

Revisiting Dareios' Scythian Expedition

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Introduction

For most people the main reason for believing in a Persian invasion of north Black Sea Scythia during the reign of Dareios is the Herodotean narrative (4.1.83-143). There *are* other Greek sources¹ and echoes in non-Greek sources, but in investigating the Scythian campaign one is investigating Herodotos. One thing I have found revisiting the topic is that there has been little new engagement with the story among the ever-growing band of Herodotean scholars.² The same is true in the realm of Achaemenid studies. The expedition naturally figures in Briant's *magnum opus* (Briant 2002), but Josef Wiesehöfer's *Ancient Persia* (1996) apparently does not deal with it. There may, of course, be good reason for this – perhaps the expedition was a non-event and all ways of dealing with the odd historical/historiographical record have been tried at one time or another, leaving little more to be said than had already been said a decade or more ago.³ I cannot assert that I have found anything but the odd tangential novelty. Indeed my principal hope is that the present discussion will prompt colleagues from other disciplines to draw attention to new data or speculations about existing data that have not yet reached the world of Herodotean or Achaemenid studies.

The story we are assessing is that Dareios, intent on avenging a Scythian invasion of western Asia during the Median Empire, marched an army over the Bosporos, through eastern Europe (where certain tribes surrendered or were subdued), across the Danube and around much of southern Ukraine. Worsted by the Scythians (who first fled but then harassed and confronted the invaders), Dareios recrossed the Danube and returned to Anatolia, leaving Megabazos to conquer Thrace. What historians would like to know is (a) whether Dareios actually campaigned across the Danube and, if so, how far and with what success, (b) what was the scale of his achievement in Cisdanubian Europe and (c) what were the motives for any or all of these activities.

A campaign to the Danube is not in itself incredible. Historians intent on an east Mediterranean, Anatolian, Levantine and western Asiatic world are liable to think of the north Black Sea as seriously out of the way (the grain-trade notwithstanding), but the distance from Byzantion to the Danube by a coastal route (ca. 775 km) is about the same as that from Byzantion to Larissa in central Thessaly. Even quite a substantial incursion across the river would

produce a trip no greater than Byzantion to Athens. What this implicit analogy with Xerxes in 480 does suggest is that a campaign would be a big undertaking, but Herodotos does not claim otherwise. So far, then, so good. But perhaps only so far, because much else about the Herodotean account fails to live up to the analogy, since, on the one hand, it is brief and ill-balanced compared with that of Xerxes' invasion while, on the other hand, some of what *is* there is positively fantastical. I propose to explore this by presenting some largely aporetic observations on what may seem a rather arbitrary series of discrete topics.

A fundamental narrative misconception?

Scholarship on the Scythian expedition has regularly rewritten the Herodotean narrative. Sometimes this is due to geographic problems and I shall come to those later. Here I deal with another issue.

In Herodotos Dareios returns to Anatolia via Sestos not the Bosphoros bridge (4.143), Megabazos' first target (after Dareios has left) is Perinthos (5.1), after which he marches west, while his successor Otanes (some time later) captures Byzantion and Chalkedon (5.25-26).⁴ Given that Perinthos lies close to Dareios' outward line of march and on the assumption that Dareios avoided the Bosphoros bridge on his return because of dissidence in Byzantion and/or Chalkedon,⁵ the suggestion has been advanced that we backdate Megabazos' campaign (so he is conquering Perinthos and other Hellespontine and Thracian targets while Dareios marches on west and north) and have him replaced by Otanes upon Dareios' return to eastern Thrace: Otanes can then proceed immediately to the reconquest of Byzantion and Chalkedon and then to the conquest of Lemnos, whose inhabitants had supposedly inflicted casualties on Dareios' returning army (5.27). That there *was* dissidence in Chalkedon is assumed in Ktesias (688 F13[21]), though there Dareios crosses the Bosphoros and burns Chalkedon's houses and temples because the citizens had intended to destroy the bridge and actually demolished an altar to Zeus Diabaterios erected by Dareios on the outward trip. (Polyainos' report in 7.11.5 that Dareios captured Chalkedon by siege could be part of the same story-line.) This version presumes that the dissidence manifested itself fairly immediately; and the revised reading of Herodotos would be in agreement with Ktesias except about the identity of the Persian who suppressed the trouble.

This seductive hypothesis opens up the image of a co-ordinated two-pronged Persian incursion into south eastern Europe, but can be criticized. That it spoils the story of the Paeonian deportation (which requires Dareios to be in Sardis while Megabazos is in Thrace) may not be a major difficulty, since few take it entirely at face-value. But it is doubtful whether Ktesias provides a valid independent argument for rewriting Herodotos; his flights of fancy and/or opportunistic manipulations of alternative (but not necessarily well-grounded) traditions are too hard to control. Dareios' return *via* Sestos

could simply mean that he had a positive reason to go to the Chersonese (and then naturally went to Anatolia directly, not via the Bosporos); Doriskos was established at this era (7.159) and that could in principle as well occur at the start of Megabazos' operations as at their end; and, if we set aside the element of Transdanubian debacle (which is suspect), there is no need to imagine immediate outbreak of dissidence at either end of the Bosporos bridge, and the apparent "delay" involved in its suppression after Megabazos' Thracian campaign can be an illusion. On the other hand, if Byzantion and Chalkedon did not turn dissident immediately, what made them do so (or be accused of doing so) by the time Otanes came to conquer them? After all, this was a time at which Megabazos had been displaying Persian power. Again, could Dareios really have left Perinthos – and the entire Hellespontine shore between the Chersonese and Byzantion – to be dealt with after an expedition to the Danube? Perhaps it is unduly Hellenocentric to raise these problems. Perinthos may have been the highest local Athenian tribute-payer after Byzantion, but would the Great King really have feared it? The fact that Byzantion and Chalkedon were foolish to misbehave does not mean (just because they were Greek) that they could not have done so. I remain unsure how to resolve these questions. I do note that there is no explicit link in the sources with a separate strand of post-Scythian-expedition developments associated with Scythian counter-attacks, *viz.* Miltiades' temporary expulsion by Scythians (6.40) either shortly after the expedition or in the later 490s (both options are problematic),⁶ Kleomenes' drunken confabulations with Scythians intent on an invasion of the Persian Empire (6.84) and Strabon's talk of Dareios burning Troad towns to deny Scythians a bridgehead into Anatolia (13.1.22). The connection of two of these with controversial individuals does not encourage one to take them very seriously. The third could, I suppose, be linked with Otanes' capture of Lamponion and Antandros – but if so, as with Ktesias and Chalkedon, we are back in a world in which it is Dareios who deals personally with northwest Anatolian fall-out from the Danube expedition.

Geographical issues

A notorious feature of the Herodotean narrative is that Dareios' army is led a merry dance over vast tracts of southern Ukraine. Nearly everyone agrees this is incredible.⁷ But there are other things to be said. (1) It is absent in later comprehensive Greek versions of the expedition and not implicit in other scattered material in Greek sources.⁸ (2) It is only partially linked with Herodotos' Scythian geography. The inclusion of a new geographical sketch in 4.99-101 is a telling sign of this.⁹ The notion of a Scythia surrounded by other tribes *is* like that earlier in book 4 (and we now get to hear about them), but the absence of rivers in Scythia and appearance of new ones beyond (flowing into Maiotis) is striking, as is the absence of the peoples living within Scythia; this Scythian world is a much emptier and more purely nomadic space than the

earlier one – we are in the world of the “desolation beyond Ister” postulated in 5.9-10, even if that is in a statement about Transdanubian land presumably lying further west, and, in fact, in a world of stereotype to a degree not true earlier in book 4.¹⁰ (3) It is separable from the rest of Herodotos’ narrative. The Dareios-Idanthyrso interchange in 4.126-128 is almost the start of a new story – the great chase being a self-contained whole after which everyone is back to where they started. One could remove it and be left with a tale limited geographically to the immediate Transdanubian area.¹¹

Integral to the Herodotean narrative is the reaction of the Scythians’ neighbours to co-operation against the invader: it is this that forces flight and the large geographical framework (4.102, 118-120). It also forms part of a parallel between the Scythian expedition and the invasion of Greece to which several scholars have drawn attention.¹² So one might wonder if this vision of the campaign is a product of retrospective application of that parallel. (The parallel, of course, spreads to other bits of the overall narrative, but some of these would be possible without the huge geographical sweep. Ktesias’ version still worked with a Scythia-Greece analogy, while abandoning the huge geographic sweep.¹³) If so, one may be able to argue a *terminus post quem* for successful development of this vision.

