythia, cf. IV 105,1. Fabulous winged snakes with multiple heads, which grow back when cut off, are found in all ancient mythologies; there is, however, a theory that Herodotus’ winged snakes are locusts, which sometimes invade Egypt and Sinai in spring-time; see R. W. Hutchinson, *CQ NS* VIII (1958), 100 f.

108,1. *λέγουσι δὲ καὶ τόδε Ἀράβιοι*: Herodotus attributes to a non-Greek oral source Greek ideas, and specifically his own ideas, on the finality of nature. *ἐχίδνας*: cf. 109,3; on the mummies of poisonous vipers in the Arabian steppes see Paus. IX 28,3–4.

2. *τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ προνοία*: the geo-biological equilibrium is maintained thanks to the ‘wisdom’ of divine providence—a typical Herodotean compromise between transcendental and immanent teleology, perhaps on the lines already traced by Xenophanes (21[11] B 24–5 DK) and Anaxagoras (59 [46] B 12 DK). Cf. Plato, *Prot.* 321b–c.

3. *ἐπικυῖσκειται*: on superfetation, not a very common phenomenon as Herodotus claims, cf. Aristotle, *De Gen. Animal.* IV 733a.

4. *ἄπαξ ἐν τῷ βίῳ*: cf. I 199,1. According to Aristotle, *Hist. An.* 579a2, this is a ‘stupid tale’, invented in order to explain the scarcity of lions; a lioness actually normally gives birth three times, once a year.

109,1. *ἐκποιήσι*: the act of procreation, rather than the *emissio seminis*.  
 2. *τὰ τέκνα*...: the mother's death at childbirth was seen by some Christian writers as Eve's punishment for letting herself be seduced by the serpent; see K. Smolak, *GB IX* (1980), 181–8.

110. *τὴν δὲ κασίην*: see 107,1 and note. *θηρία πτερωτά*: cf. Theophrastus, *Hist. Plant.* IX 5; Pliny, *NH XII* 95–8.

111,1. *κινάμωμον*: cf. 107; see also the descriptions of Theophrastus, *Hist. Plant.* IX 5, and of Pliny, *NH XII* 85–94. *ὁ Διόνυσος ἐτράφη*: in Arabia according to the Arabs (cf. 8,1 and 3 with note); at Nysa in Ethiopia, according to the version preferred by Herodotus (97,2 with note).

2. *τὰ κάρφεια*...: 'twigs', 'wood-shavings', 'sticks', with which the birds built their nests; cf. Aristophanes, *Av.* 642 f.; the form *κάρφει* (v.l. *σκάρφει*) occurs for the first time in a fragment of Aeschylus' *Bassarai* (24 *TGF*). Herodotus knows that the Greek language does not have an exact equivalent for what the Phoenicians call cinnamon. It is, however, possible that also *κάρφος* is a word of semitic origin (*qirfah* = cinnamon in Arabic). For the theory that in Mycenaean times the word indicated a perfume see A. Sacconi, *Kadmos*, XI (1972), 22–6.

3. *σοφίζεσθαι*: cf. note on 4,2.

112. *λήδανον*: see note on 107,1. *μύρων*: cf. 20,1 and 22,3. The word is of Semitic origin: *mu-ur-ra* Canaanian, *mr* Ugaritic; cf. *σμύρνη*, 107,1

113,1. *θεσπέσιον*: a Homerism; cf. e.g. *Od.* IX 210 f. See A. Lallemand, in *Peuples et pays mythiques*, Paris 1988, pp. 78 ff. (esp. pp. 81–2 and 89, n. 63). For the fabulous smell of *Arabia Felix* cf. Diod. III 46,1; Pliny, *NH XII* 86 (with criticism); Lucian, *Ver. Hist.* II 5 (who cites Herodotus). *δοίων*: the different kinds of sheep, with carts to support their tails, are documented in late antique, medieval, and modern sources in various Eastern countries; see C. H. Benedict, *CJ XXXVI* (1940–1), 168 f.; H. C. Montgomery, *ibid.* 424; L. Keimer, *BIE XXXVI* (1953–4), 466–76, with illustrations. *ἐπέλκειν, ἔλκεια*: a pun; cf. Pindar, *Pyth.* 2,167–9.

