

ROME AND INDIA: ASPECTS OF UNIVERSAL HISTORY DURING THE PRINCIPATE *

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For J. & S.T.

I

There are two approaches to universal history: a structural one and one which may be called 'real' or 'practical'. The former compares and draws general conclusions; it is theoretical history. The second is concerned with causality, relating dispersed occurrences, where possible, by determining their interdependence and establishing priorities in time. There can be no doubt, however, that an understanding of the whole of the history of mankind, from its earliest beginnings to the recognizable process of total acculturation¹ in our present world, is the ultimate, if unattainable, goal towards which all its efforts are directed. Certain aspects of this 'real' or 'practical' universal history are the subject of this paper. The Ancient Historian can advance several arguments to justify his special claim to a universalist point of view. Three observations will be selected and briefly considered anew.

The dignity, if not the vocation, of our science derives from the fact that universal history as a genre, and perhaps the most noble one, of historiography was invented by the Greeks, be it by Herodotus², or by Ephorus.³ If earlier texts are lost, it was Polybius at the latest who consciously formulated this new approach to history, and may thus be regarded as the first extant theoretician of universal history. It is with perceptible, if rather cumbersome, pathos that he seeks to impart the elevating experience of writing 'universal' history to his readers when he indicates in the following terms his choice of the 140th Olympiad (220–216 B.C.) as marking the starting point of his narrative proper⁴:

'During the times previous to these years it so happened that events in the world had been, as it were, disconnected, that therefore their origins, too, and their results were complete in themselves, and that, accordingly, the separate deeds differed from each other. But from those times onwards it so happens that history becomes, as it were, an organic whole, and that events in Italy and Africa are interwoven with those in Asia and Greece, and that the tendency of all things is towards one end.'

It does not detract from the excitement of this perception that the Americas and the Far East (a term reflecting the European point of view) are not included in this idea of historical space, which does however embrace the subcontinent of India (indirectly, as bordering on the Seleucid empire) and Africa (directly, through the Ptolemies and the vicissitudes of

* Revised and augmented text of the sixth M. V. Taylor Memorial Lecture, delivered on 14 June 1977, at the Annual General Meeting of the Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies in London. As one of the first post-war British Council Scholars from Germany in Oxford, I availed myself of this opportunity to remember gratefully the kindness with which I was received, naming particularly Professor Sir Ronald Syme, who acted as my supervisor, Michael Holroyd (1892–1953), my Moral Tutor, and Hugh Last (1894–1957), Principal of Brasenose, whose help to German refugee classicists will not be forgotten.

¹ For 'acculturation' as 'one of the major problems of ancient history' cf. S. C. Humphreys, *Parola del Passato* 22 (1967), 384.

² F. Jacoby, s.v. 'Herodotos' (7), *RE* Suppl. II, 468; 471; 485; yet cf. idem, 'Über die Entwicklung der griechischen Historiographie', *Klio* 9 (1909), 87 = *Abhandl. z. griechischen Geschichtsschreibung*, ed. H. Bloch (1956), 24: 'Hellanikos... vielleicht doch Ephoros am nächsten... als erster Versuch einer hellenischen Universalgeschichte...'

³ Th. J. G. Locher, 'Ephoros' jüngste Nachkommen', *Saeculum* 7 (1956), 127–35; cf. now also G. Schepens, 'Ephoros, Niebuhr und die Geschichte

der historischen Kritik', *Historia* 26 (1977), 503–6.

⁴ Polyb. I, 3, 3–4: 'Ἐν μὲν οὖν τοῖς πρὸ τούτων χρόνοις ὡσανεὶ σποράδας εἶναι συνέβαινε (τάς) τῆς οἰκουμένης πράξεις, διὰ δὲ τοῦτο καὶ τὰς ἐπιβολὰς (αὐτῶν ἐπὶ) δὲ συντελείας αὐτ(οτέλεις εἶναι,) καὶ κατὰ τοῦτο δὴ διαφέρ(ειν) ἕκαστα (τῶν πεπραγμ)ένων. ἀπὸ δὲ τούτων τῶν καιρῶν οἰοῦντο σωματοειδῆ συμβαίνει γίνεσθαι τὴν ἱστορίαν, συμπλέεσθαι τε τὰς Ἰταλικὰς καὶ Λιβυκὰς πράξεις ταῖς τε κατὰ τὴν Ἀσίαν καὶ ταῖς Ἑλληνικαῖς καὶ πρὸς ἕν γίνεσθαι τέλος τὴν ἀναφορὰν ἀπάντων. This is the reading of the text as restored by J. M. Moore, *CQ* 16 (1966), 245–7, and approved by F. W. Walbank, *YCS* 24 (1975), 198, n. 4. The systematic remarks of Polybius at the beginning of his report on the Hannibalic War converge from the geographical point of view: '... during the foregoing times (κατὰ... τοὺς προγεγονότας καιροὺς) true reports (ἀληθῆς ἱστορία) (sc. about remote regions of the world)... were almost impossible... But in our times (ἔν δὲ τοῖς καθ' ἡμᾶς) since the regions in Asia (τῶν... κατὰ τὴν Ἀσίαν... τόπων) owing to Alexander's domination, the remaining ones owing to the preeminence of the Romans, have nearly all become navigable and passable...' (3, 59, 1; 3). F. W. Walbank (comm. ad loc.) considers the passage an insertion 'after 146'.

Carthage). What had to be achieved first was a concept of history which reflected the contemporary progress of matters previously isolated and changing now into one world. Polybius displays it here as elsewhere in his work.

Universal history subsequently continued to be a predominantly Greek pursuit, even if much of it has been transmitted in abridged Latin versions. Commended by Orosius, the outlines of Pompeius Trogus' universal scheme were preserved through the Middle Ages, and even Niebuhr announced his renowned lectures of the years 1826 and 1829/30 under the title of 'Ancient History according to the order of Justinus'.⁵ With reference to Polybius in antiquity and Toynbee today it has recently been said that the Achaean statesman and author 'offers . . . a striking example how ancient historiography stands on an equal footing with ours', notwithstanding the obvious differences.⁶

There is perhaps another point to be made. Classical scholarship, though bound by the limitations of its field of study, tends to stand for a system of philosophical, literary and moral values and norms which were revived by Renaissance Humanism and regarded as valid till the time of our grandfathers (and in a few venerable corners of our world, even to this day). Once these values have come to be queried, threatened and negated, the science which fosters their existence by analysis and more profound understanding must of necessity likewise be called in question. Even within the ivory tower of classical studies itself doubts are being raised and a new term has been coined, describing some fields of classical scholarship as 'over-researched' ('überforscht'). However this may be, no appeal will be made here to abandon central fields of research and recede to marginal problems. In certain cases, though, Athens and Rome themselves may benefit by being observed from the periphery and through the 'interwovenness' of things, as it were. New perspectives are revealed, horizons are widened and fields threatened with the barrenness of routine research may become attractive once more. Admittedly this approach is beset with many obstacles, among which the mastery of 'exotic' languages, falling outside the ken of the average classical scholar, certainly poses the greatest problem. Among other rather time-bound arguments this was one of the main objections advanced in a then notable debate which arose within the school of Walter Otto.⁷ Close cooperation with neighbouring disciplines has proved imperative. Obviously, also, the courage to tackle universal history is no licence for credulity. Although errors of understanding may occur due to inadequate knowledge of pertinent languages, these should be openly admitted as soon as their cause has been established.⁸ Consultation with the specialist is necessary. Whatever the difficulties and whatever the risks of occasional pitfalls, if an involvement in universal history can broaden and revitalize classical scholarship as such, it certainly is one of the most urgent tasks of the Ancient Historian in our time.

In an age in which the whole globe can aptly be regarded as the subject of a 'World

⁵ B. G. Niebuhr, *Alte Geschichte nach Iustins Folge mit Ausschluss der römischen Geschichte = Vorträge über Alte Geschichte an der Universität Bonn gehalten* I; II; III (until Actium) (1847; 1848; 1851). According to the editor, vol. 1, p. viii, the title was given as follows in the official lecture-list for the winter-semester 1829/30: *Historia aevi antiqui eo ordine usque limitibus qui in Iustini libris servantur*. Cf. H. Bengtson, *B. G. Niebuhr und die Idee der Universalgeschichte des Altertums* (1960), 10 = *Kleine Schriften zur Alten Geschichte* (1974), 31.

⁶ A. J. L. van Hooff, *Klio* 59 (1977), 101. One wonders whether F. Jacoby would still subscribe to his ill-tempered verdict of 1955 on Polybius as 'einer der unerträglichsten antiken Historiker' (*FGvH* III b (text), 537; cf. E. Fraenkel's amicable criticism in *Horace* (1957), 303, n. 1) after all the Polybian studies that have appeared during the past twenty-five years.

⁷ It took its beginning from a review of *CAH* IV-VII by H. Berve, *Gnomon* 7 (1931), 65-74; cf. idem, *Arch. f. Kulturgesch.* 25 (1934), 216-30; V. Ehrenberg, *Ost und West* (1935), 2. W. Otto, Berve's teacher, replied (without naming him) in *Deutsch. Lit. Ztg.* 58 (1937), 1119-33; 1161-74,

when he reviewed *CAH* X and XI. When Berve exacerbated his judgment in *Gnomon* 15 (1939), 177-93 (*CAH* VIII-XI), W. Otto retorted openly in *HZ* 161 (1940), 309-24.

⁸ I refer to the book of S. Paranavitana (1896-1973), *The Greeks and the Mauryas* (1971). A product of the author's old age, its most imaginative parts gave rise to the highlights of the West-East tale in R. Lane Fox, *Alexander the Great* (1973), cf. 483 f.; 492; 559. Even when a preliminary report of Paranavitana's finds was published in typescript in 1964, a critical publication was called for, see K. Fischer, *Bonn. Jahrb.* 167 (1967), 210, n. 458. Since then, notwithstanding the fact that Paranavitana was 'one of Ceylon's greatest savants of modern times', M. Fernando, *Artibus Asiae* 35 (1973), 273, the fallacy of his statements regarding Greek traditions preserved on stone in his country has been generally recognized by all specialists concerned (H. Bechert, Göttingen, by letter dated 11 June 1975). As far as can be judged, however, Lane Fox has not yet retracted the doubtful passages (the recent paperback edition of the German translation, Munich 1977, does not seem to show signs of corrections).

History of Europe', to quote the title of a book, based on solid classical learning, by a German sociologist,⁹ European Ancient History and its relation to the contemporaneous histories of other continents will have a new message to impart. The family of mankind must acquire and learn about what it has in common in its past. The aspiration that historians should offer this kind of guidance is expressed already in the preface of Diodorus which deals with the utility of universal history and the function of the universal historian in his own time: 'It is fitting that all men should ever accord great thanks to the writers of universal histories, since they have aspired, by their individual labours, to serve universal human society . . . It has been the aspiration (of these writers) to marshal all men, who, although united one to another by their kinship, are yet separated by space and time, into one and the same orderly body, thereby becoming themselves, as it were, ministers of the divine providence . . .'.¹⁰ K. Reinhard claimed that these solemn phrases originated from Posidonius.¹¹ Some scholars concurred,¹² but F. Jacoby hesitated,¹³ and A. D. Nock ascribed them to lesser luminaries.¹⁴ Although the pathos of the statement constitutes a rejection of Thucydidean sobriety, historians in our time may be allowed to avail themselves of it since it expresses a strong and intense sense of responsibility. It is hardly an accident, therefore, that two modern universal historians invoked this almost religious declaration independently of each other when stating their own intentions, namely (which will be deemed not surprising) A. J. Toynbee in the *Reconsiderations* of his *Study of History*,¹⁵ and several years previously Alexander Rüstow in his *Ortsbestimmung der Gegenwart*.¹⁶ Rüstow (1885–1963), whose name ought to be cited alongside those of his contemporaries Karl Jaspers (1883–1969) and Alfred Weber (1868–1958), was a man no less deeply rooted in classical scholarship than Toynbee, though rather mundane by comparison, and his *Ortsbestimmung der Gegenwart* deserves to be mentioned among the great 'groundplans' of universal history conceived under the impact of World War II.¹⁷ The present generation witnesses the final stages of a process which Polybius described as the 'interwovenness' (συνπλοκή) of 'deeds once separate' (σποράδες πράξεις) into one 'organic whole' (σωματσειδής). It is in view of this magnificent, if painful development that one of Germany's leading modern historians has called 'a planetary world history . . . perhaps . . . the most noble task' to which our science can aspire.¹⁸

II

The universal history of antiquity and especially the relations between the Graeco-Roman Oecumene and the East as far as Central Asia, China and Eastern Africa cannot be regarded as a continuum of events. Disregarding earlier periods, one distinct historical breakthrough was due to Alexander the Great, while Rome's final assumption of control of the Eastern Mediterranean between 63 B.C., when Pompey reorganized the Near East, and Octavian's annexation of Egypt in 30 B.C., marked the beginning of yet another era. The crisis of the third century A.D. and the advance of the Persians (or Sassanids) caused another

⁹ H. Freyer, *Weltgeschichte Europas*³ (1969).

