Mission Accomplished:[1] Alexander at the Hyphasis

Timothy Howe and Sabine Müller

According to the majority of modern scholars, it is quite clear what happened at the Hyphasis River (Beas) in 326 BCE: Alexander was handed his first major defeat, by no less an enemy than his own troops. The weary men, exhausted by heat, monsoon and severe fighting, rejected Alexander's plans to march further to the *okeanos,* thus putting a stop to his search for the end of the world. Tired in body and mind as well as unable to make any sense of pressing on, the officers sided with the mass of the soldiers. Acting as their spokesman, Coenus called to a halt Alexander's march. This time, the ruler's charismatic leadership failed and Alexander had to bow to the pressure and turn back. Consequently, his ambitions to style himself as the conqueror of the world were frustrated.[2] Thus,

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[1] The parallel with U.S. President George W. Bush's famous statement, given on 1 May, 2003 from the deck of the USS Abraham Lincoln, announcing the end of major combat operations in Iraq is intentional. Just as Bush's statement was taken in many ways, by many different audiences, both at the time and afterwards, so too was Alexander's declaration at the Hyphasis. Moreover, since Alexander did a lot of fighting on his return to Babylon, just as the Americans and their allies did in Iraq after Bush's announcement, Alexander's announcement and his thank offerings to the 12 Olympians gave about the same degree of closure.

[2] L. L. Brice, "Seleucus I and Military Unrest in the Army of Alexander the Great," in *Seleukeia: Studies in Seleucid History, Archaeology and Numismatics in Honor of Getzel M. Cohen*, R. Oetjen and F. Ryan, eds. (Berlin, in-press); J. Roisman, *Alexander's Veterans* (Austin, TX, 2012); 31-39; O. Amitay, *From Alexander to Jesus* (Berkeley and L.A., 2010), 49; M. J. Olbrycht, "Macedonia and Persia," in *Blackwell's Companion to Ancient Macedonia,* J. Roisman and I. Worthington, eds. (Oxford, 2010), 360; D. Gilley and I. Worthington, "Alexander the Great, Macedonia and Asia," in *Blackwell's Companion to Ancient Macedonia*, J. Roisman and I. Worthington, eds. (Oxford, 2010), 194; C. J. King, "Macedonian Kingship and other Political Institutions," in *Blackwell's Companion to Ancient Macedonia*, J. Roisman and I. Worthington, eds. (Oxford, 2010), 386; A. Demandt, *Alexander der Große. Leben und Legende* (Munich, 2009), 268-271; W. Will, *Alexander der Große. Geschichte und Legende* (Darmstadt, 2009), 67; J. Malitz, "Von Alexander zu Kleopatra," in *Kulturgeschichte des Hellenismus*, ed. G. Weber (Würzburg, 2007), 19; J. Engels, *Philipp II. und Alexander der Große* (Darmstadt, 2006), 61; F. Holt, *Alexander the Great and the Mystery of the Elephant Medallions* (Berkeley and L.A., 2003), 16, 155-156; H. Heinen, *Geschichte des Hellenismus von Alexander bis Kleopatra* (Munich, 2003), 18; A. K. Narain, "Alexander and India," in *Alexander the Great. A Reader*, I. Worthington, ed. (London and New York, 2003), 161-162; R. Stoneman, *Alexander the Great* (London and New York, 1997), 69; M. B. Hatzopoulos, *Macedonian Institutions under the Kings*, I (Athens, 1996), 345; E. D. Carney, "Macedonians and Mutiny: Discipline and Indiscipline in the Army of Philip and Alexander," *CP* 91 (1996), 37; G. Wirth, *Der Brand von Persepolis* (Amsterdam, 1993), 258, n. 11, 317, n. 226, 324, 336, 345, 366; F. Holt, *Alexander and Bactria* (Leiden, 1989), 71, n. 82; A. B. Bosworth, *Conquest and Empire* (Cambridge, 1988), 133; W. Will, *Alexander der Große* (Stuttgart, 1986), 152-153; E. Badian, "Harpalus," *JHS* 81 (1961), 20; F. Schachermeyr, *Alexander der Große. Das Problem seiner Persönlichkeit und seines Wirkens* (Wien, 1973),

according to this traditional view, the events at the Hyphasis display a clear failure of leadership due to the building tension between the monarch and his troops. This tension resulted in a major setback to Alexander, who seems never to have forgotten it. The only matter of debate is the question whether the army's opposition could be rightfully labeled a "mutiny"[3] or rather a desperate plea that the king accept his soldiers' refusal to continue eastward, "mutinous though never mutiny."[4]

However, the above scenario is not really convincing. First, Alexander did not punish the opposition at the Hyphasis.[5] Second, he had already carefully prepared his further advance to the Indus lands of the south.[6] Third, Alexander's image in the reports about the Hyphasis is extremely artificial, formed by stereotypes of the megalomaniac relentless world conqueror: "Das Verhalten Alexanders am Hyphasis erweckt nicht von ungefähr den Eindruck des allzu Gekünstelten in der Überlieferung."[7] Fourth, the authenticity of the speeches put into the mouths of Alexander and Coenus is rather doubtful. It is mostly assumed that these speeches are free compositions reflecting what the later authors thought that Alexander's and the soldiers' feelings might have been at that point of the campaign.[8] Also, Ptolemy who was an insider belonging to Alexander's inner circle seems to have been rather reserved concerning his report on the events at

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433-438; W. W. Tarn, *Alexander the Great,* I (Cambridge, 1948), 98-99; H. Berve, *Das Alexanderreich auf prosopographischer Grundlage,* I (Munich, 1926), 214-215; II, 218.

[3] Cf. M. J. Olbrycht, "Macedonia," 360; King, "Kingship," 386; Gilley and Worthington, "Alexander," 194; Will, *Legende,* 67; Malitz, "Alexander," 19; Engels, *Philipp,* 61; M. M. Austin, *The Hellenistic World from Alexander to the Roman Conquest* (Cambridge, 2006), 43; Heinen, *Hellenismus,* 18; I. Worthington, "How 'great' was Alexander?" *AHB* 13 (1999), 45; Stoneman, *Alexander,* 69; Will, *Alexander,* 152; Narain, "India," 162.

[4] F. Holt, "The Hyphasis 'Mutiny': A Source Study," *AncW* 5 (1982), 49. Cf. K. Kraft, *Der "rationale" Alexander* (Kallmünz, 1971), 105; L. L. Brice, "Seleucus I." In the end, one wonders whether modern historians, especially those writing in English, would have been so quick to label the Hyphasis events an "Indian Mutiny" if the Great Indian Mutiny of 1857 against the army of the British East India Company had not occurred. In much the same way the Roman sources were predisposed to "read" Alexander's actions in Roman military terms (see below), perhaps modern historians unconsciously contextualize the Mutiny of 1857. Cf. W. W. Tarn, "Alexander and the Conquest of the Far East,"*CAH* 7.13 (1927), 409-10.

