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THE WAY TO THE ATLANTIANS: HERODOTUS' NEW INTERPRETATION

ШЛЯХ ДО АТЛАНТІВ: НОВЕ ТРАКТУВАННЯ ГЕРОДОТА

Summary. *This study is devoted to searching for the location of the Atlantians described by Herodotus.*

The beginning of the study reveals four factors of the Prism of Time that influenced the distortion of information concerning the Atlantians (that reached us in the texts of Herodotus), which shall be taken into account when conducting this study: “The factor of information transfer”, “The factor of changes” (the factor of natural changes), “The misinterpretation factor”, and “The dissonance factor of worldviews”.

Further, the article presents the results of the study of the way to the Atlantians described in sections 168 – 187 of Book IV of “The Histories” by Herodotus.

At the same time, the author of the article has established that this fragment of text consists of at least three independent parts: section 168 – the first sentence of section 181 (part 1); the third sentence of section 181 – the fourth sentence of section 185 (part 2); section 186 – section 187 (part 3). The first and third parts contain descriptions of the Libyan tribes (the territory of modern Libya and Tunisia), and the second part describes the tribes of Nubia (the territory of modern southern Egypt and the North of modern Sudan).

Moreover, during the study, it has been proven that the second part of the fragment is a separate story that is not connected with either the first or the third parts of the fragment. For unknown reasons the scribes and editors of the Herodotus texts artificially placed a description of the tribes of Nubia and Atlantians (the second part of the fragment) between the descriptions of the Libyan tribes (between the first and third parts of the fragment).

In this regard, the article separately examines the way to the Atlantians described in the second part of the fragment, which ran from Thebes in the direction of the South (upstream of the Nile) through the Nubian Desert, in which Nubian tribes lived, further through the Ethiopian highlands and Afar triangle to the Strait between the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden (with the modern name of "Bab-El-Mandeb").

The research reveals the following inconsistencies in the early studies of the Atlantians and Atlantis:

- The Nubian Desert was confused with the Libyan Desert,
- The Ethiopian highlands were confused with the mountains of the Atlas system,
- the Strait between the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden (with the modern name of "Bab-El-Mandeb") was confused with the "Pillars of Heracles" (modern Strait of Gibraltar).

Moreover, based on the results of this study, it has been found that the Atlantians described by Herodotus lived in the territory of the modern Ethiopian Highlands, the highest peak of which is always hidden in the clouds and is called Mount Ras Dejen (15,157 feet or 4,620 meters).

In addition, to clear up the confusion that arose due to the distortion of the information under the influence of many factors, the article also provides comments on the geographical landmarks that Herodotus mentions on the way to the Atlantians: the mountain that Herodotus called Mount Atlas; the strait which Herodotus called the "Pillars of Hercules", and so on.

Also, the article suggests that the mythical or fictional island of Atlantis described by Plato could be located in the Red Sea in front of the Strait or the modern Gulf of Aden – in front of the Strait from the ocean (where, by the way, an unexplained anomaly, so-called “Gulf of Aden Swilly” has been recently found).

However, in any case, this new data is the basis for a complete revision of the strategy and conducting new research to search for Atlantis and study the life activities of the Atlantians.

Key words: *Atlantis, Atlantians, Herodotus, Plato, the factor of information transfer, the factor of changes, the misinterpretation factor, the dissonance factor of worldviews.*

Анотація. *Дане дослідження присвячено пошуку місця розташування Атлантів, описаного Геродотом.*

На початку роботи висвітлено чотири фактори Призми часу, які вплинули на спотворення інформації про Атлантів (що дійшла до нас у текстах Геродота), які необхідно враховувати при проведенні даного дослідження: «Фактор перенесення інформації», «Фактор змін» (фактор природних змін), «Фактор неправильної інтерпретації» і «Фактор дисонансу світоглядів».

Далі у статті розглянуто результати дослідження шляху до Атлантів, описаного в розділах 168 – 187 Книги IV «Історій» Геродота».

Водночас автором статті було встановлено те, що даний фрагмент тексту складається як мінімум із трьох незалежних частин: розділ 168 – перше речення розділу 181 (частина 1); третє речення розділу 181 – четверте речення розділу 185 (частина 2); розділ 186 – розділ 187 (частина 3). У першій та третій частинах наведено описи лівійських племен (території сучасних Лівії та Тунісу), а у другій частині – опис

племен Нубії (території півдня сучасного Єгипту та півночі сучасного Судану).

До того ж у процесі дослідження було доведено те, що друга частина фрагмента була окремою розповіддю, яка жодним чином не стосується ні першої, ні третьої частин фрагмента. З незрозумілих причин переписувачі та редактори текстів Геродота штучно помістили опис племен Нубії та Атлантів (друга частина фрагмента) між описами лівійських племен (між першою та третьою частиною фрагмента).

Зважаючи на зазначене, у статті окремо досліджується шлях до Атлантів, описаний у другій частині фрагмента, який пролягав від Фів у напрямку на Південь (вгору за течією Нілу), через Нубійську пустелю, в якій жили нубійські племена, далі через Ефіопське нагір'я і Афарський трикутник, до протоки між Червоним морем та Аденською затокою (з сучасною назвою «Баб ель Мандеб»).

В результаті дослідження було встановлено наступні невідповідності в ранніх дослідженнях Атлантів та Атлантиди:

- Нубійська пустеля була переплутана з Лівійською пустелею;*
- Ефіопське нагір'я було переплутане з горами системи Атлас;*
- протока між Червоним морем та Аденською затокою (з сучасною назвою «Баб ель Мандеб») була переплутана з «Геракловими стовпами» (сучасна Гібралтарська протока).*

Крім того, на підставі результатів даного дослідження було встановлено те, що Атланти, яких описував Геродот, проживали на території сучасного Ефіопського нагір'я, найвища вершина якого завжди прихована в хмарах і називається гора Рас-Дашен (15 157 футів або 4 620 метрів).

