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Relations Between Greece and Central Asia in Antiquity: An Examination of the Written Sources

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PREFACE

The eastward expedition of Alexander the Great of Macedonia is an important event in ancient world history. After the death of Darius III, Alexander marched into Central Asia in order to completely conquer the Achaemenid Empire and establish himself as the Lord of Asia. This move, especially as it resulted in the Greco-Bactria Kingdom founded after Alexander's death, had a profound influence on the history of Central Asia, leaving a deep national and cultural imprint on Central Asia and even the northwest subcontinent. Moreover, the Greco-Bactria Kingdom also played an important role in contact and communication between the cultures of East and West.

Owing to the lack of data, especially of literature, many of the issues in the above process have hitherto remained obscure. Based as far as possible on considerations of existing scholarly achievements, this paper intends to discuss some major links between the regions in this time, with the intention of filling the gaps in my own understanding of this period of history.

1. THE BACKGROUND OF AND OPPORTUNITY FOR THE MACEDONIAN ALEXANDER'S MARCH INTO CENTRAL ASIA

A

In 359 BCE, Philip II (382–336 BCE) came to the throne of Macedonia. Under his rule, the kingdom became strong, and it ascended to the status of one of the most important principalities of Greece. He convened a representative assembly of the Greek states and principalities in Corinth. The assembly decided to set up the Corinthian League and organize an expeditionary force to declare war on the Achaemenid Empire, in retaliation for long-standing crimes committed by the Persians against the Greeks.¹

Philip II was assassinated in the summer of 336 BCE, just as the Macedonians were mobilizing for an expedition to Asia. Philip's son, Alexander, twenty years old at the time, succeeded him. He went first to Corinth where he renewed the treaties of 338 BCE and received the title of commander in chief of the allied forces that were to advance into Asia.

Alexander, after putting down rebellions in the Balkans and other places and razing Thebes to the ground, thus eliminating such worries, declared war on the Achaemenid dynasty, when Darius III (380–330 BCE) was on the throne.

By the fourth century BCE, the once strong Achaemenid dynasty had begun to decline. The Persians had been living in luxury and indulging in pleasure, and they were militarily weakened. In short, a very old empire faced the young and ambitious Alexander.

From Alexander's letter to Darius III after the battle of Granicus in 334 BCE,² recorded in Arrian's *Anabasis Alexandri*³, we know clearly what the Macedonian eastward expedition was about:

Your ancestors invaded Macedonia and the rest of Greece and did us great harm, though we had done them no prior injury; I have been appointed *hegemon* of the Greeks, and invaded Asia in the desire to take vengeance on Persia for your aggressions. For you assisted Perinthus⁴, which wronged my father, and Ochus⁵ sent a force into Thrace⁶, which was under our rule. My father was murdered by conspirators, whom you Persians

organized, as you yourselves boasted in your letters to all the world;⁷ you assassinated Arses⁸ with the help of Bagoas⁹ and seized the throne unjustly and in actual contravention of Persian law, doing wrong to Persians; you sent unfriendly letters to the Greeks about me, urging them to make war on me. You despatched sums of money to the Lacedaemonians¹⁰ and certain other Greeks, which no other city accepted but the Lacedaemonians. Your envoys destroyed my friends and sought to destroy the peace I had established in Greece. Although I marched against you, it was you that started the quarrel.

As I have conquered in battle first your generals and satraps, and now yourself and your own force, and am in possession of the country by the gift of heaven, I hold myself responsible for all of your troops who did not die in the field but took refuge with me; they are with me of their own free will, and voluntarily serve in my army. You must then regard me as Lord of all Asia and come to me. If you fear that by coming you may receive some harm at my hands, send some of your friends to receive pledges. Ask for your mother, wife and children and what you will, when you have come, and you will receive them. You shall have whatever you persuade me to give. And in future when you send to me, make your addresses to the king of Asia, and do not correspond as an equal, but tell me, as lord of all your possessions, what you need; otherwise I shall make plans to deal with you as a wrongdoer. But if you claim the kingship, stand your ground and fight for it and do not flee, as I shall pursue you wherever you are. (II, 14)

Alexander counted one by one the crimes that the Achaemenid dynasty had committed against Greece, so it can be seen that his primary goals were to recover the ashes,¹¹ destroy the Achaemenid dynasty, and force Darius III to bow to Alexander's throne. It is noteworthy that he not only intended to conquer the Achaemenid dynasty, but also to make himself the "King of Asia" by doing so.

In fact, Alexander had made it clear, when he crossed the Hellespont¹² strait with his troops, that he intended to be King of Asia". According to Diodorus' *Bibliotheca Historica*¹³:

Alexander advanced with his army to the Hellespont and transported it from Europe to Asia. He personally sailed with sixty fighting ships to the Troad¹⁴, where he flung his spear from the ship and fixed it in the ground, and then leapt ashore himself the first of the Macedonians, signifying that he received Asia from the gods as a spear-won prize. (XVII, 17.2)

Some think that this was merely a classical declaration of attack, modeled after Protesilaus,¹⁵ and thus perfectly suited to a war of revenge, but in fact there was a deeper meaning: since Alexander then claimed that God had granted him Asia, this was territory won by the spear, which indicates that he intended to expand his kingdom by force to cover the entire continent of Asia.¹⁶

Before the battle of Gaugamela (331 BCE), Darius had offered to cede all his territory as far as the Euphrates River, to redeem his family by paying a ransom of thirty thousand talents,¹⁷ and to marry his eldest daughter, Stateira¹⁸, to Alexander, but Alexander refused.¹⁹ This also indicates that Alexander's goal in the eastern expedition was not just to destroy the Achaemenid dynasty, but to conquer all of Asia.

B

As early as the reign period of Darius I (550–486 BCE), the Achaemenid dynasty had already possessed Central Asia, and this seems to have remained the same until the enthronement of Darius III. In other words, the conquest of the Achaemenid dynasty would mean the conquest of Central Asia.

In fact, before Alexander's march into Central Asia, the troops from all over Central Asia under the rule of the Achaemenid dynasty were engaged in the battle of Darius III against the Macedonian invasion. According to Arrian, the army under Darius that faced off against Macedonian forces was very large at the battle of Gaugamela²⁰ in 331 BCE, because of the great number of reinforcements, swollen by troops from all over Central Asia:

It was large because Darius had obtained the help of those Indians who bordered on the Bactrians²¹, together with the Bactrians and Sogdians²² themselves, all under the

command of Bessus, the satrap of Bactria. They were joined by Sacae²³, a Scythian people²⁴, belonging to the Scyths who inhabit Asia, who came, not as subjects of Bessus, but on the basis of an alliance with Darius; Mauaces was their commander, and they were mounted archers. Barsaentes, satrap of the Arachotians²⁵, led both the Arachotians and the Indian hillmen, as they were called, Satibarzanes, their satrap, the Areians²⁶, Phrataphernes the Parthyaeans²⁷, Hyrcanians²⁸ and Topeirians²⁹, all cavalry, ... (III, 8)

The Sogdians, Bactrians, Sacae, and Arachotians who were part of the troops present in Darius III's army can all be classified as belonging to Central Asia, as their homelands were there. And, according to Aristobulus³⁰ report, after the battle, Alexander found Darius' written documents deploying his troops: "His left wing was held by the Bactrian Cavalry with the Dahae³¹ and Arachotians," according to the documents. Not only that, but, "facing Alexander's right, had been posted the Scythian cavalry, some thousand Bactrians, and a hundred chariots carrying Scythes."³² That is to say, the heavy responsibility of the left wing of the Persian army mainly fell on the shoulders of the forces from Central Asian, which was a testament to Darius III's faith in them. In fact, troops from Central Asia did play an important role in the fighting. Arrian records the following:

As the armies were now nearing one another, Darius and his immediate followers were in full sight; there were the Persians 'with the Golden Apples', Indians, Albanians³³, the 'transplanted' Carians³⁴ and the Mardian³⁵ archers, all ranged opposite Alexander himself and the royal squadron. But Alexander moved his men rather in the direction of his right, on which the Persians moved accordingly, their left far outflanking Alexander's army. The Scythian cavalry, riding along Alexander's line, were already in contact with the troops posted in front of it; but Alexander still continued steadily his march towards his right and was nearly clear of the ground which had been made a treadable level by the Persians. This made Darius fear that if the Macedonians reached the uneven ground his chariots would cease to be of service, and he ordered the troops in advance of his left wing to ride round the Macedonian right, where Alexander was

leading, so that they might not prolong their wing any farther. In reply Alexander ordered his mercenary cavalry under Menidas to charge them. At once the Scythian cavalry and those of the Bactrians brigaded with them rushed out in a countercharge, and drove them back, as they were far more numerous than Menidas' small squadron. But Alexander ordered the Paeonians with Ariston and the mercenaries to charge the Scythians, and the barbarians wavered. The rest of the Bactrians, however, came up against the Paeonians and mercenaries, restored to the battle those on their own side who were then turning to flight, and made the cavalry engagement a close one. Alexander's men fell in greater numbers, under pressure from the number of the barbarians, and also because the Scythians, riders and horses alike, were better protected by defensive armour. Yet even so the Macedonians stood up against their onsets, attacked vigorously, squadron after squadron, and broke their formation. (III, 13)

So the battle between the Macedonians and the Central Asians had already begun at the battle of Gaugamela. In this campaign the Central Asians had shown the Macedonians their valor.

C

Alexander's march into Central Asia began with the pursuit of Darius III. This may not have been his original plan. In a sense, it's fair to say that Alexander seized this opportunity and began his war of conquest in Central Asia. According to Arrian's records:

Darius made straight from the battle by the Armenian³⁶ mountains for Media³⁷, accompanied in flight by the Bactrian cavalry, as they had been posted with him in the battle on that occasion; he also had an escort of Persians, the royal kinsmen and a few of the 'spearmen of the Golden Apples'. He was joined during the flight by some two thousand of the foreign mercenaries led by Patron the Phocian³⁸ and Glaucus the Aetolian³⁹. The reason why he fled towards Media was that he thought Alexander after the battle would take the route to Susa⁴⁰ and Babylon, since all of it was inhabited and

the road itself was easy for the baggage trains, and besides, Babylon and Susa were the obvious prize of the war, whereas the route to Media was not easy for a large force. (III, 16)

Darius III's judgement was right. As soon as Alexander left Arbela⁴¹, he took the road to Babylon. The Babylonians offered their city and surrendered. Appointing officers to defend the city, Alexander himself marched to Susa with his troops. The Susans also sacrificed their city and surrendered. (III, 16) Alexander left Susa, crossed the Pasitigres River⁴², and attacked the Uxians⁴³, forcing them to surrender (III, 17). Then, dividing the army into two branches, Alexander attacked the Persian capital, and he himself advanced through a mountainous area with his troops and captured the Persian gates⁴⁴ and occupied Persepolis⁴⁵ after fierce battles (III, 18).

In May 330 BCE, hearing that Darius had fled to Media, Alexander left Persepolis and marched into Media. According to Arrian,

Darius had determined, if Alexander were to remain at Susa and Babylon, to wait himself where he was in Media, in case there were any new developments on Alexander's side, but if Alexander were to march straight against him, he proposed to go up country to the Parthyaeans⁴⁶ and Hyrcania, as far as Bactra⁴⁷, ravaging all the country and making further progress impossible for Alexander. He sent the women, all the belongings he had still with him and the closed waggons to what are called the Caspian gates⁴⁸, while he stayed himself in Ecbatana⁴⁹ with the force he had collected from available resources. (III, 19)

Also, according to Arrian, Alexander conquered the Paraetaceae⁵⁰ on his way to the Media. Afterwards:

As he was informed on the road that Darius had decided to meet him in battle and fight it out again, since he had been joined by Scythian and Cadusian⁵¹ allies, he ordered the draught animals with their keepers and all the rest of the stores to follow, while he took the rest of the army with him ready for battle. He reached Media on the twelfth day.

There he learned that Darius' force was not capable of fighting and that the Cadusians and Scythians had not arrived to help him, but that Darius had resolved on flight. Alexander marched on all the more rapidly. But when he was about three days' journey from Ecbatana he was met by Bisthanes son of Ochus, the predecessor of Darius as King of Persia, who reported that Darius had fled four days before, with his treasure from Media of seven thousand Talents and with about three thousand cavalry and about six thousand infantry. (III, 19)

After arriving at Media, Alexander pursued Darius in the direction of Ecbatana, from which he returned to the Parthyaens. (III, 19) It took eleven days for Alexander to get to Rhagae⁵², and after five days' rest, Alexander marched on to the Parthyaens, camped near the Caspian gates, and crossed the gates the next day. (III, 20)

However, the situation then took a sharp turn, because Darius III was kidnapped by his liegemen. According to Arrian's records,

At this point Bagistanes came to him from Darius' camp, a Babylonian and a noble, with Antibelus, one of Mazaeus' sons. They reported that Nabarzanes, chiliarch of the cavalry which had shared Darius' flight, Bessus satrap of Bactria and Barsaentes satrap of the Arachotians and the Drangians,⁵³ had arrested Darius. On learning this Alexander pressed on faster than ever, with only the Companions, the mounted *prodromoi*, and the strongest and lightest of the infantry, carefully selected, without even waiting for Coenus and his men to return from foraging. He put Craterus in command of those left behind and ordered him to follow, but not by forced marches. His own men had nothing but their arms and two days' rations. Travelling all night and the next day till noon, he rested his troops a short time and then went on again all night, and at dawn he reached the camp, from which Bagistanes had started back. But he did not overtake the enemy, though he learnt that Darius was being carried in a closed waggon under arrest, that Bessus had the sovereignty in place of Darius and had been saluted as leader by the Bactrian cavalry and the other barbarians who had fled with Darius, except by

Artabazus and his sons and the Greek mercenaries, that they were loyal to Darius, and as they were unable to prevent what was taking place, had turned off the main road and were making for the mountains by themselves, taking no part in the action of Bessus and his followers, while those who had seized Darius had decided, if they learned that Alexander was pursuing them, to give him up to Alexander and make good terms for themselves, but if they learned that he had turned back, to collect as large an army as they could and preserve their power in common; Bessus was in command for the time because of his relationship to Darius and because the act was done in his satrapy.

(III, 21)

It's worth noting that the mastermind behind Darius' kidnapping was Bessus, the satrap of Bactria, and he was supported by Barsaentes, the satrap of the Arachotians and the Drangians, and others. These three areas were all satrapies in Central Asia under the Achaemenid dynasty. Due to their distance from the ruling center of the Achaemenid dynasty, they were often in a semi-independent state. Once the central power declined, their centrifugal tendency appeared to spin them off. They kidnapped Darius III, though it was not their intention to please Alexander. At best, they saw Darius III as a bargaining chip with Alexander. And what they called preserving their power in common actually meant they intended to defend their own particular territories.

By the time Alexander caught up with Bessus' party, Darius III had died. Here is Arrian's account of what happened next:

On hearing this, Alexander decided that he must pursue with the utmost vigour. Already his men and horses were growing utterly wearied under the continued hardship; none the less, he pressed on, and accomplishing a great distance during the night and the following day till noon, he reached a village where the party with Darius had bivouacked the day before. As he heard there that the barbarians had determined to travel by night, he asked the inhabitants whether they knew of any short cut to get to the fugitives. They replied that they did, but that the road was desolate for lack of water. He told them to guide him along this road and seeing that his infantry would not keep up with him if he

pushed on at full speed, he dismounted some five hundred horsemen, selected from the officers of the infantry and the rest those who had best kept up their strength, and ordered them to mount the horses, carrying their usual infantry arms. Nicanor, the commander of the hypaspists, and Attalus, commander of the Agrianians⁵⁴, were ordered to lead the men who were left behind along the road already taken by Bessus and his party with the lightest possible equipment, and the rest of the infantry were to follow in ordinary formation. Alexander then started off himself at evening, and led his troops on at full speed; during the night he covered up to four hundred stades,⁵⁵ and just at dawn came upon the Persians marching in disorder without arms, so that only a few of them attempted resistance; as soon as they saw Alexander himself, most of them did not even wait to come to close quarters but took to flight; those who did turn to make a fight of it also fled on losing a few of their number. For a time Bessus and his immediate followers continued to convey Darius with them in the closed waggon; but when Alexander was right upon them, Satibarzanes and Barsaentes wounded Darius, left him where he was and escaped themselves with six hundred horsemen. Darius died of his wound soon after, before Alexander had seen him. (III, 21)

Alexander sent Darius' body to Persepolis, ordering it to be buried in the royal tomb, like the other kings who ruled before him. (III, 22)

The death of Darius III did not stop Alexander's march; instead, he entered Central Asia, going in hot pursuit of the regicide Bessus and others.

At one meeting, in the face of the war-weariness of the Macedonian army, which was unwilling to continue its march into Asia, Alexander delivered a long speech. In his speech, he stressed that if they withdrew from Asia, the Macedonians would face the danger of rebellion. Quintus Curtius⁵⁶ gives a clear account about Alexander's views of the tribes in Central Asia at that time:

Nabarzanes has taken possession of Hyrcania, the murderer Bessus not only holds Bactra, but he also threatens us; the Sogdiani, Dahae, Massagetae⁵⁷, Sacae, and Indi are

independent. All these, as soon as they see our backs, will follow them; for they are of the same nation, we are of an alien race and foreigners. (VI, 3. 9–10)

Alexander now was no longer talking about revenge, but rather about the annexation of an empire. He wanted to be the successor to Darius III, taking all the territory of the Achaemenid dynasty and allowing no part of it to remain independent.⁵⁸

So he marched into Hyrcania, which was on the left side of the main road to Bactria. Realizing that the mercenaries who had followed Darius III had taken this route to escape to the Tapurian hills, he divided his army into three parts; he himself took the shortest and most difficult route with the least armed troops to a city called Zadracarta⁵⁹, where the Hyrcanians lived. (III, 23) After that, he attacked the Mardians on the southwestern border of Hyrcania and forced them to surrender. (III, 24) After a delay of fifteen days in Zadracarta, he marched on Parthyaea. From there Alexander entered Areia. (III, 25) In this way, because of pursuing the regicide Bessus, Alexander embarked on a journey through Central Asia without a stop.

The march to Central Asia has a special status and important significance in Alexander's whole eastward expedition.

1. Although the capital of the Achaemenid dynasty had already fallen and Darius III was dead, the Achaemenid dynasty covered a vast territory that could quickly become unsettled, and the only way to set people's minds at rest was to kill the regicide Bessus. To punish Bessus, Central Asia must be conquered. And Alexander understood that Persia could not be conquered by force alone.
2. Without the conquest of Central Asia, the task of conquering Persia was not accomplished (Persia's northeast border lay far beyond the Syr River). Despite the death of Darius III, Bactria and other satrapies in Central Asia under the rule of the original Achaemenid dynasty had not yet submitted themselves to the Macedonians, and Bessus also proclaimed himself "King of Asia". In Alexander's mind, to conquer all of Asia, it was necessary to conquer every part of the land under the rule of the Achaemenid dynasty.

3. As for Alexander, after conquering Persia, his next action was to attack India. If there was no peace north of the Hindu Kush, there would be fear of attacks from behind. Only by conquering Central Asia could he go on to conquer India and complete the task of conquering Asia.

In short, what underlay Alexander's march into Central Asia was his intention to become the hegemon of the whole of Asia, and that was triggered by the fact that Darius III had fled east after his defeat in Gaugamela's battle and then been kidnapped and killed by the satrap of Bactria and others on the way. With Alexander's march into Central Asia, Central Asia entered a new historical period.

NOTES

¹ Darius I (550–486 BCE) of the Achaemenid dynasty first invaded Greece in 492–490 BCE. Xerxes I (486–465 BCE) then invaded again in 480 BCE.

² The letter is thought to have been written on the eve of the battle of Gaugamela. Cf. Bosworth1980, pp. 227–229, 259. Gaugamela lay roughly on the Bumodus River, about six hundred stades from Arbela to the east of Mosul in present-day Northern Iraq.

³ Brunt1983.

⁴ Perinthus, a city in Thrace, on the Marmara Sea in present-day Turkey.

⁵ Ochus, Darius II of the Achaemenid Empire (423–404 BCE).

⁶ Thrace, an ancient place name in Southern Europe, now belongs to Bulgaria, Greece, and Turkey.

⁷ This refers to the assassination of Philip II.

⁸ Bagoas, a minister of the Achaemenid Empire (died in 336 BCE).

⁹ Arses, a monarch of the Achaemenid Empire (r. 338–336 BCE).

¹⁰ Lacedaemon, also known as Sparta, was the city-state in Laconia in Ancient Greece, in what is now Southern Greece.

¹¹ Alexander's burning of the palace at Persepolis is a typical revenge behavior.

¹² Hellespont, the present-day Gallipoli Channel.

¹³ Geer1984.

¹⁴ Troad, the Biga peninsula in present-day Turkey.

15 Protesilaus, a hero of the Trojan War in ancient Greek mythology

16 Bosworth1988, pp. 38–39.

17 Talent, a unit of weight, whose value varies from place to place.

18 Stateira, a daughter of Darius III, who was captured after the defeat of Issus in 333 BCE.

19 On the event at which Darius III sued for peace, there are differing accounts in the historical sources. About the event, Bosworth1988, pp. 75–76, has an analysis and summary.

20 The battle of Gaugamela, also known as the battle of Arbela. Gaugamela was to the east of modern Mosul in present-day Northern Iraq. Alexander defeated Darius III here in 331 BCE.

21 Bactria, located between the Hindu Kush Mountains and the Amu Darya in Northern Afghanistan.

22 Sogdiana, an area between the Amu Darya and Syr Darya, centered on the valley of the Zerafshan River.

23 Sacae, an alliance of nomadic tribes, was formed by Asii and four other tribes. They originally lived in the valley of the Ili River and the Chu River, and then they moved to the west, driving out the Massagetae people, who originally lived on the north bank of Syr Darya.

24 Scythia, a Persian general term for nomadic tribes to the north of Persia, especially north of the Syr Darya,

25 Arachosia, an ancient area located in present-day Southern Afghanistan.

26 Aria (Arei), an ancient place name for the area around present-day Herat in Northwestern Afghanistan.

27 Parthyaeus, or Parthia, was in what is now Northeastern Iran.

28 Hyrcania, a satrapy of the Achaemenid Empire, included provinces in the Caspian coastal area in present-day Northern Iran and on the south bank of the Caspian Sea in Western Turkmenistan.

29 The Tapurians, an ancient indigenous people near the Caspian Sea, lived in the Alborz Mountains in the provinces of Mazandaran and Gilan in present-day Northern Iran.

30 Aristobulus was a Greek historian and engineer who accompanied Alexander on his campaign to the east.

31 Dahae, a nomadic tribe in ancient Central Asia, one branch of the Scythian people. It is known as “Dayi 大益” in the “Dayuan liezhuan” of *Shiji* 史記 (ch. 123); see SimaQ1975, pp. 3157–3180; similarly hereinafter.

32 According to Quintus Curtius (IV, 12), there were also one thousand cavalry. See Rolfe1956.

33 Albania, an ancient region in what is now the Balkans.

34 Caria, a satrapy of the Achaemenid Empire in Western Anatolia.

35 The Mardia, a mountain tribe of Iran, lived in various parts of the Near East. For details, see Gregoratti2014.

36 Armenia, in the highlands around the Ararat Mountains, became part of the Achaemenid Empire by the end of the

sixth century BCE.

37 Media, an ancient area in present-day Northwest Iran.

38 Phocia, an area of ancient Greece.

39 Aetolia, a mountainous region on the northern shore of Corinth Bay in Greece.

40 Susa, east of the Tigris River, is the city of Susa in Khuzestan Province, in present-day Iran.

41 Arbela, located in the present-day Arbil, 80 km east of Mosul, Kurdistan, Iraq.

42 Pasitigres River, a section of the Tigris River south of Susa first splits into two channels near Apamea and then converges. The channel after the convergence is called the Pasitigris River, as seen in Pliny (VI, 27).

43 Uxians, semi-nomadic people in the Zagros mountains of Southwestern Iran.

44 The Persian Gates, a pass in the Zagros Mountains on the border of Elam and Persis, two satrapies of the Achaemenid Empire, currently known as Tang-e Meyran, on the border of the Fars and Kohgiluyeh Boyer-Ahmed provinces.

45 Persepolis, a site 70 km northeast of Shiraz in the Fars Province of present-day Iran.

46 Parthyaea, or Parthia, a satrapy of the Achaemenid Empire in present-day northeastern Iran.

47 Bactra, capital of Bactria, on the southern bank of the Amu Darya northwest of Mazar-e Sharif of the province, present-day Northern Afghanistan.

48 The Caspian Gates, generally known in the present day as Dariel Pass, was located on the southwest coast of the Caspian Sea.

49 Ecbatana, the capital of Media, Hamadan in present-day Iran.

50 Paraetaceae, whose home was Paraetacene, 87 km northeast of the ruins of Persepolis in the Fars Province of present-day Iran. Cf. chapter 2, note 2, of this paper.

51 Cadusia, one of the Scythian tribes, nomadic, in Northwestern Iran.

52 Rhagae, now Rey, is 15 kilometers south of Tehran, the Iranian capital.

53 Drangiana, a satrapy of the Achaemenid Empire, was located around present-day Hamun Lake.

54 The Agrian, an ancient tribe, were concentrated in upper Strymon, in present-day western Bulgaria.

55 Stade (*stadia*), a unit of length in ancient Greek. One stade equals 202 yards, or about 180 meters.

56 Rolfe1956.

57 The Massagetae, an ancient nomadic tribe, once ruled the north bank of the Syr Darya. Later, they were driven out of their home by the nomadic tribes Asii from the valleys of the Ili and Chu rivers. Some of them moved west, and some

crossed the Syr Darya and entered Sogdiana. It was these Massagetae people that Alexander met during his eastward expedition.

58 Bosworth1988, pp. 96–97.

59 Zadracarta, probably modern Sari, on the Tejan River. See Bosworth1980, p. 351.

2. AN OUTLINE OF THE COURSE OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT'S EASTWARD EXPEDITION TO CENTRAL ASIA

There are six main kinds of source books having specially recorded information about Alexander's expedition to Central Asia, and these are as follows, listed in order of the approximate date at which they were written:

1. Diodorus' (c. 90–30 BCE) *Bibliotheca Historica*, which is hereafter referred to simply as "Diodorus";¹
2. Plutarch's (46–119/120 CE) *Life of Alexander*, hereafter referred to simply as "Plutarch";²
3. Arrian's (86–160 CE) *Anabasis of Alexander*, hereafter referred to simply as "Arrian";³
4. Quintus Curtius' (in the first century CE) *Histories of Alexander the Great*, hereafter referred to simply as "Curtius";⁴
5. Anon's (in the fourth century CE) *Itinerarium Alexandri*, hereafter referred to simply as "IA";⁵
6. Anon's (in the fourth–fifth century CE) *Metz Epitome*, hereafter referred to simply as "Metz".⁶

In addition, in Strabo's (64/63 BCE – c. 24 CE) *Geography*, hereafter referred to simply as "Strabo",⁷ Justin's (second century CE) *Epitome of Pompeius Trogus* (first century BCE), hereafter referred to simply as "Justin"⁸, and certain other people who have written about it. Of them, Arrian is the most detailed and best documented. The following account gives priority to the account by Arrian, supplemented by other sources. Due to the limits of my knowledge and inconsistent records of all kinds, I can only list them side-by-side, instead of trying to reconcile them, so as to avoid introducing confusion.

A. PRELUDE

In October 331 BCE, the battle of Gaugamela, as it came to be known, broke out. Darius III (r. 336–330 BCE) of the Achaemenid Empire was utterly defeated, and Alexander the Great pursued him, crossing the Lycus River⁹ and camping, but rising in the middle of the night to chase Darius III up to Arbela. (Arrian, II, 8–15) Pursuing Darius III, Alexander headed straight from Arbela to Babylon, and from Babylon he marched twenty days to Susa. Then Alexander decided to march on the Persian capital.

(Arrian, III, 16) He left Susa, crossed the Pasitigres River¹⁰, invaded the highlands in which the Uxians lived, and captured the pass they held. (Arrian, III, 17) Alexander then divided his army into two columns to attack the Persian capital. He led an army in person through the mountains and took the Persian Gates and occupied Persepolis¹¹. (Arrian, III, 18) In June 330 BCE, hearing that Darius had fled to Media, Alexander marched into Media from Persepolis, subduing the Paraetacae¹² on the way. Alexander then reached Media and pursued Darius in the direction of Ecbatana. After arriving at Ecbatana, Alexander and his men marched to Parthyaea (Arrian, III, 19), reaching Rhagae in eleven days and resting for five days before marching to Parthyaeans, where they camped near the Caspian Gates on the first day and crossed the Caspian Gates on the second day until they reached the edge of inhabited areas. (Arrian, III, 20) At this point, Alexander learned that Darius III had been kidnapped by his subjects, and he set out day and night to pursue him with all his strength. By the time he caught up, however, Darius III was dead. (Arrian, III, 21) The date is July 330 BCE.¹³ Bessus, the satrap of Bactria of the Achaemenid Empire, was responsible for the capture and murder of Darius III. Alexander's expedition to Central Asia began with the pursuit of Bessus.

The process of Alexander's expedition to Central Asia can roughly be divided into the following stages: 1. the battle of Hyrcania; 2. Crossing over the Caucasus mountains¹⁴; 3. Crossing the Oxus River;¹⁵ 4. The conquest of Sogdiana; 5. The confrontation on the Tanais River¹⁶; 6. Chasing Spitamenes; 7. Attacking and compelling the Rock of Sogdiana to surrender; 8. Marching to the Rock of Chorienes¹⁷ and Bactria.

Following is an outline of Alexander's course to conquer and manage Central Asia based mainly on Arrian's account:

B. THE BATTLE OF HYRCANIA¹⁸

1.1. According to Arrian, Hyrcania lay on the left of the road leading to Bactria. Alexander had learned that the mercenaries with Darius III had escaped to the Tapurian mountains [Elburz]. He planned to subdue these mercenaries; besides that, he intended to subdue the Tapurians themselves on the way. He divided his army into three parts, and he himself took the shortest and hardest road to march to Hyrcania. (III, 23)

According to Diodorus, Alexander started out for Hyrcania and on the third day encamped near a city called Hecatontapylus¹⁹. This was a wealthy city, so he rested his army there for some days. Then, advancing 150 furlongs²⁰, he encamped near the Stiboeites River²¹, which was abundant in water. Thereafter Alexander entered Hyrcania with his army and took possession of all the cities there as far as the so-called Caspian Sea. Before marching to Hyrcania, Alexander rallied his army and persuaded the Macedonians to follow him into battle. (XVII, 75)

According to Plutarch, after dealing with Darius III's death, Alexander marched into Hyrcania with a select army. (44) Alexander, fearing that the Macedonians were tired of fighting, kept most of his men in the sector. He sent only a few of his picked troops, twenty thousand soldiers and three thousand cavalry, to Hyrcania. Before his departure, Alexander also delivered a pep talk. (47)

According to Curtius, Alexander encamped at Hecatontampylos and established it as a permanent supply point for the Macedonian army. (VI, 2) As a result of their success, the Macedonians thought they had won a decisive victory and, homesick, prepared to return home. Contrary to Alexander's original intention, he addressed the whole army. The main points of his speech were as follows: The victory in Persia was precarious. For the religion, culture, and language of the conquered had no kinship with those of the Macedonians. Once the Macedonians left, the tables would be turned. "I have proceeded so far on the assumption that everything previously under Darius' rule has submitted to our arms, whereas in fact Nabarzanes²² has occupied Hyrcania and the murderer Bessus is not only in possession of Bactra but is even threatening us, while the Sogdians, Dahae, Massagetae, Sacae²³ and Indians remain independent. The moment they see our backs turned they will all be after us; [10] for they are all of the same stock, while we are foreigners and racially different". In short, the Persians must be persuaded that the Macedonian war was a just one – against the crime of Bessus, not against the Persian nation, to bring the Persians to obey. Alexander's speech was warmly received by the soldiers. (VI, 4)

1.2. According to Arrian, when Alexander camped in the plain by a small river, Nabarzanes, Darius III's chiliarch, Phrataphernes the satrap of Hyrcania and Parthyaea and other very highly placed Persian officers of Darius III came and gave themselves up. After waiting four days in the camp, the native hillmen (the Tapurians) had attacked the troops guarding the rear but had been repelled. Starting off again, Alexander advanced towards Hyrcania to Zadracarta, a city of the Hyrcanians after leaving the

campsite. At this point other two troops joined him; the Macedonian army had yielded or subjugated whatever it passed. Soon after, Artabazus came to join Alexander with his three sons, and also Autophradates, satrap of the Tapurians. Alexander gave the satrapy back to Autophradates. Darius III's Greek mercenaries also sent representatives to surrender.²⁴ (III, 23)

According to Diodorus, Hyrcania and its neighboring tribes, as well as many of Darius III's commanders, surrendered. Alexander was praised for his kindness and justice. More than 1,500 of Darius III's Greek mercenaries also surrendered, and Alexander assigned them to various units of the army with equal treatment and pay. (XVII, 76)

According to Curtius, two days after Alexander's speech, he marched into Hyrcania via Parthiene²⁵. To protect the Parthienes from the barbarians, he left behind in Parthia the general Craterus and the army under his command, as well as a contingent under another general, Amyntas, plus six hundred horses and as many archers. Alexander and the general Erigyius marched separately: Erigyius carried his baggage across the plain, and Alexander himself led his phalanxes and cavalry across the mountains and valleys, establishing a fortified encampment on the way. While resting in the camp, he received a letter from Nabarzanes, justifying himself and offering to follow Alexander. Alexander promised not to hurt him. Alexander marched on, calling on rebels along the way, including Persian nobles who had fled after Darius' death, and the satrap of Tapuri²⁶, Phradates²⁷, among others. He appointed Manapis governor of Hyrcania. (VI, 4)

In Hyrcania Alexander met Darius III's most loyal supporter, Artabazus, who received a friendly reception from Alexander. Alexander also recruited more than 1,500 Greek mercenaries of Persia. He then arrived at Darius III's palace in Hyrcania and accepted the surrender of Nabarzanes. (VI, 5)

1.3. According to Arrian, after accepting their submission, Alexander himself proceeded against the Mardians. The Mardians were defeated and surrendered. Alexander appointed as their satrap Autophradates, whom he had also made satrap of the Tapurians. (III, 24)²⁸

According to Diodorus, Alexander continued westward on the coastline into the Mardians' territory. These thought themselves strong enough to resist the Macedonians, with eight thousand men defending the pass. Alexander attacked and made great gains. The rest of the Mardians was driven to camp in the mountains.