114–17. One has the impression that in these chapters Herodotus wanted to collect notes, glosses, and observations on the outermost regions of the world: two sentences on the south-western extremity (ch. 114, perhaps better placed in the Ethiopian *logos* at 17–25); some sceptical and polemical observations on Europe (115–16); and finally a description of the water problems of the northern Persian empire in Asia (117).

114. *ἄνδρας ... μακροβιωτάτους*: cf. 17,1; 20,1.

115,1. *ἔσχαται*: the European outermost regions, almost unknown to 5th-cent. Greeks; cf. II 33,3; IV 45,1; 49,3. *Ἐριδανόν*...: Herodotus argues against the theory that a river called Eridanus by the local barbarians flowed into the northern sea: he denies the existence of the river and the sea. On the sarcasm of the argumentation, cf. IV 45. In Hesiod (*Theog.* 338; fr. 150,23 Merkelbach–West) the Eridanus is a mythical river; Aeschylus places it in Iberia (fr. 73a *FTG*),

perhaps confusing it with the Rhône, although Aeschylus himself probably localized the myth of Phaethon with reference to the Adriatic; see E. Culasso Gastaldi, in *I tragici greci e l'occidente*, Bologna 1979, pp. 49–56. The Eridanus was mentioned by Pherecydes, *FGrHist* 3 F 74; Ion of Samos placed it in Achaea and Choerilus of Samos in Germany (ibid., 696 F 34 f.); in Euripides (*Hyp.* 732 ff.) the connection with the Po seems evident: see L. Burelli, in *I tragici greci e l'occidente*, pp. 131–40. It cannot be excluded that the mythographers or the geographers criticized by Herodotus identified the Eridanus with the Po, and that they linked the Adriatic Sea with the northern sea or with the Baltic. Cf. the criticism of Strabo V 1,9. For the modern identification of the Eridanus with the Elbe see R. Henning, *Von rätselhaften Ländern*, Munich 1925, pp. 82–94. τὸ ἤλεκτρον: the amber known to Homer and Hesiod; the Greek word can also indicate an alloy of gold and silver. Amber is a resin of underground fossilized plants, with deposits near the Baltic coast and in other places in central-northern Europe; it could be collected on the beaches, where the waves uncovered the clots; from Mycenaean times amber (especially succinite of a clear yellow colour) reached the Aegean area by river and caravan routes; the trade flourished in the Archaic age and again in the Roman period. The main amber artefacts were of ornamental character: necklaces, amulets, figurines, and even statues. A renowned local amber craft flourished in the 6th cent. BC in Picenum, which does not have amber deposits of its own; perhaps there is a connection between this craft and the legend that amber was formed on the river Eridanus from the tears of the Heliadae, the sisters of Phaethon, who were transformed into poplars (the legend reflects a theory of the vegetable origin of amber); or else amber was carried by the river to the mythical 'Electrides islands' in the Adriatic. See A. Grilli, *Studi e ricerche sulla problematica dell'ambra*, Rome 1975, esp. pp. 279 ff.; L. Braccisi, *Grecità adriatica*, Bologna 1977<sup>2</sup>, pp. 30–55; see also S. Ruscagni, *QUCC* XII (1982), 101–4, nn. 1–9. οὔτε νήσους: Herodotus also denies the existence of 'the tin route', considering as mythical the 'Kassiterides islands' that various ancient geographers and historians identified with the small isles of the English Channel (Scilly, Wight) or with Cornwall and the British Isles. The explorations of Pytheas (4th cent. BC) helped to clarify views on the origin of tin (texts and analysis: R. Hennig, *Terrae Incognitae*, I, Leiden 1944<sup>2</sup>, pp. 155–82; *Pitea di Massalia, L'Oceano*, ed. S. Bianchetti, Pisa–Rome 1998; B. W. Cunliffe, *The Extraordinary Voyage of Pytheas the Greek*, London 2001). See esp. Timaeus, *FGrHist* 566 F 74 and 164; (*Anhang*), 22,1–4. κασσίτερος: Homer believed it to be a precious metal like gold and silver; see *Il.* XI 25; XVIII 474, 565, 574; XXIII 503, 561. According to some the word is of Sanskrit origin (*kaštira*; cf. Dionysius Periegetes, quoted by Stephanus of Byzantium, s.v. *Κασσίτερα*, who placed the island near India); according to others it is of Celtic origin (*kass*, 'far away'); see R. Hennig, *RhM* LXXXIII (1934), 162–70; R. Dion, *Latomus*, XI (1952), 306–14; J. Ramin, *Le Problème des Cassitérides*, Paris 1965; S. Lewuillon, *DHA* VI (1980), 235–66.