Додатково, для того, аби розібратися в плутанині, яка виникла через спотворення інформації під впливом безлічі факторів, у статті також наведено коментарі щодо географічних орієнтирів, які згадуються

Геродотом на шляху до Атлантів: гора, яку Геродот називав горою «Атлас»; протока, яку Геродот називав «Гераклові стовпи» тощо.

Також, у статті висловлено припущення про те, що міфічний або вигаданий острів Атлантида, описаний Платоном, міг перебувати в Червоному морі перед протокою «Баб ель Мандеб» або в сучасній Аденській затоці, перед входом до цієї протоки з боку океану (де, до речі, зовсім недавно виявили незрозумілу аномалію, - так званий «вир Аденської затоки»).

Однак, у будь-якому разі, ці нові дані є підставою для повного перегляду стратегії та проведення нових досліджень щодо пошуку Атлантиди та вивчення життєдіяльності народу Атлантів.

***Ключові слова:** Атлантида, Атланти, Геродот, Платон, фактор перенесення інформації, фактор змін, фактор неправильної інтерпретації, фактор дисонансу світоглядів.*

Introduction. Problem Statement. The Atlantians are a mythical tribe described in the works of the ancient Greek historians and philosophers *Herodotus* (who lived about 484 – 425 BC), *Plato* (who lived about 428 – 347 BC), and *Diodorus* (who lived about 90 – 30 BC).

In the works of *Plato* and *Diodorus*, the Atlantians are described as inhabitants of the mythical Land of Atlantis, which long time ago was located on an island/continent in the Atlantic Sea and disappeared in the water as a result of a large-scale earthquake or other cataclysm.

To date, neither the existence of the Atlantians nor the existence of Atlantis has been proven.

The status of the issue. However, is there anyone who has never thought Atlantis has existed?!

Given the vague descriptions of the ancient Greeks, determining its real or even fictitious location has turned out to be not easy.

For example, in the 4th century AD, the Byzantine scientist *Ammianus Marcellinus* put forward the theory that Atlantis should have been sought far to the east of Byzantium (that is, beyond Persia and India) [11, p. 33].

Also, starting from the Middle Ages, there is a group of researchers who developed the theory that Atlantis is nothing more than the continent of America. The Spanish priest, humanist, and historian Francisco López de Gómara wrote about this in 1553 in his "Historia de las Indias" and, a few years later, the French philosopher and humanist Guillaume de Postel wrote the same [11, p. 35–37]. Later, at the beginning of the 17th century, this theory was supported by the English philosopher and statesman Sir Francis Bacon in his work "Nova Atlantis", and at the end of the 18th century by the French philosopher and diplomat Comte de Corli in his "Lettre Americain" [11, p. 35–37]. Already at the beginning of the 19th century, this theory of Atlantis-America was supported by the German classical scholar Johann Gottfried Stallbaum [11, p. 37]. Also, in the mid-20th century, this theory was supported by the Scottish journalist, anthropologist, folklorist, and occult scholar Lewis Spence in his book "The History of Atlantis"[11, p. 51–52].

Along with the emergence of the theory of Atlantis-America, in 1578 the French Calvinist pastor, humanist, and historian Joannes Serranus compared the myth of Atlantis with biblical motifs and expressed the theory that Atlantis was located on the territory of modern Palestine [11, p. 33–34]. Later, in the early 18th century, this theory was supported by the French theologian and grave advocate Mathew Olivier [11, p. 33].

The outstanding German scientist of the early 17th century, Athanasius Kircher, expressed the idea that the Atlantic Islands were the remains of the sunken continent in the Atlantic Ocean, which at the end of the 18th century was supported by the French publisher, poet, and politician Pierre Louis Ginguené and French geographer and historian Edme Mentelle [11, p. 38]. In the second half of the 18th century, the French naturalist Georges-Louis Leclerc (Comte de

Buffon) suggested that Ireland, the Azores, and America had once been portions of the great isle of Plato [11, p. 38]. A similar theory was expressed at the end of the 19th century by an American Congressman, populist writer, and fringe scientist Ignatius Loyola Donnelly in the books "Atlantis" and "Atlantis: the antediluvian world." According to his theory, «*there once existed in the Atlantic Ocean, opposite the mouth of the Mediterranean Sea, a large island, which was the remnant of an Atlantic continent, and known to the ancient world as Atlantis*» [7, p. 4–5]. The same theory is adhered to by the English geographer, archaeologist, and historian Rodney Castleden in his book "Atlantis destroyed" (1998) [5, p. 2–4].

In turn, the Swedish scientist Olof Rudbeck (a man who devoted most of his life to the search for Atlantis) published the book "Atlantica" in 1679, arguing that Atlantis was once located in the north of the Kingdom of Sweden as well as the Scandinavian Peninsula was the center of ancient human civilization [9, p. 7–8]. Later, in the mid-18th century, this theory was supported by the famous French astronomer and revolutionary figure Jean Sylvain Bailly, and already in 1923, this version was expressed in the book "La Verite sur l'Atlantide" by the French writer and researcher René-Maurice Gattefosse from Lyon [11, p. 34]. Still later, the German protestant vicar and archaeological writer Jürgen Spanuth in his book "ATLANTIS - The Mystery Unravelling" (1956) tried to prove a similar theory that Atlantis was an island in the North Sea [4, p. 82–84].