While the Macedonians were ravaging the surrounding countryside, one of Alexander's best mounts

was stolen by the natives. Alexander was so furious that he ordered that, if the horse was not returned, no grass would be left in the whole area, and the inhabitants would be slaughtered. When he carried out his threat, the terrified natives returned the horses, presented him with expensive gifts, and escorted fifty perpetrators to him to beg for forgiveness. Alexander kept the most important of them as hostages. (XVII, 76)

Plutarch also records that Alexander's horse Bucephalus was taken by the natives of Hyrcania. (44)

According to Curtius, the Mardians at the border of Hyrcania refused to obey Alexander's orders, and he marched with light troops to attack them. The Mardians surrendered and Alexander left them as hostages under Phradates, the satrap of Tapuri. The story of the recovery of Alexander's horse Bucephalus took place during the campaign against the Mardians. (VI, 5)

1.4. According to Arrian, after taking care of some issues, Alexander marched to Zadracarta, where the palace of Hyrcania was located. There he spent fifteen days and sacrificed to the gods as custom directed, and held an athletic contest, and then marched towards the Parthia and Areia, and thence to Susia²⁹, a city of Areia, where Satibarzanes, the satrap of Areia, surrendered. Alexander kept him on as satrapy, and sent a Companion to keep order with him, so the place would not be disturbed by the Macedonian follow-up units.

"Meanwhile some Persians met Alexander and reported that Bessus was wearing his cap upright,³⁰ dressing in Persian royal garb,³¹ calling himself Artaxerxes³² instead of Bessus, and giving out that he was King of Asia; he was attended by the Persians who had escaped to Bactria and by many of the Bactrians themselves; and he was expecting Scythian allies as well to join him".

Just as Alexander assembled his army and planned to march on Bactria, news was brought that Satibarzanes, the satrap of Areia, rebelled and killed the Macedonian soldiers whom Alexander had left to assist him, that he was arming the Areians and occupied the city of Artacoana³³, where the Royal palace of Areia was, and that he had decided to go from there with his troops to Bessus and join him in attacking the Macedonians. Alexander immediately returned with the army and reached the city of Artacoana in two days. The distance was six hundred stades³⁴.

Surprised, Satibarzanes fled with a handful of Areian cavalry, and the rest of the army was scattered. Alexander killed the rebels and appointed Arsames, a Persian, the satrap of Areia. So Alexander marched onto the territory of the Zarangaeans³⁵ and reached its palace. Barsaentes³⁶, then occupying

the region, fled south to India. He was captured by the Indians and sent back to Alexander and was executed for his part in the murder of Darius. (III, 25)³⁷

According to Diodorus, while he was in Hyrcania, Alexander learned that Satibarzanes, the satrap of Areia, had rebelled, killed Macedonian soldiers in the satrapy and settled in the city of Chortacana³⁸. Then Alexander led the army on a punitive expedition. Satibarzanes led two thousand knights to defend Bessus, while the rest held on to the difficult terrain. After thirty days of Alexander's crusade against them, all the cities of the satrapy were subdued. Alexander then left Hyrcania and marched to the capital of Dranginê³⁹, where he paused to give the army a full rest. (XVII, 78)

Plutarch does not give a detailed account of Alexander's activities in Hyrcania, except that he left Hyrcania and went to Parthia. The journey is described similarly to what Arrian recorded. (45)

According to Curtius, Alexander guaranteed the safety of Satibarzanes and kept him as satrap of Arii⁴⁰. Through Satibarzanes, Alexander learned that Bessus had put on royal robes and ordered that he be called "Artaxerxes" and was gathering Scythians and those living near the Tanais River. When Alexander ordered the burning of his heavy luggage and the light march to Bactria to persecute Bessus, knowing that Bessus had attacked and that Satibarzanes, the satrap of Arii whom he had appointed himself, had also defected, Alexander decided first to suppress Satibarzanes, marching fast at night with light troops and cavalry. Hearing the news, Satibarzanes fled to Bactra with two thousand cavalry. The rest of them took the nearby hills. Alexander ordered his men to blockade Arii and pursued Satibarzanes in person, then turned and attacked the Arii. They destroyed the people on the top of the rock with fire, turned on the Satibarzanes, and captured the town of Artacana⁴¹. After receiving reinforcements from Greece, Alexander advanced to Drangiana⁴², whose leader Barzaentes (= Barsaentes), an accomplice of Bessus, fled to India for fear of punishment. (6.6)

1.5. According to Arrian, after dealing with the Philotas event⁴³, Alexander moved on to the territory of the Ariaspisians⁴⁴. Alexander honoured the people for the services their ancestors had done to Cyrus, therefore granted them self-governance. (III, 27)

According to Diodorus, in Dranginê, Alexander met the Arimaspians⁴⁵. The Arimaspians treated the Macedonians well. Alexander rewarded them with special treatment because their ancestors had saved Cyrus. The Arimaspians' neighbors, the Cedrosians⁴⁶, were also cared for by Alexander, and a native, Tiridates, was appointed to administer both. (XVII, 81)

According to Curtius, Alexander appointed a new satrap of Arii and then marched into the Arimaspians⁴⁷ territory. The locals, who had helped Cyrus before, were well liked by Alexander and he drew up a decree in sixty days that put them in the charge of Amedines, Darius III's former secretary. (VII, 3)

In my opinion, Alexander's advance into Central Asia⁴⁸ began in Hyrcania. Hyrcania, located in the southeast corner of the Caspian Sea, was a small satrapy of the Achaemenid Empire. Since Alexander set out from Parthia to pursue Bessus, he should have gone east via Aria. Why did he go west? There seem to be two main reasons:

First, Alexander had to have a secure rear to crusade against Bessus towards the east. Fighting on both eastern and western fronts is taboo for military strategists and must be avoided at all costs. After the death of Darius III, Bessus and his followers went east to Bactria, and many Persian nobles who were dissatisfied and even hostile to Bessus went west to Hyrcania. Among them were not only the Persian nobles, but also Greek mercenaries of Darius III. However, to the Macedonians, these people were the hostile forces. They were entrenched in Hyrcania, and Alexander could not sleep easily.

Second, Alexander knew that Persia could not be conquered by force alone, but rather the people must be won over. The hungry were easily baited with food, and the Persian aristocrats in exile in Hyrcania were also easy to win over, which made it all the more justifiable to punish Bessus. The move amounted to turning an enemy's power into one's own. In Hyrcania, Alexander not only accepted the submission of many of his most important Persian ministers, but also strengthened himself by recruiting Greek mercenaries for his own use. But the surrender of Satibarzanes was only forced by circumstances, or was simply fake after all; Alexander's failure to see through or anticipate this led to his later losing some advantages.

C. CROSSING OVER THE CAUCASUS MOUNTAINS⁴⁹

2.1. According to Arrian, Alexander then continued his march towards Bactria, subduing the Drangians, Gadrosians⁵⁰, and Arachotians along the way, and appointing General Menon as satrap to govern them. The snow was deep along the road, and the lack of provisions made the march difficult. (III, 28)

According to Diodorus, Satibarzanes arrived in Areia with cavalry from Bactria and incited the locals

to rebel against Alexander. Upon hearing of this, Alexander sent general Erygius and others to attack him. He himself went to Arachosia and brought the region under his control in a few days. (XVII, 81) After the conquest of Arachosia, Alexander entered the Paropanisadae⁵¹ territory, overcoming severe cold and snow blindness. (XVII, 82)

According to Curtius, Alexander set out for Arachosii⁵² and entered the domain of the Parapamisadae, an isolated tribe. He appointed Menon satrap of Arachosii, leaving some troops behind as the garrison. (VII, 3)

2.2. According to Arrian, Alexander heard that Satibarzanes had invaded Areia with two thousand cavalry who had come from Bessus, and he sent Erygius and others to attack him. Soon Satibarzanes was killed in a duel with Erygius and then his followers fled. (III, 28)

According to Diodorus, Satibarzanes died in a duel with Erygius. (XVII, 83)

According to Curtius, four days after entering the Arimaspi's territory, Alexander learned that Satibarzanes had defected to the Bessus and immediately ordered General Erygius with his cavalry to attack him. (VII, 3)

2.3. According to Arrian, Alexander had arrived at the southern foothills of the Caucasus Mountains and built the city of Alexandria⁵³. Leaving the garrisoned troops behind, he led the forces to cross the Caucasus Mountains and move on to Bactria. (III, 28)

According to Diodorus, along the march Alexander camped at Paropamisum Mountain⁵⁴ in the Caucasus Mountains. In sixteen days the Macedonians crossed the Caucasus Mountains and built the city of Alexandria⁵⁵ at the entrance of a pass. Towns were built about a day's journey from the city, and seven thousand natives, three thousand campers, and volunteer mercenaries settled there while Alexander marched his army into Bactria. (XVII, 83)

According to Curtius, from the territory of the Parapamisadae tribe, Alexander moved on to the Caucasus Mountains. The army crossed the Caucasus Mountains in seventeen days, building Alexandria on its foothills, resettling retired fighters, etc. (VII, 3)

2.4. According to Arrian, at that time Bessus led his followers, consisting of the Persians, Bactrians (about seven thousand), and the Dahae from the northern shore of the Tanais River to sabotage the northern foothills of the Caucasus Mountains in an attempt to prevent the advance of Alexander's army. And when he heard that Alexander had crossed the Caucasus Mountains, he moved his troops across

the Oxus River, burned his ships, and retreated toward Nautaka⁵⁶ in Sogdiana, with the exception of troops of Spitamenes and Oxyartes⁵⁷, accompanied by followers consisting of the horsemen from Sogdiana, and the Dahae from the Tanais, though when the Bactrian cavalry saw Bessus fleeing, they scattered to their homes. (III, 28)⁵⁸

According to Diodorus, Alexander learned that Bessus called himself king and was beginning to raise an army. He offered sacrifices to the gods and held a grand feast. During the meal, he had an altercation with Bagodaras, a guest, and he was about to execute him. Overnight Bagodaras defected to Alexander's camp. (XVII, 83)

According to Curtius, Bessus called a military conference and announced his decision to withdraw to the Sogdian territory and use the Oxus River as a barrier against the Macedonians. He hoped to enlist the support of neighboring tribes and expected the Chorasmii⁵⁹, Dahae, Sacae, Indians and Scythians⁶⁰ across the Tanais River would come to his aid. Present at the meeting was Cobares, a Mede⁶¹ by birth, who was not impressed and urged Bessus to surrender. Bessus was furious and wanted to kill him. Cobares had to go to Alexandria. Bessus commanded a Bactrian army of eight thousand men. The Bactrians had expected that the Macedonians would not come because they were not accustomed to the country. When they saw Alexander approaching, they all slipped back to their villages and abandoned Bessus. Bessus could only cross the Oxus with some loyal followers. He burned his ships in an attempt to stop the Macedonians, and at the same time he began to recruit new armies from among the Sogdians. (VII, 4)

In sum, after Alexander left Hyrcania, he marched on Bactria. From Parthia he passed Drangiana, Gedrosia, and Arachosia, and his march then led him to cross the Caucasus Mountains (i.e., the Hindu Kush).

Why didn't Alexander go straight to Bactria from Parthia, by way of Aria or Margiana? Obviously, the fearless Alexander was unlikely to give up the shortcut just because Bessus would have to be tackled head on. In fact, taking a roundabout route was also blocked by Bessus. Therefore, the reasonable explanation for Alexander's circuitous route seems to be that he intended to subdue all potential allies of Bessus and completely isolate him while removing his, Alexander's, concerns. What's more, Alexander wanted to conquer not just Central Asia, but India as well. He took a devious route that would pave the way for his next march into India. In fact, his city, Alexandria, built at the northern foot of the

Hindu Kush, did pave the way for a future invasion of India.

In addition, Satibarzanes' surrender and subsequent rebellion suggests that Alexander was right in considering conquering Hyrcania before he marched into Central Asia. As an intruder, there was a high probability he would be unwelcome. He himself immediately turned to crush Satibarzanes, and then ordered another general to wipe out other resistance as well as remove a threat to a march on Bactria.

It is generally believed that Alexander built the cities named Alexandria in the places he conquered: Aria, Drangiana, Arachosia and other locations.⁶²

D. CROSSING THE OXUS RIVER⁶³

3.1. According to Arrian, Alexander entered Drapsaca⁶⁴, rested his army, and then advanced to Aornos⁶⁵ and Bactra, the largest cities of Bactria, and occupied them. (III, 29)

According to Curtius, on the other hand, Alexander crossed the Caucasus Mountains and overcame food shortages and other difficulties to reach Bactra, the capital of Bactria. Bactra is located at the foot of the Parapanisus Mountains⁶⁶ and gets its name from the Bactrus River⁶⁷, which flows through the city walls. While in Bactra, Alexander learned that the Scythians across the Tanais River had decided to help Bessus. Reports of the Macedonian battle in Aria were also received: Satibarzanes was defeated in a duel with Erigius, commander of the Macedonian army, and his troops surrendered. During his pursuit of Bessus, Alexander encountered Erigius, who offered him the head of Satibarzanes. (VII, 4)

3.2. According to Arrian, the other regions of Bactria surrendered in succession. Alexander left his army to garrison these areas. Then Alexander headed for the Oxus River, which was open and deep; he made rafts out of skins from tents and took his troops across the river in five days. (III, 29)

According to Curtius, Alexander entrusted Bactria to Artabazus and entered into the desert of Sogdia at night with light troops, overcoming the disadvantage of a shortage of water and reaching the Oxus River. The Macedonians had no boats, and no way to build a bridge because they had no wood; they had to cross the river with skins stuffed with straw. The whole army crossed the Oxus river in five days. (VII, 5)

3.3. According to Arrian, after crossing the Oxus River he marched rapidly to the place where, according to his information, Bessus was to be found. At this time, Spitamenes and Dataphernes had

already arrested Bessus⁶⁸, and Alexander ordered General Ptolemy to receive him as soon as possible. (III, 29)

According to Curtius, after learning that Alexander had crossed the Oxus River, Bessus' henchmen Spitamenes and others set a trap and arrested Bessus on the pretext of revenging Darius III. When Alexander arrived at the Tanais River from the territory of the Branchidae⁶⁹, Spitamenes brought Bessus to him. (VII, 5)

3.4. According to Arrian, Spitamenes and others left Bessus behind and withdrew. Obeying Alexander's order, Ptolemy captured Bessus and brought Bessus bound, naked, and wearing a wooden collar, and set him on the right side of the road by which Alexander and his army were to pass. Alexander berated Bessus, tortured him, and sent him to Bactria to be executed. Some said that Spitamenes escorted Bessus to Alexander. (III, 30)

According to Diodorus, Bessus' generals were bribed by Alexander, who captured Bessus and brought him to Alexander. Alexander left Bessus to Darius III's brothers and relatives to punish. Bessus was finally put to death by dismembering his body. (XVII, 83)

According to Curtius, Alexander praised Spitamenes and, after scolding Bessus, entrusted Bessus to the care of Darius III's brother Oxathres⁷⁰; Bessus was tortured, but not executed, in order to have him executed on the site of his regicide. In pursuit of Bessus, the Macedonians came to the settlement of the Branchidae. They emerged from Miletus⁷¹ on the orders of Xerxes. To please Xerxes, they invaded the temple of Didymeon⁷². The Branchidae were considered traitors to the Milesians (the residents in Miletus). Although they welcomed Alexander, he ordered the slaughter of the city. (VII, 5)⁷³

3.5. According to Arrian, when Alexander's army crossed the Caucasus Mountains and crossed the banks of the Oxus River and back again, many of their horses died, exhausted, on the way, and later Alexander replenished them in the surrounding areas. Then they marched to Maracanda⁷⁴, the royal residence of Sogdiana, and from Maracanda they reached the Tanais River, also known as Jaxartes⁷⁵. (III, 30)

According to Curtius, Alexander arrived at Maracanda. Leaving a garrison in the city, Alexander plundered and burned neighboring villages. (VII, 6)

3.6. According to Arrian, some Macedonian soldiers who were collecting provisions were killed by the natives. The natives took refuge in the remote mountains, thirty thousand in number. Fewer than

eight thousand natives survived Alexander's assault. Alexander himself attacked with his soldiers and was wounded by an arrow in battle. (III, 30)⁷⁶

Plutarch also mentioned this arrow wound. (45)

According to Curtius, When the Macedonians were out foraging for food, they were confronted by barbarians. Alexander led his army to besiege them but was shot with an arrow and carried back to camp. The next day the barbarians surrendered. (VII, 6)

In sum, Alexander did not stay at Bactria, but instead immediately crossed the Amu Darya and entered Sogdiana. No doubt this was to hunt down Bessus, who had abandoned Bactria and fled to Sogdiana. Alexander, desiring to take it, crossed the Amu Darya and followed it all the way to Sogdiana. Thanks to Spitamenes' treachery and betrayal, Alexander was able to capture Bessus alive. But he soon faced the resistance of the Bactrians.

E. CONQUERING SOGDIANA⁷⁷

4.1. According to Arrian, on the banks of the Tanais River, Alexander received the envoys from the Abian Scythians and the European Scythians. (IV, 1)⁷⁸

According to Curtius, the Scythian Abii, who was freed after Cyrus II's death, was sent to represent their obedience to Alexander. Alexander received their representative politely and sent one of his companions to the Scythians of Europe to warn them not to cross the Tanais without the king's command. (VII, 6)

4.2. According to Arrian, Alexander planned to build the city of Alexandria on the Tanais River. He told the local leaders to come to a joint conference at Zariaspa⁷⁹, the capital. These men, believing that going to the meeting was a bad thing, encouraged some of the Sogdians and Bactrians to rebel and kill the Macedonian garrison. (IV, 1)

According to Curtius, Alexander chose a site on the banks of the Tanais to build his new city, but the plan was delayed when the Sogdians rebelled and the rebellion spread to the Bactrians. The rebels started with seven thousand cavalry, but their influence grew, with more and more men joining by the day. Alexander tried to get the help of Spitamenes and others to reduce the momentum of the rebellion, but he did not know that Spitamenes and others were the leaders of the rebellion. They spread rumors

to incite the Bactrians to revolt. Alexander ordered his generals to blockade Cyropolis⁸⁰. He himself captured another city and ordered the execution of all the men and the demolition of the city as an example to others. The Memaceni⁸¹ tribe in the city of Cyropolis rebelled against Alexander, who ordered a siege. Finally the city was destroyed and looted. Then there was no strong resistance from other cities. (VII, 6)

4.3. According to Arrian, the rebel tribes took refuge in seven cities. Leading his troops, Alexander attacked these cities one by one with the use of the scaling ladder. Gaza city was the first attacked. Alexander himself came to Gaza⁸²; at the same time, he ordered the siege of the largest city, Cyropolis, so that enemy troops on the defensive had to deal with the forces outside the city, with no strength left to support other cities. Gaza was soon destroyed, and Alexander ordered all the residents of the city to be killed. Then Alexander also conquered two cities in quick succession, while monitoring the other two cities. The people there abandoned their cities and tried to escape but were surrounded and annihilated. (IV, 2)⁸³

4.4. According to Arrian, after conquering five cities in two successive days, Alexander attacked Cyropolis, the largest and the strongest city, which had been built by Cyrus II. Alexander himself led his troops into the city through the pipes that brought the river in. He opened the gates and met the besieging soldiers, and the city was finally conquered. Of the foes, eight thousand were killed and fifteen thousand surrendered. The seventh city also was taken. All the inhabitants in the city were killed. However, Alexander was wounded during the siege – struck on the head and neck by a stone. (IV, 3)⁸⁴

This injury was also mentioned by Plutarch, who says he was hit on the back of his neck by a rock, which affected his vision, blurring his sight for a while. (45)

In sum, Alexander attacked the seven cities of Sogdiana by the strategy of besieging one city, and then, when it had been taken, conquering the rest one by one. During the first siege of Gaza, Alexander ordered his generals to besiege Cyropolis, the largest city in the region, denying Gaza any support from it. In this way five cities were taken in succession, then Cyropolis was taken, and the seventh city was also occupied in the end. It should also be noted that Alexander, in his campaign against Sogdiana, often ordered the slaughter of a conquered city, including prisoners, whenever he took one. This was no doubt intended to cripple the local living forces, so that their vitality could not be recovered in the short term,

and as a result that the Macedonians might be free to attack elsewhere. This shows also how fierce the resistance of the Sogdianians against the Macedonians was.

F. CONFRONTATION ON THE TANAIS RIVER⁸⁵

5.1. According to Arrian, the forces of the Asian Scythians arrived at the Tanais River⁸⁶ and were planning to join the rebels of the Sogdianans, awaiting an opportunity. Spitamenes led his troops to surround the Macedonian garrison who had stayed behind to guard the fort in Maracanda⁸⁷, and Alexander immediately sent his general to aid them. (IV, 3)⁸⁸

5.2. According to Arrian, the city of Alexandria⁸⁹ was built in twenty days. (IV, 4)⁹⁰

According to Curtius, Alexander sent a general with three thousand infantry and eight hundred cavalry to reach the city of Maracanda. He himself went to the Tanais River and built a wall around the entire area of his camp. In the end, it took seventeen days to form the city of Alexandria. (VII, 6)⁹¹

5.3. According to Arrian, the Scythians jeered at the Macedonians from across the river and shot arrows at them. Ignoring the unlucky omens, Alexander ordered the men to build rafts and prepare for a forced crossing. At first, the two sides were in confrontation across the river, and arrows were mixed with stones in their attack on each other. Seeing them in disorder, Alexander ordered his troops to force the crossing. After they landed and assembled, the whole army attacked its enemy. The Scythian main force fled, defeated. The Macedonians pursued them, but the entire army suffered from thirst in the heat of the summer, and Alexander himself fell ill drinking unclean water. The pursuit had to stop, and the Scythians were saved from complete annihilation. (IV, 4)

According to Curtius, at that time the Scythian kingdom stretched across the Tanais River, and the Scythian king considered the Macedonians' building on the banks of the river a chain around his neck. So he sent his brother Carthasis with a large cavalry force to destroy the city and drive the Macedonian army away from the river.⁹² Alexander, while ill, mobilized his sergeants and prepared to cross the Tanais River to attack the Scythians. (VII, 7)

Alexander proclaimed that he would use rafts to transport the cavalry and the phalanx; he ordered the more lightly armed troops to swim over on inflated skins. After the preparations were completed, Alexander received the Scythian envoys. The envoys denounced Alexander's ambition, expressed their

determination to defend their freedom, and warned Alexander not to lay his hands on Scythian land. (VII, 8)

Alexander ignored the warnings of the delegation and crossed the river as planned. The Scythians sent cavalry to stop the Macedonians from crossing the river, and the two sides fought. The Macedonians made it ashore.⁹³ Alexander, wounded, commanded the battle. At one point he lost consciousness from exhaustion. Anger drove the Macedonians on. They killed and captured many Scythians, repelled their 1,800 cavalry, and returned to camp around midnight. The Macedonians lost sixty cavalry, about one hundred infantry, with one thousand wounded. (VII, 9)

5.4. According to Arrian, soon after, the Scythian king sent an envoy to express his regret over the above-mentioned incident. Since he had no force with which to pursue the battle, Alexander had to take the opportunity to step down from his position. (IV, 5)

According to Curtius, this battle made the Macedonians famous, and the Sacae sent ambassadors to beg to surrender. Alexander is said to have shown mercy to the defeated Scythians, demanding no ransom and releasing prisoners. (VII, 9)

In sum, the so-called “Scythian Kingdom” here in confrontation with the Macedonians refers to the four tribes of the Sacae recorded in Strabo (XI, 8.2). They originally lived in the valleys of the rivers Ili and Chu, in the early 520s BCE, then expanded westward to the north bank of the Syr Darya, driving out the Massagetae who originally lived there. It is noteworthy that Curtius calls these men Sacae.⁹⁴ As for Curtius (VII, 4), his reference to both the Sacae and “the Scythians who lived beyond the Tanais” seems to indicate that the Sacae were not on the north bank of the Syr Darya. But this sentence can be understood as follows: on the other side of the Syr Darya there was more than one tribe of Sacae, thus other Scythians were enlisted to add to it.

The conflict between Alexander and the Scythians north of the Syr Darya arose from their plans to cross to the south of the river and join forces with the Sogdians against the Macedonians, and to stop their attempts to prevent Alexander from building his city. But Alexander’s insistence on crossing the river, ignoring the unlucky omens, may have been to defend his gains to the south of the river. Of course, in his mind, only the conquest of the land north of the Syr Darya could be called the “conquest of Asia.” In addition, since the Syr Darya was called the Tanais by the Macedonians, it may have seemed to Alexander that crossing the river would provide him with a connection to his native land.

Alexander forced his way across the Syr Darya and fought the Sacae but did not win a decisive victory. He finally gave up the fight over the Syr Darya, did not ask ransom, and released prisoners as a gesture of good will. The direct reason for this was that Spitamenes was in his rear, but the fundamental reason was that he was intent on conquering India and had no heart for further fighting here.

G. PURSUING AND WIPING OUT SPITAMENES⁹⁵

6.1. According to Arrian, the Macedonian garrison besieged by Spitamenes at the Maracanda fortress at once fought back, killing one part of the enemy. When he heard that Alexander was approaching, Spitamenes immediately withdrew and pretended to retreat towards the capital of Sogdiana, absorbing the Scythian cavalry along the way and trapping the Macedonian phalanx with his cavalry. The Macedonians retreated to the valley of the Polytimetus River⁹⁶. When they tried to flee by jumping into the river, Spitamenes chased them with arrows. No Macedonians were spared. (IV, 5)⁹⁷

According to Curtius, the generals and soldiers whom Alexander had sent to conquer Spitamenes were ambushed and besieged, their chief commander was killed, and the soldiers died in large numbers. (VII, 7)

6.2. According to Arrian, Aristobulus said that the Macedonians were ambushed by the Scythians but were not wiped out completely. Fewer than forty cavalry and three hundred or so infantry were able to escape. Pained by the loss of these fallen soldiers, Alexander ordered a march on Maracanda, fleetly crossing 1,500 stades in three days. Spitamenes had to flee. Following him, Alexander led his men through the whole valley of the Polytimetus River all the way up to its end. (IV, 6)⁹⁸

According to Curtius, after making peace with the Sacae, Alexander returned to Maracanda. Spitamenes heard of this and fled to Bactra. Alexander, in hot pursuit, reached the spot where the Macedonians had been ambushed. Alexander held a funeral for the dead. In retaliation, he ordered the burning of villages and the execution of men of military age there. (VII, 9)

6.3. According to Arrian, Alexander left Maracanda to go to Zariaspa, there to winter over.⁹⁹ In the meantime, Alexander met with satraps and generals from all over the country and punished Bessus and arrested the enemy chiefs under him. Alexander publicly denounced Bessus for his sin of betraying

Darius, ordered that his nose and ears be cut off, and had him escorted to Ecbatana to be executed. (IV, 7)¹⁰⁰

According to Curtius, Alexander persuaded thirty Sogdian imprisoned nobles to surrender, leaving four as guards and sending the rest home. Alexander left Peucolaus¹⁰¹ in Sogdiana and arrived at Bactra with three thousand infantry. He ordered that Bessus be transferred to Ecbatana and executed him. (VII, 10)¹⁰²

6.4. According to Arrian, the Scythians of Europe again sent their envoys to visit Alexander and presented gifts. The purpose of the embassy was to express the readiness of the Scythians to do whatever Alexander commanded. At the same time, Pharasmanes, king of the Chorasmians¹⁰³, came to Alexander with 1,500 horsemen; he said that he lived on the borders of the Colchians¹⁰⁴ and the Amazons (the Female Empire)¹⁰⁵, and if Alexander desired to attack Colchis and the Amazons, he promised to act as guide and to provide supplies for the army. (IV, 15)

According to Diodorus, returning to Hyrcania from the territory of the Mardians, Alexander met the Amazon's queen, Thalestris, whose territory was located between the rivers of Phasis and Thermudon. The queen offered herself to Alexander. (XVII, 77)

Plutarch has a similar account of the romance between the Amazon queen and Alexander, but doubts its truth. (46)

Curtius also tells the story of Thalestris, the Amazon queen, of which the contents are much the same. (VI, 5)

6.5. According to Arrian, Alexander returned to the Oxus River; since it was reported that many of the Sogdians had taken refuge in their forts and would not obey the satrap set over them by Alexander, he was encamped on the Oxus River and decided to march on Sogdiana. (IV, 15)

According to Curtius, after the troops had been replenished, Alexander established order in the areas disturbed by the rebels and executed the leaders of the rebel army. Moving back to the Oxus River in three days, he then crossed the Ochus¹⁰⁶ and Oxus rivers to the capital of Margiana. (VII, 10)

6.6. According to Arrian, in addition to those troops who remained at Bactria, Alexander divided his army into five parts and led a detachment of his own to march on Maracanda, attacking those who had taken refuge in the fort, accepting those who had surrendered, and sweeping most of Sogdiana along the way. (IV, 16)

According to Curtius, Alexander was held up for ten days in Maracanda because of the Clitus incident¹⁰⁷. Then he ordered a general to march into Bactriana (Bactria) to prepare winter supplies for his army. He himself went to Xenippa¹⁰⁸, a densely populated village on the Scythian border where Bactrian rebels had gathered, with some 2,500 cavalry. They attacked the Macedonians, lost seven hundred men (three hundred of whom were taken prisoner), and had to flee. The Macedonian force was also slightly damaged. Finally, Alexander accepted their surrender. (VIII, 2)¹⁰⁹

6.7. According to Arrian, after arriving at Maracanda, Alexander sent his general to attack the Scythian region in which Spitamenes' troops were located, while personally attacking the remaining rebel-held areas, which were soon subdued. Spitamenes took some of those who had escaped from Sogdiana to refuge in the land of the Scythians called Massagetae. There they gathered up six hundred of the Massagetae cavalry, stormed a fort in Bactria, and wiped out the garrison, capturing the commander. A few days later, Zariaspa was also besieged, and many of its belongings were stolen and carted away. The garrison general of Zariaspa, the remaining eighty hired cavalry, and a few of the King's Companion cavalry launched an attack on the Massagetaean Scythians and recaptured the looted property. But on the return journey they were ambushed, with the loss of several Companions and sixty hired cavalry, and a general was wounded and taken alive by the Scythians. (IV, 16)

6.8. According to Arrian, when they learned of the Macedonian approach, Spitamenes hastily fled to the desert, only to be overtaken at the edge of the desert. The two sides fought fiercely. The Macedonians won. After losing 150 of their cavalry, the Scythians fled into the desert. The Macedonians could no longer pursue them. When Artabazus, the satrap of Bactria, resigned because of old age, Alexander appointed Amyntas as the new satrap. General Coenus was ordered to spend the winter at a camp in Sogdiana, ready to ambush the Spitamenes at any time. The Spitamenes attacked the satrap of Bactria and his troops, luring three thousand Scythian cavalry to join them in a combined attack at Gabae¹¹⁰, a stronghold of Sogdiana lying on the border of Sogdiana and the land of the Massagetaean Scythian. Bactria's Satrap led his men against the enemy. After fighting, more than eight hundred Scythian cavalry were killed, while the Macedonians lost only twenty-five cavalry and twelve infantry. Thus the Sogdians and most Bactrians who had followed Spitamenes surrendered to Macedonians. The Massagetae took the opportunity to rob the baggage trains of the Bactrians and Sogdians and fled with

Spitamenes into the desert. When Alexander led his army into the desert, the Massagetaens cut off the head of Spitamenes and gave it to Alexander in the hope that he would stop attacking. (IV, 17)¹¹¹

According to Curtius, Alexander learned that Spitamenes was among the Dahae and decided to move on to the Dahae in his next step. Spitamenes' wife urged her husband to surrender to Alexander, but Spitamenes refused. His wife killed him and fled to Alexandria.¹¹² After Spitamenes was killed, the Dahae imprisoned the other rebel generals and handed them over to Alexander. (VIII, 3)

In sum, according to Arrian (IV, 17), Spitamenes "easily induced about three thousand Scythian horsemen to join them in a raid on Sogdiana, since these Scythians are in the grip of dire poverty, and, since they have no cities and no settled habitations, and hence no fear for their loved ones, they are easy to inveigle into one war after another." These impoverished Scythians must have been the Massagetae who were driven from their homes on the north bank of the Syr Darya by the Sacae from the valleys of the rivers Ili and Chu. Although Spitamenes was good at convincing the vulnerable troops and was a very difficult character to deal with, nevertheless most of Bactria fell to the Macedonians after Alexander's campaign in Sogdiana, which had shattered the local population, and Spitamenes could rely on only the desperate Massagetae. When things went wrong, he died at the hands of these Massagetae. As to the Dahae that Quintus Curtius refers to, they can be considered to be a branch of the Dahae people, who were also expelled by the Sacae from the north bank of the Syr Darya.

