

THE COMPLETE FRAGMENTS OF CTESIAS OF CNIDUS:  
TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY WITH AN INTRODUCTION

By

ANDREW NICHOLS

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To my wife Amy

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABC	A.K. Grayson, <i>Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles</i>
AD	G.R. Driver, <i>Aramaic Documents of the 5<sup>th</sup> Century B.C.</i>
AP	A.E. Cowley, <i>Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.</i>
ATL	<i>Athenian Tribute Lists</i>
BM	Tablets from the collections of the British Museum with inventory number
DAE	P. Grelot, <i>Documents arameéens d'Égypte</i>
<i>EncIr</i>	<i>Encyclopaedia Iranica</i>
<i>FGrH</i>	F. Jacoby, <i>Die Fragmente der griechischer Historiker</i>
<i>JB</i>	<i>Jaiminīya-Brāhmana of the Sāmaveda</i> , ed. R. Vira; Ger. trans. W. Caland
<i>Manu</i>	<i>The Laws of Manu</i> , ed. G.Gha; trans. G. Bühler
<i>MbH</i>	<i>The Mahābhārata</i> , ed. V.S. Aukthankar et al; trans. J.A.B. Van Buitenen
<i>NīlP</i>	<i>Nīlamatapurāna</i> : ed. K. de Vreese; trans. V. Kumari
OGIS	W. Dittenberger, <i>Orientalis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae</i>
<i>P</i>	<i>The Aṣṭādhyāyī of Pānini</i> , ed. and trans. S.C. Vasu
PFT	R.T. Hallock, <i>Persepolis Fortification Tablets</i>
PTT	G. Cameron, <i>Persepolis Treasury Tablets</i>
<i>R</i>	<i>The Rāmāyana of Vālmīki</i> , trans. R. Goldman and S.I. Pollock
<i>Rājat</i>	<i>Rājataranginī of Kalhana</i> , ed. and trans. M.A. Stein
<i>RV</i>	<i>Rig Veda</i> , ed. F. Müller; trans. W.D. O'Flaherty; Ger. trans. K.F. Geldner
<i>SB</i>	<i>Śatapatha-Brāhmana</i> , ed. A. Weber; trans. J. Eggeling

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WITH A INTRODUCTION

By

Andrew Nichols  
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Ctesias of Cnidus was a Greek physician who lived in the last half of the fifth century and into the fourth century B.C.E. He served as royal physician to king Artaxerxes II of Persia until 398/397 B.C.E. at which point he returned to Greece where he composed works on the Persian Empire and India. Because of his position in the Great King, Ctesias had the unique perspective of a member of the royal court and as such was able to provide a glimpse into Near-Eastern views of history and the machinations and intrigue which plagued the court. His work has largely been neglected or scorned by modern scholars because of the romantic and fantastic nature of his writings. However, a close examination of his work shows that, while not always a credible source, Ctesias often reflects the oral traditions circulating in Persia in the fifth century. As such, he proves to be an invaluable source for Persian social history giving glimpses into how the Persians viewed their own history and the world in which they lived. Unfortunately, these works have not survived in their original form but have only been preserved in citations and epitomes by later authors which, until now have never been fully and collectively translated into English.



## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

### **The History of the Text**

The works of Ctesias, which do not survive in their original form but only in fragments related by later authors, continue to be of vital importance for the study of the Near East and the western view of India before Alexander. Despite their significance to scholarship, the fragments of Ctesias have never been translated into English in their entirety.<sup>1</sup> In fact, the French translation of Aubergier (1991) was the first fully collated translation of all the fragments of Ctesias in any language save Latin. Hitherto scholars had only focused on either the *Indika* or the *Persika* individually rather than the fragments as a whole. Thus one of the primary purposes of this study is to bring all the Fragments of Ctesias to an English-speaking readership, and allow a wider audience to access the surviving extracts of this study.

There is no way of determining how long the works of Ctesias remained in circulation before they were lost, but they were still available before the tenth century. Our main source for the works of Ctesias is an epitome by Photius, the 9<sup>th</sup> century Byzantine scholar and patriarch. The works may have survived much later than his epitome<sup>2</sup> but it is difficult to tell in later authors whether they were following Ctesias directly or an intermediary. While we owe much of our knowledge of Ctesias to Photius, it was probably his epitome which ultimately doomed Ctesias' original work. No longer would people feel the need to read through his entire work when they could simply read the summary. There can be no doubt that several copies of Ctesias' original work continued to circulate for some time after Photius, however they probably became much more scarce in the following centuries.

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<sup>1</sup> The unpublished dissertation of Bowman which contains a translation of Ctesias was written before the edition of Jacoby and has proven insignificant for Ctesian scholarship.

<sup>2</sup> There is no indication that Tzetzes used Ctesias directly. In fact, the numerous mistakes he makes in reference to Ctesias suggest that he did not.

Henricus Stephanus first published Photius' epitome of Ctesias along with epitomes of Memnon of Heraclea and Agatharchides of Cnidus in 1557. This same editor, wishing to compare the 'more reliable' Ctesias to Herodotus, added the epitome in an appendix to an edition of *The Histories* in 1566.<sup>3</sup> It was not until the 19<sup>th</sup> century that the first editions of all the fragments<sup>4</sup> appeared, first with the text of Albert Lion (1823) followed soon after by that of Johann Christian Felix Baehr (1824). The work of Baehr, which included a commentary and several new fragments, had a profound effect on the study of Ctesias for subsequent generations and is a work that continues to be cited to this day. The edition of Carolus Mueller (1844) contained a Latin translation and was the last edition of Ctesias to appear as an appendix to an edition of Herodotus. This work took advantage of numerous new editions of several of the authors who form fragments of Ctesias, most notably Bekker's critical edition of Photius.

Because the content of Ctesias' work covers a wide range of topics including Achaemenid Persian history, the western view of India before Alexander, and Greek history, scholars by the late 19<sup>th</sup> century began to focus their attention on only one aspect of the fragments. In 1881, John Watson MacCrimmon published an English translation of the *Indika* with a commentary as part of a larger work on Greek authors who wrote about India. A few years later, John Gilmore published a text of the *Persika* (1881) marking the first instance of an edition of only one of Ctesias' works. This trend would continue into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. In 1947 Renee Henry published an edition with French translation of the epitome of Photius but omitted all of the other fragments. The text was republished later in 1959 as part of his edition of the

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<sup>3</sup> The *editio princeps* of *Bibliotheca* of Photius did not appear until 1601 by David Hoeschel. The first real critical edition of the *Bibliotheca* was produced by August Immanuel Bekker in 1824-1825.

<sup>4</sup> See Lenfant (2004 p. CLXXV-CLXXVI) for a good definition of what constitutes a fragment, especially in instances where Ctesias is not named directly.

entire *Bibliotheca* of Photius. In 1972 Friedrich Wilhelm König published an edition of the *Persika* which was accompanied by a German translation and commentary.

In 1958 Felix Jacoby published volume IIC of his monumental *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* containing a text of all of the fragments of Ctesias. It was the first edition of all of the fragments since Mueller's text a century earlier and would become the standard edition.<sup>5</sup> More recently, however, Dominique Lenfant (2004) published a new edition of all the fragments which should supplant the text of Jacoby as the standard edition. She retained Jacoby's numbering system and added several new fragments to the corpus which were either omitted or overlooked by her predecessors. She takes a more conservative approach to textual criticism than Jacoby and her inclusion of the passages by Nicolaus of Damascus make for a fuller edition of the *Persika*.<sup>6</sup> Most recently was the publication of a text with Modern Greek translation and minimal commentary under the direction of Athena Hatzopoulou (2007). However, this text, which does not contain an *apparatus criticus*, is targeting beginners and thus it does not add much to the scholarship of Ctesias. While I have consulted nearly all of these editions<sup>7</sup>, my translation is based on the texts of Lenfant and Jacoby when the latter includes a fuller passage.

### **Life of Ctesias**

Unfortunately, not much is known of the life of Ctesias except what little can be gleaned from the fragments.<sup>8</sup> However, efforts have been made to reconstruct his biography, with some

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<sup>5</sup> Janick Auberger (1991) published a French translation with a basic commentary of all the fragments based on Jacoby's edition.

<sup>6</sup> Jacoby acknowledges that Nicolaus was using Ctesias as his source but nevertheless published his passages separately.

<sup>7</sup> I have been unable to come across the edition of Lyon.

<sup>8</sup> cf. Jacoby (1922, col. 2036)

success.<sup>9</sup> Ctesias was born sometime after the middle of the fifth century B.C.E. in the city of Cnidus in Asia Minor<sup>10</sup> where he was born into the family of the Asclepiads<sup>11</sup> and studied medicine. He was the son of either Ctesiarchos or Ctesiochos (T1 and T1b; T11h), who was himself also probably a doctor as his father before him (F68).

At some point towards the end of the fifth century he was brought to Persia to serve as physician for the royal family,<sup>12</sup> however it is unclear exactly when he arrived. According to Diodorus (T3=F5 §32.4), Ctesias spent seventeen years at the Persian court. It is generally accepted that he left Persia in 398/397 B.C.E. which would place his arrival in Persia at 415 B.C.E. during the reign of Darius II. However, he is only referred to as the physician for Artaxerxes II and the detail given to the latter's reign in the *Persika* far exceeds that of Darius. This has led some to consider that Ctesias actually spent seven years at the court rather than seventeen which would place his arrival in 405 B.C.E. around the time of the ascendancy of Artaxerxes.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> See for example the studies of Brown (1978) and Eck (1990).

<sup>10</sup> The statement of Tzetzes (F1b) that Ctesias was from the Cyprian colony of the same name is clearly false. Ctesias, a noted physician from a family of physicians was a member of the Cnidian school of medicine which was based in the Carian city of Asia Minor.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. F67 and note.

<sup>12</sup> By Ctesias' time the Persian kings had long been employing Greek physicians at the court. The first Greek to hold such a position was Democedes (cf. Hdt. 3.129-133) who served under Darius I. He was later followed by Apollonides of Cos (F14 §34, 44) who was ultimately buried alive after allegedly defiling the daughter of Artaxerxes I.

<sup>13</sup> Mueller (1844, p. 2) even proposed to emend the text of Diodorus to read seven years rather than seventeen years for the duration of Ctesias' stay in Persia (cf. Bigwood 1978, p. 19-20 and n. 3). However, the manuscripts are unanimous on this point and there is no reason to suspect corruption (cf. Stronk 2007, p. 37-38 and n. 50). In fact, the figure of seventeen years is corroborated by Tzetzes (T1b). Although Tzetzes may have been using Diodorus for this information, to follow Mueller's emendation one would have to adhere to the unlikely assumption that Tzetzes was reading a manuscript with the same textual error which has come down to us. Jacoby (1922, col. 2033) accepts the text as is but contends that Ctesias exaggerates the length of his stay at the court in order to profess superiority over his predecessors, namely Apollonides of Cos.

While it is impossible to know for certain when and under what circumstances Ctesias came to Persia, his arrival during the reign of Darius cannot be excluded. He may well have arrived in 415 B.C.E. as the sources indicate, as a prisoner of war.<sup>14</sup> In any case, he was certainly at the court before the ascendancy of Artaxerxes, although he may have held no post of distinction until the latter's rise to power. There is no reason to assume that he immediately found a place of honor upon his arrival. He may have simply been in the service of Darius tending to lesser members of the court.<sup>15</sup> He then would not have attained a distinguished position until the new king took the throne. He may even have been made the personal physician of Parysatis,<sup>16</sup> the wife of Darius, early on. While Parysatis seems to have exerted a powerful influence over Darius as she later would with her son,<sup>17</sup> there is no reason to think that Ctesias as her physician had any special privileges other than acting as her confidant.

After his arrival in Persia, nothing is known of his stay until the Battle of Cunaxa (401 B.C.E.) where he was a doctor in the army of Artaxerxes II.<sup>18</sup> At the battle he successfully

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<sup>14</sup> Cf. Brown (1978, p. 8-10) who suggests that he was a volunteer in the in the army of Pissouthnes, the satrap of Lydia, who revolted from Persian authority (ca. 413 B.C.E.) at which time Ctesias was taken prisoner by Tissaphernes the new satrap at Sardis. His knowledge of medicine probably saved his life when it caught the attention of the new satrap. According to Brown, he would have come into the service of the king in 404 B.C.E. when Tissaphernes met Artaxerxes in Babylon thus accounting for his focus on the reign of Artaxerxes (see also Eck 1990, p. 431-432 for a similar theory).

<sup>15</sup> It is doubtful that the Persian king would allow a complete stranger and newcomer to the court to be his personal physician. Rather, it is more plausible that Ctesias would have to earn the trust of the king and prove his abilities by working his way up the court hierarchy before being placed in charge of the king's health.

<sup>16</sup> cf. T7aα

<sup>17</sup> F15 §50-51, 56; cf. Brosius 1996, p. 110

<sup>18</sup> Some scholars contend that Diodorus and Tzetzes both believed that Ctesias was in the service of Cyrus and captured by Artaxerxes at Cunaxa (cf. Baehr 1824, p.13-15; König 1972, p. 1 n. 17; Jacoby 1922, col. 2033-2035 follows this but refutes their belief). This contention is impossible since Plutarch (T6aα; T6b; T7b) and Xenophon (T6aβ) both clearly show that Ctesias was serving on the side of Artaxerxes when the battle commenced. For one, Plutarch's statement that Ctesias was honored after the battle would hardly have been plausible for a captive from the enemy's side, even if he did treat the king's wound. Moreover, as a member of Cyrus' army, Xenophon would surely have indicated if Ctesias were among their number. The strong showing of the Greek forces at Cunaxa offers no real chance for a Greek to be taken captive during the battle.

treated the wound of Artaxerxes. He remained close to the king during the battle indicating that he already held the post of royal physician before 401 B.C.E. However, it was probably only after healing the king that Ctesias earned any real position of honor since there is no indication that doctors were viewed with distinction because of their practice. If he served Parysatis as her personal physician during the reign of Darius, then it seems logical that he regularly treated Artaxerxes himself as a child. The latter would then have been well familiar with Ctesias when he ascended the throne and so made the rational decision to employ a man he trusted as royal physician. This would also explain the statement of Diodorus that he served Artaxerxes for seventeen years, if one includes the years before he became king.

Soon after the battle, the Greek generals were imprisoned and executed, despite the support they received from Parysatis. Ctesias, as confidant of Parysatis and intermediary to the Greeks, assisted Clearchos by giving him a comb and arranging for a separate meal to be sent to the Greek general after his soldiers pilfered his meal (F28). In return, Clearchos gave Ctesias his signet ring with dancing Caryatids depicted on it.<sup>19</sup> Since he no doubt did this at the behest of Parysatis, Ctesias found himself in the unusual position of earning the gratitude of both the king and the queen mother.<sup>20</sup>

Ctesias did however refuse to sneak Clearchos a dagger for suicide out of fear for his own personal safety. Certainly when one looks at the cruelty often displayed by members of the royal family towards their enemies, his fears seem justified. After all, during his tenure at the Persian court he witnessed (though probably not firsthand) the execution of all of the Greek generals by Artaxerxes and the cruel vengeance of Parysatis upon the enemies of her dead son

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<sup>19</sup> Cf. Bigwood (1995, p. 140)

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Brown (1978, p. 13)

Cyrus (F27). The most notable of these executions was that of Mithridates who was put to death in a most inhumane fashion, the trough-torture.<sup>21</sup> Perhaps the most shocking deed of all was her assassination of the queen Stateira. This event certainly would have lead Ctesias to the belief that that no one at the court was safe. Under such circumstances, it is easy to see that he would welcome any opportunity to escape.

Fortunately for Ctesias, he would get his chance soon after the turn of the century when he took part as an intermediary in the communications between the king, King Evagoras of Cyprian Salamis, and Conon of Athens (T7c-d), who had resided at the court of Evagoras since Aegospotamoi. Artaxerxes wished to check the power of the Spartans in the eastern Aegean,<sup>22</sup> which had grown considerably since the defeat of Athens in 404 B.C.E. Evagoras, meanwhile, who was a subject of the Persian king, seems to have wanted to secure power over the whole of Cyprus where Spartan influence was strong and so proved to be a useful ally. He entered into negotiations with the king who made the most of the situation by employing the naval genius of Conon. Conon then entered into talks with the king through the intermediary of Ctesias who was ultimately charged with delivering two letters to Conon and the Spartans. The latter may have been sent in order to deceive the Spartans as to his own intentions.<sup>23</sup> In any case, Ctesias used this opportunity to return to his homeland of Cnidus where he composed his works on Persia and

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<sup>21</sup> Cf. F 27 §16.3-7

<sup>22</sup> He also no doubt would have still been incensed over the large role played by Spartan mercenaries in the army of Cyrus. While Darius had formed an alliance with Sparta against Athens towards the end of the Peloponnesian War, Artaxerxes had ample reasons, aside from personal enmity, for rejecting this alliance now that the political climate had changed so drastically.

<sup>23</sup> Brown (1978, p. 18 n. 83) suggests that the note was conciliatory in nature, perhaps a renewal of their alliance, but admits that the king had reason to be surreptitious.

India.<sup>24</sup> These events, as Diodorus tells us (14.46) occurred in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the 95<sup>th</sup> Olympiad thus firmly dating his return from Persia to the year 398/397 B.C.E.<sup>25</sup>

While we have no direct information on Ctesias' activities or travels within the empire, we can discern many of the places he likely visited.<sup>26</sup> He certainly would never be far from the royal family in case his services were needed. Thus we know he visited the capitals at Susa<sup>27</sup>, Ecbatana,<sup>28</sup> and possibly Persepolis<sup>29</sup> where Artaxerxes was later buried, all sites of major construction activity under Artaxerxes. We also know then that Ctesias never visited India since there is no indication that Artaxerxes ever campaigned that far east. Conversely, he certainly visited Babylon<sup>30</sup> possibly on more than one occasion, despite the fact that Artaxerxes neglected

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<sup>24</sup> This would include the *Persika*, the *Indika*, the *Periplus*, and *On the Tributes in Asia*. It is uncertain when he composed any of his medical treatises (in fact he composed any – cf. F67, F68 and notes). He may also have continued to practice medicine since not many of his rivals could boast having tended to the Great King of Persia (cf. Brown 1978, p. 19).

<sup>25</sup> Ctesias (F27 §71) makes reference to the palms which appeared over the tomb of Clearchos, who died in 401 B.C.E., eight years after his death which would be in the year 393/392 B.C.E. König (1972, p. 26 n. 13) takes this to mean that Ctesias did not leave Persia until after this time and consequently places his arrival in 409 B.C.E. He believes then that Ctesias returned to Persia after serving on the embassy to Evagoras and Sparta, but for reasons left unexplained still only covered events up to 398/397 in his work (nor does he offer up a scenario in which Ctesias may have escaped in 393/392). Such a line of argument has rightly been rejected by scholars. It is clear that Ctesias merely heard about the palms from a second hand source, possibly after the Battle of Cnidus in 394. This passage does, however, indicate that the *Persika* was not completed before 393 B.C.E. (cf. Brown 1978, p. 6).

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Eck (1990, p. 413)

<sup>27</sup> He built a new palace at Susa (*A<sup>2</sup>Sd*) and rebuilt the apadana (audience hall) of Darius I which was destroyed by fire during the reign of Artaxerxes I (*A<sup>2</sup>Sa*). On the new palace at Susa see the study of Boucharlat and Labrousse (1979); on the inscriptions see Vallat (1979) and Kent (1953, p. 154-155).

<sup>28</sup> According to an inscription (*A<sup>2</sup>Hb*), Artaxerxes constructed an apadana at Ecbatana. However, this project was more likely a restoration of the apadana first built by Darius I. The fact that Persepolis and probably Susa had only one apadana make it all but certain that only one ever existed in Ecbatana; cf. Stronach 1996-2007; for text and translation of the inscription see Kent (1953, p. 155).

<sup>29</sup> Unlike his predecessors, he was not buried at *Naqšī-Rustam* but nearby on what became known as the royal hill (cf. Diod. 17.71.7; on his tomb see the study of Schmidt (1970, p. 99-102).

<sup>30</sup> Cf. F45ba where he claims that he witnessed an elephant uproot a date-palm in Babylon.



this city<sup>31</sup> in favor of the other capitals. After the Battle of Cunaxa, Artaxerxes retired to Babylon (F27 §69) and there is no reason to believe that Ctesias did not accompany him.<sup>32</sup> Clearchos, the Spartan general in the service of Cyrus, was imprisoned there soon after the battle.<sup>33</sup> The help Ctesias gave him while in prison makes certain that he visited the city.<sup>34</sup> It is also possible that he accompanied Parysatis to Babylon upon her brief exile after the assassination of Stateira. He was certainly closer to the queen mother than the king and obviously spent much more time in her presence.

### **The Works of Ctesias**

#### **The *Persika***

The most famous work of Ctesias, both in antiquity and today, is his *Persika* written in 23 books. The work began with the Assyrian Empire and covered events up to the point of Ctesias' return to Greece in 398/397 B.C.E. His history focuses more on folk tales and court gossip than on the political events of the day. However, while his method of historiography can be frustrating for modern scholars, his work is of vital importance for the study of history of the Achaemenid Empire.

#### **Books I-VI: The *Assyriaka***

The first six books of the history are devoted to the history of the Assyrian and Median Empires (T8a) and are sometimes referred to as the *Assyriaka*. Eventually this opening portion of the *Persika* came to be viewed as a separate work.<sup>35</sup> The fact that Photius began his epitome

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<sup>31</sup> Cf. Eck (1991, p. 413); however, it has recently been shown that he was responsible for the construction of a new palace in Babylon as well; cf. Vallat (1989).

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Bigwood (1978b, p. 32-33)

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Olmstead (1948, p. 375)

<sup>34</sup> F28; cf. Eck (1990, p. 413-414)

<sup>35</sup> T2; cf. Jacoby (1922, col. 2040)

with Book 7 suggests that he was reading a copy with the *Assyriaka* missing.<sup>36</sup> However, he certainly knew that the first six books devoted to Assyria and Media were all part of the *Persika* (T8a). Thus the belief that the *Assyriaka* was a separate work was not universal. By the Middle Ages, the *Assyriaka* seems to have been for the most part reincorporated into the *Persika*, even if they were at times circulated separately.<sup>37</sup>

Ctesias begins his history with the reign of the Assyrian king Ninus who through conquest built an empire over Asia. He first subdued the region of Babylonia before gaining control over Armenia and Media. His quest for expansion was checked in Bactria at which point he returned west to found a new city. The city which he named after himself was to be the new capital of the Assyrian Empire. He then returned to Bactria to make a second attempt at conquest where he would eventually take as his queen Semiramis.<sup>38</sup> Thanks to a plan devised by Semiramis, after a long siege Ninus was finally able to conquer Bactra, the capital city of Bactria. Soon after the birth of his son Ninyas, Ninus died and Semiramis became queen.

Ninus, like most of the Assyrian monarchs in the *Persika*, is a mythical figure. Many historians up until the 18<sup>th</sup> century followed Ctesias for Assyrian history as he was thought to be the best source available.<sup>39</sup> Then in the 18<sup>th</sup> century the discovery of the Assyrian kinglist tablets showed that the royal lineage given by Ctesias was clearly fable.<sup>40</sup> However, many of the figures

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<sup>36</sup> Cf. Jacoby (1922, col. 2040)

<sup>37</sup> For example, the Suda (T1a), the 10<sup>th</sup> century encyclopedia, and Tzetzes (T1b), the 12<sup>th</sup> century author, both say that the *Persika* was written in 23 books (T1). This figure then includes the *Assyriaka* since the fragments show that only 17 books were devoted to the history of Persia.

<sup>38</sup> At this point in the narrative there is a digression on the divine origins of Semiramis. The length of the digression in Diodorus' account suggest that perhaps Ctesias devoted a rather large portion of a book to this topic.

<sup>39</sup> For example, the 15<sup>th</sup> century Byzantine scholar Laonikos Chalkokondyles follows Ctesias for his cursory mention of Assyrian history.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. F33 and note.

in the *Assyriaka* seem to be loosely based on fact, usually taking elements from several great historical figures and Ninus is no exception.<sup>41</sup>

While Ninus is credited as the founder of the Assyrian Empire, Semiramis emerges as the central figure of the *Assyriaka*. She exceeded her husband in every way and her accomplishments were given much greater detail by Ctesias. Whereas Ninus is the founder of Nineveh, she is said to have founded the even greater city of Babylon.<sup>42</sup> She is also credited with the Behistun monument which was actually constructed by Darius I to celebrate his numerous conquests.<sup>43</sup> In fact, ancient monuments which still survived in Ctesias' time were invariably attributed to Semiramis<sup>44</sup> while none of the works of Ninus could still be seen. She also displayed great prowess as a military commander expanding her husband's empire all the way to the banks of the Indus before the Indians turned her back. Ultimately, the empire the two of them forged was roughly identical to the Achaemenid Empire. Semiramis eventually abdicated in favor of her son Ninyas after he plotted against her. She then turned into a dove.

Like Ninus, Semiramis is a purely mythical character based on several historical figures. Unlike Ninus, her name itself belongs to a genuine Assyrian queen, Sammuramat, the wife of Šamši Adad V (823-811 B.C.E.). She acted as regent while her son was a minor and even made dedications in her own name. Semiramis also displays many similarities to Zakutu, the wife of

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<sup>41</sup> He appears to have received several attributes from Sennacherib (704-681), the king who moved the capital to Nineveh, Tiglath-Pileser III (744-727) who resurrected the Assyrian Empire in the eighth century, and Sargon II (721-705) who expanded the empire with a series of conquests (cf. note on F1b §1.4).

<sup>42</sup> The detail Ctesias gives to the city of Babylon, however, is not necessarily to glorify the Assyrian queen but is the result of his having visited the city and seen it firsthand. By his time Nineveh lay in ruins and was unrecognizable even to those passing by it, thus explaining Ctesias' egregious blunder of locating along the banks of the Euphrates (cf. note on F1b §3.2).

<sup>43</sup> This false attribution is surprising in light of the immense pride the Achaemenids had in their lineage which they display regularly on monumental inscriptions.

<sup>44</sup> On the works attributed to Semiramis see especially Eilers (1971, p. 15-23)

Sennacherib and mother to Esharhaddon. Like Sammuramat, Zakutu wielded great power while acting as regent for her underage son.<sup>45</sup> Both of these women show that Assyrian queens, while unable to hold the throne officially, could rise to positions of great power as regents. Such a practice was foreign both to the Greeks and the Persians<sup>46</sup> and as such likely captivated their imaginations, leading to the creation of folk tales.<sup>47</sup>

Her son Ninyas succeeded Semiramis to the throne<sup>48</sup>. She proved to be the last of the great Assyrian monarchs as with her son the kings fell into a decline. Ctesias relates that he was the first king to rule in the effeminate luxury which would characterize the remainder of the Assyrian monarchs until the advent of the Medes. He spent all of his time in the palace in the company of women and eunuchs engaging in feminine pursuits (F1b §21.2). This lifestyle became the rule rather than the exception among Assyrian kings as his successors each ruled in a similar style for the next thirty generations accomplishing nothing worthy of remembrance (F1b §21.8). This emphasis on luxury would reach a pinnacle with the final king of the Assyrian Empire, Sardanapallus.<sup>49</sup> Like his predecessors, he spent all of his time among members of the

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<sup>45</sup> Cf. note on F1b §4.1

<sup>46</sup> While Persian women could possess considerable influence over the king and rise to powerful positions as landowners (cf. note on F16 §65), they could never run the affairs of the state

<sup>47</sup> See for example Herodotus' account of the powerful Assyrian queen Nitocris (1.185). Ctesias' emphasis on powerful women may originate from the women of the royal court during his stay in Persia. He spent much of his time in the company of women and eunuchs from whom he no doubt heard many of these stories. This would explain the prominent role of powerful women and eunuchs throughout his work since they would surely want to extol their own kind.

<sup>48</sup> Ninyas is a completely unhistorical figure. He is a literary creation who embodied the Greek view of the effeminate eastern rule (cf. note on F1b §7.1).

<sup>49</sup> The name is likely a derivative of Aššurbanipal (668-627) who was the last king of the Assyrian Empire (however see note on F1b §23.1 for problems with equating the two.)

harem, spinning wool and even wearing make-up.<sup>50</sup> However, in a brilliant bit of irony, at the end of his reign he displays valor by leading his troops in combat against the Medes who were leading a revolt against him. Even after being defeated, he chose the honorable death of suicide along with his family rather than fall captive to the Medes.<sup>51</sup>

The remainder of the *Assyriaka* is devoted to the empire of the Medes, beginning with the reign of Arbaces, who led the revolt against Sardanapallus. Based upon Diodorus' account (F5), it seems clear that Ctesias devoted far less space to the Medes. Diodorus glosses over the first several kings only giving the length of their reigns. He gives a brief account of the war between the Medes and Cadusians during the reign of Artarios in order to explain the on-going hostility between the two nations. He then describes the Parthian revolt two generations later in which the Parthians formed an alliance with the Saka. Diodorus glosses over the war quickly and completely omits the romance between the Saka queen Zarinaia and the Mede Stryangeos (F7F8a-c). The latter became a favorite topic among later writers and is a good example of the romantic style of Ctesias' writing. He was clearly more interested in such stories than in political machinations and detailed accounts of battles. The final king of the Median Empire was Astyages, the ninth king mentioned in the dynasty.<sup>52</sup> He made Cyrus, the son of Atradates, his personal cupbearer. Cyrus grew into a powerful man and, although from humble origins, was

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<sup>50</sup> This view of the decadent eastern potentate who is spoiled by luxury and effeminacy continues to this day. One need only look at the depiction of Xerxes in the recent film *The 300* to notice the numerous similarities to Ctesias' Sardanapallus.

<sup>51</sup> Although the honorable death of a luxuriant king is told in a brilliant literary fashion showing that the Assyrian Empire was founded and toppled under valorous kings, this narrative is not the fictional creation of Ctesias. Sardanapallus' death is likely based on fact. Shamash-shuma-ukin, the king of Babylon and brother of Aššurbanipal killed himself by self-immolation while being besieged and facing certain captivity (cf. F1b §27.2 and note).

<sup>52</sup> Astyages was also the only king mentioned by both Herodotus and Ctesias. Herodotus only mentions four kings for the Medes (cf. note on F5 §32.6).

adopted by the Astyages. He eventually led a revolt against the Median king (F8d). Ctesias ends Book VI and the *Assyriaka* with this revolt, which would set the stage for the Persian Empire.

Unfortunately, the historical value of the *Assyriaka* is minimal to the historian of Assyria. There are numerous obvious errors, such as the location of Nineveh on the Euphrates and it is primarily rooted in folklore and full of romantic tales and literary devices. The founder of the Assyrian Empire is a non-historical character who takes his name simply from the Nineveh (called *Ninua* in Akkadian)<sup>53</sup> whose major role is to lay the foundations for empire and set the stage for Semiramis.<sup>54</sup> Semiramis was the real heroic founder of the empire who excelled both in war and domestic affairs such as foundation of cities and erection of monuments. Their son Ninyas plays a similar role in marking the transition from valorous and ambitious monarchs to the stereotypical Eastern ruler who lives a decadent life of luxury. Finally, Sardanapallus was the pinnacle of the effeminate Eastern ruler who by the end of the narrative had marked a return to the martial valor and honor with which the empire was founded.

There is however, some historical value to the *Assyriaka*. For one, the figure Ctesias gives for the duration of the empire is more or less accurate<sup>55</sup>. He also gives some names which are of genuine Akkadian origin<sup>56</sup> thus indicating that he likely obtained his information from a local source. While historical accuracy may be minimal for the history of Assyria, this work is of great importance for showing how those within the Persian Empire viewed their own history and what type of stories were circulating. They clearly sought to explain many of the surviving

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<sup>53</sup> It is doubtful that Ctesias knew Akkadian which suggests that he was relating a fable of Iranian origins.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. Eck (2003, p. XXVIII)

<sup>55</sup> See note on F1b §21.8 for a discussion of the controversy concerning the duration of the empire as given by Ctesias. While there is some debate on the specific years he gave for the beginning and end of the empire, the length he gives is fairly accurate for the combined duration of the Old and New Assyrian Empires.

<sup>56</sup> See discussions above on Semiramis and Sardanapallus. Even Ninus' name comes from the Akkadian name for Nineveh (*Ninua*).

ancient monuments by folklore and it would make a more romantic story if they were constructed by a woman of a bygone age. Most importantly, the Assyrians created an empire equivalent to the Persian Empire which was passed on to the Medes and then to the Persians. Thus the Persians seem to have justified their authority through these stories by showing that they merely inherited a pre-existing empire. They were the rightful heirs to an ancient empire<sup>57</sup> rather than ambitious and aggressive people who enslaved their neighbors in a quest for ultimate power.

Likewise the Median Empire was less historical and more reflective of an oral tradition created to justify the Persian empire. Its main purpose seems to have been to serve as a transition of empire from the Assyrians to the Persians.<sup>58</sup> In actuality, there seems not to have been a Median Empire, much less one which could preclude that of the Persians.<sup>59</sup> Yet, both Ctesias and Herodotus describe the Medes as an empirical power on par with the position the Persians would later hold. Nor is it necessary to see this as a Greek view employed by Herodotus and followed by Ctesias since both authors seem to reflect genuine oral traditions, even if these traditions are often contradictory of each other.

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<sup>57</sup> This was clearly common in the oral traditions circulating in the fifth century. Herodotus (1.94) and Xenophon (Cyr. 1.2.1) both link Cyrus to the Median royal family by making him the grandson of Astyages through his mother. The tradition they relate seeks then to justify the Persians as the legitimate heirs to the empire by direct lineage. Such justification of power was again displayed by Alexander after his defeat of Darius. He tried to portray himself as the rightful heir to an already existent empire rather than the creator of a new one. He knew that this was the only way to be accepted as supreme leader and minimize revolutionary reaction to his takeover. This wish to be seen as the legitimate heir may be one reason he treated the queen mother as his own.

<sup>58</sup> It is interesting to note that Ctesias makes no mention of the Neo-Babylonian Empire which co-existed with that of the Assyrians and played a major role in the latter's downfall; cf. Briant (2002, p. 27).

<sup>59</sup> The Medes in the time of Šalmaneser III (859-824 B.C.E.) were a tribal and fragmented society who were not unified before the seventh century (cf. Briant 2002, p. 26). By the fall of Nineveh, they were a powerful force in the Near East; however, there has been some doubt cast upon the extent of this power and if they had what could truly be called an 'empire'; on this point see especially Sancisi-Weerdenburg (1988).

Before reaching the end of the revolt, the narrative embarks on a digression on the origins of Cyrus (F8c-d). Ctesias gives an account different from that of Herodotus, although the latter no doubt had heard this version but deemed it less credible<sup>60</sup>. According to Herodotus, Cyrus was the grandson of Astyages<sup>61</sup> who was to be exposed as a baby but was instead raised by a shepherd. Ctesias, on the other hand, relates a tradition in which Cyrus was the son of a brigand and a goat herder and a member of the despised Mardian tribe. There are, however, similarities between the two accounts. In both stories Cyrus is raised in obscurity and comes to prominence in spite of his humble origins. Such stories seek to emphasize his superior character and show him as one destined for greatness<sup>62</sup> and clearly reflect an oral tradition.<sup>63</sup> According to Ctesias, Cyrus is adopted by the king's cupbearer and soon succeeds him to this position. He attains great power to the point of having his father appointed satrap, despite his previous occupation as a bandit. Soon after his rise to power Cyrus launched his rebellion.

### **Books VII-XXIII: *The Persika***

The *Persika* proper begins with the seventh book of the work which picks up the narrative right before the final fall of Astyages at Ecbatana. The origins of Cyrus and his rise to power (F8) clearly belong to the end of Book VI since Photius makes no mention of this account. In essence, the *Persika* begins when Cyrus comes to power as king of Asia and the *Assyriaka* acts as the introduction to the work devoted to Persian affairs. This would set the trend of

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<sup>60</sup> Herodotus (1.95) claims to have heard three versions in addition to the one he gives.

<sup>61</sup> Ctesias (F9 §1) has Cyrus marry Amytis, the daughter of Astyages after the latter's defeat. He is then only connected to the Median royal line by marriage rather than lineage.

<sup>62</sup> Justin (1.4.10) relates yet another version in which Cyrus, like Romulus and Remus, was nourished by a female dog.

<sup>63</sup> No trace of these stories survives in Eastern sources. According to cuneiform tablets, Cyrus was the king of Anšan and the son of Cambyses who held the same position. These stories, however, are clearly of Eastern origin. A very similar account of the origins of Sargon II of Akkad can be found in cuneiform tablets (cf. Drews 1974 for a full discussion; see also Briant 2002, p. 16).



beginning universal histories with the Assyrian Empire continuing into the Middle Ages which sought to show the history of the world in terms of a succession of empires.<sup>64</sup>

After the capture of Ecbatana, Ctesias describes the campaigns of Cyrus into Bactria and against the Saka before telling of his war against Croesus and the Lydians<sup>65</sup>. Ctesias' account of Croesus differs from that of Herodotus who claims that after being captured the Lydian king was placed upon a pyre but soon released when a sudden storm sent by Apollo doused the flames (1.86-87). Herodotus claims that before the storm, Cyrus repented of his decision to execute the Lydian king after hearing him recall Solon's famous statement regarding a man's fortune. Ctesias, on the other hand, claims that Croesus was pardoned by Cyrus after the Lydian king was miraculously freed from his bonds several times. In both stories, Croesus was freed by divine favor and afterwards honored by Cyrus.

After relating the death of Astyages at the hands of the eunuch Petesakas and Oibaras, Ctesias describes Cyrus' final campaign against the Derbikkas. During a battle, Cyrus was fatally wounded in the hip. Again the account differs from what others offer.<sup>66</sup> Herodotus and Ctesias both agree that Cyrus appointed his son Cambyses as the new king showing that from the very beginning of the empire succession was not determined by primogeniture but by royal prerogative. Before dying, he appointed Cambyses as his successor and gave his other son Tanyoxarkes a vast kingdom in central Asia to rule exempt from tribute. A similar form of

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<sup>64</sup> Cf. Momigliano (1982)

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Hdt. 1.153 who says that Cyrus subdued the Lydians before facing the Bactrians and the Saka. See note on F9 §5 for the controversy surrounding the historicity of this event.