Another theory, put forward by the French historian, philosopher, and science writer Delisle de Sales in 1779, was that Atlantis was located in an ancient sea that once occupied much of Greece and Italy [11, p. 35–36].

In addition, the French archaeologist and political activist Alexandre Louis Joseph (Marquis De la Borde) in the 18th century suggested that Atlantis was located on the islands of the Moluccas, New Zealand [11, p. 38].

In turn, some modern independent researchers, such as Oliver D. Smith, believe that Atlantis was located on the territory of modern Greece [13]. Other modern researchers, such as Paul McKay Easter, believe that Plato's description of Atlantis matches the description of the planets of the solar system [1].

There are also many other theories about the location of Atlantis, including those that say that Atlantis was located in the Black Sea or that Atlantis was located in modern Antarctica.

Continuing the incredible versions, one can also assume that Atlantis was never on Earth at all but was on another planet that could be reached through a special portal that the ancient Greeks called the Pillars of Hercules.

In any case, the futility of the search for Atlantis has led to theories that Atlantis is not a historical myth but an allegorical invention of Plato. It was first expressed in 1780 by the Italian antiquarian and literary scholar Giuseppe Bartoli in his "Essai sur l'explication" [11, p. 36–37].

Gradually, this theory gained supporters and over time became the main historical dogma in the scientific community.

To date, most historians at the mention of Atlantis either laugh or try to avoid this conversation for fear of being known among academics as an ignoramus.

The main argument of historians against the existence of Atlantis is the absence of direct evidence about its existence. But there is also no argument that Atlantis did not exist.

Historians refuse to take into account the research of Herodotus of Halicarnassus and Strabo, analytical reflections of Plato and Diodorus, taking them as travelers and philosophers who have no relation to historical resources.

But therein lays the paradox: historians believe Herodotus, Plato, and other philosophers and travelers when their descriptions are within the generally understandable and acceptable scope of history. At the same time, they stubbornly refuse to believe everything else.

And this is even though almost all historical studies are based on presumption and supposition. Chronicles of ancient times that are taken for truth are very often deemed to be the basis of historical evidence.

The historical society has resolved that they have the right to decide who to believe. What is more in most cases this kind of faith is not reasoned, and all facts are far-fetched to correspond to the conventional and socially acceptable version.

Therefore, none of the scientists even wants to hear about Atlantis. The author does not convince you that one can smell a conspiracy, but something is weird here.

In contrast to the dogmatic scientific community, we can take as a truthful basis the stories of Herodotus and Plato about Atlantis and analyze them in parts, disregarding only those narrative elements that are scientifically proven to be unsustainable arguments (and not vice versa).

At the same time, according to the author, the main problem in the search for Atlantis was the focus on the search for a powerful state based on Plato's description of Atlantis in the works "Timaeus" and "Critias". In turn, the author proposes, at the initial stage, not to look for Plato's mythical Atlantis but to focus on the search for the Atlantians, the way to whom Herodotus described in "The Histories".

The article aims to explore the route to the Atlantians, based on a critical analysis of the description made by Herodotus in "The Histories". Perhaps, over time, this information will help in the search for the mythical or "fictional" Atlantis.

The basic material.

Factors to consider when studying Herodotus' texts

The first thing to understand when exploring "The Histories" by Herodotus is that it is very difficult to confirm or refute the information told by

Herodotus because the original text has not yet been found and accordingly no one knows the way Herodotus described everything.

The modern version of “The Histories” reached its contemporaries after many editorial edits and through copies made by ancient scientists about 700 years after the death of Herodotus.

According to the British historian Tom Holland, initially, the text of “The Histories” had no division into chapters, there was no division into sentences and there were no diacritics – all this is the merit of scientists from Alexandria (Egypt) who worked in the library in the third century AD [3, p. 53].

However, even though the scientists of Alexandria performed their work qualitatively, we do not know in what form this text reached them and how many times it had been rewritten before they started their work. As Tom Holland correctly noted, a lot could have happened to the text in the period between 420 BC and 280 AD [3, p. 53].

Thus, the availability of high-quality texts still did not simplify their work. After all, to preserve the work of Herodotus, the Alexandrian scientists had to copy huge volumes of text manually. At the same time, they acted both as copyists and editors of this text, determining and selecting what needed to be restored and copied – and all this was done without the participation and support of the author.

This led to the senseless division by Alexandrian scholars of the text of “The Histories” of Herodotus into 9 books named after the nine muses [10, p. 10–13]. This is even though we know absolutely nothing about the structure of the work or even about its name, except for the information in the first sentence of the work.

Moreover, after the work of Alexandrian scientists, the texts of Herodotus had been copied and edited many more times before they acquired the form in which it is studied by modern historians.

In turn, most likely, as a result of multiple stages of editing the source text (carried out almost every time the information was transferred to a new medium), the arrangement of some parts of "The History" of Herodotus (in the form in which the text has reached the contemporaries) acquired a certain illogical order.

It is with great certainty that the modern form of "The Histories" of Herodotus could be significantly influenced by "**The factor of information transfer**" which shall be taken into account when analyzing the text of this work.

In addition, it is necessary to understand that one of the main difficulties in the interpretation of the descriptions of Herodotus is that Herodotus refers to rivers, lakes, and islands, the location of which is almost impossible to establish. A desert "captured" part of the waters in the last several thousand years, "ate" the rivers and seaways connecting islands with the mainland, and transformed rivers into deserts.

For example, today the legendary lake Tritonida (mentioned by Herodotus) can be associated with the lake Chott el Jerid which is located in the center of modern Tunisia. According to Herodotus, the river Triton flew through the mentioned lake into the sea, and according to legend, Jason on the ship Argo met with Triton right there.