¹⁰ Diod. I, 1, 1; 3: Τοῖς τὰς κοινὰς ἱστορίας πραγματευσαμένοις μεγάλας χάριτας ἀπονέμειν δίκαιον πάντας ἀνθρώπων, οἳ τοῖς ἰδίοις πόνοις ἀφελήσαν τὸν κοινὸν βίον ἐπιλοτιμήθησαν . . . πάντας ἀνθρώπων, μετέχοντας μὲν τῆς πρὸς ἀλλήλους συγγενείας, τόποις δὲ καὶ χρόνοις διεστηκότας, ἐφιλοτιμήθησαν ὑπὸ μίαν καὶ τὴν αὐτὴν σύνταξιν ἀγαγεῖν, ὥσπερ τινὲς ὑπουργοὶ τῆς θείας προνοίας γενηθέντες.

¹¹ *Posidonios* (1921), 32 f.; idem, *Kosmos und Sympathie* (1926), 184 f. (implicitly also s.v. 'Poseidonios', *RE* xxii. 1, 624; 628; 763; 772). Previous to Reinhardt, G. Busolt had already attributed the passage to Posidonius, *Jahrb. f. class. Phil.* 35 (1889), 297 f.

¹² M. Pohlenz, *Die Stoa*⁴ I–II (1970; 1972), 1, 213 f.; II, 105; 122; idem, *Stoa und Stoiker*³ (1964) (translated texts with commentary), 276; R. Harder, *Studium Generale* 6 (1953), 134 = *Kleine Schriften* (1960), 48 f.; W. Theiler, *Festgabe H. v. Greyerz* (1967), 74, n. 12 = *Untersuchungen zur antiken Literatur* (1970), 452, n. 12.

¹³ Commentary on *FGrH* no. 87, fr. 1 (p. 163) (his

remarks on *FGrH* no. 70, fr. 7/9 (p. 43) refer to other parts of Diodorus's proem). Similarly, but with more general arguments, O. Gigon, 'Der Historiker Poseidonios', in *Festgabe H. v. Greyerz* (1967), 95 f. = *Studien zur antiken Philosophie* (1972), 254 f.

¹⁴ 'Posidonius', *JRS* 49 (1959), 4 f.; independently of the opinion of Nock, W. Spoerri, *Spätellenistische Berichte über Welt, Kultur und Götter* (1959), 206, with n. 1; A. Burton, *Diodorus Siculus Book I: A commentary* (1972), 36 f. follows Nock.

¹⁵ (1961), 139.

¹⁶ *Ortsbestimmung der Gegenwart* I (1950); II² (1963); III (1957). The passage from Posidonius-Diodorus, already cited in a newspaper article in 1951, is quoted in II, 119 (with n. 110; 111).

¹⁷ Unfortunately J. Vogt, *Wege zum historischen Universum* (1961), omits Rüstow in this otherwise very instructive survey of modern universal histories and theories.

¹⁸ Th. Schieder, *Geschichte als Wissenschaft*² (1968), 139.

major disruption. Some observations presented here on the relations between Rome and India during the second of these periods, i.e. the epoch of the Principate, may possibly be regarded as a representative specimen of ancient universal history.

It might well be asked whether a continental scholar has anything worthwhile to contribute to a subject which, for various reasons, is so intimately associated with the classicists of Great Britain—W. Robertson,¹⁹ W. Vincent,²⁰ the two Rawlinsons,²¹ J. W. McCrindle,²² M. P. Charlesworth,²³ E. H. Warmington,^{23a} W. W. Tarn,²⁴ and finally Mortimer Wheeler.²⁵ Indeed, in the wake of the illustrious names quoted, as also of those omitted, the credentials of a German scholar in this field of research may possibly be questioned. Nevertheless, Eduard Meyer's *Blüte und Niedergang des Hellenismus in Asien*²⁶ may be regarded as one of the finest examples of ancient universal historiography to be published in any language, while some of F. Altheim's numerous works will certainly remain valid.²⁷ More recently a succinct posthumous survey of seafaring in Southern Asia in Antiquity by the archaeologist R. Delbrück (1875–1957) has been published,²⁸ and A. Dihle, now of Heidelberg, has written substantial essays on our topic.²⁹ At the end of this list a tribute must be paid to Rostovtzeff to whom every student in this field is indebted, even if not always explicitly aware of it.³⁰

¹⁹ *An Historical Disquisition concerning the Knowledge which the Ancients had of India* etc. (London, 1791) (*non vidi*); also Basil (sic!), 1792; German translation and preface by G. Forster, Berlin 1792. Later editions and translations need not be registered.

²⁰ *The voyage of Nearchus from the Indus to the Euphrates* (London, 1797); *The Periplus of the Erythraean Sea* (London, 1800) (*non vidi*); revised edition of both works: *The commerce and navigation of the Ancients in the Indian Ocean I–II* (London, 1807) ('a subject which concerns the general interests of mankind . . .', I, p. vii (dedication)).

²¹ George R. (1812–1902), *The Five Great Monarchies of the Ancient World . . .* (Chaldaeae to Persia) I–IV (1862–7); *The Sixth Great Oriental Monarchy . . .* (Parthia) (1873); *The Seventh Great Oriental Monarchy . . .* (Sassanids), (1876) (later editions and reprints not noted). Hugh George R. (1880–1957), *Bactria, The history of a Forgotten Empire* (1912); *Intercourse between India and the Western World from the earliest times to the Fall of Rome*² (1926).

²² (1825–1913), *Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian: being a translation* etc. (1877); *The Commerce and Navigation of the Erythraean Sea: being a translation* etc. (1879); *Ancient India as described by Ktesias the Knidian: being a translation* etc. (1882); *Ancient India as described by Ptolemy* etc. (1885); *The Invasion of India by Alexander the Great as described by Arrian, Q. Curtius, Diodoros, Plutarch and Justin: being translations* etc. (1892; new ed. 1896); *Ancient India as described in Classical Literature: being a collection of Greek and Latin texts relating to India, extracted from Herodotos* etc. (1901) (most of the volumes have been re-edited or reprinted).

²³ *Trade-routes and Commerce of the Roman Empire* (1924; second ed. 1926, French translation).

^{23a} *The commerce between the Roman Empire and India* (1928; second ed. 1974).

²⁴ *The Greeks in Bactria and India* (1938; second ed. 1951).

²⁵ *Rome beyond the Imperial Frontiers* (1954) (translations). A comprehensive study by M. G. Raschke, 'New Studies in Roman Commerce with the East', has been published in H. Temporini (Ed.), *ANRW* II. 9. 2 (1978), 604–1361.

²⁶ Published in 1925 and repr. in F. Altheim-J. Rehork (Eds.), *Der Hellenismus in Mittelasien* (1969), 19–72 (unfortunately never translated). Among previous publications by German scholars may be mentioned Gottl. S. Bayer (Königsberg, 1694–1738), *Historia Osrhoena et Edessena ex numis illustrata* (St. Petersburg, 1734); idem, *Historia regni Grae-*

corum Bactriani . . . (ibid., 1738); A. H. L. Heeren (son-in-law of Chr. G. Heyne), *De India Graecis cognita* I–II; idem, *De India Romanis cognita* (Göttingen, 1790/1, 1792). Both Bayer and Heeren represent the Universal Historiography of the Age of Enlightenment. Note also J. Lieblein, *Handel und Schiffahrt auf dem rothen Meere in alten Zeiten* (1886); W. Goetz, *Die Verkehrswege im Dienste des Welthandels: Eine hist.-geogr. Untersuchung . . .* (1888); A. Herrmann, *Die Verkehrswege zwischen China, Indien und Rom um 100 n. Chr.* (1922); W. Raunig, *Bernstein-Weihrauch-Seide: Waren und Wege der antiken Welt* (1971). In recent years the numerous articles of the Austrian philologist F. F. Schwarz, which have continued to appear since the 60's, have attracted attention.

²⁷ e.g. *Weltgeschichte Asiens im griechischen Zeitalter* I–II (1947–8); *Die Araber in der Alten Welt* I (1964).

²⁸ 'Südasiatische Seefahrt im Altertum I, II', *Bonn. Jahrb.* 155/6 (1955/6), 8–58, 229–308.

²⁹ 'The conception of India in Hellenistic and Roman Literature', *Proc. Camb. Philol. Soc.* 190 n.s. 10 (1964), 15–23; *Umstrittene Daten: Untersuchungen zum Auftreten der Griechen am Roten Meer* (1965); *Der Seeweg nach Indien* (1974); cf. 'Die entdeckungsgeschichtlichen Voraussetzungen des Indienhandels der römischen Kaiserzeit', now published in H. Temporini (Ed.), *ANRW* II. 9. 2 (1978), 546–80.

³⁰ It would be ungrateful not to mention important contributions of French scholars: J. T. Reinaud, *Relations politiques et commerciales de l'Empire romain avec l'Asie Orientale . . .* (1863) (and other studies); E. Lévêque, *Les mythes et les légendes de l'Inde et de la Perse dans Aristophane, Platon, Aristote, Virgile, Tite-Live . . .* (1880); G. Combaz, *L'Inde et l'Orient Classique* I–II (1937); A. Foucher, *La vieille route de l'Inde de Bactres à Taxila* I–II (1942–7); E. Lemotte, 'Les premières relations de l'Inde avec l'Occident', *La Nouv. Clio* 5 (1953), 83–118; R. Grousset, *Orient und Okzident im geistigen Austausch* (1955); J. Filliozat, *Les relations extérieures de l'Inde* I (1956); J. Schwartz, 'L'empire romain, l'Égypte et le commerce oriental', *Annales* 15. 1 (1960), 18–44; D. Schlumberger, *L'Orient hellénisé* (1969; German edition, Stuttgart 1969); J. Pirenne, 'Le développement de la navigation Égypte-Inde dans l'antiquité', in M. Mollat (Ed.), *Actes du 8^e coll. d'hist. maritime* (1970), 101–19.

After World War II Italian studies were resumed by scholars such as M. Mussagli, L. Petech, A. Simonetta, G. Tucci centering around the periodical *East and West* 1 (1950/1)–27 (1977) which is edited

Perhaps there are two specific aspects to be elucidated, one of which is increasingly attracting attention in our studies, while the other, though more or less agreed upon, may still call for clarification and reassessment. Firstly: to what extent were the concept of India and actual contacts with India themselves integrated with Roman life? Secondly: which of the emperors was responsible for whatever political initiatives and even military actions were directed towards India?