[5] Cf. Olbrycht, "Macedonia," 363.

[6] Cf. G. Wirth, *Der Kampfverband des Proteas* (Amsterdam, 1989), 272.

[7] Wirth, *Persepolis,* 318, n. 226.

[8] Cf. W. Heckel, *The Marshals of Alexander's Empire* (London and New York, 1992), 63; W. Heckel, "A King and his Army," in *Alexander the Great. A New History*, W. Heckel and L. A. Tritle, eds. (Oxford, 2009), 80-81; Austin, *World,* 44, n. 1; Carney, "Mutiny," 33; Stoneman, *Alexander,* 68; A. B. Bosworth, *From Arrian to Alexander* (Oxford, 1988), 133-134; J. R. Hamilton, *Plutarch, Alexander. A Commentary* (Oxford, 1969), 174.

the Hyphasis.[9] We cannot really attribute the essence of the speeches and the accounts on the entreaties of the soldiers and the consolation of Alexander's companions to him. Last, it has been objected that the monsoon will have complicated every operation but that wars must, of course, be waged in any weather.[10] In sum, the traditional view of the events at the banks of the Hyphasis only makes sense if one ignores these points and then only in the retrospective, as a Greek or Roman perspective influenced by the artificial image of Alexander the world-conqueror who was too ambitious for his own men. Indeed, for the traditional view to work effectively one must ignore the fact that Alexander had arrived at the boundary of Achaemenid authority in India, for Achaemenid control had never extended beyond the Hyphasis.

And yet this important point regularly gets overlooked because it does not fit the "character" that we (authors and readers, past and present) have constructed for Alexander the Great. The disconnect seems to stem from the fact that both ancient historiographers and modern scholars have focused primarily on the character of Alexander, on Alexander as a person, and thus try to argue on the basis of a fictitious psychological profile.[11] It is Alexander the great conqueror and warrior who stands behind the traditional view of the turning back at the Hyphasis. However, this approach is misleading, as Gerhard Wirth pointed out some time ago.[12] Instead of searching for signs of Alexander's personality, it is more useful to analyze the political structures of his empire, the Argead traditions, the construction of court and court society, the relationship between Macedonian ruler and aristocracy, and the relations between Macedonia and Persia.

This paper aims at showing that Alexander's mission was accomplished at the Hyphasis by arguing the following main points: (1) Alexander did not intend to advance further because he was following the Achaemenid tradition, not forging his own new path to World's End; (2) in traditional Near Eastern style Alexander commemorated his

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[9] Cf. Hamilton, *Plutarch*, 174.

[10] Cf. Holt, *Bactria*, 155-156.

[11] Constructing one's own, personal "Alexander" has been a perennial problem for the Alexander scholar, as E. N. Borza, "Preface," in *Alexander the Great*, Ulrich Wilcken (New York, 1967), noted some time ago.

[12] Cf. G. Wirth, "Anmerkungen zur Schlacht von Issos," in *Studia in honorem V. Besevliev* (Sofia, 1978), 435-449. See also G. Wirth, *Der Weg in die Vergessenheit* (Wien, 1993); "Alexander in der zweiten Generation. Sprachregelung und Konstruktion: eines Bildes," in: *Purposes of History*, H. Verdin et al., eds. (Leuven, 1990), 203-211; "Vermutungen zum frühen Alexander, I-II," in *Studien zur Alexandergeschichte* (Darmstadt, 1985), 168-203.

deeds, and marked the limits of his empire, by erecting altars on the banks of the Hyphasis; (3) there was no Indian Mutiny, no "unpleasantness" at the Hyphasis—what we have is a construction of the literary sources, a misreading of the episode by Greek and Roman authors who were influenced by cultural misunderstanding and insufficient knowledge about either Achaemenid or Alexander's policy. Thus, the *Forschungsmythos* of the Hyphasis "mutiny," and Alexander's subsequent failure, were based on stereotypes of an "Alexander the world conqueror" who would never voluntarily abandon his plans to advance to the *okeanos,* of the inner psychological functions of Alexander's army and, finally, of India as a fairytale wonderland at the edge of the world.

Voices in the wilderness: challenges to the traditional view

One of the first to challenge the traditional view was Benedictus Niese in 1893.[13] Roughly a contemporary of Johann Gustav Droysen, the German classicist Niese depicted Alexander as a rationally calculating politician without exaggerated plans. For him, it was obvious that Alexander did not intend to go further to the Ganges or even beyond: the weariness of his troops and unfavorable omens confirmed his plans to return at the Hyphasis.[14] In 1897, Niese again made clear that Alexander had completely accomplished his mission at the Hyphasis: He had planned to conquer the whole of Darius' empire: "und er hat es vollkommen ausgeführt, nicht mehr und nicht weniger; die Grenzen des persischen Reichs waren auch die seinigen."[15] This conclusion has been taken up more recently by Pierre Briant, who argued that Alexander's aim was to conquer the whole of Darius I's empire, in order to gain control of the Punjab and Indus Valley.[16] Here, Briant observed that "the descent of the Indus and the return along the Persian coast of the Gulf was part of a long-term plan: Alexander intended to follow the boundaries of the Achaemenid empire and take control of it in its totality, and the Indus was, of course, the empire's eastern frontier."[17]

Trying to explain the misleading reports of the ancient sources, Waldemar Heckel also concluded that Alexander planned to turn back at the Hyphasis. Rejecting the traditional

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[13] B. Niese, *Geschichte der griechischen und makedonischen Staaten seit der Schlacht von Chäroneia*, I (Gotha, 1893), 139. We would like to thank Reinhold Bichler for this information and the possibility to read his forthcoming manuscript on Niese's Alexander.

[14] Niese, *Geschichte*, 139.

[15] B. Niese, "Zur Würdigung Alexanders des Großen," *HZ* 79 (1897), 42-43. We would like to thank Reinhold Bichler for this information.

[16] P. Briant, *Alexander the Great and his Empire* (Princeton, 2010), 37.