In Aiskhylos’ *Persians* Dareios’ unsuccessful attack on Greece is admitted (Marathon is mentioned early on) and his Empire includes “Acheloid *epaulais* of Thracians beside the Strymonian sea” and places on dry land around the Hellespont, Propontis and Pontic mouth (867-877). But it is insisted that Dareios himself stayed east of the Halys, his conquests being achieved by subordinate generals (865-866); and the yoking of the sea with a bridge is denounced as madness (725, 745-751). In short, Aiskhylos presumes a world in which Dareios’ personal expedition (across a bridge) cannot have happened, though the activities of Megabazos in the *parathalassia* of Thrace and Otanes in the Propontic area would be perfectly well allowed for. (Notice, incidentally, that Macedonia is absent. Mardonios’ expedition in 492 is off the radar. Is this a sign of post-Persian Wars revisionism about the Macedonians’ relationship with Xerxes?) We are certainly dealing with a selective picture of the Dareian past. But one might wonder whether Aiskhylos could even have thought of the treatment of Dareios and Xerxes that characterizes *Persians* if a vision of the Scythian expedition such as we find in Herodotos existed or at any rate was all dominant in people’s minds in 472. For what we find in Herodotos is in essence a vision diametrically opposed to that of Aiskhylos – one in which Dareios prefigures Xerxes’ failure instead of representing the good model that Xerxes has abandoned. It may be that increasing intellectual interest in Scythia as one of the ethno-geographical poles of the inhabited world (the very interest that underlines Herodotos 4 as a whole) contributed to the idea of upgrading the expedition into a contrasted parallel for Greek success in 480. It might be no coincidence that the other ethno-geographical pole, Egypt, comes into the picture with the story about Egyptian priests refusing to let Dareios erect a

statue of himself at Heliopolis because he had not matched Sesostris' career of conquest and – in Herodotos' version (2.102-110) – specifically had failed to conquer Scythia.¹⁴ Be that as it may, we should not lightly assume that a grandiose version of Dareios' Scythian invasion and defeat was already in circulation during Dareios' own reign.¹⁵

Geographical issues are not confined to the Transdanubian phase. South of the Danube the problem is not indeed an immediate appearance of fantasy. But things are not easy either.

The Danube may not be the far side of the moon. But was it natural to mount a major expedition going that far? Starting at Byzantion, vistas for further conquest open in all directions. How should Dareios decide in which direction to go? Mountains neatly demarcate (a) coastal Thrace and the approaches to the Greek peninsula and (b) the Maritsa valley and central Bulgaria; and one might incline to think that the "natural" first step for European conquest is to consolidate a hold south of the Great Balkan Range rather than push to (or beyond) the Danube. This even has some validity for a coastal perspective – the Burgas area seems quite well demarcated by land from the Varna area. Indeed even making for Apollonia and Mesembria was not wholly natural given the mountains along what is now the Turkish-Bulgarian border. The conclusion to draw is not, of course, that the march to the Danube never happened (the geographical complexity of mainland Greece did not prevent a Persian invasion, after all), but that, if it did, the region's accessibility by sea (both its actual accessibility and the sense of it as an area conjoined with, not disjoined from, Byzantion and the Hellespont) must be important. That ought to have implications for the conduct of the campaign and, very possibly, for its motivation. But these expectations are not wholly fulfilled when we look at the narrative.

Dareios marches from Byzantion to the Danube and back from the Danube to Sestos. The return trip is wholly unnarrated and, as a trip, admits of almost no comment.¹⁶ The outward trip mixes occasional circumstantial detail with vagueness or outright silence, and demands comment.

Since the story is supposed to be about Dareios entering southern Ukraine one expects his approach to lie as far east as possible, with a crossing of the Danube as close to the sea as is consistent with avoiding the delta. (In practice this means between Tulcea, where the delta branches meet, and Galati, where the river starts to run north-south instead of east-west.) Various things are *prima facie* consistent with that: the passage past Tearos (4.89-91), both because it is described as equidistant from Heraiom and Apollonia, thus hinting at an onward trip towards Apollonia, and because anyone making for the Maritsa valley would not go that far north; the reference to the surrender of the Salmydessos Thracians (on the Thracian coast) and two Thracian tribes (Skyrmiadai and Nipsaioi) described as inland from Apollonia and Mesembria but potentially essentially coastal (4.93);¹⁷ and Herodotos' statement that the Danube crossing was indeed just above the delta split (4.89).¹⁸

On this last point let me note explicitly that Herodotos' other statement (4.89), that the Ionians sailed two days up the Danube, can be regarded as consistent. It is not legitimate to apply the rate-of-sail Herodotos used a few lines earlier when discussing the dimensions of the Black Sea (4.86) and insist that the crossing point should be 1,400 stades = 155 miles = 250 km upriver. Nor can we properly respond to Strabon's statement (7.3.15) that the crossing point was Peuke island, a mere 120 stades up-river in the middle of the delta, by postulating confusion with the Peuke that lay somewhere north of Plovdiv:¹⁹ it is inconceivable that the Ionian ships sailed that far. Both of these alternatives to a crossing between Tulcea and Galati would drive us moderately (Herodotos) or peremptorily (the reinterpretation of Strabon) towards the view that the real goal of the so-called Scythian expedition really lay in Romania. That is a view that some historians have held, but I insist that the written data about crossing places cannot reasonably be held to point in that direction.

But, if we cannot disturb the crossing point (without wholly abandoning Herodotos' *mise-en-scène*), this leaves us with two problems earlier on: a dilemma about the Odrysians and the Arteskos (either the Odrysians are in an unexpected place or Dareios marched west from the Tearos);²⁰ and the failure of whichever Greek coastal cities already existed by the penultimate decade of the sixth century (certainly Apollonia, Odessos and Istria, probably Tomis, perhaps Mesembria and/or Kallatis) to figure substantively in the narrative in relation either to the land army or the fleet – a significant failure not just on a general, perhaps overly Hellenocentric, basis that Greek cities *ought* to be mentioned but on two more specific ones: (a) on the analogy of 480 one expects an army marching so far along the coast to have come together with the fleet at least once; and (b) an expedition as far as the Danube is perhaps only credible if there was a determinately important coastal perspective. We might try to respond by keeping the Odrysians where they “should” be and asserting that the Nipsaioi and Skyrmiadai lay well inland from Apollonia and Mesembria; Dareios would then proceed into the lower-middle Maritsa valley (beyond Edirne) before turning north through the Stara Planina and making his way through hinterland Nipsaian and Skyrmian territory and then eventually back into the Dobrudja. This, however, would also involve a major abandonment of Herodotos' apparent *mise-en-scène* – the only point in penetrating the lower-middle Maritsa valley would be to assert Persian power there, whereas that is what is precisely missing in Herodotos.

The trouble is that the only alternative to fundamental abandonment of the Herodotean *mise-en-scène* is to say (i) either that the Odrysians moved or that Herodotos made a mistake and (ii) that the absence of substantive material about the relation of the Greek cities to the Persian passage through the area is just a quirk of the tradition. There is a sort of parallel in the case of the Greeks of the north Aegean coast: the narrative of Megabazos' campaign certainly does not highlight its impact on Greek cities in the region. (Contrast

the prominence of Perinthos in 5.1-2.) Even so, 5.2 does say that Megabazos subdued every polis and *ethnos*. The treatment of Dareios' march does not even allow that much. The absence of north Black Sea Greek cities from the story of Transdanubian events is tolerable because the fantastical geography of the Herodotean narrative means we can substitute a version in which Dareios' activities keep well away from their hinterland. But in the Thracian part of the story the geography is not fantastical, merely (mostly) absent, and the problem is much greater. It is only compounded by the fact that Dareios is supposed to have conquered the Getai – major players in the military story of the region (Thuc. 2.98.3-4) whose subjection should surely have been a matter of significance to their Greek neighbours.

Geographical reality in place of fantasy

If Herodotos' Transdanubian campaign is (at least in part – military confrontation with Scythians in the latter part of the story, not necessarily far from the Danube, is another matter) fantasy, what do we do about it?

Is it a fantasy replacing or built out of something real or simply dreamt up from nowhere and bolted on to what was really just a brief campaign in Transdanubian lands? The sense of a new start (already mentioned) at the exchange-of-gifts makes one well-disposed to the second option. In fact, the only reason not to adopt that conclusion immediately is the presence of two circumstantial details in the great-chase narrative, *viz.* the burning of the Boudinian city and the building of the Oaros forts (4.123-124). These stand in marked contrast to the generalized talk of the damage caused by Scythian and Persian incursions into other circum-Scythian locations, and scholars are apt to feel their appearance requires explanation. The approach is usually to relocate the items (which *prima facie* belong deep in the Ukrainian hinterland) to somewhere a bit closer either to the Danube or to the theatre of a putative "eastern Scythian expedition" coming across the Caucasus.²¹ The two need not have come from the same origin, of course, and they stand in a different relation to Herodotos' geography elsewhere in book 4, since the Boudinoi are part of it and the Oaros is not. All one can say is that, if the context into which they have been inserted is fantasy, there can be no rational way of deducing their true origin from their current position and demonstrating the accuracy of the deduction. I am perfectly happy to believe that somewhere in the vast expanses of Transdanubian territory about which data might reach Greek ears (perhaps even through the autopsy of Greek eyes) there were "incomplete fortresses" on a river and a burned "city". (Belsk illustrates the sort of thing that might have been known to Greeks, even if we do not choose to identify it as the Boudinian city.²²) But the linkage of such monuments with a story about Dareios can as well be part of the fantasy as a bit of reality responsible for the formulation of the fantasy. There is no way that we can tell. So, though historians are at liberty to imagine whatever they like about Romania or about

Persian incursions through the Caucasus and to incorporate the Oaros forts and/or the burned city therein, they need other evidence or arguments to make those stories more than just alternative fantasies. I shall return (briefly) to the Caucasus later on, but so far as Romania goes, I must say that I see no reason why Herodotos' report that the Agathyrsoi (i) wore gold (4.104) and (ii) prevented the Scythians from entering their country during the chase-phase of the campaign (4.125) should be regarded as reliable hints that Transylvanian gold was Dareios' target.²³

One might compare the case of Jordanes (*History of the Goths* 63). His account seems to belong in the same general tradition as those of Justin 2.5.9 and Orosius 2.8.5, and that does not explicitly seem to be a tradition that is working with huge geographical sweep, though he does have a two-month campaign. But Jordanes adds that Dareios was defeated by the Scythians at Tapae. That is a circumstantial claim linked with a non-standard suggestion (though still not an explicit assertion) that there was actually a serious battle. Does this entitle us to identify a genuine alternative tradition? Since the only otherwise known Tapae is a locale of the Romano-Dacian Wars tentatively placed in the Bistra valley 175 miles northwest of Bucharest, we are being invited to an entirely different idea of the Transdanubian expedition. So should we take Jordanes' evidence seriously? No. This is the author who describes Tomyris as Queen of the Getai and says that, after defeating Kyros near the Araxes, she crossed into the part of Moesia now called Scythia Minor and founded the city of Tomi (61-62). His apparent location of the Scythian expedition in Dacia is plainly of no substantive authority whatsoever. Is it any less plain that the Oaros forts and Boudinian polis tell us nothing reliable about Dareios' expedition? I am not sure that it is.