III

In the words of A. Dihle, what was 'the significance of those countries for the conception of the world among the educated class of Imperial times, as far as this can be ascertained from literature'?³¹

There are several sources at our disposal. First of all Western, that is Roman, historiography with its narratives and also its records of bare facts. The story of the 'Indians' captured by a Suebian king in Transalpine Gaul and donated to Q. Caecilius Metellus Celer during his governorship of Gallia Cisalpina in 62 B.C., is not above suspicion, although it derives from Cornelius Nepos:³² 'Indus' is also a Celtic personal name,³³ and even if the report were authentic, the incident itself would seem to have been an isolated occurrence.³⁴ The list of embassies repeatedly compiled from Roman annals, most recently by Charlesworth, though perhaps too optimistic as regards their frequency, may be more reliable.³⁵

It is common knowledge that there is no corresponding equivalent on the Indian side. Ancient India has no historiography in the European sense of the word—in this respect the only 'historiographic civilizations' of the world are the Graeco-Roman and Chinese ones—and the 'Chronicles' of Ceylon, strongly imbued with religious tendencies, are no exception, in spite of Paranavitana's hypothesis regarding their scope in retrospect. The same holds true for poetry, though one possible exception will have to be noted.

Western poets, beginning with Lucretius as far as our period is concerned, might be expected to provide more evidence. Their treatment of the topic, however, was strongly tinged by the impression made by the exploits of Alexander the Great; and this remained the case well into the second and third centuries A.D. As a rule they should, therefore, not be consulted. Thus it will be safer to rely on evidence from the sphere of everyday life—the domain of *longue durée*, so to speak—from public documents to texts of more or less elevated fiction. For instance, were Indian slaves a conceivable, if luxurious, commodity during the late Republic, as could be surmised from Horace's verse 'fuscus Hydaspes/Caecuba vina ferens'?³⁶ We shall presently return to this question. The same author's remarks in *Ep.* 1, 1, 45 about 'the indefatigable merchant' who 'hastens . . . to the Indians',³⁷ to be attributed to the late 20's B.C., suggest economic realities. For the many and various items which were the objects of commerce in pre-Augustan and Augustan times, J. Thorley has drawn up a painstaking catalogue.³⁸ These numerous tokens of a far-away world must have

by the Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente (I.S.M.E.O.); its activities were publicized in the exhibition 'India and Italy' (Rome 1974) (I owe the knowledge of the instructive catalogue to the kindness of A. Gargano). A brilliant summary of the state of West-East research has been produced by F. Coarelli, in *Enciclop. dell'arte ant. class. e orient.* vi (1965), 1010–24.

This selective list may be concluded with a reference to M. Chvostov, *History of the Eastern Trade of Greco-Roman Egypt* (Kazan, 1907) (in Russian, cf. M. Rostowzew, *Arch. f. Pap. forsch.* 4 (1908), 298); N. V. Pigulevskaja, *Byzanz auf den Wegen nach Indien* (East Berlin, 1969).

³¹ *Umstrittene Daten* (n. 29), 7.

³² Pomp. Mela 3, 5, 45: 'Cornelius Nepos . . . Q. Metellum Celerem . . . ita retulisse commemorat: cum Galliae pro consule praeesset, Indos quosdam a rege Booterum dono sibi datos . . . vi tempestatum ex Indicis aequoribus abreptos'. Pliny, *NH* 2, 67/170: 'Indos a rege Suevorum dono datos, qui ex India commercii causa navigantes tempestatibus essent in Germaniam abrepti . . .'. Cf. H. Bengtson, 'Q.

Caecilius Metellus Celer (cos. 60) und die Inder', *Historia* 3 (1954/5), 229–36 = *Kleine Schriften zur Alten Geschichte* (1974), 470–8.

³³ cf. E. Norden, *Die germanische Urgeschichte* (1959), 200, n. 2.

³⁴ This holds true also if it is connected, as it is tentatively by Bengtson (n. 32), with an incident in Celer's legateship during Pompeius's Caucasian War, when the latter, in spring 65 B.C., ordered the caravan routes from Bactria to India to be explored, Pliny, *NH* 6, 17/52 based on Varro; Plut., *Pomp.* 38, 4–5.

³⁵ M. P. Charlesworth, 'Roman Trade with India: A Resurvey', in *Studies in Roman Economic and Social History in Honour of A. C. Johnson* (1951), 131–43 (the list, 140 f.). Less complete W. Krause, 'Gesandtschaften indischer Fürsten in der römischen Kaiserzeit', *Litterae Latinae* (Wien) 25 (1971), 34–8.

³⁶ *Sat.* 2, 8, 14 f. (composed about 31 B.C.).

³⁷ 'Impiger extremos curris mercator ad Indos, per mare . . ., per saxa, per ignes . . .'.

³⁸ 'The development of trade between the Roman Empire and the East under Augustus', *Gr. and R.* 16 (1969), 209–23.

stimulated the imagination of the many who happened to see or taste Indian products. It will therefore hardly be necessary to attach special importance to the ivory statuette of an Indian goddess found at Pompeii in 1938,³⁹ since this cannot but have been one remarkable piece among a large range of imported objects.

If, two generations after Horace and Augustus, a guest at Trimalchio's table, commenting on their host's life-style, was heard to remark to his neighbour 'within the last few days he wrote that the seed of the best kind of mushroom be sent to him from India', this seems to point to an existing, albeit not wide-spread, custom.⁴⁰ Another text of about the same time also establishes links between Italy and India.⁴¹ In the census-list of the tax-district at Arsinoe, chief city of the nome of the same name, 173 male adults of Greek descent are registered as liable to *epikrisis*, which here means the process by which subjects were admitted to the privileged status of exemption from personal tax.⁴² Four of the 173 named persons are described as sojourning 'outside the boundaries of Egypt', three in Italy and one in India.⁴³ The papyrus is dated to the fourth year of the principate of Vespasian, 72/3. The oration of Dio of Prusa to the Alexandrians has recently been attributed to about the same date.⁴⁴ In it Indians are addressed as present among the audience, though naturally they were less numerous than the Italians who are also mentioned.⁴⁵ However, as far as our problem is concerned, special conditions prevailed in Alexandria, as P. M. Fraser has demonstrated in his work on Ptolemaic Alexandria, which in part also covers Roman times.⁴⁶

As regards Rome, Pliny's lamentations about the drain of money to the East⁴⁷—taking up a theme current since Tiberius, of moral indignation at the cost of Roman luxuriousness⁴⁸—will be mentioned in another connection. Here it may suffice to state that in the author's *Natural History*, which was dedicated to Titus in A.D. 77, 'India' and other forms of this name occur more than 220 times, while Egypt, for example, can show only fifty-two entries. Admittedly this is but a statistical observation and, as such, inconclusive, but made on the strength of an encyclopedia of the knowledge and interests prevalent in the first century A.D. it may perhaps be regarded as pertinent and noteworthy. Links between the centre and the periphery, such as those documented by the London papyrus from Arsinoe, can again be traced during the later years of Domitian when the construction of special store-houses for spices, *horrea piperataria*, Indian pepper, attracted public notice in Rome.⁴⁹

At about the same time, in A.D. 90, the prefect responsible for Coptos, an important commercial centre in Upper Egypt where goods were transferred from Nile boats to the caravans transporting them to the Red Sea ports (and vice versa) through the Eastern desert, had a new tariff promulgated, which has fortunately been preserved on stone.⁵⁰ It determines the dues for escorting a variety of items such as sea-captains, girls πρὸς ἐταιρισμὸν and corpses. Female slaves, as is known from the *Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*—the fascinating manual of

³⁹ cf. A. Maiuri, 'Statuette eburnea di arte indiana a Pompei', *Le Arti* (Firenze) 1 (1938/9), 111-15; M. Levi d'Ancona, 'An Indian Statuette from Pompeii', *Artibus Asiae* 13 (1950), 166-80.

⁴⁰ Petron. 38, 4: 'Ecce intra hos dies scripsit, ut illi ex India semen boletorum mitteretur'. ('Boletum' refers to a very rare and costly mushroom, cf. Steier, *RE* xx. 2, 1378, s.v. 'Pilze').

⁴¹ P. Lond. 260 = F. G. Kenyon, *Greek Pap. in the Brit. Mus.* II (1893), 42-53.

⁴² cf. O. Montevocchi, *Proceed. XI^V Papyrol. Congr. 1974* (1975), 227-32; A. K. Bowman, *JRS* 66 (1976), 170.

⁴³ Col. 4, l. 71: ... ἐξ ὀρίων Αἰγύπτου ἐν Ἰταλίᾳ γ' (= 3).

l. 72: ἐν Ἰνδικῇ α' (= 1) / δ' (= altogether 4).

Col. 3, ll. 38-41: ... ἐν ... τῇ Ἰταλίᾳ Διογένης ... Σαράππων ... Πτολεμαῖος ...

l. 42: ἐν τῇ Ἰνδικῇ Γαίων δ καὶ Διόδωρος Ἡρακλείου τοῦ Διοδώρου, μητ(ρὸς) Ἀμμωνίας ...

Cf. M. Raschke, 'Papyrological evidence for Ptolemaic and Roman trade with India', *Proceed XI^V Papyrol. Congr. 1974* (1975), 241-6.

⁴⁴ C. P. Jones, 'The date of Dio of Prusa's Alexandrian Oration', *Historia* 22 (1973), 302-9.

⁴⁵ Dio Chrys. 32, 36: ... τὴν ἕξωθεν ὑπερκειμένην (sc. θάλατταν) ἔχετε, τὴν τε Ἐρυθρὰν καὶ Ἰνδικήν ... 32, 40:

ὄρα ... οὐ μόνον Ἑλληνας παρ' ὑμῖν οὐδ' Ἰταλοῦς ... ἀλλὰ καὶ Βακτρίους καὶ Σκύθας καὶ Πέρσας καὶ Ἰνδῶν τινας οἱ, συνθεῶνται ... ἐκαστοτε ὑμῖν ...

⁴⁶ *Ptolemaic Alexandria I-III* (1972); cf. I, 180-4; 801 f.; II, 317, n. 416 etc.; cf. H. Kortenbeutel, *Der ägyptische Süd- und Osthandel in der Politik des Ptolemäer und römischen Kaiser* (Berlin, 1931; dissertation with U. Wilcken); E. Leider, *Der Handel von Alexandria* (Hamburg, 1934; diss. with E. Ziebarth).

⁴⁷ *NH* 6, 23/101; 12, 18/84.

⁴⁸ cf. Tac., *Ann.* 3, 53 (A.D. 22). For the Indians as *externae*, not *hostiles gentes* see C. Rodewald, *Money in the age of Tiberius* (1976), 47.

⁴⁹ Jerome, *Chron.*, p. 191 ed. Helm (A.D. 89); Chronogr. ad A.D. 354 (*Chron. Min.* ed. Mommsen I, p. 146); cf. Cass. Dio 72, 24, 1; E. H. Warrington, *The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India*² (1974), 81 (A.D. 92); G. E. Rickman, *Roman Granaries and Store buildings* (1971), 104 f. (extent of *horrea* comparable to Basilica of Constantine).