The death of Spitamenes meant that Alexander's mission in Central Asia was almost complete.

H. STRIKING DOWN THE ROCK OF SOGDIANA¹¹³

7.1. According to Arrian, at Nautaca¹¹⁴, Alexander rested his troops because the harsh winter had come. (IV, 18)

According to Curtius, when Alexander marched on Nautaca, its chief, Sisimithres, built fortifications in the road to defend against the enemy. Alexander destroyed the fortifications and sent messengers to persuade them to surrender. Sisimithres then surrendered, and Alexander left his two sons and let him rule the old lands. When Alexander marched into Gazaba¹¹⁵ in a storm, the storm killed two thousand Macedonians. Sisimithres brought many beasts of burden, including two thousand

camels, sheep, and cattle. Alexander then attacked the Sacae, plundered their land, and gave Sisimithres thirty thousand cattle as gifts from the war trophies. (VIII, 4)¹¹⁶

7.2. According to Arrian, as soon as spring came Alexander led his army to attack the Rock of Sogdiana¹¹⁷, where a large number of Sogdianans had taken refuge, including Oxyartes, with his wife and daughter, who had rebelled against Alexander. The situation of the Rock was dangerous, surrounded by cliffs, being easy to defend and difficult to attack. It was the last stronghold of the rebellious Sogdians. They had a large reserve of rations and forage, coupled with sufficient water in the mountains, prepared for a long period of fight. The depth of the snow made it difficult for the Macedonian troops to approach. Even so, Alexander decided to attack. He announced: whoever was the first to the top of the mountain would get the first prize of twelve talents, the second person would win the second prize¹¹⁸, the third person, the third prize, and the last who rushed to the top of the mountain will get the final prize of three hundred daric. Being thus encouraged, the Macedonians were eager to try. (IV, 18)¹¹⁹

According to Curtius, Alexander had sent the envoy to persuade the enemy to surrender, but without success, so he inspired his soldiers to achieve the summit. (VII, 11)

7.3. According to Arrian, three hundred men volunteered to climb the cliff and, at the cost of thirty men, took the top. The people in the Rock thought that this was a heaven-sent army and surrendered. (IV, 19)

According to Curtius, the Rock of Sogdiana was thirty stade high and 150 stade in circumference. It was steep on all sides and could be accessed only by a very narrow path. Arimazes, a Sogdian, guarded it with thirty thousand soldiers and a store of food sufficient for two years. Arimazes, thus emboldened, said that, unless they could fly, the Macedonians could not conquer it. After the Macedonians had made it to the summit, Arimazes, despairing of his situation, came to the Macedonian camp with his relatives and the most important nobles of his tribe. Alexander ordered that all of them be flogged and crucified under the Rock. (VII, 11)¹²⁰

7.4. According to Arrian, among those who surrendered were Oxyartes and his wife and their daughter. Alexander fell in love with the daughter, Roxane, and offered to marry her. (IV, 19)¹²¹

According to Arrian, Oxyartes summoned the courage to see Alexander, who greeted him with courtesy. (IV, 20)

According to Curtius, Alexander entered the territory of Oxyartes. Oxyartes offered to submit, and Alexander restored his position, leaving behind his two sons. At a banquet hosted by Oxyartes, Alexander was attracted to his daughter Roxane and offered to marry her. (VIII, 4)

In sum, accounts of the events of the so-called Sogdian Rock differ greatly from book to book. Arrian did not name the chief who guarded it. According to Curtius, it is known that the chief was Arimazes, while according to Strabo, the name of the Rock is Sisimithres (the same as the chief of Nautaca quoted by Curtius), but Sisimithres is said to be in Bactria, not in Sogdiana. Sogdiana also had a steep rock called Arimazes. This needs further research.

In sum, Alexander realized that his killings in Sogdiana and other places had stirred the people's hearts against him, and the marriage with Roxane might be seen as his remedy.

I. MARCHING TO THE ROCK OF CHORIENES AND BACTRIA

8.1. According to Arrian, Alexander marched from Sogdiana into Pareitacae¹²² and prepared to capture the Rock of Chorienes. Its chief Chorienes was afraid of the Macedonian military might and begged for surrender. Alexander ordered him to remain in charge of the Rock. (IV, 21)¹²³

8.2. According to Arrian, Alexander then marched on Bactria and sent his generals to defeat those who had not yet surrendered in Pareitacae. In late spring, Alexander ordered 3,500 cavalry and 10,000 infantry to remain in Bactria while he marched on India, leading the troops himself. (IV, 22)¹²⁴

In sum, viewing the whole course of Alexander's conquest of Central Asia, it is easy to see that the Central Asians were not reconciled to being used by the remnants of the Achaemenid Empire, nor to being ruled by the Macedonians. The Macedonians paid a heavy price, but they failed to conquer the north of the Tanais River. Thus their effort was hardly a complete success.

NOTES

¹ Geer 1984.

² Perrin 1919.

³ Brunt 1983; Robson 1929–33.

4 Rolfe1956, Yardley2004.

5 Davies1998.

6 Baynham1995; Loube1995; Roisman2003; Heckel2004; Hunt2005.

7 Jones1916.

8 Watson1853. Cf. Green2007.

9 The Lycus River, i.e., the Zab River in present-day Turkey and Iraq, is a major tributary of the Tigris River.

10 The Pasitigres River, which is the Tigris River south of Susa, splits into two channels near Apamea and then rejoins. The river course after this confluence was called Pasitigres. See Pliny (VI, 27).

11 The united army went as far as the present-day town of Fahlian. There Parmenion led his army south, following the present-day highway to Kazerun. He may have made a long loop south *via* Firuzabad, taking the most gradual ascent to Shiraz and the plain of Persepolis. It was the easiest route, and he could afford to take his time. Once Alexander had penetrated the defences of Persis he could bring up the baggage at leisure and without opposition. The king now took the direct route, along the Fahlian River and its eastern extension, the Tang-i Layleh. Towards the head of the valley, in an open space known as Mullah Susan, the route bifurcates; one path continues east over the Bolsoru pass and onwards to Ardakan, another branches up a narrow gorge until recently known as the Tang-i Mohammad Reza, rising to a watershed at 2,167 meters and giving access to the plain of 'Aliabad. See Bosworth1988, p. 80.

12 The territory of the Paraetaceae people may be a small satrapy of the Achaemenid Empire. According to Strabo (XV, 3.6), it was probably located in the headwaters of the Araxes River, to the north of Paraetacene (the original capital of the Achaemenid Empire), on the road to Ecbatana. See Bosworth1980, p. 334.

13 The journey is about two hundred kilometers. The march was divided into three stages. From the plain of Choarene (the present-day Khar) Alexander struck into the desert, along the northern rim of the Dasht-i Kavir. At the oasis of Thara (Lasj erd?) he received further news of the troubles in the Persian camp. Aided by local guides, this force of six thousand cavalry swept across the desert by a direct, waterless route and overtook the Persian stragglers shortly after dawn. At the first indication of the Macedonians' advance Darius III was killed by his captors. The chase ended a little short of the city of Hecatompylus, (the present-day Shahr-i Qumis). See Bosworth1988, p. 96.

14 Caucasus Mountains refers to the Hindu Kush.

15 Oxus, the present-day Amu Darya.

18 Tanies here refers to the Syr Darya.

17 The Rock of Sogdiana, named after a chieftain of the mountain tribe. Its location is hard to pin down.

18 Alexander's march into Hyrcania is believed to have begun in July 330 BCE.

¹⁹ Hecatontapylus is hereafter Hecatompylos, the present-day Qumis region of west Khorasan, Iran, southeast of the Caspian Sea.

²⁰ One furlong is 201.168 meters.

²¹ Stiboeities River, the present-day Chesmeh-i-Ali River, fifteen miles to the northwest of Hecatompylus.

²² Nabarzanes, a former Persian general and Bessus' accomplice in the abduction of Darius III.

²³ The Sacae, an alliance of nomadic tribes made up of the Asii and others, those who confronted Alexandria across the Syr Darya were mainly the Sacae who had moved west. It is worth noting that Massagetae and Sacae are mentioned together here, so it can be seen that the two should not be confused, as Harmatta1999 did.

²⁴ According to IA (31), Alexander entered Hyrcania in pursuit of Bessus, accepting the submission of Persian nobles and satraps and the surrender of Greek mercenaries. Then he decided to go to Xazacerta.

²⁵ Parthiene is read as Parthyaeans in Arrian's book, i.e., Parthia.

²⁶ Tapuri, i.e., Tapuria.

²⁷ Phradates, the satrap, should be Autophradates in Arrian's book. If the same names have different spellings, unless necessary, no note will be issued hereinafter.

²⁸ IA (31) also records the struggle between Alexander and the Mardi (= Mardia), but does not mention the hijacking of Alexander's mount.

²⁹ Susia, near Mashhad in the present-day Razavi Khorasan Province, Iran, probably refers to the city of Tus to the northeast of Meshed. See Bosworth1988, p. 99. Alexander arrived in Susia in September 330 BCE.

³⁰ "The conical Persian cap was worn with the apex drooping by all but the King." A note of English translator E. I. Robson (III, 25), p. 309.

³¹ "A purple tunic with white stripes." A note of English translator E. I. Robson (III, 25), p. 309.

³² Artaxerxes, the king of Achaemenid Empire; the first Artaxerxes' reign period was c. 466–425 BCE.

³³ Artacoana, the capital of Aria; its location is unknown, probably near Herat in present-day Northwest Afghanistan. Alexander or his heirs built Alexandria Ariana there.

³⁴ One stade is approximately 157.7 meters.

³⁵ The territory of the Zarangaeans: its capital is probably near Farah. Brunt1983, p. 315.

³⁶ Barsaentes, one of Bessus' accomplices in the abduction of Darius III.

³⁷ The concerning records in IA (32) about this are much the same as Arrian.

³⁸ Chortacana is just Artacoana.

39 Dranginē, i.e., Drangina.

40 Aria is just Areia or Aria.

41 Artacana, is also read as Artacona, the capital of Aria.

42 Drangina, a name of the region, has its capital located in the present-day Farah. It spanned what is present-day Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Eastern Iran. Cf. Bosworth 1988, p. 100.

43 The Philotas incident was a rebellion in the highest ranks of the Macedonian army (Arrian, III. 26–27).

44 The Ariaspans. According to one suggestion, their territories were in present-day Sistan. See Bosworth 1980, p. 365.

45 Arimaspians must have been Ariaspiae in Arrian's book (III, 27). Arimaspia also is mentioned in Strabo (XI, 6.2) and Metz (4).

46 Cedrosia, i.e., Gedrosia.

47 Arimaspi must have been Ariaspiae in Arrian's book (III, 27).

48 Aria must have been Areia in Arrian's book.

49 Alexander is believed to have crossed the Caucasus in May 329 BCE.

50 Gadrosia, also known as Gedrosia, was to the south of Arachosia and Drangiana, corresponding to present-day Balochistan province in the Southwest Pakistan.

51 Paropanisadae, pending further investigation. It is known as Paropamisum, a peak of the Hindu Kush, in present-day Northwest Afghanistan. The name is also found in Strabo (11, 8.1). Both names may be mistaken for Paropamisadae or Parapamisadae.

52 Arachosii is the same as Arachosia.

53 It is generally believed that this Alexandria is located in present-day Bagram; see Worth 1988, p. 247.

54 Paropamisum mountain; see note 50.

55 It refers to Alexandria of the Caucasus.

56 Nautaka, probably near Shahrisabz in present-day Uzbekistan.

57 Oxyartes, a Bactrian noble.

58 The records concerned in IA (33) are much the same as Arrian.

59 Chorasmii is the same as Khwarezm.

60 The Scythians on the other side of the Tanais River must refer to the Sacae.

61 Mede is the same as Media.

62 The Alexandria in Aria was located near Herat in present-day Afghanistan; Alexandria in Arachosia was located near present-day Farah; Alexandria in Arachosia was located in the Argandab valley of present-day Kandahar, as recorded in Schoff¹⁹¹⁴.

63 Alexander is believed to have crossed the Oxus River in May 329 BCE.

64 Drapsaca is said to be located in present-day Kunduz. See Bosworth¹⁹⁸⁰, p. 372. Strabo (XV, 2.10), read as Adrapsa.

65 Aornos, the main castle in Bactria, an important strategic stronghold. Probably it is located in present-day Khulm. See Bosworth¹⁹⁸⁰, p. 372.

66 Parapanisus is probably the Paropamisum seen in Diodorus' book (XVII, 82).

67 The Bactrus River, named after Baetis of Bactria.

68 The records in IA (33) concerned are much the same as Arrian. Aornos is read as Aornus. In Metz (5–6) the story of Spitamenes' arrest of Bessus is similar to the accounts in other books.

69 The Branchidae lived originally in Didyma, the Greek sanctuary, which is located at the city of Miletus on the western coast of Anatolia.

70 According to Metz (2), Oxyathres became Alexander's bodyguard after his surrender.

71 The city of Miletus, which is located on the west coast of Anatolia. See previous note (Branchidae).

72 Didymeon is the same as Didyma.

73 A similar account can be found in Strabo (XI, 11.4): Alexander also destroyed cities of the Branchidae. They were placed there after voluntarily following Xerxes from their homeland, after giving him the treasures of the Temple of Didyma. Disgusted by their blasphemy and betrayal of the temple, Alexander destroyed their city. Branchidae, i.e., Didyma, is an ancient Greek sanctuary, which is located in the city of Miletus on the west coast of Anatolia.

74 Maracanda is Samarkand in present-day Uzbekistan.

75 Jaxartes, which is translated as “Yaosha 藥殺” in Chinese.

76 The records in IA (35) concerned are much the same as Arrian.

77 It is generally believed that the expedition of Sogdiana began in July 329 BCE.

78 The concerning records in IA (36) are much the same as Arrian.

79 Zariaspa is the same as Bactria, near the present-day Balkh.

80 Cyropolis is the same as present-day Khujand or Jizak.

81 Memaceni, the name of a tribe, whose origin is unknown.

82 Gaza; its location is unknown.

83 The concerning records in IA (36) are much the same as Arrian.

84 The concerning records in IA (37) are much the same as Arrian. Cyropolis is read as Cyra.

85 It is believed that Alexander reached the Tanais River in July 329 BCE.

86 For the situation of the Tanais River see Strabo (XI, 2.2).

87 Marakanda was located in present-day Samarkand.

88 Metz (9–10) records that Spitamenes defected again and besieged Marakanda.

89 This Alexandria, historically known as Alexandria Eschate, was located on the southern bank of the Syr Darya and is believed to have been located near Khujand in present-day Tajikistan. Cf. Prevas2004, p. 121.

90 The concerning records in IA (36) are much the same as Arrian.

91 Based on Justin (XII, 5.12), it is seventeen days.

92 The concerning records in Metz (8) are much the same as Curtius.

93 Metz (10–12) records the situation that the Macedonians crossed the Tanais River.

94 Cf. YuTsh1992, pp. 1–23.

95 It is believed that Alexander pursued Spitamenes around the turn of autumn and winter 328 BCE.

96 The Polytimetus is the present-day Zerafshan River.

97 There are similar records in IA (38) and Metz (9).

98 The concerning records in IA (39) are much the same as Arrian.

99 The concerning records in IA (39) are much the same as Arrian. Zariaspa is read as Zariaspi.

100 The concerning records in IA (39) are much the same as Arrian.

101 Peucolaus, its specific location unknown.

102 According to Metz (14), Alexander crossed Sogdiana and entered Bactria. He took Bessus to Bactria and executed him in the Persian way.

103 Chorasimia is the same as Khwarazm.

104 The Colchi refers to the Georgians.

105 The Female Empire of Amazon appeared in various historical books, and the legends are very colorful. It's hard to tell the real from the fake, and the authenticity and the origin of these tales are not clear. According to Herodotus' *History* (IV, 110–117), the Amazons were the ancestors of the Sarmatians (Sauromatae). The Sarmatians are thought to roam the Eurasian steppe north of the Sea of Azov and the Black Sea.

106 It is known today as the Darya-i Pandj River, which flows through Tajikistan. It does not appear in other records that Alexander crossed south the Ochus River from Bactra and marched north along the Oxus River.

107 Clitus is Alexander's favorite general. Because of a slip of the tongue after getting drunk, he was mistakenly killed by Alexander.

108 Xenippa is to the west of Samarkand, near Balkh.

109 There is also the record that Spitamenes ambushed the Macedonians in IA (43).

110 Gabae, its specific location unknown.

111 On Spitamenes' death, IA (43) says only that Spitamenes was captured alive by his men, handed over to Alexander, flogged, and executed.

112 Metz (20–23) also mentions Alexander's march on the Dahae and details the murder of Spitamenes by his wife.

113 Alexander's attack on the Rock of Sogdiana is believed to have taken place between the end of 328 and the beginning of 327 BCE.

114 It was possibly located near Shahrисабз of present-day Uzbekistan.

115 Gazaba; its location is unknown.

116 Metz (19) also records that Alexander was in alliance with Sisimithres.

117 The situation is recorded that Alexander was in the Rock of Sogdiana in Metz (15–18).

118 That is, eleven talents, the third ten, and so on. Only the first twelve got prizes. – A note of English translator E. I. Robson (IV, 18, p. 401)

119 Three hundred gold darics made a talent. – A note of English translator E. I. Robson (IV, 18), p. 401.

120 The concerning records in IA (44) are much the same as Arrian. According to Strabo (XI, 11.4), Sisimithres, where Oxyartes and his wife and daughter hid themselves, was located in Bactria. It was fifteen stades high and eighty stades in circumference, with a flat top and production rich enough to support five hundred people. The other place is the Rock of Sogdiana, on the Oxus River, called Ariamazes.

121 The deeds of Roxane are also recorded in IA (44), Metz (28–31), and Strabo (XI, 11.4).

122 Pareitacae, its location unknown.

123 IA (45) gives a brief account of this process. Metz (28) records that Alexander marched on the Gazabes (Gazaba) and allied himself with the satrap, Chorienes, who entertained him at a banquet. The Metz account of Alexander's march into the Gazabes (Gazaba) gives the role of Sisimithres to Chorienes.

124 Alexander's invasion of India is believed to have taken place in 327 BCE.

3. ALEXANDER'S MAIN POLITICAL AND MILITARY STRATEGIES IN HIS MARCH INTO CENTRAL ASIA

The march into Central Asia was an important part of Alexander's eastward expedition, and it had far-reaching effects. The following description highlights his main political and military strategies, based on Arrian's (86–160 CE) *Anabasis of Alexander*, hereafter referred to simply as "Arrian".

A

As for the political strategy Alexander undertook in the process of marching into Central Asia, the first thing to know is that the conquest of Central Asia was an organic part of Alexander's big goal of the eastern expedition, and all of Alexander's military activities including marching into Central Asia never deviated from this great goal. It was this goal that directly led to Alexander's marching into Central Asia, and this goal also became the most important political reason that his marching into Central Asia achieved success.

The strategic goal of Alexander's eastern expedition was not only to conquer the Achaemenid dynasty, but also to make himself "the king of Asia" by conquering the Achaemenid dynasty.¹

Alexander knew clearly that it would take more than military means to conquer such a great power as Persia. He wanted not only to defeat Darius III's army, but more importantly to win the popular support of the people of Persia. To become the king of Asia, he must win the approval of the whole of Asia. And that's exactly what Alexander did.

After winning the victory at the Gaugamela battle, he hunted down Bessus with all his might, quelled the rebellion of Satibazanes, and put Barsaentes to death. These were not only to continue to destroy the effective forces of the Achaemenid Empire, but more importantly to win the hearts and minds of the Persians, and with it the prelude to the invasion of Central Asia kicked off.

Bessus, Satibazanes, and Barsaentes were all rebellious courtiers of Darius III. Alexander destroyed them not only because they were enemies of the Macedonians, but also, more importantly, to punish them for regicide and to justify his eastern expedition in the eyes of the Persians.

Bessus, the former satrap of Bactria, had led the Sogdians, Bactrians, and some Indian tribes on the

frontier of Bactria to take part in the battle of Gaugamela between Darius III and Alexandria. When Darius III was defeated, Bessus and Nabazanes, the cavalry commander, and Barsaentes, the satrap of Arachotia and Drangiana, among others, who fled with Darius III, captured Darius III. The goal that Bessus and others had when they seized Darius III was to replace him: "Bessus had the sovereignty in place of Darius and had been saluted as the leader by the Bactrian cavalry and the other barbarians who had fled with Darius". (III, 21)² Bessus seems to have had many supporters: "he was attended by the Persians who had escaped to Bactria and by many of the Bactrians themselves; and he was expecting Scythian allies as well to join him". (III, 25)

In addition, Bessus and the troops with whom he had taken Darius III posed a number of obstacles to Alexander's advance into Central Asia: "Bessus, attended by the Persians who had joined in the arrest of Darius, by some seven thousand of the Bactrians themselves, and by the Dahae who live on this side of the river Tanais [Syr Darya], was ravaging the land lying under Mount Caucasus, hoping that this desolation of the country lying between himself and Alexander and want of provisions would stop Alexander from proceeding farther". (III, 28) At any rate, Alexander was bound to hunt down Bessus.

According to Arrian, those who had seized Darius III had decided that "if they learned that Alexander was pursuing them, to give him up to Alexander and make good terms for themselves, but if they learned that he had turned back, to collect as large an army as they could and preserve their power in common". Then, "For a time Bessus and his immediate followers continued to convey Darius with them in the closed waggon; but when Alexander was right upon them, Satibarzanes and Barsaentes wounded Darius, left him where he was and escaped themselves with six hundred horsemen. Darius died of his wound soon after, before Alexander had seen him". (III, 21) Thus, the treason of Bessus and his associates could not be exonerated, and Alexander had more reason to hunt down Bessus – to punish the kingslayer. More than that, according to Arrian:

Bessus was wearing his cap upright, dressing in Persian royal garb, calling himself Artaxerxes instead of Bessus, and giving out that he was King of Asia. (III, 25)³

Bessus' move suggests that his aim was not only to lead the Achaemenid satraps in Central Asia to withstand Alexander, but also to lead other Asian powers beyond Persia to contend against the

Macedonians. As mentioned, he had expected to be joined by the "Scythian allies". And the so-called "Scythian allies" are presumably the Sacae cavalry from the north bank of the Syr Darya; they had taken part in the Gaugamela battle. The Sacae were allies of Darius III, not under Persian control, not even vassal states. (See the details below). This was in direct collision with Alexander's strategic goals, which made Bessus an obstacle that Alexander had to remove on the road to his grand cause, and also made him a tool with which Alexander could win popularity with Persia and even the whole of Asia.

And when Bessus was arrested, Alexander, of course, executed him:

Alexander ordered him to bring Bessus bound, naked, and wearing a wooden collar, and set him on the right of the road by which Alexander and his army were to pass. Ptolemy did so.... On seeing Bessus Alexander stopped his car and asked him why he had first seized Darius, who had been his king, and in addition his relative and benefactor, led him about in chains, and then murdered him. Bessus replied that he had acted not by any private decision of his own but in concert with all then attending on Darius, to obtain immunity from Alexander. At this Alexander ordered him to be whipped⁴ and the herald to announce during the whipping the crimes for which he himself had blamed Bessus in his question. After this torture Bessus was sent to Bactra to be put to death. (III, 30)

In another place, Arrian also records that "then Alexander summoned a council of those present, brought Bessus before them, and accusing him of treachery towards Darius, commanded that his nose and ear-laps should be cut off, and that he should be taken to Ecbatana, to be put to death there in the assembly of Medes and Persians". (IV, 7)⁵ On the face of it, at least, Alexander executed Bessus on behalf of the Persians, and he did so by torture, as if to do otherwise was insufficient to appease the Persian people.

Satibarzanes was the satrap of Areia and took part in the battle of Gaugamela, as did Bessus. (III, 8) After the war, he kidnapped Darius III with Bessus. At one point he defected to Alexander, and "Alexander confirmed him in his satrapy, and sent with him Anaxippus, one of the Companions, with about forty mounted javelin-men, so that he might have guards to set for various places, to prevent the

Areians being injured by the army on its passage". (III, 25) But Satibarzanes' action was a feigning surrender, and he soon rose in rebellion. He "had massacred Anaxippus and his mounted javelinmen, was arming the Areians and leading them in a body to the city of Artacoana, where the Areian palace was, and that he had decided, on learning of Alexander's advance, to go from there with his troops to Bessus and join him in attacking the Macedonians wherever opportunity offered". (III, 25) Alexander, who was planning to march on Bactria, could only immediately "took the Companion cavalry, the mounted javelin-men, archers, Agrianians, and Amyntas' and Coenus' battalions, and leaving behind there the rest of the army with Craterus in charge, advanced swiftly against Satibarzanes and the Areians", and forced him to flee in panic. (III, 25) However, "the Areians had again revolted, since Satibarzanes had invaded their country with two thousand horse, whom he had received from Bessus". As a result, he was killed by Alexander's generals. (III, 28)⁵

Barsaentes was the satrap of Arachosia and Drangiana. He also took part in the battle at Gaugamela, as did Bessus and Satibarzanes. (III, 8) After the war, he kidnapped Darius III with Bessus, and stabbed Darius too. (III, 21) Therefore, he committed the same sin as Bessus and Satibarzanes. When Alexander led his army on the march towards Zarangaeans⁶, which had been occupied by Barsaentes. He "fled to the Indians on this side of the river Indus; but they seized him and sent him to Alexander, who put him to death for the wrong he had done Darius". (III, 25) So he also did not escape Alexander's punishment.

By killing off Bessus, Satibarzanes, and Barsaentes, Alexander further wiped out all the effective forces of the Achaemenid Empire, and showed the Persians that he intended to be the successor of Darius III and rule all Asia, including Persia.

B

In order to further win the hearts of the people in Persia, especially Central Asia, Alexander knew well that he could not just stop at killing the traitors of Darius III, thus he appointed the people from Persia and Central Asia to important posts in the process of his eastern expedition to Central Asia.

For example, after Satibarzanes had run away, "as satrap of Areia he appointed Arsaces, a Persian". (III, 25) For another example, he put Artabazus, a general who surrendered, and his sons (Cophen, Ariobarzanes, and Arsames) in important positions. Artabazus and his sons did not take part in the

kidnapping of Darius III, nor did they recognize the authority of Bessus. When Alexander marched on Hyrcania, Artabazus and his sons surrendered together. (III, 23) "He kept Artabazus and his sons by him in an honourable position, as they were among the most eminent Persians and especially because of their loyalty to Darius". (III, 23) When Satibarzanes rebelled, Alexander ordered him to lead the troops to attack Satibarzanes. (III, 28) The important reason for their being put in important positions was their "loyalty to Darius". In addition, "to govern the rest of the Bactrians, who readily adhered to him, he appointed Artabazus the Persian as satrap". (III, 29) Afterwards, "Alexander relieved Artabazus of the satrapy of Bactria at his own request on account of old age". Alexander did not forget him, and he arranged the marriage of his two daughters at Susa. (VII, 4)

Sisicottus is another example. He "had long ago deserted from the Indians and joined Bessus at Bactra, but taken service under Alexander when he became master of Bactria and shown himself especially trustworthy". (IV, 30) Later on, he was appointed "satrap of Assacenians⁷" (V, 20) by Alexander, to give just one example.

Alexander did all these acts in order to show that he was the true heir of the Persian monarch – and thus he got the aid and support of the officers and generals under his predecessor.⁸ Objectively, the fact that the Persians and Central Asians were at the service of Alexander greatly reduced the resistance to his realizing his political goals.

C

Of course, Alexander's means to win over the Persians and Central Asians was not only in this way. More important were the connections he made through marriages. A prime example of this was his own marriage to Roxane, the daughter of Oxyartes.

Oxyartes was a Bactrian, who had followed Bessus with Spitamenes, and when Alexander marched into Sogdiana, he settled himself with his wife and daughters on the most critical mountain fortification in Sogdiana, which he thought the Macedonians could not capture. However, the mountain fortification nevertheless was conquered by Alexander, and Oxyartes' wife and daughters were captured.

Now Oxyartes had a maiden daughter of age to marry called Roxane, and those who served with Alexander said that she was the loveliest woman they had seen in Asia next to Darius' wife, and that when Alexander saw her he fell in love with her; despite his passion he was not ready to violate her as a war captive, but did not think it beneath him to take her in marriage. (IV, 19)

"When Oxyartes heard that his daughters were captives, but also that Alexander was showing solicitude for his daughter Roxane, he ventured to come to Alexander and was honourably treated by him, as was appropriate on so happy an event". (IV, 20) Clearly, this cannot be attributed to Alexander's mere fascination with Roxanne's beauty and must be seen as a deliberate strategy on the part of Alexander.

When Alexander attacked the Rock of Chorienes in Pareitacae, he sent Oxyartes to induce to him to capitulate because the mountains were difficult to attack and easy to defend. Oxyartes lived up to his mission, reducing Macedonian losses. (IV, 21) It is not difficult to imagine that Oxyartes negotiated successfully, indicating that Alexander and this Bactrian marriage offered a very good example. Plutarch's (46–119/120 CE) *Life of Alexander* pointed out: "It was thought to harmonize well with the matters which he had in hand. For the Barbarians were encouraged by the partnership into which the marriage brought them, and they were beyond measure fond of Alexander, because, most temperate of all men that he was in these matters" (XLVII).⁹

Needless to say, Alexander set a good example, and many of his Macedonian generals and soldiers married Persians and Central Asians. A striking example occurred when, after calling back troops, Alexander himself designated a person to marry Seleucus, his Companion, in a mass wedding at Susa. The bride turned out to be "the daughter of Spitamenes the Bactrian". (VII, 4) Her father, Spitamenes, followed Bessus back to Sogdiana when he first made his debut. (III, 28) At one point, the man offered Alexander the chance to arrest Bessus, but he was half-hearted. (III, 29–30) Since then, he had been dealing with the Macedonian forces in Sogdiana, and for a time he became the greatest obstacle to Alexander's management of Central Asia, which seems to indicate that he had enjoyed the support of the people in Bactria and Sogdiana. (IV, 3–17) Therefore, it cannot be argued that Alexander's officiating at her marriage was intended to bring in and appease the people in Bactria and Sogdiana.