The expedition as military event

One reason for revisiting the Scythian expedition is that I have been doing some systematic work on the military dimension of Achaemenid imperialism. In principle the expedition is a major exhibit. In practice the record is disappointing – though this is quite often the case with the record of Persian military events: ever-conscious of Herodotos books 7-9 and the Army-List or of the Alexander narratives, we readily forget how much Achaemenid military campaign history is poorly and unspecifically attested.

Herodotos and other Greek sources provide very large global figures and a simple classification into infantry, cavalry and ships but otherwise do not illuminate the invasion army. The same goes for the troops used in Megabazos' and Otanes' Thraco-Hellespontine operations. On the recruitment front it is affirmed that troops came from all of those over whom Dareios ruled. As this is said in connection with reference to the stelae that Dareios erected at the Bosphoros crossing, one may conjecture a confusion between lists of lands/peoples and lists of actual troops, but it might be wrong to assume that this

is the sole and direct reason for postulating a multi-ethnic/pan-ethnic army. We cannot forget the 480 parallel. Multi-ethnicity may appear elsewhere too. The narrative postulates the presence of a component of little worth (*elakhistos logos*) that is abandoned as a decoy when Dareios eventually flees to the Danube (4.135); a somewhat similar idea already appeared in Herodotos' narrative of Kyros' conquest of Babylon (1.191) and his final campaign (1.207,211), and is perhaps implied in the story of Zopyros' capture of Babylon (3.155). One should probably resist the temptation to assimilate the useful/useless distinction with that between the real and parade versions of a royal army, since these useless or expendable troops are being deployed on actual campaign (or does this beg a question about how far the whole enterprise – indeed any enterprise involving a royal expedition – was in display mode?), but it *may* hint at an ethnic differentiation between Iranians and others.²⁴ The least unspecifically attested component of the expeditionary force is, in fact, the Greek fleet – we do, after all, get the names of contingent commanders (4.137-138), even if the global figure of 600 ships is fantasy. But its function is confined to creating and guarding a Danube bridge, so there is not much military history to be got here, and diametrically opposite conclusions have been drawn about campaign strategy.²⁵ The logistical problem of feeding the army, acknowledged in the narrative of Xerxes' invasion, is ignored here until Dareios has crossed the Danube and even then only appears in the final phase. No maritime component seems to be postulated in Megabazos' Thracian campaign – despite Megabazos' disapproval of Histiaios' occupation of Myrkinos being partly due to its access to the materials for shipbuilding (5.23).

It deserves stress that in Herodotos' narrative it was always the Scythian intention to fight back against Dareios. They first make contact with the invader three days from the Danube (4.122) – attack on the invader is envisaged in certain circumstances during the first (flight) phase (4.120) and in the second phase a strategy of harassment and attrition is directed at trapping the Persians so they can be destroyed (4.130); this continues to be so even after the full-scale battle is aborted when the Scythians chase a hare and the Persians prove too demoralized to take advantage of the fact (4.134, 136).²⁶ Many readers, impressed by (a) Herodotos' remarks in 4.46 about the advantages Scythians derive from having no towns, living off animals rather than crops and being expert horseback-archers, (b) the flight-phase of the expedition narrative and (c) the Scythian king's claim that they can only be forced to fight in defence of their ancestral tombs fail to notice that the Scythians' purpose is not to bore Dareios into leaving them alone but to destroy him. And if one goes back to 4.46 one finds that Herodotos does not just say that the Scythian life-style allows them to evade conquest; what he says is that they can prevent an attacker from escaping and avoid being caught unless they want to be detected: it is a proposition about tactical advantage in warfare, not the possibility of avoiding it – quite reasonable in a people who worship Ares and are clearly assigned a value-system dependent on individual military

achievement. If there is a mismatch between Scythian ethnography and the war with Dareios it is rather that Dareios does actually escape, albeit after many losses and thanks to a some good fortune. I stress this both in the interests of reading Herodotos accurately and because it means that, whatever scale of operation across the Danube we insert in place of Herodotos' fantasies (and perhaps especially if it is a relatively limited one), the mere idea of crossing the river to fight a nomadic people is not absurd: one can assume that they will fight back rather than simply disappearing until the invader gives up and goes away. Alexander found the same beyond the Jaxartes.²⁷

The expedition as part of the discourse of imperial conquest

It is another matter how and how easily victory by the invader can be turned into abiding imperial control, though the King's consistent claim to rule Saka on the north eastern frontier indicates it was not impossible. We shall return to royal inscriptions shortly, but I have four other points to make about the place of the Scythian venture in the discourse of imperial conquest.

First, whatever the exact date of the expedition (and the associated activities of Megabazos and Otanes), the evidence at our disposal puts it, along with events in North Africa, at the end of a period of military conquest that is followed by over a decade of silence. I doubt that this is just an artefact of Greek neglect of the parts of Achaemenid history that were distant from the western Empire or a sign (and indeed confirmation) that there had been a significant reverse on the northern frontier. On the contrary, the new (and usurping) king had made his mark at both ends of the Empire and it was time to retrench and concentrate a little upon the building of palaces.

Second, Herodotos initially sees the expedition's cause in the availability of resources and a desire for revenge (4.1) and only articulates an intention to impose rule during the narrative (4.118, 126-127) – though since revenge is being taken for Scythian rule over the Medes such an intention is perhaps implicit throughout. In Ktesias the eventual invasion follows an earlier unexplained small-scale seaborne raid by the Kappadokian satrap aimed at securing prisoners, while the tradition in Justin, Orosius and Jordanes speaks of the Scythian king's refusal to marry his daughter to Dareios. These may be versions that did not assume an initial intention to extend imperial frontiers (as opposed to asserting the king's authority). Or perhaps they were uninterested in such distinctions between different types of subordination to Persian suzerainty – in which case they need not have seen things very differently from the Persians themselves, as the components of royal authority in royal inscriptions are generic enough to embrace different practical situations. Indeed, the Herodotean notion of slavery as the rectification of an earlier wrong could also be compared with the Persian idea of suppressing manifestations of the Lie. Views may differ about how far this was a causative element in the context of religious justification of universal empire rather than an op-

portunistic rationalization of aggression (Lincoln (2007) recently expounded a fairly unqualified version of the former approach), but Herodotos certainly believed universal empire could be a Persian objective. Modern historical scholarship tends to eschew this sort of analysis and speak of a concern for direct or indirect access to material resources (theses about defence of Greek commercial interests are in the latter category) or of the mounting of a brief foray to underline the status of the Danube as an imperial frontier.²⁸ But the two modes of analysis are not inconsistent and may both be needed.²⁹ To see the push into Europe as a natural next step in the pattern of military conquest is not an abdication of explanatory responsibility. The choice (if it was the choice) to stick initially with the coastal edges of the European peninsula was merely a tactical one.

Third, the Herodotean narrative includes a Persian demand for earth-and-water – this is what Dareios asks of Idanthyrsos (4.126) and tries to claim Idanthyrsos has supplied with his gift of bird, mouse, frog and arrows (4.131-132).³⁰ Pherekydes' alternative version (bird, mouse, frog, arrow and plough) survives without an attempted connection with earth-and-water (*FGrH* 3 F174). Since the identity of Pherekydes remains uncertain,³¹ we cannot be sure whether his version pre-dated Herodotos', but the silence about earth-and-water is unsurprising, as it is a concept almost exclusively associated with Herodotos and never encountered in post-479 historical contexts. Various attempts have been made to explain its symbolism and define the circumstances in which the gift was demanded or offered. One detail in the Scythian case is worth noting: in his interpretation of the king's gift Dareios associates mouse and frog with earth and water and in the former case says, not just that the mouse lives in the earth (as the frog lives in water), but that the mouse eats the same food as human beings (4.132). That suggests that, in Herodotos' understanding at least, the earth is specifically connected with the growth of food, and this would fit what seems to me to be a natural assumption, *viz.* that earth and water symbolize the donor's offering of territory and resources to the Great King. We are in the same realm as with the gifts on the Apadana frieze or the report in Deinon (690 F23) that Ammoniac salt and water from the Nile and the Danube were stored in the king's treasury "as a confirmation of the greatness of their *arche* and their control of everything". (So far as the Danube goes, we must assume this was a statement about the past, not contemporary fourth century circumstances.)