2. αὐτὸ κατηγορεῖ...: cf. IV 189,2. An obvious Greek element is the epic adverb ἤρι ('early in the morning'), common in composite names such as Erigonus, Erichthonius, Eriphilus; cf. the arguments concerning the names of

the continents in IV 45,2–5. Herodotus probably knew also the Eridanus of Attica; see Paus. I 19,5. ὑπὸ ποιητέω... ποιηθέν: Ἡριδανός fits perfectly in dactylic verse. Herodotus, despite the not very respectful τιωός, is not arguing here against the poets, but against the historians and geographers who rationalize the myths of the poets. On Herodotus and the poets see H. Verdin, in *Historiographia antiqua. Festschrift W. Peremans*, Louvain 1977, pp. 53–76. οὐδενὸς αὐτόπτεω: cf. IV 16,1. When there is no autopsy, Herodotus is incredulous; ἀκοή is not enough (cf. II 29,1). However such a rigid approach can sometimes result in erroneous conclusions, as in this case. On Herodotus and direct knowledge see General Introduction, pp. 15 ff. τοῦτο μελετῶν: on Herodotus' efforts to obtain information, cf. II 44,1; on this motif in ancient historiography see Marincola, pp. 148–58. ἐξ ἐσχάτης: exotic materials must by definition come from the outermost regions of the world.

116,1. πρὸς δὲ ἄρκτου τῆς Εὐρώπης: auriferous areas are found in north-central Asia, between the Urals and Siberia, north of the Altai mountains. However, it is unlikely that Herodotus included these areas in his conception of Europe (cf. IV 42,1), or that he could know anything about their gold deposits. But see R. Hennig, *RhM* LXXIX (1930), 326–30; B. Hemmerdinger, *QS* XVII (1983), 186 f. γρυπῶν: the etymology is unknown and probably non-Greek. The griffin is a mythical animal, usually represented with a lion's body and an eagle's head and wings. Of very ancient Middle Eastern origin, it entered the repertoire of Assyrian, Egyptian, Hittite, Cretan-Mycenean, archaic and orientaling Greek (cf. IV 152,4), Persian, and especially Scytho-Dacian art; cf. IV 79,2; see A. Pasquier, *CRAI* (1975), 454–66. It then passed to Etruria, Rome, and barbaric and Romanesque art. It was a symbol of royalty, as divine animal or as a purely heraldic and ornamental device. In Persian art the motif of the struggle between king and griffin is frequent. The griffin as guardian of the Sun's gold also had a role in Mithraic cult; *gryphus* in fact was one of the titles of the initiated into the mysteries of Mithras in the Roman age. The legend of the battles between griffins and Arimaspians was one of the themes of the *Arimaspeia* of Aristaeus of Proconessus; see IV 13,1; 27; cf. J. D. P. Bolton, *Aristaeus of Proconessus*, Oxford 1962, esp. pp. 62 ff., 85–93; on the date see also G. Huxley, *GRBS* XXVII (1986), 151–5. The theme is found in classical literature, beginning with Aeschylus, *Prom.* 802–6. Ctesias transfers the griffins to India: they are birds as big as wolves, have lion paws, and hinder the extraction of gold (*FGrHist* 688 F 45 and 45h), with an obvious fusion or confusion of all the legendary animals that Herodotus describes in these chapters. See in general M. G. Matunti *et al.*, *EAA* III 1960, pp. 1056–63; C. Delplace *Le Griffon de l'archaïsme à l'époque impériale*, Brussels 1980; H. Brandenburg, *RAC* XII 1983, coll. 951–95; in ancient oriental art, A. M. Bisi, *Il grifone. Storia di un motivo iconografico nell'antico oriente mediterraneo*, Rome 1965; in Greek orientaling art, A. Dierichs, 'Das Bild des Greifen in der frühgriechischen Flächenkunst', Diss. Regensburg 1981; *Boreas*, VIII (1985), 5–32; M. Leventopoulou, *LIMC* VIII 1, 1997, pp. 609–11; on the similar legend in the Book of Enoch, P. Grelot, *Vetus Testamentum*, XI (1961),