<sup>66</sup> Herodotus (1.214) claims that Cyrus was killed while fighting the Massagetae; Berossus (*FGrH* 680 F10) has him killed while fighting the Dahae and Diodorus (2.44.2) in Scythia. All of these accounts agree that he was killed in the northeast of the empire.

compensation was given to Cyrus the Younger when his brother was given the crown but in both cases it would prove insufficient for their ambition.

It may be possible to partially reconstruct the content of some of the individual books of this part of the work. For instance, we know that the Lydian expedition was discussed in Book IX (F9b). The death of Astyages and the Bactrian campaign must comprise of Books X and XI. However, it seems that much, if not all, of Book X was devoted to a digression on the natural history and ethnography of central Asia. Book X is mentioned three times specifically and never in connection with an historical event.<sup>67</sup> His description of the Dyrbaians (F11) as exceedingly just bears a striking resemblance to his view of the Indians. In fact, by all indications Book X appears to have been written in the same manner as the *Indika*. The Bactrian campaign of Cyrus may then have been put off until Book XI. The death of Cyrus and his preparations for succession are discussed at the end of the eleventh book, as Photius indicates.

Book XII picks up the narrative from the beginning of Cambyses' reign (F13§1). Photius immediately mentions the number of influential eunuchs at his court. While there were certainly powerful eunuchs at the court of Cyrus,<sup>68</sup> they appear to have gained in number and power under Cambyses. There is no historical evidence to support Ctesias' view on these matters as he may have been influenced by the eunuchs of his own day who sought to exalt their own position as one historically powerful. This especially seems the case in light of the prominent role played by eunuchs in Cambyses' Egyptian campaign. According to Ctesias, Cambyses defeated Amyrtaios,<sup>69</sup> the king of the Egyptians through the subterfuge of a eunuch (F9 §10). The story

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<sup>67</sup> F10a-b he discusses the physical attributes of the Caspian goats; F11 discusses the Dyrbaians and F12 the Choramnians.

<sup>68</sup> Bagapates, for example, is said to have gained his influence under Cyrus and retained it with Cambyses.

<sup>69</sup> On this figure see note on F13 §10.

given, although completely within the world of fable, no doubt has its roots in Eastern traditions. Herodotus (3.2-3) mentions several variant traditions of Cambyses' Egyptian campaign in addition to his main account. In all the variants women played a prominent part in the motivations for going to war and mostly represent Persian propaganda in an effort to justify their conquests.<sup>70</sup> The ultimate goal was undoubtedly to solidify and expand the empire.

The major event in the reign of Cambyses which has captured the imaginations of the Greeks was the plot of his brother Tanyoxarkes<sup>71</sup> against the throne. Cambyses' assassination of his brother and the Magus imposter who eventually succeeded him are confirmed by the Behistun Inscription (*DB* §10-14) and Herodotus (3.61ff) although with some striking inconsistencies. For one thing, Herodotus places the death of Smerdis/Tanyoxarkes after the Egyptian campaign whereas the Behistun monument claims it came first. Ctesias appears at first glance to have followed the chronology of Herodotus based on the resume of Photius. However, he claims that the deception of the false Tanyoxarkes was not discovered for five years. Since Cambyses died in 522, only three years after the Egyptian expedition, this would place the death of Tanyoxarkes before the campaign and in agreement with the Behistun monument.<sup>72</sup> Secondly, Ctesias calls the Magus Sphendadates<sup>73</sup> while the Behistun monument calls him Gaumata. Herodotus simply says that his name was Smerdis as well, though this is highly implausible.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Cf. Briant (2002, p. 50-51); on the historicity of these events see notes on F13 §10

<sup>71</sup> Herodotus calls him Smerdis which is roughly equivalent to Bardiya, the name which appears on the Behistun monument; see note of F9 §8 for full discussion of his name.

<sup>72</sup> Cf. Note on F13 §13

<sup>73</sup> Cf. F13 §11 and note.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Bickerman and Tadmor (1978) for a full discussion of these events.

After the death of Cambyses,<sup>75</sup> the false Tanyoxarkes took the throne under his assumed identity as the son of Cyrus. He ruled for only seven months<sup>76</sup> before a coalition of seven Persian nobles lead by Darius contested him for the throne. This partnership is confirmed by the Behistun monument (DB §68) and discussed by Herodotus as well. Of the names of the six co-conspirators given by Ctesias, only one corresponds to those of the Behistun inscription and Herodotus.<sup>77</sup> It is clear that both Ctesias and Herodotus were relying on oral sources and not the inscription itself. The discrepancy of even one name and the failure to mention the monument proves Herodotus reliance on oral traditions.<sup>78</sup> Ctesias was surely relying on oral sources since he attributes the monument to Semiramis<sup>79</sup> rather than Darius and makes no connection between the monument and the usurpation of the Magus.

The variations in Ctesias' account do not mean that he arbitrarily invented his list in order to contradict Herodotus. All of the names he gives are authentic Iranian names.<sup>80</sup> In two cases, the names he gives belong to the sons of two of the conspirators<sup>81</sup> which is clearly a case of

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<sup>75</sup> On his death see note on F13 §14

<sup>76</sup> F13 §16; cf. Hdt. 3.67

<sup>77</sup> The name Idernes is an acceptable equivalent of Vidarna. Although Ataphernes is similar to Vindafarna (cf. Lenfant 1996, p. 376), it is unclear if the two names correspond (cf. Mayrhofer 1973; Justi 1895 33a; Schmitt 2006, p. 147-150). Six of the seven names given by Herodotus correspond to those at Behistun; cf. note on F13 §16.

<sup>78</sup> Two fragments of an Akkadian version of the inscription were found in Babylon and a papyrus fragment of a version in Aramaic indicating that the content of the inscription was circulated around the empire (cf. Lenfant 1996, p. 376 n. 139). However, there is nothing to suggest that Herodotus had access to these written versions.

<sup>79</sup> It seems that through the centuries various fables have been attributed to the monument. In modern times, locals of the region refer to the nine figures representing conquered kings as nine dervishes (cf. Schmitt 1991, p. 17).

<sup>80</sup> On the individual names see Schmitt (2006)

<sup>81</sup> Among the conspirators he names Mardonius who is the son of Gobryas (Hdt. 6.43; called Gaubaruva in the inscription), and Onophas, the son of Otanes (Hdt. 7.62 where he is called Anaphes; Otanes is called Utana in the inscription).

confusion between father and son.<sup>82</sup> As for the other differences, it seems that Ctesias is relating a different tradition of the Seven which was circulating in his time. To be sure, the story of the Seven underwent changes even at the hands of Darius himself. At first, Darius takes sole credit for the defeat of the usurper Gaumata (DB §12-13), but later credits his six co-conspirators by name in a part of the inscription composed at a later date<sup>83</sup> indicating a change in propaganda. By the time of Herodotus some fifty years later, for reasons unknown, Ardumaniš was replaced with Aspathines in the local tradition. Fifty years later with the events of the inscription being a century removed, the traditions varied greatly. Prestigious families vied to tie their lineage to the conspirators<sup>84</sup> as families fell in and out of favor with the king.<sup>85</sup> While it is impossible to determine the cause of these discrepancies with absolute certainty, the evidence is sufficient to show that Ctesias' list was not a creation of his own imagination.

Once established on the throne, Darius, according to the fragments, constructs his tomb at Naqš-i Rostam, though Ctesias never mentions the site by name. Ctesias then describes Darius' Scythian campaign. The Scythians in question are the known in eastern inscriptions as the Saka *paradayā* ('those beyond the Sea') who inhabit the region of northeast Europe north of the

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<sup>82</sup> This confusion was likely caused by the practice of giving a father's name as part of identification. This coupled with the fact that men often had the same name as their grandfather could easily lead to confusion. Thus, Ctesias or his sources confused Gobryas, the son of Mardonius with Mardonius, the son of Gobryas (cf. Lenfant 1996, p. 377).

<sup>83</sup> Cf. Schmitt (1991, p. 20)

<sup>84</sup> This custom of tying one's lineage to the Seven in order to enhance one's prestige continued into later epochs. Diodorus (31.19.1-4) tells us that the kings of Cappadocia sought to legitimize their authority by claiming to be descendants of one of the Seven.

<sup>85</sup> The most notable exclusion from Ctesias' list is Megabyzos, who is featured prominently elsewhere in the *Persika* (cf. F13 §26, 31; F14 *passim*). However, he and members of his family frequently fell out of favor with the crown indicating that even when reconciled there was constant enmity between the two (cf. Briant 2002, p. 136). However, the family of Intaphernes was put to death soon after the rebellion for allegedly conspiring against the king and yet his name remained on Herodotus' list and possibly that of Ctesias (*supra* n. 79; cf. Lenfant 1996, p. 378-379). Perhaps it was due to the long standing tension between the two families which lasted several generations that ultimately lead to Megabyzos' removal from the list.

Danube.<sup>86</sup> Contrary to Herodotus, Ctesias describes two campaigns against the Scythians; the first, which is omitted by Herodotus, is lead by Ariaramnes, the satrap of Cappadocia, and the second Darius leads in person. On a whole, the two accounts are very similar with differences only in the details. For instance, Ctesias lists Darius army at 800,000 while Herodotus gives the slightly smaller figure of 700,000. Both authors agree that the campaign ended in disaster for Darius, although Darius himself lists these Scythians among his conquests and claims they paid him tribute (*DNa* 3). In both accounts there is correspondence between the two kings, however they diverge on the nature and order of the letters sent. According to Ctesias, the Scythian king sends the first letter in response to the first incursion into his own lands whereas Herodotus (4.126-127) maintains that Darius sent the first letter in order to provoke the Scythian king. The two accounts deviate on the causes of Darius retreat<sup>87</sup> but both agree that he abandoned part of his army in his crossing back into Asia.<sup>88</sup> Although both authors are for the most part in agreement on the events and outcome of the Scythian expedition, the divergences in their accounts indicate that they are both relating different traditions. Herodotus was clearly relating a tradition of Scythian origin<sup>89</sup> while Ctesias was reporting what was likely circulating within the empire.

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<sup>86</sup> Cf. note on F5 34.2 on the three different tribes of Saka mentioned in eastern sources; see also F13 §20 and note.

<sup>87</sup> According to the resume of Photius, it seems that Darius withdrew after being defeated by the Scythian archers while Herodotus claims that he had to retreat after his supplies ran low and his army was unable to advance in the rough terrain (cf. F13 §21 and note).

<sup>88</sup> Herodotus (4.135-136) says that he abandoned his wounded, while Ctesias mentions only a part of his army. Ctesias adds that those abandoned were massacred but Herodotus gives no detail on their fate.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. the studies of Georges (1987); Masetti (1982); Balcer (1972)

Ctesias next moves on to the Persian Wars which he uniquely describes from a strictly Persian viewpoint.<sup>90</sup> For instance, the fragments omit any indication of the Ionian Revolt and imply that hostilities began when Datis ravaged some Greek islands.<sup>91</sup> After describing the death of Darius soon after his return to Persia and Xerxes' succession, Ctesias gives the motives for the second invasion. According to him, Xerxes sought to punish the Chalcedonians for destroying Darius' bridge and the altar he erected and the Athenians for failing to return the body of Datis, whom he says was killed in the first invasion. This may have reflected the official propaganda of the Persians in order to justify their second invasion.<sup>92</sup> While there are many similarities to the account of Herodotus, there are some notable differences.

After the crossing of the Hellespont, Ctesias describes the Battle of Thermopylae. Ctesias seems to have either omitted or, more likely, relegated to the background the allied forces focusing solely on the Spartans. To be sure, he favored the Spartans and his pro-Spartan account of the war stands in contrast to the Athenocentric view of Herodotus. However, he still tells the story from a Persian viewpoint, focusing on Xerxes' failed attacks more than the heroism of the Spartans. The narrative, as it survives in Photius' resume, seems to concentrate on the various tactics and attempts of Xerxes until he was finally able to overcome his enemies with

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<sup>90</sup> Although Ctesias describes the Persian Wars from a Persian viewpoint, this portion of the *Persika* still remains largely Hellenocentric since the reign of Xerxes seems to focus solely on the wars, with the exception of his trip to Babylon before the invasion (on which see F13 §26 and notes). In actuality, Xerxes ruled for 20 years until 465 B.C.E., nearly 15 years after the conclusion of the wars. The wars with Greece formed only a minor part of his reign and their consequences could scarcely have been felt in the heart of the empire. Yet it is important to remember that Ctesias is writing for a Greek audience who would have been eager to read a detailed account of their most glorious moment.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. F13 §22 and note; it would be surprising if Ctesias passed over an event which was so well known in Greece. In any case, if he did mention it, he relegated to the background and minimized any importance the revolt had in leading the Persians to invade.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. Hdt. 7.8 who cites a desire for expansion as well as revenge as a motive for Xerxes' invasion. However, Herodotus gives a purely Athenocentric view of the war going so far as to say that Xerxes only sought revenge against the Athenians. In his view, revenge only played a role where Athens was concerned while the rest of the Greeks were to be victims of expansion. According to Ctesias, expansion does not seem to play a role in Xerxes' decision to invade.

the help of two Trachinians in surrounding the Spartans. None of this, however, deters from the glory of the Spartans.

Following the Battle of Thermopylae Ctesias commits one of his most famous blunders which has often been used to discredit him as an historian. He places the Battle of Plataia chronologically before the Battle of Salamis. Herodotus (8.50) does confirm that in 480 Xerxes burned Plataia and the city of the Thespians before marching on Athens. However, the battle described at this point is the final Greek victory which took place in 479 B.C.E. one year later. It seems difficult to believe that a simple confusion of this event lead to such an egregious error when the accounts of the Persia Wars would have been so well known to the Greeks. To be sure there was some element of confusion in his account. He claims the Greek force numbered 300 Spartans, 1,000 Perioikoi and 6,000 men from elsewhere; figures which better correspond to Thermopylae. However, this cannot be taken as evidence that Ctesias simply altered the account of Herodotus at his own discretion. Surely, he did not seek to discredit Herodotus by contradicting him on such a well-established event. It seems more plausible that Ctesias was relating a version of events that was circulating in Persia where the wars would not be as well known. It seems that this version places the battles in geographical order from north to south.

After Plateia, Ctesias narrates the sack of Athens and the Battle of Salamis. His description of Salamis is of great importance for scholars trying to reconstruct the battle. He is one of the earliest authors to mention the shrine of Herakles and he is the only author to speak of the presence of Cretan archers<sup>93</sup>. The figures he gives for the battle, although exaggerated, offer a more plausible proportion between the Greek and Persian forces. He claims that the Greeks had 700 ships of which only 110 were supplied by Athens. This may reflect a Spartan tradition

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<sup>93</sup> Cf. F13 §30 and notes.



which lessened the credit of the Athenians, especially since Ctesias would be recounting what was circulating during and immediately after the Peloponnesian War. Athenian heroes such as Themistocles and Aristides were not denied their glory, but Athens herself was not portrayed as the leaders of the Greek fight for freedom, as they appear in Herodotus. This holds true for Ctesias' entire account of the Persian Wars in which, although told from a Persian viewpoint, constantly focuses on and enhances Spartan valor.

It seems that the narrative of the *Persika* jumps immediately from the Persian Wars to the assassination of Xerxes<sup>94</sup>. According to Ctesias' version of events, Artapanos and the eunuch Aspamitres, both of whom were very influential with the king<sup>95</sup>, conspired to kill him and install Artaxerxes on the throne. After assassinating the king, the two men convince Artaxerxes that his brother Darius was to blame and the latter was put to death. Several traditions of the assassination of Xerxes survive in the Greek sources<sup>96</sup> all of which shift the blame to Artapanos and remove all culpability from Artaxerxes. These legends were likely circulated after he became king in order to vindicate his legitimacy and innocence in the murder of his brother. In reality, Artaxerxes had a strong motive for killing off his brother and rival claimant to the throne if he truly wanted to be king.<sup>97</sup> Moreover, he had Artapanos executed for allegedly plotting against him soon after becoming king in a move which both quieted his accomplices and gave him someone to blame for the murder of his father and brother.

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<sup>94</sup> *Supra* n. 92

<sup>95</sup> The latter is not listed among the most influential people at Xerxes' court (cf. F13 §24). He is, however, referred to as 'very powerful' in the narrative of this episode.

<sup>96</sup> See note on F13 §33 for full bibliography.

<sup>97</sup> The killing of one's brothers in order to secure one's claim to the throne was not uncommon in Achaemenid Persia (cf. Cambyses' murder of Tanyoxarkes and Darius' killing of Sekyndianos). The fact that tales were circulated soon after such killings which sought to justify the new king's actions shows that this was not standard practice, as would later become the case in the Ottoman Empire; for a full discussion see Carlton (1994).

In Book XIV Ctesias tells the saga of Megabyzos who first came to prominence under Xerxes when he helped put down a revolt in Babylon (F13 §26). Megabyzos conspired with Artapanos against Artaxerxes but revealed the plot beginning what would be a tumultuous relationship between his family and the crown. In the civil war that erupted in the wake of Artapanos' failed plot, Megabyzos was severely wounded but ultimately healed by the Greek physician Apollonides of Cos<sup>98</sup>. Evidently, he returned to the good graces of the king for betraying the plot of Artapanos and fought on his side in the civil war. This much is clear since the king's royal physician healed him and he next appears at the head of the king's forces in Egypt where he was sent to put down the revolt of Inaros.

After briefly passing over Artaxerxes' suppression of a revolt in Bactria, the narrative as it survives turns to the event in the reign of Artaxerxes which dominates Ctesias' testimony, the revolt of the Lybian Inaros. Based on Photius' epitome, it seems clear that Ctesias spent a great deal of time on the event. He gives the first full account of the revolt supplying many details not found elsewhere. Herodotus (3.12; 7.7) makes only a passing reference to the event without elaborating and Thucydides (1.104; 1.109-110) wrote of the revolt after Ctesias. There are many discrepancies between Ctesias and Thucydides on this episode with neither being fully satisfactory<sup>99</sup>. The two accounts can however be used to supplement one another. For instance, Thucydides tells us that Inaros was captured by treachery whereas Ctesias says that a peace was brokered between the Persians and the rebels. After five years, at the behest of Amestris, Artaxerxes ignored the oaths given by Megabyzos and had Inaros put to death. While the

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<sup>98</sup> On this figure see F14 §34, 44 and notes.

<sup>99</sup> See note on F14 §36 regarding each authors' figures for the Athenian fleet and subsequent notes for further examples.

passing of five years until the death of Inaros is implausible, both authors agree that Inaros was betrayed and ultimately impaled.

The eventual execution of Inaros and betrayal of Megabyzos' oath renewed his friction with the crown. He was granted a discharge by the king, returned to Syria and fomented a rebellion. Ousiris was sent to face him but was soundly defeated and captured. Megabyzos then returned Ousiris to Artaxerxes at his request before a second force was dispatched to face him. Again Megabyzos won an overwhelming victory. After this second battle the two sides agreed on a truce and Megabyzos received a full pardon for his leadership in the rebellion. Although once again in the good graces of the king, Megabyzos would soon find himself the target of the king's anger once again. While on a royal hunt, he killed a lion which was attacking Artaxerxes. Although his life was saved, Artaxerxes grew angry since Megabyzos made a kill before him<sup>100</sup>. Originally sentenced to be beheaded, Megabyzos was first sent into exile but was eventually pardoned once again and returned to a position of honor with the king before finally passing away at the age of 76.

After his death Ctesias moves on to the anecdote about his widow Amytis and the physician Apollonides of Cos. The Greek doctor was in love with Amytis and prescribed sex as a cure for an ailment she was suffering<sup>101</sup>. He eventually abandoned her but before she died she revealed all he had done to her and he was executed in typically cruel fashion. Many scholars have taken this story as an attack on a Coan doctor by a member of the rival school in Cnidus. However, the rivalry between the two schools was professional in nature and there is no

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<sup>100</sup> This episode may shed some light on some of the customs surrounding the royal hunt in Persia. Evidently, the first kill of the hunt brought with it a certain amount of prestige which was to be reserved for the king alone. To preempt him in this for any reason was certain to incur his ire.

<sup>101</sup> In reality, it was not uncommon in Greek medicine to use sex as a cure for certain diseases; cf. note on F14 §44.

indication that members sought to slander their rivals on a personal level<sup>102</sup>. There is nothing in the narrative to suggest that Ctesias was at all critical of the methods used by Apollonides.

Rather, it appears that he included this story in his work to show his audience what a precarious position he was in while in Persia (perhaps even to exaggerate it) and how quickly he could have been condemned to a tortuous death if he failed to cure any of his patients or even found himself the object of anyone's enmity.

Following the death of Megabyzos, Ctesias continues the saga with his son Zopyros. He left Persia for reasons undisclosed and went to Athens where he persuaded the Athenians to send him with a fleet to Caunus. At Caunus he was struck in the head and killed. The Caunian who killed him was crucified on the order of Zopyros' grandmother, Amestris. While his departure from Persia may have reflected the still turbulent relationship his family enjoyed with the king, that his grandmother, a noted member of the royal house, avenged his death implies that he was not exiled. Amestris and Artaxerxes died soon after thus ending book 18. Books 17 and 18 seems to have been largely comprised of the Megabyzos saga while the character of Artaxerxes seems to have been for the most part neglected.

Book 18 details the reign of Darius II Ochus and his ascendancy. Ctesias offers the only account of the brief reign of Xerxes II who ruled for only 45 days. Following his assassination, a dynastic struggle ensued among the illegitimate children of Artaxerxes. Sekyndianos took the throne first but after putting to death Bagorazos he incurred the enmity of the army. This tension with the soldiers obviously weakened his position evidenced by the rise of Darius Ochus. Darius gathered an army, won over several defectors from Sekyndianos, and eventually received, against his will, the crown from his followers. On the advice of his wife Parysatis, Darius made

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<sup>102</sup> On the nature of this rivalry see note on F67.

an agreement with Sekyndianos but soon betrayed the oaths he had sworn and had him executed. With his rival claimant out of the way, Darius was now firmly established on the throne.

During the reign of Darius, like those of his predecessors, eunuchs held great power with the king. However, the king's wife Parysatis enjoyed the greatest influence at the court. While the queens and queen mothers had long held positions of influence at the court<sup>103</sup>, her power seems unprecedented. Whatever authority she enjoyed with her husband was further increased during the reign of her son, Artaxerxes II. Ctesias himself became a confidant of the queen who surely was one of his greatest sources for his history. It is thus tempting to suggest that Ctesias is exaggerating the powerful position held by his benefactor and informant. However, Eastern sources confirm that Parysatis was a very powerful landowner possessing numerous estates in her native Babylon<sup>104</sup>. There is no evidence, either Greek or Eastern, of any royal woman before being such a vast landowner.

After becoming king, Darius soon faced a series of insurrections, the first led by another brother named Arsites. Artyphios, the son of Megabyzos, joined Arsites in his rebellion. Artyphios, who appears to have lead the rebellious army in the field, had a Greek contingent in his forces which is not surprising given the estates owned by his family in Syria in the western part of the empire<sup>105</sup>. Artyphios won two battles against Artasyras who was sent to quell the rebellion. Artasyras then won the third battle and bribed the Greek forces to join him which

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<sup>103</sup> For example, Amestris, the mother of Artaxerxes I, convinced her son to execute Inaros (F14 §39) despite his promise to uphold the oaths given to the rebel by Megabyzos. However, she was only able to achieve this after five years of constantly begging her son. She was also able to help persuade him to forgive Megabyzos for the hunting incident (F14 §43) and to punish Apollonides for defiling and abandoning her daughter Amytis (§44). In the latter incident, she was even charged with overseeing the execution, setting a precedent in which royal women could personally administer punishment.

<sup>104</sup> Her estates attested in the Murašû archives (cf. Stolper 1985, p. 63-64) and along the Tigris (cf. Joannes 1995, p. 196-197) and are confirmed by Xenophon (*Anab.* 1.4.9); see also F16 §65 and note.

<sup>105</sup> Cf. F14 §40 and note.

compelled Artyphios to make peace and exchanged oaths with Artasyras. However, after he was used to lure Arsites into surrendering in a plan devised by Parysatis, both rebel chieftains were executed. Parysatis' role in this episode depicts her as a clever and manipulative queen who was willing to break oaths and truces in order to exact her revenge or ensure her position of authority, which she would have lost had the rebel Arsites succeeded.

The next revolt was instigated by Pisuthnes who, like Arsites, had Greek forces this time led by Lycon of Athens. Like the other Greek contingents, these men were bribed by the king's military commanders leading to the defeat of the rebel forces. It is clear that Greeks fighting in the East, though not always mercenaries proper, were willing to trade sides when bribed and fight for the highest bidder. For his treason against Pisuthnes Lycon was given cities to govern and landed states. Pisuthnes was granted assurances but was nevertheless executed when brought before the king. Clearly, the king as supreme head of state could override any oaths given by his subordinates and those who agreed to surrender must have known they were still subject to the king's final verdict.

The king next faced a plot from the eunuch Artoxares who was betrayed by an accomplice and executed by Parysatis. Soon after Darius faced a rebellion under his son-in-law Terituchmes, who was also the brother of Stateira, wife of Artaxerxes. After fierce fighting Terituchmes was killed but the rebellion was continued by Mithridates, the son of Udiastes who had betrayed Terituchmes. In response to the rebellion, Parysatis ordered the entire family to be executed; however Arsaces, later known as Artaxerxes II, convinced her to spare the life of Stateira. Darius agreed to it but warned Parysatis that she would regret her decision, however Ctesias may have inserted this anecdote for literary effect. This event shows that Parysatis had the authority to order executions and pardons at her discretion, so long as the king agreed to it.

In fact, in the *Persika* it seems that she was in charge of overseeing executions in general, although she does not appear to have held any formal office.

Books XIX and XX deal with the accession of Artaxerxes, the civil war with his brother, and its aftermath. Book XIX begins with the death of Darius who fell ill in Babylon and was succeeded by his eldest son Arsicas, who took the throne name Artaxerxes II. Incredibly, Ctesias is wrong about the length of his reign saying it lasted 35 years when in reality it was only 19 years<sup>106</sup>. This is one of the more difficult mistakes of Ctesias to explain. One would expect him to know well how long the husband of his benefactor Parysatis had ruled. This is the best example of the carelessness of which Ctesias is often guilty. However, it must be remembered that he did not set out to compose a history but to serve as a physician and only took it upon himself to write his works after returning to Greece. He likely took notes of some kind rather than compose the entire work from memory. It seems that what he omitted or forgot, such as certain dates, he would simply estimate thus accounting for some of his more egregious errors.

After the execution of Oudiastes, his son Mithridates was installed as satrap of his father's territory at the insistence of Stateira. This shows the growing influence the queen had with the new king, no doubt to the consternation of Parysatis. This episode also highlights the growing rivalry between the two who vied for supreme power at the court. This rivalry demonstrates the powerful position which could be achieved by women in the royal family which no doubt was a source of amazement for the Greeks.

Soon after becoming king Artaxerxes was faced with a rebellion led by his brother Cyrus the Younger. He first gained knowledge of his brother's plans from Tissaphernes. Although

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<sup>106</sup> Cf. Diod.12.71.1; Manetho *FGrH* 609 F2.

versions of this story circulated by Cyrus supporters refer to these charges as slander<sup>107</sup>, Cyrus' later actions show that Tissaphernes' accusations were not without at least some truth<sup>108</sup>. Cyrus, being the satrap of Lydia and in control of all of Asia Minor, hired 10,000 Greek mercenaries to fight for his cause. According to Ctesias, he also received several deserters from Artaxerxes while losing none. However, this testimony may have come from Parysatis who favored Cyrus. The two met in open battle at Cunaxa in 410 B.C.E<sup>109</sup> where Cyrus, already victorious, recklessly charged after his brother personally and was killed. Artaxerxes was wounded during the battle and treated by Ctesias himself after retiring to a hill to watch the remainder of the fight. Ctesias' account affords glimpses of the battle from Artaxerxes' side while still relating much detail on the actions of Cyrus and the Greeks. His source for much of the battle was likely Clearchos, the Greek general to whom he attended while the latter was in prison.

After the battle, the king generously rewarded those who served him well and punished several men who had deserted to Cyrus<sup>110</sup>. Mithridates received especially generous and prestigious gifts from the king but was deprived of credit for being the first to wound Cyrus. Artaxerxes denied that Mithridates was the first to wound Cyrus and that the mortal blow was delivered by a certain Carian because he wanted all to think that he had personally bested his brother in hand-to-hand combat<sup>111</sup>. He rewarded them handsomely, however, not for dispatching

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<sup>107</sup> Cf. F16 §59 and note.

<sup>108</sup> Cf. F17 for Cyrus' reported assassination attempt of Artaxerxes at the latter's coronation.

<sup>109</sup> See F18-23 and notes for Ctesias' detailed account of the battle.

<sup>110</sup> It was a custom of the Achaemenid kings to harshly punish those who wronged them. On the other hand, they long had a policy of generously bestowing favor on those who were loyal in the hopes of deterring rebellion; cf. *DB* §8.

<sup>111</sup> It was customary for the Achaemenid kings to emphasize their own personal glory when celebrating victories. Darius omits the names of his accomplices in the slaying of the Magus usurper (*DB* §13) and only names them at a later time (*supra* p. 22). He employs the first person singular throughout the Behistun inscription since as king,



Cyrus but for retrieving Cyrus' saddlecloth and relating the news of his death. Needless to say both men were incensed at the denial of their credit, but when they voiced their discontent they were duly executed in cruel fashion. Parysatis, as became the norm, oversaw the executions. However, she cared little for their discrediting of Artaxerxes; rather she had personal motives for ordering excessively cruel methods of torture for the men who killed her favorite son. After dealing with the killers of her son, she then turned her sights on the eunuch who cut off the head and hands from the body of Cyrus after his death. Since he belonged to the king she had to contrive a way to get her hands on him. She eventually won him in a dice game with her son and promptly had him executed<sup>112</sup>.

Book XXI begins by showing how Tissaphernes plotted with Menon of Thessaly who had betrayed the Greek mercenaries and helped arrange the capture of the generals. Ctesias' narrative of these events focuses on Clearchos as the main protagonist of the story. However, this is likely because Clearchos himself was Ctesias' source for these events and Ctesias had no doubt acquired a personal affection for the general. He thus exalted his position to head general of all the Greeks<sup>113</sup> and exaggerated his fame<sup>114</sup>. Clearchos was also a favorite of Parysatis because he had faithfully served her son. It is reasonable that between his association with Clearchos himself and Parysatis that Ctesias would favor the Greek general and portray him in a

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glory of conquest ultimately falls to him. Darius, like Artaxerxes, was involved in a succession crisis and needed to legitimize his rule.

<sup>112</sup> This episode in which Parysatis outsmarts Artaxerxes highlights the devious yet intelligent character of the Queen Mother while depicting Artaxerxes as rather simple.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. F16 §63 and note. Diodorus (14.19.8) and Xenophon (*Anab.* 1.2.3) show that Clearchos was only the leader of the Peloponnesian contingent (with the exception of the Argives). In fact, there was no supreme commander of the Greek forces, but ten leaders of their own contingents.

<sup>114</sup> There is no reason why people would want to crowd around to get a glimpse of Clearchos as he was taken prisoner to Babylon. A mercenary general from Sparta could scarcely have been well known in the interior of the empire.

good light. In his account of the capture of the Greeks, Ctesias claims that Clearchos sensed the trap set by Menon but was forced to go to Tissaphernes by the majority of his men. Xenophon (*Anab.* 2.5.27, 30), who was in a much better position to know the truth, says that it was Clearchos who convinced the others to go. In relating this story, Clearchos would naturally want to portray himself in the best possible light and refuse to admit that he was the one who was wrong.

Following the aftermath of the battle, the rivalry between Parysatis and Stateira reached a climax. According to Ctesias, Parysatis wanted to free Clearchos but was only prevented from doing so by Stateira who saw to it that he was executed. Eventually, Parysatis, once again displaying her cunning and vindictive nature, employed a deceitful tactic to poison Stateira and do away with her rival. Since Stateira was suspicious of her mother-in-law and constantly on her guard, Parysatis devised a plan to smear poison on one side of a knife and carve a game bird for the two of them to share. Parysatis then ate some of the bird with no reaction, Stateira took some of her half which had been contaminated and died. With this action, Parysatis finally crossed the line with her son who ordered her eunuchs to be tortured and executed. There arose a great tension between the two and Parysatis was allowed to retire to Babylon without any reprisals from her son. This conflict had been brewing between them since Parysatis supported Cyrus in the civil war and yet she obviously held some power over her elder son since even the murder of his wife could not compel him to punish his mother. This tense atmosphere at the court may have further encouraged Ctesias to want to escape. The final episode detailed in the *Persika* is the exchange between Artaxerxes, Evagoras of Sparta, and Conon of Athens during which Ctesias acted as ambassador for the king and took the opportunity to return to Greece<sup>115</sup>. Ctesias

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<sup>115</sup> *Supra* p. 7-8

thus tries to cover Persian history from its beginnings to the point of his departure. He concludes the work with a king list from Ninus to Artaxerxes (F33).

### **The *Indika***

The work for which Ctesias has been most maligned as an historian by ancients and moderns alike is his *Indika*. The work, which is the first full monograph on India, is filled with descriptions of fantastic beasts and monstrous peoples causing many to discredit the work as of little historical value. However, the *Indika* is of extreme importance for the study of Greco-Persian views of India in the period before Alexander. Ctesias certainly never visited the country and so was forced to rely on what he heard from travelers and Indian visitors to the Persian court where he had the unique opportunity, especially for a Greek, to encounter many travelers from distant lands. Since India was beyond the borders of the Persian Empire and there is no indication that any Persian campaigned beyond the Indus, the land was relatively unknown. India, like Ethiopia, was thought to be on the fringes of the world and, like many unfamiliar places, was inhabited by fanciful beings. Such places captured the imaginations of the Greeks and no doubt were of interest to the Persians as well.

The India of Ctesias' *Indika* refers only to the Indus valley and the northwest region of the country. Like all Greeks and perhaps even Persians, he was unaware of the subcontinent. This region was sparsely inhabited and was equally a land of monsters and fantasy for the Indians of the subcontinent. Hearing such stories of monstrous beings and flora with incredible properties would simply have reinforced his typically Greek preconceived notions of the edge of the world. However, this certainly does not mean that Ctesias was simply creating stories from his own imagination, as has often been believed<sup>116</sup>. He related stories which he heard from

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<sup>116</sup> Cf. Jacoby (1922)

travelers many of which originated in the subcontinent<sup>117</sup>, and sometimes was able to view some of the animals or artifacts firsthand. He is remarkably accurate in his descriptions when he was able to employ autopsy<sup>118</sup>.

To be sure there are many literary motifs in his *Indika* which are typical of paradoxographical writings. Often sizes of flora and fauna are exceedingly large (e.g. the Indian reed, roosters) or small (e.g. Pygmies), sometimes only in regard to one feature (e.g. the unusually large ears of the Enotokoitai). They often enjoy extreme longevity<sup>119</sup>, are very just in their customs<sup>120</sup>, and inhabit a region filled with precious resources<sup>121</sup> and numerous miraculous springs<sup>122</sup>. The land abundantly provides resources and wealth often of superior quality<sup>123</sup> for its inhabitants who also live free from many diseases and ailments (F45 §32). In essence, the lands at the edge of the world are often seen as a utopia where people live justly while the land provides their sustenance and wealth in plenty (F45 §26).

The *Indika*, however, was not a mere collection of marvels, as the fragments seemingly indicate. Ctesias devoted large portions of the work to the customs of the Indians with no indication of any fantastic elements involved (F45 §16, 30). Unfortunately, later authors citing the *Indika* were more interested in marvels and showed little concern for such mundane details.

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<sup>117</sup> For instance, his account of the *Henotikontes* and the *Enotokoitai* certainly originated in the subcontinent as both are well attested in Indian literature; cf. F45 §50 and notes.

<sup>118</sup> Cf. F45 §7, 8 and notes for examples.

<sup>119</sup> The Indians can live as long a 200 years (F45 §32) as can the Cynocephaloi (F45 §43).

<sup>120</sup> The Indians as a whole are described as just on no less than three occasions (F45 §16, 20, 30 where he evidently spoke at length on their righteousness) and several individual tribes are referred to as just. The just nature of the Pygmies (F45 §23) and the Cynocephaloi (F45 §37, 43; F45pβ-γ) is heavily emphasized.

<sup>121</sup> Cf. F45 §6, 9, 11, et al.

<sup>122</sup> Ctesias had a predilection for springs mentioning no fewer than ten of them.

<sup>123</sup> Cf. F45 §25 on Indian oil, §47 on the perfume from the *karpion*, §48 on their wine and cheese.

The lack of interest shown by later authors for these parts of the *Indika* indicate that there were no marvels involved. Unfortunately, the loss of these parts of the *Indika* is irreparable, since Ctesias in all probability obtained his information directly from Indians themselves. He certainly had the opportunity to meet several Indian travelers at the Persian court as he himself acknowledges<sup>124</sup>. That Photius mentions Ctesias' discussion of their customs several times indicates that Ctesias devoted a substantial portion of his work to this topic even returning to it on multiple occasions<sup>125</sup>.

One digression on Indian customs may have been part of a larger discussion on Indian medicine, much of which was passed over by later excerpters. Photius tells us that Ctesias, while describing Indian habits, mentions their disdain for death (F45 §30). This is followed in the fragments by several sections in which medicinal qualities frequently recur. First there is spring from which is derived a truth serum (§31) followed by what was evidently a more mundane investigation into Indian medicine (§32), two types of poison (§33, 34), and a remedy for bowel irritation (§35)<sup>126</sup>. This focus on medicine is perhaps not merely the result of professional interest. He certainly would have been on the constant vigil for new and more effective remedies for ailments, especially for the powerful clientele whom he served. Ctesias' statement that the Indians do suffer from "headaches, ophthalmia, toothaches, cold-sores, or putrefaction" (§32),

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<sup>124</sup> Cf. F45 §18; in his discussion of the parrot he says the bird speaks Indian which seems to confirm that he saw the parrot in the care of an Indian handler (F45 §8). He also saw an elephant accompanied by an Indian mahout give a demonstration of its strength (F45bα).

<sup>125</sup> Cf. F45 §23 where he discusses the customs of the Pygmies as being the same as the rest of the Indians. He may have elaborated or given a more detailed account of the mores shared by the two.