Fourth, even as a statement about the past, it does affirm some abiding claim to land including or bordering on the Danube. However scandalous Herodotos' treatment of Transdanubian events may be, the scandal of our inability to nail down the nature of the post-expedition *status quo* in the non-Aegean Cisdanubian region is even greater. In the Aegean sector Herodotos does claim that a degree of systematic conquest was involved, and behind the Macedonian spin in 5.18-22 one can see that Megabazos' tour of duty was followed by the arrival of a general called Boubares. Elsewhere we note Heka-

taios' report of a "Persian city", Boryza, between Salmydessos and Apollonia. Is this enough, together with Deinon on the waters of the Danube, to ensure that the Black Sea coast as far as that river was to be held at least as firmly as the Aegean one? If so, the fact that fugitives from Byzantion/Chalkedon in 493 thought Mesembria a safe haven (Hdt. 6.33) implies a loss of authority during the Ionian revolt era (similar to that visible in the north Aegean) but, whereas Mardonius reasserted Persian authority in the north Aegean, we do not know that anyone did in the Black Sea. Was there a change of policy, a decision to abandon the Black Sea coast? Or it just that Aegeocentric Greek sources were not consistently interested in Black Sea events? How can we ever know in the absence of some spectacularly well-focused archaeological or epigraphic discovery?³² Could Aegeocentrism extend as far as neglecting operations to consolidate some control in the lower and middle Maritsa valley? Is the observation that the list of Xerxes' European troops in 7.185 starts with "Thrace" and ends (way out of geographical order) with "those who inhabit the Thracian coast" an adequate reason for postulating such a thing?

Non-Greek sources: archaeology

Leaving these questions prompted by the insufficiency of Greek sources hanging in the air, I move, finally, to some remarks about sources outside the realm of Greek literature.

My impression of the archaeological material may be summarized as follows. (I use the word "impression" advisedly: this is not a systematic review of data.)

(a) No one can *demonstrate* any direct results of the presence of an invading Persian army. The late sixth century burning of parts of Istria seems too late for Dareios – and, if it were not, would make Herodotos' silence entirely scandalous.³³ Association of any burned sites there may be in or around Belsk with Dareios (cf. n. 22) is little less groundless than Furtwängler's claim (cited in Minns 1913, 237) that a burial at Vetersfelde (700km from Kiev!) had something to do with the Scythian flight before Dareios. The suggestion that the hilt of the Chertomlyk sword came from a weapon taken as booty from Dareios' army (Chernenko 1984, 49-50) seems pretty arbitrary. So does Jacobsen's proposition (1995, 39) that some rhyta from a fifth century burial at Seven Brothers (east of the Cimmerian Bosphorus) are an exception to the general principle that there is little reflection of Dareios' expedition in the furnishings of late sixth or early fifth century burials. One can, of course, assemble various "reflections" of the Achaemenid world in the north Black Sea (Fedoseev 1997) over the centuries of its existence but – as with other places inside and outside the Empire – tying them to specific historical events is not often self-evidently possible.

(b) A substantial Scythian presence in the hinterland of the Greek cities of the Ukrainian coast – whether or not involving a "protectorate"³⁴ – still lay

well in the future in ca. 512 BC and seems to be principally due to the intrusion of new people from outside, not a change in the character or cohesion of people already there (caused, for example, by raised consciousness following the defeat of Dareios). On the other hand, there is now talk of a permanent Scythian presence from the late seventh century in the Dobrudja and adjacent steppe-land (the scene of Dareios' defeat in Strabon's version), and even of this being the ancestral territory of Ariapeithes, Oktamasdes and Skyles.³⁵ Some speak of a Scythian elite ruling indigenous (Getic?) people, others seem to imagine a larger body of Scythians. Perhaps the distinction is not important here, and the situation is consistent with Thoukydides' talk of Getai and other groups who were like Scythians in being armed horsemen (2.96). At any rate, it seems to be a picture different from one that merely recognizes a degree of Scythian-Thracian interpenetration.³⁶ If Dareios wished to fight Black Sea Scythians he did not need to stray far from the Danube.

(c) Without prejudice to the subtleties of trade-pattern analysis or debates about the importance of the grain trade in the Archaic and early Classical era (cf. recently Moreno 2007), there seems every reason to suppose that the north and northwest Black Sea (and indeed Bosporos) were in regular beneficial contact with the Aegean and west Anatolian world and that the condition of Greek communities in the region was relatively good, with both urbanization and extension of rural *chorai* being talked about in the last quarter of the sixth century.³⁷ These communities were not obviously in need of defence (may indeed characteristically have been in satisfactory symbiotic relationship with local non-Greek population groups), but might have looked to the Persians like a possible source of profit. At the same time, one has to reiterate that, as it stands, the narrative wholly shuts them out.

(d) No one now seems to talk (as Rostovtzeff 1922, 83 did) about links between the north Black Sea and Scythic populations in northern Anatolia as something that could encourage Persian interest in the region, though this latter group does perhaps enter the story rather tangentially as part of the literature on the Skudra (on whom more below).

(e) We now have evidence for a strong Achaemenid imprint upon (and perhaps presence in) eastern Georgia and for its co-existence with – perhaps among others – a population group whose funerary behaviour has a certain Scythian or nomadic allure.³⁸ The Caucasus was certainly not an impermeable border (any more than was the Danube: see above). But the implications of the recent transformation in our view of this part of the Empire's northern frontier for hypotheses about Achaemenid military incursions beyond the Caucasus remain debatable. Does it, for example, make it any more likely that a story in Polyainos (7.12) in which a campaign of Dareios against the Sakai is put at risk by the treacherous behaviour of a Sakan called Sirakes belongs in a north-of-Caucasus location, on the grounds that Sirakes/Sirakoi is a tribal name found in this general region in post-Achaemenid times?³⁹ One may still want to insist that other names in the story (Amorges; the Baktros river) take

us to the eastern part of the Empire – where Sirakene can also be found as a regional toponym.⁴⁰ Still, the idea that certain peculiarities of the Herodotean account might be explained by postulating Persian military interest in the lands east of the Black Sea and north of the Caucasus *did* exist prior to and independently of our improved knowledge of Achaemenid engagement with the lands immediately south of the Caucasus (cf. n. 21), and some will certainly argue that these two independent sets of data can legitimately offer one another some support. Of the various ways of dismantling Herodotus' narrative into more credible (or less incredible) components, this is one of the more seductive. But I am not convinced that it is true.

(f) Finding a neat link from the material culture of Thrace to Dareios' campaign or its consequences is difficult. The inventory of gold and silver vessels of more or less "Achaemenid" imprint is, of course, some sort of reflection of Achaemenid imperial power,⁴¹ but the implications for the *status quo* in ca. 515-465, a period predating most of the relevant vessels, remain arguable – which would not matter so much, of course, were it not the case that other forms of evidence that are both pertinent and cogent are hard to come by. Since find-spots are generally remote from the areas we *know* Persians to have traversed and controlled (i.e. the southern and eastern fringes), analysis in terms of relations with people outside the Empire (a story of gifts and artistic imitation against an essentially diplomatic background) seems inescapable – but that still leaves an element of uncertainty about how the Great King would have presented the situation to himself. More generally, the fact that the bulk of Thracian archaeological material of *all* categories originates from inland areas means that, while there may be arguments *e silentio* against Persian control or presence in the Bulgarian heartlands (but only may be: was there long enough for a great deal to show, when one considers how relatively elusive Achaemenid impact on the material record can seem even in well-established parts of the empire?), there seems to be little of use to be said about the coastal regions: that is particularly true of the Black Sea coast (it is symptomatic that archaeology apparently cannot help us establish for sure whether Kallatis and/or Mesembria were already in existence as of ca. 512), but only applies to the Aegean coast less, inasmuch as late Archaic numismatic material from the region's mints may reflect Persian intrusion into the area.⁴² The blunt truth is that any view we may form about the nature of Persian rule in Thrace will really be based on a written record that is anything but systematic when it is not simply silent – and will be able to cast no secure light on what Dareios was or was not doing beyond the Danube.

Non-Greek sources: texts

Moving to textual material, we note Herodotos' record of two lost items. The Bosporos crossing was marked with two stelae made of several individual blocks, one inscribed in Greek, one in Assyrian (4.87). It sounds as if,

as with the Nile-Red Sea Canal Stelae, a longer text was erected in the local language than in any one of the three cuneiform languages, which increases one's frustration that they had been destroyed before Herodotos saw them and was simply told that they listed all the contingents of Dareios' army. In the case of the other text, at the source of the Tearos (4.91), Herodotos does not specify a language, though it is generally assumed to have been in cuneiform, since there were reports in the mid-19th century that such a thing had once existed at Pinarhissar (it was said to have been carried off by the Russians), and what may have been its base was recovered a month before the outbreak of the First World War.⁴³ Few, I guess, believe that it actually said what Herodotos says it said: does it not sound far too much like what the local inhabitants, keen to promote their spring's curative properties would have liked it to have said? Still, the evidence is a useful fix for the route of Dareios' march. If only there were more such evidence. The suggestion that the stone-piles created as a means of counting Dareios' army (4.92) "sound suspiciously like the megalithic tombs in the Sakar and Strandja" (Archibald 1998, 82) – an area stretching from the Maritsa northwest of Edirne to the coast around Burgas – might count. They do not sound in themselves particularly well-designed to provoke the interpretation Herodotos reports, but they are very numerous and were covered with earth – allowing, I suppose, the belief that each of them contained large numbers of stones.⁴⁴

Of texts that do survive three can be disposed of quickly. The fragmentary tablet from Gherla (far away in northern Romania), which *might* have carried a text resembling DPa and referring to the building of a *tacara*, is mysterious rather than illuminating.⁴⁵ The fifth column of the Behistun inscription, with its account of the defeat of a Saka chief in 519 (DB § 74), definitely does not belong to our set of events. And Masettis' reading of the Dynastic Prophecy as referring to Dareios attacking the Land of Han after five years of rule is impossible in the light of modern editions of the text.⁴⁶ This leaves just two categories of texts that *are* relevant: the lists of lands ruled by the king appearing in a number of royal inscriptions (together with the iconographic adjunct on the royal tomb façades) and the rather numerous references in Persepolis fortification texts to Skudra working in Fars during the reign of Dareios. (That the latter are relevant depends, of course, on a particular view of the former.)