Except for Seleucus, "similarly to the other Companions the noblest daughters of Persians and

Medes, numbering about eighty" were at the wedding. It should also be pointed out that, "these weddings were solemnized in the Persian style". (VII, 4)

Since the wedding held at Siusa was in the Persian style, it is reasonable to speculate that Alexander and Roxane's wedding could also have been in the Persian style, or even the Bactrian style. Alexander "substituted the dress of Medes for that traditional with Macedonians and ... he exchanged the tiara of the Persians, whom he himself had conquered, for the head-dress he had long worn" (IV, 7) in the process of invading Central Asia.¹⁰

In addition, according to Plutarch, *The Life of Alexander*, "Under these circumstances, too, he adapted his own mode of life still more to the customs of the country, and tried to bring these into closer agreement with Macedonian customs, thinking that by a mixture and community of practice which produced good will, rather than by force, his authority would be kept secure while he was far away. For this reason, too, he chose out thirty thousand boys and gave orders that they should learn the Greek language and be trained to use Macedonian weapons, appointing many instructors for this work".¹¹ There is no doubt that the integration of the Macedonians with the people from Persia and Central Asian in lineage and customs was entirely in line with the Alexander's plan to achieve his strategic objectives.

D

Arrian broadly divided the Scythians into the "Asian Scythians" and "European Scythians". The former was also subdivided into the Abian Scythians, Massagetae, and Sacae.

According to Arrian, "the European Scythians" had repeatedly sent envoys to Alexander to foster cordial relations between them. "The king was willing to give Alexander his daughter in marriage, to confirm his friendship and alliance. If, however, Alexander should not think fit to marry the Scythian princess, he was still willing to give the daughters of the satraps of the Scythian territory and of the chief personages in Scythia to Alexander's most trusted followers; he would also come to visit Alexander, if summoned, and hear Alexander's commands from Alexander himself" and so on. (IV, 15) It is worth noting that Alexander declined their request for marriage, because of course Alexander's aim was to

conquer Asia at the time, but it is also counterevidence of Alexander's own political intention to marry Roxane and of his encouraging the Macedonians to marry the people of Persia and Central Asia.

Alexander's goal was to conquer Asia, and he naturally did not want instability in his backyard, thus "Alexander then replied to the [European] Scythian envoy, graciously and as his interest at the time demanded". (IV, 15) When Alexander returned to Babylon, the European Scythians sent envoys to celebrate his elevation as king of Asia. (VII, 15)

Similarly, Alexander adopted a similar approach to the so-called "Abian Scythians" as to the "European Scythians":

Not many days later, envoys came to Alexander from the Abian Scythians, as they are called, whom Homer praised in his epic by calling them "most just of men"; they live in Asia, and are independent, chiefly through their poverty and their sense of justice. Envoys came too from the European Scythians, the largest nation dwelling in Europe. Alexander sent some of the Companions with them, pretending it was an embassy to conclude a friendly agreement; but the idea of the mission was rather to spy out the nature of the Scythians' land, their numbers, their customs and the arms they use on their warlike expeditions. (IV, 1)

The attitude is slightly different for the Abian Scythians, in that he was wary, presumably because they lived in Asia, after all.

In the march into Central Asia, the Asian Scythians whom Alexander dealt with seriously were the Massagetae and Sacae. According to Arrian, the Sacae that Alexander encountered were undoubtedly located north of the Syr Darya, while the Massagetae were mostly located south of the Syr Darya, in the Sogdiana region.

The Sacae had been an ally of Darius III and therefore also took part in the battle of Gaugamela against the Macedonians:

The force was large because Darius had obtained the help of those Indians who bordered on the Bactrians, together with the Bactrians and Sogdianians themselves, all

under the command of Bessus, the satrap of Bactria. They were joined by Sacae, a Scythian people, belonging to the Scyths who inhabit Asia, who came, not as subjects of Bessus, but on the basis of an alliance with Darius; Mauaces was their commander, and they were mounted archers. (III, 8)

The Sacae cavalry was placed "in advance, and on the left wing, facing Alexander's right, had been posted the Scythian cavalry". (III, 11) At the battle of Gaugamela, these Sacae cavalry gave the Macedonians a great deal of trouble. (III, 13)

The Sacae's alliance with Darius III did not end with the latter's defeat at Gaugamela, though they did not anymore provide any substantive assistance to Darius III. (III, 19) When Bessus fought Alexander, he counted on the support of the Sacae. (III, 25) During Alexander's march into Central Asia, the Sacae were certainly on the opposite side from the Macedonians:

Meanwhile an army of the Asian Scythians arrived on the banks of the river Tanais; most of them had heard that some of the barbarians on that side of the river had revolted from Alexander, and they intended, should any important rising occur, to join in attacking the Macedonians. (IV, 3)

This "Asian Scythian" army on the banks of the river Tanais could only have been the Sacae cavalry. Alexander planned to build the city on the Tanais River, mainly in order to deal with the Sacae cavalry. "As he saw that the Scythians were not leaving the river bank but were observed shooting from it arrows into the river, which was not very broad here, and were also insulting Alexander with barbaric boasts", Alexander forced his way across the Tanais river and attacked them. The Sacae retreated after thousands of their men were killed. Alexander gave chase "because of the great heat, so that all the army was consumed by thirst, and Alexander himself, as he rode on, drank whatever kind of water there was in that country. The water was in fact bad, and so sudden diarrhoea attacked his stomach". Because Alexander fell ill, the Sacae avoided being wiped out. (IV, 4)

Soon afterwards envoys reached Alexander from the Scythian king; they had been sent to apologize for what had occurred, on the ground that it had not been the action of the Scythian community, but only that of raiders and freebooters; the king himself was ready to do what was required of him. Alexander gave a kindly answer, since he thought it dishonourable not to press the attack, if he distrusted the king, and not the right moment to press it. (IV, 5)

Striving for allied countries and making necessary compromises with enemy countries was also an important reason for the success of Alexander's march into Central Asia. Alexander did all this in order to advance his goals.

Needless to say, Alexander was not blindly tolerant. He knew how to make an example of others: his own authority was inviolable. For example, after the Macedonian army captured the city of Gaza in Sogdiana, "they put all the men to the sword according to Alexander's orders and seized and plundered the women, children and other spoils". (IV, 2) Alexander was equally adept with both suppression and appeasement.

E

Political objectives and strategies need to be achieved through the right military action. Accordingly Alexander made careful preparations for the march into Central Asia.

1. Counter insurgency: as mentioned earlier, Alexander suppressed the rebellion of Satibazanes, clearing the way for the march into Central Asia.
2. Clearing internal centrifugal forces: mainly dealing with Parmenio and his son, Philotas. (III, 26–27) Parmenio had worked for Alexander's father, Philip, having a huge influence in the political and military circles, and thus he was a threat to Alexander's control of the overall situation. Needless to say, the removal of Parmenio and his son not only opened up ways to forward the march into Central Asia, but also removed this counter force in a way that did not weaken the strength of the Macedonians, and this was was objectively conducive to the march into Central Asia.¹²
3. To establish a consolidated rear to ensure the smooth progress of the battle ahead: After putting

down the rebellion of Satibazanes, Alexander marched on Bactria to attack Bessus. However, the Macedonians actually turned south and "on the way won over the Drangians and Gadrosians, and the Arachotians as well, appointing Menon as satrap to govern them. He also came upon the Indians nearest the Arachotians". (III, 28) This is not only because these regions were also a part of Asia, which Alexander had planned to conquer, but also because conquering them eliminated worries of counterattacks while attacking Bactria.

4. Alexander built new cities throughout his eastern expedition, including in Central Asia. The most famous is the so-called "Alexandria ad Caucasum" (present-day Begram):

Meanwhile Alexander led his army to Mount Caucasus (the present-day Hindu-kush), where he founded a city he called Alexandria. (III, 28)

and the so-called "Alexandria Eschate" (the present-day Khujand):

He was himself planning to found a city on the Tanais, and to give it his own name. For in his view the site was suitable for the city to rise to greatness, and it would be well placed for any eventual invasion of Scythia and as a defence bastion of the country against the raids of the barbarians dwelling on the other side of the river. (IV, 1)

Others cities Alexander built include Alexandria at Aria (present-day Herat)¹³, which was built after the rebellion of Satibazanes, Alexandria at Arachosia (present-day Kandahar) when he went up along the Helmand Valley,¹⁴ Alexandria of Prophthasia at Drangiana (the present-day Farah), Alexandria of Opiana (Alexandropolis, the present-day Ghazni).¹⁵ These new cities were in effect fortresses garrisoned by the Macedonian army. These fortresses controlled the rear of the troops and made their advance possible without fear of attacks from behind.¹⁶

In 328 BCE, Alexander founded six cities north of the Oxus River, on high ground, at intervals of some distance. Soon after, Alexander moved prisoners of war captured alive during his siege of Aria to make them work as serfs on the lands.¹⁷ (IV, 16) This is a different function of Alexander's new cities.¹⁸

This shows that the purpose of building these cities was more than one. As far as the march into

Central Asia is concerned, those cities served mainly to consolidate the rear; they of course could also store supplies. And “some Macedonians from the army who were no longer fit for active service” (IV, 4) could be settled in the cities. Settling down the old, the weak, the wounded, and the disabled men also helped to calm people’s minds and enhance combat effectiveness.

In such a turbulent land, the new cities of Alexandria were like lighthouses and harbors on the stormy sea, which played an immeasurable role not only in the eventual peace of Central Asia, but also played an irreplaceable role in the harmony between Macedonians and Central Asians after the war.

F

In history, Alexander is known for his skillful use of military force. The secret of his victory over the enemy is his speed, which is only too important in warfares. This aspect also shows itself in the outstanding performance in the process of Alexander’s march into Central Asia.¹⁹

Alexander’s march into Central Asia began with a rapid march to follow Darius III on the run. After Darius III had been kidnapped, Alexander began his rapid march to pursue Bessus, the Persian rebel. According to Arrian, when he learned that Darius III had been kidnapped:

On learning this Alexander pressed on faster than ever, with only the Companions, the mounted *prodromoi*, and the strongest and lightest of the infantry, carefully selected, without even waiting for Coenus and his men to return from foraging. He put Craterus in command of those left behind and ordered him to follow, but not by forced marches. His own men had nothing but their arms and two days’ rations. Travelling all night and the next day till noon, he rested his troops a short time and then went on again all night, and at dawn he reached the camp, from which Bagistanes had started back. But he did not overtake the enemy ... (III, 21)

Alexander continued his forced march after receiving definite news of Bessus:

Already his men and horses were growing utterly wearied under the continued hardship; none the less, he pressed on, and accomplishing a great distance during the night and the following day till noon, he reached a village where the party with Darius had bivouacked the day before. As he heard there that the barbarians had determined to travel by night, he asked the inhabitants whether they knew of any short cut to get to the fugitives. They replied that they did, but that the road was desolate for lack of water. He told them to guide him along this road, and seeing that his infantry would not keep up with him if he pushed on at full speed, he dismounted some five hundred horsemen, selected from the officers of the infantry and the rest those who had best kept up their strength, and ordered them to mount the horses, carrying their usual infantry arms. Nicanor the commander of the hypaspists, and Attalus commander of the Agrianians, were ordered to lead the men who were left behind along the road already taken by Bessus and his party with the lightest possible equipment, and the rest of the infantry were to follow in ordinary formation. Alexander then started off himself at evening and led his troops on at full speed; during the night he covered up to four hundred stades, and just at dawn came upon the Persians.... (III, 21)

Examples of this sort might go on and on. For example, when Alexander learned of the mutiny of Satibazanes, "after covering about six hundred stades in two days, he arrived at Artacoana". (III, 25) When he learned that Spitamenes had heavily mauled the Macedonians and surrounded the troops guarding the fortress. "Alexander covered fifteen hundred stades in three days". (IV, 6) Rapid action often catches the enemy off guard.

Forced marches must be light, and Alexander could not be an exception. From Susia, for example, Alexander intended to go east over the hills of Kopet Dag and from the west entered into Bactria²⁰. According to Quintus Curtius' record,

The men had brought the loaded wagons to a large piece of flat ground, and all were waiting to see what his next command would be. He ordered the animals to be led

off, put a torch to his own baggage first and then gave instructions for the rest to be burnt. (VI, 6)²¹

Forced marching, with light packs, is the essence of Alexander's invincible myth.

G

In real battles, Alexander knew full well how to adjust measures to local conditions. Take the Macedonian conquest at Sogdiana as an example.

According to Arrian's record, there were seven castles it was necessary to conquer in Sogdiana. Alexander ordered the siege of the largest city, Cyropolis. A Macedonian general, "Craterus was ordered to encamp near the city, to dig a ditch and throw a stockade round it, and to fit together as many siege engines as he required, so that the defenders of this city might have their minds fully occupied with Craterus and his troops and be unable to help those in the other cities". (IV, 2) Alexander himself took five cities in two days. Then he returned to attack Cyropolis:

Alexander marched against the largest of them, Cyropolis. This was fortified with a higher wall than the rest, since Cyrus had founded it; and as the greatest number and the best fighters of the barbarians round about had taken refuge in it, it was not so easy for the Macedonians to capture it straight off. However, Alexander brought up engines to the wall and proposed to batter it down in this way and to make assaults wherever breaches occurred.

But when he personally observed that the outlets of the river, a winter torrent which runs through the city, were dry at the time, and did not reach up to the wall, but were low enough to permit a passage by which soldiers could pass into the city, he took the bodyguards, hypaspists, archers and Agrianes, and while the tribesmen were engaged with the siege-engines and the troops attacking there, he slipped unobserved along the channels, penetrated the city at first with only a few men, and broke open the gates from within which were at that point and easily admitted the rest of the troops. (IV, 3)

It is a classic case of success because of adjusting measures to local conditions. The key is to take advantage of the unique fabric of cities in Central Asian.

Coincidentally, there is a similar war example in Chinese historical records to be referred to: in the “Dayuan Liezhuan 大宛列傳” of *Shiji* 史記 (ch. 123) it is recorded that “Inside the town of the king of [Da]yuan [大]宛 there were no wells, and [the inhabitants] drew [what they needed] from water that flowed outside the walls. So he dispatched water workers to divert the course of the river that lay at the foot of the walls, in order to hollow out the walls.... He then marched first to [Da]yuan [大]宛, and cut off and diverted the source of its water. As a result [Da]yuan [大]宛 was in serious difficulties”.²² The statement “[the inhabitants] drew [what they needed] from water that flowed outside the walls” does not necessarily mean that the inhabitants went out of the town to draw water, for they might have drawn it from the channels which led the “water that flowed outside the walls” into the town. “The source of the water” that had been cut off and diverted must have been the source of water in the channels. Similar situations occurred in other places in Central Asia. The “the town of the king of [Da]yuan [大]宛” that Li Guangli 李廣利 attacked was not the city of Cyropolis, but the two obviously had similar situations.

Alexander attacked the city by using the channels that drew water into the city, as the water became shallow in winter; whereas Li Guangli 李廣利 contributed to the capture of the town by cutting off and diverting the water source of such channels to create a lack of water. This was the only difference between Alexander and Li Guangli 李廣利.

In a word, the organic combination of correct and consistent political strategy and effective military strategy is the most fundamental reason for the success of Alexander’s eastward expedition to Central Asia.

NOTES

¹ For details, see the first chapter of this book.

² Brunt1983, also used hereafter.

³ Also see Quintus Curtius, *Historiae Alexandri Magni* (VI, 6). For the English translation, see Rolfe1956.

⁴ According to Plutarch’s *The Life of Alexander* (hereafter referred to as Plutarch): “And when, at a later time, he found

Bessus, he had him rent asunder. Two straight trees were bent together and a part of his body fastened to each; then when each was released and sprang vigorously back, the part of the body that was attached to it followed after". (XLIII) See Perrin¹⁹¹⁹.

5 Cf. Curtius (VII, 4).

6 Zarangaeans, i.e., Drangina.

7 Assacenians, in present-day Eastern Afghanistan and in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in present-day Pakistan, also is known as Aśvaka.

8 Alexander even enlisted the Persian nobles as his entourage, most notably Darius III's brother, Oxyathres. Cf. Diodorus' *Bibliotheca Historica* (XVII, 78.2) and Curtius (VI, 22–23). For Diodorus' English translation, see Geer¹⁹⁸⁴.

9 Plutarch (XLVII), see Perrin¹⁹¹⁹.

10 According to Plutarch, "From thence he marched into Parthia, where, during a respite from fighting, he first put on the barbaric dress, either from a desire to adapt himself to the native customs, believing that community of race and custom goes far towards softening the hearts of men; or else this was an attempt to introduce obeisance among the Macedonians, by accustoming them little by little to accept changes and alterations in his mode of life". (XLV)

11 Plutarch (XLVII).

12 Cartledge²⁰⁰⁴, pp. 167–169.

13 Bosworth¹⁹⁸⁰, pp. 356–357.

14 Fisher¹⁹⁶⁷; Fraser^{1979/80}.

15 The city must have been the state of Caojuzha 漕矩吒 (Jaguda), through which Xuanzang 玄奘 traveled. See JiX¹⁹⁸⁵ (ch. 12).

16 Dani¹⁹⁹², p. 70 (p. 44).

17 Cf. Curtius (VII, 10–11).

18 For the location of the new cities, see Bosworth¹⁹⁸¹, pp. 23–29.

19 Darius III attempted to assemble an army at Ecbatana (the present-day Hamadan), where he joined forces with Bessus of Bactria, Barsaentes of Arachosia, and Satibarzanes of Aria, as well as with Nabazernes, Artabazus, and many other armies, including his Greek mercenaries. But Alexander's advance was so swift that Darius could not regroup fast enough to gain the support of the eastern satrapies. Cf. Dani, p. 43.

20 Bosworth¹⁹⁸⁸, p. 99.

²¹ Plutarch (LVII) also records the burning of luggage by Alexander in order to march light; however, this was before the invasion of India.

²² SimaQ1975.

4. THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE SELEUCID EMPIRE AND CENTRAL ASIA

As is well known that, after the death of Alexander of Macedon, the great empire which he had fought to form in all directions was soon divided into three parts: the Antigonid Empire, Ptolemaic Empire, and Seleucid Empire. Central Asia was under the Seleucid Empire.

The relations between Seleucid Empire and Central Asia are briefly described below.

A. DURING THE REIGN PERIOD OF SELEUCUS I

The founder of the Seleucid Empire, Seleucus I Nicator (c. 312–281 BCE), eventually acquired most of the territory of the former Macedonian Empire. Accordingly, Arrian's *Anabasis Alexandri* states:

Seleucus was the greatest king of those who succeeded Alexander, of the most royal mind, and ruling over the greatest extent of territory, next to Alexander himself. (VII. 22)¹

It goes without saying that there had been an up-and-down struggle. It should be mentioned here that Seleucus acquired Babylon in 320 BCE at a council of Triparadeisus in Syrian for the redistribution of power (see Diodorus, *Bibliotheca Historica*, XVIII, 39.6)²; Five years later, Seleucus was expelled from Babylon by Antigonus I (r. 306–301 BCE). In 312 BCE, with the help of Ptolemy I Soter (r. 305/304–282 BCE), Seleucus recaptured Babylon and consolidated his rule in Mesopotamia before turning his eyes to the east.³ Between 308 and 306 BCE, Seleucus became the master of Iran and Bactria through force and diplomacy.⁴ Justin's *Epitome of Pompeius Trogus*⁵ says:

After the division of the Macedonian empire among the followers of Alexander, he carried on several wars in the east. He first took Babylon, and then, his strength being increased by this success, subdued the Bactrians. (Justin, XV, 4.11)

Appian of Alexandria (c. 95–165 CE), a Roman historian, also records this in *the Syrian Wars*⁶:

Always lying in wait for the neighbouring nations, strong in arms and persuasive in diplomacy, he acquired Mesopotamia, Armenia, the so-called Seleucid Cappadocia⁷, the Persians, Parthians, Bactrians, Arabs, Tapyri⁸, Sogdiani, Arachotes, Hyrcanians, and all the other adjacent peoples that had been subdued by Alexander, as far as the river Indus, so that he ruled over a wider empire in Asia than any of his predecessors except Alexander. For the whole region from Phrygia⁹ to the Indus was subject to Seleucus. (55)

The Seleucid Empire ruled Bactria and others in Central Asian using the Achaemenid Empire's administration mode. The coins were minted in Bactria, and the names Seleucus I and Antiochus I Soter (r. 281–261 BCE) were juxtaposed. This shows that Seleucus and his son Antiochus once ruled together.¹⁰ Bactria, Sogdiana and other places were possibly under the direct jurisdiction of Antiochus (I), from 292 BCE until the death of Seleucus I in 281 BCE.¹¹

From Bactria, Seleucus I marched into India. This war ended in marriage and alliance with the rulers of the Maurya dynasty in India. According to Appian's *The Syrian Wars*,

He crossed the Indus and waged war with Androcottus, king of the Indians, who dwelt on the banks of that stream, until they came to an understanding with each other and contracted a marriage relationship. (55)

Androcottus is the same as Chandragupta (r. 324/321–297 BCE) of the Mauryan dynasty. It is generally believed that Seleucus ceded the easternmost satrapies: Arachotia, Gedrosia, and Paropamisadae¹², and perhaps Areia¹³ was included as well. According to Strabo's *Geography*¹⁴,

The geographical position of the tribes is as follows: along the Indus are the Paropamisadae, above whom lies the Paropamisus mountain: then, towards the south, the Arachoti (=Arachotes): then next, towards the south, the Gedroseni (=Gedrosia)¹⁵, with the other tribes that occupy the seaboard; and the Indus lies, latitudinally, alongside all these places; and of these places, in part, some that lie along the Indus are held by Indians, although they formerly belonged to the Persians. Alexander (III "the

Great" of Macedon) took these away from the Arrians and established settlements of his own, but Seleucus Nicator (Seleucus I Nicator) gave them to Sandrocottus (Chandragupta), upon terms of intermarriage and of receiving in exchange five hundred elephants. (XV, 2.9)

Apparently, Seleucus had ceded these areas in exchange for stability on the empire's northeastern frontier, and it was through the settlement of the Paropamisadae that Alexander had entered Bactria. The rule of Seleucid Empire was further consolidated in Central Asia by intermarriage and alliance with Chandragupta. Needless to say, these arrangements were also beneficial to the security of the Mauryan dynasty.

B. DURING THE REIGN-PERIOD OF ANTIOCHUS I

Antiochus I was the son of Seleucus I and Apama, the empress, and, as mentioned earlier, he ruled in joint regency with his father (probably *mathišta* [maθišta] of the Achaemenid Empire). After the death of Seleucus I he formally ascended the throne.

During the joint regency, Central Asia came under the direct control of Antiochus. He was resident in Bactria, and not Seleucia on the Tigris River.¹⁶ He may have been required to defend Bactria because of invasions and rebellions by nomads. The mint of the Seleucid Empire in Bactria was established during his joint regency with his father to meet the needs of this region's economy as well as east-west trade.¹⁷

Antiochus was also responsible for urban construction and border fortification from Iran up to Bactria. Here are some of the major cities he built in Central Asia:

1. Antiochia Margiana.¹⁸ According to the *Natural History* of Pliny the Elder (23/24–79 CE),¹⁹

In Margiane Alexander had founded a city called Alexandria, which was destroyed by the barbarians, but Antiochus son of Seleucus reestablished a city on the same site,

intersected by the river Margus, which is canalized into Lake Zotha; he had preferred that the city should be named Antiochia. Its circuit measures 8 miles. (VI, 47)

For a similar account, see Strabo's *Geography*:

Margiana is similar to this country, although its plain is surrounded by deserts. Admiring its fertility, Antiochus Soter enclosed a circuit of fifteen hundred stadia with a wall and founded a city Antiocheia. (XI, 10.2)

2. Achais.²⁰ According to *Natural History* of Pliny the Elder,

The town of Heraclea, founded by Alexander and subsequently overthrown, but restored by Antiochus, who gave it the name of Achais.

3. Artacoana. According to *Natural History* of Pliny the Elder,

In the direction of the Indus is the Arian region, There is a town, Artacoana, and a river, Arius²¹, which flows past Alexandria, a town founded by Alexander which covers an area of nearly four miles; and the much more beautiful as well as older town of Artacabene²², the fortifications of which were renewed by Antiochus, covers an area of 6 miles. (VI, 93)

Furthermore, archaeological evidence suggests that Ai-Khanoum in the Takhar Province in the Northern Afghanistan (at the confluence of the Panj and Kokcha Rivers) was founded by the Seleucid Empire about 280 BCE, which Antiochus I must already have been ruling on his own. The city was inhabited by Greeks, Macedonians, and natives.²³

It goes without saying that the construction carried out by Antiochus I not only helped consolidate the frontier and prevent the invasion of nomadic tribes from the north, but also contributed to the development of economy and trade.

It is likely that during Antiochus' regency in Central Asia, general Demodamas explored the areas north of the Syr Darya. Based on the *Natural History* of Pliny the Elder, the Tanais River, which had hindered Alexander the Great and his army, was "crossed by Demodamas, the general of King Seleucus and King Antiochus, whom we are chiefly following in this part of our narrative; and he set up altars to Apollo Didymaeus (Apollo of Didyma)". (VI, 18)²⁴ Demodamas is generally considered to have gone further in this direction than Alexander the Great. He also rebuilt the distant Alexandria Eschate. He was satrap of Bactria and Sogdiana in the Seleucid Empire, and later wrote an autobiography of his adventures in Central Asia, which became an important source for the geographers Strabo and Pliny the Elder.²⁵

From the time Antiochus I came to the throne, the Seleucid Empire and the Ptolemaic Empire were in constant conflict, fighting for control of coastal cities in the eastern Mediterranean with at least six so-called Syrian Wars breaking out. It should be noted that Central Asia was unquestionably loyal to the Seleucid Empire during the First Syrian War (274–271 BCE). The evidence is that the satrap of Bactria used elephants to support the Seleucid Emperor in 273 BCE.²⁶

Antiochus I was succeeded by Antiochus II Theos (r. 261–246 BCE), who may have been lax in governing Central Asia, and it was probably during his reign that Central Asia gained independence from the Seleucid Empire, which was known historically as the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom. Diodotus (I), the first king of the Greco-Bactria Kingdom, was probably the satrap of Bactria of the Seleucid Empire under Antiochus II.²⁷

Another war broke out between Seleucus II Callinicus (r. 246–225 BCE), who came to the throne at the end of the reign of Antiochus II, and his brother Antiochus Hierax, who established his own kingdom in Minor Asia as a result. The War of the Brothers (241–239 BCE) and the ensuing Third Syrian War (246–241 BCE) gave Diodotus the opportunity to consolidate his independent kingdom.

C. DURING THE REIGN PERIOD OF ANTIOCHUS III

Seleucus II was succeeded by his eldest son, Seleucus III Ceraunus (r. 225–223 BCE). Two years later, Seleucus III was assassinated at Bergama²⁸ while fighting with Attalus I of Pergamon (r. 241–197 BCE), and his brother Antiochus III Megas (r. 222–187 BCE) ascended the throne at the age of 18. It is possible that he was in charge of the eastern satrapies of the empire before enthronement.²⁹

It was during the reign of Antiochus III that the Seleucid Empire again extended its force into Central Asia (Bactria).

Antiochus III invaded Armenia in 212 BCE as a prelude to the reconquest of the eastern satrapies, making Antiochus IV's brother Prince Regent 210 BCE.³⁰ Towards the end of 210 BCE, he began his campaign to the east, with the main objective being defeat of Arsaces II (r. 217–191 BCE), who occupied Parthia, Hyrcania, and Media. After forcing Arsaces II to retreat from Media and capture Hecatompylus, he entered into Hyrcania from the Hecatompylus pass. Arsaces II had to yield after Sirynca³¹ was occupied. The above situation is recorded in Polybius's (c. 200–118 BCE), *Histories* (X, 27–31).³²

Next, Antiochus III marched into Bactria, where Diodotus I, the founder of the Greco-Bactria Kingdom, had died and was succeeded by his son Diodotus II. When Antiochus III invaded the Greco-Bactria Kingdom, the kingdom had been usurped by Euthydemus, a powerful minister, (known to history as the Euthydemus dynasty). Antiochus III's opponent would have been Euthydemus I. Euthydemus I tried to resist Antiochus III on the banks of the Arius River³³ but was defeated and retreated to the capital Bactra, where he had to stay for three years, a circumstance ending in peace between the two sides in 206 BCE. Euthydemus claimed that if the two sides continue to fight, Bactria would be faced with the invasion of nomadic tribes. Antiochus III then agreed to make peace. Antiochus III expressed his acceptance of Euthydemus as king, while Euthydemus recognized Antiochus III as suzerain and offered grain and elephants as compensation for the war.³⁴ Antiochus III then crossed the Hindu Kush into the valley of the Kabul River.³⁵

After Antiochus III, the Seleucid Empire could no longer control Central Asia.

After Alexander the Great, Central Asia was ruled by the Seleucid Empire, but due to having its center of gravity in the West, Central Asia soon separated from the Seleucid central government and became independent, becoming known in history as the Greco-Bactria Kingdom.³⁶

D. APAMA AND APAMEA

1. As mentioned earlier, Apama, the mother of Antiochus I, was the daughter of Spitamenes, a Bactrian nobleman.³⁷

Seleucus I had been Alexander's general and one of his closest friends. In 324 BCE, Apama, daughter of Spitamenes, the Bactrian nobleman and former Macedonian enemy, was betrothed to him by Alexander in a grand mass wedding at Susa (see below). This marriage had a positive effect on Seleucus' dominance later. It has been suggested that perhaps Seleucus I was thus even more successful than Alexander in gaining acceptance among the people in Central Asia.³⁸

According to Arrian's *Anabasis of Alexander*, Spitamenes was among the men who followed Bessus when the latter crossed the Oxus River and led his men to Sogdiana after Darius III had been murdered. (III, 28) But when Alexander crossed the Oxus River and attacked Bessus, Spitamenes betrayed Bessus. He arrested Bessus and handed him over to Alexander. (III, 29–30) However, when the Macedonian army reached the Tanais River (Syr Darya), Spitamenes rebelled against Alexander and besieged Marakanda with his troops (IV, 3) and decimated the Macedonian army in the valley of the Polytimetus River. (IV, 5) In order to pursue and attack Spitamenes, Alexander traversed the valley of the Polytimetus River. (IV, 6, 16 – 17) Spitamenes was arguably Alexander's most formidable opponent in his quest to conquer Central Asia.³⁹

As an indigenous nobleman from Central Asia, Spitamenes was no doubt an enemy of Alexander of Macedonia, but he was in fact not loyal to the Achaemenid Empire. At first, he had followed Bessus only to gain the strength from the Persians against the Macedonians. As soon as he found Bessus unreliable, he abandoned him and himself rallied the Bactrians, the Sogdians, and the Sacae, and the Massagetae, in his struggle against the Macedonians adamantly.⁴⁰ Spitamenes was killed and his daughter Apama fell into the hands of Alexander in 328 BCE due to a betrayal by the Massagetae.

Such a native aristocrat who stood up to the invaders would not lose popularity among the natives even after his death. So even though Spitamenes was his mortal enemy, Alexander betrothed his daughter to his favorite general. It is generally believed that the time is 324 BCE. The following is the record in Arrian's *Anabasis of Alexander*:

He also held weddings at Susa for himself and for the Companions; he himself married Darius' eldest daughter Barsine, and, as Aristobulus says, another wife as well, Parysatis, the youngest daughter of Ochus. He had already taken to wife Roxane, the daughter of Oxyartes the Bactrian. To Hephaestion, he gave Drypetis, another daughter of Darius, sister to his own wife (for he desired Hephaestion's children to be cousins to his own); to Craterus, Amastrine, daughter of Oxyatres, Darius' brother; to Perclicas, a daughter of Atropates, satrap of Media; to Ptolemy the bodyguard and Eumenes the royal secretary, the daughters of Artabazus, Artacama and Artonis, respectively; to Nearchus the daughter of Barsine and Mentor; to Seleucus the daughter of Spitamenes the Bactrian, and similarly to the other Companions the noblest daughters of Persians and Medes, numbering about eighty. These weddings were solemnized in the Persian style.