<sup>126</sup> Undeniably Ctesias' interest in medicine is evident throughout the *Indika*. For instance, he speaks of the antidotal powers of the unicorn horn, which he also maintains cures epilepsy. He mentions a fountain with fantastic properties finishing the description by saying it cures white disease (F45sa). However, the recurring appearance of medicine in these sequential passages begun by the Indians contempt for death points to the possibility that he devoted an entire section of his work to Indian medicine, something to be expected of a physician; cf. F45l where Aelian seems to acknowledge that Ctesias' explanation of the crimson snake comes amid a discourse on medicine.

surely is the result of the physician's inquiry into the subject, as such specific information could hardly have been volunteered by the visitors. This passage may help shed light on some of the common ailments suffered in fifth century Persia and one can only wonder what valuable information was omitted by later authors. Unfortunately, Photius and the other excerpters were more interested in the fantastic aspect of these medical explanations and neglected much of this testimony.

While the excerpters showed a predilection for marvels and many of the descriptions, although rooted in fact, took on fantastic elements through oral tradition, Ctesias was strikingly accurate when he was able to view things firsthand<sup>127</sup>. His description of the elephant, although containing some misinformation<sup>128</sup>, is for the most part correct<sup>129</sup>. His account of the parrot is not only accurate, but given with enough detail that one may even speculate on the species<sup>130</sup>. However, to his Greek audience, these creatures belonged to the same world of fantasy as the martichora or the unicorn. They also certainly would have increased Ctesias' gullibility regarding the other seemingly incredible stories he heard. If India had brilliantly colored birds which could speak a human language, it certainly would have seemed possible for other such beings to exist.

### **Other Works**

The remainder of Ctesias' works are poorly preserved, even in fragmentary form. Little can be discerned as to their content or quality (or for that matter if they even existed). Of the

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<sup>127</sup> See for example his account on falconry (Cf. F45 §24; F45g and notes).

<sup>128</sup> Cf. F48a-b and notes.

<sup>129</sup> Cf. F45 §7; F45ba and notes.

<sup>130</sup> Cf. F45 §8 and notes. Unfortunately, problems with the text prevent any identification with certainty; cf. Bigwood (1993b).

scant remains the two best preserved works are *On the Tributes of Asia* and the *Periodos* (also called the *Periegesis* and the *Periplous*). Very little is known of the former work (F53, F54), however based on the title it seems to have been a work devoted to the various tributaries of the Persian Empire. The loss of this work is irreparable since Ctesias was in a unique position to list the various nations within the empire and perhaps shed some light on what each contributed to the king. The meager remains of the work indicate that there may have been some focus on the alimentary contributions each nation made to the king's elaborate dinner<sup>131</sup>, however the work must have covered a wider range of topics, such as ethnographical digressions on each nation.

A little more light can be shed on the *Periodos* since it is in an only slightly better state of preservation (F55-F60). It seems to have been a geographical treatise covering all of Asia (F60) containing at least three books. Ctesias touched upon Egypt in Book I (F55) and Italy in Book III (F59) though this latter mention have been a passing reference as a digression on Umbria would not be suitable to a work on Asia. Although the overall content cannot be weighed, it is certain that he dealt at length with the Black Sea region<sup>132</sup>. He discussed tribes from the area in Book I (F56) and Book II (F57-58). He may then have begun his *Periodos* in Egypt and then worked his way up the coast through the Levant to the Black Sea. He reached the Black Sea from the south (F56) then seems to have circumnavigated the sea<sup>133</sup> before heading east.

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<sup>131</sup> Cf. Lenfant (2004, p. CLVIII-CLIX) who rightly asserts that this work was probably more serious in nature than the tales of intrigue and romance which dominate the *Persika*. The same could be said for the *Periodos*.

<sup>132</sup> Cf. F56-58 and notes.

<sup>133</sup> Assuming that F57 is from the *Periodos* (it is never mentioned specifically) and that its content preceded that of F58, Ctesias would have circumnavigated the sea in a counterclockwise motion since he mentions Colchis before Tiriza which is located in modern Bulgaria; see notes on F57-F58. However, his direction could just as easily have been the reverse.

Ctesias may also have written one or more medical treatises (F67-F68)<sup>134</sup> of which little survives. Based on the minimal remnants of the works, only a little can be discerned as to their nature and content. The medical writings seem to be standard medical compositions with no indication of Ctesias' stay at the Persian court. They may then have been composed before he left Greece, though this is pure speculation. In one work he criticizes Hippocrates' methods of setting a dislocated hip, which is not surprising since he was a member of the Cnidian school of medicine which rivaled that of Hippocrates' Cos<sup>135</sup>. In the other work, Ctesias discusses the use of hellebore, a plant commonly used in Greek medicine by the end of the fifth century<sup>136</sup>. He claims that while it was dangerous in his father's time, it was safe in his day thus expressing the medical advances achieved in the fifth century.

The essays *On Mountains* (F73) and *On Rivers* (F74) have been deemed spurious titles by Jacoby, despite the fact that they are both mentioned by title. Although they are unattested elsewhere which certainly renders their existence as individual works suspect, the content of the fragments show that they should be considered genuine fragments of Ctesias. Both fragments discuss medicinal cures found in nature. The former work describes a stone used to treat leprosy and the latter a plant which when boiled down can cure madness<sup>137</sup>. Since works in the ancient world were not always clearly titled, it is possible that Plutarch, the author responsible for both fragments, simply referred to a section of a larger work by these more specific titles<sup>138</sup>. The titles

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<sup>134</sup> Baehr (1824, p. 20) posited the theory that Ctesias composed a medical treatise and this has generally been accepted (see for instance the text of Jacoby). However, Lenfant has recently cast doubt on this view suggesting instead that Ctesias' criticism of Hippocrates may have come from either the *Persika* or the *Indika*.

<sup>135</sup> On his criticisms and the rivalry between the two schools see note on F67.

<sup>136</sup> On hellebore see note on F68.

<sup>137</sup> See notes on F73 and F74 for full discussions.

<sup>138</sup> Much in the same way that the first six books of the *Persika* are known alternatively as the *Assyriaka*.



used by Plutarch, even if arbitrarily, seemingly rule out the hypothesis that these fragments come from a medical treatise. If not independent, then the works would best fit in with the *Periodos* since they are both of a geographical nature. In both cases Ctesias is not only focusing on the medicinal benefits of the objects in question but their origins as well. In any case, if these were isolated treatises, they, like the *Periodos* and *On the Tributes of Asia*, seem to have been of a more serious nature and consequently never achieved the popularity of the *Persika* and the *Indika*.

CHAPTER 2  
TRANSLATION

**Testimonia**

- **T1) Suda s.v. Κτησίας:** Ctesias of Cnidos, the son of either Ctesiarchos or Ctesiochos, was a physician who served in Persia under Artaxerxes Mnemon and composed the *Persika* in 23 books.
- **T1b) Tzetz. Chil. I.85-89 (=82-86 Kiessling):** Ctesias the physician, the son of Ctesiochos, hailed from the city of Cnidos in Cyprus. He healed Artaxerxes while fighting with Cyrus and spent seventeen years in Persia. He composed the *Persika* in 23 books.
- **T2) Strabo Geo. 14.2.15:** Renowned men from Cnidos...Ctesias, who served as physician for Artaxerxes and composed both the *Assyriaka* and the *Persika*, was from this city.
- **T3) Diodor. 2.32.4 (F5):** Ctesias of Cnidos, on the other hand, lived in the time of Cyrus' campaign against his brother Artaxerxes. He was captured and because of his knowledge of medicine, was taken in by the King where he spent 17 years and was honored by him. He claims that, making use of the royal archives in which the Persians kept records of ancient accounts as was the custom, he made a thorough investigation into these affairs individually, composed the history, and released it into the Greek world.
- **T3b) Phot. Bibl. 72 p. 45b [L] (F45):** There is iron at the bottom of the spring from which Ctesias says two swords were fashioned and given to him; one was from the king the other from the king's mother Parysatis.
- **T4) Gal. on Hipp. Art. 70 (F67):** The first was Ctesias of Cnidus, his relative and a member of the Asclepiads.
- **T5a) Euseb. Chron. Ol. 95.1:** Xenophon, son of Gryllos and Ctesias are considered famous.
- **T5b) Phot. Bibl. 72 p. 36a 6:** (cont. from T8) Ctesias flourished in the time of Cyrus, the son of Darius and Parysatis and the brother of Artaxerxes, to whom the Persian kingdom was returned.
- **T6aα) Plut. Artox. 11.3 (F20):** Although many of his men fell into disorder and fled, Artaxerxes rose to his feet and with a few men, including Ctesias, occupied a small hill and kept quiet.
- **T6aβ) Xen. Anab. 1.8.26-27 [L] (F21):** While with these men, he caught sight of the king and the array of men around him and immediately lost his patience. "I see him", he said as he charged at the king, struck him through the chest, and wounded him through the breastplate, according to Ctesias the physician who also says that he personally treated the wound. (27) Someone then hit him violently under the eye with a javelin as he was dealing the blow to the king and then Cyrus, the king, and the soldiers with them engaged in battle. Ctesias records

the number dead among the king's soldiers as he was with the king while on the other side Cyrus himself died along with eight of his best men who lay on top of him.

- **T6aγ) Plut. *Artox.* 13.4 [L] (F22):** Ctesias says that the number of dead reported to Artaxerxes was 9,000 but the number of those lying dead did not seem to him to be less than 20,000.
- **T6b) Plut. *Artox.* 14.1 (F26):** After the battle, the king gave extravagant gifts to the son of Artagereses, who was killed by Cyrus, and honored Ctesias along with several others.
- **T7aα) Phot. *Bibl.* 72 p.44a 31-34 (F27):** Ctesias, since he was the physician for Parysatis, personally tended to Clearchos and, through her intervention, provided him with many amenities while he was in prison.
- **T7aβ) Plut. *Artox.* 18.1-4 [L] (F28):** After Tissaphernes deceived Clearchos and the other generals by breaking his oaths, arresting them, and sending them away bound in shackles, Ctesias says that Clearchos asked him where he might find a comb. (2) After obtaining his wish, Clearchos combed his hair and out of gratitude gave Ctesias his ring as a token of friendship to show to his friends and relatives in Sparta. The emblem on the ring showed caryatids dancing. When the food sent to Clearchos was promptly seized and devoured by the soldiers imprisoned with him leaving only a little for the general, Ctesias says that he also resolved this problem by arranging for more food to be sent to Clearchos while separate portions were given to the soldiers. He performed these services as a favor at the request of Parysatis. (4) Since a ham was sent to him daily as his meal, he urged Ctesias to implant a dagger in the meat and send it to him concealed in this manner and not to leave his fate to the cruelty of the king. Ctesias, however, refused to do this out of fear.
- **T7b) Plut. *Artox.* 13.5-7 (F23 cf. T15):** This is a matter of dispute but the report of Ctesias, who says that he was sent to the Greeks with Phalinus of Zacynthos and certain others, is clearly false. (6) Xenophon knew that Ctesias was living with the king because he mentions him and was clearly familiar with his works. Xenophon then would not have failed to name him if he were actually present as an interpreter in these talks rather than only naming Phalinus of Zacynthos. But Ctesias clearly seems to be ambitious and equally fond of Sparta and Clearchos, and so always grants to himself certain portions of his narrative in which he would certainly mention the many honorable deeds of Clearchos and Sparta.
- **T7c) Phot. *Bibl.* 72 p. 44b 20-42 (F30):** Ctesias gives the following reasons why king Artaxerxes quarreled with Evagoras the king of Salamis. Evagoras sent envoys to Ctesias in order to receive letters from Abolitos and Ctesias wrote a letter to him concerning reconciliation with Anaxagoras the king of Cyprus. Evagoras then sent envoys to Cyprus and received the letter sent by Ctesias. (73) Conon, meanwhile, spoke to Evagoras about returning to the king, but Evagoras sent a letter instead stating what he thought the king should grant him. Conon in turn sent a letter to Ctesias while Evagoras paid tribute to the king. Letters were then dispatched to Ctesias who spoke to the king on Conon's behalf before sending a letter to him. Evagoras gave gifts to Satibarzanes. Envoys arrived in Cyprus while Conon sent a letter to the king and Ctesias. (74) Ctesias describes how the

Spartan envoys sent to the king were closely watched, how the king sent a letter to Conon and the Spartans which Ctesias personally delivered, and how Conon was appointed navarch by Pharnabazos. (75) Ctesias went to his homeland Cnidus and then Sparta. At Rhodes there was a trial concerning the Spartan envoys followed by an acquittal.

- **T7d) Plut. Artox. 21. 2-4 (F32):** Seeing that he was in need of a force to pursue his own plans while the king's army needed a good leader, he (sc. Conon) sent a letter to the king disclosing his plans. He ordered the letter-carrier to deliver it to the king through Zenon the Cretan dancer or Polycrites the Mendaean physician, and if these men were unavailable, then Ctesias the physician. It is said that after receiving the letter, Ctesias added to Conon's proposal the request that he be sent to Conon to help him in his actions at sea. Ctesias, however, says that the king imposed this task on him of his own volition.
- **T8a) Phot. Bibl. 72. p. 35b 35- 36a 6:** Ctesias' *Persika* in 23 books is a well known work. In the first six books he deals with Assyrian history and whatever occurred before the Persians; however, from the seventh book onward he details Persian affairs. In books 7-13 he recounts the exploits of Cyrus, Cambyses, the Magus, Darius and Xerxes. In nearly every instance he gives an opposing account to Herodotus going so far as to expose him as a liar and label him an author of fables; for he is also younger than Herodotus. Ctesias says that he was himself an eyewitness for the greater part of the events described in his history and, when he was not there to witness them, he personally heard the existing tales from the Persians themselves. This is how he composed his history. He not only opposes Herodotus in his history, but in some places he also disagrees with Xenophon, son of Gryllos (cont. 5b).
- **T8b) Phot. Bibl. 72 p. 42b 11-13 [L] (F15):** Ctesias claims to have acquired this knowledge from Parysatis herself.
- **T9) Diodor. 14.46.6 (F33b):** Ctesias, the author of a Persian history, begins with Ninus and Semiramis and concludes his work in this year (398/97).
- **T10) Phot. Bibl. 72 p. 45a 20-21:** His *Indika* was published in one book and was written mostly in the Ionic dialect.
- **T11) Strabo Geo. 11.6.2-3:** . . . No one gives an entirely accurate description of these people, nor do the ancient accounts of the Persians, the Medes, or the Syrians lend themselves to credence on account of the simplicity of the authors and their fondness for romantic tales.
- (3) Seeing the popularity of those who were clearly writing mythology they decided to provide a pleasant narrative, even if they wrote in historical prose about things which no one had ever seen or heard or even known of. They were only concerned that it was enjoyable to hear and that it was fantastic. It would be easier to believe Hesiod and Homer and the tragic poets who wrote about heroes than Ctesias, Herodotus, Hellanicus and other authors of this sort.
- **T11b) Strabo Geo. 1.2.35:** No one would fault the ignorance of Hesiod when he writes about the Half-dogs, the Large-headed men, and the Pygmies, nor would one find fault with

Homer when he too relates fanciful stories which also include these same Pygmies. One would not criticize Alcman who writes about the Steganopodes, nor Aeschylus when he tells of the Cynocephaloi, the Sternophthalmoi, and the Monommatoi. Nor do we place much value in the prose authors of historical works even if they do not agree that their works are fiction. Indeed, it is clear that they knowingly fabricate fictional accounts, but not out of ignorance of what occurred, for they fabricate impossible tales in order to delight and entertain with marvelous stories. If they seem to be speaking in ignorance, then they are most persuasive in speaking about what is unclear and what is unknown. Theopompus recognizes this when he says that he will relate fables in his history to a greater extent than Herodotus, Ctesias, Hellanicus and the authors of *Indika*.

- **T11c) Antigon. *Hist. mir.* 15 (F36):** Ctesias claims that something similar to this occurs in Ecbatana and Persia, but since he is prone to telling lies, I will skip over this extract because it seems too fanciful.
- **T11d) Plut. *Artox.* 1.4 (F15a):** Ctesias, however, even if he is unreliable for the farrago of fanciful tales and allegations which he incorporates into his work, is not likely to have been ignorant of the name of the king with whom he lived and whose wife, mother, and children he served as personal physician.
- **T11e) Plut. *Artox.* 6.9 (F29a):** Although Dinon says the plot was brought to fruition during the war, Ctesias says it occurred after, and it is unlikely that he was ignorant of the time since he was there when it happened and he had no reason to change the time of its occurrence when he describes how it happened – however often his history departs from the truth and enters into the realm of myth and drama – therefore, this event will be placed at the time given by Ctesias.
- **T11fα) Aristot. *H.A.* 7.28 p. 606a 8 (F45kα):** According to Ctesias, although he is not entirely reliable, there are no swine in India, either wild or tame, but the bloodless and scaled beasts are all large.
- **T11fβ) Aristot. *H.A.* 3.22 p. 523a 26 [L] (F48a):** It is untrue what Ctesias writes about the sperm of elephants.
- **T11fγ) Aristot. *G.A.* 2.2 p. 736a 2 [L] (F48b):** For Ctesias of Cnidos is clearly wrong on what he says about the sperm of elephants, for he says that it hardens when it dries and becomes similar to amber. This does not happen.
- **T11gα) Arr. *An.* 5.4.2 (F45a):** According to Ctesias, if he is a credible source, the Indus River at its most narrow point is 40 stades across, while it is 100 stades across at its widest point, but most of the river is in between these two distances.
- **T11gβ) Arr. *Ind.* 3.6 [L] (F49a):** Ctesias of Cnidos says that the territory of India is equal to the size of the rest of Asia.

- **T11gy) Ael. N.A. 4.21 [L] (F45dβ):** Ctesias claims to have seen one such creature which was brought to the Persian king as a gift, if he is a credible witness about these matters. However, when one hears of the peculiar characteristics of this animal, his attention is drawn to the Cnidian's history.
- **T11h) Lucian V.H. 1.2-4:** . . . each part of this history has alluded to those ancient poets, historians, and philosophers who have written many fabulous and fantastic stories whom I would have named if they were not going to be revealed to you as you read further. Of these authors, Ctesias of Cnidos, the son of Ctesiochos who wrote about India and its inhabitants, described things he had never seen himself nor heard about from a reliable source. Iamboulos wrote about the many marvels of the great sea and created a work of fiction with which everyone is familiar, but one which nevertheless is entertaining. There are many others who have chosen to write on these same topics and have written about their own travels and journeys in which they describe great beasts, the savagery of men, and the most unusual lifestyles they lead. The originator and most influential author of this type of nonsensical writing, Homer's Odysseus, relates to Alcinous and his family tales of enslaving the winds, Cyclopes, eaters of raw meat, and other such savage men, as well as many-headed beasts and the transformation of his companions caused by potions; these are the fanciful stories with which he captivated the naïve Phaeacians.
- (4) . . . I now write about the things that I have not seen, experienced, nor learned from others and in no way do they exist or even enter the realm of possibility. Therefore, those who read this should not believe a word of it.
- **T11hβ) Lucian V.H. 2.31 [L]:** Those who lie about anything in their lifetime and those who do not write about the truth have endured the greatest punishment of all; Ctesias of Cnidos, Herodotus, and many others comprise this group.
- **T11hy) Lucian Philops. 2 [L]:** I could show you many wise men who otherwise possess an amazing intellect but somehow got caught up in this vile activity and became liars. How it distresses me if these men who excel in every endeavor, take pleasure in deceiving both themselves and all those they come in contact with. For example, you could look at the ancient writers who came before my time including Herodotus and Ctesias of Cnidos, and before them there were the poets including Homer himself. These were famous men who wrote such lies that they deceived their contemporary audience and, consequently, their falsehood has endured until my time having been preserved by successors in beautiful words and meters. At any rate, I often grow ashamed of them whenever someone writes about the castration of Ouranos, the imprisonment of Prometheus, the revolt of the Giants, the tragedies of the underworld, how Zeus, driven by love, became a bull or a swan, how a woman was transformed into a bird or a bear, and when they speak of Pegasus, the Chimaera, the Gorgons, the Cyclopes, and other such creatures which, because of their fantastic and mythical nature, have the power to charm the souls of children who still fear the Lamia and the Mormo.
- **T11hδ) Lucian Hist.Conscr. 39 [L]:** The one duty of the historian is to relate how events happened. He would not be able to do this as long as he either feared Artaxerxes whom he

served as physician, or hoped to receive a purple garment, a gold chain or a horse from Nisaion as payment for praising the king in his work.

- **T11i) Aen. Gaz. Thphr. 84-85 [L]:** Ctesias, who composed many tales about India, never reported this story any more than Arrian.
- **T11j) Tzetz. Chil. 9.571-585:** Ctesias seems to Tzetzes to be more accurate than the others, especially on what he writes about Babylon. He claims that the entire perimeter of the city was 370 stades while the others give a much larger figure. He gives a smaller length for the perimeter while increasing its height no more than necessary. Perhaps, when Ctesias saw this, the towers had a height of 60 *orgyia* and the walls at that time were 50 *orgyia* high. They may have been reduced by wars and earthquakes so that when Cleitarchos and the entire army with Alexander later saw them their height was reduced by several *orgyia*. Consequently, their reduction can hardly be calculated in *pecheis*.
- **T12) Dion. Hal. Comp. 10.4-5:** Certainly the styles of Thucydides and Antiphon of Rhamnous are composed beautifully, no one can criticize them on this point, but they are not pleasant to read. On the other hand, the styles of Ctesias, the historian from Cnidos, and Xenophon, the student of Socrates, are especially pleasing, although they completely lack beauty. I am saying this is the general case but does not pertain to every instance since there are times when the former authors are pleasing and when the latter are beautiful. (5) The work of Herodotus contains both of these elements, for it is both pleasing and beautiful.
- **T13) Phot. Bibl. 72 p. 45a 5-19:** this author is very clear and simple; therefore his work is interwoven with pleasure. He employs the Ionic dialect, although not throughout like Herodotus, but only in select passages. He does not make use of untimely digressions like Herodotus, and stray from his account. However, he does not abstain from fanciful tales, although he criticizes Herodotus for this practice; he is especially guilty of this in his account of India. His history hits a high point of pleasure in the construction of his narrative which is full of emotion and the unexpected and adorned by its proximity to myth. He has a style that is looser than is necessary so that it falls into the category of vulgar speech. The style of Herodotus, on the other hand, because of this aspect coupled with the force and skill of his writing, is the model of the Ionic dialect.
- **T14a) Demetr. De eloc. 209-216 (F8a, F24):** First of all, about clarity: clarity first of all comes from precision and overlooking and omitting nothing. For example: “as when a man is drawing off water” and this entire comparison: clarity comes from relating everything that happened and leaving nothing out.  
(210) The horse race for Patroclos where he said, “with their breath, the back of Eumelos” and “for they always seemed likely to board his chariot”. This entire episode is made clear by the poet’s omission of nothing that is happening or that has already happened.  
(211) As a result, repetition often makes the style more clear than making a statement only once, as in the following example: “you spoke ill of him while he was alive, and now that he is dead you write ill of him.” The use of the word ‘ill’ twice makes the slander more clear.

(212) The charge made against Ctesias that he is verbose because of his use of repetition is perhaps often justified, but often his critics do not perceive the clarity of the author, for he often repeats the same word twice in order to create a greater emphasis.

(213) Here is an example of this: “A Median man named Stryangeios knocked a Sakidian woman from her horse (for the women of the Saka fight in battle like the Amazons), but when he saw that she was young and beautiful, he changed his mind and chose to spare her life. When a treaty had been concluded, he fell in love with her, but when his feelings went unrequited, he decided to starve himself to death after writing a letter to the woman rebuking her in the following way: ‘I saved you and you are alive because of me, but now I have been ruined because of you.’”

(214) Perhaps a man of few words may find fault with this passage thinking that it is of no value to say ‘I saved’ and ‘because of me you were saved’ since both of these phrases mean the same thing. But if you remove either phrase, then at the same time you take away the clarity and the emotion of the clarity. In addition, the phrase ‘I have been ruined’ instead of ‘I am ruined’ adds more clarity to the final product, for what has happened is more terrible than what is going to happen or what is happening.

(215) In short, this poet (for he could likely be called a poet) is a practitioner of clarity in the whole of his work.

(216) It is also this way in the following example: one must not immediately say that something has happened, but do so little by little leaving the listener in suspense and compelling him to share in the anxiety of the moment. This is what Ctesias does in his account of the death of Cyrus. A messenger approaches Parysatis but does not immediately tell her that Cyrus is dead (this is called Scythian discourse). He first reports that Cyrus was victorious and she was delighted and, filled with anticipation, asked, "How is the king doing?" To which the messenger replied, "He escaped". Then she said, "He can only blame Tissaphernes for all of this" and then asked again, "Where is Cyrus now?" "Where brave men must dwell" was the envoy's reply. Thus advancing progressively little by little, the story was slowly disclosed. Through this he represents very clearly the character of the messenger, who was reporting the tragedy unwillingly, and creates anticipation for the mother and the listener.

- **T14b) Plut. *Artox.* 11.11 (F20):** Such is the account of Ctesias in which Cyrus dies gradually as if by a small, blunt sword.
- **T15a) Plut. *Artox.* 13.6 (F23, cf.T7b):** Xenophon knew that Ctesias was living with the king because he mentions him and was clearly familiar with his works.
- **T15b) Plut. *Artox.* 18.6-7 (F28) [L]:** According to Ctesias, this is why Parysatis plotted against Stateira and contrived to poison her, but it is an unlikely and illogical allegation to say that Parysatis took such a risk for the sake of Clearchos and performed this heinous act of daring to kill the lawful wife of the king who bore him children reared for the throne. Rather, it is clear that Ctesias composed such a dramatic story to honor the memory of Clearchos. (7) He says that when the generals were killed, the bodies of the rest of them were torn to pieces by dogs and birds, but a windstorm brought a mass of earth over the corpse of Clearchos and covered his body.



- **T16) Suda s.v. Παμφίλη (139):** Pamphile of Epidauros, was a wise woman and the daughter of Soteridos who is said to be the author of a treatise, according to what Dionysius says in Book 30 of his *History of Music*. Other authors claim that she was married to Socratides. Her works include: *Historical Notes* in 33 books, *An Epitome of Ctesias* in three books, many abridgements of historians and other works, *On Disputes*, *On Sexual Pleasures*, and many others.
- **T17) Euseb. P.E. 10.3.23:** There are two books of Lysimachos *On the Plagiarism of Ephoros*, but Alcaeus, the author of caustic iambic poetry and epigrams, parodied the plagiarisms of Ephoros and condemned them. There is a letter of Pollion to Soterides entitled *On the Plagiarism of Ctesias* and a book of his entitled *On the Plagiarism of Herodotus*.
- **T18) Pliny N.H.:**
  - 1,2: the miraculous joining of fire and water...the places which always burn... by the authors...foreigners:...Ctesias
  - 1.7: The marvelous figures of the races...who found these figures in his life...by the authors...foreigners:...Ctesias
  - 1.8: About the Manticore...by the authors...foeigners:...Ctesias
  - 1.31: The miraculous parts of water... by the authors...foeigners:...Ctesias
  - 1.37: About amber... by the authors...foeigners:...Ctesias
- **T19) Gell. N.A. 9.4:** When we returned to Italy from Greece and came to Brundisium, we disembarked at that famous port and walked around (...), we saw parcels of books laid out for sale (2) and I immediately proceeded over to them. (3) All of these books were Greek and filled with marvels and fables, strange and incredible tales, by many ancient writers of high status: Aristeas of Proconnessus, Isogonus of Nicaea, Ctesias, Onesicritus, Philostaphanus, and Hegesias. (4) These scrolls had gone stiff from sitting for so long had taken on a filthy appearance and condition. (5) Nevertheless, I approached them and inquired about the price. I was persuaded by the astonishingly and unexpected low price and so purchased many of the books for only a little money and spent the next two nights quickly reading through them all. While reading the books I gathered some things from them, took note of the marvels which were mostly neglected by our native authors, and included them in this commentary so that whoever reads it will not find himself ill-informed and ignorant of such matters. (6) There were stories in these books of the following variety:...
  - (9) Likewise, in the mountains of India there are men with the heads of dogs who bark and feed on birds and wild animals taken in the hunt. There are also other marvels in the furthest reaches of the east including men called the *Monocoli* who run by leaping on one leg and are able to move with vigorous speed. There are others still with no neck who have eyes on their shoulders (...)
  - (11) Near these people dwell the Pygmies who reach a maximum height of two and a quarter feet.
- **T20) Gal. In Hippocratis librum vi epidemiarum comentarii vi.III.13 (Kühn XVIII.33 = CMG V.10.2.2 p. 1411.1) [L]:** He says that is rare to find some scurf unless you not only read as history the books of the ancient physicians like Herodotus and Ctesias, but do so for the sake of achieving something greater for the practice of the craft.

## The Persika

### Books I - VI

- **F1a) Euseb. (Arm.) Chron. p. 28.28 K (Synkell. p. 315.8):** Cephalion the historian on the Assyrian kings: “I begin to write about the other authors who wrote on this topic, namely Hellanicus of Lesbos and Ctesias of Cnidos and then Herodotus of Halicarnassus. First of all, Assyria ruled over Asia with Ninus, son of Belis, as their king and during his reign many deeds and great feats were accomplished.”  
Then he goes on to discuss the age of Semiramis and he speaks of Zaravyšt the Magus, the war against the Bactrian kings and their conquest by Semiramis, the duration of the reign of Ninus, 52 years, and its end.
- **F1b) Diodor. 2.1-28:** [The book before this contains the events in Egypt... (3) In this book I will write about the events that occurred in Asia in early times, beginning with the empire of Assyria.]  
(4) Long ago there were native kings in Asia who are neither remembered by name or worthy deed. The first to survive in historical memory is Ninus and the great achievements he accomplished which I will try to record in detail. As Ninus was by nature warlike and ambitious, he armed the strongest of his young men and trained them for longer than usual conditioning them to every type of hardship and military danger. (5) And so after organizing a sizable infantry he made an alliance with Ariaeus, king of Arabia which in those days seemed to be full of brave men [and this nation is very fond of their freedom and in no way welcoming of foreign domination]...(7) Ninus, the king of the Assyrians, taking on board the leader of the Arabians, launched a campaign with a large army against the Babylonians who inhabited the neighboring land – however in those days what is now Babylon was not yet founded, but many notable settlements existed throughout the Babylonia. He easily subdued the natives because they were unaccustomed to war and then imposed a predetermined amount of tribute to be paid annually; moreover, he took the defeated king captive along with his children and put them to death. (8) After this he invaded Armenia with great numbers, laid waste to some of the cities and terrorized the natives. Because of this, their king, Barzanes, aware of his own inability to engage in battle, approached Ninus with many gifts and said that he would do whatever was ordered of him. (9) Ninus treated him generously and allowed him to rule Armenia and, as a friend, to send a force and a contribution to his army. Growing ever more powerful, he launched a campaign into Media. (10) Although Pharnus, the king of Media, resisted with a sizable force, he was defeated and lost most of his troops. He was taken prisoner along with his wife and seven children and impaled. (2) As things were going well for Ninus, he was overcome by a strong desire to subdue all of Asia from the Tanaïs to the Nile, for invariably a spell of good fortune arouses the desire for more. So he established one of his friends as satrap of Media while he personally attacked and subdued the nations throughout Asia. After seventeen years he became the master of all except India and Bactria. (2) No historian has recorded the battles independently or the number of peoples he fought against, but following Ctesias of Cnidos, I will try to concisely run through the noteworthy nations. (3) He subdued the coastal and continental lands of Egypt and Phoenicia, and then Koile Syria, Cilicia, Pamphylia and Lycia, and also Caria, Phrygia, Musia and Lydia. He annexed the Troad, Hellespontine Phrygia, The Propontis,

Bythnia, Cappadocia and all of the tribes that live throughout the Black Sea as far as Tanaïs. He also conquered the lands of the Cadusians and the Tapyroi and moreover that of the Hyrcarnians and the Drangians, the Derbikians, the Carmanians, the Choromnaians, the Borkanians and the Parthyans. He invaded Persis, Sousiana and the place called Caspiana to which the entrances are very narrow and for that reason are called the Caspian Gates. (4) He added many other smaller nations to his list of conquered peoples which would take too long to mention. Because Bactria was hard to enter and had a multitude of fierce warriors, Ninus suffered many losses and was unsuccessful; consequently, he put off the war against the Bactrians until another time. He then led his forces into Assyria and picked out a good location to found a city. (3) Since he had accomplished the most notable achievements of any one of those who came before him, he was eager to found a city of such great size that it would not only be the biggest of those in the inhabited world at that time, but one that could hardly be superseded by anything following in posterity. (2) And so he honored the Arabian king with magnificent gifts and spoils and then departed homeward with his army. He then gathered forces from all over and supplies of every kind and then founded a well-walled city along the Euphrates, setting it in a rectangular shape. The city was 150 stades on each of the longer sides and ninety stades along the shorter sides. (3) Thus, when the entire enclosure was comprised of 480 stades, Ninus was not cheated of his expectations, for no one in later times built such a large city in terms of the size of the enclosure and the magnificence of the fortification wall. The wall had a height of 100 feet and was wide enough for three horse drawn chariots to run upon. There were 1500 towers in all which had a height of 200 feet. (4) He settled in the city the most of the Assyrians, especially the most powerful of them along with whoever was willing from other nations. He named the city Ninus, after himself and he attached much of the neighboring land into the settlement.

(4) Then after the founding of the city Ninus launched a campaign into Bactria where he married Semiramis the most famous of all the women whose memory has come down to us. And so, it is necessary to speak first about her, how from humble beginnings she was elevated to such renown. (2) In Syria there is a city called Ascalon where nearby there is a very large and deep lake which is full of fish. Next to this lake is a sacred enclosure of a prominent goddess whom the Syrians call Derketo. She has the face of a woman but the rest of her body is that of a fish for the following reasons: (3) the most educated of the natives relate the story that Aphrodite took offense at the aforementioned goddess and inflicted upon her a terrible desire for one of those making sacrifice, a good looking young man. Derketo slept with the Syrian and had a daughter. However, she was ashamed at her indiscretion and so she made the young man disappear and exposed the child to some desolate and rocky place where there was a multitude of pigeons nesting who miraculously saved and nourished the infant. Because of her shame and grief, Derketo cast herself into the lake and the form of her body changed into a fish. This is why the Syrians until the present day have protected this animal and honor fish as gods. (4) Since a number of doves were nesting near the place where the infant was exposed, the child was paradoxically and mysteriously nourished by them. Some of these birds embraced the infant's body with their wings and kept it warm all over while others, whenever they saw the shepherds and other herdsmen absent from their nearby dwellings, would bring milk in their mouths and feed her by dropping it through the middle of her lips. (5) When the child was a year old and in need of stronger nourishment, the doves provided sufficient sustenance by snipping off pieces of cheese. When the herdsmen returned and saw the snipped-off cheese they marveled at the unexpected sight.

When they watched out and learned of the cause, they discovered the infant that excelled in beauty. (6) They brought it straight home and gave it to the herdsman of the royal flock, a man named Simmas. This man was childless and so he raised the child as his own daughter with all due diligence. He gave her the name Semiramis which in the Syrian dialect is derived from the word for doves, which from that time all Syrians began to honor as goddesses. (5) This is more or less the tale told about the birth of Semiramis. When she reached the age for marriage and far exceeded the other maidens in beauty, a lieutenant was sent by the king to inspect the royal flocks. His name was Onnes and he was the chief of the royal council and designated lieutenant over all of Syria. He stayed with Simmas and when he saw Semiramis he was captivated by her beauty. Consequently, he begged Simmas to give him the maiden to be his lawful wife. He then brought her to the city of Ninus where they married and produced two children, Hyapates and Hydaspes. (2) Since Semiramis had other characteristics that were consistent with her beautiful face, it happened that her husband was completely subservient to her and since he did nothing without her knowledge, he succeeded in everything. (3) At this time, the king, after he had completed the founding of his eponymous city, attempted to launch a campaign against the Bactrians. Seeing the great numbers and strength of their men, and also that the region had many inaccessible places on account of its fortifications, the king enlisted a number of soldiers from all of his subject nations. Since he failed with his previous army, he was determined to arrive in Bactria with a far larger force. (4) When the army was assembled from all the regions, their numbers, as Ctesias wrote in his history, reached 1.7 million infantry, 210,000 cavalry, and a bit less than 10,600 scythed chariots. (5) People over here are incredulous when they hear about the size of the army, but in no way does it seem impossible to those who have carefully examined the enormity of Asia and the large numbers of peoples who live throughout the region. For if overlooking the expedition of Darius against the Scythians with 800,000 troops and Xerxes' crossing into Greece with countless numbers, one would examine the more recent campaigns in Europe, he would more readily accept what was said as trustworthy...And so I must say this to those who estimate the ancient populations of these nations based on the desolation that now exists around the cities. (6) Ninus campaigned in Bactria with such a large force and, because the region was narrow and hard to access, he was forced to lead his army in small portions. (2) Bactria is comprised of many great cities, but there is one that is most prominent and it is here that the palace happened to be located. This city was called Bactra and it far excelled others in size and the fortifications on its acropolis. Exaortes, the ruler of Bactria, enlisted all of those who were of age for military service. Their numbers totaled 400,000. (3) Taking up his army he faced the enemy at the passes. He allowed part of Ninus' army to enter, and when it seemed that a sufficient number of the enemy had reached the plain, he drew up his own army in battle formation. In a hard fought battle, the Bactrians routed the Assyrians and pursued them as far as the nearby mountains killing 100,000 enemy troops. (4) But after this, when the entire army entered, the Bactrians, overwhelmed by the numbers, withdrew to their cities so that he each could assist his own homeland. Ninus easily subdued the rest, but he could not take Bactra by force on account of its fortifications and the preparations inside. (5) During the long siege that ensued, Semiramis' husband, being amorous of his wife, sent for the woman while on campaign with the king, as she was equipped with intelligence, daring and other qualities which contribute to distinction and she seized the opportunity to make a show of her own virtue. First, as she was going to be on the road for several days she put on a robe which made it impossible to tell whether the person

wearing it was a man or a woman. This robe was suitable for traveling in the heat and it kept her skin safe and in good condition allowing her to do whatever she needed. She was young and nimble and had such all around grace that later on the Medes, when they ruled Asia, adopted the robe of Semiramis, and after them the Persians did the same. (7) When she arrived at Bactra and inspected the progress of the siege, she saw that the plain and the accessible areas were attacked, but that no one came near the acropolis on account of its fortifications. She also saw that those inside the city had abandoned their posts and were giving assistance to those in danger on the walls below. (8) For that reason, she took those soldiers who were accustomed to rock climbing and ascended through a dangerous cleft with them, took over a part of the acropolis and gave a signal to those besieging the wall throughout the plain. Those within the city were panic stricken because of the capture of the citadel; they then deserted the walls and gave up the notion of salvation. (9) When the city was captured in this manner, the king marveled at the bravery of Semiramis. First, he honored her with magnificent gifts and then, because of her beauty, grew amorous of her and attempted to persuade Onnes to willingly yield to him. Ninus proclaimed that in exchange for this favor, he would give Onnes his daughter Sosane's hand in marriage. (10) When Onnes became infuriated at this, Ninus threatened to cut out his eyes if he did not readily submit to these commands. Onnes, partly in fear of the King's threats, and partly because of the love he had for his wife fell into a mad rage, slipped a noose around his neck and hung himself. And so this is how Semiramis became royalty.