[17] Briant, *Alexander*, 38.

view, Heckel suggested that Alexander staged the "mutiny" in order to lay the responsibility for turning back on the men, giving them sufficient reason for refusing his request in advance, thus getting what he wanted: the return after reaching the borders of the Persian Empire.[18] Unfortunately, this false mutiny scenario seems to be rather complex and leads one to question why Alexander should have hesitated to tell his army that his mission was accomplished. Heckel's thesis, while innovative, still tries to make sense of the actions of the "character" of Alexander, as constructed by the ancient historiographers. [19] In the end, this argument only makes sense if Alexander's army understood him as the Roman era sources did, as a figure driven to conquer the world until he was stopped by death. Of course, this constructed Alexander could not simply stop, nor ask his soldiers to stop; neither could, for example, Curtius' megalomaniac tyrant, nor Strabo's world conqueror Alexander whom he depicted as worthy of being compared to Augustus.[20] Thus, while there has been some attempt to disentangle the historical Alexander from the historiographical character, more work is necessary.

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[18] W. Heckel, "Alexander the Great and the 'Limits of the Civilized World'," in *Crossroads of History: The Age of Alexander*, W. Heckel and L. Tritle, eds. (Claremont, CA, 2003), 165-73, *The Conquests of Alexander the Great* (Oxford, 2008), 120-125; "Alexander's Conquest of Asia," in *Alexander the Great. A New History*, W. Heckel and L. A. Tritle eds. (Oxford, 2009), 49; "King," 80-81. Cf. P. A. Spann, "Alexander at the Beas: Fox in a Lion's Skin," in *The Eye Expanded: Life and the Arts in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, F. B. Titchner and R. J. Morton, eds. (Berkeley and L.A., 1999), 62-74.

[19] There is much artifice embedded in the reports of the Hyphasis event. For example, Alexander's alleged imitation of Achilles: He is said to have tried the Achilles tactic of sulking in his tent for three days in order to make the men change their minds. Arr. 5.28.3-4; Curt. 9.3.18-19. Roisman, *Veterans*, 37. The sources report similar behavior after Alexander murders Clitus. Arr. 4.9.1-4; Curt. 8,2,11; Just. 12.6.15. These scenes seem to be a fictitious construction of the sources based upon later positive or negative concepts of Alexander as a new Achilles. Waldemar Heckel has argued plausibly that the historical Alexander did not systematically imitate Achilles but only honored him as his great ancestor and that especially Curtius employed the Achilles theme to mock him ironically as Achilles' rather unworthy descendent. W. Heckel, "Alexander, Achilleus, and Heracles," in *FS A. B. Bosworth*, E. Baynham and P. Wheatley, eds. (in print). Accepted by S. Müller, "In Abhängigkeit von Alexander? Hephaistion bei den Alexanderhistoriographen," *Gymnasium* 118 (2011), 432-433. Against W. Ameling, "Alexander und Achilleus," in *Zu Alexander d. Gr. FS G. Wirth*, II, W. Will and J. Heinrichs eds. (Amsterdam, 1988), 657-692.

[20] J. Engels, "Die Geschichte des Alexanderzugs und das Bild Alexanders des Großen in Strabons Geographika," in *Alexander der Große. Eine Welteroberung und ihr Hintergrund,* W. Will ed. (Bonn, 1998), 163, 171. Strab. 15.1.27 therefore shows that Alexander was forced by his weary men and the oracles to return.

The Achaemenids, Alexander and India

Alexander may not have been "the last of the Achaemenids," as Briant calls him[21] but he came from an empire whose structures and courtly traditions were heavily influenced by the examples set by the Persians.[22] Ever since the period of the Achaemenid domination of Macedonia, sealed by the submission of earth and water to Darius I's ambassadors by Amyntas I in 512/10 BC,[23] Persia had played an important role in the self-definition of Argead rulership. This Persian influence is especially visible, for example, among the earliest coins minted by Alexander I, who imitated the Achaemenid iconography and provided his Macedonian rider on the obverse with a Persian *akinakes*.[24] Even after the Persian abandonment of Thrace and Macedonia because of the Greek victory over Mardonius at Plataea in 479, the political and cultural exchanges between Macedon and Persia certainly continued. Unfortunately, we lack literary narratives informing us about Macedonian-Persian relations for the period between Alexander I's turning into a *philhellene* after Plataea and Philip II's clash with Artaxerxes III in the context of the failed Macedonian siege of Perinthus.[25] However, there is scattered evidence about Persian aristocratic exiles living at Philip's court, Persian ambassadors at Pella in Alexander's youth and a possible alliance between Artaxerxes III and Philip II, probably dating before the event at Perinthus in 341/40.[26] Therefore, we can assume that there was constant diplomatic exchange between Persia and Macedonia. Thus, it is highly

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[21] P. Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander* (Winona Lake, 2002), 876. Cf. M. van de Mieroop, *A History of the Ancient Near East* (Oxford, 2007), 300.

[22] A.J.S. Spawforth, "The Court of Alexander the Great," in *The Court and Court Society in Ancient Monarchies*, A.J.S. Spawforth, ed. (Cambridge, 2007), 82-92.

[23] Hdt. 5.18; Just. 7.4.1. Cf. L. Scott, *A Historical Commentary on Herodotus Book 6* (Leiden, 2005), 189. After a short period of autonomy in the course of the Ionian revolt, Macedonia became again a Persian subject in 492 BC (Hdt. 7.108.1). See S. Müller, "Die frühen Perserkönige im kulturellen Gedächtnis der Makedonen und in der Propaganda Alexanders d. Gr.," *Gymnasium* 118 (2011), 111; M. J. Olbrycht, "Macedonia," 343-344; J. Heinrichs/S. Müller, "Ein persisches Statussymbol auf Münzen Alexanders I. von Makedonien," *ZPE* 167 (2008), 289.

[24] Cf. Heinrichs/Müller, "Statussymbol," 292-295; Müller, "Perserkönige," 111-112.

[25] Hdt. 5.22.2 (Alexander I in Olympia); Siege of Perinthus: Diod. 16.75.1-2; Arr. 2.14.5. cf. S. Müller, "Philip II," in *Blackwell's Companion to Ancient Macedonia*, J. Roisman and I. Worthington, eds. (Oxford, 2010), 178-179; I. Worthington, *Philip II of Macedonia* (New Haven, 2008), 131-132.

[26] Exiles: Arr. 3.22.1; Diod. 16.52.3; Athen. 6.256 C-E; Ambassadors: Plut. *Alex.* 5.1; Dem. 10.48 (Macedonian Embassy to the Great King); Alliance: Arr. 2.14.2. Cf. Olbrycht, "Macedonia," 346-350; D. Kienast, *Philipp II. Und das Reich der Achämeniden* (Munich, 1973), 248-291.

unlikely that Alexander and his court aristocracy were especially ignorant of Persian culture.

