

Hilmar Klinkott. *Der Satrap. Ein achaimenidischer Amtsträger und seine Handlungsspielräume*. Frankfurt am Main, Verlag Antike, 2005, 578 p. (Oikumene. Studien zur antiken Weltgeschichte; 1).

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- <sup>1</sup> The first volume in a new series of studies on world history in Antiquity, especially on the relations of the Mediterranean and the Near East, is about one of the central institutions of the administration of the Achaemenid Empire, viz. about the satrap. The satrapal system, being one of the Empire's essential pillars, is known particularly through the (often biased) information given by Greek authors. The present account, however, is based not only on the Greek literary sources, but also on epigraphic and other material written in the various languages of the Empire.
- <sup>2</sup> The work consists of two unequal parts: the topic of Part I (pp. 19-394) is the satrap's duties, powers and scope for action, i.e. his office; whereas part II (pp. 395-499) treats the satrapies of the Empire, especially how they were established and how many and which particular satrapies existed. Here also is a useful first Appendix listing all the passages where names and titles of satraps are attested for the individual countries (pp. 503-516). By way of introduction, the origin of the title 'satrap' and its explanations offered in Antiquity are discussed and the sources concerning the satrap and his office are surveyed, starting from the evidence found in Greek authors. Here the various enumerations of countries and peoples in the Achaemenid inscriptions and most of the other references in choronyms and ethnonyms are also reviewed. When reading the discussion about how the Greek sources mark the administrative area in the satrap's title, one is surprised that the relevant Old Persian expression attested twice in DB is

not cited at all. The main section of Part I then deals with the satrap's tasks and competence in home and foreign affairs: on the one hand, in jurisdiction, administration, taxation, coining (with the interesting observation that all the so-called « satrapal coins » are from satraps appointed 'strategists' in some military operation by the Great King), in cult, military affairs etc.; on the other hand in operations outside his own administrative territory, in diplomatic relations and the authority to make political treaties on his own.

- 3 Part II analyses and evaluates both the infrastructure of the Empire (roads, post, treasuries, magazines, archives, palaces, gardens, citadels, etc.) and the reasons for establishing a satrapy (e.g., for its strategic or economic importance). This chapter is followed by a detailed discussion of the entire wealth of satrapies as documented in the available fragmentary listings and other occasional instances. Even if incomplete, this account leads to a chapter of the utmost importance, *viz.* a description of development in each country and in the Empire in general during the two centuries from Cyrus to Alexander.
- 4 The author discusses many quite different aspects of the Empire's administration, not all dealing directly with the satrap and his office. And he is often the first to try to answer questions of central significance, especially by going beyond the Graeco-centric view. (It should be noticed here that in the meantime the bulk of relevant oriental sources happily has increased again with the 4th century Aramaic documents from Bactria, some of which Shaul Shaked has already edited.) Although he endeavours to resolve terminological ambiguities and imprecision of the Greek sources, many of his statements remain vague and uncertain owing to the lack of evidence, in particular for the eastern satrapies.
- 5 Unfortunately, the author does not know the (admittedly very diversified) relevant literature as completely as required, and also in technical matters not always enough care has been taken. I must emphasize especially that many remarks about linguistic questions (e.g., the etymology of OP *πασα-p<sup>h</sup>van-* and *\*dahyu-pati-*) show by their misunderstandings, confusions and distortions (and, in sum, by their inappropriateness and unreliability) that he lacks philological competence.

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**Thèmes** : 3.2.2. Pré-Achéménides et Achéménides

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