(7) Ninus took over the treasuries in Bactria, which contained a lot of gold and silver, settled affairs throughout Bactriana and dismissed his troops. After this he had a son named Ninyas from Semiramis and died soon after, leaving behind his wife as queen. Semiramis buried Ninus in the palace and built a very large burial mound for him 9 stades in height and 10 stades in width, according to Ctesias. (2) Since the city lay on a plain along the Euphrates the mound was visible from many stades away as if it were an acropolis. They say it still remains today although the city of Ninus was razed to the ground by the Medes when they dissolved the Assyrian empire. Since Semiramis was by nature very ambitious and eager to become even more renowned than her husband who ruled before her, she took it upon herself to build a city in Babylonia and so she selected architects and craftsmen from all over, made the rest of the preparations herself and gathered 2 million men from all over her empire to complete the construction. (3) She blocked off the Euphrates River and built a wall around the city 360 stades long with many large towers in between. The strength of the construction was so great that the walls were wide enough to hold six horse drawn chariots and the height sounded incredible to those who heard about it, as Ctesias of Cnidos tells us. According to Cleitarchos, however, and some of those who later crossed into Asia with Alexander, the walls were 365 stades long. They add that her ambition was to build a wall the same number of stades as there are days in a year. (4) Using baked bricks connected with asphalt she had the wall built up to a height of 50 *orgyia* according to Ctesias, but some of writers calculate the height at 50 *pecheis*, while its width was traversable by more than two horse-drawn chariots with 250 towers 60 *orgyia* high, which some later writers emend to 60 *pecheis*. (5) One would not have wondered if, despite the fact that the enclosure wall was so enormous, she provided it with only a few towers, as the city was mostly surrounded by a marsh and she did not think it necessary to build towers in the same area because the marsh provided a sufficient natural defense. Between the houses and walls a road was left two plethora in width. (8) To expedite the construction of these edifices, she measured out a stade to each of

her friends, provided sufficient supplies for this task, and demanded that construction be completed within a year. (2) When they did what was ordered with great earnest, Semiramis applauded their zeal, while she herself built a bridge through the narrowest part of the river five stades long. She skillfully embedded pillars in the riverbed which stood twelve 'feet' apart. She bound interlocked stones with iron divots and filled their framework with molten lead and then placed cutwaters in front of the pillars to the sides which would receive the stream. These cutwaters hinder the rolling outflow and taper off little by little to the width of each pillar so that the sharpness around these cutwaters cuts the flow of the stream. The curvatures yield to the force of the stream and calm the strong current of the river. (3) The deck of the bridge was made of cedar and cypress beams and also over-sized trunks of date-palms, and with a width of 30 'feet', it seemed inferior to none of Semiramis' works in craftsmanship. On each side of the river she constructed a lavish quay nearly equal to the width of the walls 160 stades long. She also built two palaces by the river on either side of the bridge. She intended to police the entire city from these palaces as if to keep in check the keys to the most strategic locations of the city. (4) Since the Euphrates flowed through the middle of Babylon and towards the south, one of the palaces faced toward the east and the other toward the west and both were constructed lavishly. For the part of the palace facing west, she made the outer enclosure 60 stades long and fortified it with high luxurious walls made of baked brick. Within this she built another circular enclosure where wild beasts of all kinds were engraved on the brick while still unbaked and were very realistic with their splendid colors. (5) This enclosure wall was 40 stades long, approximately 30 bricks wide, and, as Ctesias says, had a height of 50 *orgyia* with towers 70 *orgyia* tall. (6) She even made a third enclosure within these that circumnavigated the acropolis which itself had a perimeter of 20 stades, while the height and width of the structure exceeded the construction of the middle wall and depicted on the towers and walls there were animals of all types skillfully crafted in their colors and realistic representations of figures. The entire setting portrayed a hunting scene filled with all sorts of beasts, the biggest of which were more than 4 cubits in size. Semiramis was also shown in the scene on horseback wounding a leopard while nearby her husband, Ninus, was smiting a lion with a spear in his hands. (7) She also set up a triple gate system with double bronze gates that were opened by a locking mechanism. This palace far exceeded the one on the other side of the river both in its size and its construction because the latter had an enclosure with a wall 30 stades long made of baked brick and instead of the skilled images of animals, there were bronze statues of Ninus and Semiramis, their lieutenants and even Zeus, whom the Babylonians call Belos. On the wall battles and hunts of all types were depicted which provided visual entertainment to the spectators. (9) After this she chose the lowest place in Babylon and made a square shaped cistern. Each side of the cistern was 300 stades, made of baked brick and asphalt, and it had a depth of 35 'feet'. (2) She redirected the river into the cistern and made an underground canal from one palace to the other. She added a vaulted roof of baked brick and coated both sides with hot asphalt up to the point that the plaster was four cubits thick. The walls of the tunnel were 20 bricks wide; the height of the tunnel except for the curved vault was 12 'feet' and the width was 15 'feet'. (3) This was built within seven days and they restored the river to its normal course so that the stream was carried over the tunnel and Semiramis would now be able to go from one palace across to the other without crossing over the river. She added bronze gates on each side of the tunnel which remained until the time of the Persian Empire. (4) After this, she built a temple of Zeus in the middle of the city whom, as I have said, the Babylonians call

Belos. Since historians are in disagreement about this subject and the building has suffered the ravages of time, it is impossible to give a precise account, however, it is agreed that it was excessively high and that the Chaldeans made observations of the stars in it, since east and west were clearly visible due to the height of the structure. (5) While the entire structure was lavishly made of asphalt and brick, atop the staircase she placed three gold statues of Zeus, Hera and Rhea. Of these, the statue of Zeus stood in mid-stride at a height of 40 'feet' and weighed 1,000 Babylonian talents. The statue of Rhea sat on a golden seat and weighed the same as the aforementioned statue of Zeus. On her knees stood two lions and nearby there were huge silver serpents each one weighing 30 talents. (6) The statue of Hera was standing and weighed 800 talents. In her right hand she held a serpent by the head and in her left she held a scepter set with precious stones. (7) All of these statues shared a golden wrought pedestal that stood 40 'feet' high, 15 'feet' wide and weighed 500 talents. Upon the pedestal sat two *karchesia* that weighed 30 talents. (8) There were also two censers each weighing 300 talents and 3 golden kraters of which the one dedicated to Zeus weighed 1200 Babylonian talents while the other two each weighed 600 talents. The Persian kings, however, later plundered these objects and as for the palaces and other buildings, time completely obliterated some while it left others in ruins. Now only a small part of Babylon is inhabited while most of the land within the walls is cultivated ...

(13) After Semiramis put an end to her projects she set out for Media with a great force. When she arrived at the mountain called Bagistanon, she had her army set up camp near it and constructed a park there which had a perimeter of 12 stades. It was sitting on a plain with a large fountain from which the gardens were irrigated. (2) Mt. Bagistanon is sacred to Zeus and has jagged rocks in the area near the park reaching a height of 17 stades. At the lowest part she smoothed out the rock and engraved an image of herself surrounded by 100 spearmen. She also inscribed on the rock in Syrian characters that Semiramis buried the aforementioned cliff using the saddlebags of the attendant pack animals and in this way ascended the mountain ridge. (3) From there she set out and came to Chauon, a Median city, where she observed in an elevated plain a rock of astonishing height and size. There she built another park of enormous size with the rock at its center, while against the rock she built luxurious and lavish apartments from which she could view the gardens throughout the park and the entire army encamped in the plain. (4) There she spent a long time enjoying all types of luxuries. She was unwilling to marry for fear of being deprived of her power, but choosing among the soldiers those who were most attractive, she slept with them and then had every one of them put to death. (5) After this on her way to Ecbatana she arrived at Mt. Zarkaroion, which extended for many stades, was full of cliffs and ravines, and had a long circumference. However, she was eager to leave behind an immortal memorial of herself and to make the journey shorter. For that reason, she cut up the crags, filled in the hollow spots and made a short, expensive road which to this day is called the Road of Semiramis. (6) When she arrived at Ecbatana, a city lying on a plain, she built a lavish palace and took even greater care of this place. Since the city lacked water and there were no water-sources nearby, she irrigated the entire city by bringing large quantities of the best water with great pains and expense, (7) because 12 stades away from Ecbatana there is a mountain called Mt. Orontes which is known for its ruggedness and its size which reaches a height of 25 stades by direct ascent up to the top. Since there is a large lake on the other side of Orontes which empties into a river, Semiramis dug through the aforementioned mountain at its foot. (8) The

tunnel was 15 'feet' wide and 40 'feet' high through which she led the river from the lake into the tunnel and thus filled the city with water. This is what she did in Media.

(14) After this she came to Persis and every other land that she ruled over throughout Asia. Everywhere she made lavish roads by cutting through mountains and cliffs, and in the plains she made mounds sometimes building tombs for dead chieftains and other times establishing cities on the high grounds. (2) She was also accustomed to building small mounds in every place she camped where she would place her tent and closely observe the entire encampment. This is why many of her constructions throughout Asia still remain to this very day and are called the structures of Semiramis. (3) After this she invaded all of Egypt and, after subduing most of Libya, came to the oracle of Ammon to consult the god about her own death. It is said that there was a prophecy that she would vanish from mankind and among some of the tribes throughout Asia she would attain immortal honor; and this will happen when her son, Ninyas, forms a plot against her. (4) After leaving Egypt she invaded most of Ethiopia, subdued it and observed the marvels of this land. They say that there is a square lake in Ethiopia with a perimeter of about 160 feet, the water of which on the surface resembles cinnabar and has a very pleasing fragrance, not unlike an aged wine, and it has incredible power: they say that whoever drinks it falls into madness and confesses to all of the crimes he has previously committed and gotten away with. It would not, however, be easy to believe those making such statements. (15) The inhabitants of Ethiopia build tombs for their dead in a peculiar way; they embalm the bodies, pour a transparent material around them and stand them on top of a stele so that the body of the deceased will be visible through the transparent material to all those passing by, as Herodotus says. (2) Ctesias of Cnidos, on the other hand, claims that Herodotus is writing fiction. He says that the body is embalmed; however the transparent material is not poured around the naked bodies because this would completely burn them up and make it impossible to observe any resemblance to the deceased. (3) This is why they construct a hollow golden statue in which they place the deceased and pour the transparent material around it. Then the entire construction is set on a tomb and the golden image of the deceased is visible through the transparent material. (4) Ctesias says that the rich are buried in this manner, but those who leave behind less property obtain a silver image while the poor have one of clay. There is enough transparent material for everybody because it is abundant throughout Ethiopia and is quite common in neighboring lands as well. (5) But I will talk more about the customs of the Ethiopians later on. (16) After Semiramis settled affairs throughout Ethiopia and Egypt, she returned to Bactria in Asia with her army. Because she had large forces and had been at peace for a long time, she was eager to do something brilliant in the battlefield. (2) When she heard that the nation of the Indians was the greatest in the world and that they possessed the largest and most beautiful land, she resolved to launch a campaign into India where in those days Stabrobates reigned with countless soldiers and an incredible number of elephants, brilliantly adorned with terrifying instruments of war. (3) India is a land of exceeding beauty divided by many rivers; there is water everywhere and it produces harvest twice each year. There is such an abundance of life's necessities that the natives are always provided with plentiful enjoyment. It is said that there has never been a famine or loss of crops in this country because of the good climate. (4) It has an incredible number of elephants far surpassing those in Libya both in forcefulness and bodily strength. There is also an incredible supply of gold, silver, iron and bronze, and in addition to these, there is a large quantity of precious stones of all types as well as nearly everything pertinent to luxury and wealth. After Semiramis heard about all this in detail, she



was persuaded to declare war on the Indians, although she had not been provoked in any way. (5) Seeing that she still needed an exceedingly large force, she sent out envoys to all of her satrapies ordering the governors to enlist the best of their youth and gave them a quota based on the size of their nations. She ordered all of them to construct new armor and the others to be present prepared after a third year in Bactria. (6) She sent for shipbuilders from Phoenicia, Syria, Cyprus and the other coastal lands where she supplied them with an abundance of wood and ordered them to construct collapsible river boats. (7) The Indus River, the largest river in this region which defines the borders of her kingdom, required many skiffs to cross it and to guard against the Indians; since there is no forest around the river the skiffs had to be carried on foot from Bactriana. (8) Semiramis observed that she was badly in need of elephants so she contrived a plan to construct a likeness of these animals hoping to astound the Indians because they believed that there were no elephants at all outside of India. (9) She selected 300,000 black oxen and distributed their meat to the craftsmen and those appointed to build the contraptions, and then she sewed the skins together and filled them with hay to make the image completely imitate the form of these creatures. Each of these contraptions had a man inside in order to manage them and a camel to carry it and thus give it the appearance of a real beast to those watching from a distance. (10) The craftsmen building these for her conducted their work in an enclosure with a wall and a diligently watched gate, so that none of the craftsmen inside could leave nor could anyone reach them from outside. She did this so that no one outside would know what was going on and no rumor of these operations would reach the Indians.

(17) Since the boats and the beast contraptions were built in the first two years, in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year Semiramis asked for the forces from all over her empire to gather in Bactriana. The numbers of the assembled army as provided by Ctesias of Cnidos were 3 million infantry, 200,000 cavalry and 100,000 chariots. (2) There were also 100,000 men riding camels equipped with sabers which were four cubits long. Semiramis constructed 2000 collapsible riverboats and she arranged for them to be carried over land by the camels along with the elephant contraptions, as I have already said. The soldiers gathered the horses around them and taught them not to fear the strangeness of these beasts. (3) Many years later Perseus, the king of the Macedonians, did something similar... (4) Stabrobates, the king of the Indians, when he learned of the size of the aforementioned forces and the lengthy preparations for war, set out to outdo Semiramis in every way. (5) First, he built 4,000 riverboats out of reeds (for India produces along the rivers and marshy areas an abundance of reeds which are so wide that a man can hardly embrace one); moreover, it is said that boats made from these reeds are superior since this material does not decay. (6) After taking great care for the construction of armor and going around all of India, Stabrobates gathered a force far greater in size than the one assembled by Semiramis. (7) After making a search for wild elephants and multiplying his preexisting numbers, he brilliantly equipped all of them with terrible instruments of war. (8) Then, because of their size and the construction of the towers on their backs they gave the appearance in attack formation of something humanely impossible to withstand. (18) When he had made all his preparations for war, Stabrobates sent envoys to Semiramis while she was on the road and accused her of starting war without provocation. In his letter he seriously cursed at her like a harlot calling upon the gods as witnesses and threatened that after her defeat he would have her nailed to a cross. (2) Semiramis, however, read the letter, laughed, and remarked that through her actions the Indian would experience her true virtue. She then advanced with her force and came to the Indus River where she found the boats of

the enemy ready for battle. 3) Consequently, Semiramis quickly prepared her boats, filled them with her best marines and engaged in a naval battle on the river while her infantry drawn up along the stream eagerly joined in. (4) While the engagement continued for a long time and both sides were fighting fiercely, finally Semiramis was victorious destroying nearly 1,000 boats and taking many prisoners. (5) Ecstatic over her victory, she enslaved the islands in the river and the cities while collecting more than 100,000 captives. After this, the king of the Indians led his force away from the river pretending to be withdrawing in fear but in truth he was coaxing the enemy to cross the river. (6) Semiramis, meanwhile, as matters were proceeding according to plan, crossed the river by constructing a lavish bridge over which she transported her entire force. She left behind 60,000 men to guard it while she advanced with the rest of her army in pursuit of the Indians with the elephant imitations leading the way so that the enemy's scouts would inform the king of the numbers of elephants she had. (7) Her hopes were not dashed; when those sent out on reconnaissance informed the Indians of the multitude of elephants which the enemy had, they were all at a loss as to from where such a large number of elephants could have come. (8) The lie did not remain a secret for very long; some of Semiramis' soldiers were caught during the night neglecting their guard duties in the camp and for fear of the impending punishment they deserted to the enemy and informed them of the deception of the elephants. The king of the Indians gained confidence upon hearing the news and informed his army about the fake elephants; he then marshaled his army and turned back to face the Assyrians. (19) When Semiramis did the same, as the armies drew closer to each other, Stabrobates the king of the Indians sent his cavalry with his chariots well in advance of the battle-line. (2) Since the queen faced the attack of the cavalry courageously and the constructed elephants were marshaled in front of the line of battle in equal distances from each other, it happened that the Indian horses became terrified. (3) The elephant contraptions from a distance had the same appearance as the real beasts and the Indian horses, being accustomed to them, boldly charged; however, when they drew near, the smell that hit them was unfamiliar and this, along with everything else being substantially different, threw the horses into utter disorder. Consequently, some of the Indians fell to the ground while others, when their animals disobeyed the bit, as it happened, were carried into the enemy lines with their horses. (4) Semiramis, fighting with select soldiers and skillfully taking advantage of the situation, routed the Indians; although these men fled toward the line of battle, King Stabrobates remained calm and advanced the ranks of his infantry with the elephants leading the way while he personally took up position on the right flank and, fighting on the strongest elephant, boldly advanced against the queen who just happened to be positioned opposite him. (5) When the rest of the elephants did likewise, the army of Semiramis was able to withstand the attack of the beasts for only a short period of time as the animals had superior strength and trusting in their own power easily destroyed all resistance. (6) As a result, there was widespread slaughter: some men were trampled under foot while others were ripped apart by their tusks and some were flung in the air by their trunks. When there was a heap of bodies piled up and the impending danger aroused great terror and panic in those watching, no one still had the courage to remain at his post. (7) And so when the entire army was put to flight, the king of the Indians pressed hard against Semiramis herself. At first, he fired arrows at her and wounded her in the arm and then he hurled a javelin at her which ran through the queen's back hitting her sideways; for that reason, Semiramis did not suffer serious injury and quickly rode off while the pursuing beast fell behind because it lacked

speed. (8) Every one had fled towards the pontoon bridge and, because such a large crowd ended up confined in one narrow place, some of the queen's men were killed by their own people as horses and foot soldiers ran headlong together in mass confusion. When the Indians were at hand there was a violent thrust for the bridge out of fear so that many were forced over both sides of the bridge and fell into the river. (9) Then, when most of the survivors had reached safety across the river, Semiramis cut off the bonds holding the bridge together. With the bonds broken, the pontoon bridge fell to pieces and as many of the pursuing Indians were on it when it was brought down by the force of the current, many of them perished while Semiramis found safety because she prevented the enemy from crossing to her side. (10) After this the king of the Indians, since he had perceived omens in the sky and seers were prophesizing that the river was not to be crossed, halted his pursuit. Semiramis, meanwhile, made an exchange of prisoners and returned to Bactria having lost two-thirds of her force. (20) After some time had passed, Semiramis became the target of a plot by her son Ninyas with the help of a eunuch rekindling the oracle of Ammon; however she did him no harm but, on the contrary, handed her kingdom over to him and ordered her lieutenants to obey him. She then disappeared as if she were going to join the gods as stated in the prophecy. (2) Some story-tellers say that she became a dove and after many birds came down to her house she flew away with them; for this reason, the Assyrians deified Semiramis and honored her as a goddess. She ruled over all of Asia except India and passed away in the aforementioned manner having lived for sixty-two years and ruled for forty-two. (3) Ctesias of Cnidos said this about Semiramis in his history; however, Athenaeus and certain other authors claim that she became a glamorous prostitute... (21) After her death, Ninyas, her son with Ninus, took over the throne and ruled peacefully without emulating the ambition and risk taking of his mother. (2) First, he spent all of his time in the palace and was seen by no one except the concubines and eunuchs he kept around him; he sought idleness, luxury, and a life free of hardship and anxiety considering it the goal of a blissful kingship to enjoy all pleasures without restraint. (3) In order to safeguard his power and instill fear in his subjects, every year he demanded a fixed number of soldiers and a general from each nation. (4) He kept his army, which was comprised of people gathered from all over, outside of the city and appointed as leader of each nation the man most favorable to him and at the end of each year he again sent out for an equal number of soldiers from each nation sending the previous year's troops back home. (5) As this was happening, all of those who were gathered together outside the royal palace were amazed at the large forces always encamped in the open air and punishment was always ready for those who revolted or were disobedient. (6) He contrived the annual exchange of soldiers so that before his generals and everyone else became too familiar with each other, each man would depart to his own fatherland; for spending a lot of time on campaign confers upon the commanders experience in military affairs, arrogance, and, most of all, provides great pretexts for revolt and conspiracy against the leaders. (7) Not being seen by any outsider kept everyone ignorant of the true extent of his depravity and each man, as though out of fear for an unseen god, did not dare to speak ill of him. After appointing the generals, satraps, administrators and even the judges for each nation and by managing everything else as seemed expedient for his interests at the time, he remained in the city of Ninus for the rest of his life. (8) The rest of the kings ruled like Ninyas for thirty generations, son succeeding father into power, until the time of Sardanapallus; for it was during his reign that the Assyrian Empire succumbed to the Medes after enduring for more than 1360 years, as Ctesias of Cnidos states in his second book.

(22) There is no urgent need to write down all the names of these kings and the number of years for which each ruled because they accomplished nothing worthy of mention and only the alliance formed between the Trojans and the Assyrians, which Memnon the son of Tithonus led as general, happened to be preserved in record. (2) They say that when Teutamios was king of Asia, the twentieth king since Ninyas, son of Semiramis, the Greeks under Agamemnon campaigned against Troy when the Assyrians had ruled over Asia for more than 1,000 years. Priam was growing weary of the war and as king of Troy but a subordinate to the Assyrian king sent ambassadors to him to ask for help. Teutamios sent out 10,000 Aethiopians and an equal number of Sousians with 200 chariots with Memnon the son of Tithonus appointed as general. (3) Tithonus in those days was the general of Persia and was especially favored by the king among the lieutenants. Memnon was at the prime of his life and excelled in courage and brilliance of the soul and built on the top of the acropolis the palace at Susa which was still standing until the time of the Persian Empire and was called Memnonea after him. He also built a road through the country-side which to this day is still called the Memnoneion, (4) however the Ethiopians near Egypt claim him as their own saying that this man was born in their parts and point to the ancient palace which they say even now is still called the 'Memnoneia'. (5) Yet, it is said that Memnon assisted the Trojans with 20,000 infantry and 200 chariots and that he was admired for his courage and for killing many Greeks in battle, but in the end he was ambushed and slaughtered by the Thessalians. But then the Ethiopians fought and claimed his body, burned the corpse and brought the bones back to Tithonus. The Barbarians claim such stories were written about Memnon in the Royal Archives.

(23) Sardanapallus was the thirtieth king since Ninus, the founder of the empire, and was to be both the last of the Assyrian kings and the one who exceeded all those before him in lasciviousness and indolence. In addition the fact that he was never seen by any outsider, he lived his life like a woman. He spent his life with the concubines spinning the softest wool and making purple garments as well as wearing a woman's robe; he even applied white make-up and other cosmetics customary to courtesans to his face and entire body making himself softer than any tender girl. (2) He also cultivated a feminine voice and at drinking-parties he not only constantly enjoyed the most sensational food and drink, but also pursued the sexual pleasures of both men and women; he freely had intercourse with both without caring at all about the shame associated with such acts. (3) He went so far with lechery, hedonistic shamelessness and incontinence that he prepared his own funeral elegy and instructed his heirs after his death to inscribe on his tomb in a foreign tongue which was later translated by a Greek:

"Knowing well that you were born mortal, lift your spirits  
Delight in festivities; once you die there will be no pleasure.  
For I am ashes, after being ruler of the great city of Ninus.  
All I have is what I ate and abused  
And all the sexual pleasures that I was subjected to  
But now all this happiness is left behind."

(4) Being this sort of person, Sardanapallus not only shamefully destroyed his life like this, but finished off the Assyrian empire, though it had existed far longer than any of those that can be remembered. (24) A certain Arbaces, a Median in origin who excelled in courage and the brilliantness of soul, was general of the Medians who were sent to the city of Ninus every year. During his service he became an associate of the general of the Babylonian contingent

who urged Arbaces to cast off the yoke of Assyrian domination. (2) This man, whose name was Belesys, was the most notable of the priests whom the Babylonians call the Chaldaeans. Having much experience in astrology and prophecy he would foretell the future to many without fault. As he was admired for this, he foretold to the general of the Medes, who was his friend, a prophecy that Arbaces was destined to rule over all the territory in Sardanapallus' kingdom. (3) Arbaces commended Belesys and informed him that he would grant him the satrapy of Babylonia after the affair had been completed, while he himself, as if elevated to new status by the voice of a god, began meeting with the leaders of the rest of the nations and received all of them openly at banquets and public gatherings thus establishing a friendship with each one of them. (4) Moreover, he was determined to see the king in person and to examine his entire lifestyle; consequently, he bribed one of the king's eunuchs with a golden phiale and so won an audience with Sardanapallus where he had the opportunity to observe first hand the king's lechery and fondness for feminine pursuits. He felt contempt for the king and thought he was a worthless man motivated more than ever to cling to the hopes which the Chaldaean had given him. (5) Finally, he conspired with Belesys, so that while he personally led the Medes and the Persians in revolt, the latter would persuade the Babylonians to join in and he also involved his friend, the chief of the Arabians, in his bid for domination. (6) When the annual term of service had come to an end, the previous year's troops were relieved and sent back to their homes, as was the custom, when their replacements came. It was then that Arbaces convinced the Medes to attack the Assyrian kingdom and the Persians to have a share in power in their bid for freedom. Belesys likewise persuaded the Babylonians to adhere to freedom and sent an embassy to Arabia to invite the leader of those people, his friend and ally, to take part in the attack. (7) When the year of service had passed, all those nations gathered together large numbers of soldiers and came in full force to the city of Ninus on the pretext of bringing the replacements as was the custom, but with the intention to topple the Assyrian Empire. (8) When the aforementioned four nations gathered into one place, they numbered in total 400,000, all of which assembled in one camp and deliberated about the most expedient course of action. (25) When Sardanapallus heard about the revolt, he immediately sent against them his remaining nations. At first, in a pitched battle on the plain, those who started the rebellion were defeated and, after suffering heavy losses, were pursued to a mountain 70 stades from the city of Ninus. (2) After this, as they returned to the plain and were preparing for battle once again, Sardanapallus marshaled forces against them and sent heralds to the camp of the enemy proclaiming the following: "Sardanapallus will give 200 talents to anyone who kills Arbaces the Mede and the reward will be twice as much for anyone who turns him in alive along with being made governor of Media. He likewise promises to offer gifts for the capture of Belesys the Babylonian alive or dead." (3) As no one was paying any attention to the proclamations, he engaged them in battle, killing many of the rebels and pursuing the rest of them to their encampment in the mountains. (4) Then Arbaces' men began to lose heart after so many defeats and held an assembly of their friends to consider what was to be done. (5) The majority of them said that they should return to their native lands, occupy the strongholds and make every possible preparation for war. However, Belesys the Babylonian persuaded all of them to endure the dangers by suggesting that the gods indicated to them that with much toil and hardship they would achieve their goal in the end and inciting them in every other way possible. (6) There was a third battle in which the king was again victorious; this time he even gained control of the camp of the rebels and pursued the

defeated soldiers as far as the borders of Babylon. Arbaces took substantial personal risks and killed many men but was himself wounded by the Assyrians. (7) With so many defeats occurring in succession for the rebels, the chieftains began to lose hope of victory and were preparing to return home each to his own land. (8) Belesys, laying awake in the open air for the entire night and eagerly watching the stars declared to those who had lost hope that if they were to wait for five days, help would come of its own accord and the entire situation would completely change to the opposite because the gods had foretold this to them through the stars. He begged them to remain for five more days and to experience his personal skill and the goodwill of the gods.

(26) Everyone was called back and waited for the ordained time when a messenger arrived saying that a force from Bactria was sent to the king and was near and advancing fast. (2) Arbaces and his allies decided to meet with the Bactrian generals as soon as possible and take up the strongest and best equipped of the soldiers so that in the event that they did not succeed in persuading the Bactrians to join in the rebellion with speeches, they could force them to share in their expectations under arms. (3) However, they were happy to heed the call for freedom, first the chieftains and then the rest of the force, and they all encamped together in the same place. (4) Then, as it happened, the king of the Assyrians, unaware of the revolt of the Bactrians and exalted by his previous success, decided to relax and give his soldiers sacrificial animals, a large quantity of wine and other food for a festival. Then, when the entire force was celebrating, Arbaces and his men were informed by some deserters of the wanton and drunken revelry in the enemy's camp and they unexpectedly launched an attack during the night. (5) The well organized rebels attacked men who were in disarray and were ready against an enemy that was unprepared, and so they recovered the camp, killed many of the soldiers, and pursued the rest as far as the city. (6) After this the king appointed as general his wife's brother, Salaimenes, while he personally looked after the preparations in the city. The rebels, meanwhile, were marshaled on the plain in front of the city and in two battles defeated the Assyrians. They killed Salaimenes and some of the enemy as they were fleeing while those who were cut off from entrance into the city were killed nearly to a man and were forced to cast themselves into the Euphrates River, (7) and the magnitude of the slaughter was so great that the flowing stream mixed with blood changed the water color over a substantial area. Then when the king was cut off in a siege, many nations revolted and deserted in order to gain their freedom. (8) Sardanapallus, seeing that his entire kingdom was in peril, sent his three sons and two daughters with a large sum of money to Paphlagonia to his lieutenant Kotta, the most loyal of his subjects, while he personally sent out letter-carriers to all of those who had fought under him, asked for forces and made preparations for a siege. (9) There was an oracle passed down to him by his forefathers saying that no one would take the city of Ninus by force unless the river would first become an enemy of the city. Thinking that this would never happen he adhered to hope and was determined to endure the siege until he received the armies that were going to be sent by his subjects. (27) The rebels, exalted by their success, began the siege; however, on account of the strength of the fortification walls they could do no harm on those in the city, for stone-throwers, protective sheds for sappers and battering rams built to tear down walls had not yet been invented in those days. The besieged had a great store of all the necessities because the king prepared for this situation ahead of time; consequently, the siege was prolonged and maintained for two years with attacks on the walls and a blockade of those inside from coming into the countryside. In the third year when thunderstorms were continuously falling,

it happened that the Euphrates swelled, flooded a large portion of the city, and demolished 20 stades of the city wall. (2) Then the king, thinking that the oracle was being fulfilled and that the river had clearly become the enemy of the city, gave up any hope of salvation. In order to avoid falling into the hands of the enemy, he constructed a pyre of enormous size in the palace and heaped onto it all the silver and gold and even all of the royal robes. After locking his concubines and eunuchs in the chamber built in the middle of the pyre, along with all of them he burned the palace and himself. (3) Upon learning of the death of Sardanapallus, the rebels conquered the city by attacking through the leveled part of the wall. They placed the royal robe on Arbaces, proclaimed him king and turned over supreme power to him. (28) Afterwards when the king was doling out gifts to his fellow soldiers and appointing satraps over the nations, Belesys the Babylonian, who had foretold that Arbaces would be king of Asia, approached him and reminded him of his beneficence and thought that he should be granted the rule of Babylon as was originally promised. (2) Belesys furthermore reminded Arbaces that he had made a vow to Belos that if Sardanapallus were conquered and the palace burned, then he would allow him to bring the ashes of the palace to Babylon, set them near an enclosure sacred to the god and the river, and construct a mound that would serve as an eternal memorial to those sailing along the Euphrates of the fall of the Assyrian Empire. (3) He asked this after hearing about the gold and silver from a eunuch who had run across, deserted to Belesys and was hidden by him. (4) Arbaces knew nothing of this because all of those in the palace had been burned together by the king and so he agreed to let Belesys bring the ashes to Babylon and to exempt this nation from tribute. Then Belesys provided boats and along with the ashes quickly carried much of the silver and gold back to Babylon. The king was informed of this and Belesys was caught in the act; Arbaces then appointed his generals that had served with them as judges. (5) After the perpetrator agreed that he had committed the crime, the court condemned him; however, the king, out of generosity and because he wanted to build an empire based on tolerance, set Belesys free and allowed him to keep the silver and gold he had carried away. Arbaces likewise did not deprive Belesys of the authority over Babylon which was granted at the outset saying his earlier benefits were greater than his later crimes. (6) When this show of clemency became public he gained no ordinary glory and goodwill from the nations as all of them judged that he was worthy of royalty who dealt with wrongdoers in this manner. (7) Then Arbaces treated the citizens with leniency, settled them in villages, and gave to each of them his own possessions while he razed the city to the ground. Then he brought the silver and gold that was left over from the pyre (which amounted to many talents) back to Ecbatana in Media. (8) The empire of the Assyrians endured for thirty generations, beginning with Ninus, and lasted more than 1300 years until it was toppled by the Medes in the aforementioned manner.

- **F1c) Anon. *De Mul. I*:** Semiramis: according to Ctesias was the daughter of Derketo the Syrian goddess and a certain Syrian; she was raised by Simma, a servant of King Ninus and was married to Onnes, the royal lieutenant, and had two sons. As she conquered Bactra with her husband, Ninus, who was already an old man, took notice of her and married her himself; she bore to him a son named Ninyas. After the death of Ninus she built with baked brick and asphalt the walls of Babylon and constructed a temple to Belos. After her own son Ninyas plotted against her she died at the age of 62 having ruled for 42 years.

- **F1d) Strabo 16.4.27:** The variations of names, especially among the barbarians, are many; for instance, they call Dariokes Darius, Phasiris Parysatis, and Athara Atargatis whom Ctesias calls Derketo.
- **F1eα) Eratosth. *Catast.* 38:** . . . The one called the Great Fish... according to Ctesias, it is written about him that he previously lived in a lake in Bambyke. When Derketo, whom the local inhabitants call a Syrian goddess, fell into the lake he saved her.
- **F1eβ) Hygin. *Astr.* 2.41:** The Fish which is called southern... who is considered to have once been a servant to Isis; for his service she placed amongst the stars a constellation of him and his sons... Thus many Syrians do not eat fish and worship golden statues of them in place of domestic deities. Ctesias also writes about this.
- **F1eγ) Tzetz. *Chil.* 9.502:** There was an Assyrian queen whom they called Derketo, who had an adulterous affair with a young Syrian. She became pregnant and being ashamed of the gossip, made the Syrian disappear and after giving birth exposed the child in a field and then cast herself into Lake Myris where she drowned. Syrian writers say that she turned into a fish which is why the Syrians now refuse to eat any fish.
- **F1f) Arnob. *Adv. nat.* I.52:** Now then, I pray that Zoroaster the Magus comes through the fiery zone from the center of the earth so that, if we are to agree with Hermippus the author, he can meet with that Bactrian whose exploits Ctesias describes in the first book of his *Historia*, Armenius the grandson of Zostrianus and the Pamphylian friend of Cyrus, Apollonius, Damigero and Dardanus, Belos, Julianus, Baebulus, and if there is anyone else who is said to have had his name and sovereignty amid such delusions.
- **F1g) Euseb. *Chron.* p. 29.3 (= Kephalion 93 F1):** After this (sc. the death of Ninus), the kingship was taken over by Semiramis who surrounded Babylon with walls of such kind and shapes as have been mentioned by many, including Ctesias, Zenon, Herodotus, and others after these. After that, he further tells of the campaign of Semiramis in India and her defeat and flight, and how she personally massacred her own sons and how she herself was killed by her son Ninus after she had ruled for 42 years.
- **F1h) Steph. Byz. s.v. Chauon:** An area of Media. Ctesias in Book I of his *Persika*: "Semiramis and her army then marched out and came to Chauon in Media.
- **F1i) Synkell. p.119.11:** The famous Semiramis succeeded him (sc. Ninus), who raised mounds of earth in many places on the pretext of stopping floods, but in truth, these were tombs for her lovers who were buried alive, as Ctesias mentions in his history.
- **F1k) Diodor. 1.56.5-6:** I am not ignorant of the fact that Ctesias of Cnidos differs in his story about the aforementioned cities saying that some of those men who entered Egypt with Semiramis founded and named them after their own homelands. It is not easy to set forth the truth of this matter with precision, but the discrepancies among the historians must be considered worthy of record in order that the readers be able to judge what is true entirely for themselves.