And yet, the later Greek and Roman authors tend to ignore this Persian influence on the Macedonian court and court society and as a result anachronistically transfer their own perspective upon the Macedonians. Hence, Alexander and the Macedonians are depicted as rather ignorant about Achaemenid tradition and often hostile towards the Persian culture. This impression is certainly not correct but heavily biased by Greek and Roman prejudices and traditional literary clichés,[27] and, of course in the beginning of Alexander's Persian campaign, also fuelled by panhellenic propaganda.[28]

In all likelihood, Alexander will have known that Achaemenid rule never extended beyond the Hyphasis. His actions suggest that he was very much aware of Achaemenid political and administrative traditions.[29] But even if we allow that he had not been informed previously about the frontiers of the Persian Empire, Alexander's Persian advisers will certainly have provided him with this information before he had started his Indian campaign. Waldemar Heckel and Pierre Briant are certainly right in stating that Alexander did not push mindlessly into the unknown.[30]

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[27] Another example for a misleading reading is Curtius' report on Darius III's council after he had fled from Ecbatana towards the East (5.8.6-17). Nabarzanes points out that because of adverse gods and bad fortune there would be need of a new beginning and proposes that the rule should be temporarily entrusted to Darius' relative, Bessus, satrap of Bactria, as a substitute king. After the victory the power will be returned to Darius. Interestingly, this is the description of the Old Mesopotamian royal substitution ritual, a remedy against bad fortune. Cf. I. Huber, *Rituale der Seuchen- und Schadensabwehr im Vorderen Orient und Griechenland* (Stuttgart, 2005); P. M. Goeddegebuure, "KBo 17.17+: Remarks on an old Hittite Royal Substitution Ritual," *JANER* 2 (2002), 61-73; E. Cancik-Kirschbaum, "Herrscher. Alter Orient," *DNP* 5 (1998), 493-494; C. Nylander, "Darius III – the Coward King. Point and Counterpoint," in *Alexander the Great. Reality and Myth*, J. Carlsen et al. eds. (Rome, 1993), 152; H. M. Kümmel, *Ersatzrituale für den hethitischen König* (Wiesbaden, 1967). In severe cases, the substitute king could be chosen among royal family members. Curtius' source for this information is uncertain. Perhaps the tradition was preserved in a Seleucid context. In any case, Curtius completely misunderstood the meaning of the ritual. In his view, it was a wicked conspiracy against Darius from the beginning.

[28] M. Flower, "Alexander the Great and Panhellenism," in *Alexander the Great in Fact and Fiction*, A. B. Bosworth and E. J. Baynham, eds. (Oxford, 2000), 96-135. P. Kamizadeh, *Alexander Histories and Iranian Reflections: Remnants of Propoaganda and Resistance* (Leiden, 2012).

[29] Cf. J. Wiesehöfer, *Das antike Persien* (Düsseldorf, 2005), 149-153; P. Briant, *L'Historie de L'Empire Perse de Cyrus à Alexandre* (Paris, 1996), 872-884; Wirth, *Proteas*, 272.

[30] Heckel, *Conquests*, 123; Briant, *Alexander*, 37. Briant adds that Alexander will have received information from Indian princes and local guides.

Alexander will have known more than we do as our information on the Persian rule over parts of northwest India is rather limited.[31] For example, Herodotus reports that Darius I conquered India (4.44) and that the Indians paid gold dust to him (4.41).[32] India, in Old Persian *Hinduš*, appears in the lists of Darius' royal inscriptions,[33] and while the precise date of India's conquest is unknown, its reality is not in doubt.[34] India figures also in an inscription of Darius' son and successor Xerxes and of Artaxerxes III,[35] and again, while the precise administrative structures of the satrapy in the reigns of Darius I's successors are uncertain, perhaps at the time of Alexander's Indian campaign, the Achaemenid Indian realm consisted of half autonomous kingdoms or dynasties.[36] In any case, Alexander will have been better informed than we. Consequently, the bald assumption that the conquest of India was not part of the plan to conquer the Persian Empire[37] has to be rejected. On the contrary, the advance to the Indian regions that had formed part of the historical Achaemenid Empire makes sense considering Alexander's efforts to appear as a successor of Darius III and Cyrus the Great.

Interestingly, to this end, Alexander's own propaganda, or at least the propaganda of later Alexander historiographers, employed the strategy of "inventing traditions" to adjust Alexander to his role-model Cyrus. Indeed, Alexander scholars often overlook the well-known fact that the Greek historiographers upon whom the Alexander authors relied as authorities for Persian history nowhere report that Cyrus conquered India. For

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[31] A. Kuhrt, *The Persian Empire* (London and New York, 2010), 189, n. 3.

[32] See J. Wiesehöfer, *Das frühe Persien* (Munich, 1999), 29-30. However, these reports already appear to be mystified, influenced by legendary tales about India as a wonderland at the end of the world. Cf. H. Klinkott, *Der Satrap* (Frankfurt, 2005), 108. See the story about the gold-digging ants (Hdt. 3.102.2; cf. Arr. *Ind.* 15.4-6). For the role of India within the Achaemenid Empire see J. Wiesehöfer, "Mare Erythraeum, Sinus Persicus und Fines Indiae," in *Der Indische Ozean in historischer Perspektive*, S. Conermann, ed. (Hamburg, 1998), 9-36; W. Vogelsang, "The Achaemenids and India," *AchHist* 4 (1990), 93-110.

[33] DPe, § 2, l. 17-18; DSm § 2, l. 10; DNa § 3, l. 25; DSf § 3, l. 40 (we are informed that ivory for the decoration of Darius' palace at Susa was brought from India). India does not figure in Darius' earliest inscription, the Behistun Inscription. Cf. Kuhrt, *Empire*, 189, A. 3; H. Klinkott, *Satrap*, 95; Briant, *Histoire*, 185. Therefore, his conquest of parts of the Indus region is mostly dated about 518 BCE.

[34] See Kuhrt, *Empire*, 189, n. 3; Briant, *Histoire*, 152; D. Asheri et al., *A Commentary on Herodotus Books I-IV* (Oxford, 2007), 613.

[35] XPh § 3, l. 25; A³Pb, l. 13. Cf. Klinkott, *Satrap*, 71-73.

[36] See Klinkott, *Satrap*, 496; Berve, *Alexanderreich*, I, 270-273.