The relevant lists of peoples are those that putatively contain entries for European peoples, identified as such either by the tag "beyond the sea" or for other reasons.⁴⁷ There are only five such lists, and two are problematic from the start. DSe is incompletely preserved and the precise form in which one entry appears is not known for certain: this complicates things but is not perhaps disastrous. The Egyptian-language list on the Canal Stelae and Dareios Statue, however, is doubly odd: it describes Scythians in unique terms and it entirely omits the Yauna (as well as the Karians and Gandarans).⁴⁸ Since Scythian and Yauna entries are crucial for our purposes this is a problem; and since there is no unequivocally correct explanation of either oddity, the truth is that the

Canal-Statue list has to be fitted around whatever conclusions emerge from the other lists.

Among those other lists, two (DSe and DNa) include “Saka beyond the sea”. They appear after references to Lydians and Ionians and quite separately from the two Saka groups on the north east frontier (*haumavarga* and *tigrax-auda*), and the natural assumption is that they are a western group, though Jacobs (1994, 257-260) has denied this, locating them instead in central Asia and identifying them with the Daha named in XPh – in which case neither list has anything to do with our present subject. If Jacobs is wrong about this, the really interesting thing is that, having appeared twice, these western Scythians disappear again. They are certainly absent in XPh and we cannot tell whether they are embraced by the compendious Scythian entry in the Canal-Statue list (see above, n. 48). So, at least by the reign of Xerxes (and in what is the longest list of peoples) and possibly in the reign of Dareios, the claim to rule them had been dropped. Was the claim a lie that was eventually abandoned (perhaps first by Dareios’ successor) or a legitimate boast overtaken by events or a change of policy? I incline to the second view, but there is no objective proof. It must be stressed in any case that “beyond the sea” affirms nothing about the Danube. If archaeological evidence entitled us to postulate Dobrudja Scythians (cf. n. 35), we could call them “Saka beyond the sea” and even do so without infringing the spirit of Herodotos’ account, since he says that Dareios conquered the Getai in the land immediately south of the Danube (4.93). If so, of course, we must also explicitly acknowledge an effective abandonment of Persian claims to suzerainty no later than some date in Xerxes’ reign.

Alongside the “Saka beyond the sea” we find in DSe the Skudra and a Yauna group *probably* labelled “beyond the sea” (as well as some “Yauna on the sea”) and in DNa the Skudra and *Yauna takabara* (as well as some plain Yauna). When the Saka have disappeared in XPh, we still find the Skudra and an entry for “Yauna on the sea and beyond the sea”. A fourth text (DPe), of similar date-horizon to DSe, offers “peoples beyond the sea” and “Yauna on the land and on the sea”. There are no entirely neat patterns here,⁴⁹ but it is hard to resist equating “Yauna beyond the sea” and *Yauna takabara* and associating both, along with the Skudra, with Persian military activity in Europe. It is true that this is to a significant degree because Herodotos invites us to believe in Persian military activity in Europe at the right sort of juncture. If Herodotos did not exist, one *could* tell a story in which none of these entities was further from Anatolia than an offshore island or (if Jacobs’ relocation of the “Saka beyond the sea” is still rejected) the transmarine Saka were approached wholly by sea. After all, one scholar has actually located the Skudra in northern Anatolia or Georgia (Gropp 2001), and if the Akkadian version of *Yauna takabara* literally means “Yauna who carry a shield to their head” (as Rollinger 2006 insists) one might think of the Lykian *Schildraub*. One might even, for that matter, see the “Yauna beyond the sea” as Ukrainian or Crimean Greeks. But Herodotos *does* exist, and neither his Transdanubian fantasies and

Cisdanubian inadequacies nor any enigmas surrounding *Yauna takabara* and Skudra as European entities are quite severe enough to make such (frankly) perverse alternative solutions at all attractive.

Robert Rollinger has, it is true, recently sought to make the *Yauna takabara* more problematic, arguing that the Akkadian version of their name does not speak of them "wearing" a shield and questioning whether their depiction on royal tomb façades assigns them the *petasos*-hat that current orthodoxy takes to be the reference of *takabara* and its Akkadian translation (Rollinger 2006). But I can live with the idea that we have a badly rendered *petasos* and an awkward translation of a metaphorical use of *takabara* produced by people not personally very familiar with or interested in the relevant article of dress – at least until a much better alternative explanation is forthcoming. Whether it was reasonable of Persians to regard the *petasos* (in principle wearable by *any* Greek) as a distinctive feature of inhabitants of the north Aegean coast may be arguable, but it seems a better bet than that they thought such people to be more characteristically hoplites than their Anatolian cousins.⁵⁰

The Skudra remain elusive. (1) The labelled or conjectural depictions at Persepolis and Naqsh-e Rostam are not entirely mutually consistent (though the carrying of two spears recurs, and hat with ear-flaps and a rounded or flattened bobble on top is common), sometimes have a Scythian allure and hardly look as one expects of a Thracian – *alopekis* and *zeira* are never uncontroversially present.⁵¹ Of course, we lack Thracian self-representations of appropriate date.⁵² (2) Their name is etymologically linked with "Scythian" and recalls toponyms encountered in many locations: scholars often stress parallels in northern Greece/Macedonia,⁵³ but one might as well think of Uskudama (Edirne), Skudris (in Hellespontine Phrygia) or, as Wouter Henkelman has recently observed, Uskudar (Scutari).⁵⁴ He suggests that the term was first encountered by Persians in relation to a west Anatolian population group and then used by analogy of non-Greeks in Europe, some of whom actually had ethnic links with Anatolia (he has in mind the Thracian Phrygian/Bithynian link). That the term was artificially conferred by outsiders might help explain its elusiveness in non-Persian historiographical or epigraphic sources and indeed the iconographic fluidity just noted, though it must be admitted that the toponymic and ethnonymic reflections of the word through Greece, the Balkans and Anatolia then become somewhat troubling. (3) Skudra appear as foreign workers in the Persepolis fortification archive over the longest period (nine different years⁵⁵) and in the largest number of documents (86 texts), followed a little way behind by the Turmiriyans (Lykians: 66) and a long way behind by anyone else (Babylonians with 38 are the next closest). Two personal names are known, Šedda and Karizza, and both are Iranian,⁵⁶ but since the archive contains Babylonians with Iranian names⁵⁷ the inference to be drawn is not certain. It is perhaps suggestive that there are Skudrian "horsemen",⁵⁸ since there are no other horsemen amongst ethnically designated foreign workers. Again one might feel a slight Scythian allure. Of course, the Skudra

at Persepolis may not all have been not ethnically homogeneous. The greatest value of the archive evidence is perhaps that it forbids us to respond to the oddity of the name and the inadequacy of Herodotos' Cisdanubian narrative by treating the Skudra as an unreal element in the catalogue of imperial subjects. Whoever, and however many different people, they were, some of them at least were undoubtedly a solid resource. It is rather remarkable that it is precisely in the account of Megabazos' operations in coastal and near-coastal Thrace that Herodotos produces a story about the deportation of foreign people (in this case Paionians) as workers. This story does, of course, only take them as far as Anatolia, whence their alleged return in the 490s is a by-product of the disorder generated by the Ionian revolt.⁵⁹ But, since the whole tale has what one might reasonably call an emblematic character (and since it is the only place where Herodotos focuses on the movement of population as a matter of labour organization rather than as punishment for dissidence), one *might* feel entitled to wonder whether its appearance here reflects some actual recollection of worker-deportation as a consequence of the Persian military intrusion into Europe.

One other observation: if the transmarine Saka *are* a European group, they disappear from the roster of subjects at a time at which Skudra and transmarine Yauna are still included. So perhaps it *is* actually the case that the loss of Persian authority on the Black Sea coast implied by what happened at Mesembria in 493 BC (Hdt. 6.33) was never reversed. I doubt that the fact that Diodoros (11.2.1, 3.8) envisages Xerxes drawing ships from Pontic cities is particularly reliable evidence to the contrary.

Non-Greek sources: military iconography

Finally, from iconographically illustrated texts, I move back to pure military iconography. Mandrokles' picture of the crossing of the Bosporos is long gone (Hdt. 4.88), and I hold no particular brief for the view sometimes advanced that there is a connection (at least a chronological one) between the Scythian expedition and the first issue of archer-adorned *sigloi* – though I am also not sure I can believe the claim that they were first issued as early as 522/521.⁶⁰ Instead I want to look at images of military combat.

As is well known, monumental art in the imperial heartland eschews military combat, preferring static iconographies of order and triumph. To find representations of combat involving Persians that originate within the geographical and chronological space of the Achaemenid Empire one has to look to monuments from western Anatolia or the Levant or to the art of the seal cutter or jeweller. If we search more specifically for combat images in which Persians are pitted against Scythians (or adversaries with the clothing and weaponry appropriate to nomadic people), then – apart from a single remarkable Anatolian monument, the Tatarlı tomb⁶¹ – we are confined to a scene on the Miho torque (Bernard 2000) and to seal-stones or *bullae*. So far

as this latter category is concerned I know of 62 seal-stone or *bullae* images (of varying stylistic identity) which show combat and/or the parade of captives involving Persians and putatively non-Persian adversaries; of the 52 where the character of the adversary is not unknown or obscure, 18 involve what have been regarded as Scythians. There is no question of trying to demonstrate that any of these refers specifically to Black Sea Scythians, but they are not entirely irrelevant to the present topic.