- **F11α) Antigon. Hist. Mir. 145:** According to Callimachus, Ctesias mentions a spring in Ethiopia that has water as red as cinnabar and says that those who drink from it become deranged. Philon, the author of the *Ethiopika*, also mentions this in his history.
- **F11β) Paradox. Flor. 17:** Ctesias mentions in his history a spring in Ethiopia which has the color of cinnabar and that those who drink from it lose their mind so that they confess even to things done in secret.
- **F11γ) Plin. N. H. 31.9:** But there it is necessary to be moderate in one's drinking because it brings on madness, which happens in Ethiopia to those who drink from the Red Spring, according to Ctesias.
- **F11δ) Nic. Damas. (Exc. de Insidiis p. 3.24 de Boor = FGrH 90 F1):** [Nicolaus says] that after the Indian war as she was crossing Media, Semiramis went up to the top of a lofty mountain which was inaccessible on all but one side because of a smooth and precipitous rock face, and inspected her army from an *exhedra* which she had constructed on the spot. While she was encamped there, a eunuch named Satibaras, along with her sons from Onnes, plotted against her. The eunuch personally had orchestrated the entire scheme and told the young men that they were in danger of being put to death by Ninyas should he become king; therefore, they should anticipate it, kill Ninyas and their mother, and assume the throne. Moreover, he said to them that it was most shameful to tolerate the behavior of their licentious mother who was lusted after day after day by any man around while her sons were grown men.  
When they inquired how the matter was going proceed, the eunuch said that they should not be concerned about it but approach Semiramis on the peak of the mountain and, when he gave the signal (he would take care of it), push her off the peak to the ground below. They agreed to this and made a vow to each other in a temple. By chance there was a Mede standing with his head down behind the altar where they made their agreement and heard everything; when he learned of their intentions he wrote it all down on a piece of leather and sent it to Semiramis through an intermediary. On the next day when Semiramis read this, she summoned the sons of Onnes as she was ascending the mountain and, for whatever reason, ordered that they come fully armed. Satibaras rejoiced since their mother had instructed them to arrive with their weapons as if the event were arranged for them by a god and went along with the young men. When they arrived, Semiramis ordered the eunuch to leave and said to the young men: "Base children of a noble father, persuaded by a lowly slave you plot the murder of your own mother and you are planning to push me, someone who has her authority granted from the gods, off this cliff? Well, here I am! Push me off this cliff so you can earn glory from men and you can rule after killing your mother Semiramis and Ninyas." She made the same speech to the Assyrians.  
(He examines this in *On the Speeches*)
- **F11m) Athenag. Pro Christ. F130:** For if the most detested and hated of God have the reputation of being gods and if the daughter of Derketo, Semiramis, a lecherous and murderous woman, is deemed a Syrian goddess and, because of Derketo, the Syrians worship Semiramis and doves along with her (for it is impossible that she was transformed into a

dove; this is the story according to Ctesias), then why is it amazing when those men of power and tyranny are called gods by their contemporaries.

- **F1n) Athen. 12.38 p 528 EF:** Ctesias in the third book of his *Persika* says that all the kings of Asia were very fond of luxury, especially Ninyas, the son of Ninus and Semiramis, who always stayed indoors and lived in opulence without ever being seen by anyone except his eunuchs and women.
- **F1oα) Euseb. Chron. p. 29:** After her (sc. Semiramis) Ninyas assumed power; Kephalion reports that he accomplished no deed worthy of mention. So then he recounts the remaining kings one after the other and says that they ruled for a period of a thousand years, son taking over the throne from father; and still, not one of them held the throne for less than twenty years. Then their unwarlike, soft, womanly customs kept them in secure seclusion; they sat at home and had nothing to occupy their time and no one met them in person, except their concubines and effeminate men. If, meanwhile, someone should want to make the acquaintance of these kings, Ctesias counts them individually by name numbering twenty-three kings, as it seems to me. However, what desire or pleasure can there be for one to list names in a language of barbaric idiom of kings without manly virtue or courage, names of cowardly, soft and debouched tyrants?
- **F1oβ) Agathias. Hist. 2.25.3:** It appears that Ninus previously established a secure kingdom in Assyria and Semiramis after him and all their descendants up to Beleous, the son of Derketades. (4) With this Beleous that succession line of Semiramis came to an end when a certain Beletaras, a gardener, caretaker and superintendent for the gardens in the royal palace seized the kingship in an absurd way and established his own dynasty, as is written by Bion and Alexander Polyhistor, which lasted up to Sardanapallus when, as those two say, the empire was dissolved and Arbaces the Mede along with Belesys the Babylonian deprived the Assyrians of it. They killed the king and transferred the leadership to the nation of Media; 306 years in addition to the thousand or more had gone by since Ninus first gained preeminence over that land; Ctesias of Cnidos recorded these dates and Diodorus of Sicily agrees with him. The Medes in turn held power (and arranged everything to their customs)... for no less than 300 years... then the Persian kings ruled for 228 years...
- **F1pα) Athen. 12.38 p. 528 F-529:** Such a man was Sardanapallus (who some say was the son of Anakyndaraxes and others say was the son of Anabaraxaros). When Arbaces, one of the generals serving under him, a Mede by birth, arranged through Sparameizos, one of the eunuchs, to see Sardanapallus and barely secured permission with the latter's consent, the Mede, upon entering, saw Sardanapallus wearing white powder, adorned with feminine attire and combing purple fabrics while sitting with the concubines with his feet up, his eyebrows plucked, clad in a woman's robe and with his face shaved and smooth – it was whiter than milk with shadows around his eyes – then he looked upon Arbaces lifting up the whites of his eyes (There are many, of whom Douris is one, who claim that Arbaces was so overtly indignant, if such a man ruled over them, that he killed Sardanapallus with his spear).
- **F1pβ) Aristot. Pol. 5.8.14:** Some were attacked out of contempt as happened to Sardanapallus when someone saw him spinning wool with women, if the writers of such tales

speak the truth; even if it were not true in this case, it might have happened at some other point.

- **F1pγ) Pollux. 2. 60:** Ctesias says that Sardanapallus lifted the whites of his eyes.
- **F1pδ) Nic. Damas. (*Exc.de Virtibus* p.324.16 Büttner-Wobst = *FGrH* 90 F2) [L]:** [Nicolaus says] that Sardanapallus ruled the Assyrians after inheriting the kingdom from Ninus and Semiramis. He lived in the city of Ninus and spent his life in the palace never taking up arms or going out on hunts like the kings of old. He anointed his face, wore eyeliner, competed with the concubines in beauty and hairstyles, and in every way followed feminine customs. According to previously set terms, the satraps from the other nations arrived at the gates bringing the ordained forces and, in particular, Arbaces, the governor of the Medes, a man who had lived a prudent life and was second to none in active experience; he was a seasoned hunter and warrior and had accomplished many noble deeds in the past while he had even grander plans for the future. When Arbaces heard about the life and morals of the king, pondered the issue and decided that for lack of a brave man this one holds power over Asia, and so he contrived a plan to gain supremacy.
- **F1pε) Nic. Damas. (*Exc. de Insidiis* p. 4.23 de Boor = *FGrH* 90 F3) [L]:** [Nicolaus says] that when Sardanapallus was king of Assyria, Arbaces the Mede, after hearing of the life which the king lived and his morals, pondered the issue and decided that for lack of a brave man this one holds power over Assyria. It seemed that at that time the Median race was perceived as second in courage only to the Assyrians. Arbaces was a friend of Belesys, the ruler of Babylon, and was a fellow guard at the palace gates with this member of the Chaldaean tribe (these men were priests who held a position of preeminence). They made an agreement and orchestrated a plot to make an attempt to gain supreme power and transfer the authority of the Assyrians over to the Medes. The Babylonians were most skilled in astrology, excelling in wisdom, prophecy (both through dreams and portents), and in every skill concerning divination. What is more, Belesys talked with Arbaces in front of the gates near a certain manger in which two horses fed and said how at midday on the spot he fell asleep and in his sleep he seemed to see one of the horses bringing husks in his mouth to Arbaces who was also sleeping, and the other horse said "Why are you doing this, you lunatic? Why do you bring straw to this man?" The first horse replied "I envy him; he is going to be king of all those over whom Sardanapallus now rules." After seeing and hearing this, the Babylonian woke up the sleeping Mede and, as he was more knowledgeable in matters of divination, interpreted the report of the dream and urged Arbaces to walk to the Tigris River which flowed near the city of Ninus and washed against the city wall. As they went discussing many things as friends would, Belesys said "Come now, Arbaces, if Sardanapallus our master made you satrap of Cilicia, what would you give me for bringing you the good news?" Arbaces answered, "My good man, don't mock me? Why would he make me satrap of Cilicia skipping over others who are my superiors?" Belesys replied, "But if he should grant it, for I speak knowing something more, what gratitude will you show me?" And Arbaces said, "You would not be dissatisfied, for you would have the largest share of power." Belesys said, "If he made you satrap of all of Babylon, how would you use me?" And Arbaces responded, "By God, stop railing me so much! I don't think it is right that I, a Mede, should be mocked by a Babylonian." Belesys said, "By Great Belos, I am not

mocking you when I say this, but I am thinking of something greater." And Arbaces replied, "If I will become satrap of Babylon, I will make you lieutenant governor of the entire satrapy." The Babylonian answered, "I don't doubt you. Tell me this; if you were king of all the lands now ruled by Sardanapallus, what would you do with me?" Arbaces said, "If, my wretched man, Sardanapallus heard this, know well that you and I would die horribly. What has gotten in to you to make you speak such nonsense? Won't you stop fooling around?" And Belesys, grabbing his hand firmly, said, "By this right hand I value so much and by Great Belos, I am not joking about what I am saying, but I know well the art of divination." Arbaces responded, "I will give you Babylon to have and all the lands in it exempt from tribute." When Belesys put forward his hand, Arbaces also stretched his right hand and confirmed this. Belesys said, "You should know, you will be king, there is no doubt." And then they agreed to this and went back to the gates to perform their usual duties. After this, Arbaces became acquainted with one of the most trusted eunuchs and asked that he show him the king; for, he was very eager to see what type of man the king was. However, when the eunuch said that his request was impossible to grant because no one ever gets to see him, Arbaces dropped the matter for the time being, but a little while later he again asked him more earnestly saying that he would pay him a large sum of gold and silver for the favor. The eunuch was eventually won over, for he was very fond of Arbaces and did not want to disappoint him and so he promised that if there was an opportunity, to remember... to his master... he lived there where he died(?).

- **F1q) Athen. 12.38 p. 529 B-D:** Ctesias says that he (sc. Sardanapallus) entered into the war, assembled a great army, was defeated by Arbaces, and then committed suicide by burning himself in the palace piling up a pyre four plethra high on which he placed 150 golden couches and an equal number of golden tables. He also built a wooden chamber on the pyre one hundred feet long, placed the couches inside and sat there with his wife while his concubines lay on the others; for, he had sent his three sons and two daughters to †the city of Ninus† to the king there with 3,000 talents of gold when he saw that the situation was grim. He set a roof over the chamber with large thick beams and then set many bulky pieces of wood in a circle so there would be no escape. He then placed 10 million talents of gold and 100 million talents of silver along with his cloaks, purple garments, and all other kinds of robes on top of it. He then ordered that the fire be lit from below and it continued to burn for 15 days. Those who saw the smoke were amazed and thought that Sardanapallus was making sacrifices. Only the eunuchs knew the truth. And so Sardanapallus, although he had lived an exceptionally hedonistic life, died a noble man.
- **F2) Clem. Al. Strom. 1.102.4:** If the events of Assyria are much older than those of the Greeks by many years according to Ctesias...
- **F3) Plin. N.H. 7.207:** According to Philostephanus, Jason was the first to sail in a warship; Hegesias claims it was Paralus, Ctesias says it was Semiramis and Archemachus that it was Aegaeon.
- **F4) Athen. 14.44 p. 631:** Berosus says in the first book of his *Babyloniaka* that on the sixteenth day in the month of Loos a festival called the *Sakaia* was celebrated for five days in Babylon in which it was customary for the masters to be ruled by the servants of the house

and one of them became the head of the household, wore a robe similar to that of the king, and was called *zoganes*. Ctesias also mentions the festival in the second book of his *Persika*.

- **F5) Diodor. 2.31.10-34.6:** And what has been said about the Chaldaeans will suffice... but, with regard to the kingdom of the Assyrians and how it was dissolved by the Medes, we return to the point from which we digressed. (32) Since the ancient writers are in disagreement, regarding the greatest hegemony of the Medes I think we should follow... the customary route of a side by side exposition of the disagreements of the historiographers. (2) Herodotus, who was born in the time of Xerxes, says the Assyrians ruled Asia for 500 years before they were overthrown by the Medes; afterwards, since there was no king to lay claim on all lands for many generations, the cities governed themselves and handled their affairs democratically. Finally, after many years had passed, a man named Cyaxares, who excelled in his sense of justice, was chosen to be king by the Medes. (3) At first he attempted to annex his neighbors and become the founder of the Median hegemony; then his descendants continually acquired many of the neighboring lands to increase the kingdom until the time Astyages who was defeated by Cyrus and the Persians. I have now given a summary of these events but will write about them in greater detail later when I reach the appropriate time-frame. In the second year of the 17<sup>th</sup> Olympiad Cyaxares was chosen king by the Medes, according to Herodotus. (4) Ctesias of Cnidos, on the other hand, lived in the time of Cyrus' campaign against his brother Artaxerxes. He was captured and because of his knowledge of medicine, was taken in by the King where he spent 17 years and was honored by him. He claims that, making use of the royal archives in which the Persians kept records of ancient accounts as was the custom, he made a thorough investigation into these affairs individually, composed the history, and released it into the Greek world. (5) He says that after the fall of Assyrian hegemony, the Medes dominated Asia when Arbaces became king after defeating Sardanapallus, as I have already mentioned. (6) Arbaces ruled for 28 years and was succeeded by his son Maudakes who ruled Asia for 50 years; after him, Sosarmus was king for 30 years, Artykas ruled for 50 years, the one named Arbianes held power for 22 years, and Artaios for 40 years. (33) During the reign of Artaios, a great war broke out between the Medes and the Cadusians for these reasons: Parsondes the Persian, a man admired for his courage, intelligence, and other virtues, was a friend of the king and the most powerful member of the king's council. Incensed by a decision of the king over a certain matter, Parsondes fled with 3,000 infantry and 1,000 cavalry to the Cadusians where he had given his own sister in marriage to the most influential man throughout these parts. (3) As a rebel, he persuaded the entire nation to claim their freedom and was elected general on account of his bravery. When he was informed that a large enemy force was assembled, he armed the Cadusians to a man and encamped near the passes leading into the country with an army that totaled no less than 200,000 men. (4) Although King Artaios campaigned against him with 800,000 men, Parsondes was victorious in the battle, killed more than 100,000 men and drove the rest of the forces out of the land of the Cadusians; consequently, he was admired by the natives, chosen king, and plundered Media frequently damaging the whole area. (5) He gained great glory and when he was about to die in old age, Parsondes made his successor to the throne take a vow that the Cadusians would never relinquish their hostility towards the Medes and if ever they made peace, utter destruction was to fall upon his own family and all Cadusians. (6) For these

reasons, the Cadusians have always been hostile toward the Medes and were never obedient to their kings until Cyrus transferred the hegemony to the Persians.

(34) After the death of Artaios, Artines ruled the Medes for 22 years and then Astibaras ruled for 40 years. During the latter's reign, the Parthians revolted from the Medes and entrusted their land to the Saka. (2) On account of this, a war erupted between the Saka and the Medes which lasted for several years, many battles were fought, many were killed on both sides, and in the end the two sides came to terms. The Parthians were to become subject to the Medes while each side was to retain their pre-existing possessions and they were going to be friends and allies for all time. (3) At that time a woman named Zarinaia ruled over the Saka who, admirable in matters of war, was far superior to the other women of the Saka in boldness and action. All the women of this nation were brave and shared the dangers of war with their men; however, Zarinaia is said to have stood out from the rest in terms of beauty and her plans and special undertakings. (4) She thus made war upon some of her barbarian neighbors who were overcome with audacity and sought to enslave the nation of the Saka. She cleared a large part of the countryside, founded many cities, and made the lives of her fellow country-men more prosperous in every way. (5) This is why after her death the locals repaid the favor of her beneficence and in remembrance of her virtue, constructed a tomb that far exceeded all existing ones. They set up a three sided pyramid each side being three stades in length and one stade high with the top coming together at a point; they set upon the tomb a colossal golden statue, imparted heroic honors on her and made everything more magnificent than what was granted to her ancestors. (6) When Astibares, the king of the Medes, died of old age in Ecbatana, he was succeeded by his son Aspandas, whom the Greeks call Astyages. This man was defeated by Cyrus the Persian thus transferring the kingdom to the Persians. I will discuss these events in greater detail in the appropriate time-frame.

- **F6a) Athen. 12.40 p. 530 D:** Ctesias writes in his history that Nanaros, the lieutenant of the king and most influential man in Babylonia, wore a woman's robe and jewelry and that 150 women singing and plucking the lyre would attend his dinner, although he was himself a slave to the king; they would sing and play while he dined.

- **F6b) Nic. Damas. (Exc. de Virt. p. 330.5 Büttner-Wobst = FGtH 90 F4) [L]:** [Nicolaus says] that during the reign of Arbaces the king of the Medes and successor of the Assyrian king Sardanapallus, there was a Median man distinguished for his courage and strength named Parsondes who was greatly honored by the king and in his homeland Persia as much for his wisdom as for his physical beauty; he was also skilled at capturing beasts and fighting as a foot-soldier and from a chariot or horseback. When this man saw Nanaros the Babylonian draped in beautiful robes, wearing earrings, with his face very clean shaven and soft like a woman, grew so disgusted with the man that he tried to persuade Artaios to kill him and hand the kingdom over to him. Artaios, however, was reluctant to violate his agreement with Arbaces and commit the affront against the Babylonian. Parsondes met with Artaios two or three times, but since the response was always the same, he kept quiet. However, Nanaros found out about his plot and promised the petty dealers who follow the king's army in his region that he would greatly reward whoever would bring Parsondes to him. (2) Then by chance, Parsondes, while hunting, drove on ahead of the king to a plain not far from Babylon where he directed his attendants to a nearby forest with the order to shout and clamor in order to scare their quarry into the plain. He captured many wild boars and

deer but while chasing a wild ass he got separated from his entourage and pushing on alone, arrived in Babylonia where the petty-dealers were preparing the market for the king; when Parsondes saw them he asked for something to drink to quench his thirst. They were delighted to see Parsondes and poured him a drink, took his horse, and urged him to stay for lunch. This did not seem like a bad idea since he had been hunting all day and he ordered them to send the ass which he killed to the king and to tell his servants in the woods where he was. After promising to do his bidding they persuaded Parsondes to lie down and then prepared a splendid feast with the sweetest wine, deliberately unmixed, so that he would get drunk. When he had enough, he asked for his horse so that he could return to the army of the king. However, they paraded beautiful women before his eyes and urged him to spend a night in their company and leave in the morning. When he saw the beautiful women, he decided to stay and pass the night there. Partly worn out from the sexual activity and partly from fatigue, he was overcome with sleep; then, some men woke the women sleeping next to Parsondes while many attacked, bound him, and brought him to the Nanaros.

(3) When the Nanaros saw him (Parsondes had already sobered up from the wine and knew that he was in great trouble) he asked, "Parsondes, have you ever suffered any injury from me, yourself or any of your relatives?" Parsondes answered that he did not. "What then, did you expect to suffer one in the future?" "No, I did not", replied Parsondes. "Why did you try to injure me without provocation by calling me effeminate and asking Artaios to give you my kingdom, as though I were worthless while you were noble? I am very grateful to Artaios for not allowing himself to be persuaded to take away the kingdom which Arbaces gave to us. Why did you do this, you lowlife?" Parsondes now spoke without flattery, "I thought I was more worthy to have this prize since I am manlier and more useful to the king than you, a man who keeps his face clean-shaven, wears eye-liner, and anoints his skin with white make-up." Then he answered, "Aren't you ashamed that such a great man as yourself, defeated by your belly and genitalia, has been conquered by the lesser one? I, however," he continued, "will soon make your skin softer and whiter than a woman's." He then swore an oath to Belos and Molis (this is how the Babylonians call Aphrodite).

Nanaros then summoned the eunuch in charge of the songstresses and said to him, "take this man and shave his entire body except for his head, rub it with pumice stone, wash him twice a day and rinse him with egg-yolk, and then put eye-liner on him and braid his hair like a woman's. Teach him to sing, play the cithara, and pluck the lyre so he can perform like a woman for me with the music-girls, with whom he will share a lifestyle by having a soft body, wearing the same clothes, and practicing the same skills." After he spoke, the eunuch took Parsondes, shaved his entire body except for the head, taught him what he was asked, keeping him out of the sunlight, washing him twice per day, softening him up, and keeping him in the same quarters with the women as his master had ordered. Soon after, Parsondes was a white, smooth, and woman-like man, who sang and played the cithara more beautifully than the music-girls with whom he had performed and surpassed them in beauty as well and no one who saw him perform at one of Nanaros' dinner-parties would realize that he was not a woman.

(4) Artaios, the king of the Medes, grew weary of inquiring into the whereabouts of Parsondes and offered rewards to anyone who found him alive or dead; he surmised that while hunting Parsondes was eaten by a lion or some other beast and he greatly distressed over the loss of one so manly. Parsondes had been in Babylon living a woman's lifestyle for seven years when Nanaros violently whipped one of his eunuchs and physically abused him.

Parsondes then with great promises persuaded the eunuch to run away to Artaios in Media and tell the king that, "Parsondes is alive and has been dishonored by being made to live with the women, Parsondes, the same man who was your friend and such a great warrior." When the eunuch revealed this to the king, he rejoiced but at the same time said with a heavy heart, "Alas! A good man has been dishonored! How has the Parsondes I knew endured feminization by an enemy?" He then sent one of his most trusted *angaroi* (for this is what they call messengers of the king) to Babylon.

(5) When the *angaros* arrived and demanded the return of Parsondes, Nanaros denied everything and said he had not seen him since his disappearance. When Artaios heard this, he sent another *angaros* who was much greater and more powerful than the first, while demanding on parchment that Nanaros stop this Babylonian trickery and return the man whom he had handed over to the eunuchs and music-girls or he would lose his head. Artaios wrote this down and ordered his *angaros* that if Nanaros failed to deliver Parsondes, he was to be seized by the belt and put to death. When this second *angaros* arrived in Babylon and announced the demands of Parsondes, Nanaros, fearing for his life, promised to surrender the man and while defending himself to the *angaros*, urged him to persuade the king that he was justly punishing a man who had first committed a grave injustice against himself; for he would have suffered worse cruelties at the hand of Parsondes if the king, his master, protected him. After this, he invited the *angaros* to join him for a drink and dinner and when the meal was served, the music-girls entered, 150 women in with Parsondes among them. Some women played the cithara or aule while others plucked the lyre; Parsondes was the most prominent of them in beauty and talent as he appeared to be a woman too. When they had their fill of dinner, Nanaros asked the *angaros* which of the girls he thought was the most attractive and talented and without much thought he replied, "that one" while pointing to Parsondes. Nanaros clapped his hands and laughed for a long time before saying, "How would you like spending the night with her?" to which the *angaros* readily assented. Nanaros then said, "However, I won't let you have her.", and the *angaros* replied, "Then why did you ask me?" Nanaros paused for a while and said, "That is Parsondes, the man for whom you have come." The *angaros* found this hard to believe but Nanaros swore that he was. Then the *angaros* said, "I am amazed how a brave man endured to live like a woman rather than kill himself, if he could not kill his enemy. How will my master take this news when he finds out?" Nanaros said, "I will easily show him that I did nothing wrong." Then they discussed the matter before going to bed.

(6) The next day the Babylonian placed Parsondes in a covered carriage and sent him away with the *angaros*. When they arrived at Susa where the king was, the *angaros* revealed Parsondes causing Artaios to stand in awe for a long time because what he saw was a man who had turned into a woman and finally say, "Oh you pitiful man, how did you suffer this dishonor without opting for death first?" Parsondes replied, "Necessity is said to be more powerful than the gods, my lord. I carried on living after such suffering in order that I might be able to see you again and then, with your help, exact my revenge on Nanaros which would not be possible if I were dead. And so, my lord, do not cheat me of my wish but grant me justice from a base man." Artaios promised Parsondes he would grant him his wish when he returns to Babylon. A little while later Parsondes regained his manly nature and the king went to Babylon. Then Parsondes loudly beseeched him on a daily basis to exact vengeance upon Nanaros who came to the king and argued that he had acted justly saying, "That man first slandered me, although he had suffered no injury by my hands, urging you to kill me and



hand the rule of Babylon over to him." Artaios, however, responded that Parsondes had the more justified argument, "You should not have rendered a verdict nor inflicted such punishments, but you ought to have referred the matter to me. You will therefore get you what you deserve in ten days". Upon hearing this Nanaros became terribly frightened and turned to Mitraphernes who was the most influential of the eunuchs, and promised him ten talents of gold, ten golden phiale, 200 silver cups, 100 talents of silver coins and other luxurious garments, and to the king he promised 100 talents of gold, 100 golden phiale, 300 silver phiale, 1,000 talents of silver coins, numerous garments and many other beautiful gifts if he would obtain a pardon for his life and the kingdom of Babylon from Artaios. The eunuch went to the king and pleaded a lot, as he was greatly honored, and said that Nanaros did not deserve to be put to death since he did not kill Parsondes, but rather he retaliated against a man who had insulted and injured him greatly. "Even if he is worthy of death, my lord, nonetheless grant me this favor and a reprieve on his behalf. He will give you a lot of gold and silver and will make recompense of 100 talents of silver to Parsondes." The king was persuaded and sent his decision to Nanaros who prostrated himself in obeisance. Parsondes, however, shook his head and said, "May whoever first discovered gold for the human race be cursed; for, it is because of this that I am now ridiculed by a Babylonian." The eunuch sensing he was taking it hard said, "My good man, stop being so angry, listen to me and become a friend to Nanaros because this is the wish of our master." However, Parsondes waited for an opportunity to exact revenge on the eunuch and Nanaros. He eventually saw his chance and had his revenge.

He examines this in his work *On Strategies*.

- **F6c) Suda s.v. ἐξεκεκλήκει[L]:** ἐξεκεκλήκει (he has called out): He rose from the dinner table. When night fell he summoned the servants of Nanaros.
- **F6d) Suda s.v. σφοδροῦ [L]:** σφοδροῦ (excessive): flashy, extravagant: While the drinking was excessive, Parsondes, waiting in ambush, drank only a little and ordered the servants to pour a lot for them.
- **F7) Anon. De Mul. 2:** Zarinaia: When her husband and brother, Cydraios, the king of the Saka, died, she married Mermeros, the ruler of the Parthian lands. When the Persian king invaded, she fought, was wounded and fled. As Stryangeios pursued her, she approached him as a suppliant and avoided death. A little while later, her husband held Stryangeios captive and wanted to execute him, but Zarinaia begged that he be spared and, failing to win her husband over, freed some of the captives they had with them and killed Mermeros. She then handed control of her country over to the Persians and made a friendly alliance with them, according to Ctesias.
- **F7b) Tzetz. Chil. XII. 893-898 [L]:** Know well that there is the tribe of the Saka who invented the shield and, according to Ctesias and countless others, whose women fight alongside their men while on horseback. Long ago a Median man named Stryangaios knocked a Sakidian woman from her horse.

- **F7c) Suda s.v. ἐπρουτάνευσε [L]:** ἐπρουτάνευσε (he has put forward): He has offered, he has provided. "She sent gifts in order to secure a friendship and alliance which Stryangaios had proposed.
- **F8a) Demetr. *De Eloc.* 213:** A Median man named Stryangeios knocked a Sakidian woman from her horse (for the women of the Saka fight in battle like the Amazons), but when he saw that she was young and beautiful, he changed his mind and chose to spare her life. When a treaty had been concluded, he fell in love with her, but when his feelings went unrequited, he decided to starve himself to death after writing a letter to the woman rebuking her in the following way: "I saved you and you are alive because of me, but now I am ruined because of you."
- **F8b) P. Oxy 2330 s. II<sup>p</sup>:** (...?) that you left behind pollution. He then said, "Come now, I will at least write a letter to Zarinaia", and he wrote:  

Stryangaios to Zarinaia:  
I saved you and because of me you are still alive, but now I am ruined because of you and I have killed myself since you did not want to make me happy. However, I did not choose these troubles and this love, but Love destroyed me, for this god is the same for you and all of mankind. Whenever he approaches someone favorably, he grants that person the greatest pleasures and bestows upon him many other benefits, but whenever he grows angry, like he did with me now, he stirs a lot of trouble and finally ruins and destroys someone. I give as evidence my own death; for, I, calling no curse upon your head, will make the most righteous prayer on your behalf. If you had treated me right...
- **F8c) Nic. Damas. (*Exc. De Virtut.* p. 335.20 Büttner – Wobst = *FGrH* 90 F5) [L]:**  
[Nicolaus says] that after the death of Marmaros, the king of the Saka, Stryangaios was secretly gripped with passion for Zarinaia who likewise was in love with him. When he approached the city of Rhoxanake where the palace of the Saka is located, Zarinaia met him and, as she was very happy to see him, she greeted Stryangaios with a kiss while everyone was watching, climbed aboard his chariot and accompanied him to the palace conversing along the way; she also welcomed the magnificent army which had accompanied him. After this, Stryangaios went to his own quarters, groaned of his love for Zarinaia, and, growing impatient, confided in the most trustworthy of the eunuchs who had accompanied him. With words of encouragement the eunuch advised him to cast aside his shyness and confess his love to Zarinaia. Thus convinced Stryangaios leapt up and went to her. Although he was shyly hesitating, sighing and blushing, her warm greeting gave him the resolve to tell her how he was burning with desire and powerful love for her. However, she gently rejected him saying that it was an embarrassing and damaging matter for her, but it would be more scandalous and detrimental to him since he was already married to Rhoitaia, the daughter of Astibaras, who was said to be more beautiful than Zarinaia and all other women. She added that he should not only be courageous in battle, but also in these circumstances when something assails his heart and not to suffer for a long time for the sake of a short-lived pleasure, the sort of which one gets from concubines, if Rhoitaia should find out. So, she said that after he drops this request, he can ask whatever else he wants, for she would deny him nothing.

Upon hearing this, he kept silent for a longtime and then, kindly bidding her farewell, departed and, growing more depressed, lamented his situation to the eunuch. Finally, after writing a letter on parchment, he made the eunuch swear an oath that he would deliver it to Zarinaia only after Stryangaïos had died without saying anything beforehand. The letter said: "I saved you and I am the reason for your present prosperity; however, you have killed me by depriving me of all joy. If you have done this justly, then I hope that you meet with good fortune in all your endeavors, but if you have acted unjustly, then I pray that you experience the same suffering as I have, for you have advised me to become such as I am now." After writing this letter, he placed it under his pillow and demanded his sword so he could courageously depart for Hades. But the eunuch...

- F8d) Nic. Damas. (*Exc. de Insid.* p.23.23 de Boor = *FGrH* 90 F66) [L]:** [Nicolaus says] that in Asia when the king of the Medes died, his son Astyages received the empire who, tradition has it, was the most noble after Arbaces. During his reign, supreme power transferred from the Medes to the Persians for the following reasons: (2) the Medes had a custom that any poor man who, due to hunger, submits himself to a rich man so he can be fed and clothed, is considered equal to this man's slave. If the one who receives the pauper cannot sufficiently provide for him, then the poor man can go to another.

(3) A certain young lad by the name of Cyrus, a Mardian by birth, approached a royal servant who managed the palace decorators. Cyrus was the son of Atradates, who, on account of his poverty, was a thief, and whose wife, Argoste, the mother of Cyrus, lived as a goat-herder.

(4) So Cyrus submitted himself to the royal servant in order to be maintained and was diligent in cleaning the palace. The overseer gave him better clothes and transferred him from the attendants outside the palace to the interior decorators who worked near the king and introduced him to the manager. The overseer was harsh and often whipped Cyrus so he was transferred to the lamp carriers. The manager of the lamp carriers liked Cyrus and brought him close to the king to be one of his personal lamp-carriers. (5) Since he was popular with the men, Cyrus was transferred to Artembares, the overseer of the wine-pourers and personal handler of the king's drinking cup, who eagerly welcomed him and asked him to pour wine for the table-guests of the king. A short while later, while Artembares was watching him serving so well and performing his duties so elegantly, the king asked Artembares where the young man came from who poured so well. He replied, "My lord, he is your slave, a Persian by birth from the Mardi, who surrendered himself to me in order to avoid going hungry." (6) Artembares was an old man and one day when he was ill with fever he asked the king to be sent home until recovered. He told the king, "This young man (indicating Cyrus) of whom you are so fond, will pour wine in my place. If he should soundly pour wine for you, my lord, I will adopt him, although I am a eunuch." Astyages agreed to this proposal and the eunuch departed after giving Cyrus many orders and embracing him like a son. And so, Cyrus stood near the king, gave him his phiale, and poured wine day and night while displaying sound judgment and courage. (7) Artembares eventually died from his illness after adopting Cyrus, and so Astyages gave him all of Artembares' possessions, as he would to a son, along with many gifts and as a result, Cyrus became powerful and his name was known all over.

(8) Astyages had a beautiful daughter of noble character whom he gave in marriage to Spitamas the Mede along with all of Media as a dowry. (9) Cyrus sent for his parents, Atradates and Argoste, from the Mardians who arrived to find that their son had become a

powerful man. His mother recounted to him a dream she had in which she was pregnant with Cyrus at the time when she as a goat-herder for the Mardians and decided to sleep in a sanctuary. She said, "When I was pregnant with you, Cyrus, I seemed to urinate so much that it was like water flowing from a large river and there was enough urine to flood all of Asia while flowing out as far as the sea." After hearing her story, Cyrus' father suggested that they defer the matter to the Chaldaeans in Babylon and so Cyrus summoned the wisest of the order and recounted everything to him. The Chaldaean responded that this was a great omen showing that Cyrus would hold the highest office in Asia; however, it was necessary to keep it a secret so Astyages would not hear of it, otherwise "he will savagely kill both you and me, the interpreter of such an omen." They swore an oath to each other that they would not tell anyone about this great vision, which was like no other. (10) Much later, as Cyrus was growing more powerful, he made his father satrap of Persia and his mother the most prominent among Persian women in terms of wealth and power. (11) At that time the Cadusians were enemies of the king but their chief, Onaphernes, betrayed his people, sided with the king, and sent a messenger to Astyages asking for a trustworthy man with whom he could deliberate about the circumstances of his betrayal. The king sent Cyrus to assist in the deliberations but ordered him to return to Ecbatana in forty days. The dream interpreter bolstered his confidence and encouraged Cyrus to go the Cadusians brimming with courage. (12) It occurred to Cyrus, inasmuch as he was a man of noble and generous character, that with divine help the Persians could revolt, try to remove Astyages from power, and trust in the Babylonian who was so knowledgeable in divination. They encouraged each other: the Babylonian told Cyrus that he was destined to depose Astyages and seize his kingdom, a prophecy the Babylonian knew well; Cyrus replied to the Babylonian that if the prophecy comes to pass and he becomes king, then he will hold the seer in the highest honor. He also recalled how Arbaces earlier removed Sardanapallus and assumed his power: "Although the Medes who supported Arbaces were not stronger than the Persians, nor was Arbaces himself wiser than I am, fortune and fate have already shown me the future as they did him." (13) As he was contemplating this, Cyrus entered Cadusian territory and encountered a man who had been whipped carrying dung in a basket. Regarding it as an omen, he related it to the Babylonian who instructed him to find out who the man was and where he came from. When Cyrus questioned the man he replied that he was a Persian named Oibaras which greatly pleased him because Oibaras means 'bringer of good news' in Greek. The Babylonian informed him that this was an excellent symbol: "He is a fellow citizen of Persia and carries horse manure which is a symbol of wealth and power as the name indicates." Cyrus immediately took the man who accepted his invitation to join them. (14) After this, Cyrus came to Onaphernes in Cadusia and concluded the negotiations over the betrayal before returning to Media. He honored Oibaras with a horse, a Persian robe, and a retinue and, seeing that he was a man of sound judgment, kept him close by because the Babylonian had requested to begin deliberations with him, and over time, Cyrus befriended him making him a member of his council. As they were talking one day, it was mentioned that he was upset to see the Persians being mistreated by the Medes, although they were in no way naturally inferior. (15) Oibaras then said, "Cyrus, is there no noble man with lofty aspirations in these times who is willing to overthrow the Medes for thinking it right to rule people more powerful than they are?" To which Cyrus replied, "Surely there has to be." Oibaras countered, "Perhaps there is such a man but he is terribly frightened and thus rendered powerless." Cyrus then tentatively asked, "If a bold man should appear, how could

he accomplish such a feat?" Oibaras answered, "First, he would gather all of those Cadusians who would be eager to join him since they are fond of the Persians and greatly despise the Medes; then, he would have to incite the Persians and arm about 400,000 of them, for they would be more than willing because of what they have suffered at the hands of the Medes; furthermore, they are well adapted to their rocky and mountainous land so that if the Medes should want to campaign there, they will hardly be able to escape." Cyrus then asked, "If a man should arise and do this, will you join him in his risky endeavor?" To which Oibaras replied, "By Zeus! If only you would be the one to undertake this enterprise, since your father commands the Persians and you are the most inviolable and capable; but if you don't do it, then perhaps someone else will come forward."

(16) After this conversation, Cyrus saw that Oibaras was a sensible and courageous man who placed all of his hope in him and so revealed his entire plan to him and sought his council. He agreed with Cyrus and, with encouraging words, soundly advised him to send a message to his father Atradates urging him to arm the Persians on the pretext of being ready to assist the king against the Cadusians, but with the real intention of revolting. He then advised Cyrus to request that Astyages send him to Persia for a few days so that he could make votive offerings on behalf of the king's safety and his father who was weak from an illness. "If you do this, then you must show courage throughout the entire mission. It is in no way a terrible thing, Cyrus, to risk one's life while undertaking great exploits and, if necessary, to suffer the same fate that awaits those who do nothing." (17) Cyrus took great pleasure in the nobility of Oibaras and encouraged him by recounting his mother's dream and the Babylonian's interpretation of it. Oibaras, being a shrewd man, roused Cyrus and urged him to keep an eye on the Babylonian to make sure he would not divulge the dream to the king warning him, "Unless you resolve to kill him which would be the best option." And Cyrus replied, "But to do so would be an act of ill omen." (18) From then on, Oibaras and the Babylonian dined and socialized with Cyrus. Since the Persian was afraid that the Babylonian might tell Astyages about the dream, by night he pretended to be performing ancestral sacrifices to Selene and asked Cyrus for sacrificial victims, wine, servants, couches and other provisions; he also asked Cyrus that the servants be ordered to obey him. Cyrus then gave the order but did not partake of the sacrifice planned by Oibaras, who made all the preparations well into the night including the deep bed of straw on which they were going to feast; then he made all the sacrifices, entertained the Babylonian and got him drunk. After making a bed over a trench as if to lie on it, he pushed the Babylonian into the pit below and threw a slave down there with him. (19) At dawn when Cyrus set out, he was joined by Oibaras. Shortly afterwards, Cyrus was looking for the man and Oibaras at first replied that when he left the Babylonian was still sleeping off his hangover. However, when Cyrus grew angry, he finally revealed the truth that he killed the Babylonian because he saw this as the only way to keep Cyrus and his children safe. Cyrus was very displeased and, growing ever angrier, refused to admit Oibaras into his presence, but soon changed his mind and welcomed him back into his council. When the wife of the Babylonian enquired as to the whereabouts of her husband, he said that he was killed by brigands and that he had buried him.