[37] See Gilley and Worthington, "Alexander," 194.

his part, Herodotus attributes the conquest of parts of the Indus region to Darius I.[38] And in his rather fictitious *Cyropaedia*, Xenophon claims that Cyrus conquered only Arabia, Cyprus and Egypt.[39] According to Ctesias, Cyrus died on the battlefield campaigning against the Derbicae, who were assisted by the Indians and provided with elephants by them. Cyrus was even killed by an Indian who stabbed him with his javelin.[40] However, it is clear in Ctesias' narrative that although the Derbicae got help from the Indians, they were themselves not Indians. The precise location of the Derbicae homeland is unclear: they are either placed near the mouth of the Oxus, or to the south, in Hyrcania.[41] Thus, although Ctesias linked Cyrus' death with an Indian warrior, he did not attribute the conquest of India to him.[42] For lack of evidence, we do not know how far to the east Cyrus advanced.[43] However, in scholarship, there is consensus that the first to conquer parts of India was Darius I, not Cyrus.[44]

The sources of Alexander's time and afterwards also seem to be aware that Cyrus did not go as far east as India. According to Strabo, for example, the city of Cyra or Cyropolis founded by Cyrus and located at the Jaxartes River, the modern Syr Darya, marked the eastern frontier of his empire; Cyropolis marked the place farthest east, where Cyrus had stopped.[45] In addition, Curtius makes clear that Alexander's siege of Cyropolis took place in the context of the revolt of the Bactrians and Sogdians. Thus, Alexander could hardly connect Cyropolis to the conquest of India. From a slightly different perspective, Megasthenes stated that the Indians believe no one else (not even Cyrus) ever invaded India before Alexander, except for the demi-gods Dionysus and Heracles.[46] Citing

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[38] Hdt. 4.44. See Asheri et al., *Commentary*, 613. Herodotus' Cyrus dies in the battle against the Scythian Massagetai (1.211-214). Strabo (11.6.2; 11.8.5-8) locates them near to Hyrcania. Cf. Just. 1.8.

[39] Xen. *Cyr.* 8.6.16. Cf. Briant, *Histoire*, 59.

[40] Ctesias, *FGrH* 688 F 9 (7-8).

[41] Kuhrt, *Empire*, 101, n. 1. Ctesias also mentions that Cyrus made war on the Bactrians and on the Sacae after his defeat of Astyages (Ctesias, *FGrH* 688, F 9 (103)) but not on Indians.

[42] K. Ruffing, "Ktesias' Indienbilder," in *Ktesias' Welt*, J. Wiesehöfer et al., eds. (Wiesbaden, 2011), 354.

[43] Wiesehöfer, *Persien*, 26; Kuhrt, *Empire*, 49.

[44] Ruffing, "Indienbilder," 354; Kuhrt, *Empire*, 189, n. 3; Asheri et al., *Commentary*, 613; Wiesehöfer, *Persien*, 29-30; Briant, *Histoire*, 152-153; P. Callieri, "India iii Relations: Achaemenid Period," *EncIr* 13 (2004), 10-13; P. Kamizadeh, *Alexander Histories and Iranian Reflections*, 141-2.

[45] Strab. 11.9.4; Curt. 7.6.20; Just. 12.5.12. According to Justin, Alexander combined three cities established by Cyrus along the banks of the Tanais river in the Caucasus. Kuhrt, *Empire*, 100 n.1; Hamilton, *PA* 115; Bosworth, *Commentary* II (1995), 141-196.

[46] Arr. *Ind.* 9.10; Strab. 15.1.6.

Megasthenes, Strabo reveals the origins of the linkage between Cyrus and India: Nearchus, Alexander's *nauarchos*.[47] According to Megasthenes, Nearchus wrote Cyrus up to serve as a role-model for Alexander crossing the Gedrosian desert; the claim that Alexander wanted to outdo the Persian king who had fled through the desert on his way back from his Indian campaign also stemmed from Nearchus.[48] This attribution is confirmed by Arrian: in his *Indika*, Arrian cites Nearchus' statement that Cyrus once had conquered the Indus region.[49] Concerning the story about Cyrus' march through Gedrosia, Arrian tells us that in most accounts Cyrus too was said to have reached this part, intending to invade India but failed to do so because he lost the greater part of his army.[50] As a result, we have three different traditions: (1) Cyrus never invaded India; (2) Cyrus tried to invade India but had to return and followed the route through the Gedrosian desert; (3) Cyrus conquered the Indus region. Obviously, all three versions were known to the Alexander historians, but only the latter two served to legitimize Alexander's actions.[51]

To sum up, Nearchus made Alexander follow in Cyrus' footsteps thereby ignoring that in Greek literary tradition the conquest of India seems to have been connected to Darius, not to Cyrus. Perhaps, Nearchus follows Alexander's own propaganda. It is obvious that Alexander chose Cyrus as his role model because he thought him to be popular with Greeks, Macedonians and the native population of the Persian Empire. Darius I will have been popular with the Persians, too, but in Greek and Macedonian eyes, he was a problematic figure. Although Aeschylus depicted him as a wise man, and Herodotus portrayed him as an energetic politician, Darius I was stigmatized by his being the king who oppressed the Ionian revolt, demanded earth and water from Greek cities and started the war that his son Xerxes inherited. In the panhellenic tradition that Alexander and Callisthenes had used earlier in the campaign, Darius I had certainly played a negative role of being the firestarter even though the focus was clearly on his son Xerxes who was seen as the notorious arch-enemy of Greek freedom.[52] In the end, it is possible

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[47] Strab. 15.1.6.

[48] Strab. 15.1.5; 15.2.6. Strabo makes clear that he does not believe in this story.

[49] Arr. *Ind*. 1.4.

[50] Arr. 6.24.3.

[51] The story that Alexander honored the so-called Benefactors, whose ancestors aided Cyrus by giving shelter and supplies to his weary troops, seems to have been treated as a spin-off of this. Thus, the Benefactors are located by Curtius and Diodorus close to Gedrosia, in Drangae. Curt. 7.3.1-3; Diod. 17.81.1-2. However, Arr. 3.27.4-5.

[52] See Curt. 3.10.8; 4.1.11

that in his propaganda and self-representation addressed towards a Greek and Macedonian audience Alexander simply could not afford to be paralleled with Darius I.[53] Thus, there is a dimension of artifice in the ancient reports on Alexander in India. For both Alexander and the Alexander historiographers, history had to be rewritten: Cyrus the suitable role model had to be substituted for the unsuitable Darius. And so Alexander could in fact follow in the steps of Darius, could claim all of the territory as had Darius, he just could not do it in Darius' name.

Commemorating the campaign

If we work from the conclusion that Alexander regarded his mission as accomplished when he had reached Darius' stopping point at the Hyphasis, the king's efforts to commemorate his arrival at this point no longer seem to be meant to conceal his failure and deceive posterity. Based on Ptolemy, Arrian reports that Alexander made the regular sacrifice for the crossing that proved unfavorable and therefore gave orders to go back.[54] Now, from a Near Eastern perspective, attempting to cross a river marking a frontier would have been sufficient to propagate the accomplishment of a mission.[55] According to the ideological concept of the "middle of the ocean" as the sense of being a final boundary or frontier, a distant place at the world's edge, it would have been the final deed to arrive at the coast or the banks and then to attempt to sail to the "middle of the ocean" ostentatiously.[56] Thus, Alexander went on the river, or at least stepped into it, in order to demonstrate that he had reached, in Persian fashion, the "middle of the ocean" and thus the boundary of his realm.