Thus, when analyzing the texts of "The Histories", it is also crucial to take into account "**The factor of Changes**" (the factor of natural changes) which has a strong influence on the distortion of the geographical landmarks understanding indicated by Herodotus.

In addition, it is necessary to take into account that in a modern version of the famous "The Histories" by Herodotus the Atlantians are mentioned fleetingly (as if by chance) at the end of book IV "Melpomene» in the listing and description of many of the Libyan tribes, that is, as an ordinary tribe and not as residents of a powerful state.

Given this uncertainty, it remains only for us to try “to read” correctly the map of the descriptions of Herodotus concerning the way to the Atlantians.

Study of the description of the way to the Atlantians set out in sections 168 – 187 of Book IV of “The Histories” of Herodotus

In sections 168 – 187 of Book IV of “The Histories” Herodotus describes the tribes living outside Egypt, among whom he also describes the Atlantians tribe and even points the way to them [2, p. 372–390].

Provided one considers this text of “The Histories” as a single fragment, it may seem that Herodotus describes the way to the Atlantians through the lands of the Libyan tribes who lived in the territories located to the west of Egypt, right up to the Tritonian Lake and the Atlas Mountains.

Moreover, subsequently, taking this fragment into account, researchers of the texts of “The Histories” of Herodotus compiled a map, according to which it is assumed that Herodotus believed that the Nile River (along which the way to the Atlantians could lie) turned near ancient Thebes (modern Luxor) 90 degrees to the West and flew through the Sahara Desert to Mount Atlas.



Map [3, p. 706-707]

However, when studying this fragment more carefully, one can notice that it is divided into three parts: section 168 – the first sentence of section 181 (the first part); the third sentence of section 181 – the fourth sentence of section 185 (the second part); section 186 – section 187 (the third part).

At the same time, after a separate analysis of each part, the impression can completely change.

So, the first part of this fragment (section 168 – the first sentence of section 181), provides the description of the tribes “νομάδων Λιβύων” (translated from the ancient Greek as “the nomad Libyans”) living within the territories that are sequentially located one after another outside Egypt [2, p. 374–382]. At the same time, it immediately becomes clear that it is about tribes that live in the western direction from Egypt since the text often mentions the phrase “τὸ πρὸς ἐσπέρης” (translated from the ancient Greek as “towards the west”) [2, p. 374]. In addition, the indication of the places of residence of such tribes is most often carried out relative to the coastline of the sea (most likely, the Mediterranean Sea). This is noticeable by how often such words and phrases as “λιμένος” (translated from the ancient Greek as “harbor” or “bay”), “παρὰ θάλασσαν” (translated from the ancient Greek as “near the sea” or “on the seashore”), and “νήσου” (translated from the ancient Greek as “island”) [2, p. 374] is used.

In this case, the description of the tribes in the first part of the fragment is performed in the following order (sequentially according to their place of residence to the West one after another): “Ἀδυρμαχίδαι” (reads as “the Adyrmachidae”), “Γιλιγάμαι” (reads as “the Giligamae”), “Ἀσβύσται” (reads as “the Asbystae”), “Κυρηναῖοι” (reads as “the Cyrenaeans”), “Ἀύσχίσαι” (reads as “the Auschisae”), “Βάκαλες” (reads as “the Bacales”), “Νασαμῶνες” (reads as “the Nasamones”), “Ψύλλοι” (reads as “the Psylli”), “Γαράμαντες” (reads as “the Garamantes”), “Μάκαι” (reads as “the Macae”), “Τινδᾶνες” (reads as “the Gindanes”), “Λωτοφάγοι” (reads as “the Lotophagos” and is called as “the

Lotus-eaters”), “Μάχλυες” (reads as “the Machlyes”), “Αὔσέες” (reads as “the Ausees”) [2, p. 372–380].

As the place of living of the last of the listed tribes, Herodotus indicates the coast of “Τριτωνίδα λίμνη” (translated from the ancient Greek as the “Tritonian lake”) [2, p. 380].

Thus, the first part of the given fragment ends with the following first sentence of section 181: “οὔτοι οἱ παραθαλάσσιοι μὲν τῶν νομάδων Λιβύων εἰρέαται, ὑπὲρ τούτων δὲ ἐς μεσόγαιαν *natural* θηριώδης ἐστὶ Λιβύη, ὑπὲρ δὲ τῆς θηριώδεος ὄφρῴη ψάμμης” [2, p. 382] – “here it is said about the nomadic coastal tribes of Libya, over which, far from the water, Libya abounds with wild animals, over which, beyond the land abounding with wild animals, is the sandy bar” [the author’s translation].

That is, Herodotus concludes that in his previous description, only the coastal nomadic Libyan tribes are listed. At the same time, in this sentence, he prepares us for the fact that further, it would go about the lands of the inland Libyan tribes (living above the coastal tribes, in lands abounding with animals), behind which there is a sandy ridge (that is, a desert).

However, there are several inconsistencies in this sentence concerning the previously described information and several illogical conclusions.

Firstly, the conclusion that only the coastal nomadic tribes are listed in the previous description does not correspond to reality. It is easy to notice by studying sections 172 and 174 of this book that describe the tribes “the Nasamones” and “the Garamantes” living above the seashore (that is, inland) in places abundantly populated by animals [2, p. 374–376]. At the same time, section 175 of the book just describes that below the tribe “the Nasamones” (that is, closer to the sea) seaside tribes such as “the Macae” live [2, p. 378].

Secondly, in this sentence, the lands deep into the territory of Libya are described illogically – that is, first the lands abounding with animals and then the desert. In reality, to the south of the seaside strip (that is, deep into the

mainland), the desert first stretches, and only much further south tropical jungles are teeming with wild animals. In other words, in this conclusion, the sequence of territories is confused.