(20) After this, when Cyrus returned to the king, Oibaras reminded him of their plans and encouraged him to carry them out; namely: he was to send word to Persia, arm those of military age, and request that Astyages allow him a few days to make offerings and tend to his ailing father. (21) Cyrus was persuaded and since the weapons were ready, asked the king to be sent to Persia so that he could sacrifice on his behalf and at the same time see his

father who was in poor health; the king, however, refused with the excuse of his attachment to him wishing rather to keep him close by. When Cyrus felt discouraged and revealed to Oibaras that he had failed, Oibaras lifted his spirits and urged him to wait a few days before repeating his request to Astyages and this time he would succeed; however, it was necessary to serve the king even more enthusiastically than ever and to use an intermediary when making his request the second time rather than do it in person.

(22) Cyrus then went to the king and asked the most trusted of the eunuchs, when he had the chance, to make a request to the king for his departure. And so, when he saw the king in a drunken and jovial mood, Cyrus indicated to the eunuch to address the king with these words: "Cyrus, your slave, begs that you grant him permission to make the sacrifice which he wished for on your behalf and to tend to his ailing father." Astyages summoned Cyrus with a smile and granted him his wish setting a five month time limit, but ordered him to return on the sixth month. (23) After making obeisance, Cyrus appointed Tiridates as royal wine-pourer in his stead until his return. Then he came to Oibaras full of joy who ordered him to depart immediately taking his servants with him; and since he was himself a caretaker, he made all the preparations by night and at first light they set out for Persia.

(24) The wife of the Babylonian who interpreted the dream for Cyrus previously heard from her husband, while he was alive, about the vision which Cyrus mentioned to him. When her husband died, she married his brother and one night while in bed with him he told her that Cyrus, who had grown powerful, was on his way to Persia. She thereupon told him about the dream and how her husband had interpreted it as a sign that Cyrus was going to be king of Persia. (25) Early the next morning, this man fearlessly approached Astyages and, using a eunuch as an intermediary, requested an audience with the king and revealed how he heard from his wife that her dead husband, a prophet, had interpreted a vision for Cyrus as a sign that he would be king and, on account of this, he was now on his way to Persia. He also said that only recently he heard about it himself from his wife, and recounted every facet of the dream and its significance. Astyages grew very anxious and asked the Babylonian what he should do and he replied that the king should have Cyrus killed, after recalling him as soon as possible, because this is his only safe course of action.

(26) Astyages dismissed the Babylonian and reflected on what he had heard. As evening approached, while drinking he summoned his concubines who were dancers and cithara players, and one of them sang the following: "The Lion that had a boar in its grasp released it into the copse, where he became more powerful, and in a fierce battle, the weaker subdued the stronger." When she sang this song, Astyages took it to heart as if the words were directed at him and immediately sent 300 cavalry troops after Cyrus with the order to summon him back and if he refused, they were to bring back his head.

(27) They set out and when they reached Cyrus, disclosed the demands of Astyages. Cyrus, either because he was quick witted or, perhaps, on the advice of Oibaras, replied, "Of course, how is it possible to refuse the summons of my master? But for now, dine with us and let us go to him in the morning." They agreed while he carved several roasted cattle and oxen in the Persian fashion and provided a feast for the cavalymen and got them drunk in the process. Meanwhile he had already dispatched one of his messengers to his father asking for 1,000 cavalry and 5,000 infantry to be sent to Hyrba, another city lying along his route, and to arm the rest of the Persians as quickly as possible, pretending that all this was done on the king's orders, for he did not reveal his true intentions. (28) After the feast when the cavalymen had fallen asleep, Cyrus and Oibaras mounted their horses, and set out. It was

still night when they reached Hyrba and Cyrus armed his men arraying his father's troops in battle formation while personally taking up position on the right with Oibaras on the left. (29) In the morning the men dispatched by Astyages recovered from their hangover and, after realizing what happened, pursued Cyrus to Hyrba where they arrived to find him with an assembled army arranged in battle formation, and engaged him. Cyrus, at first, showed great courage killing, with the help of three Persians, 56 cavalry men. The rest fled back to the king and reported everything that happened.

(30) The king hit his thigh and said, "Alas! How often I came to the realization that it is not right for evil men to fare well, but for all that, I was captured by eloquence, I who received Cyrus, that lowly goat-herder of Mardian descent, and created my own undoing; but even now, he will not achieve all of his objectives." He then immediately summoned his generals and ordered them to gather an army. When a force of 1 million infantry, 200,000 cavalry and 3,000 chariots was assembled, he set out for Persia. (31) However, Atradates, who was by now privy to everything, had equipped an army totaling 300,000 peltasts, 50,000 cavalry and 100 scythed chariots; once assembled, Cyrus addressed them all.

(He examines this in *On Public Speeches*)

(32) Cyrus and his father marshaled the army and appointed Oibaras as general, a sharp and energetic man who first placed garrisons in the narrow passes and on the highest mountains, then transferred most of the population from the un-walled cities into those which were well fortified and, when the opportunity presented itself, constructed citadels. (33) Soon after, Astyages arrived with his army, burned down the abandoned cities, and sent messengers to Cyrus and Atradates, his father, issuing threats, mocking their former state of poverty, and ordering them to surrender to him, for they would only be bound with thick fetters! "But if you are captured," he said, "then you will die horribly as villains." Cyrus responded, "You don't know the power of the gods Astyages, since you don't realize that the goat-herders are encouraged by them and we will follow through on to the end. Because you treated us well when the gods permitted it, we urge you to remove your force and let the Persians be free, since they are stronger than the Medes, and not to lose everything in your vain attempt to enslave them." The envoys reported this message to Astyages (34) who, in a rage, ordered his army to enter into battle and personally mounted a horse with 20,000 spearmen at his side. Cyrus was marshaled opposite him stationing Atradates on the right flank and Oibaras on the left while he personally held the middle with the best Persian fighters. A terrible battle ensued in which Cyrus and the rest of the Persians killed very many men. Astyages was annoyed and while sitting on his throne said, "Alas! Those terebinth-eating Persians are excellent fighters!" He then dispatched envoys to his generals detailing to them what they are going to suffer unless they defeat the enemy.

(35) The Persians were overwhelmed by the sheer numbers of their enemy as one band followed another in their attack. They were repulsed and withdrew to the city in front of which the battle was being fought. Cyrus and Oibaras encouraged them as they entered the city because they killed more of the enemy and advised them to send the women and children to Pasargadae (the highest mountain in the area) while they planned to launch an attack on the following day and seal their victory: "We are all faced with the prospect of dying whether in victory or defeat, but it is better to suffer this fate, should it be necessary, as liberators of our fatherland." As he said this, a great hatred and anger for the Medes welled up inside all the Persians and at dawn they flung open their gates and ran out for an attack with Cyrus and Oibaras leading the charge while Atradates guarded the wall along with the other elders. The

countless battle-lines of Astyages marched against them with armed infantry and cavalry and, on his order, surrounded the city with 100,000 fighting men, captured it and sent a seriously wounded Atradates to the king. After a noble fight, Cyrus' men fled to Pasargadae where the women and children were.

(37) Astyages, when the father of Cyrus was brought to him, said, "You were a good satrap for me and I honored you as such, but this is how you repaid my generosity with your son." And the old man, already on the verge of death, replied, "I do not know, my lord, which of the gods filled my son with this madness, but don't abuse me, for I will soon breathe my last breath." Astyages then took pity on him and said, "I will not harm you, for I know that if your son obeyed you, then he would not have done this, and so I will grant you full burial honors since you did not agree with him in his madness." (38) He died soon after and they gave him an honorable and proper burial after which Astyages set out for Pasargadae through the narrow passes. All around there were smooth cliffs and a high ruptured mountain while Oibaras guarded the passes around the center with ten thousand armed soldiers, making the prospect of coming through hopeless.

(39) After realizing his predicament, Astyages ordered 100,000 men to surround the mountain until they found a way up, crept up to the top, and conquered it; consequently, Oibaras and Cyrus fled by night with all their soldiers to another mountain, which was lower lying than the first. (40) The army of Astyages, following their tracks, pursued them right between the mountains where they attacked and fought bravely while ascending the mountain. Everywhere there were cliffs, woods, and continuous stretches of wild olive trees. The Persians fought still more bravely with Cyrus attacking in one area and Oibaras in another; the latter reminded his men of their women and children, old fathers and mothers, and how it would be shameful to abandon them to the Medes to be abused and cut to pieces. Invigorated by these words they charged down shouting and pelting them with immense stones because they lacked arrows and drove the enemy from the mountain.

(41) Somehow Cyrus came to his ancestral home where he lived as a goat-herder in his youth, set camp, and made a sacrifice in it. After finding flour and bay-wood and cypress, he lit a fire by rubbing two sticks together as a poverty-stricken tired man would do.

Immediately on his right side lightning flashed followed by thunder and Cyrus prostrated himself while auspicious birds sat on his house indicating that he would arrive in Pasargadae.

(42) After this, they ate dinner and slept on the mountain and on the next day, trusting in ominous birds, they went down to face the enemy who were creeping up the mountain and fought a long, courageous battle. Astyages stationed 50,000 men next to the mountain and gave the order to kill anyone who was afraid to ascend or who fled back toward them, and so by compulsion the Medes and their allies went up to face the Persians, (43) who were struggling against the numbers of the enemy and fled to the peak of the mountain where their women were. These women exposed themselves and shouted, "Where are you going, you cowards? Are you going to enter the place from which you came?" For this reason, when the Persian king comes to Pasargadae he gives gold to the Persian women at a value equivalent to 20 attic drachmas each. (44) The Persians, being ashamed at what they saw and heard, turned back to face the enemy and in one motion charged forcing them off the mountain and killing no less than 60,000 men. Astyages, however, did not give up the siege.

(He examines this in *On Brave Deeds and Strategies*)

(45) Much happened in the meantime until Cyrus entered the tent, sat upon the throne of Astyages, and took up his scepter. The Persians shouted their approval while Oibaras



coronated him and said, "You are more worthy to wear this than Astyages because a god has bestowed it upon you for your virtue and the Persians are more worthy to rule over the Medes." Under the command of Oibaras, who appointed the officers, they brought the entire treasury back to Pasargadae and the Persians also profited immensely by looting the private tents of the Medes.

(46) The report of Astyages' flight and defeat soon reached everyone as if his power were removed by the gods causing the people and nations to revolt. The chief of the Hyrcarnians, Artasyras, brought 50,000 soldiers to Cyrus and prostrated himself saying that he had another even larger force prepared should Cyrus give the order. Then came the Parthians, Saka, Bactrians, and all the others one after another, as each nation wanted to reach Cyrus first until Astyages was left with only a few men and before long, when Cyrus made an attack and was easily victorious, Astyages was taken to him as a prisoner.

## Books VII – XI

- **F9) Phot. *Bibl.* 72 p. 36a 9 – 37a 25:** [Ctesias] says early on that Cyrus was in no way related to Astyages, whom calls Astyigas, and that he fled at the sight of Cyrus in Ecbatana and was hidden in the ram heads of the palace halls by his daughter Amytis and her husband Spitamas. When Cyrus appeared he ordered Oibaras to torture not only Spitamas and Amytis, but also their children Spitakes and Megabernes, enquiring into the whereabouts of Astyigas; however, he gave himself up so the children would not be tortured on his behalf. When caught, he was bound in heavy chains by Oibaras but was freed shortly after by Cyrus himself and honored as a father. His daughter, Amytis, who for a while was honored like a mother by Cyrus, finally became his wife since Spitamas, her husband, was put to death for lying about Astyigas when Cyrus was looking for him. This what Ctesias says about Cyrus but his account is different from that of Herodotus.

(2) [Ctesias also says] that Cyrus went to war with the Bactrians and the battle was indecisive, but when the Bactrians learned that Astyigas had become the father of Cyrus and Amytis his mother and wife, they willingly surrendered themselves to Amytis and Cyrus.

(3) He also describes how Cyrus campaigned against the Saka capturing Amorges, the king of the Saka and husband of Sparethre who, after the capture of her husband, gathered the army and continued the war against Cyrus at the head of a force of 300,000 men and 200,000 women. She defeated Cyrus and captured alive, amongst many others, Parmises, the brother of Amytis, and his three children for whom Amorges was later freed in a prisoner exchange.

(4) Ctesias next recounts the campaign of Cyrus against Croesus and the city of Sardis with Amorges as an ally; he describes how on the advice of Oibaras, wooden statues of Persians were placed on the top of the battlements striking fear into the inhabitants and by these tactics the city was captured. He also mentions how before the city was taken, the son of Croesus was given over as a hostage after a divine vision deceived him and how, when Croesus plotted a deception, his son was killed right before his eyes and the boy's mother, seeing the accident occur, threw herself off the city wall and died. (5) He says that when the city was taken, Croesus fled to its temple of Apollo on the acropolis where he was put in chains three times by Cyrus and for a third time he was freed by something invisible despite the fact that the temple was sealed shut and closely guarded by Oibaras. Those remaining loyal to Croesus were decapitated after allegations of treason because they supposedly tried to free their king, who was then captured in the palace, bound more securely, and, being

freed once again after lightning and thunder struck, was finally pardoned by Cyrus. After this, Cyrus honored Croesus by granting him the great city of Barene near Ecbatana along with 5,000 cavalry and 10,000 peltasts, javelin men, and archers.

(6) Ctesias then relates how Cyrus sent the eunuch Petesakas, who was very influential with the king, to Persia to bring back Astyigas from the Barcanians, for he and Astyigas' daughter, Amytis, were both eager to see their father; however, Oibaras plotted with Petesakas to abandon Astyigas in a desolate place and leave him to die of hunger and thirst, which is exactly what happened. After the crime was revealed in a dream, Amytis repeatedly asked for Petesakas to be handed over to her for retribution and finally Cyrus gave in and handed him over: the eunuch had his eyes cut out and skin flayed before being impaled. Oibaras feared that he would suffer the same fate (although Cyrus assured him that he was not going to hand him over to such a fate) and starved himself for ten days before succumbing to death. Astyigas was buried with magnificent honors as his body had been kept untouched in the desolate place of his abandonment; for, according to Ctesias, lions guarded it until Petesakas came and took it back.

(7) Cyrus campaigned against the Derbikes during the reign of Amoraioi. By placing their elephants in an ambush, the Derbikes repelled the Persian cavalry causing Cyrus himself to fall off his horse at which point an Indian – for the Indians were fighting alongside the Derbikes and supplied their elephants – hit Cyrus after he fell with a javelin below the hip to the bone inflicting a fatal wound; however, Cyrus was taken up before dying and brought back to camp by his servants. Each side lost 10,000 men in the battle. After hearing about Cyrus, Amorges came with all speed at the head of 20,000 cavalry from the Saka; however, after hostilities resumed, Amoraioi was killed along with his two children in a major victory for the Persian and Sakidian contingent in which 30,000 Derbikes and 9,000 Persians perished. In this way the land came under the dominion of Cyrus, (8) who, on his deathbed, appointed his eldest son, Cambyses, as king and made Tanyoxarkes, the younger son, master of the Bactrians, Choramnians, Parthians, and Carmanians allowing him to have these lands exempt from tribute. As for the children of Spitamas, he gave Spitakes the satrapy of the Derbikians and Megabernes was made satrap of the Barkanians; he then gave the order to obey their mother in all matters. He made Amorges their friend ratified with a handshake and pledges of good faith and wished all things good to those who maintained goodwill towards one another while he put a curse on anyone who would take unjust action. After making these declarations, he passed away three days after the day he was injured, having ruled for thirty years. The 11<sup>th</sup> book of the history of Ctesias ends with these events.

- **9a) Tzet. *Chil.*I.82-100:** Ctesias the physician, son of Ctesiochus, after sailing out from the Cypriot city of Cnidos, was captured by Artaxerxes upon arriving as an ally to Cyrus and spent 17 years in Persia as a result of which he composed his *Persika* in twenty-three books. He says that Cyrus, after overthrowing Astyages, appointed the latter as chief of the Barkanians. He describes how in Sardis Oibaras, the great general under Cyrus, placed wooden statues on long poles during the night and threw the Lydians into disorder allowing the city to be taken; soon after Croesus was captured. Cyrus sent Petesakas to Astyages so that upon his arrival he could see him and Amytis, the daughter of Astyages, who perceived that Petesakas, that wretched first eunuch, was plotting against her father and so, after cutting out his eyes and flaying him alive, she impaled him on a stake leaving his body for the birds to feast on.

- **F9b) Theon Progymn. II.(II 118.21 Sp):** These are descriptions of their customs, their equipment, arms, and war machines, and how each is prepared... In his ninth book, Ctesias says, "As dawn approached, the Lydians saw from a distance the statues of Persians on long wooden poles alongside their acropolis, causing them to turn and flee thinking that the acropolis was full of Persians and already captured."
- **F9c) Polyæn. Strat. 7.6.10:** When Cyrus was besieging Sardis, he set on top of the city walls many poles of equal length holding bearded statues dressed in Persian clothing with quivers on their backs and bows in their hands which he erected during the night placing them above the walls of the citadel and then made an attack on another part of the city at daybreak. The army of Croesus was fighting off Cyrus' attack when some of them, turning around and seeing from a distance the statues above the acropolis, cried out. Seized with fear from the belief that their acropolis had already fallen to the Persians, they all opened the gates and fled in every direction; this is how Cyrus captured Sardis by force.
- **F9d) Steph. Byz. s.v. βαρῆνη [L]:** Barene: A Median city near Agbatane.
- **F10a) Apollon. Hist. Mir. 20:** Ctesias says in the tenth book of his *Persika* that there were certain camels in the [Caspian] region which had hair similar to Milesian wool in terms of its softness and it was used to make clothes for the priests and other potentates.
- **F10b) Aelian. N.A. 17.34:** Caspian goats were bright white, small in size, lacking horns, and snub-nosed. The camels were very numerous, the size of the largest horses, and were covered with hair that was soft enough to be compared to Milesian wool, and thus make the clothes for priests and the most rich and powerful Caspians.
- **F11) Steph. Byz. s.v. Δυρβαῖοι:** Dyrbaians: a nation that extended to Bactria and India. Ctesias says in the tenth book of his *Persika*, "The land of the Dyrbaians lays to the south extending all the way to Bactria and India. Its men are blessed, wealthy, and very just, never committing any crime or killing anybody; if one of them should find gold, a cloak, silver, or anything else in the street, he would not move it. These men do not bake bread or eat it or have the custom <...> unless for the sake of a ritual. They make their barley-groats very fine just like the Greeks and eat clumps of grass."
- **F12) Steph. Byz. s.v. Χωραμναῖοι:** The Choramnians: a Persian nation of savage men. Ctesias says in the tenth book of his *Persika*, "The savage man is so quick that he can chase and capture deer." He goes on to say much more about them.

## Books XII - XIII

- **F13) Phot. Bibl. 72 p. 37a 26 – 40a 5:** (9) Book 12 begins with the reign of Cambyses who, once he became king, sent the body of his father with the eunuch Bagapates to Persia to be buried and managed the rest as his father had ordained. During his reign, Artasyras the Hyrcarnian wielded the greatest power, and among the eunuchs Izabates, Aspadates, and Bagapates who gained great influence under the king's father after the death of Petesakas.

(10) Cambyses campaigned in Egypt and defeated Amyrtaios, the king of the Egyptians, when Kombaphis, the eunuch who had the greatest influence over the Egyptian king, betrayed the bridges and the rest of the Egyptian affairs so that he could become its governor. This is exactly what happened, for Cambyses made an agreement with him with the help of Izabates, the cousin of Kombaphis, and later in person. After capturing Amyrtaios alive, he treated him well but forced him back to Susa with 6,000 Egyptians of his own choice and made all of Egypt his subject. 50,000 Egyptians and 7,000 Persians died in the battle.

(11) A certain Magian named Sphendadates approached Cambyses falsely charging that Tanyoxarkes, the king's brother who had whipped him for wrong doing, was plotting against him and gave as proof of the revolt that if summoned Tanyoxarkes would not come.

Cambyses then sent for his brother who put off coming because another obligation demanded his presence causing the Magus to continue all the more openly with his slander. Amytis, the king's mother, suspecting the aims of the Magus, warned her son Cambyses not to trust him and he replied that he would not be persuaded but in fact he was. (12) When Cambyses sent a message for the third time to his brother, the latter came and greeted him affectionately, but the king cared for nothing other than killing him and was eager to put his plans into action without the knowledge of Amytis. The action was accomplished because the Magus, who was complicit in the plot with the king, came up with the following plan: since the Magus strongly resembled Tanyoxarkes, he advised the king to stage in public his own fake execution by beheading under the pretext that he had slandered the king's brother. However, Tanyoxarkes was secretly put to death and the Magus donned his robes making everyone think that the man in the garment was the king's brother. This is what happened:

Tanyoxarkes drank the blood of a bull and died as a result; the Magus then put on his clothes and assumed his identity. (13) No one noticed this for a long time except Artasyras, Bagapates, and Izabates who were the only ones whom Cambyses trusted with this matter. Cambyses summoned Labyxos, the most influential of Tanyoxarkes' eunuchs, along with the rest of them, revealed the Magus sitting down in the posture of Tanyoxarkes, and asked, "Do you think this is Tanyoxarkes?" Labyxos was amazed and responded, "Who else should I think he is?" so similar was the Magus in appearance; then he was sent off to Bactria and managed everything under the identity of Tanyoxarkes. After five years had passed, Amytis was informed of what had happened by the eunuch Tibethes whom the Magus had beaten up. She asked Cambyses for Sphendadates but he refused. She then uttered a curse, drank poison, and died. (14) Cambyses made a sacrifice but when the animals' throats were cut, no blood poured out and he became disheartened; then Rhoxane bore to him a headless child causing him to grow more disillusioned and the Magi told him that the portents signified that he would fail to leave behind an heir to the throne. One night his mother appeared before him and threatened him for the murder he committed causing him again to lose heart. When he came to Babylon, he passed the time by carving a twig with a large knife and he accidentally cut a gash in his thigh to the muscle and died eleven days later after ruling for 18 years.

(15) Before Cambyses died Bagapates and Artasyras planned for the Magus to rule which he did after the king passed away. Izabates went to Persia with the body of Cambyses but returned while the Magus was ruling under the name of Tanyoxarkes. After disclosing everything to the army and publicly exposing the Magus, he fled to a temple where he was seized and beheaded. (16) Then seven Persians nobles conspired against the Magus: these were Onophas, Idernes, Narondabates, Mardonius, Barisses, Ataphernes, and Darius the son

of Hystaspes. After these men had given pledges to each other, Artasyras joined them as did Bagapates who possessed all the keys to the palace and through whose help the seven men entered the palace where they found the Magus lying with a Babylonian concubine. When he saw them, he leapt up and finding no weapons around (for Bagapates had secretly removed all of them) shattered a golden stool and fought with one of the legs but was finally cut down by the seven and died after ruling for seven months.

(17) Of the seven men, Darius became king when in accordance with an agreement they made, his was the first horse to neigh (through some contrivance and skill) as the sun rose in the east.

(18) The Persians celebrate a festival called the slaughter of the Magians for the day Sphendadates the Magus was killed.

(19) Darius ordered a tomb to be constructed for him on a smooth hill and the order was carried out. Although he wanted to see it, he was prevented from doing so by the Chaldaeans. His parents wanted to ascend the hill but when the priests who were hoisting them up saw snakes, they became frightened and released the ropes dropping and killing them both. Darius grieved excessively and beheaded the 40 men in charge of working the lift.

(20) Ctesias says that Darius ordered Ariaramnes, the satrap of Cappadocia, to cross over into Scythia and take the men and women prisoner. He made the crossing with thirty penteconters and took his prisoners including Marsagetes, the brother of the king of the Scythians, whom he found in a bad state chained up by his own brother. Skytharbes, the Scythian king, in his anger, wrote an abusive letter to Darius and received a response in kind.

(21) After gathering an army of 800,000 and bridging the Bosphoros and the Ister, Darius crossed into Scythia and after a journey of 15 days the two sides exchanged volleys of arrows and the Scythians were victorious. Consequently, Darius fled and crossed the bridges and in his haste tore them down before his entire army had crossed over. Then, Skytharbes executed the 80,000 troops stranded in Europe. After crossing the bridge, Darius burned down the temples and houses of the Chalcedonians because they had considered tearing down the bridges on their side and because they destroyed the altar which Darius had set up, as he was passing, in the name of Zeus Diabaterios.

(22) Then Datis, on his way from the Pontus leading a Median fleet, ravaged the islands and Greece. However, at Marathon Miltiades met him, defeated the barbarian force, and after Datis himself was killed, refused to hand his body over to the Persians when they asked for it. (23) Darius returned to Persia and after making sacrifice, fell ill for 30 days before dying at the age of 92 having ruled for 31 years. Artasyras also died and Bagapates sat next to the grave of Darius for seven years before he died.

(24) His son Xerxes became king and Artapanos, the son of Artasyras, became as powerful as his father was during the reign of Darius and the elder Mardonius was equally influential; the most powerful of the eunuchs was Natakas. Xerxes married Amestris, the daughter of Onaphas, with whom he had a son named Dariaios and two years later another named Hystaspes and later a third named Artaxerxes; they had two daughters named Amytis, after her grandmother, and Rhodogyne.

(25) Xerxes campaigned against the Greeks because the Chalcedonians tried to tear down the bridge, as has already been stated, and because they destroyed the altar erected by Darius, and when the Athenians killed Datis, they refused to hand over his body. (26) First he went to Babylon because he wanted to see the grave of Belitanas which he did with the help of

Mardonius, but he did not succeed in filling the vat with oil as had been written. Xerxes had set out for Ecbatana when he learned that the Babylonians had revolted and killed Zopyros, his general. Ctesias gives a different account of this than Herodotus who only says about Zopyros that his mule gave birth; Ctesias, however, attributes the rest to Megabyzos who was the son-in-law of Xerxes by marriage to his daughter Amytis. And so Babylon was captured by Megabyzos and Xerxes granted him, amongst many other gifts, a golden mill-stone that weighed six talents which was the greatest royal gift a Persian could receive.

(27) Xerxes gathered a Persian army that numbered 800,000 men excluding chariots and 1,000 ships and invaded Greece after building a bridge at Abydos. Demaratus the Spartan was already there and joined him in the crossing and prevented his attack on Sparta. Xerxes attacked the Spartan general Leonides at Thermopylae with Artapanos who was leading a force of 10,000 men. The Persian contingent was massacred while only two or three Spartans were killed. Then he ordered another attack with 20,000 men who were again defeated. They were whipped into fighting, but even under the lash they were still defeated. On the next day, Xerxes gave the order to fight with 50,000 men and when he accomplished nothing, ceased hostilities. However, Thorax, a Thessalian, and the powerful of the Trachinians, Calliades and Timaphernes, arrived with their armies. Xerxes summoned them along with Demaratus and Hegeas the Ephesian and learned that he could not defeat the Spartans unless he surrounded them. With the two Trachinians as guides, a Persian army came through a narrow pass, 40,000 men in all, and came up behind the Spartans. Thus surrounded, the Spartans fought and died to a man. (28) Xerxes then dispatched an army to Plataea numbering 120,000 men under the leadership of Mardonius since the Thebans were urging Xerxes to attack the Plataeans. Pausanias the Spartan led the opposing force with 300 Spartans, 1,000 Perioikoi, and 6,000 men from other cities. The Persian army was overwhelmingly defeated and Mardonius was wounded and fled. (29) This Mardonius was sent by Xerxes to plunder the temple of Apollo where, according to Ctesias, he died in a heavy hailstorm causing Xerxes to be deeply saddened. (30) Xerxes then pushed on into Athens and the Athenians filled 110 triremes and fled to Salamis. Xerxes took the vacated city and burned everything except the Acropolis where there were still some men left who fought them back. In the end, they fled during the night and it too was burned up. Xerxes then went to the narrowest part of the straits on the side of Attica to a place called Heraklion and heaped up earth in mounds in the direction of Salamis with the intention of crossing over to the island on foot. Following the advice of Themistocles the Athenian and Aristides, archers were summoned from Crete who arrived in time. Then a naval battle followed between the Persians and the Greeks in which the Persian fleet numbering over 1,000 ships under the command of Onophas faced a Greek fleet of only 700 ships. The Greeks were victorious thanks to the advice and skill of Themistocles and Aristides, destroying 500 Persian ships and causing Xerxes to flee. 120,000 Persians died in all the subsequent battles. (31) Before crossing back to Asia and returning to Sardis, Xerxes sent Megabyzos to plunder the temple at Delphi, but when he refused, he dispatched Matakas the eunuch to insult Apollo and plunder everything. He did so and then returned to Xerxes.

(32) After Xerxes arrived in Persia from Babylon Megabyzos began spreading rumors of the infidelity of his own wife, Amytis, who, as has already been said, was the daughter of the king. She was then censured by her father and promised to remain chaste. (33) Artapanos who had great influence with Xerxes, plotted with the also very powerful eunuch Aspamitres to kill the king, a plan they followed through. They persuaded Artaxerxes, the king's son,

that Darius, the king's other son, had killed him. Darius arrived and was led into the home of Artaxerxes by Artapanos where amid screams and denials of the murder of his father, he was put to death.

- **13a) Athen. 13.10 p.560 DE:** According to Ctesias, Cambyses launched an expedition against Egypt for the sake of a woman. After hearing that Egyptian women surpassed all others in sexual prowess he sent a message to Amasis, the Egyptian king, asking to marry one of his daughters; but the king refused to give one of his own daughters fearing that she would not be treated as a wife but as a concubine. Instead he sent Neitetes, the daughter of Apries, who had been driven from the throne of Egypt after suffering a defeat against the Cyrenaeanes and was put to death by Amasis. Cambyses, meanwhile, was pleased with Neitetes but grew angry when he learned the entire story from her. As she wanted to exact vengeance for the murder of her father, she persuaded him to declare war on Egypt. Deinon in his *Persika* and Lycaeus of Naukratis in the third book of his *Egyptika* say that Neitetes was sent to Cyrus by Amasis, she became the mother of Cambyses, and he exacted vengeance for his mother by invading Egypt.
- **F13b) Ael. V.H. XIII.3 [L]:** When Xerxes the son of Darius excavated the ancient tomb of Belos, he found a crystalline sarcophagus containing oil in which the body was kept. The sarcophagus was not full but was missing about four fingers breadth along the rim. Lying next to the sarcophagus was a thick stele on which was written: "There will be nothing good for the one who opens the monument and does not fill the sarcophagus." After reading this, Xerxes became frightened and ordered oil to be poured in as quickly as possible, but it did not fill up. He again gave the order for oil to be poured in but once again it failed to increase the level until he gave up and did not waste anymore oil in vain. He closed the tomb and departed feeling troubled. The stele did not lie about what it said, for after gathering 700,000 troops against Greece, he left in defeat and after returning died a most dishonorable death: during the night while he slept his throat was cut by his own son.

#### **Books XIV - XVII**

- **F14) Phot. Bibl. 72 p. 40a 5 – 41b 37:** Artaxerxes became king thanks to the efforts of Artapanos who in turn plotted against him. Artapanos also took as an accomplice in the plan Megabyzos, who was already distraught because of the suspected adultery of his wife Amytis. They gave each other the security of an oath, but Megabyzos exposed the entire scheme and Artapanos was killed in the same fashion he was going to kill Artaxerxes while the plots against both Xerxes and Darius were revealed. Consequently, Aspamitres, who was an accomplice in the murders of Xerxes and Darius, died a horrible death, for he was exposed in a tub to die slowly while being eaten by insects. After the death of Artapanos, there was a battle between his followers and the rest of the Persians in which his three sons fell and Megabyzos was severely wounded. While Artaxerxes, Amytis, Rhodogyne, and their mother Amestris wept, with great care he was barely saved by a doctor from Cos named Apollonides.  
(35) Bactria revolted from Artaxerxes under the leadership of their satrap, another Artapanos. There was a stalemate followed by a second battle which Artaxerxes won when the wind blew in the faces of the Bactrians, and subdued all of Bactria.

(36) Egypt revolted under the leadership of the Libyan Inaros and another Egyptian and made all preparations for war. When the revolt began the Athenians, at the request of Inaros, sent 40 ships. Artaxerxes intended to personally lead the campaign but when his companions protested this decision, sent his brother Achaemenides at the head of an army of 400,000 infantry and 80 ships. Inaros met Achaemenides in battle and the Egyptians were victorious. Achaemenides was fatally wounded by Inaros and his body was sent back to Artaxerxes. Inaros was also victorious at sea where Charitimides distinguished himself as commander of the forty ships from Athens; of fifty Persian ships twenty were captured with their crews while thirty were destroyed. (37) Megabyzos was then dispatched to face Inaros at the head of another army to be joined with the remaining 200,000 infantry and 300 ships still in Egypt under the command of Oriskos so that the force totaled 500,000 not counting the fleet. When Achaemenides fell in battle, 100,000 of the 400,000 men under his command were killed. A more fierce battle took place in which many men on both sides fell with the Egyptians suffering heavier losses. Megabyzos wounded Inaros in the thigh and routed his forces winning an overwhelming victory for the Persians. Inaros fled to Byblos (a very powerful city in Egypt) with all the Greeks who did not die with Charitimides in the battle. Consequently, all of Egypt, with the exception of Byblos, was returned to Megabyzos. (38) Since the city seemed impregnable, Megabyzos made peace with Inaros and the Greeks who still numbered 6,000 with the promise that they would suffer no harm from the king and the Greeks were granted a free pass to return home whenever they wanted. He appointed Sarsamas satrap of Egypt and taking along Inaros and the Greeks, returned to Artaxerxes and found him in an angry mood with Inaros for the killing of his brother Achaemenides. After Megabyzos related all that happened and how he gave pledges of faith to Inaros and the Greeks before taking Byblos, he solemnly begged the king to spare their lives, secured their salvation, and finally broke the news to the army that Inaros and the Greeks would not be harmed. (39) However, Amestris was incensed that there would be no reprisals for Inaros and the Greeks on behalf of her son, Achaemenides, and begged the king who rebuffed her requests. Then she approached Megabyzos who likewise dismissed her pleas. By continuously annoying her son, ultimately she achieved her goal and five years later the king delivered Inaros and the Greeks over to her. She impaled Inaros on three stakes and beheaded the 50 Greeks she was able to get her hands on. (40) Megabyzos was very upset and grieved; then he requested to be discharged to his territory of Syria where he had secretly sent the rest of the Greeks in advance. He left, revolted from the king, and assembled a large force numbering nearly 150,000 men excluding cavalry. Ousiris was sent to face him with 200,000 men and in the ensuing battle the two leaders wounded each other. Ousiris hit Megabyzos in the thigh with his spear giving him a wound two fingers deep. Megabyzos then inflicted a similar wound on the thigh of Ousiris, but also hit him in the shoulder knocking him from his horse. When Ousiris was surrounded, Megabyzos gave the order to carry him off to safety. Many Persians fell in the battle and the sons of Megabyzos, Zopyros and Artyphios, fought bravely giving their father a resounding victory. Megabyzos took good care of Ousiris and sent him back to Artaxerxes at his request. (41) Another army was dispatched against Megabyzos under the leadership of Menostates the son of Artarios who was the satrap of Babylon and brother of Artaxerxes. In the subsequent battle, the Persian army was put to flight and Menostates was first wounded in the shoulder by Megabyzos, then hit in the head by an arrow and although the wound was not fatal, nevertheless, he fled with his soldiers giving Megabyzos a brilliant



victory. (42) Artarios approached Megabyzos and advised him to make peace with the king. Megabyzos revealed that he too wanted a truce, however, only on the condition that he be allowed to remain in his territory as he was unwilling to go to the king. When the king was informed of this proposal he was advised by Artoxares, the Paphlagonian eunuch and Amestris herself to quickly make peace. Artarios set out with Amytis, his wife, Artoxares who was twenty years old at the time, Petesas, the son of Ousiris and father of Spitamas. All of them reassured Megabyzos with oaths and guarantees and, with some difficulty, convinced him to go to the king. Finally, the king himself sent for him to come and receive a pardon for his wrong-doings.

(43) Sometime later, the king went on a hunt when he was attacked by a lion and when the beast was in mid-air Megabyzos struck it with a spear killing it. This act angered Artaxerxes because Megabyzos made a successful kill before he did and so he ordered Megabyzos to be beheaded. Because of the pleas of Amestris, Amytis, and others his life was spared and he was removed to a city near the Erythrian Sea named Kyrta while the eunuch Artoxares was banished to Armenia because he often spoke openly on behalf of Megabyzos. Megabyzos spent five years in exile before escaping while disguised as a *pisagas*, the Persian term for lepers, who are completely unapproachable. After escaping, he went home to Amytis, who hardly recognized him and with her help and that of Amestris, the king was mollified and once again made him a Tablemate. At the age of 76 he passed away causing great grief for the king.

(44) After the death of Megabyzos, Amytis was frequently having relations with men, just like her mother before her. Apollonides the physician from Cos told her when she was sick (although she was very ill and weak he still fell in love with her) that she would fully recover if she had sex with men because her ailment was in her uterus. After he achieved his goal and slept with her, Amytis was still wasting away and he stopped sleeping with her. On her deathbed she begged her mother to exact vengeance on Apollonides and she in turn related the entire matter to King Artaxerxes how the doctor slept with her daughter, how he shunned her after he had defiled her, and how her daughter asked to be avenged. The king entrusted the matter to his mother who arrested Apollonides, put him in bonds, and tortured him for two months before burying him alive at the same time when Amytis died. (45) Zopyros, the son of Megabyzes and Amytis, after both of his parents died, left the king and went to Athens because of the benefaction his mother had shown them. He sailed into Caunus with the Athenians in his retinue and demanded that the city be handed over to him. The Caunians said that they would surrender the city to him but not to the Athenians who accompanied him. As Zopyros was entering through the gates, a Caunian named Alcides struck him on the head with a stone and this is how he died. However, Amestris, the grandmother of Zopyros, then crucified the Caunian. (46) Amestris died a very old woman and Artaxerxes passed away after ruling for 42 years. So ends Book 17 and begins Book 18.

- **F14a) Steph. Byz. s.v. κυρταία:** Kyrtaia: A city on the Erythraean Sea where according to the †third Book of Ctesias' *Persika* Artaxerxes exiled Megabyzes.
- **F14b) Steph. Byz. s.v. Βύλος [L]:** Byblos: ...Byblos is the most secured city on the Nile.
- **F14c) Hsch. Lex. s.v. πισσῶται [L]:** Pissatai: Those who have leprosy.