For his part, Ptolemy has chosen to misrepresent this Persian tradition of "reaching the middle but not crossing" as Alexander deciding not to cross the river because of unfavorable oracles. In general, Ptolemy's account of the Hyphasis seems to have been rather short and reserved. The reason will neither have been that he did not know about Alexander's plans to stop at the Hyphasis, nor that he regarded the return as a failure of the ruler. Instead, at this point, the fact that Alexander trod in the footsteps of the Achaemenid kings was too manifest to be ignored. However, the fragments of Ptolemy's

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[53] Cf. Müller, "Perserkönige," 120-122. Strikingly, the Alexander historians seem to have avoided commemorating Darius' achievements in connection with Alexander. Cf. Arr. 5.7.1. Cf. Müller, "Perserkönige," 128.

[54] Arr. 5.28.4-5.

[55] See M. Lang and R. Rollinger, "Im Herzen der Meere und in der Mitte des Meeres," in *Interkulturalität in der Alten Welt*, R. Rollinger et al., eds. (Wiesbaden, 2010), 209-223.

[56] Cf. Lang and Rollinger, "Meere," 224.

historiography show that he employed biased panhellenic clichés regarding the Persians and tried to avoid representing Alexander as a successor of the Achaemenids following their policy.[57] This can be explained by his realm (Egypt), and his audience, obviously conservative Macedonian nobles and Egyptian priests, who did not want to hear about Alexander as a new Achaemenid.[58] Thus, Ptolemy had good reason to cover up anything that made Alexander look too Persian.

But because Alexander had in reality reached the frontier of Persia, he regarded his mission as accomplished and he seems to have wished to confirm his accomplishment in traditional Persian, Near Eastern fashion, by erecting altars.[59] Alexander gave the order to erect twelve altars on the far bank of the Hyphasis, dedicated to the Olympian gods as thank-offerings because they had brought him to the end of his campaign. Here Alexander also performed customary sacrifices on them and held athletic and equestrian games.[60] J. R. Hamilton is probably correct in criticizing as fictitious fancies the accounts

[57] Müller, "Perserkönige," 107-108; S. Müller, "Ptolemaios und das Ölwunder (Arr. 4,15,8)," in *In memoriam V. Lica*, V. Iliescu and D. Nedu, eds. (Galatzi, 2012) (in print); M. Böhme, "Das Perserbild in den Fragmenten der Alexanderhistoriker," in *Studien zur antiken Geschichtsschreibung*, ed. M. Rathmann (Bonn, 2009), 179-180.

[58] T. Howe, "Alexander in India: Ptolemy as Near Eastern Historiographer," in *Macedonian Legacies: Studies in Ancient Macedonian History and Culture in Honor of Eugene N. Borza*, T. Howe and J. Reames, eds., (Claremont, CA, 2008), 215-234 and S. A. Stephens, *Seeing Double. Intercultural Poetics in Ptolemaic Alexandria. Hellenistic Culture and Society, 37,* (Berkeley and L. A., 2002).

[59] At the boundaries of Macedonian control, near Chaeronea and Amphipolis, Alexander's father, Philip erected massive stone lions as well as altars. These are thought to guard the frontier as well as represent Argead royal authority. If this is true, then Alexander is not the first Macedonian king to mark his frontiers in this manner. See E. N. Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus* (Princeton, 1990) for further discussion.

[60] Arr. 5.29.1-2; Curt. 9.3.19; Diod. 17.104.7; Plin. *NH* 6.110. We would like to thank Robert Rollinger for the information that he regards the altars as an aspect of the Near Eastern tradition. Commemorating expansion by setting up monuments was also Achaemenid tradition. Combining ideological and commercial purposes, Darius I completed and reopened Necho II's canal running from the Wadi Tumilat connecting the eastern branch of the Nile to the Red Sea (Hdt. 2.158-159; Diod. 1.33.9; DZc). It is likely that fire altars and associated cults were set up along the canal. About 497/6 probably for the opening of the canal, Darius himself traveled to Egypt, for his last time. Along the banks of the canal four trilingual stelae were set up. The Old Persian text emphasizing Darius' deeds reads: "Saith Darius the King: I am a Persian; from Persia I seized Egypt; I gave order to dig this canal from a river by name Nile which flows in Egypt, to the sea which goes from Persia. Afterwards this canal was dug thus as I had ordered, and ships went from Egypt through his canal to Persia thus as was my desire." (Translation: R. G. Kent). Cf. S. Ruzicka, *Trouble in the West. Egypt and the Persian Empire 525-332 BC* (Oxford, 2012), 24-25; Kuhrt, *Empire*, 189, n. 2, 486, n. 1, 4-5; S. Müller, *Das hellenistische Königspaar in der medialen Präsentation* (Berlin, 2009), 317-319; G. Vittmann, *Ägypten und die Fremden* (Mainz, 2003), 135-136; C. Tuplin, "Darius' Suez Canal and Persian Imperialism," *AchHist* 6 (1990), 237-283.

that Alexander also gave orders to make a camp of heroic proportions with an enormous ditch and rampart, together with massive couches and weapons, in order to create the impression that the Macedonians were giants.[61] This alleged attempt to enhance his fame by deceit would only make sense if Alexander had experienced a setback and was eager to cover it up. Interestingly, Arrian says nothing of this.[62] And yet, Alexander's monuments to commemorate the limit of his campaigns seem to have become legendary quite quickly. In the second century AD, for example, the sophist Philostratus gives us a hint at the way legends about Alexander's monuments at the Hyphasis had developed:

> About thirty stades further on they found altars with this inscription: "to my father Ammon, my brother Heracles, Athena of Forethought, Olympian Zeus, the Cabiri of Samothrace, the Sun of India, and Apollo of Delphi." They say there was also a bronze tablet dedicated there with the legend "Alexander stopped here." We must suppose that the altars were set up by Alexander to honor the limits of his empire, while the Indians across the Hyphasis dedicated the tablet, presumably in order to boast that Alexander had advanced no further (*Life of Apollonius* 2.43).[63]

Having become a regular feature of ancient maps, by the Middle Ages the altars and the alleged bronze stela were highly popular subjects, fuelling the fantasy of many people.[64]

Interestingly, Arrian states that Alexander ordered the altars set up as high as the greatest towers and in breadth even greater than towers.[65] If this was the case, and this information originated from Alexander, there is more to the Near Eastern connection. In the Assyrian ideological language of power, mountains, like seas, figured as markers of frontiers symbolizing world-wide empires. Often, temples or newly founded cities with their buildings are described in similar terms as mountains or rock masses, or even called

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[61] Diod. 17.95.1-2; Plut. *Alex.* 62.3-4; Curt. 9.3.19; Just. 12.8. Cf. Hamilton, *Plutarch*, 174. See also J. C. Yardley and W. Heckel, *Justin. Epitome of the Philippic History of Pompeius Trogus Books 11-12* (Oxford, 1997), 265-266; Wirth, *Persepolis*, 311.