30–8. *Ἀριμασπῶν*: cf. IV 13; 27. in this last passage Herodotus offers a Scythian etymology; but it is probably an Iranian ethnic, a compound of *aspa-*, ‘horse’; see L. Vlad Borrelli, *EAA* I 1958, p. 637; X. Garbounova, *LIMC* VIII 1 1997, pp. 529–34. For Latin sources on the Arimaspians see P. Aalto and T. Pekkanen, *Latin Sources on North-Eastern Eurasia*, Pt. I, Wiesbaden 1975, pp. 58–61. *μουννοφθάλμους*: according to Strabo I 2,10, Homer modelled his Cyclopes on the Scythian legend. The myth, which Herodotus rejects, was rationalized by others: the profession of archery could cause the atrophy of an eye (see e.g. Eustathius, *Comm. Dion. Perieg.* 31, mentioning anonymous ‘ancient’ writers who offered this explanation). *πείθομαι δὲ οὐδὲ*: cf. the expressions of scepticism in IV 25,1; 105,2; 191,4.

3. *ἔσχαται*...: the concluding sentence refers back to 106,1; for the ‘ring composition’ technique in Herodotus see Beck. *περικληῖουσαι*: cf. *περικεκλημένον* immediately following at 117,1; according to J. E. Powell, *CR* LI (1937), 104 f., this is a pun.

117,1. *ἔστι δὲ πεδῖον*...: this interesting chapter on the Persian water-control policy in Chorasmia seems to have been inserted here in order to recall the reader from the fabulous boundaries of the world to the administrative realities of the Persian empire and the story of Darius, which will resume at ch. 118. The area described by Herodotus was an integral part of the empire, but it also had its *mirabilia*. It is a historical fact that the Achaemenids, like their great Middle Eastern predecessors, monopolized water resources and distinguished themselves by their works of canalization, reservoirs, dams, irrigation, and water taxation. In its details Herodotus’ description is semi-fantastic; in some aspects it recalls the description of the Thessalian alluvial plains (VII 129), although in this case it seems that Herodotus used oral sources (para. 6). The Persian water policy is presented as an example of oppressive taxation, worthy of Darius the ‘shop-keeper’ (89,3 with note), who is, however, not explicitly named. Herodotus says nothing about the interest which the Achaemenids undoubtedly had in the improvement and cultivation of land. On Herodotean hydrography, O. Longo, *QS* XXIV (1986), 23–53. *Χορασμίων*: cf. 93,3 with note. This must be the area east of the Caspian Sea (sixteenth *νομός*), but further identification is impossible. The Hyrcanians (cf. VII 62,2) lived between the south-east coast of the Caspian Sea and Parthia; the Sarangaeans and the Thamanaeans (93,2) lived about 700 to 900 km. south-east, in Drangiana; they did not, therefore, border on the area described by Herodotus. Maybe he alludes to the area of Elburz, south-east of the Caspian Sea, where there were Persian works of canalization known to Polybius (X 28,2–4).