## Book XVIII

- **F15) Phot. Bibl. 72 p. 41b 38 – 43b 2:** After the death of Artaxerxes, his son Xerxes became king. He was the only legitimate child born from Damaschia who died on the same day as Artaxerxes. Bagorazos brought the bodies of his father and mother back to Persia. Artaxerxes had 17 illegitimate children including Sekyndianos from a Babylonian named Alogoune; Ochos, who would later become king, and Arsites were the children of another Babylonian named Cosmartidene. In addition, the king also had children named Bagapaios and Parysatis by Andia, another Babylonian; Parysatis later became the mother of Artaxerxes and Cyrus. While their father was still alive, he appointed Ochos satrap of Hyrcania and gave him as a wife Parysatis, the daughter of Artaxerxes and his own sister. Sekyndianos won over Pharnakyas the eunuch, who along with Bagorazos, Menostanes, and certain others. They entered the palace after Xerxes who had gotten drunk at a festival and fell asleep in the royal quarters, and they killed him. It was the 45<sup>th</sup> day after his father's death and so both men were carried back to Persia together. The mules pulling the wagon with the father's body refused to budge, as if they were waiting for the body of son and only when it joined the procession did they eagerly depart.  
(49) Sekyndianos ascended the throne and Menostates became his *azabarites*. Bagorazos departed and then returned to Sekyndianos, but because an old enmity secretly burned between them, Bagorazos was stoned to death on the order of the king on the pretext of abandoning the body of his father without consulting him. Consequently, the army was stricken with grief and the king offered the soldiers gifts, but they hated him because he had murdered his brother Xerxes and Bagorazos. (50) Sekyndianos sent a message summoning Ochos, who promised he would come but repeatedly failed to do so until he finally acquired a large enough army to support his ambition to become king himself. Arbarios, the commander of the cavalry under Sekyndianos, defected to Ochos and was soon followed by Arxanes the satrap of Egypt and Artoxares the eunuch who joined them from Armenia. Despite his objections, they placed the royal headdress on him. Ochos became king, changed his name to Dariaios, and, on the advice of Parysatis, invited Sekyndianos with deceitful intent and oaths. Although Menostanes warned Sekyndianos not to trust the agreement and come to terms with this perfidious lot, nevertheless he was convinced, and subsequently captured and thrown into a room full of ash where he perished after a rule of six months and 15 days.  
(51) Ochos, also known as Dariaios, became the sole ruler and of the three most influential eunuchs under him, Artoxares wielded the greatest power followed by Artibarzanes and Athoos. However, he most often sought the advice of his wife who bore him two children before he became king, a daughter named Amestris and a son named Arsakas who was later called Artaxerxes. After becoming queen she gave birth to another son named Cyrus after the sun. Then she bore him Artostes and nine others to a total of thirteen children (Ctesias claims to have acquired this knowledge from Parysatis herself). The rest of these children soon died except the ones whose names were mentioned along with a fourth son named Oxendras who survived.  
(52) Arsites, the king's brother by the same father and mother, revolted with Artyphios, the son of Megabyzos. Artasyras was dispatched to confront him but in the war with Artyphios he was defeated twice. However, he vanquished Artyphios in the third battle and won over his Greek contingent with bribes until only three Milesians remained in his service. When

Arsites failed to appear, Artyphios made peace and exchanged oaths with Artasyras and surrendered to the king. Parysatis advised him not to execute Artyphios yet, as was his desire, but to use him as a trap to lure Arsites into surrendering. When he was deceived and captured, she said to the king, "now you must deal with them both." The queen succeeded in her plan and both men were thrown into a room full of ash, although the king was reluctant to put Arsites to death. Parysatis, however, partly by persuasion and partly by compulsion caused their undoing. Pharnakyas, who was an accomplice of Sekyndianos in the murder of Xerxes, was stoned to death and Menostanes died by his own hand since he was already in custody and awaiting execution.

(53) Pisuthnes revolted and when Tissaphernes, Spithradates, and Parmises were dispatched to subdue him, he marched out to face them with Lycon the Athenian and his Greek forces. The king's generals bribed Lycon and the Greeks who promptly abandoned Pisuthnes; then after exchanging assurances with him they brought him to the king, who cast him into a room full of ash and granted Tissaphernes his satrapy. Lycon also was rewarded with cities and land for his treacheries.

(54) Artoxares the eunuch, who was very influential with the king, plotted against him with the intention of seizing the throne for himself. He ordered a woman to make a fake beard and moustache for him so he could appear as a man. However, she revealed the plot and he was arrested, handed over to Parysatis, and put to death.

(55) Arsaces, the son of the king who later was renamed Artaxerxes, married Stateira, the daughter of Idernes. Meanwhile, Terituchmes, the son of Idernes, married Amestris, the daughter of the king, and after the death of his father, became satrap in his stead. However, Terituchmes had a sister by the same father named Rhoxane, who was beautiful and skilled with both the bow and spear. Since he was in love and had intimate relations with her, he hated Amestris and intended to throw her in a sack and have it pierced by the 300 men with whom he planned his revolt. However, a certain Udiastes who had influence with Terituchmes, received a letter from the king filled with promises if he were to save his daughter. And so he attacked and killed Terituchmes although the latter conducted himself bravely in the insurrection and killed many men (they say he killed up to thirty-seven men).

(56) Mithridates, the son of Udiastes, who was the shield-bearer for Terituchmes, had been away. When he learned of the situation, he called down many curses on his father, seized control of the city of Zaris, and guarded it for the son of Terituchmes. Parysatis then ordered the mother of Terituchmes, his brothers Mitrotos and Helikos, and his sisters (there were two in addition to Stateira) to be buried alive. As for Rhoxane, she was cut to pieces while still alive. The king told Parysatis to give the same treatment to Stateira, the wife of his son Arsaces, but Arsaces begged his parents with tear-filled pleas and moved Parysatis to pity. After she capitulated, Ochos the so-called Dariaios went along but warned Parysatis that she would greatly regret her decision.

This concludes Book 18.

- **F15a) Plut. Artox. I.2:** Darius and Parysatis had four children: the oldest was Artaxerxes followed by Cyrus and the younger two Ostanos and Oxathres. (3) Cyrus was named after Cyrus the Elder and they say he was named after the sun because the Persians call the sun 'Cyrus'. (4) Artaxerxes was originally called Arsikas, however, Dinon says his name was Oarses. Ctesias, however, even if he is unreliable for the farrago of fanciful tales and allegations which he incorporates into his work, is not likely to have been ignorant of the

name of the king with whom he lived and whose wife, mother, and children he served as personal physician.

- **F15b) Plut. *Artox.* 2.2 [L]:** [Arsikas] married a beautiful and noble woman at the insistence of his parents and protected her against their opposition, for the king had put her brother to death and wanted to do the same with her. However, by supplicating his mother and by lamenting greatly, Arsikas managed to persuade her not to execute his wife or dissolve their marriage.

### **Books XIX - XX**

- **F16) Phot. *Bibl.* 72 p. 43b 3 – 44a 19:** (57) In the nineteenth book of his history, Ctesias explains how Dariaios Ochos fell ill in Babylon and died after ruling for 35 years and then Arsaces became king and changed his name to Artaxerxes. (58) Oudiasstes was put to death by having his tongue cut out and removed from the root and his son Mithridates became satrap in his place; this was done at the insistence of Stateira despite the objections of Parysatis. (59) Cyrus was denounced by Tissaphernes to his brother Artaxerxes, fled to his mother Parysatis, and was cleared from the accusations. Dishonored by his brother, he departed for his own satrapy and plotted a revolt. (60) Satibarzanes spread the rumor that Orondes slept with Parysatis, although she was very chaste, and he was put to death which made the queen mother furious against the king. (61) [Ctesias says] that Parysatis killed the son of Terituchmes with poison and, (62) contrary to custom, his father placed his body on a pyre; in relating this story he charges Hellanicus and Herodotus with lying. (63) Cyrus revolted from his brother and assembled an army mixed of Greeks and barbarians with Clearchus as the general of the Greeks. Ctesias describes how Syennesis entered into an alliance with both Cyrus and Artaxerxes and how each man advised his own army. Clearchus, the Spartan who led the Greeks, and Menon the Thessalian, both allies of Cyrus, were always at odds with each other because Cyrus always deliberated with Clearchus while he did not rely on Menon at all. Many men deserted from Artaxerxes to Cyrus but no one deserted from Cyrus to Artaxerxes; consequently, Arbarios intended to join Cyrus but was betrayed and thrown into the ashes. (64) Cyrus attacked the king's army, won a victory, but died in the battle when he failed to follow the advice of Clearchus. His body was mutilated by his brother Artaxerxes, who cut off his head and the hand which he used to wound the king and paraded around with them. (65) Clearchus the Spartan retreated with his Greek contingent during the night and occupied one of the cities under Parysatis' dominion. Finally, the king concluded a peace with the Greeks. (66) [Ctesias says] that Parysatis went to Babylon mourning for Cyrus, and with difficulty got possession of his head and hand; she gave them funeral honors and sent them back to Susa. She then played a game of dice with the king which she won and selected as her prize Bagapatos, the man who had removed the head from Cyrus' corpse on the order of the king. She had him flayed and crucified and then stopped her excessive lamenting for Cyrus at the behest of Artaxerxes, (67) who granted gifts to the man who carried off Cyrus' saddle-cloth and honored the Carian who reportedly killed him. Parysatis, however, tortured and killed

the exalted Carian. Artaxerxes handed Mithridates over to Parysatis at her request and she put him to death in cruel fashion for boasting at the dinner-table that he killed Cyrus.

This is the summary of Books 19 – 20.

- **F17) Plut. *Artox. 2.3*:** Their mother loved Cyrus more and wanted him to be king. When Darius fell ill, Cyrus was immediately summoned from the coast and arrived full of hope that by his mother's efforts, he would become the successor to the throne. (4) Parysatis employed the plausible rationale which Xerxes the Elder had used on the advice of Demaratus, that Arsicas was born when Darius was a private citizen whereas Cyrus was born when he was king. (5) The king was not persuaded by this argument but chose to make his elder son his successor under the name Artaxerxes while appointing Cyrus as satrap of Lydia and commander of the forces along the coast. (3) Shortly after the death of Darius, Artaxerxes went to Pasargadae where he was to take part in the coronation ceremony performed by the Persian priests. (2) There is a temple of some warrior goddess whom some might liken to Athena where the initiate must go to cast aside his own robes and take up the garments worn by Cyrus the Elder before he became king, eat a cake of figs and chew terabinth, and drink a glass of sour milk. If there is any other facet of the ritual, it remains hidden from outsiders. (3) As Artaxerxes was about to perform the ritual, Tissaphernes approached him with one of the priests who was Cyrus' instructor when he was receiving the appropriate education, taught him the skills of the Magus and was as upset as any Persian when he was denied succession to the throne; consequently, his accusation of Cyrus was believable. (4) He charged that Cyrus was preparing an ambush in the temple and was going to attack and kill the king when he took off his robes. (5) Some say that his arrest stemmed from this allegation, but others maintain that he really entered the temple and was betrayed by the priest while hiding. (6) As he was about to be put to death, his mother embraced him, flung her curls around him, pressed his neck against her own, and by much lamenting and wailing successfully begged for his life. She sent him back down to the coast but he was not satisfied with the office he held and he did not remember the pardon he received but only his arrest, and fueled by rage his desire for the kingship was more intense than ever before. (4) Some say that he revolted from the king because what he received for his daily meals was insufficient, but they are talking nonsense...
- **F18) Plut. *Artox. 8*:** Since many have written about this battle and Xenophon all but brings the reader face to face with the action as though it were happening now and not long ago...it would not be sensible to recount it in detail except to cover whatever he passed over that is worthy of mention. (2) The place where the armies were marshaled is called Cunaxa and is located 500 stades from Babylon. Before the battle when Clearchus urged Cyrus to keep his distance from the fighting and not put himself in harm's way, he reportedly replied, "What are you saying, Clearchus? Are you advocating that I should act in a manner unworthy of the kingship for which I am striving?"
- **F19) Plut. *Artox. 9*:** The Greeks defeated the barbarians to the extent that they wanted and pursued them quite far. However, Cyrus, who was riding a high-bred but hard-mouthed and arrogant horse (according to Ctesias it was named Pasakas) came face to face with Artagerses, the leader of the Cadusians, who cried aloud, (2) "You, a most unjust and foolish man, dishonor the most noble Persian name of Cyrus by traveling down the path of

wickedness, along with those vile Greeks, against the nobility of Persia with the hopes of killing your master and brother who has a million slaves who are more noble than you. You will test your fortune and lose your head before having the chance to look upon the face of the king." (3) After saying this, he hurled his javelin at Cyrus, whose breastplate deflected the blow leaving him unwounded but stunned from the powerful impact. When Artagerses turned his horse around, Cyrus hit him square driving his spear through his neck near the collar-bone. (4) Nearly everyone agrees that Cyrus killed Artagerses. Xenophon briefly and simply deals with the death of Cyrus himself because he was not there, but perhaps nothing stops me from first recounting Dinon's version of events and then relating what Ctesias had to say on the matter.

- F20) Plut. Artax. 11:** The narrative of Ctesias, given here in a concise and abridged version, is as follows: after killing Artagerses Cyrus directed his horse against the king, who turned to face him, both riding in silence. Ariaaios, a friend of Cyrus, made the first move by hurling his spear at the king but failed to wound him. (2) The king unleashed his spear and missed Cyrus but hit Satiphernes, a trusted and noble friend of Cyrus, striking him dead. Cyrus then threw his spear at the king and struck him in the chest through the breastplate inflicting a wound in his flesh two fingers deep and knocking him from his horse. (3) Although many of his men fell into disorder and fled, Artaxerxes rose to his feet and with a few men, including Ctesias, occupied a small hill and kept quiet. Cyrus, however, rode his indomitable horse a great distance amidst the enemy and when darkness fell he went unrecognized by the enemy while his comrades were looking for him. (4) Exalted by his victory and roused by anger and daring, he advanced shouting several times in Persian, "Get out of the way you scum!" and they stepped aside making obeisance. Then the headdress fell from Cyrus' head (5) and a young Persian named Mithridates ran at him and struck him in the temple near the eye without knowing who he wounded. The wound bled profusely causing Cyrus to fall, dizzy and stunned. (6) His horse escaped and roamed around, but an attendant of the man who wounded Cyrus picked up its blood-soaked saddle-cloth which had fallen off. (7) Cyrus was struggling to recover from the blow when a few eunuchs offered him another horse to mount and ride to safety. (8) He was weak but wanted to walk under his own power so they helped him along. Although he was weary and stumbled about, he thought he had won since he heard those fleeing calling him king and begging to be spared. (9) In this group were certain Caunians, low-living paupers who followed the king's army to perform menial tasks, who happened to mingle with Cyrus' men, as if they were friends. With some difficulty, they recognized the crimson tunics and since the royal forces wore white tunics, realized these men were the enemy. (10) One of these men had the audacity to strike Cyrus from behind with his spear without knowing who he was. The blow ruptured the artery in his hamstring causing him to fall, hit his wounded temple on a rock, and die. Such is the account of Ctesias in which he kills Cyrus off gradually as if by a small, blunt sword. (12) When Cyrus died, Artasyras, the king's Eye, happened to ride past on his horse and see the eunuchs lamenting. He asked the most trusted of them, "Pariskas, for whom are you mourning?" The Eunuch replied, "Artasyras, don't you see that Cyrus has died?" (2) Amazed at this, Artasyras ordered the eunuch to take heart and guard the body while he personally went to Artaxerxes, who had already given up his cause and was suffering from thirst and the agony of his wound. With pleasure he informed the king that he had personally seen Cyrus dead. (3) The king immediately prepared to set out and ordered Artasyras to take him to the spot, but since

there were rumors abounding about the Greeks and the fear that they were in pursuit and victorious in every way, he thought it best to send a larger force to scout the area and so he dispatched thirty men with torches. (4) Since the king was almost at the point of death from thirst, Satibarzanes the eunuch went around in search of water, but there was none in the area and the camp was far away. (5) He then came across one of those lowly Caunians who had about eight *kotylai* of foul and polluted water in a shoddy wineskin which he seized and brought back to the king. (6) When he drank it all down, the eunuch asked him if he found the drink disgusting, but he swore to the gods that he had never tasted wine or the clearest, most pure water and found it as pleasing: "If I cannot find the man who gave you this water and reward him properly, I pray that the gods make him more blessed and wealthy." (13) In the meantime, The thirty men with torches returned and with great pleasure informed the king of his unexpected fortune. With his spirits lifted by the multitude of men running back to him and joining the ranks, he came down from the hill illuminated by many torches. (2) He stood over the corpse and, following Persian custom, had the right hand and head removed from the body; he then ordered the head to be brought to him and grasped it by the thick bushy hair to show it to those who doubted the report and to those who fled. (3) They were astonished and prostrated themselves so he soon had 70,000 men in his service who accompanied him back to the camp.

- **F21) Xen. *Anab.* I.8.23:** The king commanded the center of the army but was still beyond the left wing of Cyrus; since no one fought opposite him or those marshalled in front of him he turned his force inward to envelope the enemy. (24) For fear that the king might get behind the Greek contingent and cut them to pieces, Cyrus drove on against him. He engaged the king with a force of 600 and defeated the troops under the king's command, put the 6,000 men to flight, and is said to have killed Artagerses, their commander, by his own hand. (25) When the route ensued, the 600 men under Cyrus scattered and set out in pursuit while only a very small contingent of men, almost limited to his so-called Table-Companions, remained by his side. (26) While with these men, he caught sight of the king and the array of men around him and immediately lost his patience. "I see him", he said as he charged at the king, struck him through the chest, and wounded him through the breastplate, according to Ctesias the physician who also says that he personally treated the wound. (27) Someone then hit him violently under the eye with a javelin as he was dealing the blow to the king and then Cyrus, the king, and the soldiers with them engaged in battle. Ctesias records the number dead among the king's soldiers as he was with the king while on the other side Cyrus himself died along with eight of his best men who lay on top of him.
- **F22) Plut. *Artox.* 13.3:** According to Ctesias, the king led 400,000 men into battle, but the figures given by Dinon and Xenophon are much larger. (4) Ctesias says that the number of dead reported to Artaxerxes was 9,000 but the number of those lying dead did not seem to him to be less than 20,000.
- **F23) Plut. *Artox.* 13.5:** This is a matter of dispute but the report of Ctesias, who says that he was sent to the Greeks with Phalinus of Zacynthos and certain others, is clearly false. (6) Xenophon knew that Ctesias was living with the king because he mentions him and was clearly familiar with his works. Xenophon then would not have failed to name him if he

were actually present as an interpreter in these talks rather than only naming Phalinus of Zacynthos.

- **F24) Demetr. *De eloc.* 216 (Gregor. Cor. VII 1180 Walz):** It is also this way in the following examples: one must not immediately say that something has happened, but do so little by little leaving the listener in suspense and compelling him to share in the anxiety of the moment. This is what Ctesias does in his account of the death of Cyrus. A messenger approaches Parysatis but does not immediately tell her that Cyrus is dead (for this is the so-called Scythian discourse). He first reports that Cyrus was victorious and she was delighted and, filled with anticipation, asked, "How is the king doing?" To which the messenger replied, "He escaped". Then she said, "He can only blame Tissaphernes for all of this" and then asked again, "Where is Cyrus now?" "Where brave men must dwell" was the envoy's reply. Thus advancing progressively little by little, the story was slowly disclosed. Through this he represents very clearly the character of the messenger, who was reporting the tragedy unwillingly, and creates anticipation for the mother and the listener.
- **F25) Aps. *Ars rhet. (Rhet. Gr. I<sup>2</sup>) p.320, 22 Sp-Ha:*** A speech given on the possessions of the deceased arouses pity, as when Ctesias makes the mother of Cyrus speak about her son's horses, dogs, and armor in a speech that inspires compassion.
- **F26) Plut. *Artox. 14:*** After the battle, the king gave extravagant gifts to the son of Artagerses, who was killed by Cyrus, and honored Ctesias along with several others. (2) He found the Caunian who gave him the wineskin of water, made him rich and elevated him from obscurity and poverty. (3) Care was also taken to punish the wrong-doers. Arbaces, a Mede who deserted to Cyrus during the battle but returned to Artaxerxes' side after Cyrus was killed, was convicted by the king, not for treason and wickedness, but for cowardice and weakness and ordered to carry a nude whore on his shoulders while she straddled his neck through the market-place for an entire day. (4) When another man, in addition to deserting, lied about killing two enemy soldiers, Artaxerxes ordered that he be pierced with three needles through his tongue. (5) Because he wanted all men to think and say that he personally killed his brother, the king sent gifts to Mithridates, who first wounded Cyrus, and ordered those delivering them to say, "The king honors you with these because you found the saddle-cloth of Cyrus and brought it to him." (6) When the Carian who dealt Cyrus the fatal blow to his hamstring asked for his own reward, the king ordered those delivering the gifts to say, "the king grants you these gifts for being the second after Artasyras to deliver him the good news of Cyrus' death." (7) Mithridates departed in silence annoyed at the affront, but the pitiful Carian foolishly succumbed to a common sentiment (8) and, seemingly corrupted by his present fortunes, decided to immediately aim for unattainable prizes and was not content to receive the gifts as payment for being the bearer of good news. He called upon men as witnesses and shouted that none other than himself had killed Cyrus and he was unjustly being robbed of his glory. (9) After hearing this, the king became irritated and ordered the Carian to be beheaded, but his mother, who was present at the time, said, "My lord, do not put the Carian to death in such an easy manner but hand him over to me and he will get what he deserves for what he had the audacity to say." (10) After the king delivered the man to Parysatis, she ordered the



executioners first to stretch him on the wheel for ten days, then to cut out his eyes and pour molten bronze into his ears until he dies.

(15) Mithridates also died a horrible death soon after because of the same foolishness as the Carian. When he was invited to dinner where the eunuchs of the king and his mother were present, he arrived adorned in the fine robes and gold jewelry which he received from the king. (2) When the drinks were flowing heavily, the most powerful of Parysatis' eunuchs said, "The robes which the king gave you are very beautiful as are the necklaces and bracelets, and the scimitar is highly prized too, and he has made you blessed and elevated you to a position prominent to all." (3) Mithridates, however, was already drunk and said, "What, these, Sparamizes? What I did for the king on that day deserved better and more beautiful gifts than these." (4) Sparamizes smiled at him and said, "No one will deny you this, Mithridates, but since the Greeks say 'wine is also truth', tell us, my good man, what is so great about finding a saddle-cloth that fell off a horse and bringing it back to the king?" (5) Sparamizes knew full well the truth of the matter when he said this, but he wanted to expose Mithridates to the present company and proceeded cautiously and subtly when the wine had put him in a talkative mood. (6) Mithridates then spoke without restraint, "You can say what you want about saddle-cloths and such nonsense, but I tell you explicitly that Cyrus fell by this very hand. I did not cast my spear and miss like Artagnes but nearly hit his eye when I struck him through the temple and knocked him down, and he died because of this wound." (7) Seeing the end of Mithridates and his ill fortune, the rest of the guests bowed their heads and the host of the party said, "My dear Mithridates, let us drink and feast on this occasion, pay our respects to the good fortune of the king, and cast aside discussions which are above our station."

(16) After this, the eunuch told Parysatis about what Mithridates said and she in turn reported it to the king who grew angry as he was caught lying and was deprived of the best and sweetest aspect of his victory. (2) He wanted all barbarians and Greeks to believe that when he was exchanging blows with his brother amidst the cavalry charge, he was wounded himself but personally killed Cyrus. He therefore ordered that Mithridates be put to death by the trough-torture. (3) The trough-torture is as follows: two basins are fitted together and the convicted is placed on his back in one of them while the other is placed on top and fastened to the first so that only the head, hands, and feet are exposed while the rest of the body is covered. The condemned is given food and if he refuses to eat, then his eyes are gauged and he is force fed. After eating, he is forced to drink milk mixed with honey which is poured into his mouth and down his face. (5) His head is then turned so his eyes always face the sun and as swarms of flies settle there, his entire face is covered by them. (6) Since he does what must be done when one is eating and drinking inside the basin, the decay and putrefaction of the excrement brings about a swarm of maggots and worms which consume his body and slip their way into his innards. (7) When the man is clearly dead, the upper skiff is removed revealing that the flesh has all been eaten away while swarms of such creatures are growing and eating all around his viscera. This is how Mithridates died after slowly wasting away for 17 days.

(17) Masabates, the eunuch of the king who cut off Cyrus' head and hands, was the final mark for Parysatis' vengeance. (2) Because he never gave her any opportunity to get hold of him, she contrived the following plan: She was a clever woman and skilled at playing dice often playing with the king before the war. (4) After the war when she was reconciled to him, she did not avoid his friendly advances but sported around with him. She was also

present at and assisted in his love affairs leaving very little time for Stateira to enjoy the king's company, whom on account of her own desire for supreme power, she hated most of all. (5) One day she came upon Artaxerxes as he was growing restless in his leisure and invited him to play dice for 1,000 darics. When he accepted the challenge she let him win and paid him the gold. Feigning annoyance and competitiveness, she immediately asked to play again, this time for a eunuch, and the king readily assented. (6) After agreeing on the wager, each person set aside their five most trusted eunuchs so the winner could choose their prize from the rest, and then they rolled the dice on these terms. (7) Parysatis, determined and focused on the game, won with some fortunate rolls of the dice and chose as her prize Masabates, who was not one of those reserved by the king. Before the king became suspicious of the affair, she handed the eunuch over to the executioners with the order that he be flayed alive and his body transfixed sideways on three stakes while his skin was to be stretched out separately. (8) When the king heard what happened, he took it hard and grew angry at Parysatis, who professed ignorance and said with a smile, "How sweet and foolish you are that you grieve for a miserable old eunuch while I took it well and kept silent after losing 1,000 darics at dice." The king regretting the deceit, kept quiet. However, Stateira openly opposed her and felt disgust at how for the sake of Cyrus, she cruelly and illegally had put to death men who were supportive and loyal to the king.

## **Books XXI - XXII**

- **F27) Phot. Bibl. 72 p. 44a 20 – b 19:** [We have now reached] Books 21, 22, and 23, the final book of the entire work, which contain the following: Tissaphernes plotted against the Greeks and formed a partnership with Menon the Thessalian through whom he vanquished Clearchos and the rest of the Greek generals using deception and false oaths. Clearchos, however, learned of the plot and planned to fend it off, but the majority of his men, deceived by Menon, compelled him against his wishes to go to Tissaphernes. Proxenos, the Boeotian who was already captured beforehand, also recommended this course of action. (69) Tissaphernes sent Clearchos and the other generals in shackles to Artaxerxes in Babylon where everyone crowded to get a glimpse of Clearchos. Ctesias, since he was the physician for Parysatis, personally tended to Clearchos and, through her intervention, provided him with many amenities while he was in prison. Parysatis would even have removed the shackles and freed him if Stateira had not persuaded her husband Artaxerxes to put him to death. Following his execution, a portent appeared above his body: a powerful wind blew and a burial mound appeared out of thin air over him and elevated itself to great heights. The Greeks who accompanied him were also put to death with the exception of Menon. (70) Parysatis verbally abused Stateira and ultimately killed her with poison prepared in the following way (for Stateira was constantly on her guard so she would not suffer the fate she eventually did): she smeared one side of a knife with poison but the other was left clean and she used it to carve up a small bird the size of an egg which the Persians call the *Rhyndake*. Parysatis cut the bird in half and took the portion that was free from poison for herself and ate it. She then offered the poisoned half to Stateira who had no way of sensing the danger after watching Parysatis eat her portion and so she ate the poison and died. Greatly angered at the actions of his mother, the king arrested her eunuchs, tortured them, and put them to death. He also arrested Ginge, a companion of Parysatis, and put her on trial. Although she

was acquitted by the judges, she was condemned by the king who had her tortured and executed. This aroused the anger of Parysatis towards her son, who likewise still harbored enmity for his mother.

(71) After eight years the burial mound of Clearchos was seen surrounded by date-palms, which Parysatis secretly had planted through her eunuchs when he died.

- **F28) Plut. *Artox. 18:*** After Tissaphernes deceived Clearchos and the other generals by breaking his oaths, arresting them, and sending them away bound in shackles, Ctesias says that Clearchos asked him where he might find a comb. (2) After obtaining his wish, Clearchos combed his hair and out of gratitude gave Ctesias his ring as a token of friendship to show to his friends and relatives in Sparta. The emblem on the ring showed caryatids dancing. When the food sent to Clearchos was promptly seized and devoured by the soldiers imprisoned with him leaving only a little for the general, Ctesias says that he also resolved this problem by arranging for more food to be sent to Clearchos while separate portions were given to the soldiers. He performed these services as a favor at the request of Parysatis. (4) Since a ham was sent to him daily as his meal, he urged Ctesias to implant a dagger in the meat and send it to him concealed in this manner and not to leave his fate to the cruelty of the king. Ctesias, however, refused to do this out of fear. (5) The king assented to his mother's pleas and swore that he would not kill Clearchos, but was persuaded by Stateira to kill all of the Greek captives except Menon. (6) According to Ctesias, this is why Parysatis plotted against Stateira and contrived to poison her, but it is an unlikely and illogical allegation to say that Parysatis took such a risk for the sake of Clearchos and performed this heinous act of daring to kill the lawful wife of the king who bore him children reared for the throne. Rather, it is clear that Ctesias composed such a dramatic story to honor the memory of Clearchos. (7) He says that when the generals were killed, the bodies of the rest of them were torn to pieces by dogs and birds, but a windstorm brought a mass of earth over the corpse of Clearchos and covered his body. (8) A little while later, some dates scattered over the hill and created an amazing grove which gave shade to the place causing the king to regret his actions thinking he had killed a man favored by the gods when he put Clearchos to death.
- **F29a) Plut. *Artox. 6.9:*** Although Dinon says the plot was brought to fruition during the war, Ctesias says it occurred after, and it is unlikely that he was ignorant of the time since he was there when it happened and he had no reason to change the time of its occurrence when he describes how it happened – however often his history departs from the truth and enters into the realm of myth and drama – therefore, this event will be placed at the time given by Ctesias.
- **F29b) Plut. *Artox. 19:*** From the beginning Parysatis harbored deep hatred and jealousy for Stateira because she saw that her own power stemmed from the king's respect and honor while Stateira held influence through his deeply powerful love and devotion. She therefore plotted against Stateira and vied for what she considered the greatest prize. (2) She had a trusted nurse whom she held in the highest regard named Gigis who, according to Dinon, assisted in preparing the poison. Ctesias, however, says that she was an unwilling accomplice and names Belitaras as the one who provided the poison while Dinon claims it was Melantas who did this. (3) After their previous suspicions and quarrelling had subsided, Parysatis and Stateira began associating and dining together again, although they fearfully

remained on guard and only ate the same dishes served on the same plate. (4) There is a small bird in Persia called *rhyntakes* which has no excrement, but its innards are full of fat and the creature is thought to obtain its nourishment from wind and dew. (5) Ctesias says that Parysatis carved this bird with a small knife that was smeared with poison on one side so that it would contaminate only one side of the bird. She then placed the undefiled piece in her mouth and ate it before giving Stateira the poisoned part. (6) Dinon says that it was not Parysatis but Melantas who carved the bird with the knife and served the poisoned meat to Stateira. (7) As Stateira was dying in great agony and convulsions, she became aware of the evil plot and made the king suspicious of his mother, for he knew her savage and unforgiving nature. (8) He immediately made an investigation into the affair which resulted in the arrest and torture of her servants and table attendants. Parysatis kept Gigis in her house with her for a long time and refused to give her up when the king demanded her. However, he later learned that she was begging to be allowed to return home during the night and so he set an ambush, seized her, and condemned her to death. (9) Poisoners in Persia are legally executed in the following way: their head is placed upon a flat stone and smashed and squeezed with another rock until the face and head are completely obliterated. (10) Gigis died in this manner. Artaxerxes, however, said nothing else of the affair and did no harm to Parysatis but simply sent her to Babylon in accordance with her wishes and told her that as long as she remained alive, he would never set eyes upon Babylon. This was the state of affairs within the royal family.

- **F29c) Hsch. Lex. s.v. ῥυνδάκη:** Rhyndake: a small bird the size of a .
- **F30) Phot. Bibl. 72 p. 44b 20 – 42:** (72) Ctesias gives the following reasons why king Artaxerxes quarreled with Evagoras the king of Salamis. Evagoras sent envoys to Ctesias in order to receive letters from Aboulites and Ctesias wrote a letter to him concerning reconciliation with Anaxagoras the king of Cyprus. Evagoras then sent envoys to Cyprus and received the letter sent by Ctesias. (73) Conon, meanwhile, spoke to Evagoras about returning to the king, but Evagoras sent a letter instead stating what he thought the king should grant him. Conon in turn sent a letter to Ctesias while Evagoras paid tribute to the king. Letters were then dispatched to Ctesias who spoke to the king on Conon's behalf before sending a letter to him. Evagoras gave gifts to Satibarzanes. Envoys arrived in Cyprus while Conon sent a letter to the king and Ctesias. (74) Ctesias describes how the Spartan envoys sent to the king were closely watched, how the king sent a letter to Conon and the Spartans which Ctesias personally delivered, and how Conon was appointed as commander of the fleet by Pharnabazos. (75) Ctesias went to his homeland Cnidos and then Sparta. At Rhodes there was a trial concerning the Spartan envoys followed by an acquittal.
- **F31) Athen. I.40 p. 22 C:** The famous dancers... Zenon the Cretan was by far the most honored by Artaxerxes after Ctesias.
- **F32) Plut. Artox. 21.1 – 4:** The king drove the Lacedaimonians from the sea with Conon the Athenian acting as general alongside Pharnabazos. Conon spent time in Cyprus after the naval battle of Aegospotami, not in pursuit of safety, but awaiting a change in the state of affairs as one would await a shift of the wind at sea. Seeing that he was in need of a force to pursue his own plans while the king's army needed a good leader, he sent a letter to the king

disclosing his plans. He ordered the letter-carrier to deliver it to the king through Zenon the Cretan dancer or Polycritos the Mendaeian physician, and if these men were unavailable, then Ctesias the physician. It is said that after receiving the letter, Ctesias added to Conon's proposal the request that he be sent to Conon to help him in his actions at sea. Ctesias, however, says that the king imposed this task on him of his own volition.

### Book XXIII

- **F33) Phot. *Bibl.* 72 p. 45a 1 – 4:** (76) Ctesias estimates the number of stations and *parasangs* from Ephesus to Bactria and India as well as how many days march it is. He lists the kings from Ninus and Semiramis to Artaxerxes at which point he ends his work.
- **F33a) Schol. Aristeid. *Panath.* p. (64) 301 Ddf:** Tradition mentions five kingdoms... The first was the Assyrian kingdom which was founded by Ninus, the first king, and dissolved under the last king Sardanapallus having lasted for 1,450 years. The second kingdom was that of the Medes which lasted from its first king Arbaces to the reign of its final king Astyages for a period of 470 years (Herodotus claims it lasted for 128 years). The third kingdom was the Persian Empire, which was founded by Cyrus, the son of Cambyses, until Artaxerxes, the son of Darius, covering a period of 215 years. Ctesias writes about these times until the reign of Artaxerxes which he reaches in the twenty-third book of the *Persika*.
- **F33b) Diod. XIV.46.6 (cf. 59) [L]:** Ctesias, the author of a Persian history, begins with Ninus and Semiramis and concludes his work in this year (398/97).
- **F34a) Aelian *N.A.*:** I have learned that the oxen in Susa are not without knowledge of arithmetic. As evidence that this statement is not merely boasting, there is the story that in Susa the king possesses oxen which can each draw one hundred pales of water to irrigate the dryer places. Indeed they perform this task with great earnest whether it was forced upon them or they were bred to do it and you would never catch one standing idly around. According to Ctesias, if you tried to force them to draw up even one pale more than the aforementioned hundred, you could neither persuade nor compel them, either with beatings or coaxing words, to do so.
- **F34b) Plut. *De soll. an.* 21 p.974 DE:** These phenomena, although amazing, are rendered less astounding by the animals that possess an understanding of number and the power of calculation, such as in Susa where there are oxen to irrigate the royal park by operating buckets on a water wheel. There is a set number of buckets, for every day each ox conveys one hundred buckets of water. Moreover, it is impossible, even if one wanted to, to make them forget the number of buckets already taken or force them to fetch more because they have the ability of addition due to their experience. After each ox fetches its predetermined number of buckets, it halts and refuses to work any further. Their skills of addition and ability to recall the sum total are thus very precise, according to what Ctesias of Cnidus writes in his history.
- **F35) Aelian *N.A.* 16.42:** Ctesias of Cnidus says that near the Persian city of Sittake is a river called the Argades which is inhabited by many snakes with black bodies and white heads that

grow as long as an *orgyia*, and have a fatal bite. They are never seen during the day because they swim underwater, but by night they kill people while they fetch water or wash clothes. Many people suffered their attack when their water supply ran dry or when they were too busy during the day to wash their clothes.

- **F36) Antigon. *Hist. mir.* 15:** They say that in the Thessalian town of Crannon there are only two ravens... but Theopompus says it is more peculiar than this, for he says that they live in Crannon until their young have grown at which time they abandon the chicks and leave. Ctesias claims that something similar to this occurs in Ecbatana and Persia, but since he is prone to telling lies, I will skip over this extract because it seems too fanciful.
- **F37) Athen. 2.23 p. 45 AB:** Herodotus states in Book 1 that the Persian king "has water brought for him to drink from the Choaspes River, which flows near Susa, and this is the only water he drinks. When this water has been purified, many four-wheeled mule-drawn wagons follow him bringing the water in silver jars." Ctesias of Cnidus also says that this royal water is boiled, stored in jars, and brought to the king and adds that it is the purest and sweetest water.
- **F38) Athen. 2.74 p.67 A (Eust. Od. z 79):** Ctesias says that in Carmania there was acanthus oil which the king used...
- **F39) Athen. 4.27 p.146 C:** Both Ctesias and Dinon state in their *Persika* that the Persian king dined in the company of 15,000 men and spent 400 talents on the dinner.
- **F40) Athen. 11.11 p.464 A:** They refused to give us terracotta cups, for Ctesias says, "according to the Persians, whomever the king holds in contempt drinks from terracotta cups."
- **F41) Hsch. s.v. σάρραπις:** Sarapis: an off-white Persian robe, according to Ctesias: "she tore her sarapis, let her hair down, pulled it, and cried out."
- **F42) Steph. Byz. s.v. Ἀγβάτανα. . . : . . .** Demetrius says that there are two cities called Acbatana; one is in Media and the other in Syria. Everywhere in his *Persika* Ctesias spells the Median Agbatana with an alpha. However, the ancient writers spell the Persian city with an epsilon as I will demonstrate.
- **F43) Steph. Byz. s.v. Δερβίκκαι:** Derbikkas: a tribe near Hyrcania. Apollonios is right to spell it with two kappas. Ctesias calls them Derbisses or Terbisses.
- **F44a) Tert. Ad. nat. I.16:** According to Ctesias, the Persians openly sleep with their mothers and do so freely and without fear.
- **F44b) Tert. Apolog. 9:** Ctesias reports that the Persians fornicate with their own mothers.