[62] Cf. Wirth, *Persepolis*, 258, n. 11.

[63] We quote the translation by C. P. Jones. We would like to thank Reinhold Bichler for this hint. On Philostratus' passages on Alexander in India cf. G. Anderson, *Philostratus, Biography and Belles Lettres in the Second Century AD* (Dover, 1986), 207-209, 212; Stoneman, *Alexander*, 69; Hamilton, *Plutarch*, 174.

[64] Cf. Demandt, *Alexander*, 271-272; Stoneman, *Alexander*, 69.

[65] Arr. 5.29.1.

mountains or rocks because of their height.[66] Emphasizing height and monumentality, temples and cities are thus equated with mountains. Therefore, it might be possible that the account that Alexander's altars erected at the Hyphasis were extremely high can be explained in terms of an ideological ancient Near Eastern code: The altars were high like towers or mountains and thus marked the frontier of his empire close to the end of his "world."

Roman perceptions

From a military standpoint, the events at the Hyphasis, as we currently have them in the extant sources, are also curious. In substance they most resemble literary accounts of *Roman* indiscipline.[67] In a way, this makes sense, but only if we read the accounts we have as historiographical, rather than strictly factual. And yet, as we have noted above, this has not been the traditional perspective. Joseph Roisman, for example, is only the latest scholar to see the literary descriptions of the Hyphasis "discontent" as an accurate reflection of "the nature of the troops' wishes and grievances, how they expressed them, the reason for their success and failure, and what they learned from these experiences," and even though he fully acknowledges the limitations of the sources, he still falls victim to their embedded nature.[68] Here, we suggest a different approach: grappling with the Roman filter directly. First, as we have argued, it is important to recognize that both historical actors like Alexander and the ancient historiographers

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[66] Cf. R. Rollinger, "Berg und Gebirge aus altorientalischer Perspektive," in *Gipfel der Zeit,* W. Kofler et al. eds. (Freiburg, 2010), 18-29.

[67] Lee L. Brice first identified these source parallels between Alexander's relationship with his army and later Roman commanders and theirs in a paper we attended a year ago in Calgary, forthcoming as "Seleucus I." We are especially grateful to him for sharing the finished manuscript. Brice's foundational work has been pivotal in identifying key passages and guiding our own research, though with all due respect to his fresh and innovative thesis that these parallels between Alexander's and the Roman forces were actual rather than historiographical, in what follows we present a different interpretation.

[68] J. Roisman, *Alexander's Veterans,* 31. So, too J. Atkinson, "Honour in the Ranks of Alexander the Great's Army," *Acta Classica* 53 (2010), 15-16, E. Carney, "Macedonians and Mutiny," and most recently L. L. Brice, "Seleucus I." Such *a priori* approaches ignore the constructed nature of the Alexander narratives. Cf. E. Baynham, *Alexander the Great: the Unique History of Quintus Curtius* (Ann Arbor, 1998); "The Ancient Evidence for Alexander the Great," in *Brill's Companion to Alexander the Great*, J. Roisman, ed. (Leiden, 2003), 3-30; "Barbarians I: Quintus Curtius' and other Roman historians' reception of Alexander," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Historians,* A. Feldherr, ed. (Cambridge, 2009), 288-300; and D. Spencer, *The Roman Alexander: Reading a Cultural Myth* (Exeter, 2002); "Roman Alexanders: Epistemology and Identity," in *Alexander the Great: A New History,* W. Heckel and L. A. Tritle, eds. (Malden, MA, 2009), 251-74.

created context in an attempt to present historical facts in a certain, topically relevant and therefore culturally understandable frameworks. In short, when an historical individual's actions did not suit agenda, literary arc or cultural/political perspective, our ancient authorities cobbled together their own backstory or narrative context and thereby wove a chain of cause and effect that made historical actions understandable, morally satisfying and, most importantly, useful to both the authors and their audiences.[69] Consequently, for Roman-era historiographers such as Diodorus, Trogus, Curtius, and Arrian, past events (and even other literary narratives) were simply raw data to be mined, manipulated and knit together in a meaningful, relevant and, above all, literarily satisfying, narrative.

For Curtius and especially Arrian, who himself served as a Roman commander, the literary context most convenient for making sense of the events at the Hyphasis was the indiscipline on the Rhine and Danube frontiers in the times of the emperor Tiberius. As we have argued, Alexander's decision to halt at the Hyphasis was neither satisfying nor understandable to a post-Alexander Roman or Greek audience, and so Curtius and Arrian reached for contextual parallels and, at least in the case of Arrian, his own Roman military experience. These later authors did so because unlike Alexander's army, which these Roman authors imperfectly understood, the Roman military had a complex means of control that included physical, mental and social components reinforced with positive as well as negative sanctions.[70] Since Curtius and Arrian could not accept that Alexander had willingly turned back, for many of the historiographical reasons we have argued above, and a military commander as they would have understood Alexander could never ask the troops for their opinions, Curtius and Arrian either consciously or otherwise viewed the events on the Hyphasis in a Roman way, as a mutiny.

By the time of Curtius and Arrian, military unrest had developed a wide literary vocabulary. Latin and Greek authors had adopted an array of terms (both nouns and verbs) including: *seditio* (mutiny, revolt, insubordination), *motus* and *defectio* (rebellion), *res novae* (revolution), *desciscare* (to defect, revolt), *discordia* (discord), *turba* (disturbance), *tumultus* (riot), *bellum civile* (civil war), *coniuratio* (conspiracy), *infidelitas* (disloyalty), and *desertor* (defector), *desero* and *relinquo* (to desert), στάσις (strife,

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[69] See R. Nicolai, "The Place of History in the Ancient World," in *A Companion to Greek and Roman Historiography*, J. Marincola, ed. (Malden, MA, 2007), 13-26, for a discussion of the relevant literature.

[70] Although Alexander had faced insubordination during the course of his campaign, his treatment was *ad hoc* and inconsistent, ranging from the execution of Menander for insubordination in leaving his post (Plut. *Alex.* 57.3), to the creation of the "disciplinary unit" following Philotas' execution (Arr. 3.26.4; Diod. 17.80.4; Curt. 7.2.28-32 and 36), see Brice, "Seleucus I" for further discussion.

conflict, mutiny), νεωτερίζω and νεοχμόω (to revolt), ἐμφύλιος πόλεμος (civil war), θορυβέω and ταράσσω (to cause an uproar, tumult), συνωμοσία and ἐπιβούλευμα (conspiracy), μεθίστημι (to defect), and ἀταξία (disorder, indiscipline).[71] All our Alexander historiographers had to do was exploit this rich terminology and context.