⁵⁰ *OGIS* 674 (Coptos, dated 10 May A.D. 90), the stele set up on order of L. Antistius Asiaticus, *praefectus Montis Berenices* (*PIR*² A 755); a κυβερνήτης Ἐρυθραϊκός cost 8 drachmas, γυναίκες πρ. ἐ. 108, α ταφή (mummy) 1½.

a Graeco-Egyptian merchant, though on the whole too specialized for the purpose of a more general survey—were preferred objects of export to India.⁵¹ Was there also a counter-trade of Indians sold as slaves to the West, so that their appearance would become noticeable to the inhabitants of Italy? M. Raschke, from the school of E. Badian, has recently scrutinized the Greek part of the Empire for bearers of names such as ‘Indos’ or ‘Indikos’, but without conspicuous results.⁵² Even fewer specimens can be traced in the West. Among the thousands of *cognomina* occurring in urban inscriptions one single ‘Indus’ can be found, his *nomen* being ‘Sornatius’. From the surnames of his parents, Zeuxis and Areskousa, servile extraction may be deduced, and the date seems to lie between the first and second century A.D.⁵³ The same findings apply to the one or two women called ‘Inde’ who are also attested in Rome.⁵⁴ It has been remarked before, however, that ‘Indus’ may have Celtic connotations.⁵⁵ Not to be doubted, though, is the case of the Indian slave whom Herodes Atticus inherited from his ‘teacher and friend’ Favorinus of Arelate (d. c. A.D. 150). Described as ‘pretty black’, he used to amuse both his masters with a peculiar mixture of Indian and Attic words when they sat together drinking. This piece of information, which derives from Philostratus’ *Lives of the Sophists*,⁵⁶ is probably reliable, whereas the same author’s notorious biography of Apollonius of Tyana (who supposedly lived from the early first century to after 96) must be treated on the principle that none of his assertions can be accepted unless confirmed elsewhere.⁵⁷ One more instance of human traffic can be cited, if in a slightly different chronological context; towards the end of the seventies of the second century A.D., Indian eunuchs (*spadones Indici*) are mentioned in a joint rescript of Marcus Aurelius and Commodus which deals with a case of evasion of customs duty in the unspecified area where a collector of Eastern revenues operated—apparently the only reference to anything Indian in the *Digest*.⁵⁸

Returning to the beginning of the century, one might think that Plutarch would provide evidence for the opinions and interests currently held by the cultivated Graeco-Roman stratum of the Empire—especially in his *Moralia*, where his own ideas occasionally prevail over those derived from his sources. Yet these expectations are hardly fulfilled. Apart from numerous allusions to Alexander the Great and his geographical interests, there is a single passage where we may surmise a direct reference to the Indian river system in his own day. In his *Advice on keeping well*, the warning of gymnastic masters is quoted that the discussion of scientific topics during meals upsets the digestion, especially when ‘the Indus is analysed’.⁵⁹ However, in older commentaries it is conjectured that ‘Indus’ is the term of a syllogism, while the editors confine themselves to the verdict *res obscura* in the apparatus of the recent Teubner edition.⁶⁰ A passage in the *Parallel Lives* is perhaps less disappointing and may reveal Plutarch’s own convictions. In the biography of Pompey he reports the reflections of ‘some Romans of the highest rank and a few Greeks, standing aside from the battle’ at Pharsalus, to the effect that Pompey and Caesar could have conquered India with an army of 70,000 men, instead of fighting against each other.⁶¹ But if this is his personal

⁵¹ *Peripl. M. Er.* 31: σώματα θηλυκά, 49: παρθένοι εὐειδείς πρὸς πωλακείαν.

⁵² *op. cit.* (n. 43), 241 f.

⁵³ *CIL* VI, 21650 (the *nomen* ‘Sornatius’ seems to point rather to the first century of the principate).

⁵⁴ VI, 38159 and 22628 (as dative case). Cf. M. Bang, ‘Die Herkunft der römischen Sklaven I’, *Röm. Mitt.* 25 (1910), 225–51 with suppl. *Röm. Mitt.* 27 (1912), 189; J. Baumgart, *Die römischen Sklavennamen* (Diss. Breslau, 1936), 63.

⁵⁵ W. Schulze, *Lateinische Eigennamen* (1904), 20 f.; A. Holder, *Alt-Celtischer Sprachschatz* II (1904), 41; cf. 40. The best known example is ‘Iulius Indus e civitate Treverorum’ (Tac., *Ann.* 3, 42).

⁵⁶ *Vit. Soph.* I, 8. Whether his name Αὐτολήκυθος (‘poor’, ‘beggar’), also has Indian implications, cannot be ascertained.

⁵⁷ Wecker, s.v. ‘India’, *RE* IX, 2, 1308.

⁵⁸ *Dig.* 39, 4, 16, 6–7; cf. H. E. Dirksen, ‘Über ein in Justinian’s Pandekten enthaltenes Verzeichnis’

etc., *Abh. Kgl. Akad. Wissensch.* (1843), *Philol. u. hist. Abh.* (1845), 59–108. The date is from 177 to 17 March 180. On this passage cf. also H. Nissen, *Bonn. Jahrb.* 95 (1894), 17 f.; U. Wilcken, *Zeitschr. f. Pap.* 3 (1906), 194 f.; M. Rostowzew, *Zeitschr. f. Pap.* 4 (1908), 310 f. The other articles specified as Indian are: *aroma* (aromatic herb, spice), *ferrum, opia* (sorts of poppy-juice), *capilli* (whether human, animal or of plants is not clear). M. Meinhardt who is directing a computerized analysis of the *Digest*—cf. her article in *Festschrift Max Kaser* (1976), 743–61—has kindly confirmed by letter the absence of any other occurrence of ‘Indus’ etc. in the Corpus. Cf. H. E. Dirksen, *Manuale Latinitatis Font. Jur. Civ. Rom.* (Berlin, 1837): the only entry.

⁵⁹ *De tuend. san.* 20, p. 133 B: τὸν Ἰνδὸν ἀναλύειν. (The treatise seems to belong to Plutarch’s earlier productions and should be dated well before A.D. 100.)

⁶⁰ Plut., *Mor.* I, ed. corr. W. R. Paton—I. Wegehaupt etc. (1974), 274.

⁶¹ Plut., *Pomp.* 70, 4 f.

view, which period did he actually have in mind : that of Alexander, of Caesar, of Augustus, of Trajan ?

Lucian of Samosata poses comparable problems of identification : which of his material is taken from classical tradition, which from the author's own day and, what is more, where does he write tongue in cheek, and where does he exaggerate ? Nevertheless, this cultivated and subtle exponent of the enlightenment of the second century can be held to represent the average sophisticated mind and outlook. The examples found in Lucian date to the principates of Marcus and Commodus.⁶² The hero of the dialogue *Hermotimus* (*On the different philosophical sects*), who aspires to higher wisdom, is asked in jest whether his current philosophical education might lead him to bliss within one Olympiad, 'two Olympiads being sufficient to travel three times from the Pillars of Hercules to India and back, sojourns in the intermediate countries included'⁶³—one and a quarter years would thus suffice for an easy journey in one direction. A hundred years previously the philosopher Seneca, in order to elevate his correspondent and himself above the pettiness of human conditions, had given a rhetorical estimate of the journey 'from the most remote shores of Spain to the Indians' as 'a distance of a few days', given favourable winds.⁶⁴ The matter may have been a *topos* even then.⁶⁵

Certainly India and philosophy had been a traditional theme since Alexander's discussion with the gymnosophists ; and when brahmins are mentioned by Lucian, it is this same recurrent line of thought, which may consequently be disregarded. In his attack on the charlatan Alexander of Abonuteichus, written in A.D. 180 or somewhat later, a marginal scene throws some light on contemporary life :⁶⁶ a frivolous student at Alexandria, instead of studying, was sailing on the Nile canal, open to traffic again since Trajan,⁶⁷ when he suddenly decided to embark on a vessel bound for India, intending to return after some months. How India permeates the imagination of the reading public of the second century A.D. is best shown by the romance of Xenophon the Ephesian, which, although not favoured by the Byzantine scholars, may have been enjoyed in Rome no less than in the Greek East.⁶⁸ One of the many adventures the faithful Anthia has to endure is being bought as a slave by 'a rich Indian', a maharaja, who is sojourning in Alexandria 'sightseeing' but also 'on business'.⁶⁹ Soon afterwards the two of them are seen to leave for Upper Egypt, that is for India, in a stately caravan, with numerous camels, mules, packhorses, etc. However, the reader need not be afraid that Anthia will be deported to so distant a place : she is liberated by brigands and eventually re-united with her lover.

The route to India continued to go through Egypt and the Red Sea. Pantaenus, the teacher of Clement of Alexandria, as so many philosophers before him, had visited India—during the reign of Marcus, as Eusebius' report in the *Ecclesiastical History* would seem to indicate.⁷⁰ Clement himself also met Indian wise men at Alexandria with whom he conversed.⁷¹ On the showing of A. Dihle⁷² it was Clement who, as a result of the communications by sea, introduced a new notion of India's geographic situation into the higher realms of literature where hitherto the concepts of the Alexander-historians and of Eratosthenes had prevailed.

In view of all the comings and goings between India and the Eastern Mediterranean it is hardly surprising that at one of the other hubs of West-East traffic, at Petra, the capital of the Nabataean client-kingdom and still a busy place when the region was made a Roman

⁶² In dating the works of Lucian I follow the chronology of R. Helm, *RE* XIII. 2, 1764–6.

⁶³ *Hermot.* 4: Μετὰ δύο . . . Ὀλυμπιάδας . . . ἐν τοσοῦτῳ χρόνῳ . . . ὅσον τρις ἄπὸ Ἡρακλείων στηλῶν εἰς Ἰνδοὺς ἀπελθεῖν, εἴτ' ἐπανελθεῖν ῥᾶδιον, εἰ . . . τις . . . ἐν τοῖς διὰ μέσου ἔθνεσι περιπλανώμενος . . .

⁶⁴ *Quaest. nat.* I, *praef.* 13: ' . . . quantum est enim, quod ab ultimis litoribus Hispaniae usque ad Indos iacet? paucissimorum dierum spatium, si navem suus ferat ventus . . . ' There is no question here of globosity, although the passage seems to have influenced Columbus, *pace* e.g. E. Norden, *Die germanische Urgeschichte in Tacitus Germania*³ (1923), 35; J. O. Thomson, *History of Ancient Geography* (1948), 326 f.

⁶⁵ cf. L. Friedländer, *Darstellungen aus der*

*Sittengeschichte Roms*¹⁰ I (1922), 368.

⁶⁶ *Alex. s. Pseudom.* 44: ὁ ναυσίκοσ . . . ἐπεισθη καὶ αὐτὸς εἰς Ἰνδοὺς πλεύσαι . . .

⁶⁷ cf. F. Oertel, 'Das Problem des antiken Suezkanals', in *Spiegel der Geschichte: Festgabe M. Braubach* (1964), 18–51 = *Kleine Schriften* (1975), 233–64.

⁶⁸ For its survival cf. H. Gärtner, *RE* IX A. 2, 2087.

⁶⁹ *Xen. Eph.* 3, 11. f.; 11, 2: "Ἐρχεται . . . τις . . . ἐκ τῆς Ἰνδικῆς τῶν ἐκεῖ βασιλέων κατὰ θέαν τῆς πόλεως καὶ κατὰ χρεῖαν ἐμπορίας . . .

⁷⁰ 5, 10, 3.

⁷¹ *Strom.* I, 71, 3–6.

⁷² See above n. 29 and A. Dihle, 'Indische Philosophen bei Clemens Alexandrinus' in *Mullus (Festschrift Th. Klauser)* (1964), 60–70.

province in 106, an Indologist has discovered what he takes to be the possible remains of a Buddhist temple.⁷³ This interpretation, with a provisional dating to the second or third century, still stands in need of confirmation by further discussion. There seem to be valid reasons, however, for not pursuing the present inquiry beyond the second century. Personal contacts tended to decrease at this time, although commerce may have continued, its volume still being a matter of dispute. Whoever wished to reach India during the next century had to take the arduous land routes. It was for this reason that Plotinus enlisted with the army which Gordian III was to lead against the Persians in A.D. 242-4.⁷⁴

IV

Given the increasing integration of India into the real world and the thinking of Western civilization and society, as they existed under the Principate, we may now ask when does it commence? To whom, after the Eastern Mediterranean was segregated from South Asia in consequence of the gradual disintegration of the Hellenistic state-system and the rise of the Parthians, can the initiative to reopen the routes to India be imputed? Pompey is said to have contemplated it, Crassus, Caesar, Marcus Antonius, with their Parthian wars, could have aimed at retrieving the caravan routes; Augustus, Claudius, Nero, Trajan, Hadrian, Verus together with Marcus Aurelius are named or can be considered.