The overwhelming majority of images in the corpus defined above involve Greek or west Anatolian adversaries. (Among seal images, for example, there are 37 Greek items.) That is no doubt a function of the place of origin of the art-objects involved – certain in the case of the large-scale monuments (tombs, stelae and the like) and likely or possible in the case of many other items. It should be stressed, of course, that where the images display Persian victory (always the case on seal-stones, for example) the putative non-heartland geographical origin or stylistic attribution does not necessarily tell the whole story about iconological significance for students of Persian military or imperial ideology. In these circumstances the presence of a number of items on which Persians fight (and defeat) “Scythian” adversaries is striking. Some wish to see these as commemorating specific (if not now identifiable) conflicts between the imperial power and people on the north eastern frontier of the Empire,⁶² but one may be interested not so much in that as in the simple fact that the icons exist and that the only other readily recognizable category of non-Greek adversaries – Egyptians – appear on just three items. The general run of historical evidence tempts us to see the Egyptians as “significant” adversaries (and the seal images have been duly attached to one or other Egyptian revolt). Perhaps then the Scythian items also speak of the status of nomad adversaries in the Persian imperial imagination.⁶³ Of course, if we are to say anything like that, we shall also (even allowing a Greco-Anatolian bias in our corpus) have to conclude that Greeks had a special place in the Persian imperial imagination – a conclusion liable to alarm those who fear the vulnerability of Achaemenid studies to Hellenocentrism. Still, Greeks were responsible for a notable check to the fortunes of Persian imperialism (as well as being the victims of notable Persian military and diplomatic successes) and it would not be odd that they be incorporated in an iconography of Persian victory. It is no more Hellenocentric to say that Persians thought Greeks important enough to be the object of spin than it is Egyptocentric or Scythocentric to say the same about Egyptians and Scythians. If it is Greek sources that give us so much of our reason to think that Greeks, Egyptians or Scythians could be “significant” adversaries from a Persian point of view, that is only because it is Greek sources that are inescapably responsible for much of what passes for the narrative of Achaemenid history. This does not mean that I am arguing that we have to believe in a great Persian defeat in the north Black Sea in order to explain a prominence of Scythian adversaries in icons of Persian military victory: we have grounds for distrusting the

Greek sources on that point of a sort that do not exist when we are dealing with Xerxes' defeat or the importance of Egypt to the Persian Empire, and seal images are not a valid basis for dismissing those grounds for distrust – that *would* involve Hellenocentrism, since it would involve neglecting the importance of the (to us) ill-evidenced north eastern frontier. But what one *could* say in the light of the seal images is that any conflict with Saka on or beyond the north western frontier might have a special resonance for the Persian king and that, if Greeks chose to make an exceptionally big deal out of a relatively minor event (and connect it *via* a revenge motif with the historical impact of nomads in the heartlands of western Asia), they were in a certain sense behaving in a way that a Persian would have understood. I wonder, in passing, if this background is one component in the intermittently Scythoid construction of the Skudra.

There is also a point to be made about what one might call the tactical character of the military icons involved. Those who designed the images of Perso-Greek combat on seal-stones very largely chose to pit Greek infantry against either a quasi-royal figure (wearing dentate crown and Persian robe) or – most characteristically – against a Persian horseman. Those who designed putative Perso-Scythian combat images appear to have gone a different way. Two purely equestrian combat images do survive, though they appear so mutually similar that they must be regarded as two realizations of a single icon; and there is one seal impression that may show a Persian horseman pursuing an infantry Scythian. On the Miho torque (Bernard 2000, fig. 2) we have a clash between horsemen, but infantry are in attendance on both sides. The same is true on a much larger scale on the Tatarlı beam, but at the centre of the composition is a confrontation on foot between a quasi-royal figure and three Scythians (one already dead at the Persian's feet), and it is images of this non-equestrian sort that fill the rest of the relevant corpus (Summerer 2007a, figs. 1-3; 2007b, figs. I-IX, XI-XX). That may seem mildly surprising; surely the Saka are people who characteristically live and fight on horseback and, since the Persians were also notable cavalrymen, should their victory over Saka not be primarily represented in equestrian icons? Now we must, of course, beware of stereotype assumptions about the military character of Persians and Scythians – and indeed one thing to be said in favour of Herodotos' picture of the north Black Sea conflict is that he goes against the stereotype in imagining the Scythians fielding an army that included infantry (4.134). But, even so, the prominence given to combat on foot requires explanation. I suggest that what it discloses is a sense that, to win true victory, you have to bring the enemy to a proper formal battle and defeat his infantry. The conquest of the Persian Empire was not encompassed by overwhelming adversaries with hordes of Iranian cavalry; it was achieved by mixed-force armies in which the proportions were, no doubt, somewhat different from that found in, for example, a Greek army, but the infantry was of at least equipollent significance. For iconographical purposes, whether fighting Greeks, who were relatively weak

in horsemen, or Scythians who were relatively strong in them, the significant thing was superiority over the enemy infantry: in the Greek case this could happily be symbolized by having a horseman riding down an infantryman but in the Scythian case that would not be satisfactory – everyone knew Scythian horsemen were too good to be sidelined in that way and it was necessary to select the infantry arm of the Persian military to encapsulate superiority.

This conjecture means that, here too, the Herodotean representation of what happened beyond the Danube was not perhaps wholly remote from a possible Persian view of things: for it is not the futile pursuit of fleeing Scythian horsemen all around the southern Ukraine that signals Dareios' defeat, but the failure of a relatively conventional battle between mixed forces to yield actual Persian victory. This does nothing for the exactitude of Herodotos as a reporter of actual events, but it is agreeable to end with some small defence of his wider credit as a historical observer.

Conclusion

The northern frontier of the Persian Empire either directly abutted regions in which Scythian or Sakan tribes were to be found or was inhabited by people who had contact with such regions. It is no surprise, therefore, that the written historical record includes episodes of conflict between Persians and Scythians. So, although only DB § 74 comes at all close to being the unarguably authentic record of a particular military confrontation (and even then, as part of an *ego-* narrative of propagandistic character, it is not beyond contestation), I do not think that we need to dismiss any of the others (Kyros' eastern wars; Ariaramnes' naval raid; the Scythian expedition; Dareios' other encounters with Scythians as narrated in Polyainos) as completely unrelated to reality. But we do have to admit that in all cases the relation to reality may be heavily compromised. Most people have no problem with this when it is a question of the war of Kyros with Queen Tomyris (because it is geographically remote, lacks circumstantial detail and smells of emblematic stereotype) or of any story in Ktesias (just because it *is* a story in Ktesias). The case of events in northern Thrace and beyond the Danube in Herodotos book 4 is precisely similar.

The existence of the narrative is in itself *probably* sound evidence that some form of military venture occurred in that general geographical space. Some individual features of the narrative – the city of Gelonos and the Oaros forts, but also, for example, Idanthyrsos' gifts or (a more down-to-earth matter) the actual *tactical* stalemate in 4.128-134 – may be authentic in the sense that such things really did figure in the story-telling environment that was the only data-set available to Herodotos and his sources. But any such authenticity guarantees very little about what actually happened. The vulnerability of the modern historian's position is clear from another potentially authentic detail. If a fleet of Greek ships *was* involved, then there had once been a quite substantial number of predominantly east Aegean Greeks who were wit-

nesses to the fact that the Danube was crossed. If one were minded to assert that the Danube was *not* in fact crossed, one would have to account for the creation and success of a story predicated on something that a lot of people had known was not true. Perhaps it would be possible to do so. But, even if one decides to abjure that degree of scepticism, nothing much more than the fact of a river-crossing is established, because everything else that is said about the Greeks' engagement with the course of events on the other side of the Danube is embedded in what are precisely the controversial aspects of the overall story and it would be a *petitio principii* to appeal to the presence of Greek witnesses (most of whom would anyway be dead by the time Herodotos was collecting material) as a guarantee of truth. The very fact (noted above) that the fleet plays no narrative role *except* at the Danube crossing and that nothing survives about its voyage from Byzantion to that crossing-point is a stark reminder of how disjointed the story has become from what one might once have heard about if one had been in a position to talk with the people involved.

Is the comparative modesty of Ktesias' version of what happened the other side of the Danube any guarantee of greater truth-value? The argument advanced above about Aischylos' ability to ignore the Scythian expedition favours the view that the early stories about what happened did not make it into any big deal. So it *may* be that the reason Ktesias purveyed his version was that stories told in the reign of Dareios I were still being told a century or so later and that he judged them a suitable alternative to the Herodotean narrative. (That was probably the important thing. He might have thought them more credible too, but I am not sure that that was more than a secondary matter.) It *may* also be that his entirely non-Herodotean story about Ariaramnes – another story that is not inherently over-blown – was also a tale surviving from the distant past. But the fact that the story is an addition to, not a substitute for, something in Herodotos is still probably inadequate to give it any special *imprimatur* of authenticity. We may feel that stories of Persians carrying out raids on the north Black Sea from a base in Kappadokia fit the world of Dareios I better than that of Ktesias' time (in other words, that it was a model unlikely to be offered to his inventiveness by more contemporary events) – but that may only be another way of saying how little we know. One would sympathize with anyone who wished to argue the merits of Ktesias' version of Dareios and the Black Sea Scythians, but could hardly feel very sure that it was painful to do so.