For Arrian, Tacitus' narrative of the Pannonian and Rhine mutinies was a useful treasure-trove. Arrian seems to have mined Tacitus for language and situations about royal mutinies, Curtius at least expresses similar thoughts, with only minor differences in focus:[72] Curtius centers round the soldiers, while Arrian focuses on the Companions and their resistance to Alexander's plans, and seems more intent to rely on his own military experience, paired with Tacitus, or even Curtius' own rhetorical flourishes.[73] A few comparisons should suffice to establish the pattern: (1) In 5.25.3, Arrian relates that as the soldiers learned of Alexander's plans to cross the river they "began meeting in small groups" to plan their dissent, "with some men unhappy and other refusing to continue." This description is clearly intertextual with Tacitus' account of the Pannonian Mutiny of 14 CE.[74] (2) In Curtius 9.2.27, Alexander tries to lure the disaffected men across the Hyphasis by promising them a plunder campaign. This is intertexual with Tacitus' Germanicus' actions with mutineers on the Rhine, though in that case Germanicus succeeded while at the Hyphasis Alexander failed.[75] (3) Later on, Coenus speaks to Alexander on behalf of the Companions (in Arrian's account) and the common soldiers (in Curtius' account). Likewise, Tacitus' report include spokesmen.[76] (4) Among

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[71] We are grateful to L. L. Brice for this list of terms.

[72] A. B. Bosworth, "Mountain and molehill? Cornelius Tacitus and Quintus Curtius," *CQ* 54 (2004), 551-567, argues that Tacitus follows Curtius, and even though we don't have clear dates for Curtius, or even a clear sense of who he is (see E. Baynham, *Unique History*), if Bosworth is right about Curtius' context and literary impact, he would be using the Hyphasis Mutiny to comment on the relevant, and recent, mutinies under Tiberius. Tacitus, who would also see the relevance, borrowed these descriptions for his own work. Finally, Arrian, perhaps using the descriptive language of both Tacitus and Curtius, though modifying the perspective and setting to follow his own sources and agenda, further embeds the Alexander story in a Roman military context.

[73] For example, Arrian relies on his own experience to observe that Alexander took to his tent to give the men a chance to change their minds, "as is often the way of a crowd of soldiers" (5.28.3). By the early empire it was quite common for authors to use previous works in this fashion. E. O'Gorman, "Intertextuality and historiography," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Roman Historians*, Andrew Feldherr, ed. (Cambridge, 2009), 231-242.

[74] Tacitus, *Ann.* 1.16. Brice, "Seleucus I."

[75] Tacitus, *Ann.* 1.49.

[76] Tacitus, *Ann.* 1.21-29.

Alexander's troops assemblies are held (among the general soldiery in Curtius, among the Companions in Arrian). A similar *contio* is reported by Tacitus, in which the soldiers air their grievances and Drusus promises to report to Tiberius. In the end, Drusus has all of the ringleaders arrested and the mutiny ended.[77] All educated Romans would have been familiar with Tacitus' accounts by the time Arrian published his narrative about Alexander, and this audience would certainly have drawn parallels between Alexander and Drusus and Alexander and Germanicus, as well as Alexander and Tiberius. For his part, Curtius may also have expected his readers to understand Alexander as Tiberius, more ambitious than reasonable.[78]

These parallels are not just coincidence. It is telling that both pre-Emperor Tiberius Roman authors, Diodorus and Trogus-Justin, view the events on the Hyphasis quite differently. Their narratives are more simple and do not contain these rhetorical inventions of spokesmen, soldiers' assemblies and out-of-touch commanders. Both Diodorus (17. 94.1-5) and Justin (12.8.10-17) suggest that Alexander stopped where he planned on stopping—at the Hyphasis. While Alexander did consider moving forward, across the river, he sought out his men and asked their opinions. When they reported they wanted to go back, he agreed. Indeed, in a separate section, Diodorus, likely following Hieronymus of Cardia, reports that Alexander himself did not wish to cross the river and fight the Gandaridai.[79]

Conclusions

Alexander planned to end his campaign at the Hyphasis, at the frontier established by Darius I. Probably, Alexander pretended that thereby he was following in the footsteps of Cyrus the Great, not of Darius, whose reputation in Greek cultural memory was too problematic to be emulated. By having extended his control over the whole of the Achaemenid Empire at this point, Alexander's mission was accomplished. The altars he set up on the far bank of the Hyphasis commemorated his achievement of conquering Persia rather than some sort of premature stop, where Alexander was foiled in his ambitions by his weary troops. Although Alexander might have crossed the river or reached its middle, to show symbolically that he had arrived at the distant mythical place of the world's end at the "middle of the sea," he did not choose to penetrate further into India. The longing for the *okeanos* is a mythos constructed by post-Alexander

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[77] Tacitus, *Ann.* 1.30.

[78] Curt. 9.2.9-12; Spencer, "Roman Alexanders."

[79] Diod. 2.37.2; 18.6.1; A. B. Bosworth, *A Historical Commentary on Arrian*, vol II (Oxford, 1995), 340.

sources. Later, long after Alexander's death the story evolved further into a Roman-style "mutiny" by weary troops and a forced return that was regarded as a setback and as a failure in Alexander's generalship. Here we have suggested that these historiographical misreadings of the events at the Hyphasis resulted from four different aspects: (1) the focus on an artificial image of Alexander the obsessed world conqueror who did not know any limits; (2) the lack of knowledge (or deliberate misrepresentation) among ancient Greek and Roman sources about Achaemenid traditions regarding boundaries; (3) the long tradition marking India a marvelous wonderland and thus obscuring its Achaemenid significance; and (4) the Roman views concerning the discipline of soldiers. In the end, our extant the Roman sources combined the accounts of the severe toils, discontent of the soldiers and Alexander's alleged relentless aim to reach the world's end with their lack of knowledge about the political relevance of the Indian campaign and then conjured up the mutiny as a reasonable explanation. We end with this final point: the sources upon which we must rely reported most *actions* accurately, right up to the point where they drew very false, but internally satisfying *conclusions* about the background, moral character and (especially) motives of the individuals involved in those actions.

TIMOTHY HOWE
ST. OLAF COLLEGE

SABINE MÜLLER
CHRISTIAN ALBRECHTS-UNIVERSITÄT ZU KIEL