Thirdly, this means that the tribes “the Nasamones” and “the Garamantes” not only were not seaside, but they generally lived very far from the sea, as far as the sandy ridge (behind the desert), in a land teeming with wild animals - that is, somewhere in the area of the tropical jungle (in the south of the modern states of “Chad” and “Sudan”).

In fact, the conclusion stated in the first sentence of section 181 does not correspond to reality and most likely does not belong to Herodotus and appears as an artificial editorial insertion.

Further, in the second part of this fragment (the third sentence of section 181 – the fourth sentence of section 185), the tribes located just behind the Egyptian region “Θῆβαι” (reads as the “Thebes”) which is located in southern Egypt (Upper Egypt) are listed.

At the same time, the description of the tribes in the second part of the fragment does not contain any indication of their cultural or national identity, their way of life (nomads or farmers), or their location relative to parts of the World or relative to Egypt. Thus, these tribes most likely have no relation to Libya. Such tribes as “Ἀμμώνιοι” (reads as “the Ammonians”), “γαράμαντες” (reads as “the Garamantes”), “Ἀτάραντες” (reads as “the Atarantes”) and “Ἀτλαντες” (reads as “the Atlantes”) [2, p. 384–388] are stated among them. The binding location of the last of these tribes (“the Atlantes”) is made with the geographic areas called “ὄρος Ἀτλας” (translated from the ancient Greek as “Mount Atlas”) and “Ἡρακλέους στῆλαι” (translated from the ancient Greek as “Pillars of Heracles”) [2, p. 386–388]. The second part of this fragment ends with the texts of the second and third sentences in section 185 which say that ten days after “the Atlantes” an unknown tribe lives that builds houses out of salt [2, p. 388].

That is, we can conclude that the second part of the fragment described above does not contain information connecting it with the first part.

In turn, in the third part of this fragment (sections 186 – 187) the narrative returns again to the description of the geographical object “Tritonian Lake” (which was described earlier in the first part of the fragment, in sections 178 – 180) and to the description of the Libyan nomadic tribes living near it (which were also described earlier in the first part). And here again, indications of the western location of the territories are applied.

Due to such a consistent description of the tribes, which begins in the first part and ends in the third part with a description of the same Libyan tribes, it seems that the second part of the fragment also contains a description of Libyan tribes allegedly located in the desert, in the western direction from “Thebes” to the “Tritonian Lake”.

However, this impression is misleading for several reasons.

Firstly, none of these descriptions of the tribes in the second part of the fragment contain any mention that these are “Libyan” or “nomadic” tribes.

Secondly, there is not a single indication either to the West or to any other parts of the World.

That is, in the second part of the fragment there is no connection with the descriptions of the tribes in the first and third parts of the fragment.

The only allegedly controversial point in the second part of the fragment is the description of the tribe “the Garamantes” which has the same name as the Libyan nomadic tribe described in the first part of the fragment. However, this point is not controversial, since the tribe “the Garamantes” from the second part of the fragment and the tribe with the same name from the first part of the fragment are two different tribes that are radically different from each other. So, in the first part of the fragment (in section 174), the nomadic tribe “the Garamantes” is indicated which avoided every person, had no weapons, and did not know how to repel enemy attacks. In turn, in the second part of the fragment

(in section 183), the tribe of farmers “the Garamantes” is already indicated which sowed the land, grazed bulls, and was quite belligerent, since it hunted cave Ethiopians (by the way, who lived in a different part of the continent concerning the Mediterranean coast). Perhaps the tribes “the Garamantes” from the first and second parts of the fragment have a consonant name, but they were different tribes. Most likely, one of the scribes of the Herodotus texts by mistake or on purpose (to confuse the reader) corrected the similar name of the second tribe so that it coincided with the name of the first tribe.

Thus, the tribes described in the second part of the fragment (sections 181 – 185) cannot be attributed by any parameters to the Libyan nomadic tribes described in the first and third parts.

Hence, it can be assumed that the first part of the fragment (description of the Libyan tribes and “Tritonian Lake”) ended with the first sentence in section 181 of this book and contained information not only about the coastal tribes but also about all Libyan nomadic tribes (both coastal and inland) living in the territory that stretched from the western border of Egypt to the “Tritonian Lake” (that is, in the western direction). At the same time, the information indicated in the third part of the fragment, beginning with section 186 (where the description of the Libyan tribes and the “Tritonian Lake” continues), should have been mentioned just after it.

In turn, the second part of the fragment was most likely a separate story that had no connection to either the first or the third parts of the fragment. For unknown reasons (perhaps mistakenly or on purpose, to create confusion), the scribes and editors of the Herodotus texts artificially placed this story (the second part of the fragment) between the descriptions of the Libyan tribes (between the first and third parts of the fragment).

What is the reason for this confusion? – technical errors or deliberate distortion of the text by its editors and copyists – this is unknown to anyone.

However, provided the text of "The Histories" was changed, then the question arises where the Atlantians lived in the time of Herodotus and where the mountain that Herodotus called "Mount Atlas" and the strait that Herodotus called "Pillars of Heracles" is located.

Commentary on the description of the mountain (near which the Atlantians lived) set out in section 184 of "The Histories" of Herodotus

In Book IV (Chapter 184) of "The Histories" Herodotus recounts the information that he received in Egypt from Egyptian scientists about the mountain which he calls Atlas:

“ἔχεται δὲ τοῦ ἀλὸς τούτου ὄρος τῷ ὄνομα ἐστὶ Ἄτλας, ἔστι δὲ στεῖνὸν καὶ κυκλωτερὲς πάντη, ὑψηλὸν δὲ οὕτω δη τι λέγεται ὡς τὰς κορυφὰς αὐτοῦ οὐκ οἶά τε εἶναι ἰδέσθαι, οὐδέποτε γὰρ αὐτὰς ἀπλείπειν νέφεα οὔτε θέπεος οὔτε χειμῶνος. τοῦτο τὸν κίονα τοῦ οὐρανοῦ λέγουσι οἱ ἐπιχώριοι εἶναι” [2, p. 386, 388].