All ancient historiography (and perhaps not only ancient) works with what is credible as well as with what is objectively attested – it is, after all, in the business of creating narratives, not listing data, and the credible serves to compensate for deficiencies of data and to supply continuity – both substantive and/or literary. The effect of this concern with the credible varies with the data and with the remoteness of events from what might be called the default home environment: Thukydides writing the narrative of a battle fought in

Boeotia (for example) is in a different situation from Herodotos writing the narrative of one fought (and indeed *not* fought) in Scythia, though both will be quite happy to accompany the narrative with pieces of entirely invented *oratio obliqua*. Beyond a certain limit we cannot expect properly to assess or control these effects; and in some cases the situation created by concern with the credible is complicated by a parallel fascination with the *incredible*. A setting such as Scythia is likely to be a case in point. We should not assume that Herodotos or Ktesias thought their narratives entirely credible to start with (any more than the former really believed in over 5,000,000 people entering Greece with Xerxes in 480 BC or the latter really believed that Plataea was fought before Salamis). In our terms of truth and falsehood, we may at best be invited to accept a narrative as “poetically” true. As with any act of poetry (*poiesis*) we are at liberty to disentangle, study and speculate about the materials the poet has used; but there remains a real sense in which the eventual poem must be judged whole or not at all.

Notes

- 1 Pherekyd. *FGrH* 3 F174; Ktes. 688 F13(20-21); Just. 2.5.9; Oros. 2.8.5; Jordan. *Get.* 63; Strab. 7.3.14-15, 16.1.3; Nep. *Milt.* 3; Plat. *Menex.* 239E, *Gorg.* 483D; Polyb. 4.43.2; Diod. 2.5.5. On the other hand, Strabon's statement (7.3.9) that Choerilus described an army crossing Dareios' bridge must, I think, be an error. The claim that a supposed sixth century substratum in Pseudo-Skylax's account of the Black Sea reflects a Pontic voyage by the real Skylax (of Karyanda) undertaken ahead of Dareios' expedition (cf. Gallotta 1980, 152 n. 28, citing Baschmakoff 1948) is, to say the least, speculative.
- 2 Purves 2006 is a rare example. (His thesis is that Dareios fails because he wrongly tries to apply to Scythia principles of linearity and countability that are only appropriate to Egypt.) The expedition barely registers as such in the recent *Brill's Companion to Herodotus* (2002) and *Cambridge Companion to Herodotus* (2006), though in the latter Stephanie West does find the Transcaucasian expedition hypothesized in Gardiner-Garden 1987 persuasive (493).
- 3 For previous (more or less extensive) treatments see, for example, Bury 1897; Minns 1913, 116-117; Rostovtzeff 1922, 84-85; Schnitzler 1972; Gallotta 1980; Parlato 1981; Shahbazi 1982; Chernenko 1984; Georges 1987; Gardiner-Garden 1987, Fol & Hammond 1988; Archibald 1998, 79-88; Briant 2002, 141-144. The current (and correct) orthodoxy is that whatever lies behind the events in Herodotos book 4 is quite separate from Dareios' campaign against Skunkha in DB §74. Balcer (1972a) argued the contrary, but later abandoned the view. It was still assumed by Petit (1990, 108-109). Tritle (2006) writes that “the Scythians nearly defeated Dareios' invasion of Scythia in 522 BCE” – which is too early even for DB §74 and is perhaps a misprint. Yailenko (2004) contends that DB §74 corresponds to Ariaramnes' raid across the Black Sea in Ktesias 688 F13(20), which led to the conquest of the Cimmerian Bosphorus and was a preliminary to the invasion in Herodotos book 4. I can see no merit in this view. For another approach to DB §74 cf n. 21.

- 4 Megabazos' son Oibares was subsequently governor of Daskyleion (6.33: before 493). Herodotos has Megabazos succeeded in the *strategie* (contextually *ton parathalassion andron*) by Otanes, which may or may not be consistent with Megabazos having been left at Daskyleion in ca. 513.
- 5 This could have been prompted by the fleet's arrival in the area with news of events across the Danube.
- 6 A recent discussion (Scott 2005) seeks to eliminate the problem by arguing that the entire story of this expulsion is a *canard* from Miltiades' trial at Athens in 493.
- 7 Fol & Hammond 1988 are an exception, attributing Dareios a march of 2,000 miles in three months. The time-frame of something more than two months implied by the narrative has thus been arbitrarily increased by nearly a half. Skrzhinskaya (1991, 108) suggests "60 days" is simply a stereotype "big" number and not to be taken seriously for calculation purposes: but that does not mean we can increase it to whatever suits us – it means that it is part of a discourse that may not be susceptible to rational "correction" at all. Minns (1913, 117) claimed the figure was the remnant of an original plan to march from the Danube to the Caucasus and thence back home, while Rybakov (1979, 174-179) reckoned that the distance could be covered in the appropriate number of days if for some of the time it was only Dareios' *cavalry* that was chasing round after the Scythians.
- 8 For example, Pherekydes' version of the exchange of messages (*FGrH* 3 F174), references to Miltiades' advice to strand Dareios in Scythia (*Nep. Milt.* 3) or the contrast between Sesostris' success and Dareios' failure in Scythia reported by Herodotos (2.110) and Diodoros 1.55. (In the latter version Scythia is not even named.)
- 9 Is there some link between the 20-day dimension of the sides of the square Scythia described here and the 60-day limit set by Dareios for the campaign (*Hdt.* 4.98)? In any event one sympathizes with Minns' feeling that Herodotos is creating a sort of chessboard for the combatants to move around on. The description does also contain some entirely non-pertinent material about the Tauric peninsula – but (because of the comparison with Attica) that arguably contributes to the analogy with 480 (cf. n. 12)
- 10 The Scythian "desert" was already proverbial in 420s Athens as a place of brutal horror (*Ar. Ach.* 704). For Strabon too (cf. n. 1) the story played out in a desert.
- 11 West (1988: 210) noted that the story logically belongs when Dareios has just crossed the Danube, and she and Corcella (1993, 327) take the Pherekydes' version to have been so located.
- 12 Hartog (1988) laid some stress on this (for example 35-40, 47, 259); cf. Corcella 1993, xxv-xxvi. There are also (less surprisingly) analogies with Kyros and the Massagetai (Gallotta 1980, 197).
- 13 He made the Scythian venture adjacent with invasion of Greece (Datis goes to Attica from the Black Sea) and has Xerxes' motivation for attack include misdeeds by the Chalkedonians.
- 14 On the Sesostris story, cf. Ivantchik 1999.
- 15 The story that Miltiades recommended destruction of the Danube bridge (4.137) is regularly thought to have figured in, indeed perhaps to have been invented for, Miltiades' *apologia* in Athens following his return there in the late 490s. But, even if that is so, we cannot be sure how the rest of the context was presented at that time.

- 16 The identity of its end-point – perhaps connectable with the foundation of Daskyleion – is another matter, already touched on above.
- 17 Especially if there really was a place called Nipsa that figured in the Athenian tribute lists.
- 18 Notice incidentally that the actual crossing on the outward journey is never narrated as such – 5.9-10 declares that no one can say anything reliable about land north of Thrace, but the land beyond the Danube is vast and desolate, and the only known people there are Sigynnai whose territory may extend nearly as far as that of the Enetoi on the Adriatic. Herodotos opines that it is the cold, not bees, that prevent travel/settlement north of the Danube. Yet he himself has ventured to say lots of other things about land beyond the Danube. One can only make sense of this by assuming that for the purposes of this discourse “Thrace” lies to the west of the line of Dareios’ advance to and across the Danube, even though the Getai and the people around Apollonia and Mesembria are Thracians. Since the focus of Megabazos’ activity can be thought of as more westerly, this is not wholly without sense.
- 19 This place appears in the story of Alexander’s incursion into Transdanubian Thrace (Arr. 1.2.2, 3.3, with Bosworth 1980, 57).
- 20 Herodotos says that, after leaving the Tearos, Dareios came to the Arteskos (4.92), which flows through Odrysian territory. If the Arteskos is the Teke (Jochmus 1854, 46; Müller 1987), a river originating in the Stranja, the Odrysians extend much further east than one would naturally suppose. If it is the Ardas (Archibald 1998, 82), Dareios must have crossed the Hebros (since the Ardas enters it at Edirne from the west) – which implies a westerly route from the Tearos (cf. Corcella 1993, 306)
- 21 Among rivers identified with the Oaros are (from east to west): Kuban (Gardiner-Garden 1987, 333), Volga (Schnitzler 1972, 66; Gallotta 1980, 69; Sulimirski 1985, 190), Sal (a Don affluent: Jacobs 2000, 96), Korsak or another river entering the Sea of Azov west of Berdansk (Chernenko 1984, 92), Dnieper (Harmatta 1990, 129; Archibald 1998, 81; Corcella 1993, xxii) and Buzau (Bury 1897). The first three go with hypotheses involving a Transcaucasian expedition either before or contemporary with the Transdanubian one (and in Schnitzler’s case explicitly identified with the operation in DB §74!), the last with a Romanian location for Dareios’ target area. The other two represent attempts to get Dareios as far as possible into Scythia without (allegedly) breaching the slightly-over-60-day limit for the campaign. In Chernenko’s case this involves locating Dareios’ parley with Idanthyrsos (Hdt. 4.126-127) on the banks of the Oaros and close to the Azov coast; incursions into Sauromatian, Boudinian and other territories in 4.122-123 and 125 having been rejected as entirely untrue.
- 22 Admittedly there was fire-destruction there in the late sixth century as in other forest-steppe forts (Shramko 1975, 67; Hoddinott 1981, 95; Chernenko 1984, 95; Corcella 1993, 323) but there is no telling whether it is of precisely the right date.
- 23 Bury 1897; Gardiner-Garden 1987, 344.
- 24 Those who are sick and of *elakhistos logos* (least significance) in 4.135 are contrasted with the *katharos stratos* (“pure” army), terminology that in Thoukydides 5.8.9 seems to have an ethnic significance. But the presence of the sick troops in Herodotos complicates the picture, since troops of any ethnicity can fall sick or be wounded.

