



GEDROSIA

GEDROSIA (or Kedrosia), a place-name known only from Classical sources. In the Alexander biographies and later geographies the name was used to denote much of present-day southern Baluchistan in south Pakistan and southeast Persia. According to Arrian, the province extended from the land of the Oritans, along the western banks of the Arabius or Arabis River (the modern Hab, west of Karachi) and the nearby mountains (Kirthar range; the Arbita mountains of Ptolemy, *Geography* 6.21) to the borders of Carmania (Arrian, *Anabasis Alexandri* 6.22-26). The provinces of Arachosia and Drangiana (qq.v.) lay to the north, and in the south extended the Indian Ocean. Arrian says that it took Alexander sixty days to traverse Gedrosia from east to west. The capital of Gedrosia was Pura, in the west of the province (Arrian, *Anabasis* 6.24.1). The first satrap appointed by Alexander was Apollophanes; he was replaced by Thoas, who soon died and was replaced by Sibyrtius, the satrap of Carmania, who was now given charge of both the Gedrosians and the Arachosians. The coast of Gedrosia was described by Nearchos, Alexander's admiral, whose account has partly survived in Arrian's *Indica* (pp. 20 ff.).

Southern Baluchistan is still a sparsely populated area. There is a general lack of water, and this situation, judging from Alexander's problems crossing Baluchistan, cannot have been much different in ancient times. It is therefore perhaps not so surprising that the name of Gedrosia is never mentioned in Achaemenid sources; instead we find the name of Maka (e.g., DB 1.17), which covered much of the coastline along the Persian Gulf and the Arabian Sea. It is likely that both names indicate the same region.



The center of Gedrosia, and its capital Pura, cannot be located with certainty, but it is clear from the Alexander biographies that it lay west of the main Gedrosian deserts. It should therefore be placed in Persian Baluchistan, possibly in the Bampūr oasis.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Arrian, *Indica*, ed. and tr. G. Wirth and O. Hinüber as *Der Alexanderzug: Indische Geschichte*, Munich and Zürich, 1985.

E. Ehlers, *Iran: Grundzüge einer geographischen Landeskunde*, Darmstadt, 1980, pp. 478-82.

J. F. Hansman, "A Periplus of Magan and Meluhha," *BSO(A)S* 36, 1973, pp. 554-84.

T. H. Holdich, "Notes on Ancient and Medišval Makran," *Geographical Journal* 7, 1896, pp. 387-405.

A. W. Hughes, *The Country of Baluchistan: Its Geography, Topography, Ethnology, and History*, London, 1878, repr. Quetta, 1977.

W. Kiessling, "Gedrosia," in Pauly-Wissova, VII/1, cols. 895-903.

H. Pozdena, "Makran: Das rückständigste Gebiet Irans," *Erdkunde* 29, 1975, pp. 52-59.

B. Spooner, "Kûch u Balûch and Ichthyophagi," *Iran* 2, 1964, pp. 53-67.

F. Scholz, "Baluchistan: A Brief Introduction to the Geography of Pakistan's Mountainous Province," *Newsletter of Baluchistan Studies* 1, 1982/3, pp. 13-18.

M. A. Stein, *An Archaeological Tour in Gedrosia*, Calcutta, 1931.

W. J. Vogelsang, "Southeast Afghanistan and the Borderlands in the Early Historical Period: Some Further Observations and Suggestions," *Newsletter of*



Baluchistan Studies 4, pp. 47-59.

Idem, *The Rise and Organisation of the Achaemenid Empire: The Eastern Iranian Evidence*, Leiden, 1992.