(VII, 4)

It was men like Spitamenes that Alexander had to win over. This was in keeping with the fundamental purpose of Alexander's mass wedding in Susa.

Perhaps it should be pointed out: according to Arrian (IV, 17), Spitamenes died at the hands of the Massagetae, who had once followed him. (IV, 17) And according to Quintus Curtius (VIII, 3), Spitamenes died at the hands of his beloved wife. Spitamenes' wife was tired of having constantly to run away, and she persuaded her husband to surrender to Alexander by any means necessary in order to save their three children. But Spitamenes saw her betrayal and nearly killed her. His wife had to kill Spitamenes in his sleep and take his head to Alexander. Although Alexander resented her cruelty, it is not hard to imagine that this incident cleared the way for Alexander to later betroth Spitamenes' daughter to his general. Apama herself, or this marriage, had been a catalyst for the Seleucid Empire's domination of Central Asia.

2. Apama was the biological mother of Antiochus I; Antiochus I was born 323 BCE. According to Plutarch's *Lives IX (Demetrius)*⁴¹, Seleucus married another Macedonian woman in 300 BCE:

Not long afterwards, however, Seleucus sent and asked the hand of Stratonice (320–254 BCE), the daughter of Demetrius and Phila⁴², in marriage. He had already, by Apama the

Persian, a son Antiochus; but he thought that his realms would suffice for more successors than one, and that he needed this alliance with Demetrius, since he saw that Lysimachus⁴³ also was taking one of Ptolemy's⁴⁴ daughters for himself, and the other for Agathocles his son. (Plutarch, Demetrius, XXXI, 3)

But this did not affect Apama's position, and Antiochus, her son, ascended the throne without a problem, having previously ruled the land of his mother's place of birth as a joint regent with his father.

It is believed that at least four cities were named after Apama during the reign of Seleucus I and Antiochus I.⁴⁵ According to Appia's *Syrian War*,

He (Seleucus I Nicator) built cities throughout the entire length of his dominions and named sixteen of them Antioch after his father, five Laodicea after his mother, nine after himself, and four after his wives, that is, three Apamea and one Stratonicea (= Stratonice). Of these the two most renowned at the present time are the two Seleucias, one on the sea and the other on the river Tigris, Laodicea in Phoenicia, Antioch under Mount Lebanon, and Apamea in Syria. (LVII)

These cities are recorded in various classical books, of which the following are the most important.

a. The most famous is Apameia on the Orontes River⁴⁶ in Syria. Strabo's *Geography* (XVI, 2.4) states that there are four large cities in Syria:

The largest are four: Antiocheia near Daphnê, Seleuceia in Pieria, and also Apameia and Laodiceia; and these cities, all founded by Seleucus Nicator, used to be called sisters, because of their concord with one another. Now the largest of these cities was named after his father and the one most strongly fortified by nature after himself, and one of the other two, Apameia, after his wife Apama, and the other, Laodiceia, after his mother. (XVI, 2.4)

b. Apameia, north of Mesene⁴⁷ (Mēšān). According to *Natural History* of Pliny the Elder,

It (the Tigris) then traverses the mountains of the Gurdiae, flowing round Apameia, a town belonging to Mesene, and 125 miles short of Babylonian Seleucia⁴⁸ splits into two channels, one of which flows south and reaches Seleucia, watering Mesene on the way, while the other bends northward and passing behind the same people cuts through the plains of Cauchae; when the two streams have reunited, the river is called Pasitigris. [VI, 31]

c. Apameia on the Euphrates River, opposite Zeugma. According to *Natural History* of Pliny the Elder,

The towns washed by the river are Epiphania and Antioch (called Antioch on the Euphrates), and also Zeugma, 72 miles from Samosata, famous as a place where the Euphrates can be crossed, Apameia on the opposite bank being joined to it by a bridge constructed by Seleucus, the founder of both towns. [V, 21] 02, p. 287.

d. Apameia in Phrygia. According to *Natural History* of Pliny the Elder,

..... Apameia, which Antiochus names after his mother; this town is surrounded by the Tigris, and the Archous⁴⁹ intersects it. (VI, 31), p. 439

The city is also mentioned in several places in Strabo's *Geography* (read as Apameia, XII, 6.4, 8.13–15–18–19; XIII, 4.12; XIV, 2.29). Among them (XII, 8.15), it is an incorrect statement that that Apama, Antiochus' mother, was the daughter of Artabazus, a Persian nobleman who defected to Alexander the Great.

In my opinion, if the first three Apameas were built by Seleucus I, then the fourth, Apamea in Phrygia, might well have been built by Antiochus I also. This suggests that Apama's influence lasted at least until the reign of Antiochus I. In addition, there are some cities named after Apama, which will not be listed here.⁵⁰

It should be noted that in the middle of the third century BCE, the Seleucid Empire claimed that Apama was the daughter of Alexander and Roxane, who was identified as the daughter of Darius III in

order to establish itself as the legitimate successor of the Achaemenid dynasty and Alexander the Great of Macedon.⁵¹ This fictional pedigree caused quite a bit of confusion.⁵² But it's not hard to imagine that Apama's status as a descendant of Central Asia's indigenous nobility would have been emphasized by the Seleucids on at least a few particular occasions, when it wanted to strengthening their dominance in Central Asia centered in Bactria.

Either way, Apama left her mark on the history of the Seleucid Empire. This is also the mark left by the Central Asians.

In sum, from the beginning of its founding, the Seleucid Empire occupied Central Asia. The Seleucid Empire inherited the administrative system of the Achaemenid Empire, Bactria, and Sogdiana, which probably belonged to the single satrapy under the rule of a satrap. The imperial rulers built fortifications and even cities in regions like Bactria, Sogdiana and Margiana to defend their northeastern borders. It is suggested that the economy of Central Asia flourished during the Seleucid period as the dynasty encouraged migration to Bactria and actively expanded its irrigation networks.⁵³

As the satrapy of Bactria became independent from imperial control and began to mint coins in the satrap's own name,⁵⁴ the Seleucid Empire lost Central Asia. Antiochus III's eastward expedition in fact gained only nominal suzerainty. This region was of great importance to the Seleucid Empire. In addition to tributes, these regions may have provided cavalry, light infantry and, above all, archers for imperial warfare, which formed the basis of imperial military power.⁵⁵ The loss of Persia and its east, including Bactria, was the result of the decline of the Seleucid Empire, which marked the final disintegration of the Seleucid Empire as a world power.⁵⁶

NOTES

¹ Brunt 1983.

² Geer 1984. For the date of this conference, see Anson 1986. The exact location of Triparadeisus is unknown.

³ Grayson 1975, no. 10 (pp. 25–26).

⁴ Sherwin-White 1993, p. 12.

⁵ Watson 1853.

⁶ White 1962.

⁷ In what is now Central Anatolia, present-day Turkey.

⁸ One tribe of the Scythians.

⁹ The name of an ancient state, located in central and western part of what is now Anatolia in present-day Turkey. It is said that the people had migrated from the Balkans.

¹⁰ Erickson2019, p. 67 (Houghton2003, no. 257).

¹¹ Parker1956, pp. 20–22.

¹² Paropamisadae was located in the upper valley of the Kabul River, including Kophen, Kapisa, etc.

¹³ Clark1919, Smith1920.

¹⁴ Jones1916.

¹⁵ Briant2002, p. 756.

¹⁶ Seleucia; see Strabo's *Geography* (XVI, 1.5).

¹⁷ Bopearachchi1999; Bing2011.

¹⁸ Merv in present-day Turkmenistan.

¹⁹ Rackham1949.

²⁰ The location of the city is uncertain as opinions vary. See Cohon2013, pp. 274–275.

²¹ This river is probably the present-day Herat River.

²² Here Pliny mistakes one city (Artacoana) for two (Artacoana and Artacabene). See Cohen2013, p. 261.

²³ Lyonnet2012, Martinez-Sèvre2014, Charpentier1931.

²⁴ Seleucus I was said to be the son of Apollo. See Justin's *Epitome of Pompeius Trogus* (XV, 4.3–6) and Appian's *The Syrian Wars* (56).

²⁵ On Demodamas, see Kosmin2014, pp. 61–67, and Sherwin-White1993, pp. 25–27.

²⁶ For details, see the fifth chapter of this book.

²⁷ For details, see the fifth chapter of this book.

²⁸ It is located in the İzmir province in present-day Western Turkey.

²⁹ Bing2011.

³⁰ Parker1956, p. 22.

³¹ Sirynca, near present-day Astarābād.

³₂ Paton1922–27.

³₃ Arius River, i.e., the present-day Harīrūd River.

³₄ For details, see the sixth chapter of this book.

³₅ See Polybius' *Histories* (X, 48–49; XI, 39): Paton1922–27.

³₆ Cf. the fifth chapter of this book.

³₇ Brunt1983 (Arrian, *Anabasis*, VII, 4.6); Perrini1919 (Plutarch, *Demetrius* 31). Berve1973, nos. 98 Απάμη (p. 52); 717 Σπιταμένης (pp. 359–361).

³₈ Macurdy1975, pp. 77–78. Erskine2017, pp. 72–75, 133 (Strootman2007, pp. 110–111).

³₉ Cf. the second chapter of this book.

⁴₀ Berve1973, pp. 359–361.

⁴₁ Perrini1959. Demetrius refers to Demetrius I (294–288 bce) of the Antigonid Empire.

⁴₂ Phila, the daughter of Antipater, the Macedonian regency.

⁴₃ Lysimachus, the king of Thrace (306–281 bce).

⁴₄ Ptolemy refers to Ptolemy I (r. 305/304–282 bce).

⁴₅ Shahbazi2011.

⁴₆ The Orontes River starts in Lebanon and flows north through Syria into the Mediterranean Sea.

⁴₇ Mesene is just Characene, located at the head of the Persian Gulf.

⁴₈ Seleucia of Babylon, on the left bank of the Tigris river opposite Ctesiphon, in modern Baghdad Province, Iraq.

⁴₉ The location of this river is to be examined. Strabo's *Geography* (XII, 8.15) says that the river that passes through the city of Apamiea is the Marsyas River. The latter refers to the present-day Orontes River.

⁵₀ Smith1854, pp. 152–153.

⁵₁ Tarn1929, p. 138; Tarn1951, pp. 446–451; Shahbazi1977; Strootman2015–1. Roxane was the daughter of Oxyartes, a Bactrian nobleman. Oxyartes surrendered after Alexander had captured the Rock of Sogdiana. See Arrian's *Anabasis of Alexander* (IV, 18–19).

⁵₂ Shahbazi1977.

⁵₃ Frye1996, pp. 113–114.

⁵₄ Broderson1986, Lerner1999.

⁵5 Strootman 2015–2.

⁵6 Habicht 1989.

5. THE INDEPENDENCE OF GRECO-BACTRIA AND THE BEGINNING AND END OF THE DIODOTID DYNASTY

A

The founder of the Greco-Bactrian kingdom is Diodotus, whose birth date is unknown. It is believed that he may have been the satrap of Bactria when Antiochus II Theos (reigned 261–246) of the Seleucid Empire was trusted by his father Antiochus I Soter (reigned 281–261) to administer the empire's eastern territories.¹ Afterwards, he gained independence from the Seleucid Empire and founded the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom.

Due to lack of documentation, the details of Diodotus' deeds before his independence are unknown. Only in the *Babylonian Astronomical Diaries*² is it recorded:

... Month XII, the 24th day, the satrap of Babylonia brought out much silver, cloth, goods, and utensils from Babylon and Seleucia, the royal city, and 20 elephants, which the satrap of Bactria had sent to the king, to Transpotamia (i.e., Eber-näri, the countries west of the Euphrates) before the king. (No. -273B 'Rev. 30'- 32')

This was during the First Syrian War (274–271 BCE). This unnamed Bactrian satrap who sent a herd of twenty war elephants to Babylon to join the Seleucid forces' fighting against Ptolemaic Egypt may have been Diodotus. Of course, it could also be his predecessor.

As for the date of the independence of Bactria under Diodotus from the Seleucid Empire, the documents offer only some conflicting hints. Moreover, some of them are tied to the timing of the independence of Parthia, so it is difficult to determine a date. At present, there are two main theories: 255 (or 250) BCE and 246 BCE.³ The advantage of the former theory is that it explains why Antiochus II of the Seleucid Empire issued very few coins at Bactria, which means that Diodotus (I) was independent during the reign of Antiochus II. The latter theory has the advantage of linking the independence of Diodotus to the Third Syrian War (246–241 BCE), which was disastrous for the Seleucid empire.⁴ Here I

will list several items, both directly or indirectly offering evidence, presented in chronological order, and briefly discuss their bearings on the date.

B

In *Geographica* of Strabo (c. 63 BCE–24 CE)⁵ it is recorded:

*They say that the Aparnian Däae were emigrants from the Däae above Lake Maeotis, who are called Xandii or Parii. But the view is not altogether accepted that the Däae are a part of the Scythians who live about Maeotis. At any rate, some say that Arsaces (Arsaces I, r. 247/6–21 BCE) derives his origin from the Scythians, whereas others say that he was a Bactrian, and that when in flight from the enlarged power of Diodotus (I) and his followers he caused Parthia to revolt. (XI, 9.3)

Strabo's message here is that Arsaces, founder of the Parthian Empire, raised his rebellious flag in connection with Diodotus (I) of Bactria.⁶ For, according to Strabo, on the origin of Arsaces, the founder of the Parthian Empire, there seem to be two different narratives, some calling him a Scythian (specifically, Xandii or Parii), and others calling him a Bactrian. If one wants to reconcile the two narratives, he might do so by considering Arsaces as a Scythian who moved into Bactria.⁷ If Arsaces did rise in rebellion in Bactria, he must have been free of Diodotus (I) and its forces. Since Bactria and Parthia are adjacent, if Diodotus (I) had defected from the Seleucid Empire and tried to expand his sphere of influence, then the precondition for Arsaces (I) to raise his rebellious flag in Parthia must also be that he had freed himself of Diodotus' fetter.

As Strabo refers to Bactria, he cites the writings of Apollodorus, a Greek historian active between 130 BCE and 87 BCE; Apollodorus was a resident of the city of Artemita in the Parthian Empire. Therefore, Strabo's records are considered to be reliable. But by the above-cited accounts of Strabo we do not know the date when Arsaces (I) raised his rebellious flag in Parthia, nor the date when Diodotus' Bactria rebelled against the Seleucid Empire.⁸

It is worth noting that, before the above-cited passage, there is another passage in Strabo's work that relates to the independence of Bactria and Parthia from the Seleucid Empire:

But when revolutions were attempted by the countries outside the Taurus, because of the fact that the kings of Syria and Media, who were in possession also of these countries, were busily engaged with others, those who had been entrusted with their government first caused the revolt of Bactriana and of all the country near it, I mean Euthydemus and his followers; and then Arsaces, a Scythian, with some of the Däae (I mean the Aparnians, as they were called, nomads who lived along the Ochus), invaded Parthia and conquered it.... (XI, 9.2)

This is a controversial account: what does “revolutions were attempted by the countries outside the Taurus” mean? What does “the kings of Syria and Media, who were in possession also of these countries, were busily engaged with others” mean? Even stranger, why is it said here that the rebellion of Bactria was launched by Euthydemus? Scholars have put forward various explanations for this.⁹ These explanations are instructive, but they all seem hard to justify.

Here, I put forward my personal view, only for reference.

The first, the statement “revolutions were attempted by the countries outside the Taurus” must refer to Antiochus Hierax (the son of Antiochus II, the brother of Seleucus II [r. 246–225 BCE]), who controlled the area outside the Taurus, i.e., Asia Minor, meaning that he tried to secede from the Seleucids and become independent.¹⁰

Secondly, the statement “the kings of Syria and Media, who were in possession also of these countries, were busily engaged with others” seems to refer to the situation that Seleucus II, who was busy fighting with Ptolemy III Euergetes (r. 246–222 BCE) in Syria and Media, had no time for Asia Minor. From the Adulis inscription of Ptolemy III¹¹:

Having become master of all the land this side of the Euphrates and of Cilicia and Pamphylia and Ionia and the Hellespont and Thrace and of all the forces and Indian elephants in these lands, and having made subject all the princes in the (various)

regions, he crossed the Euphrates river and after subjecting to himself Mesopotamia and Babylonia and Sousiana and Persis and Media and all the rest of the land up to Bactria and having sought out all the temple belongings that had been carried out of Egypt by the Persians and having brought them back with the rest of the treasure from the (various) regions he sent his forces to Egypt through the canals that had been dug.

From this we can see that, during the Third Syrian Wars, Ptolemy III crossed eastwards the Euphrates River, with his army moving toward Mesopotamia, Babylon, Elam, Persia, and Media. The Seleucid Empire was in danger, and Syria and Media were fought over by both sides.

Third, "those who had been entrusted with their government" were undoubtedly the Seleucid satraps of the eastern territories, including Bactria, Parthia, etc. As is known to all, Euthydemus ascended the throne of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom only after he had overthrown the Diodotid dynasty, and it must be that Diodotus (I) as well as Arsaces raised the rebellious flag successively. Therefore, Strabo's above records seem to say that "Euthydemus and his followers" are the powerful faction in Bactria, and were the actual manipulator who rebelled against the Seleucid Empire. And Diodotus, then the satrap of the Bactria, was nothing more than a puppet. This also makes it easier to understand the subsequent usurpation of Euthydemus later. In other words, Euthydemus was the planner and executor when Bactria rebelled against the Seleucid Empire. After independence, Euthydemus became a powerful minister of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom.

In brief, in this paragraph Strabo says that, when Seleucus II and Ptolemy III were busy with the Third Syrian War, with a volatile situation in Asia Minor, Bactria and others, seizing the opportunity, revolted. Arsaces, a Scythian, then invaded Parthia. As far as the independence of Bactria is concerned, Strabo's records show that it dates from 246 BCE at the earliest and 241 BCE at the latest.

C

The historian who is most closely related to Strabo is Pompeius Trogus (who lived in the first century CE). His work is the *Historiae Philippicae*, which has been lost. The following citation is from the *Epitome* of Justin (second century CE)¹²:

After the death of Alexander the Great, when the kingdoms of the east were divided among his successors, the government of Parthia was committed to Stasanor, a foreign ally,¹³ because none of the Macedonians would deign to accept it. Subsequently, when the Macedonians were divided into parties by civil discord, the Parthians, with the other people of Upper Asia, followed Eumenes (c. 362–316 BCE), and, when he was defeated, went over to Antigonus (the mid-second century BCE). After his death they were under the rule of Seleucus Nicator, and then under Antiochus and his successors, from whose great-grandson Seleucus they first revolted, in the First Punic War, when Lucius Manlius Vulso and Marcus Atilius Regulus were consuls. For their revolt, the dispute between the two brothers, Seleucus and Antiochus, procured them impunity; for while they sought to wrest the throne from one another, they neglected to pursue the revolters.

At the same period, also, Theodotus, governor of the thousand cities of Bactria, revolted, and assumed the title of king; and all the other people of the east, influenced by his example, fell away from the Macedonians. One Arsaces, a man of uncertain origin, but of undisputed bravery, happened to arise at this time; and he, who was accustomed to living by plunder and depredations, hearing a report that Seleucus was overcome by the Gauls in Asia, and being consequently freed from dread of that prince, invaded Parthia with a band of marauders, overthrew Andragoras his lieutenant, and, after putting him to death, took upon himself the government of the country. (XLI, 4)

The first paragraph of the above-cited *Epitome* relates the attribution of the Parthians and the course of their independence from the Seleucid Empire after the death of Alexander the Great. According to the *Epitome*, while Lucius Manlius Vulso (c. 256 and 250) and Marcus Atilius Regulus (c. 267 and 256 BCE) were both Roman consuls at the same time, specifically in c. 256 BCE, this year fell during the First Punic War (c. 264–241 BCE).¹⁴ It is suggested that Justin's *Epitome* is mistaken here. Marcus Atilius Regulus should have been replaced by Caius Atilius Regulus, meaning the two consuls should have been Lucius Manlius Vulso and Caius Atilius Regulus (both held consulships in 250 BCE at the same time).¹⁵ This would be the only way to link up the following "Seleucus (II)".

In my opinion, the record in the *Epitome* of Justin that "under Antiochus and his successors, from

whose great-grandson Seleucus they first revolted" was undoubtedly a reference to a revolt against Seleucus II, the great grandson of Seleucus I (r. 305–281 BCE). However, in 256 BCE Seleucus (II) had not yet ascended the throne. Probably, like his grandfather Antiochus I, he was entrusted by his father to administer the eastern part of the Seleucid Empire. He must therefore have been the target of the rebels. In fact, Justin's accounts are not necessarily wrong. In addition, the person who rebelled in 256 BCE must have been Parthia's satrap (Andragoras) appointed by the Seleucid Empire.¹⁶ The Third Syrian War, which took place soon after, and the subsequent war between Seleucus II and his younger brother (Antiochus Hierax), who had occupied Asia Minor (known as "War of the Brothers", 241–239 BCE), left the Seleucid Empire with no ability to restrain the rebels, allowing them to grow strong and insubordinate.

Regarding the phrase "at the same period" (*eodem tempore*) in the second paragraph of the *Epitome* cited above, there seem to be two ways of reading it. The first interpretation is that the revolt of the satrap of Bactria, Diodotus, and the revolt of the satrap of Parthia of the Seleucid Empire, were "at the same period". Sure enough, Diodotus did revolt in 256 BCE. The second interpretation is that the revolt of the satrap of Bactria, Diodotus, and the "War of the Brothers" of the Seleucid Empire, and the situation in which the Parthians were able to revolt, were all happening "at the same period". And, in fact, the date when Diodotus revolted could have been as early as during the Third Syrian War. In other words, the incident in which the Parthians first revolted against the Seleucid Empire and the "War of the Brothers" were at two different periods, and therefore these two incidents should not be confused.

Comparing these two interpretations, the latter is more likely. The *Epitome* mentions that Arsaces invaded Parthia and killed its satrap, following the example of Diodotus. That is to say, both Diodotus' rebellion and Arsaces' rebellion occurred during the "War of the Brothers".

The statement that "Seleucus (II) was overcome by the Gauls" refers to the decisive battle in the "War of the Brothers", whose battleground was in Ancyra (today's Ankara).¹⁷ The result was that Seleucus II was defeated. The main force of Antiochus Hierax was the Gaul mercenary, therefore the *Epitome* says Seleucus II "was overcome by the Gauls". Since Arsaces invaded Parthia after learning of Seleucus II's defeat in the "War of the Brothers", the Arsaces' rebellion, with the killing of the Parthian satrap of the Seleucid Empire, may have predated the "War of the Brothers". This correlates to the

preceding paragraph, in which “For their revolt, the dispute between the two brothers, Seleucus and Antiochus, procured them impunity” and so on.

Briefly put, the satrap of Parthia appointed by the Seleucid Empire revolted in 256 BCE, according to Justin’s *Epitome*, and got away with it because the Third Syrian War had started and the “War of the Brothers” broke out soon after. Thus, the satrap of Bactria, also appointed by the Seleucid Empire, became independent from the Seleucid Empire. Then, after Seleucus II had been defeated in Asia Minor, following the example of Diodotus, Arsaces, a Scythian, revolted and killed the satrap of Parthia, which was already independent, and took possession of Parthia.

The records of Pompeius Trogus are consistent with those of Strabo as far as the date of Bactria’s independence is concerned.

D

3. *Parthica* (History of the Parthians) by Flavius Arrian (c. 86/89–146/160 CE). The work had already been lost. The concerned contents are preserved in Photius’ (the ninth century CE) *Bibliotheca* (*Myriobiblon*)¹⁸:

In the *Parthica* he gives an account of the wars between Parthia and Rome during the reign of Trajan. He considers the Parthians to have been a Scythian race, which had long been under the yoke of Macedonia, and revolted, at the time of the Persian rebellion (the Persians having been subdued at the same time),¹⁹ for the following reason. Arsaces and Tiridates were two brothers, descendants of Arsaces, the son of Phriapetes. These two brothers, with five accomplices, slew Pherecles, who had been appointed satrap of Parthia by Antiochus Theos, to avenge an insult offered to one of them; they drove out the Macedonians, set up a government of their own, and became so powerful that they were a match for the Romans in war, and sometimes even were victorious over them.... (58)

Here the statement that Parthians "at the time of the Persian rebellion (the Persians having been subdued at the same time)" must refer to the event that Arsaces rose in rebellion at the time when the satrap of Parthia appointed by the Seleucid Empire revolted, as the satrap of Parthia, Pherecles, was probably a Persian. The revolting "Persians" were conquered by Arsaces. Arsaces killed the renegade satrap of Parthia appointed by the Seleucid Empire and occupied Parthia. Though its satrap was a Persian, Parthia was still a satrapy under the Seleucid Empire, so it is not surprising to say that Arsaces "drove out the Macedonians". Arrian does not say whether the Arsaces' rebellion was in the reign of Antiochus II or whether this satrapy of Parthia had already rebelled against the Seleucid Empire at that time. Objectively, this is not incompatible with the conclusion, based on the cited Justin's *Epitome*, that the time when the Arsaces revolted and overthrew the Parthian satrap appointed by the Seleucid Empire is later than the date that Diodotus revolted against the Seleucid Empire.

Similar accounts can also be found in Zosimus' (c. the second half of the fifth century CE) *New History*²⁰:

*For after the death of Alexander the son of Philip, and of his successors in the empire of the Macedonians, at the period when those provinces were under the authority of Antiochus, Arsaces, a Parthian, being exasperated at an injury done to his brother Tiridates, made war upon the satrap of Antiochus, and caused the Parthians to drive away the Macedonians, and form a government of their own. (I, 18)

Here, Zosimus did say that Arsaces revolted against the Parthian satrap appointed by Antiochus II, and did not say that he revolted during the reign of Antiochus II. This satrap had already revolted against the Seleucid Empire when Arsaces revolted. It is stated that "Antiochus" in the above-cited text must be an error for "Seleucus (II)".

Similar accounts can also be found in Syncellus' (died after 810 CE) *Byzantine Chronicle*²¹:

During the reign of this Antiochos, the Persians, who were tributaries to them from the time of Alexander the founder, revolted from Macedonian and Antiochid rule. The reason was as follows: A certain Arsakes and Teridates, brothers tracing their lineage

from Artaxerxes king of Persians, were satraps of the Bactrians at the time of Macedonian Agathokles, the Persian eparch. According to Arrian, this Agathokles fell in love with Teridates, one of the brothers, and was eagerly laying a snare for the young man. But failing utterly, he was killed by him and his brother Arsakes.²² Arsakes then became the king of the Persians, after whom the kings of the Persians were known as "Arsakidai". He reigned for two years and was killed and his brother Teridates succeeded him to rule for thirty-seven years. (AM 5238)

In fact, the sentence that "during the reign of this Antiochos, the Persians, who were tributaries to them from the time of Alexander the founder, revolted from Macedonian and Antiochid rule" must refer to the event in which the satrap (*eparch*) of Parthia appointed by Antiochus II revolted against the Seleucid Empire. However, Syncellus is wrong to confuse this with Arsaces overthrowing Agathokles, as he was already independent. Here, Agathokles, who was killed by Arsaces, has been called Macedonian,²³ and his position as "satrap (*eparch*) in Persia" are all this is inaccurate, and the record that the Arsaces brothers served together as satrap of Bactria is also irreconcilable with other accounts. Thus, this record is very limited in its value as a source.²⁴

E

4. In the *Roman History* of Appian (c. 95–165 CE)²⁵ it is recorded:

*After the death of Seleucus, the kingdom of Syria passed in regular succession from father to son as follows: the first was the same Antiochus who fell in love with his stepmother, to whom was given the surname of Soter, "Savior", for driving out the Gauls who had made an incursion into Asia from Europe. The second was another Antiochus, born of this marriage, who received the surname of Theos, "Divine", from the Milesians in the first instance, because he slew their tyrant, Timarchus.

*This Theos was poisoned by his wife. He had two wives, Laodice and Berenice, the former a love-match, the latter a daughter pledged to him by [the Ptolemaic king]

Ptolemy. Laodice assassinated him and afterward Berenice and her child. Ptolemy, the son of Philadelphus, avenged these crimes by killing Laodice.²⁶ He invaded Syria and advanced as far as Babylon. The Parthians now began their revolt, taking advantage of the confusion in the house of the Seleucids. (XI, 65)

Ptolemy III invaded Syria, starting the conflict known as the Third Syrian War. In the sentence that "the Parthians now began their revolt, taking advantage of the confusion in the house of the Seleucids," "the Parthians" who began their revolt refers to Arsaces, and the event happened in 246 BCE at the earliest. This date is consistent with the conclusion based on the previous quotations from the records of Strabo, Pompeius Trogus, and Arrian.

It is generally acknowledged that the above-cited Adulis inscription of Ptolemy III also seems to be useful in speculating about the date of the independence of Bactria. The description that Ptolemy III's forward march reached the land up to Bactria shows that, at least in Ptolemy III's mind, Bactria was still a part of the Seleucid Empire. It should be noted that these inscriptions cannot account for the situation of Bactria at the time; in other words, whether or not it had defected from the Seleucid Empire at the time, Bactria was likely to be attacked by Ptolemy III. The inscriptions record that Ptolemy III first gained an upper hand in the Third Syrian War. From this it can be seen that the Seleucid Empire really was in deep trouble, and it makes sense that Bactria took this chance to act, as Bactria, like Parthia, was on the fringe of the Seleucid Empire.

F

In the *Roman History* of Ammianus Marcellinus (born c. 330 CE and died 391–400 CE)²⁷, it is recorded:

This kingdom, formerly but small, and one which had been known by several names, from causes which we have often mentioned, after the death of Alexander (336–323 BCE) at Babylon received the name of Parthia from Arsaces,²⁸ a youth of obscure birth, who in his early youth was a leader of banditti, but who gradually improved his condition, and rose to high renown from his illustrious actions. [23.6.2]

After many glorious and valiant deeds, and after he had conquered Seleucus Nicator, successor of the said Alexander, on whom his many victories had conferred that surname, and had driven out the Macedonian garrisons, he passed his life in quiet peace, and was a mild ruler and judge of his subjects. (XXIII, 6.3)

As conveyed in the two phrases—"after the death of Alexander (323 BCE) at Babylon [it] received the name of Parthia from Arsaces" and "he had conquered Seleucus Nicator, successor of the said Alexander"—the two narratives match well, which shows that Ammianus Marcellinus believed that the Parthia revolted during the reign of Seleucus I. I think this is not an unconscious mistake.

G

Extracting the reasonable elements of the above accounts, my general opinion as to the date of Bactria's independence and related events is as follows:

1. The earliest date of the rebellion of the Parthia's satrap appointed by Antiochus II, against the Seleucid Empire, must be during the First Punic War, probably in 256 BCE.
2. The date when Diodotus, the satrap of Bactria appointed by Antiochus II, revolted against the Seleucid Empire probably occurred during the "Third Syrian War" at the earliest, or during the "War of the Brothers" at the latest.
3. The date when Arsaces killed the original satrap of Parthia who had revolted against the Seleucid Empire must have been in the end of the reign of Antiochus II or in the beginning of the reign of Seleucus II, which is a little later than the date at which Diodotus revolted against the Seleucia dynasty.
4. Before he invaded and captured Parthia, Arsaces had clashed with Diodotus (I), who had already become independent. The cause may be that Arsaces coveted Bactria, or the power of Diodotus expanded into Parthia.

H

Contradictions and conflicts between Diodotus and Arsaces:

It is suggested that during the reign of Antiochus II Theos a part of the nomadic league of Parni-Dahae, led by the brothers Arsaces I and Tiridates I, left their Scythian homeland about 250 BCE and migrated to the valley of the Ochus River, where they were expelled by the satrap of Bactria, Diodotus. Finally, they invaded Parthia (and invaded also Hyrcania later) and killed Andragoras (Pherecles or Agathocles), satrap of the Seleucid Empire. Arsaces ruled for two years (about 250–248 BCE) and was succeeded by his brother Tiridates, whose reign lasted until 211 BCE. Tiridates was succeeded by Arsaces II (Priapatius I or Artabanus I).²⁹

Bactria, which rebelled against the Seleucid Empire and became independent, is known as the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom. It is said that Diodotus I died during the reign of Seleucus II, about 235 BCE.³⁰ Diodotus I was succeeded on the throne by his son Diodotus II.

