




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Rezension


Kommentar schreiben


 Druckfassung 
Thematisch verwandte Rezensionen:

Kim M. Phillips:
 Before Orientalism. Asian Peoples and Cultures in European Travel Writing, 1245-1510, Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press 2014


Lucie Filipová:
 Erfüllte Hoffnung.

Städtepartnerschaften als Instrument der deutsch-französischen Aussöhnung, 1950-2000, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht 2015



Alexander Burka: Was blieb vom Fenster in den Westen? Zur Auslandskulturpolitik Österreichs in Ostmitteleuropa seit 1945 am Beispiel Polens und der Tschechoslowakei/Tschechiens, Bruxelles [u. a.]: Peter Lang 2011


Kris Manjapra: Age of Entanglement. German and Indian Intellectuals across Empire, Cambridge, MA / London: Harvard University Press 2014

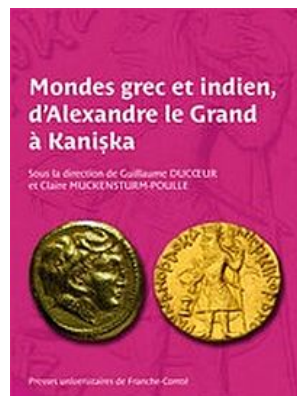

Quinn Slobodian (ed.): Comrades of Color. East Germany in the Cold War World, New York / Oxford: Berghahn Books 2015

Weitere Rezensionen von Richard Stoneman:

Marc Steinmann: Alexander der Große und die "nackten Weisen" Indiens. Der fiktive Briefwechsel zwischen Alexander und dem Brahmanenkönig Dindimus, Berlin: Frank & Timme 2012


Jaakko Juhani Peltonen: Alexander the Great in the Roman Empire. 150 BC to AD 600, London / New York: Routledge 2019

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Guillaume Ducoeur / Claire Muckensturm-Pouille: Mondes grec et indien, d'Alexandre le Grand à Kaniška

 Textgröße: [A](#) [A](#) [A](#)


The title of this book raises great expectations, of some form of synoptic view of Greek and Indian interaction over six centuries. In fact, it is a collection of specialised and narrowly focused studies. The volume collects the papers given at a conference held in Strasbourg in April 2021.

They are somewhat heterogeneous, bringing philology, archaeology and numismatics to bear on several aspects of the Central Asian world in the centuries following Alexander of Macedon's incursion into the region.

The opening paper, by G. Ducoeur discusses the naked philosophers of Taxila and takes issue with

G. Halkias' 2015 paper arguing that Calanos was a Buddhist. Ducoeur convincingly argues that Calanos' ascetic practices and his self-immolation in sickness, are consistent with a Brahmanical stance, but takes no cognisance of the arguments I proposed, in my book of 2019, *The Greek Experience of India*, that Calanos was an *ajīvika*. He seems to assume that all the naked ascetics adhered to the same sect, and that the two observed by Aristobulus, standing on one leg and enduring the heat of fires, respectively, are to be identified with Calanos and Mandanis, which is nowhere stated in the sources. He further suggests that there is no evidence that Pyrrho and Anaxarchus continued with the expedition beyond Bactria, thus obviating the possibility, as argued by Beckwith, myself, and others, that these philosophers were able to draw extensively on Calanos' wisdom to achieve an understanding of Buddhism (which would not entail that Calanos was a Buddhist) to develop their own philosophies.

C. Muckensturm-Pouille disentangles the varied and contradictory reports of the altars, or pillars, that Alexander is said to have erected on the west (or east) bank of the Hyphasis to mark the easternmost limit of his expedition. No trace of these structures now remains. Strabo avers that these were a response to the pillars erected by Heracles in his conquest of India. It was clear already to Eratosthenes that the stories linking Alexander to the previous expedition of Heracles were invented in the entourage of Alexander. In fact, the *Alexander Romance* is the first ancient source to explicitly refer to columns of Heracles encountered by Alexander, and probably represents the earliest strand of this legend-making. Muckensturm-Pouille quotes the passage of the Romance but treats it as the latest of the texts she discusses, ignoring the growing scholarly opinion that the work is fundamentally Hellenistic, and strangely describing the Romance as a 'bios' on the Plutarchan model. This may be the result of relying solely on the French translation by Tallet-Bonvalot, with a nod to Kroll's edition of 1926, rather than the more recent edition of Stoneman and Gargiulo (2007), which offers extensive arguments for an early date, not to mention other work already cited above. The almost exclusively Francophone frame of reference of both these chapters makes them out of date even before publication.

Two papers by O. Boppearachchi and Z. Tarzi examine the persistence of Indo-Greek iconography in, respectively, the coins of Gandhara and a group of reliquaries apparently originating from the region of Jalalabad. Boppearachchi shows ingeniously how small-scale Indian sculptures may have influenced the Greek artists who created the coinage of kings from Agathocles onwards, while Tarzi

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demonstrates the persistence of Greek techniques and motifs in the art of the Greco-Bactrians, Indo-Greeks, and Sakas.

K. K. Kim presents translations of two Chinese texts of the *Questions of King Milinda*, originally published in 1894 and 1992, both deriving from the Pali text. Some variations from the original indicate an affinity with the Sarvastivada school of Buddhism, and Kim suggests that the rather hagiographic treatment accorded to King Milinda is designed to make the work more palatable to a literate, i.e. upper-class, Chinese readership, which would include sovereign rulers.

The article by T. Grandjean considers the fragmentary Oration 18 of Himerius which recounts the legend that Indians who travelled with Dionysus turned the Cilician River Melas black by bathing in it. Grandjean plausibly links this to the desire of Himerius, writing a welcome address for a new student, Basil of Caesarea, to link his destination to the custom of Christian baptism as well as the initiatory dunking of new students in deep water. This paper thus shows that, while Greek motifs persisted in India up to the third century CE, India was also not forgotten in the Greek world; but it is rather an oddity in a volume otherwise focussed on the Indian world of the Greeks.

Like so many conference volumes, this one stands as a souvenir of a no doubt enjoyable gathering of scholars, without representing anything really new in the study of the Indo-Greek world. One may hope that future such volumes will do more to deploy the work of archaeologists (especially from Italy) who are changing our understanding of the Gandharan scene, as well as art historians (represented by the recently completed Gandhara Connections series of publications emerging from Oxford) and even philologists and philosophers (not only myself and Beckwith, but e.g. J. Garfield, A. Kuzminski, not to mention the heroic dead such as F. Nietzsche and T. McEvilley) who are chipping away at the intellectual connections between Greece and India from the third century BCE onwards. Scholarship is more likely to advance as an international enterprise than by being treated as an exclusively French preserve, and all these disciplines are essential to a broad and nuanced reconstruction of 'Mondes grec et indien'.

Richard Stoneman