Ancient historiographical perspectives, as a rule, are little concerned with the economic operations discussed here so far. Thus, to answer our question we must rely on a variety of sources and sorts of sources: building remains, pottery, glass, in short archaeological material of different kinds, then coins, inscriptions, papyrus and, always the most important, literary tradition. Here, besides Pliny's report on navigation to India in his *Natural History*,⁷⁵ the *Periplus of the Red Sea* of an unknown author,⁷⁶ already mentioned, and Ptolemy's *Geography*—especially its introduction and book 7—are outstanding. The *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, a series of descriptions of navigation-routes and ports in the Red Sea (in the broader ancient meaning which can embrace also the modern Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean), from Egypt and Nabataea to Rhapta (Dar es Salaam, Tanzania?) in the African South and the mouth of the Ganges in the North-East, still offers many riddles, in its topography and, above all, in its chronological setting—the much disputed question of the date of its composition. This is all the more disconcerting, as the highly positive verdict, passed by Mommsen,⁷⁷ is still valid, 'that if Strabo and Tacitus had had a similarly open eye for these matters (i.e., for example, the political situation in the hinterland of Southern Arabia) as that practical man (viz. the merchant-author of the booklet), we would know more about antiquity'.

Before asking for possible Indian information, which is of an entirely different nature and can hardly be substantiated, a brief survey of the political situation on the subcontinent, as offered by present-day Indology, might be appropriate.⁷⁸ When the Sakas-Scythians, having broken away from the Parthians, had overthrown the domination of the Indo-Greeks, who originated from Bactria and were already on the decline, in the Indus-valley, an Indo-Sakian monarchy was established, partly again under Parthian sovereignty, hence also called Indo-Parthian. Its most prominent prince was Gundofarr (Gondophares) who may be dated A.D. 19 to 45 or later. Another incursion of nomads followed from the Central Asian steppe: the Kushan, under their great emperor Konishka, whose long debated period

⁷³ H. Goetz (1898-1976), 'An unfinished early Indian temple at Petra, Transjordanian', *East and West* 24 (1974), 245-8.

⁷⁴ Porphyry, *V. Plot.* 3.

⁷⁵ *NH* 6, 23/101-23/106.

⁷⁶ To be used in the edition of H. Frisk in *Göteborgs Högskolas Arsskrift* 33.1 (1927), 1-22. The problem of dating the *Periplus* will not be tackled in this paper. However, two articles of E. J. Asher in *Journ. of Trop. Geogr.* should not remain unnoticed by Classical scholars: 'Graeco-Roman nautical technology and modern sailing information: a confrontation between Pliny's account of the voyage to India and that of the "Periplus maris Erythraei" in the light of modern knowledge', 31 (1970) 10-26 ;

'The timetables of the "Periplus maris Erythraei" and of Pliny's voyage to India' 34 (1972), 1-7 (*Periplus* and following it Pliny's account both dated to time of Vespasian). Coarelli's comments, op. cit. (n. 30), 1013-1016, deserve attention (second cent.?).

⁷⁷ *Römische Geschichte* v (1885), 613, n. 1. See, however, the remarks of Th. Nöldeke, *Zs. d. dt. Morgenländ. Ges.* 39 (1885), 340.

⁷⁸ In this *coup d'oeil*, of course devoid of original research, I am following F. Wilhelm, who gives an excellent summary in volume xvii of the *Fischer-Welt-Geschichte* (A. T. Embree-F. Wilhelm, *Indien* (1967), 98-107). For references I am grateful to my Indologist colleagues R. Geib and U. Schneider.

of rule varies between A.D. 78 and 225 (the former reckoning probably being nearer to the truth), extended their domination as far as the Ganges, while their capital, corresponding to their original area of departure, remained in the West, at Purusapura (Peshawar, West Pakistan). Already a century later the great Kushan Empire was in decline, but it continued, weakened and fragmented into various smaller kingdoms, of which the most important was governed by the dynasty of the Nagas, originally between Ganges and Yamuna (Jumna), and later, with a much enlarged sphere of dominance, by the Gupta dynasty (A.D. c. 320-c. 500).

All these changes occurred in the North of the subcontinent from which the Aryan invaders had driven the Dravidian aborigines towards the South. It is obvious that the great ethnic movements of those centuries, affecting above all the northern regions, did not encourage long-distance traffic and busy exchange of goods, as Alexander's path from Iran to North India was again and again closed altogether for those purposes. The South, however, was largely spared the storms which disturbed the plains of the Indus and the Ganges. Here, in the first and second centuries A.D., the dynasty of the Satavahanas (also called Andhras) ruled the highland of the Deccan with its narrow western and eastern coastal strips. Although still tied to the pre-Aryan world by matriarchal succession, this splendid ruling family nevertheless opened the way to influences from the North Indian culture, dominated by Buddhism and also Brahminism. Further to the South, behind the protecting barrier of the empire of the Satavahanas, there were other smaller realms: the monarchy of the Pandyas in the middle, stretching towards the southern tip of the subcontinent (Cape Comorin) and known since c. 300 B.C., that of the Cheras on the West coast (Malabar Coast) and that of the Cholas in the East (Coromandel Coast). All four of these regimes pursued 'world'-traffic from their respective coasts.⁷⁹ The reflections of the political circumstances thus outlined, as found in the *Periplus Maris Erythraei*, are difficult to interpret, the work of the Graeco-Egyptian captain and merchant being drafted from an entirely different point of view.

It is to this period that some pieces of the archaic Tamil poetry of Southern India may be referred, at least indirectly. Their date is as much in dispute as their interpretation: seventh century A.D. and later. However, the oldest texts, according to the consensus of scholars, allude to facts of the first and second to third centuries A.D.⁸⁰ Since they are quoted repeatedly in all pertinent publications, it may suffice to recall a few lines: '... when the valiant ships, masterworks of the Yavanas (= Westerners), agitate the white foam of the Periyar, river of the Cheras (= Keralas), when they come with gold and depart with pepper, and Muziris (= Cranganore) swells from prosperity ...';⁸¹ or '... the terraces, the stores near the port, the towers with windows like deer-eyes ... , elsewhere in Puhar (= Kaveripattanam, on the Eastern Coast) ... the dwellings of the Yavanas ... , whose riches are immeasurable ...';⁸² or (in a poem dedicated to a prince of the middle and southern region, the reign of the Pandyas) 'that the wine with the sweet smell, brought by the valiant ships of the Yavanas, be presented to you ...';⁸³ or '... the Yavanas, with the murderous sword, at the door of the fortress, excellent guardians ...',⁸⁴ '... with their laced corselet, ... of terrible aspect, uncouth body, sharp eye ...'.⁸⁵ These then, with some proba-

⁷⁹ cf. C. Krishna Gairola, 'Die Satavahanas und der indische Welthandel', *Saeculum* 6 (1955), 282-91, 442. It may be noted that this same first century A.D. also saw a maritime expansion of the South Indian Kingdoms towards the Indonesian archipelago (cf. O. Botto, 'Il "Navadhyaksa" (ship's inspector) nel "Kautilya-arthashastra"', (Arth. of Kautilya) e l'attività marinara nell' India antica', *Riv. di Studi orient.* 36 (1961), 109-24). The authoritative work is still R. Mookerji, *Indian Shipping: A history of the sea-borne trade and maritime activity of the Indians from the earliest times* (1912). For recent views about the advanced type of Indian ships at the time see D. Schlingloff, 'Kalyanakin's Adventures: The identification of an Ajanta Painting', *Artibus Asiae* 38 (1976), 5-28.

⁸⁰ P. Maile, 'Les Yavanas dans l'Inde tamoule',

Mél. Asiatiques 1940/1 (= *Journ. Asiat* 232, fasc. 1), 85-123, is still the best account; cf. J. Filliozat, *Les relations extérieures de l'Inde* I (1956), 9 f.

⁸¹ From Tayan-Kannanar (name of the poet), *Agam* ('Tradition') 149, v. 7-11 (Meile p. 90).

⁸² From the poem *Cilappadigaram* ('The Song of the Anklet') 5, v. 10 and before (the first part is quoted by Mortimer Wheeler, *Rome* (n. 25), ... 133, the second by Meile p. 113).

⁸³ From Nakkirar (name of the poet), *Puram* 56, v. 17-20 (Meile p. 103).

⁸⁴ From *Cilappad.* (as n. 82) 14, v. 66 f. (Meile p. 112).

⁸⁵ From Nappudanar (name of the poet), *Mulleipattu* ('Song of the Jungle', belonging to the Pattupattu-Collection ('The ten Idyls')), v. 59-62 (Meile p. 107).

bility, are recollections of the 'world'-traffic in those South-Indian kingdoms with their great and smaller rajahs.

Thus, the presence of Western, i.e. Graeco-Roman, ships seems to be attested from the Indian side, with their import of gold, export of spices, their wines, armour, mercenaries, their 'comely girls' quoted both in Western and Indian sources,⁸⁶ because they surpassed in charm the native courtesans. If this information is scanty and vague, reports of the Indians about their own transmarine activities during those centuries are more or less non-existent.⁸⁷ It is possible that in this connection the guilds of Jain merchants are of some importance, followers of Jainism, that redeeming religion which once competed with Buddhism and prevailed in Southern India during the centuries before and after Christ. Max Weber compares their 'ascetic saving compulsion', resulting from the doctrines of their faith, with Puritans and Quakers with regard to their dominating position in commerce and business.⁸⁸ If reflexions of this kind have not yet been brought to bear upon our question, it is partly caused by the fact that the relevant statements, if referring to individual events at all (as some epigraphical evidence does), can hardly be dated. The beginning of most eras is anything but certain, and if they are establishable at all, it is only when they are connected with occidental chronological pivots. Since the Indian conception of the world is mythical rather than historical, for any establishment of chronology anchorage in mediterranean chronometry is as important as, for instance, Egyptian finds are for South-European prehistory.

The literary tradition being so unsettled on the Eastern side, archaeological discoveries are of special importance. A synopsis of most of the more recent information on this subject is due to Mortimer Wheeler, from 1944 to 1948 Director-General of Archaeology in India.⁸⁹ He gave a survey and interpretation of the main archaeological finds and especially of most Roman coins—single-finds and treasure-troves—discovered on the subcontinent.⁹⁰ Further research has followed the lines established by him.⁹¹ He also carried the excavations, casually started by French antiquaries on the territory of Pondicherry (150 km south of Madras), on a sound methodological basis, up to 1945, while the archaeologist J. M. Casal completed them in 1947 and 1948.⁹²

The comparatively small area of Arikamedu or Vira(m)patnam, as the French call it by another, better-established local name⁹³—its ancient Tamil designation being Puduchcheri ('New town'), hence Pondicherry, Greek Ποδοῦκη⁹⁴—has yielded storebuildings and parts of trade quarters (including water reservoirs and dyeing tanks) where more than fifty fragments of *terra sigillata*, red glazed Arretine ware, were unearthed, as well as c. 150 sherds of Western wine amphorae, small quantities of Roman glass and remains of a few Italian lamps.⁹⁵ Among the *terra sigillata* pieces those bearing potter's stamps were of special interest: VIBIE, CAMURI, ITTA⁹⁶ and C.VIBI OF(ficina).⁹⁷ 'The most knowledgeable . . . M. V. Taylor' was the first to interpret VIBIE as related to a firm at Arezzo, active until after the middle of the first century A.D.⁹⁸ Though the Arretine ware does not date beyond A.D. 45,⁹⁹ the amphorae may have preceded it and certainly continued after it, so

⁸⁶ cf. above n. 51. For Indian tradition see W. W. Tarn, *The Greeks in Bactria*, 374 f.