- 25 West (2004, 75) infers Dareios' intention to make no more than a brief foray across the river. Fol & Hammond (1988, 240) take creation of a proper bridge to prove that the river-crossing is the base for something much more than a temporary raid. Safer to conclude just that his plans did not involve combined land-sea operations (any more than they apparently had since he left Byzantion) and that he wanted to be able to return the way he had come.
- 26 I wonder whether the fashion for explaining the hare-chasing (shown on a Kul'-Oba plaque: Minns 1913, 197, fig.90; Rolle 1989, 99 fig.71; Jacobsen 1995, fig.52) as some sort of reflection of the Eurasian nomadic game of *buskashi* (cf. Rolle 1989, 98-99; Corcella 1993, 328) is really valid.
- 27 Arr. 4.3.6-5.1; Curt. 7.7.1-29, 7.8.1-9.19.
- 28 For the Danube as imperial frontier cf. Deinon *FGrH* 690 F23(b) = Plut. *Alex.* 36.
- 29 One could speculate about religious explanation for failure. It would have to mean either that Ahuramazda did not will success or that the Scythians' gods were more powerful. The former would be the less bad option, but particularly difficult when the king himself was involved. Following the cosmological/eschatological line one might try to argue that it had turned out that the undefeated enemy were not part of the Evil One's creation and therefore not in line for conquest.
- 30 Earth-and-water also appears in the Megabazos-Macedon narrative (5.18).
- 31 Clement of Alexandria, attributes the story to Pherekydes of Syros, a mythographer and cosmogonist perhaps too early to have retailed a late sixth century story. Jacoby included the fragment as a *dubium* in his edition of Pherekydes of Athens (in *FGrH* I), and later assigned it to Pherekydes of Leros (Jacoby 1947, 52-53) – who was probably a Hellenistic author (cf. West 1988). Fowler (2000) rejects the attribution to Pherekydes of Athens. West (1988) suggests Clement misread an intermediate source and was wrong to think the story came from *any* author called Pherekydes – making its origin and date in relation to Herodotos a matter of pure speculation – but also finds reason to regard it as a more authentic version. The story type has a partial analogy in the comments of Jaxartes Scythians to Alexander in Curt. 7.8.17.
- 32 Some existing epigraphic material that may cast some light on the matter is discussed later.
- 33 Pippidi 1970; Alexandrescu 1990, 66; Vinogradov 1997, 108-109; de Boer 2004-2005, 274. Perhaps the phenomena are part of what lay behind talk of post-expedition Scythian "reprisals" (Hdt. 6.40, 84) – or of the Scytho-Thracian conflict from which some believe the Odrysian Kingdom to have emerged (Tsetschladze 1996, 967)
- 34 Vinogradov's "protectorate" thesis is criticized by Kryzhitskii 2005.
- 35 Marchenko & Vakhtina 1997. That the region is also Herodotos' "Ancient Scythia" must be uncertain, however, given a recent claim that that term is merely a textual corruption in the historian's text (Hind 2005).
- 36 For example, Archibald 1998, 103-4.
- 37 Marchenko 1995, chap. 5; Solovev 1998, 218-222; 1999, 64, 79, 95-96; de Boer 2004-2005; Tsetschladze 1998.
- 38 Knauss 2003; Knauss 2006; Knauss this volume; Bill this volume.
- 39 Tac. *Ann.* 12.15; Strab. 11.5.2, 8; Diod.20.22-23; Mela 1.19; Ptolem. 5.8.12.
- 40 Ptolem. 6.9.5 (Hyrkania).
- 41 Archibald 1998, 177-196, 260-281; Ebbinghaus 1999; Zournatzi 2000.
- 42 Balcer 1972b; Balcer 1988; Picard 2000; Georges 2000.
- 43 Jochmus 1854, 43-44; Unger 1915.

- 44 Other suggestions include that the story actually alludes to the building of fortresses (Georges 1987, 131) or the erection of monuments celebrating conquest of the Odrysians (Klinkott 2001, 119).
- 45 Mayrhofer 1978, 16 (3.10). Archibald (1998, 81) misleadingly suggests that the text is evidence about the Dobrudja and can be put (along with Hekat. 1 F166 on Boryza) in a pattern of fortified occupation in the western Black Sea littoral.
- 46 Masetti 1982. There is a two-column (ca. 100 line) lacuna between the reign of Cyrus (II 17-24) and the section that Masetti wished to associate with Dareios I. This was not seen by Grayson (on whose text Masetti was relying), but was established by Lambert in 1978. (For a recent re-edition of the text, cf. van der Spek 2003, 311-324.)
- 47 The lists appear in DPe, DNa, XPh (Kent 1953; Schmitt 2000), DSe (Stève 1974, 7-28 supersedes the text in Kent 1953), the Suez Canal Stelae (Posener 1936, 8-10) and the Dareios statue from Susa (Yoyotte 1972).
- 48 The description of the Scythians is conventionally rendered as "Scythians of the marshes and of the plains" (after Posener 1936). Edakov 1976 (and cf. Edakov 1980, 108) took it to mean the "northern Scythian territories", while Edakov 1986 speaks of the Statue text as referring to "all Scythians (including those) on the sea". In both cases he seems to suppose the Black Sea Scythians are wholly or partly in mind. It is hard for the non-Egyptologist to unravel what is going on here (and in trying to do so I am indebted for assistance to my Liverpool colleague Mark Collier), but my impression is that (a) the Canal and Statue texts are probably saying the same thing (albeit with different writings), (b) there are two Scythian entities in question, (c) Posener's interpretation of them as corresponding to the *Saka tigraxauda* and *Saka haumavarga* of cuneiform inscriptions is certainly neat but cannot be definitive – not because of any defect in his understanding of the hieroglyphs but because the assumption that the Egyptian nomenclature has a one-to-one correspondence with the cuneiform one is plainly not independently testable. The best construction I can put on what Edakov is suggesting is this: the sign Posener interprets as "marsh" actually signifies "north" (which it certainly can) and we are dealing with a unitary concept, so that what might literally be read as "Saka of the north, Saka of the plains" really signifies "Saka of the northern plains". (The sea does not appear to come into it at all, despite the way things are put in Edakov 1986.) But, even if this were so, it would remain entirely uncertain whether this generic term – applicable to *any* Scythians on the northern edges of the Empire – actually in practice includes Scythians in the plains north of the Black Sea.
- 49 The same is true of the entire set of Yauna references in royal inscriptions: see recently Sancisi-Weerdenburg 2001a, 2001b; Klinkott 2001 (but note that he seems unaware of the revisions to DSe in Stève 1974); Casabonne 2004. I shall leave this larger question for another occasion.
- 50 The view is sometimes expressed that, when fighting Athenians at Marathon, the Persians were taken by surprise by a species of hoplite fighting that differed markedly from what they had experienced from west Anatolian Greeks. If so, it also differed markedly from the behaviour of north Aegean Greeks (never mind Macedonians or Thracians!) and the point made in the text would actually be reinforced.
- 51 Persepolis: Apadana XIX (Schmidt 1953, 89, pl. 45), Central Building no.20 (Schmidt 1953, 119, pl. 81 [no.20]), Hall of 100 Columns (Schmidt 1953, 136, pl.

- 111 [E10]), palace H (Tilia 1972, 284, fig.8). Naqsh-e Rostam: Schmidt 1970, 109, fig.44. (The identification of unlabeled Skudrians – i.e. those at Persepolis – follows the tabulation in Roaf 1974, 149.) Jacobs (2002, 376-378) is sceptical about the documentary reality of the palace H figure.
- 52 Archibald 1998, 208.
- 53 Archibald 1998, 84, n. 29.
- 54 Henkelman & Stolper forthcoming.
- 55 Skudrians appear in years 14 and 17-24 (with seven texts before year 20), Turmuriyans (for example) only in years 20-25.
- 56 Šedda: PF-NN 0728 (and perhaps also PF-NN 2653); Karizza: PF-NN 2653.
- 57 Bakena: PF 1561; Zimakka: PF 783.
- 58 PF 1957: 10; PF-NN 2184.
- 59 Hdt. 5.12-15, 23, 98.
- 60 For the former view, see Briant 2002, 408-409 (the royal coinage – both *sigloi* and darics – was created at Sardis on Dareios' return from Europe), for the latter, Vargyas 1999; Vargyas 2000 (the introduction of darics, along with new, type II, *sigloi*, belongs between 519 and 512, probably towards the latter *terminus*). Nimchuk (2002, 69) sees both as linking *sigloi* (if not darics) with payment of military expenses. But any imputation that they were *created* to pay for the Scythian expedition seems false on either view. That Dareios' *personal* experience of coin-producing areas in Aegean Anatolia and Thrace might have provided a more general stimulus for the issue of a new coinage that was specifically royal and Persian (as well as for the inclusion of non-Persian coins in the Apadana foundation deposit; Vargyas 2000; Zournatzi 2003) is not impossible but, if so, it is an expression of power from which nothing very certain can be inferred about the actual course of events in Europe.
- 61 Summerer 2007a; Summerer 2007b.
- 62 Cf., for example, Stolper 2001, 108.
- 63 Summerer (2007b) notes Strab. 15.3.15 (Zela/Sakaia story) as a sign of the legendary or formative character of Persian-Scythian conflict.

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