The latter, uniting with Arsaces of Parthia, had fought against Seleucus II, as after describing how Arsaces had defeated and killed the independent Andragoras, the Parthian satrap of the Seleucid Empire, who owned this region, the above-cited Justin's *Epitome* continued:

Not long after, too, he made himself master of Hyrcania, and thus, invested with authority over two nations, raised a large army, through fear of Seleucus and Theodotus, king of the Bactrians. But being soon relieved of his fears by the death of Theodotus, he made peace and an alliance with his son, who was also named Theodotus; and not long after, engaging with king Seleucus, who came to take vengeance on the revolters, he obtained a victory; and the Parthians observe the day on which it was gained with great solemnity, as the date of the commencement of their liberty. (XLI, 4)

The statement that "being soon relieved of his fears by the death of Theodotus" and so on can be read in connection with the above-cited Strabo's statement that Arsaces was "in flight from the enlarged power of Diodotus (I)" and his followers. But we can't trust these records to think that Arsaces revolted and occupied Parthia after Diodotus died, and can only believe that Arsaces was not able to dedicate

himself to Parthia's development only till after he had been “in flight from the enlarged power of Diodotus (I) and his followers”, that Arsaces had no lofty goals of building the Parthian Empire until Diodotus' death, and that he could not realize his grand plan until the latter died. Thus, although Arsaces modeled himself after Diodotus, he remained under Diodotus' (Theodotus) influence until his death, when he was able to pursue his ambitions.

It is believed that both Diodotus I and his son Diodotus II issued coins. Diodotus II changed the hostile policy of his father against Parthia, and, fighting against the Seleucid Empire with the Arsaces, Diodotus II eventually consolidated the independent Greco-Bactrian Kingdom.³¹

Diodotus II was overthrown by Euthydemus, and the Diodotid dynasty came to an end after only two generations. According to the *History of Polybius* (c. 208–125 BCE)³², in 209 BCE, when Antiochus III of the Seleucid Empire attacked Bactria, Euthydemus, the ruler of Bactria at that time, said to Teleas, the emissary of Antiochus III:

Antiochus was acting unjustly in trying to expel him from his kingdom. He was not himself a revolted subject, but had destroyed the descendant of some who had been such, and so had obtained the kingdom of Bactria. (XI, 34)

From this, it can be seen that Euthydemus usurped the Greco-Bactrian kingdom from the Diodotid House. It is generally believed that the “descendant” of the rebels refers to Diodotus II.

One view is that Euthydemus I's usurpation was the result of exploiting the Greek discontent with Diodotus II's alliance with the Parthians against the Seleucids.³³ Another opinion is that Diodotus II formed an alliance with Arsaces because a civil war with Euthydemus had already broken out in Bactria, and Diodotus II had to make peace with Arsaces to quell the civil strife. But Arsaces did not seem to have given Diodotus II strong support, because Bactria's instability would have been beneficial to Parthia.³⁴

As for the date of the demise of the Diodotid dynasty, there is no conclusive evidence. There are various theories among scholars about this, most of them dating it from 230 to 225 BCE, around the time of the accession of Antiochus III of the Seleucid Empire.

I

Finally, as a supplement to the above, here is a brief introduction to the research on the coinage of the Diodotid dynasty:

The studies on the coinage of the Diodotid dynasty have focused on how many generations of kings this dynasty had. The most widely accepted argument at present is that this dynasty came to an end after only two generations. Among the coins that are recognized to be those of the Diodotid dynasty, there was a kind of coin issued under the name "Antiochus", and the issuer is believed to be Diodotus I. He issued these coins under the name Antiochus II of the Seleucid Empire and had his own image printed on the obverse. The reverse of these coins abandoned Apollo, the Seleucid deity, in favour of a depiction of Zeus, because the name Diodotus means "Gift of Zeus" in Greek, although the legend remains ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΝΤΙΟΧΟΥ (Of King Antiochus). This is a tentative step by Diodotus, the satrap of Bactria, toward breaking away from the Seleucid Empire. The true independence of Bactria was not realized until his son, Diodotus II, ascended the throne. This was thought to show that the independence of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom was achieved in a gradual and peaceful way.³⁵

This theory was challenged later on.³⁶ The new hypothesis suggests that the Diodotid dynasty may have had a third king named Antiochus, who was probably the other son of Diodotus I, a brother of Diodotus II. He had ruled the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom after Diodotus II. His name does not appear in the historical books, but he had issued coins. The king can be identified with Antiochus Nicator, who appeared on tetradrachmas in the pedigree coinage issued by Agathocles (r. 190–180 BCE), a ruler of the Euthydemid dynasty. Agathocles issued the pedigree coinage in order to show the nobility of his blood and the legitimacy of his rule. Diodotus was appointed as satrap of Bactria by the Seleucid Empire, which shows that he was probably related to the Seleucid royal family, so it is not surprising that his son had the same name as a Seleucid monarch.

According to the new hypothesis, when "Diodotus coins" and "Antiochus coins" were found together in the Ai Khanoum hoard in 1973, the "Diodotus coins" were more worn. This suggests that the "Diodotus coins" were earlier than the "Antiochus coins". Since the coins issued in the name of Antiochus are later than those issued by Diodotus I and II, they are unlikely to have been issued before the independence of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom, but can be thought to have been issued by the third generation of kings in the

Diodotid dynasty, who had the name “Antiochu”. He issued the coins in his own name after succeeding his brother on the throne. Antiochus is only one of the Greek rulers who became known through the coins, of which a number can be named.

After Alexander the Great died, his generals, who de facto controlled his empire in independent fiefs, by and large continued to issue posthumous Alexander coins, usually by adding their own names to coins with Alexander’s portraits, or in some cases adding their own portraits, instead of the opposite. In some Hellenistic dynasties, like the Ptolemies and the Attalids, later kings repeated more or less idealized portraits of the dynasty’s first ruler on their coins. If the portraits on the coins of Diodotus II were meant to represent Diodotus I, the dynasty’s founder, Antiochus Nicator, his successor, could well have continued to use them.

These disagreements naturally lead to differences of opinions about the reign of the rulers of the Diodotid dynasty. According to the previous theory, the reign of Diodotus I is about 255/250–235 BCE, and that of Diodotus II, about 235–230 /225 BCE. And according to the latter theory, the reign of Diodotus I is about 255–250 BCE, that of Diodotus II, about 250–240 BCE.³⁷

NOTES

¹ It has been suggested that this was in the 250s BCE. See Grainger2014, p. 177.

² Sachs1988, p. 345.

³ Musting86.

⁴ Lerner1999, pp. 13–31.

⁵ Jones1916–36.

⁶ According to one opinion, the statement that Arsaces broke away from the control of Diodotus (I) and their followers may have meant that the Arsaces tried to control the Margiana, but was repulsed by the Diodotus (I). See Sidky2000, p. 150.

⁷ YuTsh2020.

⁸ Based on the records of Strabo, it has been suggested that by this time Diodotus’ influence had expanded from Bactria to Sogdiana, Margiana, and Aria. Strabo’s records stating that Arsaces was a Scythian or Bactrian can be explained as the result of the Parii invading Margiana and being defeated by Diodotus, Bactrian satrap of the Seleucid Empire. In other words, Strabo, or the sources he based his record on, probably confuses Arsaces’ “Scythian origin” with his defeat by the

Bactrian satrap of the Seleucid Empire and his subsequent migration from "Bactria" to Parthia. See Lerner1999, pp. 13–14. In my opinion, this hypothesis is extrapolated excessively.

9 According to one suggestion, the statement in Strabo's records that the Bactrian revolution against the Seleucid Empire was launched by Euthydemus is a mistake. It has been suggested that "Syria and Midia" is the antonomasia for the Seleucid Empire, and the statement that "the kings were in possession also of these countries" refers to the war between Seleucus II and his brother Antiochus Hierax, known as the "War of the Brothers".

10 For the cause and effect of this matter, see Grainge2014, pp. 186–199.

11 Dittenberger1903–05 (OGIS 54), pp. 83–88; BCHP 11.

12 Watson1853.

13 Stasanor, who came from Cyprus, a military office of Alexander the Great, had been appointed the satrap of Aria, Drangiana, and others.

14 Many scholars, e.g., Debevoise 1938, p. 9; Narain 1957, p. 13; and others, believe that the Parthian revolution must have been in 250 BCE.

15 Saint-Martini1850, i, pp. 267–271; ii, pp. 249–252.

16 Most scholars, such as Schippmann1986, believe that the date is 245 BCE, but there is no conclusive evidence.

17 The battle of Ancyra is said to have taken place in 237 BCE; see Grainger2014, p. 195.

18 Freese1920, pp. 54–55. Also see Arrian "Parthica", FGrH 156: Arrianus, "Parthica" [30]–[31].

19 "The Persian rebellion" refers to the satrap of Parthia appointed by Antiochus II who revolted against the Seleucid Empire. "The Persians" should refer to the people in the Parthian satrapy.

20 Anonymity1814, Ridley1982.

21 Dindorf1829, p. 359 (vol. 1, p. 676); Adler2002, p. 412 (= p. 343).

22 The satrap who was killed by Arsaces, according to Justin, was Andragoras; according to Photius, Pherecles; and according to Syncellus, Agathocles. It is generally believed that all three are the same person. It has been suggested, however, that the three historians mentioned were three different men, who had perhaps been appointed Parthian satraps of the Seleucid Empire successively. That all three had experiences with nomads may have led to their baselessly being thought to be killed. See Grainger2014, p. 196. In my opinion, the three names are so different that it's hard to identify them as the same person, but it could be that Arsaces killed only one of them. Since of the three only Andragoras had coins that were handed down over time, and his name is found in the Gurgan inscriptions, we might as well believe the *Epitome* of Justin. In addition, Agathocles' coins appeared in the so-called "Oxus treasure"; see Barnett1968. For the Gurgan inscriptions see Bivar1983(1), Bivar1983(2).

23 Agathokles must be a Persian; see Frye 1985.

²⁴ The record seems flawed: Arsaces did not serve as the Bactrian satrap, and it is even less likely that the two brothers would have served as the Bactrian satrap together. Agathokles was also not a Persian eparch, but rather a Parthian satrap. Also, eparch here is equal to satrap.

²⁵ White1962.

²⁶ In fact, Laodice survived until 236 BCE.

²⁷ Rolfe1956.

²⁸ Based on Justin (XLI, 1), “in the Scythian language exiles are called *Parthi*”.

²⁹ Lerner1999.

³⁰ Holt1999, p. 101.

³¹ Holt1999, p. 55–62.

³² Shuckburgh1962.

³³ Cf. Tarn1951, pp. 73–74.

³⁴ Holt1999, pp. 105–106.

³⁵ The earliest research to distinguish the coins of Diodotus I and II Bopearachchi1991. For more detailed study, see Kovalenko1995, Holt1999, pp. 87–125, 139–171. Their specific discussions are different. Holt has the largest database, with 268 gold and silver coins, thus his conclusions are widely accepted.

³⁶ Jakobsson2010.

³⁷ The latter has been affirmed by some scholars, but has also been questioned. The sceptical argue that it is supported neither by the typology, nor by historical data, nor by a rigorous and scientific reading of monograms used in the Greco-Bactrian mints. Cf. Bordeaux2012.

6. A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE HISTORY OF THE EUTHYDEMID DYNASTY IN THE GRECO-BACTRIAN KINGDOM

A

The Diodotid dynasty of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom came to an end after only two generations. The Euthydemid dynasty is the second dynasty of this kingdom, whose founder is known as Euthydemus I (r. 230–200/195 BCE).

The deeds of Euthydemus I can only be found in a few classic books such as the *History* of Polybius (c. 208–125 BCE)¹ and the *Geography* of Strabo (c. 63 BCE–24 CE)². The latter touched upon Euthydemus I's participation in the rebellion of Diodotus I, while the former described the general process of the eastward expedition of Antiochus III and of the Seleucid Empire against the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom.³ Most scholars have tried to understand Euthydemus I himself and the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom under his rule by deliberating these brief records. For the convenience of discussion, I will first list the relevant records of Polybius as follows:

News being brought that Euthydemus with his force was at Tapuria, and that a body of ten thousand horsemen were keeping guard at the passage of the river Arius, he decided to abandon the siege and attack these last. The river was three days' march away. For two days therefore he marched at a moderate speed; but on the third, after dinner, he gave orders for the rest of his army to start next day at daybreak; while he himself, with the cavalry and light-armed troops and ten thousand peltasts, started in the night and pushed on at a great rate. For he was informed that the cavalry of the enemy kept guard by day on the bank of the river, but at night retired to a city more than twenty stades off. Having completed therefore the rest of the way under cover of night, the plains being excellent for riding, he got the greater part of his army across the river by daybreak, before the enemy came back.

When their scouts told them what had happened, the horsemen of the Bactrians hastened to the rescue, and fell in with their opponents while on the march. Seeing that

he must stand the first charge of the enemy, the king summoned the two thousand horsemen who were accustomed to fight round his own person; and issuing orders that the rest were to form their companies and squadrons, and take up their usual order on the ground on which they already were, he advanced with the two thousand cavalry, and met the charge of the advanced guard of the Bactrians. In this engagement Antiochus is reputed to have shown the greatest gallantry of any of his men. There was heavy loss on both sides: the king's men conquered the first squadron, but when a second and a third charged, they began to be hard pressed and to suffer seriously. At that juncture, most of the cavalry being by this time on the ground, Panaetolus ordered a general advance; relieved the king and his squadrons; and, upon the Bactrians charging in loose order, forced them to turn and fly in confusion. They never drew rein before the charge of Panaetolus, until they rejoined Euthydemus, with a loss of more than half their number. The king's cavalry on the contrary retired, after killing large numbers and taking a great many prisoners, and bivouacked by the side of the river. In this action the king had a horse killed under him, and lost some of his teeth by a blow on the mouth; and his whole bearing obtained him a reputation for bravery of the highest description.

After this battle Euthydemus retreated in dismay with his army to the city of Zariaspa in Bactria.... (X, 49)

Next, Polybius recorded Euthydemus' performance in the face of Teleas, who worked to mediate the conflicts between Parthia and Bactria.

Euthydemus was himself a Magnesian, and he answered the envoy by saying that "Antiochus was acting unjustly in trying to expel him from his kingdom. He was not himself a revolted subject, but had destroyed the descendant of some who had been such, and so had obtained the kingdom of Bactria." After adding more arguments to the same effect, he urged Teleas to act as a sincere mediator of peace, by urging Antiochus not to grudge him the royal title and dignity, "for if he did not yield to this demand,

neither of them would be safe: seeing that great hordes of Nomads were close at hand, who were a danger to both; and that if they admitted them into the country, it would certainly be utterly barbarised." With these words he sent Teleas back to Antiochus. The king had long been looking about for some means of ending the controversy; and when he was informed by Teleas of what Euthydemus had said, he readily admitted these pleas for a pacification. And after several journeys of Teleas to and fro between the two, Euthydemus at last sent his son Demetrius to confirm the terms of the treaty. Antiochus received the young prince; and judging from his appearance, conversation, and the dignity of his manners that he was worthy of royal power, he first promised to give him one of his own daughters, and secondly conceded the royal title to his father. And having on the other points caused a written treaty to be drawn up, and the terms of the treaty to be confirmed on oath, he marched away; after liberally provisioning his troops, and accepting the elephants belonging to Euthydemus. He crossed the Caucasus and descended into India; renewed his friendship with Sophagases the king of the Indians; received more elephants, until he had a hundred and fifty altogether; and having once more provisioned his troops, set out again personally with his army: leaving Androsthenes of Cyzicus the duty of taking home the treasure which this king had agreed to hand over to him. Having traversed Arachosia and crossed the river Enymanthus, he came through Drangene to Carmania; and, as it was now winter, he put his men into winter quarters there.

This was the extreme limit of the march of Antiochus into the interior: in which he not only reduced the up-country Satraps to obedience to his authority, but also the coast cities, and the princes on this side Taurus; and, in a word, consolidated his kingdom by overawing all his subjects with the exhibition of his boldness and energy. For this campaign convinced the Europeans as well as the Asiatics that he was worthy of royal power.... (XI, 34)

As Antiochus III was eager to recover the renegade satrapies of the east of the Seleucid Empire after he had ascended the throne, he launched an eastward expedition. In about 220 BCE, he first defeated

Molon, the satrap of Media, and Artabazanes, a local ruler in Media. He then returned to Syria to deal with the affairs of the empire. Around 212 BCE, he again embarked eastwards on a crusade. This time his target was Armenia. He succeeded in gaining the loyalty of Xerxes, the prince of Armenia, and others, and assigned his own generals to administer the region. In the autumn of about 210 BCE, he set out again on a mission to recover the satrapies of Parthia and Hyrcania, as well as the regions of Comisene and Choarene south of the Caspian Sea, both of which were then under Arsaces II (r. 217–191 BCE) of the Parthian dynasty. Antioch III started off from Ecbatana to Hecatompylus, the capital of Parthia. The Parthians tried to thwart it by destroying wells along the way but did not succeed. Antiochus III arrived at Hecatompylus and continued in pursuit of Arsaces II, and he encamped in the city of Tambrax near Sirynx. Arsaces II was defeated and begged to surrender. In the end, Arsaces II recognized Antiochus III as suzerain, and the two sides stopped fighting. On this basis, Antiochus III began to target Bactria, the last goal of his eastward expedition.⁴

It is not difficult to see that the author narrates this event from the perspective of Antiochus III's eastward expedition, so the situation on the side of Euthydemus (I) is not clear. The following is a brief discussion of the relevant issues centering on Euthydemus I.

A. The regime change of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom; the usurpation of Euthydemus

The above-cited records of Polybius' *History* make it clear that it was Euthydemus I who overthrew the Diodotid dynasty and usurped the throne. The descendant of the rebels whom he killed is believed to be Diodotus II. As for the date, there is no conclusive evidence. There are various theories about this, but its dating falls roughly between 230 and 225 BCE, around the time of the accession of Antiochus III to the throne of the Seleucid Empire.

Based on the following records of Strabo's *Geography*:

But when revolutions were attempted by the countries outside the Taurus, because of the fact that the kings of Syria and Media, who were in possession also of these countries, were busily engaged with others, those who had been entrusted with their government first caused the revolt of Bactriana and of all the country near it, I mean Euthydemus and his followers; and then Arsaces, a Scythian, with some of the Däae (I mean the

Aparnians, as they were called, nomads who lived along the Ochus), invaded Parthia and conquered it. (XI, 9.2)

It has been suggested that Euthydemus' usurpation coincided with the rebellion of Molon, the satrap of Media, in 222–220 BCE, thus the date when Euthydemus (I) usurped the throne can be determined as being in 221 BCE.⁵ In my opinion, this argument is unconvincing.

First, the statement that "those who had been entrusted with their government first caused the revolt of Bactriana and of all the country near it" and so on obviously refers to Bactria's first independence from the Seleucid Empire, but is unlikely to refer to Euthydemus' usurpation.⁶

Second, as to the statement that "revolutions were attempted by the countries outside the Taurus" and so on, though this is interpreted variously, it cannot refer to Molon's rebellion. Molon is but the satrap of Media and should not be called "king". Molon's rebellion had already been suppressed in 220 BCE, and there are no records that he was king, nor did he issue any coins — though Polybius once said that Molon was "master, then, of a territory of proportions worthy of a kingdom". (V, 45.1) However, Polybius also recorded that after Molon had revolted, Hermeias, the powerful minister of Antiochus III, "despatched the Achaean Xenoetas against Molon, in command of an army, with full powers; asserting that against rebels it was fitting that generals should have the command, but that the king ought to confine himself to directing plans and conducting national wars against monarchs" (V, 45.6). This makes it clear that Molon was not included in the statement about "the kings of Syria and Media", which had nothing to do with Molon.

In addition, the coins issued by Euthydemus I show him in three images: young, middle-aged, and old, from which numismatists infer the dates of Euthydemus I's life. In my opinion, all these theories are based on speculation, and none of them appear to be conclusive.⁷

B. The identity of Euthydemus (I), the usurper

Polybius makes no mention of this, suggesting that Euthydemus' identity is nothing unusual. Before he usurped the throne, he must have been an official of the Diodotid dynasty. However, researchers have put forward various opinions.⁸ Some say Euthydemus was the Sogdian satrap of the Seleucid Empire, while others say he was the satrap of Margiana and Aria appointed by Diodotus II.⁹ These ideas are

enlightening, but there is no hard evidence for them.

In my opinion, the above-quoted records from Strabo's *Geography* are sufficient to show that Euthydemus most likely served under the satrap of Bactria, Diodotus (I), and played an important role in establishing the independence of Bactria from the Seleucid Empire. Later, he became a key minister in the Diodotid dynasty of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom. This is to say, he was not entirely innocent of the rebellion of Bactria against the Seleucid Empire, as he himself confessed. In essence, Strabo's records show that Euthydemus was the strongman who led the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom to rebel against the Seleucid Empire and become independent. He thus was a significant figure, powerful enough to usurp the throne of Diodotus II after the death of Diodotus I.¹⁰

It has been suggested that Euthydemus I's usurpation took advantage of the Greek emotion towards Diodotus II, who had joined the Parthians against the Seleucid Empire.¹¹ Another suggestion is that Diodotus II allied himself with Arsaces I (r. 247–217 BCE), because the fight between Euthydemus (I) and Diodotus II in Bactria had already broken out. Diodotus II had to make peace with Arsaces I to quell the civil unrest. However, Arsaces II does not seem to have given Diodotus II strong support, because weakening Bactria was advantageous to Parthia.¹²

In my opinion, both arguments are reasonable but sadly lacking in real evidence. Euthydemus (I) was the powerful minister of the kingdom, usurping the throne when the old king was dead and the new king was young and weak; that is all.

C. The native place of Euthydemus (I)

There is a clear record in Polybius' work: Euthydemus (I) was a Magnesian. There are now three theories concerning the geographic position of Magnicia. It might be: (a) Magnesia in Ionia;¹³ (b) Magnesia ad Sipylum in Lydia;¹⁴ or (c) Magnesia in Thessaly.¹⁵ In my opinion, these arguments all have no real evidence, so I will put aside the problem for the time being.¹⁶

A related question is whether the Teleas, the man mentioned by Polybius, who brought about the peace between Euthydemus I and Antiochus III, was the same as the Teleas who was a compatriot of Euthydemus I.¹⁷ In my opinion, this possibility cannot be ruled out. Otherwise, it would be odd that Polybius mentioned here the native place of Euthydemus I.

In sum, from Polybius' account we learn several facts about Euthydemus I, the founder of the second

dynasty of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom: He was a Magnesian of Greece and served under Diodotus (I), the satrap of Bactria, in the Seleucid Empire. He played a decisive role in the revolt of Diodotus (I) against the Seleucid Empire and thus became a powerful minister of the kingdom. After Diodotus I died, he overthrew his successor, Diodotus II, and made himself king. As for the motive for his usurpation, for now, it can only be attributed to personal ambition.

D. Antiochus III's eastward expedition against Bactria and Euthydemus' resistance in 209/8 BCE.

The war can be divided into two phases. The first stage was that Euthydemus I tried to resist Antiochus III, by the Arius River. He had ten thousand cavalry but was defeated and retreated to his capital, Bactra (i.e., Zariaspa, see below). The second stage was Bactra's offensive and defensive battle. It ended with a mutual agreement.

For the first phase, the following two issues are mainly touched upon:

- a. The place in which the two sides fought

According to Polybius, Antiochus III was laying siege to a city before the appearance of Euthydemus I. The exact location is unknown, but it was roughly west of the Arius River. By this time he had learned that the armies of Euthydemus I had reached Tapuria and held the fords of the Arius River; Antiochus III was three days' journey away from these fords.

About Tapuria (*Ταπουρίαν*), scholars agree that this is actually an error for *τὰ Γουριανά*,¹⁸ which should be corrected. On the geographical location of *Γουριανά* there are two theories: one is that Gouriana (Guriana) was located in Aria, by the Hari-rud (Arius) River in present-day Herat.¹⁹ Another is that Gouriana was located in Margiana, to the east of the Arius River and on the way to Bactra. According to Ptolemy's *Geography* (VI, 10.4), there did exist the city of Guriana (Gouriana).²⁰ In my opinion, it is always best to be flexible in the use of troops. Both statements make sense, but the latter argument slightly wins out, because it supported by evidence from Ptolemy's *Geography*.

b. After losing the battle by the Arius River, Euthydemus I retreated to the city of Zariaspa to hold on.

The city of Zariaspa (later Bactra) must have been the capital of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom at that time. It got its name from 'Zoroaster,' because it was the center of Zoroastrianism, being the place

where Zoroaster first preached and where he died. The name may have come from the Zoroastrian temple, Azar-i-Asp.²¹

In my opinion, it was reasonable for Euthydemus I to hold the capital against the Seleucid army.

In any case, to the east of the Arius River Euthydemus I tried to hold off Antiochus III's army, but Antiochus III marched overnight, crossed the river at dawn, and confronted him. After fierce fighting, Euthydemus I was defeated and retreated to the capital, Bactra.

For the second phase, the following three issues are the main ones commented upon:

1. Euthydemus I successfully resisted the siege of Antiochus III, which was generally believed to have lasted two or three years (209/8–206 BCE). Around 206 BCE, both sides agreed to make peace. Antiochus III married one of his daughters to Euthydemus I's son, later Demetrius I (r. 200/195–180 BCE). Antiochus III received Euthydemus I's elephant and forage.

In my opinion, the successful negotiations between the two sides were due mainly to the following three factors:

First, Euthydemus I showed his strength. He was able to “comfort” the Seleucid army with rations and war elephants even after a long siege, a testament to his considerable strength. However, to station the soldiers under a heavily fortified city is taboo to the military strategist, and Antiochus III should have known this. If one is unable to win quick victory, it is better to retire gracefully.

Second, Antiochus III's western territories were unstable. It was not only the newly conquered territories that were likely to cause trouble, but also his old rival, the Ptolemaic dynasty, which was eyeing his western lands covetously. And when Antiochus III stayed away from his base too long on these affairs, the court also inevitably became unstable. Add to that, Antiochus II's strategic intention to conquer India had not yet been implemented.

Third, Euthydemus I was right that the nomads' invasion was a real possibility. If both sides were to fight each other to the death, the nomads must feel that there was an opportunity. A battered Greco-Bactrian Kingdom would not have been able to withstand the onslaught of the nomads, and Antiochus III would certainly not have been able to face the invasion of the nomads immediately after his conquest of Bactria.

2. The status of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom after making peace: Whether it became a vassal of the Seleucid Empire

The troops had been in operation too long, and the soldiers were extremely tired. Also, the possible threat from the nomadic tribes in the north, and perhaps the problems of the rear, finally forced Antiochus III to accept Euthydemus I's fracturing of independent Bactria. However, from the fact that Euthydemus I offered the Seleucid army a large supply of food, and especially that Antiochus III took a number of war elephants, one can see that he accepted a peace treaty under humiliating terms. That Antiochus III granted that Euthydemus I could claim the throne is only one side of the circumstance — that he bowed to hard reality and acknowledged the strength of Euthydemus I. On the other side, this was done to identify himself with the suzerain, as though it were an enfeoffment. In other words, in Antiochus III's mind, at least, Bactria was a vassal of the Seleucid Empire, as were Parthia and others he had conquered before this time.²² Although we cannot be sure of the contents of the peace treaty, it is not difficult to imagine that it contained provisions for the regular payment of tribute by Euthydemus I.

3. It has been pointed out that when Antiochus III launched his eastward expedition, the diplomatic relations between Parthia and Bactria had deteriorated so much that they were forced to resist Antiochus III separately. Although the reasons for the breakdown of this relationship are unknown, it can be inferred that hostile relations between Parthia and Bactria, similar to those during the reigns of Arsaces I and Diodotus I, had been restored.²³

In my opinion, first, the peace treaty between Parthia and Bactria was concluded by Arsaces I and Diodotus II, and since the dynasties of the contracting parties had already changed, neither Arsaces II nor Euthydemus I was under any obligation to comply. Second, the possibility cannot be ruled out that Arsaces II was hostile to Euthydemus I, who usurped the throne of Diodotus II, because it was Diodotus II who contracted with Parthia. Third, Euthydemus I's Greek stance likely would have meant he welcomed the collapse of Parthia. Fourth, when Antiochus III attacked Parthia with irresistible force, Euthydemus I was busy enough with his own affairs — so how could he have supported the Parthians?

In brief, when Antiochus III hit Arsaces I so hard that the latter couldn't fight back, the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom, which had made a peace treaty with Parthia, stood aside, until Antiochus III finally defeated it, piecemeal.

E. The territorial limits of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom under Euthydemus I:

Specifically, whether Sogdiana, Margiana, and Aria are included in addition to the original Bactria: it is suggested that before Antiochus III launched his eastward expedition, the territory of Euthydemus I had included Sogdiana, Margiana, and probably Aria.²⁴

As for the above question, especially for Margiana and Aria, scholars have various opinions. E.g., it is suggested that Euthydemus (I) was the satrap of Margiana during the reign of Diodotus I, and when Diodotus II succeeded to the throne, Arias also became his domain.²⁵ In other words, the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom had Margiana and Aria. Another suggestion is that Aria belonged to the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom as early as Antiochus II Theos (261–246 BCE).²⁶ The third suggestion is that Aria belonged to the Greco-Bactria Kingdom during the reign of Demetrius I, Euthydemus I's son, in 187–184 BCE,²⁷ and so forth. Unfortunately, these theories are nothing more than speculations.

In my opinion, according to the scale of the war between Antiochus III and Euthydemus I and the location of the battlefield, the possibility cannot be ruled out that the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom possessed Margiana and Aria before the war. It should be noted, however, that the deployment, advance, and retreat of troops on both sides in time of war cannot be predicted by common sense, whether Tapuria is located in Margiana or in Aria.

As for Sogdiana, Strabo simply says that the Bactrians “also held Sogdiana” (XI, 11.2), and it is not clear whether the so-called “held” begins with Diodotus I or Euthydemus I, nor is it clear to what extent this holding is a complete annexation or an enslavement. In addition, it is also unknown whether Sogdiana broke away from the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom after the defeat of Euthydemus I, as some scholars have claimed.²⁸

F. The last year of Euthydemus I

To the west of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom, in the present day Kuliab region in the present-day Tajikistan, an inscription dated in c. 200 to 195 BCE was discovered. The inscription's contents refer to Euthydemus I and his son.²⁹ This inscription is recorded here to complete the above argument:

Heliodotos dedicated this fragrant altar for Hestia, venerable goddess, illustrious amongst all, in the grove of Zeus, with beautiful trees; he made libations and sacrifices

so that the greatest of all kings Euthydemos, as well as his son, the glorious, victorious and remarkable Demetrios, be preserved of all pains, with the help of Tyche with divine thoughts. (Kuliab inscription, 200–195 BCE)³⁰

Heliodotos dedicated this fragrant altar to Hestia, venerable goddess. Although the inscription glorifies both Euthydemus I and his son, it does not indicate that Euthydemus I was still on the throne at the time. Perhaps the inscription was made at the time of the death of Euthydemus I. "Pain" probably refers to the death of Euthydemus I, which means that he might have been out of power in 200 or 195 BCE.

B

1. Euthydemus I was succeeded by his son, Demetrius I. About Demetrius I's experience, in addition to the above-quoted Polybius' description that he was ordered by his father to negotiate with Antiochus III, it is mainly the record that he went on an expedition to India in Strabo's *Geography*:

The Greeks who caused Bactria to revolt grew so powerful on account of the fertility of the country that they became masters, not only of Ariana, but also of India, as Apollodorus of Artemita says: and more tribes were subdued by them than by Alexander — by Menander in particular (at least if he actually crossed the Hypanis³¹ towards the east and advanced as far as the Imaüs³², for some were subdued by him personally and others by Demetrius, the son of Euthydemus the king of the Bactrians; and they took possession, not only of Pattalena, but also, on the rest of the coast, of what is called the kingdom of Saraostus and Sigerdis. In short, Apollodorus says that Bactriana is the ornament of Ariana as a whole; and, more than that, they extended their empire even as far as the Seres and the Phryni. (XI, 11.1)

This is the only clear account of Demetrius I's southern expedition to India.