⁸⁷ Gairola (op. cit. n. 79), for this purpose, has only western evidence to quote.

⁸⁸ 'Die Wirtschaftsethik der Weltreligionen II: Hinduismus und Buddhismus' (originally 1916/17) in *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssoziologie* II² (1923), 202 ('asketischer Sparzwang').

⁸⁹ *My archaeological mission to India and Pakistan* (1976).

⁹⁰ 'Roman contact with India, Pakistan and Afghanistan' in *Aspects of Archaeology pres. to O. G. S. Crawford* (1951), 345–81; idem, *Rome beyond the Imperial Frontiers* (1954) (unaltered German translation, *Der Fernhandel des römischen Reiches*, 1965), 137–45.

⁹¹ cf. C. Rodewaldt, *Money in the age of Tiberius* (1976), 46–51; n. 378 has valuable supplements to the analyses of Wheeler to which must be added P. L. Gupta, 'Roman trade in India', in S. S. Mookerji *Felicit. Vol.* (Varanesi, 1969), 169–80.

⁹² Wheeler, opp. cit. (n. 89 and 90); J. M. Casal, *Fouilles de Virampatnam-Arikamedu* (1949).

⁹³ J. Filliozat, op. cit. (n. 80), 17 f. (Virampatnam); cf. J. M. Casal, *Fouilles*, 14; 61 (Virampatnam).

⁹⁴ Wheeler, *Rome* (n. 90), 147.

⁹⁵ Wheeler, *Rome*, 149 f.

⁹⁶ R. E. M. Wheeler—A. Ghosch—Krishna Deva, 'Arikamedu', *Ancient India* 2 (1946), 39 f.

⁹⁷ The fourth inscribed sherd seems to have turned up during the French excavations in 1947–8 (cf. J. M. Casal, *Fouilles*, 35 with pl. xv B) and is thus read by Wheeler, *Rome*, 149 f.

⁹⁸ M. Wheeler, *My archaeological mission to India and Pakistan* (1976), 47, cf. also Wheeler etc., loc. cit. (n. 96). A. Oxé—H. Comfort, *Corpus Vas. Arret.* (1968), do not contribute to the elucidation of any of the four stamps.

⁹⁹ Wheeler, *Rome*, 148; L. Ohlenroth, *Germania* 30 (1952), 389–92, tends to date the material, according to the shape of the vessels, as late Augustan.

that the first century A.D. may be called the, or at least a, flourishing period of this port, with a marked emphasis on its first half. This is also suggested by one of twenty-one graffitti found on sherds of local pottery and carved in 'Brahman' (the oldest Indian writing), but mostly conceived in Tamil, the ciphers of which the French Indologist J. Filliozat would be inclined to read as a dating equivalent to A.D. 24.¹⁰⁰ This might be doubtful, but the approximate date and the ancient name, occurring both in the *Periplus Maris Erythraei* and in Ptolemy,¹⁰¹ should not be questioned.

As to the date and direction of busy trading activity, coin finds generally confirm what has been observed at the site of Poduke. The vast majority of all Roman coins has been recorded south of the Vindhya Mountains, i.e. in Central and above all in Southern India. Apart from an isolated *denarius* of Tiberius in Taxila, there are no first-century finds (unmixed with later coins) at all beyond the line of these heights. All issues of the first century are of silver or gold, with a predominance of coins of Augustus and Tiberius, while with and after Nero they decrease notably in number,¹⁰² and they all seem to have been buried after only a short period of use. A recent analysis of the South-Indian coin finds makes it likely that the Western merchants reaching these coasts operated with certain denominations which were exclusively appreciated in the country,¹⁰³ and that, owing to the increased liabilities of the Roman West, a switch was effected, about the middle of the century, to the gold standard (one *aureus* the equivalent of twenty-five *denarii*) to which again, some thirty years or so later, bullion began to be preferred.¹⁰⁴

V

To whom therefore, to return to our question after these digressions, must the re-opening of the connections with India in a way that broader circles might benefit by them, be referred? That it could not happen on Alexander's path i.e. the overland route, is clear from the distribution of the coin finds and by our references to contemporary ethnic movements in the regions of Parthia and Northern India. The discoveries made on Indian soil point to the first century A.D. without doubt. Thus Trajan must be passed over, although of all the Emperors he is the first—and the last—to have approached India and its problems as closely as the Persian Gulf, when during his Parthian campaign (A.D. 114–17) he occupied Mesene, the estuary region of the Euphrates and Tigris,¹⁰⁵ and ordered a fleet to be stationed there which could reach India.¹⁰⁶ Leaving aside all inevitable reminiscences of Alexander the Great,¹⁰⁷ it must be stated that Trajan concluded rather than initiated a development when he ordered the Arabian kingdom of the Nabataeans to be annexed as a province in A.D. 106. As a client kingdom, it had functioned as a terminus for both the Red Sea traffic and the caravan commerce of South-eastern Arabia under the lucrative control of Rome. Of his predecessor's Eastern innovations it was this which Hadrian did not cancel, while he

¹⁰⁰ J. Filliozat, op. cit. (n. 80), 21 f. (to Wheeler et al., op. cit. (n. 96), 114 (no. 19), the sense remained uncertain).

¹⁰¹ *Peripl. M. Er.* 60; Ptol., *Geogr.* 7, 1, 14; cf. the article of H. Treidler, *RE* XXI. 1, 1145 f., excellent for the time of its composition (before the second World War).

¹⁰² cf. Wheeler, *Rome*, 137 f., based on his contribution 'Roman contact with India, Pakistan and Afghanistan' in *Aspects of Archaeology presented to O. G. S. Crawford* (1951), 345–81. This general impression still holds true after some new finds and the detailed scrutiny of C. Rodewald, *Money* (n. 91), 48–51 with table v.

¹⁰³ Rodewald, *Money*, 48 f. lays stress on the almost complete absence of republican silver from the Indian hoards of the imperial period, and on the fact that of 371 identified *denarii* of Augustus, 368 are of the C. and L. *Caesares* issue (c. 2 B.C.–A.D. 11, *Rom. Imp. Coin.* 1 Aug. no. 350), and that of the 1033 *denarii* of Tiberius 1029 are of the *Livia* or *Pax*-Series (A.D. 16–37, *Rom. Imp. Coin.* 1 Tib. no. 3). Hence the author's suggestion that India-bound captains were provided with the required currency by bankers in Egypt.

¹⁰⁴ Rodewald, *Money*, 48–51.

¹⁰⁵ Cass. Dio 68, 28, 4 (in A.D. 116, Spasinus Charax (Characene) belonged to the king of Mesene's dominion). For Characene, which at this time can be equated with Mesene, see S. A. Nodelman, 'A preliminary history of Characene', *Berytus* 13 (1961), 83–121. The fundamental treatment of Charax (and nearby (Ph)oratha = Forat) as the terminal harbours for Palmyrene long-distance traffic remains H. Seyrig, 'Inscription relative au commerce maritime de Palmyre', *Mélanges F. Cumont* 1 (1936), 397–402.

¹⁰⁶ Eutr. 8, 3, 2. The location of the harbour is not known; it may have been near the modern Kuwait, as A. Dihle affirms (in *Mullus: Festschrift f. Th. Klauser* (1964), 65) referring to F. Altheim, *Literatur u. Gesellschaft i. ausgehenden Altertum* II (1950), 82 f. who, however, is discussing the institutions of L. Verus in A.D. 163–5.

¹⁰⁷ For the peculiar mixture of Trajan's imitation of Alexander with his real policy the *locus classicus* is W. Weber, *Untersuchungen zur Geschichte des Kaisers Hadrian* (1907), 8–14.

deemed untenable—or unprofitable—his attempt to bring the Northern, i.e. Mesopotamian, routes under Roman authority.

Reverting to the first century proper, Domitian's 'Indian laurel' will presumably remain the traditional fiction of poets.¹⁰⁸ But it was Nero for whom E. Kornemann and his pupil W. Schur (whose promised article 'Osthhandel' has never appeared) postulated, with the background of his still essentially unexplained philhellenism, a new Eastern policy mainly determined by economic interests—and accordingly postdated the *Periplus maris Erythraei* until some time after Nero's principate, namely between A.D. 87 and 105.¹⁰⁹ However, the dispatch of a party of praetorian guards, with centurions among them, under the command of a *tribunus militum*, in order to explore the border area between Upper Egypt and Nubia and thus to prepare for an alleged *Bellum Aethiopicum*,¹¹⁰ and details of the campaigns which Domitius Corbulo led in Caucasian Armenia, do not suffice to sustain Kornemann and Schur's theory, even if we disregard the numerous other hypotheses of theirs which critical scholars have refused to accept. The reconnaissance enterprise towards the realms west of the Red Sea can at best have been meant to prepare for the protection and strengthening of the artery of Romano-Indian economy. The special interest which the most prominent of the political advisers of the young Princeps, the philosopher Seneca, took in India, may point in the same direction. The title, but unfortunately not much more, of a whole monograph of his *De situ Indiae*, is preserved.¹¹¹ At the same time the Northern passages, as a consequence of the ethnic unrest in the Armeno-Iranian, i.e. Parthian and Indian zones, were entirely barred. This appears, as in a snapshot, from an incident mentioned by Tacitus. Corbulo, in A.D. 59/60 from his headquarters in Tigranocerta, has ambassadors of the Hyrcanians, a people dwelling on the South-eastern shores of the Caspian Sea and north of the Parthians with whom they were at war, who intended to return to their country, escorted *ad litora maris Rubri*; since the intention was to prevent them from crossing the Euphrates and being arrested by the Parthians, only the Red Sea proper can be meant. From there they could embark on one of the regular ships bound for India and thus—via the Hindu Kush—'reached their homes'.¹¹²

A further step back in time cannot be avoided: Claudius has been credited with the initiative. But properly speaking, for any special role which this princeps could have acted in matters Roman and Indian, we can quote only the exciting story which Pliny has preserved.¹¹³ A freedman of Annianus Plocamus, farmer of the Red Sea taxes, had been driven by adverse winds to the coast of Ceylon and as a result endured a half year's involuntary sojourn there. *Post hoc*, which is not always *propter hoc*, Pliny records a Ceylonese embassy—'principe eorum Rachia', a rajah—to Claudius, which gave an opportunity to ascertain many data on the geography and the customs of that island.¹¹⁴ It is of the same tax-farming

¹⁰⁸ 'Indica laurus': Stat., *Silv.* 4, 1, 41 (composed for the Princeps entering his seventeenth consulate on 1 Jan. 95); N. C. Debevoise, *A Political History of Parthia* (1938), 215 (but not S. Gsell, *Essai sur le règne de l'Empereur Domitien* (1893), 233 f.) interpreted this and other allusions of the court poet as announcements of seriously planned campaigns. If so, Trajan, as in other instances, would have taken those schemes from Domitian's 'drawers' (cf. E. H. Warmington, *The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India*² (1974), 94).

¹⁰⁹ E. Kornemann, 'Die historischen Nachrichten des sog. Periplus maris Erythraei über Arabien: Ein Beitrag zur ernerischen Orientpolitik', *Ianus* 1 = *Festschrift Lehmann-Haupt* (1921), 55-72; W. Schur, *Die Orientpolitik des Kaisers Nero* (1923) (cf. the review of O. Leuze, *Deutsche Lit. Zeitg.* 27 (1924), 343-7). In *RE* xviii. 4 (1949), 1989, s.v. 'Parthia', W. Schur referred to an article 'Osthhandel' as forthcoming.