“Mount Atlas is not far from the salt mound. As they say, when it reaches its height, it becomes narrow and forms a perfect circle, and no one can ever see its top, such is the constancy of the cloud cover - both in summer and winter. According to the natives, this is a pillar that holds up the sky” (the author’s translation).

To date, it is a well-known fact where the Atlas Mountains are located. However, did Herodotus mention these mountains?

For example, the famous English historian Tom Holland, on this occasion, gave the following comment:

“a mountain called Atlas: H.’s Mt Atlas, wherever exactly it may have been, is located well to the east of today’s Atlas Mountains” [3, p. 675].

It is clear that Herodotus, judging by his story, was not near this mountain himself but received information about it in Memphis, Egypt. In turn, the Egyptians, like any other people, most likely used their terminology to describe geographical objects. And it is very unlikely that Egyptian terminology could contain Greek terms. Thus, it becomes clear that Herodotus most likely assigned

the name "Atlas" to the mountain, information about which he received from the Egyptians and which fit the description of the mountain with the same name known to him. That is, Herodotus interpreted the received information in a Greek manner understandable to him without any confirmation of such an interpretation.

As in the above and many other cases, Herodotus preferred to substitute terminology, interpreting information in a Greek manner that he understood.

Thus, it can be assumed that the information that was presented by Herodotus in "The Histories" may have been influenced by a factor that the author determines as "**The misinterpretation factor**".

The reason for such an incorrect interpretation, carried out by both Herodotus and other ancient authors, is that they received most of the information about historical events and geographical objects (especially regarding size) not as a result of their research but from archives or the third parties, including non-native origin. At the same time, the names and characteristics of tribes, natural phenomena, and geographical landmarks that were used by other peoples to describe relevant events and objects were translated by the corresponding author into his native language and interpreted by his knowledge of the World. Moreover, different sources could call the same objects differently or call different objects by the same name.

In this regard, the text of "The Histories" cannot provide a clear answer to the question concerning the location of the mount "Ἀτλας" brought forth by Herodotus, and whether it has any relation to the Atlas Mountains.

Commentary on the description of the Atlantians provided in section 184 of "The Histories" of Herodotus

In Book IV (Chapter 184) of "The Histories" Herodotus provides information he received in Egypt from Egyptian scholars about a people he calls 'Atlantians':

“ἐπὶ τούτου τοῦ ὄρους οἱ ἄνθρωποι οὗτοι ἐπὼνυμοὶ ἐγένοντο. καλέονται γὰρ δὴ Ἀτλαντεῖς. λέγονται δὲ οὔτε ἔμψυχον οὐδὲν σιτέσθαι οὔτε ἐνύπνια ὄραν” [2, p. 388].

“These people, called ‘Atlantians’, after the mountain, have special diets and never see dreams” (the author’s translation).

It is clear that Herodotus did not verify this information but wrote it down from the words of third parties. At the same time, it is obvious that the people who provided him with this information did not fully understand its essence and therefore did not give it an explanation.

In this regard, many supporters of adventurous theories attach fantastic features to the characteristics of the Atlantians. However, there is nothing fantastic about this.

Thus, the lifestyle of people with a special vegetarian diet only means that already in those ancient times there were vegetarian people, which is unordinary for that time, but it does not mean anything unusual.

In turn, the phrase “never see dreams” requires additional explanation.

Tom Holland suggested the following on this matter:

«‘Atlantians’ ... nor in their sleep do they ever see dreams: The Greeks linked diet to dreams, and H. seems to infer a causal connection between the vegetarian diet and dreamless sleep of the Atlantians» [3, p. 675].

However, this is just an assumption and not a scientific explanation of what “dreaming” is, which may or may not be seen.

Recently, scientists have gradually begun to agree that “dreaming” is a kind of wandering of the mind in the process of spontaneous thinking [8, p. 718] [12, p. 1].

That is, modern scientists conclude that “dreaming” is some kind of involuntary simulation of the real world. Moreover, some scientists compare “dreaming” with “daydreaming” which is already a conscious simulation of the

world: «'daydreaming' and dreaming may engage similar brain mechanisms» [6, p. 412].

Moreover, by "dream" they most often mean not the "dreaming" itself but information about the "dream" that a person remembered after waking up from this "dream".

In turn, if the possibility that a person may not remember a "dream" does not cause much controversy, then the possibility of dreamless sleep is questioned by some scientists [12, p. 29].

However, the concept of dreamless sleep exists in the modern world and, as Windt J. M. said, it is based on classical Indian debates:

«The classical Indian debate is important, ... because if the Advaita Vedānta and Yoga claims about the persistence of consciousness during dreamless sleep are correct, the default view of consciousness as that which disappears during dreamless sleep is false and requires revision» [12, p. 3].

Also, there are scientific theories according to which the state of dreamless sleep is interpreted as a state of "sleeping" with "controlled consciousness":

«the most plausible candidates for dreamless sleep experience in this sense: these are lucid dreamless sleep, white dreams, and sleep-state misperception as most prominently seen in subjective insomnia. I also proposed that these states can be meaningfully compared to the transition from nonlucid to prelucid and fully lucid dreams» [12, p. 29].