Strabo, whose attention was focused on the geographical situation, and not on the political process, described the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom and the deed of Demetrius I in very general terms. For example,

it is not clear whether the sentence “the Greeks who caused Bactria to revolt grew so powerful” refers to the Diodotid dynasty or the Euthydemid dynasty. Objectively, to rule the entire Ariana should be the achievement of the two dynasties in the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom before and after. Nevertheless, through his rambling and inattentive narration, there are some important points to be learned:

First, since there is no record of the Diodotid dynasty’s conquest of India, the situation that the Greeks became the masters of India must have begun from the Euthydemid dynasty. The Heliodotos’ inscription that says Demetrios is “victorious” probably refers to his military exploits in invading India.

Second, Strabo says that Menander had conquered more tribes than Alexander, and that other tribes had been conquered by Demetrius I. Menander was a general under Demetrius I, and the tribes conquered by Menander must have belonged to Demetrius I. Here Strabo distinguishes between the two and puts Menander’s name before Demetrius I, which seems to imply the following three points:

- a. Menander and Demetrius I must have gone separate ways. That is to say, Demetrius I and Menander invaded India by two separate armies, each with one army.
- b. Menander and Demetrius I probably didn’t set out at the same time: Menander went first, Demetrius I followed.
- c. The tribes conquered by Menander included not only those conquered by Menander as general of Demetrius I, but also those conquered by him after Demetrius I died.

Third, the statement that “they took possession, not only of Pattalena, but also, on the rest of the coast, of what is called the kingdom of Saraostus³³ and Sigerdis³⁴” refers to the army, led by Demetrius I himself, whose vanguard reached the mouth of the Indian river, which can be called the Southern Route Army. And the army that “crossed the Hypanis (the present-day Beas River) towards the east and advanced as far as the Imaüs”, led by Menander, which can be called the Eastern Route Army.

As to Apollodorus’ statement that the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom extends its frontiers as far as the Seres and Phryni and so on, does not seem to refer specifically to any particular dynasty of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom, but rather to the achievements of the whole Kingdom. Now I will leave the subject until some further date.

2. The date at which Demetrius I started invading the Northwest of India is not known, but it seems to have been at the time the Pushyamitra Shunga (r. 185–149 BCE) had overthrown the Maurya dynasty

and established the Shunga (Śunga) dynasty (c. 185–78 BCE).³⁵ This is because, considering that it was Demetrius I who made the expedition, the Seleucid Empire did not send troops to stop it or took the opportunity to attack Bactria's base, which is almost optimistic about its success. This may have been due to the fact that there was the relationship of marriage and alliance between the Maurya dynasty and the Seleucid Empire.

The fact that the Maurya dynasty had a marriage with the Seleucid Empire is recorded in *Bhavishya Purana*, chapter 1 (Biblical and Modern History):

Buddha-simha's son was Chandra-gupta, who married with a daughter of Suluva (= Seleucus I Nicator), the Yavana (= Ionians) king of Pausasa (= Persia?). Thus he mixed the Buddhists and Yavanas. He ruled for 60 years. From him Vindusara was born and ruled for the same number of years as his father. His son was Ashoka. (*Bhavishya Purana*)

This can also be indirectly known through the records in Strabo's *Geography*:

The geographical position of the tribes is as follows: along the Indus are the Paropamisadae, above whom lies the Paropamisus mountain: then, towards the south, the Arachoti: then next, towards the south, the Gedroseni, with the other tribes that occupy the seaboard; and the Indus lies, latitudinally, alongside all these places; and of these places, in part, some that lie along the Indus are held by Indians, although they formerly belonged to the Persians. Alexander took these away from the Arians and established settlements of his own, but Seleucus Nicator gave them to Sandrocottus, upon terms of intermarriage and of receiving in exchange five hundred elephants. (XV, 2.9)

Afterwards, Asoka (r. 268–232 BCE), a grandson of Chandragupta, sent monks as emissaries to the Hellenistic territories and the Seleucid Empire after he had presided and finished the third council of Buddhism in the seventeenth year (250 BCE) of his reign, which is recorded in the *Mahāvamsa*, an epic in the Pali language:³⁶

When the therā Moggaliputta, the illuminator of the religion of the Conqueror, had brought the (third) council to an end and when, looking into the future, he had beheld the founding of the religion in adjacent countries, (then) in the month Kattika he sent forth theras, one here and one there. The therā Majjhantika he sent to Kasmīra and Gandhāra, the therā Mahādeva he sent to Mahisamaṇḍala. To Vanavāsa he sent the therā named Rakkhita, and to Aparantaka the Yona named Dhammarakkhita³⁷; to Mahāratṭha (he sent) the therā named Mahādhammarakkhita, but the therā Mahārakkhita he sent into the country of the Yona.... (XII, 1)³⁸

Since the Maurya dynasty had allied itself with Seleucus, “the country of the Yona (i.e, the Greeks)” undoubtedly referred to the Seleucid Empire.

In addition, after overcoming the Greco-Bactrian king, Euthydemus I, and forced him to sign a humiliating agreement, Antiochus III also crossed the Hindu Kush southward. According to Polybius' *History*:

He crossed the Caucasus and descended into India; renewed his friendship with Sophagasesus the king of the Indians; received more elephants, until he had a hundred and fifty altogether; and having once more provisioned his troops, set out again personally with his army: leaving Androsthenes of Cyzicus the duty of taking home the treasure which this king had agreed to hand over to him. Having traversed Arachosia and crossed the river Enymanthus, he came through Drangene to Carmania; and, as it was now winter, he put his men into winter quarters there. (XI, 34)

Sophagasesus appears only once in the history books, just here. It is generally believed that at that time, the Maurya dynasty had been in decline, and Sophagasesus was supposed to be a separatist whose sphere of influence was around Paropamisadae (Parapamisadae).

In my opinion, the covenant updated by Antiuke III with Sophagasesus seem to have been the old covenant between Seleucus I and Chandragupta. If so, Antiochus III did not regard him merely as a vassal. The exact circumstances are unknown because the historical records remain silent. Thus it can

be seen that the Maurya dynasty had a deep relationship with the Seleucid Empire, and Demetrius I certainly had his own motive and purpose in sending troops to India, but for the Seleucid Empire, at least objectively, Demetrius I's southern expedition had the effect of revenge for the Maurya dynasty. Perhaps this is why the Seleucid Empire sat back and watched (or enjoyed) Demetrius' expedition against India.

It is generally believed that the Shunga dynasty, which overthrew the Maurya dynasty, mainly controlled the central and eastern regions of the South Asian subcontinent. In my opinion, there is no doubt that the northwestern subcontinent and the Indus River basin conquered by Demetrius I and his generals were originally territories of the Maurya dynasty. The present study holds that there is no doubt that the northwestern subcontinent and the Indus River basin conquered by Demetrius I and his generals were originally territories of the Maurya dynasty. When Pushyamitra Shunga killed the last king of the Maurya dynasty and overthrew the Maurya dynasty, it is highly probable that he expanded his power eastward and occupied the eastern territories that originally belonged to the Maurya dynasty. The fact that the main territory of the Shunga dynasty was confined to the central and eastern parts of the subcontinent was probably the result of Demetrius I's southern expedition to India. Since Demetrius I's southern expedition to India took place shortly after the Shungas overthrew the Mauryas, there are no surviving records of direct battles between Demetrius I and the Shungas. In fact, the influence of the Shunga dynasty extended to the northwestern subcontinent but was not firmly established, so it was soon driven out or eliminated by the Greeks. Of course, objectively, it cannot be ruled out that Demetrius I's opponents were the remaining forces of the Maurya dynasty. These forces, after the collapse of the central Mauryan regime, carved out their own kingdoms. Due to their isolation and weakness, they were conquered one by one by Demetrius I and his generals.

3. There is no direct information as to the exact course of Demetrius I's conquest of India. We can only deduce it indirectly from certain materials. The most accepted one of these materials is *Parthian Stations*³⁹ (ch. 19) by Isidorus of Charax (between 1 BCE and 1 CE), in which it is recorded:

Beyond is Arachosia. And the Parthians call this White India; there are the city of Biyt and the city of Pharsana and the city of Chorochoad and the city of Demetrias; then

Alexandropolis, the metropolis of Arachosia; it is Greek, and by it flows the river Arachotus. As far as this place the land is under the rule of the Parthians. (ch. 19)

And the reference to “the city of Demetrias” can be seen as meaning the city built by Demetrius I, which is also evidence of Demetrius I’s occupation of Arachosia, which belongs to the area occupied by the above-mentioned Southern Route Army.

It has been suggested that Demetrius I built a city named after himself in Arachosia, which is equal to its announcement of independence, indicating that Bactria was no longer a vassal state of the Seleucid Empire.⁴⁰ In my opinion, when Demetrius I founded the new town, and named it after himself, the chief symbolic significance, is perhaps, to lay claim to the occupied territories. This is similar to Alexander’s original intention of establishing his cities everywhere during his eastern expedition. And, of course, objectively, it is his way of demonstrating his power to the Seleucid Empire.

Since the intermarriage existed between the Maurya dynasty and the Seleucid Empire, and the Maurya dynasty had already been replaced by the Shunga dynasty when Demetrius I went south to India, Demetrius I’s southern march did not necessarily mean a demonstration against the Seleucid Empire. It should be noted that Arachosia was once a settlement of the Greeks and later ruled by the Maurya dynasty. Demetrius I is supposed to have taken this area from the Sunga dynasty.

It has been suggested that Demetrius I took the three satrapies from the Seleucid Empire during the southern march: Aria, Arachosia, and Sakastan. For the later usurpation of Eucratides I was met with resistance from Arachosia, Drangiana, and Aria, indicating that these regions were loyal to the Euthydemid dynasty at that time. During the eastern expedition of Antiochus III of the Seleucid Empire, Euthydemus I was defeated at the Arius River and retreated to his capital Bactra, and these regions came over and pledged allegiance to the Seleucid Empire. When Eucratides I usurped the throne, all these regions lined up against him, indicating that they were the territory of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom at the time.⁴¹

In my opinion, this should still be regarded as one theory. But there seems to be another possibility: When Antiochus III withdrew after he made a contract with Euthydemus I, Aria (and possibly Margiana) was intended to be returned to Euthydemus I. The reason for this is that Antiochus III had not only recognized Euthydemus I as king, but also married his daughter to his son, Demetrius (I), and thus it

would be very likely his lost lands would be given back to demonstrate the virtue of being suzerain and the friendship of in-laws. Moreover, the declining Bactria could not withstand the nomadic tribes from the northern shore of Syr Darya, which Antiochus III had to consider — and which was the main reason for his conclusion of a peace treaty with Euthydemus I.

As for Arachosia, etc., south of the Hindu Kush, when Demetrius I marched south, these regions are not necessarily under the Seleucid Empire. Demetrius I entered India, probably in the name of revenge for the Seleucus' in-laws, the Maurya dynasty, and is unlikely to take possession of territory belonging to the Seleucid Empire. Demetrius I built a city in Arachosia named after himself, which in a sense was the success of the Seleucid Empire, because his father had been canonized by Antiochus III.

4. Demetrius I also captured Sagala⁴² before going south and capturing Arachosia. Evidence is available from Ptolemy's (c. 100–170) *Geography*: "Sagala, which is also called Euthymedia".⁴³ This can be taken as a city that was built by Demetrius I, named after his father. If Sagala was captured, Gandhāra and Taxila would also have been conquered.

Thus Demetrius I is thought to have personally conquered large parts of what is now Pakistan.

C

In addition to Strabo's *Geography*, Isidorus' *Parthian Stations*, and Ptolemy's *Geography*, there are several Indian records related to the event that the Euthydemid dynasty of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom invaded India:

1. Patañjali (c. 150 BCE), a grammarist, who was a contemporary of Pushyamitra Shunga, gave two examples in illustration of the use of the imperfect tense to denote an event which has recently happened in *Mahābhāṣya*:

Thus in speaking of a recent public occurrence we may say:

"the Yavanas have besieged Sāketa";

"the Yavanas have besieged Mādhyamika".⁴⁴

It is suggested that this indicates a conflict between the Yavanas and the Shunda dynasty which ruled the Midland Country (Central North India) at this time.⁴⁵ In my opinion, The above-mentioned two places are far apart; the former was the target of the Eastern Route army, while the latter was the target of the Southern Route Army. The grammarist had these examples handy, though only for the need to explain grammatical phenomena. From these examples, however, we have no way of ascertaining the exact circumstances of the military operations of the Yavanas.

2. Patañjali also mentioned a city called Dattamitri in the kingdom of Sauvīra (lower Indus valley), which was built by Dattāmitra.⁴⁶ (Bk. iv, Ch. II, §76, p. 725). In *Mahābhārata* (1: 141) Dattāmitra is called "king of the Yavanas".⁴⁷

It is suggested that Dattāmitra is without doubt Demetrius I, and the existence of Demetrius I in Sind is confirmed by an inscription from the Nasik Caves (17):⁴⁸

Success! (The gift) of Indragnidatta, son of Dhammadēva, the Yavana, a northerner from Dattamitri. By him, inspired by true religion, this cave has been caused to be excavated in mount Tiranhū, and inside the cave a Chaitya and cisterns. This cave made for the sake of his father and mother has been, in order to honor all Buddhas bestowed on the universal Samgha by monks together with his son Dhammarakhita. (Cave 17, No. 18)⁴⁹

The Nasik Caves were carved beginning in the first century BCE. It is accepted that Cave 17 is dated to around 120 CE. According to the inscription, the cave was built by a devotee of Greek descent, whose father was a Yavana, a northerner from Dattāmitrī. It has been suggested that the city of Dattāmitrī can be identified with Demetrias, which is seen in *Parthian Stations*.⁵⁰

3. Yuga-Purāna; the so-called *Yuga-Purāna* is originally a chapter of *Gārgī Samhitā*, which is a work on astronomy. It is stated that *Gārgī Samhitā* was written between the earliest dates of the current era and the third century. The *Yuga-Purāna* spoke of the Greek invasion of India in the form of prophecy. There are mainly two paragraphs related to this article, as follows:

After this, having invaded Sāketa (an old name for the ancient city of Ayodhya, the administrative headquarters of Faizabad district of Uttar Pradesh, India), the Pañchālas

(Doab designates the flat alluvial tract between the Ganges and Yamuna rivers extending from the Sivalik Hills to the two rivers' confluence at Allahabad), and Mathurā, the viciously valiant Yavanas (Greeks) will reach Kusumadhvaja ("the town of the flower-standard"). Then the thick mud-fortification (embankment) at Pātaliputra being reached, all the provinces will be in disorder, without doubt. Ultimately a great battle will follow with tree (-like) engines. (*Gargi-Samhita, Yuga Purana*, ch. 5)

... The Yavanas (Greeks) will command, the Kings will disappear. (But ultimately) the Yavanas, intoxicated with fighting, will not stay in Madhadesa (the Middle Country); there will be undoubtedly a civil war among them, arising in their own country (Bactria), there will be a terrible and ferocious war. (*Gargi-Samhita, Yuga Purana*, ch. 7).⁵¹

The above-cited narratives seem to be supported by Strabo's account:

Of the eastern parts of India, then, there have become known to us all those parts which lie this side the Hypanis (Hypasis), and also any parts beyond the Hypanis of which an account has been added by those who, after Alexander, advanced beyond the Hypanis, as far as the Ganges and Palibothra (Pātaliputra). (XV, 1.27)

In my opinion, it was obvious that the Yavanas in question were the Eastern Route army of the Greco-Bactria kingdom commanded by Menander. After crossing the Hypanis river and capturing the districts of Sāketa and Pañchālas, the Eastern Route army pointed directly at Pātaliputra.

It is believed that the most important part of the above-cited segment in the *Yuga-Purāna* is provided by a "prophecy" on "a civil war", and the so-called "their own country", apparently referring to Bactria, the mainland of the Greeks who invaded India. In other words, it is prophesied that the Euthydemid dynasty would soon be usurped, and that this would cause a civil war.⁵²

4. The play of Kālidās (fifth century CE), *Malavikāgnimitram*, has this plot: Pushyamitra Shunga had a horse which had been prepared to be sacrificed after a year, and was guarded by Vasumitra (131–124 BCE), his grandson. "This very horse wandering on the right bank of the Indus was claimed by a cavalry squadron of the Yavanas.... Then there was a fierce struggle between the two hosts. Then Vasumitra, the

mighty Bowman, having overcome his foes, rescued my excellent horse, which they were endeavouring to carry off by force". (act 5, verse 14)⁵³ The "right bank of the Indus" mentioned here clearly belongs to the territory occupied by the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom's Southern Route Army.

5. Hathigumpha inscription of Kalinga's ruler, Kharavela⁵⁴:

The inscription in Brahmi script was discovered at a natural cavern called Hathigumpha in the Udayagiri hill, near Bhubaneswar in Odisha. The Hathigumpha Inscription consists of seventeen lines, but only four lines of it are completely legible. The inscription was inscribed in the thirteenth year of the reign of Kharavela, Kalinga king, it mentions a Greek king who retreated to Mathura with his demoralized soldiers in fear of Kharavela:

Then in the eighth year, (Kharavela) with a large army having sacked Goradhagiri (near the Barabar Hills) causes pressure on Rājagaha (Rājagrīha). On account of the loud report of this act of valour, the Yavana (Greek) King Dimi[ta] retreated to Mathurā having extricated his demoralized army ...

Then in the eighth year, having destroyed the strong (fort) of Gorathagiri (near the Barabar Hills [Jehanabad district, Bihar, India]) with a mighty army (His Majesty) oppressed Rajagrha. Getting the tidings of all these achievements, the Yavanraja who returned to Mathura for the rescue of his army encamped there (surrendered) ... (N. K. Sahu, Kharavela, King of Kalinga. Bhubaneswar: Orissa State Museum, 1984.)⁵⁵

The English translator of the inscription read the name of the Yavanraja as "Dimita", and identified the Yavanraja "Dimita" with Demetrius I. In my opinion, there is much room for discussion of this theory.

First, the name of this king of Greek is very indistinct. It contains three letters, the middle one said to be MA or MI. That is to say, it is not certain that Dimi[ta] can be pronounced Dimi[ta]. Even if Dimi[ta] can be identified with Demetrius, it is not necessarily Demetrius I. In addition to Demetrius I, there are also Demetrius II and Demetrius III, who are known to be Greek rulers operating in India.

Secondly, the attack on Goradhagiri and Rājagrīha was the task of the Eastern Route army of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom. By definition, Demetrius I should not appear at Rājagrīha.

What's more, the dates of Kharavela, the Kalinga ruler, are hard to pin down. There are many

theories, such as the fourth, third, second, first centuries BCE and first centuries CE. The discussions involved archaeology, paleography, and the dating of the Maurya and Shunda dynasties, which were extremely complex and seemed to have various justifications. If the king Kharavela intersected with Demetrius I of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom, his dates would have been in the first half of the second century BCE.⁵⁶ However, even scholars who advocated this date did not necessarily approve of identifying Dimi[ta] with Demetrius I. Thus, it has been pointed out that it is impossible to put Dimi[ta] and Demetrius I together in time;⁵⁷ and some believe that Dimi[ta] was a Greek ruler who later ruled east Punjab;⁵⁸ and so on.

The chronology of the king Kharavela is too complex to be explored here.⁵⁹ For this purpose, the relationship between the Hāthigumphā inscription and Euthydemid dynasty or India can only be put on hold pending the emergence of new data and further study.

D

To sum up, around 185 BCE. Demetrius I began his southern expedition, and he left his eldest son Euthydemus (II) to guard Bactria, probably as a viceroy of Demetrius I.⁶⁰ He led his second son Demetrius (II), generals Menander, Apollodotus and others to the south.

After passing the Hindu Kush, the main forces divided into two. One headed east, led by Menander and others, and reached as far as Pātaliputra, the capital of the former Maurya dynasty. The other one headed south, led by Demetrius I himself and supported by Demetrius II and others, and reached the Indus delta. It may have occupied Kabul, Gandhara, Taxila, Sagala, etc. during this period.⁶¹ Demetrius I left his second son to defend Paropamisadae, Gandhara, and Taxila, and he himself took possession of what is now the Indus delta.⁶² According to one theory, at one point Menander was in Pātaliputra, Apollodotus in Ujjain, and Demetrius (II) in Taxila, which were in a tripartite balance.⁶³

Demetrius I has been identified as the founder of the Yavana era, whose first year in office is 186/185 BCE. However, the first year of this era has been set to 174 BCE at present, so it has nothing to do with him.⁶⁴

The cause of Demetrius I's death is unknown and he is generally thought to have died in about 180 BCE. The date was chosen in order to set aside enough sufficient reign periods for the later rulers of the

Euthydemid dynasty, such as his son Euthydemus II. If so, the “prophecy” concerning the Yavanas, that their army would retreat because of Eucratides I’s insurrection in *Yuga-Purāna*, can be interpreted as the result of the Greek soldiers attacking Pātaliputra becoming demoralized and withdrawing when they learned that Bactria was lost.

One theory says that Demetrius I has four children, by age, Euthydemus II, Demetrius II, Pantaleon, and Agathocles.⁶⁵

Euthydemus II is not documented, but his existence has been confirmed by numismological studies.⁶⁶ One might reasonably consider that he succeeded his father, Demetrius I, when the father died.

Eucratides (I) usurped the throne around 170 BCE, and the whereabouts of Euthydemus II are unknown. It is reasonable to think Eucratides must be the last ruler of the Euthydemid dynasty in the mainland of Bactria.

However, numismological evidence suggests that between Euthydemus II and Eucratides I there were several rulers of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom who must be accounted for in this history. To be specific, after Demetrius I launched a southern campaign against India in about 185 BCE and until the Eucratidid dynasty replaced the Euthydemid dynasty in about 170 BCE, in addition to Euthydemus II, at least three rulers of the Euthydemid dynasty of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom must be arranged

Those of Euthydemus II’s coins that have been handed down are rare, and the portrait of his head shown on the coins appears quite young, which seems to imply that his reign was short. However, he issued a number of nickel-alloy coins. These same nickel-alloy coins were also issued by Agathocles and Pantaleon.⁶⁷ This suggests a close relationship among the three. This is because only the coins of these three kings were made of nickel-alloy, and only the Chinese knew how to use nickel alloy at that time.

Agathocles and Pantaleon are not documented, and, like Euthydemus II, they are known as rulers of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom chiefly through their coins. Interestingly, Agathocles issued pedigree coinage, including that of Alexander the Great (Obverse: ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΦΙΛΙΠΠΙΟΥ “Alexander son of Phillip”, Reverse: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΟΝΤΟΣ ΑΓΑΘΟΚΛΕΟΥΣ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ “Of Reign Agathocles the Just”), Diodotus I (Obverse: ΔΙΟΔΟΤΟΥ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ “of Diodotus the Saviour”, Reverse: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΟΝΤΟΣ ΑΓΑΘΟΚΛΕΟΥΣ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ “of Reign Agathocles the Just”), Euthydemus I (Obverse: ΕΥΘΥΔΗΜΟΥ ΘΕΟΥ “Euthydemus God”, Reverse: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΟΝΤΟΣ ΑΓΑΘΟΚΛΕΟΥΣ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ “Of Reign Agathocles the Just”)

and Demetrius I (Obverse: ΔΗΜΗΤΡΙΟΥ ΑΝΙΚΗΤΟΥ "Demetrius Invincible", Reverse: ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΟΝΤΟΣ ΑΓΑΘΟΚΛΕΟΥΣ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ "Of Reign Agathocles the Just"), also including Pantaleon.⁶⁸ Agathocles would have known that Bactria was originally a satrapy under Alexander of Macedon, that the independence of Diodotus I was an act of rebellion, and that the Diodotid dynasty was overthrown by the Euthydemid dynasty. Naturally, this has led to much speculation among researchers, focusing on his motives for issuing the pedigree coinage.

It is generally acknowledged that Agathocles might have ascended to the throne by unlawful means, and issuing pedigree coinage was an attempt to please all sides and consolidate his rule, while no commemorative coins for Euthydemus II are found in his pedigree coinage, which could easily be explained by the latter's having been overthrown by him, for his pedigree included not only the founder of each dynasty. Of the Euthydemid dynasty's commemorative coins, both Euthydemus I and his son Demedrius had theirs issued.

In my opinion, the evidence that Agathocles was a usurper seems to be insufficient, and his issuance of pedigree coinage is more like a retrospective of Bactria's history. He did not favour one regime over another, which might not always have been good for consolidating his own regime, and it might not even have won sympathy and support from either side. As for the absence of Euthydemus II in this pedigree, it can be attributed to the various fortunes of coins passing down through the generations.⁶⁹

Moreover, it may be said that Agathocles belonged to one of the descendants of Alexander who had been stranded in Bactria, while his father and grandfather, by all kinds of chance, had ties of kinship or friendship to the rulers of both the Diodotid dynasty and the Euthydemid dynasty. This became the internal reason to issue his pedigree coinage.

Apart from his pedigree coinage, the coins issued by Agathocles are varied and creative: they use a variety of scripts — Brahmi, Greek, and Kharoshthi legends,⁷⁰ which express not only belief in Greek gods but also in the deities and ideas of Buddhism⁷¹ and Hinduism⁷². This shows that Agathocles had a broad vision and was knowledgeable. He was eclectic and tried to use coinage to describe the history and society of his time. Certainly this can be called a pioneering work. And it may have something to do with the blood running through his veins.

Moreover, his devotion to coinage suggests that, under him, Bactria (and perhaps areas further south of the Hindu Kush) was peaceful and prosperous.

In brief, given Euthydemus II's short reign, the Bactrian throne was likely to go to Pantaleon and Agathocles, and, as with Euthydemus II, the number of Pantaleon coins passed down through the generations was very small. These three rulers should be considered together as a group, and Agathocles as the best of them all.

As for the identity of Pantaleon and Agathocles, there are various speculations, whether referring to him as the son of Euthydemus I, or as the son of Demetrius I, or other figures. I will not discuss any of these here.

In addition to the above-mentioned three kings, there is another person, called Antimachus I, whose area of control is controversial but which arguably includes several parts of Bactria and other areas to the south of the Hindu Kush.⁷³ His origins are unclear, but it is believed that his time predated the accession of Eucratides I. In other words, Antimachus I might have been the heir of Agathocles, a member of the Euthydemid dynasty.

Antimachus I's existence is confirmed not only by the coins he issued, but also by a tax receipt on parchment, found in 1993:⁷⁴

In the reign of Antimachos Theos and Eumenes and Antimachos ... the fourth year, in the month of Olous, in Asangorna, the guardian of the law being... The tax collector Menodotus, in the presence of... who was also sent out by Demonax, the former..., and of Simus who was ... by the agency of Diodorus, controller of revenues, acknowledges receipt from ... the son of Dataes from the priests ... the dues relating to the purchase.⁷⁵

Antimachus had his own associate kings (Eumenes and Antimachos), and this implies that he was indeed a king. He or Antimachus II, his son as his associate king, was the last king of the Euthydemid dynasty. In other words, it was probably Antimachus I or his son, Antimachus II, who had to face up to the usurpation of Eucratides in Bactria.⁷⁶

In brief, from about 185 to 170 BCE, i.e., from the year of Demetrius' southern expedition to India to the year of usurpation by Eucratides, there may be at most four or five rulers who held the mainland of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom (in part or in whole). They are Euthydemus II, Pantaleon, Agathocles, Antimachus I, and Antimachus II.⁷⁷

As for the relationship between the Euthydemid dynasty and India after Demetrius I, that is, the activities of Demetrius I's descendants and subordinates in the South Asian subcontinent, I will discuss these in another paper.

NOTES

¹ Shuckburgh 1962.

² Jones 1916.

³ For details, see Lerner 1999, pp. 45–47.

⁴ For the new situations inside and outside the Seleucid Empire (e.g., preparations for war, the route of the march, and the attack against Parthia before Antiochus III invaded eastwards into the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom), see Grainger 2015, pp. 55–70.

⁵ Lerner 1999, pp. 58–60. On this basis, he then, according to the research results of the handed down coins, made arrangements for the reign periods of Euthydemus I and his son.

⁶ See the fifth chapter of this book.

⁷ For an introduction to and criticism of the concerned doctrine, see Lerner 1999, pp. 55–56.

⁸ Masson 1955, esp. pp. 39–43.

⁹ Cunningham 1884, pp. 134–135, 144. Narain 1957, pp. 19–22.

¹⁰ For details, see the fifth chapter of this book.

¹¹ Cf. Tarn 1951, pp. 73–74.

¹² Holt 1999, pp. 105–106.

¹³ E.g., Cunningham 1884, p. 145; Gardner 1886, p. xxi; and Tarn 1951, pp. 74–75.

¹⁴ Macdonald 1922, p. 440; Newell 1941, p. 274.

¹⁵ Lerner 1999, p. 54.

¹⁶ See Lerner 1999, pp. 52–54, for more details of the discussion.

¹⁷ Narain 1957, pp. 20–21.

¹⁸ Gutschmidt 1888, p. 37, n. 4.

¹⁹ Walbank 1967 ii: p. 265. Lerner 1999, p. 48, also believes that the battlefield was at Herat.

²⁰ Holleaux1930, esp. p. 141 n. 1; Tarn 1951, p. 88 n. 3 and p. 44 nn. 3–5.

²¹ See Cunningham1884, pp. 139–140; Tarn 1951, pp. 114–115. Wilson1841, p. 221, supposed that the town of Zariaspa, from which Euthydemus I retreated, was Alexandria-Margiana (Merv). Cunningham thought this idea was wrong, because Merv was on the edge of the desert. If Euthydemus I retreated there, he would surely have been defeated and surrendered.

²² Holt1989, pp. 127–135, believed that the evidence of numismatics shows that Bactria under Euthydemus I remained an independent kingdom after the war. It has been suggested that the agreement probably gave the area of Margiana, and the valley of the Arius River, to the Seleucid Empire.

²³ Lerner1999, p. 42.

²⁴ Lerner1999, pp. 49–50.

²⁵ Cunningham1884, p. 134; Narain1957, p. 19.

²⁶ Newelli1938, pp. 257–259.

²⁷ Tarn1951, pp. 92–93.

²⁸ Bopearachchi1992.

²⁹ Wallace2016.

³⁰ For an English translation, see Castro2012.

³¹ Hypanis, the present-day Beas River.

³² Imaüs, Himalayas.

³³ Saraostus, southwest of present-day Saurashtra and Gujarat.

³⁴ Sigerdis, Indus Delta, present-day Sindh, Pakistan.

³⁵ See Stadtner1975.

³⁶ Guruge1994.

³⁷ Based on Rudradāman's Junāgadh inscription, Aparānta (Aparantaka) was under Tushaspa, a Yonaraja, during the reign of Asoka.

³⁸ Geiger1912, p. 82.

³⁹ Schöffi1914.

⁴⁰ Tarn1951, p. 94.

⁴¹ Tarn1951, p. 93.

⁴² Sagala, in present-day Punjab.

43 Stevenson1932, p. 152.

44 Vasu1891–97, Bk III, Ch. II, §111, p. 454.

45 Rapson1922, p. 544.

46 Vasu1891–97, Bk IV, Ch. II, §76, p. 725.

47 The *Mahabharata*, Book 1: Adi Parva: Sambhava Parva: Section 141, see Ganguli1883–96, pp. 295–296.

48 Tarn1951, pp. 142, 146. Cf. Weber1862, p. 150, note.

49 Senart1905–6, esp. p. 91.

50 This is the theory of G. Bühler, quoted from Senart1905–6.

51 Jayaswali1928. The translation related to the *Yuga-Purāna* in this text came entirely from this paper. The “tree(-like) engines”, according to the English translator, seems to refer to instruments guarding the city. If so, this should be understood as “rolling wood”. Here, in this context, I interpret it as a siege instrument.

52 Tarn1951, p. 132, believes that the usurpation of Eucratides (I) led to the retreat of the Greeks from Pātaliputra; the date is 169 BCE.

53 Tawaney1891, p. 91 (Mālavikāgnimitram, act 5, verse 14).

54 Jayaswali1917, Banerji1918, Jayaswali1933.

55 Jayaswali1933, esp. p. 87.

56 Some people hold this view, e.g., Jayaswali1917; Banerji1918; Konow1923; Panigrahi1961, pp. 192–203, and so on.

57 Chattopadhyaya1974, pp. 48–51.

58 Sen1988, pp. 176–177.

59 Verma1971, pp. 86–87. Shimada2012, p. 57. Various opinions may be being referred to: Chanda1919; Chanda1919/77; Tarn1951, pp. 457–459; Chattopadhyaya1974, pp. 48–51; Sen1988/99, pp. 176–177, and others, not listed here.