2. *Ἀκῆς*: cf. Hesychius, s.v. *Ἀκίς*. It has been identified with the Oxus or, better, with the modern Atrak, which marks the border between Turkmenistan and the area of Iran to the east of the Caspian Sea. It must be the Ochos of Apollodorus of Artemita (*FGrHist* 779 F 4) and of Strabo (XI 7,3; 11,5); see I. N. Khlopin, *Orientalia Lovaniensia Periodica*, II (1971), 137–52. Some consider the Aces an imaginary river. *πενταχοῦ*: the reading accepted by most editors, which

creates a fictitious correspondence between the five branches of the river and the five peoples; cf. the five Thessalian rivers at VII 129,1; *πανταχοῦ* is preferable. In Herodotus five is a 'typical' number; see e.g. III 25,4; 59,2; 80,1; Fehling, pp. 224–5.

3. *πέλαγος*: the artificial lake created by the inundation; cf. II 97,1; VII 129,3; for the reservoir of Nitocris see I 185,4–5.

4. *ὁ θεός*: Herodotus alludes here to Zeus, the god of rain (cf. 125,4), not to a divinity in a general sense.

5. *κατὰ τὰς θύρας τοῦ βασιλέως*: 'king's gate' is an oriental expression (cf. *bāb šarri* Accadian, *s'r hmlk* in Esther 2: 19, etc.); see O. Loretz, *Die Welt des Orient*, IV (1967–8), 104–8. Herodotus is thinking of the palace of Susa; cf. 77,1; 119,3; 120,2. For a similar scene in Samos see 42,1. *ἀνοίγειν*...: there is a reminiscence of this passage in Lucian, *Icaromenippus* 25–6; see G. Anderson, *Philologus*, CXXIV (1980), 159–61.

6. *χρήματα*...*φόρου*: a clear reference to the catalogue of tributes (chs. 89–96), to the 'gifts' *πάρεξ τοῦ φόρου* (97,5), and to Darius' fiscal policy (89,3). With this reference Herodotus concludes the series of *excursus* started in ch. 89, and returns to the main narrative of the reign of Darius.

118–19. The story of Darius' reign, interrupted in ch. 88, is resumed with the pathetic episode of the death of Intaphernes. What emerges is the figure of an authoritarian yet humane monarch. The episode owes its fame to the words of Intaphernes' wife and to her tragic choice (119,6). The historical background is probably the period of turbulence of Darius' 'first year' (see note on 88,1). We know from the Bisitun inscription that Intaphernes was entrusted with the task of repressing the Babylonian revolt of the autumn of 521 (see note on chs. 150–60); therefore his eventual fall could be dated at least a year later than the death of Bardiya, and directly after the conspiracy of the seven as Herodotus claims. See the bibl. in note on chs. 61–88.

118,2. *ἀγγελιηφόρος*: cf. the v.l. at 126,2, and note to 34,1.

119,1. *οἱ ἕξ*: after the withdrawal of Otanes, the 'six' became five.

2. *καὶ τοὺς παῖδας αὐτοῦ*...: the capital punishment of an entire family is documented in all ancient civilizations, including archaic Greece; cf. IX 113,2; Ctesias, *FGrHist* 688 F 15 (56); Esther 9: 6–10.

6. *ἀνὴρ μὲν*...: a famous argument echoed in Sophocles *Ant.* 905–12, although the authenticity of verses 905–12 has been disputed; cf. the similar choices or answers in Apollodorus II 6,4; Lucian, *Tox.* 61; *De Dea Syria* 18. It is senseless to contemplate what Darius would have done had the wife chosen her husband; it is a novelistic folk-tale motif (Aly, p. 109), found in many cultures, including Indian tales and the Persian *Mazbān-nameh*; cf. Th. Nöldeke, *Hermes*, XXIX (1894), 155–6. Some have held that tales of this type, in their original form, reflect an 'avuncular' system centring on the brother's priority over the husband; there are traces of such a system in the Ancient East and in Europe (Tacitus, *Germ.* 20,3). But tales of this kind could also reflect the juridical reality of certain forms of

