Matt Waters. “Xerxes and the Oath-breakers: Empire and Rebellion on the Northwestern Front”

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Matt Waters. "Xerxes and the Oath-breakers: Empire and Rebellion on the Northwestern Front" in John J. Collins & J. G. Manning (eds.). *Revolt and Resistance in the Ancient Classical World and the Near East in the Crucible of Empire*. 2016, Leiden & Boston: Brill, p. 93-102

- 1 How did the Achaemenid kings view the 'oath-breakers' and how did they respond to rebellion through the prism of their own ideology? To answer this question the case of the treaty between Athens and Achaemenid Persia has been revisited. Whose starting point has been the Athenian embassy to Artaphernes, brother of Darius I and satrap in Sardis, in 507 BCE and whose outcome the Persian military campaigns of the early fifth century against Greece in a different light.
- 2 To revisit the event from the Persian imperial perspective, M. Waters studies Herodotus's recount not only in light of the Achaemenid royal inscriptions, but also of their Mesopotamian and Elamite cultural predecessors, e.g. the Assyrian *adê-agreements* with their expressions of 'universality' and the Elamite royal texts with the formula *likume rišakka* 'expander of the realm'.
- 3 He considers the 'expansion of territory' as a part of the Achaemenid ideology and formulas like 'Great King', 'King of Kings', 'King of Lands', 'King of this great earth even unto the far', etc. as their expressions of 'universality'. On the other hand, in Achaemenid ideological terms, oath-breakers would have been afflicted by the Lie, worshipping *daivas* instead of Ahuramazda (XPh).

- 4 Sometimes punishing oath-breakers also allowed the imperial operation to move forward. Thus was Xerxes allowed to fulfill his obligation to the gods by punishing Athenian oath-breakers as well as his obligation to his predecessors as an 'expander of the realm'.
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