¹¹⁰ Sen., *NQ* 6, 8, 3; Plin., *NH* 6, 35/181-6, cf. 12, 8/19; Cass. Dio 63, 8, 1 seem to deal with one and the same undertaking (F. Hintze, *Meroitica* 1: *Sudan im Altertum* (East Berlin, 1973), 131; 140 f. ingeniously pleaded for two). It is best dated by Schur, *Orientpolitik*, 41 f. in 61/3 (against which M. T. Griffin, *Seneca* (1976), 396; 399 f.; 465 has no serious objec-

tion). For the significance of the expedition within the history of discoveries see L. P. Kirwan, 'Rome beyond the Southern Egyptian Frontier', *Proceed. Brit. Acad.* 63 (1977), 13-31; 28 f. Note Sen., *NQ* 4a, 2, 4, where the Nile, Ethiopia and the factories of the Indian Sea (*commercium Indici maris*) are mentioned in one context.

¹¹¹ The work is quoted by Serv., *Comm. Verg. Aen.*, 9, 30 and used by Pliny, *NH* 6, 21/57-60 (K. G. Sallmann, *Die Geographie des Älteren Plinius in ihrem Verhältnis zu Varro* (1971), 48 believes that this whole passage derives from Seneca); Ed. Norden, *Die germanische Urgeschichte in Tacitus Germania*³ (1923), 39 estimated it as of considerable quality.

¹¹² Tac., *Ann.* 14, 25, 2: 'Eos (sc. Hyrcanos) regredientes Corbulo, ne Euphraten transgressi hostium custodiis circumvenirentur, dato praesidio ad litora maris Rubri deducit, unde vitatis Parthorum finibus patrias in sedes remeare'. The usual interpretation of *mare Rubrum* here as meaning the Persian Gulf part of it (Schur, *Orientpolitik*, 75, n. 2; J. G. C. Anderson, *CAH* x (1934), 264; E. H. Warmington, *Commerce*² (1974), 88) makes no sense.

¹¹³ *NH* 6, 22/84: 'Anni Plocami, qui maris Rubri vectigal a fisco redemerat, libertus . . .'

¹¹⁴ *NH* 6, 22/85-91.

firm that, several years ago, inscriptions were published, precisely dated to day, month and year: 2 and 5 July A.D. 6. They name Lysas, a slave of P. Annius Plocamus, viz. the father or grandfather of the one who transacted the business under Claudius.¹¹⁵ Also an inscription recording a certain C. Numidius Eros, *exs Ind(i)a red(i)e(n)s*, in March 2 B.C.,¹¹⁶ is connected, if not with Plocamus, then in any case with our subject. These texts have been found on the road from Aphrodite to Berenike, the final section of one of the two caravan routes (one described accurately by Pliny, who lists its individual section)¹¹⁷ on which the goods were transported from Coptus, terminus of the Nile ships, to the Red Sea.

Thus, as the inscriptions show, these trade routes were in full operation already in Augustan times, and it is indeed with the first Princeps (to whom other indications also point) that we have to search for a large-scale revival of the trade with India. However, the land connections being more or less barred by the Parthians, all significantly increased and extensive navigation on the Red Sea (in its ancient meaning) depended on the availability of knowledge about a nautical fact of the first order in this area of the ocean, namely the monsoon, which blows in summer from South-west to North-east, and in the opposite direction in winter. With its help the original course of proceeding from harbour to harbour, both tedious and costly, could be abandoned and it became possible for instance to embark from Adana (the modern Aden) and head directly for a port on the West coast of India. The author of the *Periplus M. Er.* and the Elder Pliny share the opinion that the Indian traffic of their time would not have been possible without the harnessing of this natural force.¹¹⁸

When did its observation and use, no doubt familiar to the coast people of India¹¹⁹ and Arabia for ages, pass, with all its far reaching consequences, into Western cognizance? Certainly not, as has been asserted,¹²⁰ on the occasion of the forced voyage to Ceylon which Plocamus' freedman underwent. In the *Periplus* the 'discoverer' is called Ἴππυκλῶς κυβερνήτης, captain Hippalos. Instead of searching for the date of this semi-mythical figure¹²¹ in whom Greek tradition personalized a decisive step in the development of Eastern seafaring, it seems preferable to ascertain when the volume of trade with India had reached a degree which was unimaginable without the use of the monsoon.

Strabo's statement that in 26-5 B.C. 120 vessels annually sailed for India from Myos Hormos alone,¹²² provides a clear *terminus ante quem*. W. Otto was the first to see, as early as 1913,¹²³ the importance in this context of the appearance of a new Late Ptolemaic official, ὁ ἐπὶ τῆς Ἐρυθρᾶς καὶ τῆς Ἰνδικῆς θαλάσσης (or *vice versa*), which he then dated to 78 B.C.,¹²⁴ and later, after the Coptus-inscription, *Sammelbuch* v, 8036, had come to his notice, to 110/09 B.C.¹²⁵ This latter text has recently been assigned, perhaps with more probability, to the year 74/3 B.C.¹²⁶ Thus the starting years of an organized traffic between Egypt and India cannot be later than the beginning of the reign of Ptolemy XII Auletes (80-51 B.C.). It is obvious that the new source of profit, considerable though it was,¹²⁷ was not so much to

¹¹⁵ D. Meredith, *JRS* 43 (1953), 38-40.

¹¹⁶ D. Meredith, *Chron. d'Ég.* 29 (1954), 281-7 (already copied in 1826). For the lively traffic between Coptus and Myos Hormos (or Berenike respectively) from Augustus to Vespasian, W. Otto-H. Bengtson, *Zur Geschichte des Niederganges des Ptolemäerreiches* (1938), 213, refer to the business papers of a firm of camel-keepers ed. by J. G. Tait, *Greek ostraka in the Bodleian Library at Oxford and various other collections* (1930) (Flinders Petrie Coll. nos. 220-304).

¹¹⁷ *NH* 6, 26/102 f.

¹¹⁸ *Per. M. Er.* 57; Pliny, *NH* 6, 26/100 f.; 104.

¹¹⁹ For Indian seafaring at this time see above n. 79.

¹²⁰ e.g. implicitly by E. H. Warmington, *Commerce*, 44 (modified by him in *OCD*², 516, s.v. 'Hippalus' and on p. 394 b of *Commerce*), and still maintained by J. M. Derret, *D. Kl. Pauly* II, 1398 f., s.v. 'Indischer Ozean'.

¹²¹ cf. W. W. Tarn, *Bactria*, 369. A selected doxography of the problem of dating 'Hippalos' and the 'discovery' is offered by J. Pirenne, *Le développement* etc. (see above n. 30), 108 f.; cf. also R. Böker,

RE Suppl. IX, 403-12, s.v. 'Monsunschiffahrt nach Indien'.

¹²² 2, 5, 12 (118), during Aelius Gallus' prefecture of Egypt and before the latter's Arabian War. Harbour-statistics of Berenike, the other Red Sea port for Indian trade, are not mentioned by Strabo. His allusions to 'big convoys' dispatched to India (17, 1, 13 (798)) refer to a later, but still Augustan, time, cf. summarily 15, 1, 4 (686). The detachment of police troops (not attested before Pliny, *NH* 6, 26/101, cohorts of archers) may already have been a Ptolemaic institution.

¹²³ *RE* VIII, 2, 1660 f., s.v. 'Hippalos' no. 3.

¹²⁴ Based on the Philae inscription, Dittenberger *OGIS* I, 186 = *SB* v, 8398.

¹²⁵ W. Otto-H. Bengtson, op. cit. (n. 116), 1-22; 194-218, starting from the said inscription, re-edited by H. Henne, *Rev. de Phil.* 10 (1936), 318-24.

¹²⁶ L. Mooren, *Anc. Soc.* 3 (1972), 127-33, cf. E. van't Dack, 'L'évolution de l'épistratégie dans la Thébaïde au I^{er} siècle av. J.-C.', in *Miscellanea in honorem J. Vergote* (1975/6), 577-87.

¹²⁷ Strabo 17, 1, 13 (798) stresses the high contribution which Indian commerce already made to the state revenues under Auletes.

benefit the declining power of the Ptolemies¹²⁸ as the Roman victor lying in wait for his prey. In short, all signs point to Octavian-Augustus.

VI

In the testamentary account of his political achievement Augustus, accordingly, places upon record, in a prominent passage in the chapters devoted to foreign policy, 'the embassies often sent to him' by Indian princes, which had not happened before with any Roman commander.¹²⁹ It cannot be expected, and especially not in a document of this kind, that all—and even less the true—motives of his operations should be voiced. However, on the same column of the inscription, two armies are emphatically reported as having been led 'under my command and auspices' 'at about the same time against Ethiopia and against the so-called Fortunate Arabia'.¹³⁰ One wonders that a view, common at least since Rostovtzeff and Lesquier¹³¹—that the double campaign was, among other reasons, if not predominantly, to serve the re-establishment and protection of the maritime connections with India¹³²—could have become obscured in more recent publications. In S. Jameson's new and thorough treatment,¹³³ the chronology of the expeditions of Aelius Gallus on the Arabian side of the Red Sea, and of C. Petronius, his successor in the Egyptian prefecture,¹³⁴ towards Nubia on the other side, has been revised, and perhaps not altogether conclusively. Whether Gallus opened the attack in 26 B.C., and Petronius in 25, or each one year later, cannot alter the fact that the two campaigns were part of the grandiose programme to justify the new system, the Principate, by an expansive imperialism which Augustus himself served with the utmost personal exertion, after the internal compromise of January 27 B.C., in Gaul, Spain and almost in Britain.¹³⁵ Since late in 27 his headquarters had been in Tarraco (Tarragona). There, in 26 and in the following year numerous embassies presented themselves to the Princeps: those of the Parthians, Indians and Scythians (which possibly means the Kushan) are reported,¹³⁶ but may not have been the only ones from the Far East. It is difficult not to see here diplomatic moves accompanying the parallel expeditions along the Red Sea. Although the Arabian War of Gallus ended without military success, nevertheless, as is shown by the ensuing development of the Red Sea trade, the outcome of the two campaigns, assessed from the point of view of trade policy, proved altogether positive.¹³⁷ If it has been said that the new monarch gained his principate in the battles of

¹²⁸ How near, at least psychologically, India was to Cleopatra is shown by her last plan, to 'haul' her fleet 'over' the Suez isthmus and 'let down' the ships into the Arabian gulf' (i.e. the Red Sea proper) and 'to settle abroad' (which might presumably mean India), Plut., *Ant.* 69, 4, cf. Cass. Dio 51, 6, 3; at the end she ordered her eldest son Kaisarion to be escorted 'through Ethiopia to India', Plut., *Ant.* 81, 4, cf. Cass. Dio 51, 15, 5.

¹²⁹ *RG* (Col. v) 31, 1: 'Ad me ex India regum legationes saepe missae sunt non visae ante id tempus apud quemquam Romanorum ducem'. In a more panegyric and abridged paragraph Suetonius (*Aug.* 21, 3) depicts Indians and Scythians as having asked for the friendship of the Princeps and the Roman people. But since Augustus explicitly differentiates between the Indians, who merely sent delegations, and the *Scythae* and other peoples who by the same means sought his friendship (*RG* 31, 2), we would not expect to read the names of the 'Kings' from India on the bronze tablet of an Augustan *formula sociorum atque amicorum*.

¹³⁰ *RG* (Col. v) 26, 5: 'Meo iussu et auspicio ducti sunt duo exercitus eodem fere tempore in Aethiopiā et in Arabiam quae appellatur Eudaemon...'