Unfortunately, this topic is still poorly understood despite the enormous scientific and technical capabilities that exist among modern scientists.

Therefore, the question arises of where information about such a phenomenon came from in ancient times, how they could have found out about it, and what was meant by this phenomenon. After all, we understand that the technical capabilities of the Ancient World for sleep studying are significantly inferior to the capabilities of modern medicine.

Moreover, the great difference in worldviews between the Atlantians tribe and the Egyptians who described them as well as Herodotus led to a misunderstanding of this phenomenon and the inability to correctly describe and interpret it already in ancient times. Different understandings of the same terms by different nations and people living in different times determined the emergence of a new factor influencing the perception of ancient information, namely **“The dissonance factor of worldviews”** which may have influenced the transmission of information about the Atlantians by Herodotus.

This is the same case when probably no one made any mistakes in the text, and the information also did not undergo any changes, but we are still not sure of its correctness, since we do not know whether Herodotus understood and wrote it down correctly. Now, after several thousand years, the difference in our worldviews, increased by time, has further distanced us from solving this riddle.

Geographical features that are important when searching for the way to the Atlantians based on the description given in “The Histories” of Herodotus

At the beginning of this research, it was established that the scribes of the texts of Herodotus mixed up the sequence of the presentation of “The Histories” placing a fragment about the way to the Atlantians (third sentence of section 181 – fourth sentence of section 185) between the description of the Libyan tribes (section 168 – first sentence of section 181 and section 186 to section 187).

In this case, to find the location of the Atlantians in these fragments and not get confused by the descriptions outlined in “The Histories” of Herodotus, it is necessary to remember three important elements.

Firstly, Herodotus described the Libyan tribes sequentially, in an east-west direction along the Mediterranean coast, starting from the first tribe living near the northwestern border of Ancient Egypt and ending with the tribes living near the “Tritonian Lake”.

Secondly, when describing the way to the Atlantians, Herodotus never indicated the direction to the West and did not call a single tribe Libyan. Moreover, Herodotus's description of the way to the Atlantians begins from the city of Thebes, located far in the south of Ancient Egypt (at a distance of about 880 kilometers (about 547 miles) from the Mediterranean coast). That is, if the Atlantians were in the West, following the previously described Libyan tribes, then the description of the way to them would be logical to begin either from the northwestern borders of Ancient Egypt or from the location of the westernmost of the described Libyan tribes. There was no point in describing the way to the Atlantians first from Thebes to the Mediterranean Sea (that is, to the North), through the well-known territory of the state of Ancient Egypt, and then again starting to list the Libyan tribes which were already mentioned earlier. That is, we can make an unambiguous conclusion that the way to the Atlantians did not lie through the lands of the Libyan tribes who lived along the Mediterranean Sea to the west of Ancient Egypt.

Thirdly, it is also unlikely that the way to the Atlantians lay in a western direction from Thebes. There are several explanations for this. The first one is that Herodotus never mentions the direction to the west when describing the route to the Atlantians. The second point is that to the west of Thebes, there was a lifeless Libyan desert (modern name Sahara), in which the tribes described by him did not live and no tribes lived at all. Third, foreign travelers, such as Herodotus, in a foreign land usually wrote down in their diaries either caravan routes or the most accessible routes along which their army could move to conquer useful territories (in this case, this path could be the Nile River).

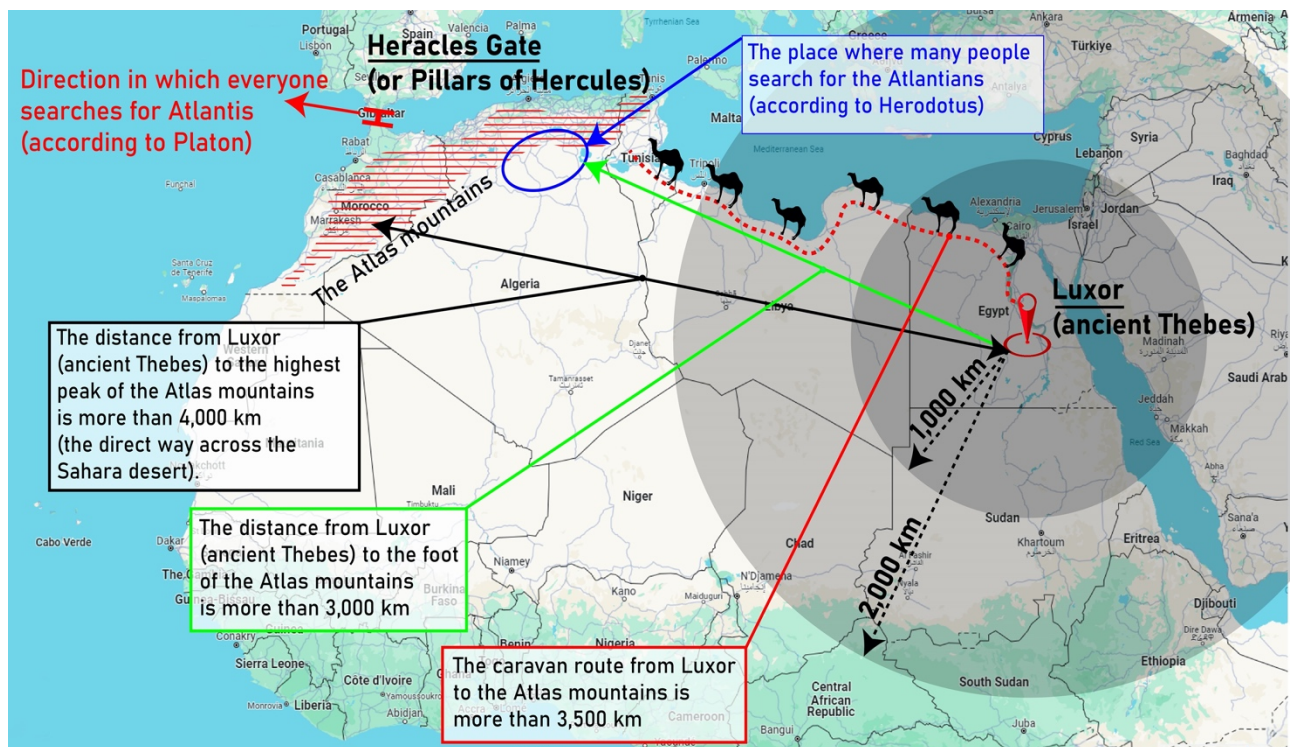
Thus, most likely, the way to the Atlantians described by Herodotus lay south from ancient Thebes along the Nile River or the coast of the modern Red Sea.