60 Bopearachchi1992 believed that Sogdiana broke away from the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom when Antiochus III besieged the capital of Bactria. Euthydemus I was unable to recover Sogdiana, thus turned his attention to India, and then Demetrius I crossed the Hindu Kush.

61 That is to say, Demetrius I ruled Taxila, mainly because of the discovery of many of his coins at the Sirkap site. It is suggested that he did not issue these coins for himself, but rather that his second son, Demetrius II, issued them for his father.

62 Sen1988, p. 166.

63 Tarn1951, pp. 131–156.

64 Cf. Falk2007; MacDowall2007.

65 Tarn1951, pp. 76–78.

66 Holt2000.

67 Holt1989, p. 2; Kim2017, p. 267.

68 Tarn1951, pp. 201, 263, 439–440, 450–451, 504, 506; Holt1989, pp. 6–7.

69 Accordingly, Goukowsky1981, pp. 87–89, denied the existence of Euthydemus II.

70 Cf. Lahiri1964; Audouin1974; Bopearachchi1991, pp. 172–180.

71 Krishan1996, p. 22; Bopearachchi1991, p. 176; Halkias2014, esp. pp. 85–90.

72 Bopearachchi2016.

73 Cf. Narain1957, pp. 47–49. Narain introduces a number of relevant ideas, all based on coin data, which are very different from each other.

74 For the details on this tax receipt, see Rea1994.

75 The tax receipt is now in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. For the English translation, see Holt1999, p. 176.

76 Many scholars have discussed the situation of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom before Eucratides (I) usurped the throne, e.g. Rawlinson2012, Tarn 1951, Narain1957, and others.

77 The numismatist O. Bopearachchi has assigned each of them a reign period: Euthydemus II (190–185 BCE), Pantaleon and Agathocles (190–180 BCE), Antimachus I (185–170 BCE), and Antimachus II (160–155 BCE); see Bopearachchi1991, p. 453. The notes are here for reference.

7. THE EUCRATIDID DYNASTY AND THE FALL OF THE GRECO-BACTRIAN KINGDOM

A

The Greco-Bactrian Kingdom lasted for more than one hundred years and went through three dynasties: the Diodotid dynasty, the Euthydemid dynasty, and the Eucratidid dynasty. This chapter will outline the beginning and end of the Eucratidid dynasty and the fall of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom.

The founder of the Eucratidid dynasty was Eucratides I, who is believed to have overthrown the Euthydemus dynasty and usurped the throne. As for his origin, there is no record of his family background; we have only the images of his parents on the commemorative coins issued after his accession to the throne,¹ the coin legend reading: King Eucratides the Great, [son of] Heliocles and Laodice.

His mother's name, Laodice, has attracted scholars' attention. Many ladies of the Seleucid Empire were named Laodice, such as the mother of Seleucus I Nikator (305–281 BCE), queen of Antiochus II Theos (261–246 BCE), and so on. If the mother of Eucratides I was also named Laodice, it cannot be excluded that Eucratides I also has the aristocratic lineage of the Seleucid Empire. Laodice appears on the coins wearing a royal diadem, while Heliocles appears to be a commoner.² As for Laodice's identity, there are various theories.

According to one suggestion, Laodice, the mother of Eucratides (I), was the daughter of Seleucus II Callinicus (r. 246–225 BCE) or Seleucus III Ceraunus (r. 225–223 BCE), and was more likely the daughter of Seleucus II and thus sister of Antiochus III the Great. Heliocles, whom Laodice married, also had a higher position. Sure enough, Eucratides (I) and Antiochus IV Epiphanes, (r. 175–164) were cousins. The former was sent by the latter to attack the Euthydemid dynasty of Bactria in an attempt to recover the renegade satrapy. The narrator even sketched out his route to the Bactria. It was Eucratides (I) himself, of course, who eventually ascended the throne of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom.³ According to another scholar, Laodice, the mother of Eucratides (I), was a princess of the Euthydemid dynasty.⁴ Others refer to Laodice as the daughter of Antiochus III,⁵ and so on.

Thus, the only evidence is open to many interpretations, and the reasonable syllogism is also only a

syllogism. Since The Greco-Bactrian Kingdom was originally one of the satrapy of the Seleucid Empire, it is not surprising that its officials had various connections with the Seleucid royal household, including blood ties. The possibility that Laodice had a noble lineage cannot be ruled out and her relationship with Eucratides (I) gave Eucratides (I) a pivotal position. This could easily have become the basis for the usurpation of power by an ambitious person.⁶

Anyhow, Eucratides overthrew the Euthydemus dynasty and ascended the throne of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom. Next come these two questions:

1. When did Eucratides ascend the throne? Eucratides I and Mithridates I of Parthia (r. 171–132 BCE) ascended the throne at about the same time, according to the *Epitome* (XLI, 6) of Justin (second century BCE).⁷ It is generally believed that Mithridates I of the Parthian Empire ascended the throne around 171 BCE,⁸ and thus it is supposed that the year when Eucratides overthrew the Euthydemid dynasty and began to rule the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom is roughly around 170 BCE. But others think that this year should be 165 BCE.⁹ This is because Justin's words are very general (the citation is in the next section of this article), offering no more information than that Mithridates I and Eucratides I were contemporaries.¹⁰ In other words, the Euthydemid dynasty of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom died roughly at this time.

Timarchus of the Seleucid Empire called himself “Great King” (*Basileus Megas*) in 162/161 BCE, probably inspired by Eucratides I, who had also adopted a similar title, thus the year of his accession to the throne was slightly earlier than that of Timarchus. It is unlikely that Eucratides I adopted such a title at the outset of his reign, and more likely that he did so after he believed that he had achieved something.¹¹

2. Who was the last ruler of the Euthydemid dynasty overthrown by Eucratides I?

The last known ruler of the Euthydemid dynasty seen in the records was Demetrius I Soter (r. 200–185 BCE), the son of Euthydemus I. After Antiochus III of the Seleucid Empire signed a treaty of peace with his father Euthydemus I, he led an army of invasion south toward India. His whereabouts were unknown, and numismologists designated the date for his death as 190 BCE in order to give time for the rulers who might have belonged to the Euthydemid dynasty. Between the death of Demetrius I and the ascent of Eucratides, approximately 15 to 20 years, the numismologists arranged seven rulers:

Euthdemus II, Pantaleon, Agathocles, Antimachus I (174–165 BCE), Apollodotus I, Demetrius I, and Antimachus I.¹²

Since the first three issued nickel-alloy coins, numismologists put them in one group. Euthydemus II is believed to be the son of Demetrius I who stayed behind on the mainland of Bactria during his father's march to India. He probably ruled the land of Bactria as his father's deputy, as was the custom of Greek rulers at the time, and then officially ascended the throne after his father's death. The appearance of his head on his coin was particularly youthful and is seen as evidence of his short reign. Like Euthydemus II, both Pantaleon and Agathocles were members of the Euthydemid royal family. Since the former appears among the pedigree coinage issued by the latter, the former must have ascended to the throne earlier than the latter, which means that he may have inherited the throne of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom after Euthydemus II. The number of Pantaleon coins handed down from generation to generation was also small, suggesting his reign was also short-lived. However, it is difficult to determine whether these two persons are the son of Demetrius I or Euthydemid I without empirical evidence.

It is generally believed that Antimachus I was also a member of the Euthydemid dynasty and might be a brother of Demetrius I. He ascended the throne after Agathocles. It is possible that Antimachus I was the reigning king of the Euthydemid dynasty when Eucratides usurped the throne.

B

During the reign of Eucratides I, a war broke out between the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom and the Parthian Empire. The reigning king of Parthian Empire at that time was Mithridates I. and the *Epitome of Justin* (second century CE) records this event:

Almost at the same time that Mithridates ascended the throne among the Parthians, Eucratides began to reign among the Bactrians; both of them being great men. But the fortune of the Parthians, being the more successful, raised them, under this prince, to the highest degree of power; while the Bactrians, harassed with various wars, lost not only their dominions, but their liberty; for having suffered from contentions with the

Sogdians, the Arachosians, the Drancae, the Arei and the Indians, they were at last overcome, as if exhausted, by the weaker Parthians. (XLI, 6)

According to Justin, the event that the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom under Eucratides I was conquered by Mithridates I of the Parthian Empire seems to have happened after Eucratides I became exhausted from contentions with “the Sogdians and the Arachosians, the Drancae, the Arei and the Indians”.

It is clear, however, that Eucratides and the people of the above-mentioned regions cannot have fought at the same time. These wars may have been divided, at least, into two phases: the first phase with the Sogdians and the Arachosians, the Drangians, and the Arians, and the second phase with the Indians.¹³

This is considered possible because, with the exception of India, the rest of the lands lie north of the Hindu Kush, near Bactria. At the height of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom, these regions became either territories of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom or its dependencies. It is unsurprising that these regions rose to revolt or attempted independence when Eucratides I usurped power. Eucratides I made it possible to cross the Hindu Kush into India only after levelling the area around Bactria.

The question is whether the fighting between Eucratides I and Mithridates I occurred before or after the former’s advance into India.

Objectively, both of these possibilities exist. Taking the chance that Eucratides I advanced south against India and his rear, Bactria, was empty, Mithridates I could advance eastward. He could also have dispatched troops at a time when Eucratides I was struggling to suppress resistance in the vicinity of Bactria.

Taking all things into consideration, the latter is more likely: Mithridates I launched the war against the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom at a time when Eucratides I was still shaky. On the accession of Mithridates I, the main threat to the Parthians comes not only from the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom in the east, but also from the Seleucid Empire in the west. It is certain that Mithridates I, with great skill and foresight, did not make the Parthians entangled on two fronts, East and West, at once, and that he decided to choose the easier party first.

The Greco-Bactrian Kingdom is relatively easy to deal with. This is because its ruler was a usurper, who must be bound to have incurred internal resistance or rebellion, and even if internal strife was

pacified, national strength would inevitably have declined. This would have been Mithridates I's best time to attack against the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom. Eucratides I would have been hard put to cope with the situation if Mithridates I commanded his army eastward at this time.

The time of the war between the Parthians and the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom, therefore, seems likely to be fixed sometime after the accession of the two men. Specifically, it was within the first four or five years of their accession.

On the other hand, Timarchus, the satrap of Media of the Seleucid Empire, who called himself king shortly after the death of Antiochus IV (between 163 and 160 BCE), not only coveted the throne of the Seleucid Empire, but also fought with the Demetrius I Soter (r. 161–150 BCE) of the Seleucid Empire. There seems to be evidence that he also intended to expand eastward, and thus colluded with Eucratides I, the ruler of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom, when dealing with the Parthian Empire.¹⁴ This would also set Mithridates I up for a war against the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom, taking advantage of Timarchus' making a deadly fight with Demetrius I and having no time to try first to eliminate the threat from the east.

As to how much territory of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom was lost due to the defeat of Eucratides I, there is only a simple record in Strabo's *Geography*¹⁵:

Their cities were Bactra (also called Zariaspa, through which flows a river bearing the same name and emptying into the Oxus), and Darapsa, and several others. Among these was Eucratidia, which was named after its ruler. The Greeks took possession of it and divided it into satrapies, of which the satrapy Turiva and that of Aspionus were taken away from Eucratides by the Parthians. And they also held Sogdiana, situated above Bactriana towards the east between the Oxus River, which forms the boundary between the Bactrians and the Sogdians, and the Iaxartes River. And the Iaxartes forms also the boundary between the Sogdians and the nomads. (XI, 11.2)

Reading this account, it is easy to see that Turiva and Asangius thus should be located in the mainland of Bactria, rather than in the surrounding areas, such as above-mentioned Sogdiana, Arachosia, Drangiana, Aria, etc. Strabo was clearly saying that, after occupying Bactria, the "Greeks" divided it into

dioceses. The “Greeks” mentioned by Strabo here were not those who conquered Bactria in the beginning, but the Greeks present after Bactria became independent. This is because the whole of Bactria was a satrapy before the independence of Bactria from the Seleucid Empire, and only after this original satrap became king did it become necessary to further divide Bactria into several satrapies and to appoint satraps to administer them. Whether the two satrapies of Turiva and Aspionus were established in the Diodotid dynasty, Euthydemid dynasty, or even Eucratides I is impossible to know.

Moreover, Strabo’s reference to the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom of having lost the two satrapies, Turiva and Aspionus, during the battles of Mithridates I of the Parthian dynasty and Eucratides I does not mean that Mithridates I only occupied these two satrapies. He only mentioned these two places obviously because they were within the mainland of Bactria; that is, within the satrapy under Diodotus, as a Seleucid satrap. In brief, Turiva and Aspionus must be sought only within Bactria. Taking all things into consideration, they most probably were in the west of Bactria.

If the two satrapies, Turiva and Aspionus, were indeed located to the west of Bactria, Mithridates I would have occupied the regions to the west of them first before occupying these two regions. According to one theory, Mithridates I’s invasions aimed at Aria, Margiana, and the western Bactria in the first place,¹⁶ which is quite true.

In a word, there has been a lot of discussion, but no conclusion has been reached concerning the geographical locations of Turiva and Aspionus. Those theories that these two satrapies should be sought outside the Bactria will not be discussed here.¹⁷ Those theories seeking to locate both satrapies at specific places within Bactria are not supported, lacking hard evidence.¹⁸ So far we can only say that there is a relatively high probability these two satrapies are in the west of the Bactria. It seems hard to deny that the Parthian Empire occupied parts of the main region of Bactria during the reign of Mithridates I.¹⁹

The result of this war, as is known from the accounts of Justin, was the submission of Eucratides I. The case is similar to that of Euthydemus I succumbing to Antiochus III. Antiochus III did not destroy the Euthydemid dynasty: first, because the latter still had strength — Bactra was besieged for two years and was not conquered. The second reason is his fear of an invasion by nomads to the north of the Syr Darya. Why Mithridates I, following the victory, didn’t destroy the Eucratidid dynasty and unify Bactria and its surrounding areas was probably due to considerations similar to those of Antiochus III. For one

thing, Eucratides I had not lost all his power, despite losing the cities and territories. One can see how soon he crossed the Hindu Kush and invaded south India. Secondly, once the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom was fully annexed, Mithridates I must have set aside a great deal of power to hold the new lands, especially against the nomadic tribes from the north. Perhaps, considering his own strength, Mithridates I thought it would be better to accept the allegiance of Eucratides I, or to preserve this barrier against the nomadic tribes of the north. Another possibility is that something happened in the western territory of the Parthian Empire that forced Mithridates I to withdraw from Bactria as soon as possible.

It is likely that, as early as the reign of Antiochus IV, Timarchus (who proclaimed himself king during the period 163–160 BCE), as the Media's satrap for the Seleucid Empire, had been eyeing Parthia, and the best strategy with which to fight Parthia was to join forces with the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom. When Demetrius I of the Seleucid Empire took the throne by killing Antiochus V Eupator (r. 164–161 BCE), Timarchus had the excuse of gaining independence as king, and fighting with Demetrius I, who had newly acceded to the throne and needed Bactria to contain the Parthians. The evidence of numismatics seems to bear this out: the coins issued by Timarchus resemble those of Eucratides I, in particular the tetradrachms (with the helmeted bust on the obverse and the Greek god Dioscuri on the reverse). As mentioned above, Timarchus also adopted a title similar to that of Eucratides I: Great King Timarchus.²⁰

According to the *Epitome of Justin*:

During the course of these proceedings among the Bactrians, a war arose between the Parthians and Medes, and after fortune on each side had been some time fluctuating, victory at length fell to the Parthians; when Mithridates, enforced with this addition to his power, appointed Bacasis (Bagayasha) over Media, while he himself marched into Hyrcania. (XLI, 6)

Read in the context of the above-quoted account, the first sentence in this paragraph refers to the event in which Eucratides I advanced south to India, whose founding date was after Mithridates I had conquered Eucratides I. All this, though not as pieces of direct evidence, has served to show that the

western part of Parthia was not safe. Thus, once Eucratides I bowed to submit to him, Mithridates I turned west.

C

The following offers an abridged account of Eucratides I's invasion of India and his death.

The rise of the Parthian Empire is generally thought to have cut off Bactria's ties to the West, especially trade, which was crucial to Bactria's prosperity, but it was only after the operations of Mithridates I that Parthia became a true power. Obviously, Bactria's trade with the West must have been difficult during the reign-period of Mithridates I. This may have been an important factor in forcing Eucratides I to move south of the Hindu Kush.²¹

In my opinion, that Eucratides I advanced south into India, which is recorded in the *Epitome* of Justin (XLI, 6), should be regarded as a fact. The date is probably after he was beaten by Mithridates I. Faced with the humiliation of defeat, Eucratides I decided he must do something to restore his authority.²² Since it was impossible to develop westward, Eucratides I had to go south and invade India. On the one hand, it would open up new trade opportunities. On the other hand, perhaps the most important, it was the Euthydemid dynasty, the arch-enemy of Eucratides I, which was occupying the northwest subcontinent. And among them, not only Euthydemus II, the son of Demetrius I, but also Demetrius I's generals, Menander was the most powerful. The forces of the Euthydemid dynasty in the south of the Hindu Kush are likely to have taken the opportunity to go north to attack Eucratides I when Mithridates I was in a pitched battle with Eucratides I.²³ This may have been an important factor in Eucratides I's defeat by Mithridates I. Eucratides I, it may be said, had crossed south over the Hindu Kush in order to clear away the power of the Euthydemid dynasty in India, and to end his serious trouble.

There is no documentary evidence to demonstrate Eucratides' specific process in the southern expeditions, but it is generally believed that he achieved considerable success, although it was not always easy sailing.

Following the account of Eucratides I's defeat in the battle with the Parthians, the *Epitome* of Justin described a battle during which Eucratides I invaded south India:

Eucratides, however, carried on several wars with great spirit, and though much reduced by his losses in them, yet, when he was besieged by Demetrius king of the Indians, with a garrison of only three hundred soldiers, he repulsed, by continual sallies, a force of sixty thousand enemies. Having accordingly escaped, after a five months' siege, he reduced India under his power. (XLI, 6)

"Demetrius" here is obviously not Demetrius I, the son of Euthydemus I. There have been many speculations among scholars as to his identity and the date of his administration, but so far there exists much uncertainty and doubt about the authenticity of the above-mentioned Justin's *Epitome*.²⁴

In my opinion, though, Justin's account cannot be entirely disbelieved, because it is impossible that all of the events described are false. The "Demetrius" mentioned by him need not be regarded as a specific individual but rather as the power of the Euthydemus dynasty occupying the Indian subcontinent, represented by Demetrius I. Justin or his data may not be clear about the individual identity of the specific opponent whom Eucratides I was facing when he went south to India, because he only knew that he was dealing with the power of the Euthydemid dynasty in India. The Euthydemid dynasty's situation in India was initiated by Demetrius I, so, when describing the above war, the opponent is called "Demetrius".

In fact, since Eucratides I had made great achievements in his southern expedition to India, the possibility is not ruled out that he had fought with the descendants or subordinates of Demetrius I in India, such as Demetrius II, Agathocles, Pantaleon, and even Menander I.

The area that Eucratides I conquered in India is not clearly documented, nor is the location of the battleground in which he fought "Demetrius," as recorded by Justin. The areas of India conquered by Eucratides I are believed to include Gandhara and Paropamisadae in the northwest subcontinent.

In any case, his bilingual, square copper coins are enough to show that he once ruled over certain parts of India, and the Indian artifacts unearthed at the Ai-Khanoum site on the Amu Darya can also be seen as circumstantial evidence.

Eucratides I was killed by his son during his return from India, according to the *Epitome* of Justin,

As Eucratides returned from India, he was killed on the way back by his son, whom he had associated to his rule, and who, without hiding his patricide, as if he didn't kill a father but an enemy, ran with his chariot over the blood of his father, and ordered the corpse to be left without a sepulture. (XLI, 6)

The right and wrong between the father and son is unknown, and since Eucratides I may have had more than one son, it is difficult to know who killed the father. But Justin is convinced that Eucratides I was killed by his son and not by outsiders (Demetrius II or other descendants of Euthydemid dynasty).

The numismatics evidence indicates that, except for Eucratides II,²⁵ the relatives of Eucratides I are Plato and Heliocles I: Plato briefly ruled the south of Bactria or Paropamisade, while Heliocles was probably the last king of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom. The reign period of the three is in c. 145–130 BCE.²⁶ Eucratides II may have ruled Bactria as deputy king during Eucratides I's lifetime, and the latter two may have ascended to the throne after Eucratides I's death one after another.²⁷

If Heliocles and Plato were both sons of Eucratides I, and the patricide was committed by one of them, the latter is more probable than the former, which can be seen in the legends of their coins. The former referred to himself only as “the Just”, while the latter claimed himself to be “the Manifestation of God on earth”. Plato issued many coins whose image is the Sun divinity Helios, riding a four-horse chariot, which serves to show his arrogance. This is not inconsistent with Justin's description of the patricide.²⁸

As for the relationship between Heliocles and Plato, there are two possibilities:

1. Plato ascended the throne, killing his father, but he was soon overthrown by Heliocles. The civil strife was sure to make the weakened Kingdom even weaker. Heliocles finally became a witness to the downfall of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom.
2. Plato, who succeeded to the throne after he had killed his father, was killed by the tribes of the Sakas who invaded. Faced with a swarm of nomadic tribes, Heliocles retreated to a corner (r. 140–130 BCE) and survived until the Da Yuezhi's 大月氏 arrival.

In brief, Eucratides I was the last influential ruler of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom.

1. He overthrew the Euthydemid dynasty, ascended the throne, put down struggles in the regions, and established his own rule.

2. He failed against Mithridates I of the Parthian Empire, losing his western colonies and part of the Bactria territory. Nevertheless, he crossed the Hindu Kush and marched south to India, where he fought with great success mainly against the forces of the Euthydemid dynasty, which occupied the northwest subcontinent. To consolidate his rule, he issued coins in the Indian standard, Greek on the obverse and Pali in the Kharoshthi script on the reverse.
3. Eucratides I was ambitious and craved for greatness and success, calling himself "Of Great King Eucratides" on the coins issued, and he made the largest gold coin handed down from the classical world, weighing nearly six ounces.²⁹ He built Eucratideia, a city named after him in Bactria.³⁰
4. It is generally believed that the coins of the latest age unearthed from the famous Ai-Khanoum site in Takhar province in Northern Afghanistan belonged to Eucratides I, who must have been the last person to care for this site. It is located at the confluence of the Panj River and the Kokcha River, tributaries of the Amu Darya and is a key route into the Indian subcontinent. It had been an important city in the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom since 280 BCE. The end of the city ushered with the death of Eucratides I.

D

The Greco-Bactrian Kingdom was destroyed by the tribes of the Sacae (Sakās) from the north bank of Syr Darya. As Strabo's *Geography* reports:

Now the greater part of the Scythians, beginning at the Caspian Sea, are called Däae, but those who are situated more to the east than these are named Massagetae and Sacae, whereas all the rest are given the general name of Scythians, though each people is given a separate name of its own. They are all for the most part nomads. But the best known of the nomads are those who took away Bactriana from the Greeks, I mean the Asii, Pasiani (Gasiani), Tochari and Sacarauli, who originally came from the country on the other side of the Iaxartes River that adjoins that of the Sacae and the Sogdiani and was occupied by the Sacae. (XI, 8.2)

In the following account, Strabo makes it quite clear that the Sacae “occupied Bactriana”. (XI, 8.4) And the Asii, Pasiani (Gasiani), Tochari, and Sacarauli “who took away Bactriana from the Greeks” must belong to the Sacae, who must belong to the Sacae people, who are called Scythians in association with Däae and Massagetae. We might well call Asii et al. the four tribes of the Sacae.

The relevant account is clear that the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom was destroyed by the four tribes of the Sacae: Asii, Pasiani (Gasiani), Tochari, and Sacarauli. These tribes came from the northern bank of the Syr Darya, where they had formerly been living in the valleys of the Rivers Ili and Chu, which were once called “the land of the Sai 塞” (the “Xiyu zhuan 西域傳” of *Hanshu* 漢書). In about 177/176 BCE, due to attacks by the Xiongnu 匈奴, the Yuezhi 月氏, formerly living in the region from north of the present Qilian 祁連 Mountains to the eastern end of the present Tianshan 天山 Mountains and the Altai Mountains, were forced to move westward to “the land of the Sai 塞”, the tribes of the Sacae were driven to the north bank of the Syr Darya, and the rest were camped on the northern bank of the Syr Darya, the former land of the Massagetae, except for a part of them who went south through the Pamirs.³¹ Possibly continuing to be invaded by the Yuezhi 月氏, its eastern neighbor, the Sacae, who lived on the north bank of the Syr Darya crossed the Amu Darya south and invaded the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom. As previously mentioned, the numismatics show that the reign of Plato, the patricide, ended in 140 BCE. This may well have been the year of the Sacae tribes’ southward march.

Bactria, which was occupied by the tribes of the Sacae, is called Daxia 大夏 in Chinese historical records. “Daxia 大夏” [dat-hea] is the Chinese translation of the name of the Tochari, one of the tribes of the Sacae.³² This may be due to the fact that the Tochari in the tribes of the Sacae had more people and greater strength and occupied a larger land. In any case, the tribes of the Sacae, which occupied the Bactria, each did things in its own way and fought each other continually.³³ They did not establish a unified regime. In the “Xiyu zhuan 西域傳” of *Hanshu* 漢書 it is recorded that “Originally Daxia 大夏 had no major overlord or chief” and so on. This refers to the above-mentioned situations. This is the reason that Heliocles was able to hold his corner and continue to maintain the rule of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom for nearly ten years after Plato.

In 130 BCE, the Da Yuezhi 大月氏, who had been living in the valleys of the Rivers Ili and Chu, had been forced to give up these valleys after being attacked by the Wusun 烏孫 who advanced westwards; they went south to the valley of the Amu Darya through present-day Ferghana. The Da Yuezhi had

unified small regimes established by the tribes of the Sacae respectively. The Greco-Bactrian regime under Heliocles was destroyed thoroughly.³⁴ At this point, the Eucratidid dynasty of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom fell, and the reign of the Greeks north of the Hindu Kush came to an end.

NOTES

¹ Macdonald 1922, esp. pp. 453–454.

² It is also argued that this kind of coin does not honor the parents of Eucratides I, but instead the marriage of his son; see Salletti 1879, pp. 23–24, 103. More recently, a scholar has suggested that these coins were not issued by Eucratides I, but rather by Heliocles and Laodice, the hitherto unnoticed Greco-Bactrian rulers who were closely related to Eucratides I; see Glenn 2014.

³ Tarn 1951, pp. 196–201.

⁴ Holt 1981, esp. p. 41.

⁵ Hollis 1996, esp. pp. 162–163.

⁶ Narain 2006.

⁷ Watson 1886/2003.

⁸ Most scholars believe that Mithridates I came to the throne around 171 BCE (e.g. Bevan 1966, II, p. 158; Bivar 1983, esp. 98). Olbrycht 2010 argues for 170 BCE.

⁹ Assar 2005, Assar 2006 and the others.

¹⁰ Except for Justin; according to *On the Characteristics of Animals* of Claudius Aelian (c. 175–235 CE), “There is a city (Perimula) of which one Soras by name was ruler, a man of royal lineage, at the time when Eucratides was ruler of Bactria” (See Scholfield 1959, p. 219). Unfortunately, we do not know who this Soras was, nor when he ruled the city of Perimula (northwest coast of present-day Sri Lanka — the English translator). Therefore, this record is not helpful in determining the date of the reign of Eucratides I.

¹¹ Bellinger 1945, Houghton 1979, Narain 2006.

¹² Bopearachchi 1991, p. 453.

¹³ It is also possible, of course, that Eucratides I, after pacifying the regions around Bactria, proceeded south to wage a war on India. Eucratides I had to return to battle when Mithridates I, seizing the opportunity, advanced east. It was not until after the battle with Mithridates I that Eucratides I entered India again, and as a result the war, with the Euthydemid dynasty that dominated India arose, described in the *Epitome* of Justin.

¹⁴ Bivar2000, esp. p. 32, no. 2. In addition, according to Diodorus' *Bibliotheca Historica* (XXXI, 27), Timarchus had formed an alliance with Artaxias, king of Armenia, in order to deal with Demetrius I of the Seleucid Empire. This may be seen as circumstantial evidence of his possible alliance with Eucratides I.

¹⁵ Jones1916.

¹⁶ Olbrycht2010.

¹⁷ E.g., Narain1957, p. 17, believes that the two satrapies were located in Margiana.

¹⁸ Mithridates I's capture of the territory of the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom can be verified by numismatics; see Rtveladze1995. However that scholar believes that Mithridates I captured the western part of Bactria, including Bactra, which is unlikely. Certainly Eucratides I had been completely crushed, and the negotiating room between him and Mithridates I was completely lost. Bactra was easy to hold but hard to attack and must have been Eucratides' last stronghold against Mithridates I.

¹⁹ Mukherjee1969.

²⁰ See Bivar2006, esp. p. 32, no. 2.

²¹ Sidky2000, p. 218.

²² It is believed that Eucratides I's defeat by Mithridates I resulted in Sogdiana's defection from the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom, see Rtveladze1995.

²³ See Narain2006, esp. p. 405. Narain, however, argues that the power of the Euthydemid dynasty that cooperated with Mithridates I, was mainly Pantaleon, Agathocles and the others, and that the spheres of activity of the two people were mainly in the west of Bactria, on the basis that their coins were mainly distributed in the west. In contrast, the coins of Eucratides I were mainly distributed in the eastern part of Bactria. In my opinion, this is not appropriate. The following possibilities seem to be under consideration: Bactria was once unified by Pantaleon and Agathocles in succession, and their coins were found in the east and west of the Bactria, despite the fact that their reign period was short. Eucratides I took their place, and his rule could not have been confined to the west and centre of Bactria. It is not reliable to infer the range of activities of the coin issuer according to the location of the coin unearthed or found. Not only is it likely that the coins were being handed down from generation to generation, but also the coins themselves were in circulation.

²⁴ It has been suggested that Demetrius here refers to the son of Demetrius I. See Tarn1951, pp. 76–78. In my opinion, this can be regarded as an unproven argument. However, Senior2004, Wilson2004 and others believe that the Demetrius who appears on coins is inconsistent with the “king of Indians” recorded by Justin in many places.

²⁵ There are two coin series whose images are Apollo on the reverse, one of them with the coin legend “King Eucratides” and the other with the legend “King Eucratides the Saviour”. Based on these coins, Tarn1951, pp. 271–272, and others distinguish Eucratides I from II, stating that the former is Great King Eucratides, and the latter, Eucratides II.

²⁶ Boparachchi1991, p. 453.

²⁷ Wilson2004 believes that, in addition to the Plato of Bactria, there is also another member of the Eucratidid dynasty, Demetrius, who is not the same person as the “king of Indians”, Eucratides’ enemy, mentioned by Justin.

²⁸ Narain1957, pp. 70–73; Narain2006, esp. p. 402.

²⁹ Markowitz2014.

³⁰ Ptolemy (vi.1.7); see Stevenson1932; Strabo (XI, 11.2) reads Eucratidia. As to the exact location of the city, there has been no agreement up to now, and we can only leave the question open.

³¹ YuTsh1992, pp. 28–29.

³² YuTsh1992, pp. 26–29.

³³ Pompeius Trogus mentions “the occupation of Bactra and Sogdiana by the Scythian tribes, the Saraucae (Sacarauli) and the Asiani (Asii)” (Prologus of Book XLI), and at another point he mentions vaguely “the Asian (Asii) kings of the Tochari, and the demise of the Saraucae (Sacarauli)” (Prologus of Book XLII); see Watson1886/2003.

³⁴ YuTsh1992, pp. 57–59.

POSTSCRIPT

This research topic was conceived in 2009, and data collection and reading began in the same year. It was not until around 2014 that the first article was written. Due to various reasons, the work has been on and off.

As is well known, there is a vast amount of research results on Alexander the Great's eastern campaigns and the Greco-Bactrian Kingdom. Thanks to the generous help from my colleagues in the Research Office of Sino-Foreign Relations History at the Institute of Ancient History, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, as well as other friends both at home and abroad, I have been able to obtain some relevant research information from Western academic circles; otherwise, I would have been unable to make any progress. I would like to express my deep gratitude here.

It can be said that the only gain from working on this project is a further realization of one's own shallowness and incompetence. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Ms. Zhang Xiaorong 張小蓉 for proofreading my translations. I am responsible for all remaining errors.

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