¹³¹ J. Lesquier, *L'Armée romaine d'Égypte* (1918), 9 ff.; M. Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire* (1926), 53 (unchanged in the second edition, 1957): 'The Arabian expedition of Aelius Gallus was not a complete success, but at any rate it secured good harbours for Roman traders on their way from Egypt to the ports of

India', with a reference to *Arch. f. Pap.* 4 (1908), 306 f., where, however, Rostovtzeff was less outspoken, stating (p. 308) that greed for money was not the sole cause of the expedition of Aelius Gallus. Cf. also J. G. C. Anderson, *CAH* x (1934), 250 and F. Oertel, *CAH* x, 389.

¹³² The specific purpose of Petronius' campaign, the protection of Egypt on the South, is of course not to be denied.

¹³³ 'Chronology of the campaigns of Aelius Gallus and C. Petronius', *JRS* 58 (1968), 71–84. In section v, 'The object of the expeditions', 79–84, any aspect other than local is explicitly suppressed. Yet generally speaking, the historian is not obliged to acquiesce only in the motives transmitted by the sources. Strabo (2, 5, 12 (118), cf. above n. 122) states at least the increase of Indian commerce as a consequence of Gallus' campaign. The latest and very circumstantial study of the geographer H. v. Wissmann in *ANRW* ix. 1 (1976), 308–544 does not contribute to our question.

¹³⁴ Gallus 26–5 B.C., Petronius 25/4–22 according to P. A. Brunt, *JRS* 65 (1975), 142.

¹³⁵ cf. W. Schmitthenner, *Historia* 11 (1962), 43 f. = *Augustus* (1969), 425 f.

¹³⁶ Justin 42, 5, 6 ('Parthi'); Oros. 6, 21, 19 f. ('Indi', 'Scythae'); for the Indians see also Cass. Dio 54, 9, 8 (προκηρυκευόμενοι πρότερον, in 20 B.C.); in addition the general references.

¹³⁷ See Strabo, loc. cit. (n. 133), and e.g. Rostovtzeff, *opp. citt.* (n. 131).

Asturia,¹³⁸ one might suggest still more pointedly, that he also won it by his active steps in relation to India.

Augustus' Eastern policy, as a matter of fact, was continued, especially in the years 22 to 19 B.C., with a great effort at *détente*, if this current catch-word may be used. Its result was the adjustment of interests *uti possidebant* between Rome and the Parthian empire, certainly one of the foundations of the prosperity now commencing in the East, and with far-reaching consequences.¹³⁹ It is beyond dispute that in such a situation a trade route far from the Parthians and to some extent safely under Roman control, was of special significance. The 'big convoys' described by Strabo at the time of the first Princeps as crossing to India were the reward of Augustus' policy.¹⁴⁰ In the continental area of Mesopotamia and Iran, however, only modest results could be expected of the new agreement. It is more than unlikely that a certain Maes (Mahes) with the surname Titianus, a Graeco-Egyptian wholesale merchant in Syria, could have organized in Augustan times a network of commercial agencies along the 'silk-road' as far as the Pamirs, as has been inferred, too confidently as it seems, from a note preserved by the geographer Ptolemy.¹⁴¹

Augustus, therefore, never abandoned more offensive plans designed to open up the land routes and to safeguard more firmly the passage by sea to India. The Eastern supreme command of the heir apparent C. Caesar (*cos.* A.D. 1), lasting from 1 B.C. till his death in A.D. 4,¹⁴² was prepared carefully and long in advance. Diplomatic negotiations preceded it, and one or several regional experts were dispatched in order to collect information on the spot.¹⁴³ When Augustus, in the spring of 1 B.C.,¹⁴⁴ solemnly bade farewell to his departing grandson and adoptive son, then of the ominous age of nineteen years, he is reported to have 'prayed to the gods that the goodwill of Pompey, the courage of Alexander and his own fortune might accompany him'.¹⁴⁵ The latter did not fall to Gaius' share. Extensive inspections and even a limited military venture kept him from 1 B.C. to A.D. 1 on both the Egyptian and the Arabian side of the Red Sea, which makes the reminiscence of the actions in 25-4 B.C. all the more vivid.¹⁴⁶ In the course of A.D. 1 he betook himself with his staff to Syria where in A.D. 2, on the Euphrates, an encounter with the king of the Parthians with an highly elaborate protocol took place. Soon afterwards he suffered an injury in Armenia from the effects of which he died in A.D. 4.

Nevertheless the Pax Augusta remained undisturbed, and it may have been a true expression of public feeling when, in the gulf of Puteoli, the crew of an Alexandrian ship, meeting the yacht of the aged Augustus in the last months of his life, took up positions on

¹³⁸ W. Schmitthenner, *op. cit.* (n. 135), 52 f. = *Augustus*, 438 f.

¹³⁹ A. J. Toynbee, *A Study of History* ix (1954), 528 f. where, however, its duration is exaggerated.

¹⁴⁰ Strabo 17, 1, 13 (798) (see n. 122). Note also the description, quoted by Strabo 15, 1, 73 (719) from the eyewitness account by Nicolaus of Damascus, of the Indian embassy, with a letter in Greek from their king, which arrived at Antioch, presumably in 20 B.C. en route to see Augustus on Samos (Dio 54, 9, 8-10). See n. 136 above.

¹⁴¹ Ptol., *Geogr.* 1, 11, 6 f. quoting Marinus of Tyre (c. A.D. 110); see also W. Kubitschek, *RE* Suppl. vi, 235 f. s.v. 'Maes qui et Titianus'. Augustan—or Hadrianic—dating by M. Cary, *CQ* 50 (1956), 130-4; 'soon after A.D. 100', M. Cary—E. H. Warmington, *Die Entdeckungen der Antike* (1966), 312 (the English edition of 1963 was not available to me): Cary's early dating is accepted by J. Thorley, *Gr. and R.* 16 (1969), 215.

¹⁴² The best description is still by V. Gardthausen, *Augustus* 1. 3 (1904), 1128-47 ('Mission of Gaius', 'Gaius in the Orient'); cf. J. G. Zetzel, 'New light on Gaius Caesar's Eastern Campaign', *Gr. R. and Byz. Stud.* 11 (1970), 259-66; G. W. Bowersock, *JRS* 61 (1971), 227 f.; T. D. Barnes, *JRS* 64 (1974), 23; G. W. Bowersock, *JRS* 65 (1975), 182.

¹⁴³ Dionysius (or Isidorus) of Charax and perhaps Juba of Mauretania (cf. F. Jacoby, *Commentary to FGrH* no. 275 (1943), 326), see also S. A. Nodelmann, *Berytus* 13 (1961), 107; G. W. Bowersock, *JRS* 61 (1971), 227.

¹⁴⁴ Gardthausen, *Augustus* 1. 3, 1135.

¹⁴⁵ Plut., *Mor.* 207 E; cf. 319 D f., with Scipio instead of Alexander. Appropriately Mommsen comments (*Römische Geschichte* v (1885), 374) that the Oriental campaign might almost be described as a continuation of Alexander's journey.

¹⁴⁶ Gaius, whose Oriental command included Egypt and Syria (Oros. 7, 3, 4: 'ad ordinandas Aegypti Syriaeque provincias missus'), may well have stayed in Egypt more than a year. G. W. Bowersock, *JRS* 61 (1971), 227 argued persuasively, by reference to the inscription of the Pisan cenotaph (*CIL* xi, 1421 = *ILS* 140), that Gaius, while ordinary consul (A.D. 1), undertook a campaign, whatever this meant, near the Red Sea. Thirteen years later a plenipotentiary was again sent to the Orient on a similar mission, Germanicus Caesar (died A.D. 19). For the inscription of the famous journey which a Palmyrene merchant made on his behalf to the head of the Persian gulf, see J. Cantineau, *Syria* 12 (1931), 139-41, no. 18.

deck, solemnly dressed in sacrificial robes, and praised the Princes: 'Through thee we live, through thee we navigate, freedom and welfare we enjoy through thee'.¹⁴⁷

The history of this prosperity in the first century A.D. has been studied from Rostovtzeff to Duncan-Jones, and certain aspects particularly bearing upon our subject could be developed further.¹⁴⁸ Pliny's *Natural History* and, afterwards, the *Annals* of Tacitus are thoroughly acquainted with the complaint of rising luxury as a token of general decline.^{148a} The matter can be viewed also from the angle of financial policy. The same Pliny condemns, in too mercantilist a spirit perhaps, the drain of precious metals to the East,¹⁴⁹ without considering the advantages which the Fiscus derived from rising incomes in commerce and how money invested in the infrastructure would yield its full revenues only in time.¹⁵⁰

VII

The craving for pepper, incense and silk makes no World History, just as the Crusades were not undertaken for spices alone. However, the desire first of small groups, then of broader strata, for the attractions of a more agreeable life, is certainly an important factor in historical change.

The southern maritime route, as already suggested, was, in the main, almost never the sole way of communication between the Mediterranean and India during our period. The function of the great caravan centre of Palmyra has been alluded to above.¹⁵¹ And the Kushan, notwithstanding all the waves of pressure they exerted upon the Irano-Indian ethnic medley, at the same time acted as mediators of influences from the major contemporary powers. A symbol of the universal character of their empire is the title which Kanishka II, one of their later rulers,¹⁵² bore according to epigraphic sources. In Sanskrit it was 'Maharajasa Rajatirajasa Devaputrasa Kaisarasa', and it might be translated as 'Great King' (from India), 'King of Kings' (Iranian) 'Son of God' (cf. 'Son of Heaven' from China), 'Caesar'.¹⁵³

The historical evolution, described above in the terminology of Polybius as a passage from originally 'separate deeds' to their 'interwovenness' in one world, eventually rendered it necessary that European History, taken not in the geographical but in a cultural sense and including Russia and the Americas, should become World History—as it were, the 'World History of Europe'.¹⁵⁴ One of the earliest periods of this secular process, and within it some selected aspects only, perhaps deserving closer scrutiny, has been the object of this paper.

If Universal History, as observed at the beginning, can be treated either in a 'structural' ('theoretical') or in a 'practical' ('real') way, we can also distinguish between a vertical view, following the evolution of universal phenomena through the ages, and a more horizontal one, embracing a historical universe at a given time or epoch. It was the latter prospect which induced the author of these reflections to undertake his 'passage to India'.

Freiburg im Breisgau

¹⁴⁷ Suet., *Aug.* 98, 2: 'per illum se vivere, per illum navigare, libertate atque fortunis per illum frui'. L. Robert, offprint from *Stele* (en honneur de N. M. Kontoleon) (1977), 6, n. 36, refers to Philo, *Leg. ad Gaium* 151 for background of the anecdote of Suetonius.

¹⁴⁸ M. Rostovtzeff, *The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire* (1926) (and later translations and editions); R. Duncan-Jones, *The Economy of the Roman Empire: Quantitative Studies* (1974).

^{148a} This is a recurring subject with Pliny and needs further investigation. For Tacitus see above n. 48; for both cf. C. Rodewald, *Money* (n. 91), 29; 48; 50.

¹⁴⁹ *NH* 6, 26/101; 12, 41/84; cf. the paper of M. G. Raschke, read at the seventh Ann. Meeting of the Ass. of Am. Anc. Hist., Stanford Univ., May 1976, and presumably to be published: 'Balance of payments deficits in the Ancient World: The case of Rome's commerce with the East' (kind information from J. Nicols).

¹⁵⁰ cf. J. I. Miller, *The Spice Trade of the Roman Empire* (1969), 217 (also compares monetary issues in Elizabethan England).

¹⁵¹ See above, n. 105.

¹⁵² c. 100 years after Kanishka the Great (whose modern dating varies between A.D. 78 and 225) and for some twenty-five years, cf. R. Göbl, *Dokumente zur Geschichte der iranischen Hunnen in Baktrien und Indien II* (1967), 318.

¹⁵³ The quotation, well known to Indologists, is taken from B. Rowland jr., foreword to J. R. Rosenfield, *The dynastic art of the Kushans* (1967), p. vii.

¹⁵⁴ See above, n. 9.

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