Summing up the above descriptions, we can finally calculate the approximate distance from Thebes to "Mount Atlas" and the territories of the Atlantians which is around a 50-day journey.

At the same time, when calculating distances, it is necessary to understand that in ancient times the distance was often indicated in days based on the standard distance in those days an army had to cover per day (no more than 20 – 40 kilometers per day, and in desert areas it is even less).

Thus, 50 days of travel was a distance of no more than 1,000 – 2,000 kilometers.

In this regard, first of all, one should pay attention to the fact that the distance from Luxor (ancient Thebes) to the modern Atlas Mountains is more than 3,000 kilometers (the direct way across the Sahara Desert), and if one goes the caravan route along the water it is more than 3,500 kilometers. Accordingly, the Atlas Mountains, located in northwest Africa, cannot be the "ὄρος Ἀτλας" that Herodotus underlines in section 184 of "The Histories".



Taking this into account, it can be assumed that the copyists of the texts of Herodotus had confused the sequence of presentation of "The Histories" placing the description of the tribes of Nubia (*the territory of modern southern Egypt and the North of modern Sudan*) between the description of the Libyan tribes (*the territory of modern Libya and Tunisia*).

Moreover, as stated above, it is very unlikely that the Egyptians could have used Greek names in their geographical maps. Accordingly, when describing the way to the Atlantians, the Egyptians most likely described the following:

- a desert located beyond Thebes,
- tribes living in this desert,
- some mountain located just beyond this desert, with its top reaching into the sky,
- some kind of strait from the sea to the ocean, which was located behind this mountain and which was framed by mountain peaks.

That is, the Egyptians did not provide Herodotus with the Greek names of geographical objects they described but most likely used their names. In turn, Herodotus may have incorrectly called these geographical objects by Greek names based only on the similarity of their descriptions.

In turn, if one moves from Thebes in the direction of the South (upstream of the Nile) then at some distance south of Thebes in ancient times the tribes of Nubia lived (*the territories of the south of modern Egypt and the north of modern Sudan*), and after the first threshold of the Nile, the famous Nubian desert began which was not such a ruthless desert as the Sahara (*Libyan desert*) and therefore allowed different tribes to live there.

In addition, behind the Nubian desert (as well as behind the Libyan desert) there are also mountains (others only) called the Ethiopian highlands.

Behind these mountains there is a strait which according to the description is very similar to the strait of the "Pillars of Heracles" (the modern Strait of

Gibraltar) – but it is a completely different geographical object, namely, the Strait between the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden (with the modern name of “Bab-El-Mandeb”), which on both its sides is surrounded by the mountains with the modern names of “Thakar” (*the Yemeni mountains*) and “Musa Ali” (*the Ethiopian highlands in the modern state of Djibouti*).

This discovery suggests that Herodotus’s incorrect use of names for geographical objects and the scribes’ violation of the sequence of presentation of “The Histories” misled researchers of the texts of “The Histories” of Herodotus that led to the following:

- The Nubian Desert was confused with the Libyan Desert,
- The Ethiopian highlands were confused with the mountains of the Atlas system,
- The Strait between the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden (with the modern name of “Bab-El-Mandeb”) was confused with the “Pillars of Heracles” (modern Strait of Gibraltar).

Moreover, the ancient Greeks could well have applied the name the “Pillars of Hercules” to several similar straits thus describing not a geographical location but a local landscape.

In addition, large-scale salt mines which according to Herodotus were located behind the Atlas Mountains a few days away from the Atlantians were generally taken as fiction even by researchers who believed in Atlantis, because beyond the Atlas Mountain system such salt mines do not exist.

In turn, no one took into account the salt desert (*a salt layer thickness is up to 3 km.*) located in the Ethiopian highlands in the famous Afar triangle.



Conclusions and prospects for further research. Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that the Atlantians described by Herodotus lived in the territory of the modern Ethiopian Highlands, the highest peak of which is always hidden in the clouds and is called Mount Ras Dejen (15,157 feet or 4,620 meters).

At the same time, the distance from ancient Thebes to the Ethiopian Highlands is about 1,300 kilometers (about 800 miles) which is quite surmountable in 50 days of hiking at a speed of 26 kilometers (16 miles) per day.

Certainly, this does not mean that the Atlantians described by Herodotus are connected with the Atlantis described by Plato. Also, this does not mean (although this is possible) that the island of Atlantis described by Plato was located in the Red Sea in front of the Strait or the modern Gulf of Aden – in front of the Strait from the ocean (*where, by the way, an unexplained anomaly, so-called “Gulf of Aden Swilly” has been recently found*).

However, in any case, this new data on the location of the Atlantians is the basis for a complete revision of the strategy and conducting new research to search for Atlantis and study the life activities of the Atlantians.

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