pardon 'by choice' in cases of collective punishment. See H. Schmeja, *Gymnasium*, LXXII (1965), 203–7; G. Germain, *REG* LXXX (1967), 106–12; F. Gabrieli, *RSO* XVII (1937), 111–13, and in *Letterature comparate. Studi in onore di E. Paratore*, I, Bologna 1981, pp. 139–41; Erbse, pp. 143–4; R. S. P. Beekers, *Mnemosyne*, XXXIX (1986), 225–9; S. Murnaghan, *AJP* CVII (1986), 192–239; C. Shaw Hardy, *TAPA* CXXVI (1996), 101–9. Polycrates' daughter would choose her father, who is irreplaceable, over an eventual husband (124,2). For the scale of human affections, cf. note on 14,1.

7. ἡσθεῖς: cf. note on 32,2.

120–8. The double *logos* of the deaths of Polycrates and Oroetes, intimately connected internally as well as linked with the series of Samian *logoi* (chs. 39–60 and 139–49) and the story of the reign of Darius, unfolds through a theological-moral chain of 'offences' or 'faults' (αἰτίαι) and of 'revenges' (τίσεις). The first episode should be dated to the period of Cambyses' illness (120,1), around 523 BC; the second to the period that extends from Cambyses' death to the beginning of the reign of Darius (including the seven months of the Magus: 126,1), thus between the beginning of the spring and the autumn of 522 (see note on 67,2). It is a period of insurrections, in which the story of Oroetes would fit well (see Balcer, pp. 146 ff.); the story is not mentioned in the Bisitun inscription (but see what Darius says in §58). The sources of Herodotus on the two episodes are substantially Samian and above all oral. For the bibl., L. Boffo, *RAL* XXXIV (1979), 85–104; A. Abramenko, *Klio*, LXXVII (1995), 35–54.

120,1. Σαρδίων ὑπαρχος: cf. 90,1. In Herodotus ὑπαρχος indicates 'the governor'. The term can refer to a satrap (e.g. III 70,3; 126,2; IV 166,1; V 25,1; 73,2; 123; VI 1,1; 30,1; 33,3; 42,1; VII 6,1; IX 113,2); to a subordinate governor (V 27,1; VII 33; 105; 194,1; IX 116,1); to the vassal-king of Macedonia (V 20,4); to military commanders (VII 26,2; 106,1). Ὀροίτης: a successor of Tabalus, the first satrap of Sardis (I 153,3). οὐκ ὀσίον: cf. 16,2. Oroetes' impiety consists of having plotted the killing of Polycrates without a motive of personal grudge. Herodotus does not consider as motives political reasons such as Polycrates' support of Cambyses; cf. 44,1–2. ὡς μὲν οἱ πλεῖνες...: Herodotus prefers the version of the majority, which he compares to that of a minority (121,1). The version of the majority was Samian, patriotic, and sympathetic to the tyrant, who had fallen victim of the conflict between Greeks and Persians.

2. Μιτροβάτεια: perhaps *Mithrapatā* in Persian. ἐν Δασκυλείῳ: cf. 90,2 with note. Dascyleum is today confidently located on the southern coast of lake Manyas, about 100 km. west of Bursa. The remains of a satrapal palace have been excavated, as well as seals and a stele of Graeco-Persian art. A famous 'paradise' was joined to the palace. See Lewis, pp. 51 f.; T. H. Corsten, *Epigraphica Anatolica*, XII (1988), 53–76; T. Bakin in P. Briant (ed.), *Dans les pas des Dix-Mille*, Toulouse 1995, pp. 269–85; Müller II, pp. 811–15. κρινομένων δὲ περὶ ἀρετῆς: cf. Pindar, *Nem.* 7,10. The Athenian audience will have loved the allusion to sophistic disputes on 'virtue'.