## The *Indika*

- **F45) Phot. Bibl. 72 p. 45a 21 – 50a 4 (T10):** [Ctesias] says about the Indus River that it is forty stades wide at its narrowest point and two hundred at its widest. (2) He claims that the population of the Indians is nearly greater than the rest of the world combined. (3) There is a worm which inhabits the river and is the only animal to live in it, and (4) no men live beyond India. (5) It does not rain but India is irrigated by the river. (6) Ctesias describes a gemstone called *pantarba*, which when it was thrown into the river, was retrieved clinging together 477 gems and precious stones that belonged to a Bactrian dealer. (7) Ctesias describes the wall-destroying elephants, the small monkeys with tails four cubits in length, (8) and roosters of enormous size. There is a bird called the *bittakos* which has a human voice, is capable of speech, and grows to the size of a falcon. It has a crimson face and a black beard and is dark blue as far as the neck...like cinnebar. It can converse like a human in Indian but if taught Greek, it can also speak Greek. (9) There is a spring which throughout the year fills with liquid gold and from it one hundred clay jugs are drawn annually. The jugs must be made of clay since the gold solidifies when drawn off and the vessel must be broken in order to remove it. The spring is square with a perimeter of sixteen cubits and a depth of one *orgyia*. Each jug retrieves one talent of gold. There is iron at the bottom of the spring from which Ctesias says two swords were fashioned and given to him; one was from the king the other from the king's mother Parysatis. He maintains that the sword if stuck into the ground can ward off clouds, hail and hurricanes, an act he claims to have personally witness the king perform on two occasions. (10) The dogs in India are huge and they fight with lions. (11) There are large mountains where the sardonyx, the onyx, and other precious stones are quarried. (12) It is very hot there and the sun appears ten times larger than in any other land. Many people die of suffocation in these places. (13) Ctesias says that there is a sea there which is no smaller than the Greek Sea. Its surface up to four dactyls deep is so hot that no fish can approach the heat and survive so they all live below this level. (14) The Indus River flows through the plains and mountains and the so-called Indian reed also grows there. These reeds are as thick as two men's embrace and as high as the mast of a large tonnage merchant ship. Some are even larger than this and some are smaller, such as is to be expected on a large mountain. The reeds can either be male or female. The male lacks a pith but is very strong whereas the female has a pith. (15) There lives in India a beast called the *martichora* which has a human face, is the size of a lion, and is red like cinnabar. It has three rows of teeth, human ears, and light blue eyes like a man's. It has a tail like a land scorpion on which there is a stinger more than a cubit long. It also has stingers on either side of the tail as well as on the end like a scorpion. If approached, it stabs with a stinger inflicting a fatal wound. If its opponent fights from a distance, then it points its tail at him and fires stingers as if from a bow, but when assailed from behind, it stretches its tail straight out. It can fire stingers as far as a *pletheron* and the stingers are completely fatal to everything except elephants. Each stinger is one foot long and as wide as the thinnest reed. The word 'martichora' means man-eater in Greek because it mostly captures and devours humans, but eats other animals as well. It fights with both its talons and stingers, which Ctesias claims grow back after being fired. Many of these creatures live in India where the natives kill them by firing arrows while riding elephants.

(16) Ctesias claims that the Indians are very just people; he also describes their customs and manners. (17) There is a holy place in the uninhabitable region where they honor Helios and Selene. This sanctuary is fifteen days journey from Mt. Sardo. For 35 days each year the sun cools in that region so that they can honor him with a festival and return home without being burned.

(18) There are no thunder, lightning, or heavy rainstorms in India, but heavy wind and hurricanes frequently wipe out whatever is in their path. The rising sun until midday stays cool, but for the rest of the day it causes severe heat for most of India. (19) Indians are not dark-skinned from the sun but by nature, for some of them, both men and women, are very light-skinned, even if they are a minority. Ctesias claims to have personally seen two such women and five such men of Indian stock. (20) In his desire to prove that the sun is cool in India for thirty-five days, he says that the fire flowing from Aetna does not destroy the middle of the region because the Indians are just, although it destroys everything else. In Zacynthus, there is a spring filled with fish from which pitch is drawn. In Naxos, there is a spring from which sometimes flows a very sweet wine. Near Phaselis in Lycia, there is an unquenchable fire which burns night and day atop some rocks and it cannot be extinguished by water which makes the flames burn brighter, but by rubbish.

(21) In the middle of India live black men called Pygmies who speak the same language as the rest of the Indians. They are very small; the tallest is two cubits while most are one and a half of a cubits in height. They have very long hair that reaches their knees and even lower and their beards are the longest of any man. Since they grow such a long beard, they wear no clothes at all but comb the hair from their head down their back well below their knees and pull their beards down the front to their feet and then gird the hair around their entire body using it in place of clothing. Their penises are so large that they reach their ankles and are thick too, while they themselves are snub-nosed and ugly. Their sheep are like lambs, their asses and oxen are nearly the size of rams, and their horses, mules, and all other livestock are no larger than rams. (23) Three thousand of those Pygmies accompany the king of the Indians, for they are excellent bowmen. They are very just and follow the same laws as the Indians. (24) They hunt hare and fox not with dogs, but with ravens, kites, crows, and eagles.

(25) There is a lake in their region with a perimeter of 800 stades on the surface of which oil settles when the wind is calm. They sail in skiffs through the middle of the lake and skim the oil from the surface with small cups and use it; they also use sesame oil. The lake also contains fish. They use oils from walnuts as well, but the oil from the lake is better.

(26) There is an abundance of silver in their region and the silver mines are not deep, but they say the mines in Bactria are deeper. There is gold in India but it is not found washed in the rivers as happens in the Paktolos River, rather it is found in the numerous large mountains where the griffins live. These are four-footed birds the size of a wolf with legs and claws like a lion. The feathers on the breast are red while those covering the rest of the body are black. Because of these creatures, it is hard to obtain the gold from the mountains, although it exists in large quantities.

(27) The sheep and goats of the Indians are larger than asses and they rear four to six offspring at most. They have large tails which they remove from those ripe for motherhood in order to assist in breeding. There is no swine either domesticated or wild in India. (28) The palms in India and their dates are three times the size of those in Babylon. (29) According to Ctesias, there is a river of honey which flows from a rock. (30) He speaks at



length about the just nature of the Indians, the high regard they have for their king, and their disdain for death.

(31) There is a spring and when someone draws water from it, it solidifies like cheese. If you give someone three obols of this curdle to drink in water, he would tell you everything he has ever done, for it deprives him of his senses and sanity for the entire day. The king uses this when he wants to discover the truth in allegations. If the accused confesses, he is ordered to starve himself to death, but if nothing is proved by this, he is acquitted.

(32) The Indians do not suffer from headaches, ophthalmia, toothaches, cold-sores, or putrefaction. They live for 120, 130, and 150 years and some live to be as old as 200 years old.

(33) There lives in these parts a serpent which is a span in length and has a body like beautiful crimson and a bright white head. It has no teeth and is hunted in the burning mountains where the sardonx is quarried. It does not bite but wherever it vomits, the entire area rots. It produces two fluids when hung by its tail: one is an amber-colored substance and the other is black. The amber-colored drug is extracted while the snake is still alive and the black drug after it is dead. When a sesame-seed size droplet of the poison extracted from the living snake is administered, the person who drank it immediately perishes with his brains flowing out through his nose. When the other poison is administered, it brings on consumption causing death in close to a year.

(34) There is a bird called the *dikairon* which in Greek means 'just'. It is the size of a partridge egg and it buries its excrement so it cannot be found. If found and someone drinks as much as a sesame-seed sized dollop in the morning, he is overcome by sleep, lays down deprived of his senses, and dies by sunset.

(35) There is a tree called the *parebon* which is the size of an olive tree and is only found in the royal gardens. It yields no flowers or fruit and has only 15 roots which are thick under the ground; its thickness is equal to that of an arm at its thinnest point. Wherever a span of this root is set, it snatches and attracts everything to itself – gold, silver, bronze, stones, and everything else except amber. If as much as a cubit of this root is placed somewhere, it attracts lambs and birds; they do most of their hunting in this manner. If you want to solidify up to a *chous* of water, you could do so with an obol of the root and the same goes for wine which you could hold in your hand like bees-wax and it dissolves the following day. This is given as a remedy for bowel irritation.

(36) There is a river flowing through India which is not very big but about two stades wide called the *Hyparchos* in Indian, which in Greek means 'bringing all good things'. This river carries down amber every year for thirty days. They say that there are trees in the mountains which hang over the water (there are streams in the mountains). When it is the season the tree produces droplets of sap just like the almond tree, pine, or any other tree, but it only produces them for thirty days each year. When this sap falls into the river, it solidifies. This tree is called the *siptachora* in Indian which in Greek means 'sweet' or 'pleasant'. The Indians gather the amber from the river. The tree also produces fruit in clusters just like a grapevine and the berries are similar to the nuts from Pontus.

(37) According to Ctesias, in these mountains live men who have the head of a dog. Their clothes come from wild animals and they converse not with speech, but by howling like dogs, and this is how they understand each other. They have larger teeth than dogs and claws that are similar but longer and more rounded. They live in the mountains as far as the Indus River and they are black and very just, like the rest of the Indians with whom they associate.

Since they understand what the other Indians say but cannot converse, they communicate by howling and making gestures with their hands and fingers like the deaf and mute. The Indians call them *Kalystrioi* which in Greek means Cynocephaloi ('Dog-Headed People'). They have 120,000 people in their tribe.

(38) Near the source of the river grows a crimson blossom from which comes a purple dye as good as that of the Greeks but much brighter. (39) There are animals there the size of the scarab and red like cinnabar which have incredibly large feet and are soft like a worm. These creatures live in the trees which produce amber and they feast on their fruit. They also kill the tree just like the pests that destroy the vines in Greece. The Indians grind up these bugs and dye their red cloths, garments, and whatever else they wish. These are better in quality than the dyed garments of Persia.

(40) The Cynocephaloi who dwell in the mountains do not work but live off the wild game. They make a kill and then bake the meat in the sun. They raise sheep, goats, and asses and drink both fresh and sour milk from sheep. They eat the fruit off the *siptachora* tree (which is very sweet) from which amber is produced. They dry the fruit and put it in large baskets like the Greeks do with raisins. (41) The Cynocephaloi make rafts, load them with cargo of this fruit along with the purple dye purified from the flower, and 260 talents annually. This and the same amount of the substance used to make the red dye along with 1,000 talents of amber are sent each year to the king of the Indians. They gather more of it and sell it to the Indians in exchange for bread, meal, and cotton garments. They also exchange the fruit for swords which they use to hunt wild game (they also use bows and spears, and they are very skilled with both). Because they inhabit lofty and inaccessible mountains they are unfamiliar with war. Every fifth year the king gives them a gift of 300,000 bows, the same number of javelins, 120,000 shields, and 50,000 swords.

(42) The Cynocephaloi live not in houses but in caves. They hunt animals with bows and javelins and capture them by way of pursuit since they are fast runners. Their women bathe once per month when their menstrual cycle comes but at no other time. The men do not bathe but wash their hands, anoint their bodies three times per month with the oil from milk, and use hides to wipe themselves down. They do not wear shaggy clothes but very thin strips of leather and this is done by both the men and the women. Members of the wealthiest class wear clothes made of linen, but these men are few. They do not have beds but make mattresses of straw. The one who possesses the most sheep is considered to be the richest since the rest of their possessions are approximately of equal value. (43) All of them, both men and women, have a tail just above the rear end like that of a dog, only bigger and hairier. They fornicate with their women on all fours like dogs and it is shameful for them to do it any other way. They are just men who enjoy the greatest longevity of any people, for they live for 170 years and some of them even reach the age of 200.

(44) They say another race lives beyond these people past the source of the river. These men are dark like the rest of the Indians and do not work, eat grain, or drink water. Instead, they tend many flocks of sheep, oxen, goats, and cattle and drink only milk and nothing else. When their young are born, they do not have an anus nor do they have bowel movements. They have buttocks but the orifice is grown together. Consequently, they do not pass excrement but they say their urine is like cheese, not thick but foul. They say that once they drink early in the morning and again in the middle of the day, they ingest a sweet root which does not allow milk to solidify in their abdomen. They gnaw on this root in the evening and vomit everything up with ease.

(45) There are wild asses in India the size of horses and even bigger. They have a white body, crimson head, and deep blue eyes. They have a horn in the middle of their brow one and a half cubits in length. The bottom part of the horn for as much as two palms towards the brow is bright white. The tip of the horn is sharp and crimson in color while the rest in the middle is black. They say that whoever drinks from the horn (which they fashion into cups) is immune to seizures and the holy sickness and suffers no effects from poison, whether they drink wine, water, or anything else from the cup either before or after ingesting the drug. They also say that other asses, both tame and wild, and the other solid-hoofed animals have no astragalus or bile in the liver. However, these creatures do have an astragalus and bile in the liver. The astragalus, which is similar in size and shape to that of an ox, is the most beautiful I have ever seen. It is as heavy as lead and the color of cinnabar even at its deepest points. This animal is extremely swift and strong and neither horse nor any other animal can overtake it in pursuit. It begins running slowly, but the longer it runs, the more speed it picks up as it exerts itself brilliantly. Usually this animal cannot be hunted, but when they bring their young to pasture and are surrounded by many men on horseback, they choose not to flee and abandon their colts; rather, they fight both with their horn and by kicking and biting. They kill many horses and men, but they are taken down by the bow and javelin, as one could never capture them alive. Their flesh is inedible on account of its bitterness, but they are hunted for their horns and astragaloi.

(46) In the Indus River there is a worm that resembles the one that lives in the fig tree and is more or less seven cubits long. They say it is so wide that a ten year-old child could hardly embrace it. It has two teeth, one up top and one below, and eats whatever it grabs with these teeth. Throughout the day they live in the mud of the river but come out by night. When it comes across an ox or camel on land, it bites it, then drags the beast into the river and consumes everything except the intestines. It is caught on a giant fishhook baited with a kid or a lamb and fixed to an iron chain. After catching one, they hang it up for thirty days and set a jar under it because thick oil drips from it enough to fill ten attic *kotylae*. When the thirty days have passed, they discard the worm, secure the oil, and bring it to the king of the Indians. The king is the only one to possess it, since it is not permitted for anyone else to have the oil from the worm. Whatever this oil is poured on, whether wood or living being, it becomes kindled and burns with a fire that can only be extinguished by a lot of thick clay.

(47) There is a tall tree in India which is similar to the cedar or cypress but with leaves like the date-palm only a little wider. It has no axil but blooms like the male laurel and bears no fruit. In Indian it is called the *karpion* and in Greek the 'scented rose'. It is a rare tree and droplets of oil drip from it which they wipe up with wool and wring out into containers made of stone. It is slightly red in color, somewhat thick, but gives off the most pleasant of scents; they say its fragrance can be detected from a distance of up to five stades. It can be possessed only by the king and his relatives. The king of the Indians sent some to the Persian king and Ctesias claims to have personally seen it and said that he smelled a fragrance which defied description or comparison.

(48) Ctesias maintains that their cheese and wine are exceedingly sweet and that he personally tasted them and so knows from first hand experience.

(49) He says that there is a spring in India with a perimeter of five *orgyia* and square in shape. The water is in the rock at a depth of up to three cubits, but the water itself is three *orgyia* deep. The most prominent of Indians, men, women, and children, bathe in the spring and jump in it feet first. When they jump into it, the water casts them back out. It not only

repels men, but any other creature whether living or dead, is cast out onto dry land. This holds true for simply anything thrown into it except iron, silver, gold, and bronze; these items sink to the bottom. The water is very cold and sweet to drink. It makes a great noise like water boiling in a kettle and is used to clear up dull-white leprosy and mange. In Indian it is called the *Ballade* which in Greek means 'useful'.

(50) In the mountains of India where the reed grows, there is a tribe of men numbering 30,000. Their women give birth only once in their lifetime and their children have very beautiful teeth on both the upper and lower jaws. From birth each man and woman has white hair on their head and eyebrows for the first thirty years of their life. Their hair all over their body is white; after this it begins to turn black. When they reach the age of sixty, their hair is totally black. These men have up to eight fingers on each hand and likewise eight toes on each foot; the same goes for the women. They are very warlike and 5,000 of them serve the king of the Indians as archers and javelin men. According to Ctesias, they have ears big enough to cover their arms as far as the elbow and their entire back at the same time and one ear can touch the other.

(51) These are the stories Ctesias writes and asserts that they are completely truthful; adding that he personally saw some of the things he wrote about while others he heard from first-hand witnesses. He says that he omitted many other more incredible tales in order to not seem untrustworthy to those who have not seen them personally. These are some of the stories in his work.

- **F45a) Arrian. *Anab.* 5.4.2 (Eust. Dion. Per. 1143):** According to Ctesias, if he is a credible source, the Indus River at its most narrow point is 40 stades across, while it is 100 stades across at its widest point, but most of the river is in between these two distances.
- **F45bα) Aelian. *N.A.* 17.29:** When the king of the Indians attacks an enemy, 120,000 war elephants are leading the charge. I hear that another 3,000 elephants of exceeding size and strength follow trained to attack and tear down the enemy walls on the king's order. They tear down the walls with their chest, according to Ctesias who claims that he wrote this after hearing it, and also that he had personally seen date-palms in Babylon uprooted and toppled by elephants in this same manner with extreme violence. However, they only do this on the orders of an Indian mahout.
- **F45bβ) Aelian. *N.A.* 16.2 [L]:** There are huge roosters that do not have a red comb like our native ones but instead have a colorful one like a crown of flowers. Their tail feathers are not protruding nor curved in a spiral, but are flat and they drag them around like the peacock whenever they do not hold them erect and stand them upright. The feathers of the Indian cock are gold and dark green like an emerald.
- **F45c) Tzetz. *Chil.* 7.738:** If someone thinks that the reeds in Arabia defy belief, says Tzetzes, then who would believe Ctesias who writes that the reeds of India are 2,000 *orgyia* thick and that one of their knots makes two merchantmen?
- **F45dα) Arist. *H.A.* 2.1 p. 501a 24:** None of these species has two rows of teeth. There is one such species, if we are to believe Ctesias, for he describes a beast in India called the Martichora which has three rows of teeth on both jaws. It is the size of a lion and just has

hairy with similar feet; however, its face and ears are human, it has light blue eyes, and it is the color of cinnabar. It has a tail like that of the scorpion with a stinger at the tip and it shoots its stingers like a javelin. It makes a noise like a syrinx or salpinx. It can run as fast as a deer and is a savage man-eater.

- **F45dβ) Aelian. N.A. 4.21 (Philes De an. props. 38):** There seems to be an Indian beast of irresistible strength which is the size of the largest lion, red in color like cinnabar, and as hairy as a dog. In Indian it is called the Martichora. It has a face that more closely resembles a man than a beast. It has three rows of teeth on its upper and lower jaws which are very sharp at their cutting edge and larger than a dog's. Its ears also appear human in shape, but they are larger and hairy. It has blue eyes which also look human. I think its feet and claws resemble a lion's. The stinger of a scorpion is attached to the tip of the tail which is a cubit long and has stingers on either side. The tip of the tail pricks its victim when close at hand and instantly kills him. If someone pursues it, then it discharges its stingers horizontally like arrows and can shoot them very far. When it unleashes its stingers toward the front its tail bends back, and when it aims them toward the rear it stretches its tail out flat like the Saka. Whatever it hits it kills, with the exception of elephants. The stingers used for shooting measure one foot in length and are as thick as a rope. Ctesias claims and maintains that the Indians corroborate this, that in place of the discharged stingers a new one grows as if it were the offspring of this dreadful item. As Ctesias himself says, it is especially fond of human flesh and it kills many. It does not lay in wait for one person, but chases after two or three and vanquishes all of them by itself. It prevails upon the rest of the animal kingdom, but could never overpower a lion. This animal takes great pleasure in having its fill of human flesh living up to its name, for the Indian name in Greek means 'man-eater' and is so-called from this habit. It is as swift as a deer and the Indians hunt their young before they develop a stinger and smash their tails with stones so they are never able to grow them. It emits a sound most closely resembling that of a salpinx. Ctesias claims to have seen one such creature which was brought to the Persian king as a gift, if he is a credible witness about these matters. However, when one hears of the peculiar characteristics of this animal, his attention is drawn to the Cnidian's history.
- **F45dγ) Paus. 9.21.4:** In the account given by Ctesias there is a beast in India called the Martichora by the Indians and the 'man-eater' by the Greeks which I take to refer to the tiger. It has three rows of teeth on each jaw and a stinger on the tip of its tail. It defends itself with these stingers in close combat and discharges them when fighting at a distance like a bowman's arrow. I think excessive fear for the beast has led the Indians to receive a false account from each other. (5) They were also deceived as to the color of its skin. When the tiger appeared before them in the rays of the sun, they thought it was red and either because of its speed or, if it were not running, its continuous twisting and turning, they could not see it up close.
- **F45dδ) Plin. N.H. 8.75:** Ctesias writes that amongst these same men there is found an animal called the Mantichora which has three rows of teeth like a comb, the face and ears of a human, and bluish eyes. It is red in color with the body of a lion and a tail with stingers like a scorpion. Its voice is as if the sounds of the pipe were mixed with a trumpet and it is a creature of great speed which avidly goes after human flesh.

- **F45eα) Antig. Hist. mir. 166 [F 107 XXXVIII Pf]:** According to Callimachus, Ctesias writes in his history about the so-called immortal flame near the land of the Phaselitai on Mount Chimaera. If someone throws water on this fire, it burns brighter. However, if rubbish is thrown on it, then the fire is extinguished.
- **F45eβ) Plin. N.H. 2.236:** Mount Chimaera burns in Phaselis and the flame is undying both by day and night. According to Ctesias, this fire is inflamed by water but is extinguished by earth or dung.
- **F45fα) Excerpt Const. De an. 2.67 (Suppl. Aristot. I 1 ed. Lambras p. 53.27):** In India dwell those called the Pygmies who possess a great tract of land in the middle of the region. The men are dark-skinned like the other Indians and speak the same language, but they are extremely small with the tallest being two cubits while most, both men and women alike, are only one and a half cubits tall. Throughout their childhood they go around wearing cotton garments, but when they reach adolescence, they grow their hair long. The rest of the Pygmies have hair which reaches their knees and even longer while their beards exceed those of any other race. As a result, they say that, since they are small, they pull their beards down to their feet and their hair down their backs well below their knees. Because they grow their beard so long, they no longer wear cloaks but drape themselves in the front with the hair from their beard and in the back with the hair from their head. Then they gird their hair tightly around their entire body and so, in lieu of cloaks, they clothe themselves in their hair. They have very large penises which reach their ankles while they themselves are snub-nosed and deformed and look nothing like the rest of the Indians. Their women are small and ugly, just like the men. Their horses are like rams or a little bigger, their sheep are as small as lambs, and their asses, mules, and other livestock are no bigger than rams.
- **F45fβ) Ebd. 2. 556 (p. 139.27):** Amongst the Pygmies, just as they themselves are small, so are their sheep and other livestock.
- **F45fγ) Aelian. N.A. 16.37 [L]:** The so-called Psylloi in India (for there are others in Libya) have horses no greater than rams, and sheep which seem as small as lambs, while their asses, mules, oxen, and other livestock are similar in size.
- **F45g) Aelian. N.A. 4.26:** The Indians hunt hare and fox in the following way: they have no need of dogs when hunting, but they gather the young chicks of eagles, crows, and kites which they raise and train for the hunt. This is their method: they attach meat to a tame hare and domesticated fox, release them to run, send the birds after them on foot, and allow them to remove the meat. The birds pursue them with all their might and when they capture either a hare or a fox, they grip the meat and seize it as their prize. This is their bait and it is very enticing. Then, when they have perfected their skill in hunting, the Indians release them to hunt wild hare and fox. In the hopes of acquiring their accustomed meal, whenever they see one of these animals, they charge after it, quickly snatch it up, and return to their masters, according to Ctesias. In lieu of the meat hitherto fastened to the animals, the birds receive the innards of their prey as a meal. This is where we learned this practice.

- **F45h) Aelian. N.H. 4.27:** I hear that the griffin is an Indian animal with four feet with exceedingly strong talons which most closely resemble a lion's. They have plentiful feathers on their backs with black plumage but red in the front while their wings are white. Ctesias claims that the neck is adorned with deep blue feathers; the beak and head are like an eagle, similar to what an artisan would draw or mould, and its eyes are a fiery red. It makes its nest in the mountains but it is impossible to capture a full grown one; however, they can be taken into captivity when they are young. The Bactrians who are neighbors with the Indians say that the griffins guard the gold in that region and that they dig it out and weave their nests with it while the Indians gather what falls off. The Indians deny that these griffins are guardians of the aforementioned gold, for the griffins have no need of gold (in saying this I think they speak plausibly). However, when the Indians come to gather the gold, the griffins, in fear for their young, fight with the invaders. They contend with other animals whom they easily overpower, but they do not stand against lions or elephants. Fearing the might of these beasts, the natives do not retrieve this gold by day, but only do so at night, for they are more likely to go unnoticed at this time. This area where the griffins dwell and their gold is mined is frighteningly desolate. Those hunting the aforementioned material arrive in groups of one or two thousand, armed and carrying shovels and sacks. They watch for a moonless night before beginning to dig. If they escape the notice of the griffins the reward they reap is two-fold, for they return home with both their load and their life. When those possessing the knowledge of the goldsmith have refined the gold, they acquire immense wealth in exchange for the aforementioned dangers, but if they are detected they are killed. They return home, as I have learned, after three or four years.
- **F45iα) Aelian. N.A. 3.3:** The sheep belonging to these men have tails a cubit wide, according to Ctesias.
- **F45iβ) Excerpt. Const. De an. 2.556 (Suppl. Aristot. II p. 139.13):** Ctesias says "the Indians have sheep and goats which are larger than the biggest asses. For the most part, each ewe and goat produces up to six young, but neither bears less than three while most bear four. They have long and wide tails just reaching the ground, which they drag around; they are as much as a cubit in width. The Indians cut the tails from the breeding females because they cannot be mounted by the males unless their tails are removed. It is very sweet to eat and each tail has ten *minae* of fat while the smaller ones have only five. They make oil from this fat and often use it in their cooking. They tear open the tail of the male ass and remove three *minae* of fat or sometimes up to four. Then they sew it back up and restore it to health, for unless this is done, the ewes will not be able to carry around their tails. They do this every year as the fat grows back and the tail returns to its original condition.
- **F45iy) Aelian. N.A. 4.32 [L]:** The flocks of the Indians are something worthy to learn of. I hear that the goats and ewes are bigger than the largest asses and they bear four young each; neither the Indian goat nor the ewe would ever bear less than three. The tails of these sheep reach their feet and the goats have the very large tails that just touch the ground. They practice the custom of removing the tails of the asses of calf-bearing age so they can be mounted. They also extract oil from the fat of these animals. They slash open the tails of the males, remove the fat, and stitch them back together. The cut heals back and every trace of it vanishes.

- **F45kα) Aristot. H.A. 8.28 p. 606 a 8:** According to Ctesias, although he is not entirely reliable, there are no swine in India, either wild or tame, but the bloodless and scaled beasts are all large.
- **F45kβ) Aelian. N.A. 3.3:** The peculiarities of the nature of these animals are as follows: Ctesias says there are neither wild nor tame pigs in India.
- **F45kγ) Ecerpt. Const. De an. 2.572 (Suppl. Aristot. I1 p. 143.17):** Ctesias claims "there are no swine in India either tame or wild. No Indian would ever eat the meat of swine anymore than he would that of a human".
- **F45kδ) Aelian. N.A. 16.37 [L]:** They say that there are no swine in India either tame or wild. The Indians are disgusted at the prospect of eating this animal and they would never consume pork, just as they would never eat human flesh.
- **F45kε) Val. Max. *facta et dicta memorabilia* 8 ext. 5 [L]:** The Ethiopians make less astonishing claims about the longevity of this king, when, according to Herodotus, they say that he lived longer than 120 years; the same assertion is made about the Indians by Ctesias.
- **F45l) Aelian. N.A. 4.36:** The historians say that India is rich in drugs and suitable for growing these plants. Some of these drugs are used to heal those on the verge of death from animal bites, since there are many in this region, and remove them from these dangers. Others are used to quickly cause death, such as the venom from the snake. This snake is a span in length and of a very deep crimson color, but the head, as they describe it, is not crimson but white, not off-white, so to speak, but a white brighter than snow or milk. This snake has no teeth and is found in the hottest parts of India. It cannot bite and you could think that it is tame and gentle, but wherever it spits, so I hear, whether on a man or beast, each limb affected rots away. After capturing it, they hang it by its tail so its head is facing down towards the ground and then they place a bronze vessel under its mouth. The drops from its mouth pour into the vessel and this runoff thickens and congeals; if you saw it you would think it was sap from an almond tree. When the serpent dies they remove the vessel and replace it with another, likewise made of bronze. When the snake is dead, a wet discharge similar to water in consistency flows out. They allow this to happen for three days at which time this substance congeals. There is a difference in color between the two substances; the latter is very dark while the former is the color of amber. If you give anyone a sesame-seed sized droplet of this substance, simply putting it into wine or food, the person will first be seized with violent convulsions, then his eyes roll back, his brains melt down and pass out the nose, and he dies an agonizing but swift death. If you administer a smaller portion of the drug, death becomes inevitable but takes time. If you dispense even a sesame seed sized droplet of the dark substance which discharged from the dead serpent, it causes suppuration while consumption seizes the victim and he wastes away within a year. Many survive for two years dying gradually.
- **F45m) Aelian. N.A. 4.41:** There is a species of very small Indian birds which build their nests both amidst the lofty rocks and also the so-called smooth cliffs. The little bird is the



size of a partridge egg and I think its color is orange. The Indians call it *Dikairon* in their language, but the Greeks, as I hear it, call it *Dikaion*. If someone should ingest a speck of its dung placed in a drink, he would die by evening. The death is like sleep – very pleasant and free of pain – the sort the poets like to call 'limb-relaxing' and 'easy'. This death would bring freedom from pain and therefore is most pleasing for those in need of it. The Indians go to great lengths to acquire it, for they consider it the source of forgetfulness of troubles for its owner. The Indians also include this substance among their most precious gifts for the Persian king who receives it as a prize revered above all others; he hoards it as a remedy and antidote for incurable illness, if he should contract one. No one else in Persia possesses this substance except the king himself and his mother. Therefore, let us compare the drugs of India and Egypt and see which are more sought after. First of all, the Egyptian drug curbed and suppressed pain for one day whereas the Indian drug provided oblivion from ills for eternity. The one was a gift of a woman and the other came from a bird or some secret nature which frees men from a truly grievous prison via the aforementioned servant. The Indians are lucky enough to possess it so they can be freed from the imprisonment of this life whenever they wish.

- **F45nα) Apollon. *Hist. mir.* 17:** According to Ctesias, there is a tree in India called the *parebon* which attracts whatever is brought near it including gold, silver, tin, bronze, and all other types of metal. It also draws in birds that fly close by. If the tree is taller, then it even attracts goats, sheep, and other animals of a similar size.
- **F45nβ) Hsych. s.v. πάρηβον:** *parebon*: according to Ctesias it is a tree.
- **F45oα) Plin. *N.H.* 37.39:** Ctesias claims that there is a river in India called the Hypobarus which, as the name implies, brings all good things. It flows from the northern regions to the eastern part of the ocean near the mountains wooded with the amber-bearing trees. This tree is called the *pitthachora* which means 'pleasant sweetness'.
- **F45oβ) Psellus. ed. P. Maas [L]:** (1) In India there flows a river two stades wide called the *spabaros* which in Greek means 'the bringer of all good things'. According to Ctesias, this river brings amber for thirty days each year. They say that a mountain looms over the river where there are large trees from which sap drops into the river causing it to solidify and become amber. This tree is called the *zetachora* which in Greek means 'sweet'. He claims that the tree also bears fruit in bunches like grapes on the vine, but its berries are like the Pontic nut.
- (2) Men dwell on the mountain who have the head of a dog but the rest of their body is human. They shout to the other Indians and communicate with them, but instead of talking they howl like dogs. They eat the fruit from these trees and the raw meat from wild animals which they hunt. They also keep many sheep and their teeth are larger than a dog's. They wear black garments made of hide and the drink milk from their sheep. All of them have tails, men and women alike, below the haunches just like a dog.
- **F45pα) Plin. *N.H.* 7.23:** In many mountains there is a race of men with the head of a dog and clothed in animal skins. Instead of a voice they issue howls. They are armed for the

hunt with talons and feast on birds. According to Ctesias, they numbered more than 120,000 at the time of his writing.

- **F45pβ) Tzetz. *Chil.* 7.713:** Ctesias claims that there are amber-producing trees and dog-headed peoples in India. He maintains that they are very just and live by hunting.
- **F45pγ) Aelian. *N.A.* 4.46:** There are creatures in India the size of dung beetles which are red in color. If you saw them for the first time you might liken them to cinnabar. They have very long legs and are soft to the touch. They live in the amber-producing trees and feed on their fruit. The Indians capture these creatures, mash them up, and use them to dye their dark-red garments, chitons, and whatever else they wish to turn this color and paint. Raiment of this sort was brought to the Persian king and their beauty was a source of amazement for the Persians. It was compared to the native Persian garments and amazingly was found to be far superior. According to Ctesias, this was because it was brighter and more noticeable than the revered Sardian robes. They are produced in the part of India where the dung beetles and Cynocephaloi live. These people get their name from the appearance and nature of their bodies. For the most part, they have a human figure and go around clothed in animal skins. They are just and do no wrong to anyone. Instead of talking they howl, but still they understand the Indian language. They feed on the flesh of wild animals which they capture with the greatest of ease, for they are very fast runners. They kill what they catch, break it up into pieces, and cook it with the heat of the sun instead of fire. They raise goats and sheep and, although they feed on the flesh of wild animals, they drink the milk from the domesticated animals they rear.
- **F45q) Aelian. *N.A.* 4.52:** I have heard that there are wild asses in India no smaller than horses which have a white body, a head which is almost crimson, and dark blue eyes. They have a horn on their brow one and a half cubits in length. The lower portion of the horn is white, the upper part is crimson, and the middle is very dark. I hear that the Indians drink from these multicolored horns, but not all the Indians, only the most powerful, and they pour gold around them at intervals as if they were adorning the beautiful arm of a statue with bracelets. They say that the one who drinks from this horn will never experience terminal illnesses. No longer would he suffer seizures or the so-called holy sickness nor could he be killed with poison. If he drank the poison first, he would vomit it up and return to health. It is believed that the other asses throughout the world, both tame and wild, and the rest of the other solid-hoofed animals do not have an astragalus in their ankle nor do they have bile in their liver. According to Ctesias, however, the one-horned Indian asses have astragaloi and are not lacking bile. They say their astragaloi are black and if someone should grind them up they would be the same on the inside. These creatures are not only faster than other asses, but horses and deer as well. They begin to run lightly, but gradually they run harder and to pursue one is, to put it poetically, to chase the intangible. When the female gives birth and guides her newborns about, the sires join them in the pasture and watch over their young. These asses are found on the most desolate plains in India. When the Indians set out to hunt them, the asses allow those that are still young and tender to graze behind them while they fight and charge the horsemen at close quarters and strike them with their horn. Such is their strength that nothing can endure their impact. Everything succumbs to them and gets pierced; however, if by chance it is crushed to pieces, it is rendered useless. They have

attacked the sides of horses and ripped them open disemboweling them. For that reason, the horsemen are too afraid to go near them because the price for getting too close is a horrible death for both themselves and the horses. The asses also have a deadly kick and their bite reaches such a depth that whatever is caught in its grip is completely torn away. You could not capture a full grown ass alive, but they are killed with javelins and arrows and when it is dead, the Indians remove the much revered horn from the animal. The flesh of the Indian ass is inedible because it is so bitter.

- **F45r) Aelian. N.A. 5.3:** This Indus River is lifeless save only the worm they say inhabits it. In form it is similar to the worms born and reared in trees, but the ones in the river approach seven cubits in length, although you could find them bigger or smaller. Their width is such that a ten year old boy would hardly be able to embrace it. These creatures have one tooth on both the upper and lower jaw which are square and a *pygon* in length. Their teeth are so powerful that they easily crush whatever they grasp, whether it is a stone or an animal, either tame or wild. They spend the day below at the bottom of the river pleasantly dwelling in the mud and sediment where they remain hidden. By night they go forth onto land and whatever they come across, whether it is a horse, ox, or ass, they crush it, drag it into their own habitat, and eat it in the river; they devour every limb except the intestines. If hunger lays hold of them even in the daytime, then they creep upon camels or oxen as they drink from the riverbank, seize them by the tip of the lips, and in a violent rush drag them with a firm grip into the water and have their meal. Each animal is covered by skin two dactyls thick. The following way for hunting them has been devised: they lower a thick, powerful hook fastened to an iron chain rigged with a thick rope of white flax. They then wrap both up in wool in order to keep the worm from gnawing through them. Next, they bait the hook with either a lamb or a kid and lower it into the water. Up to thirty men hold the rigging ready to hurl javelins and armed with daggers while sticks of very strong cherry wood are kept at hand should it be necessary to club the worm. When the worm has taken the bait and been hooked, they drag it out, kill the beast, and then hang it in the heat of the sun for thirty days. Thick oil is squeezed from it into a ceramic vessel and each worm produces up to ten *kotylae*. This oil is sealed and brought to the king of the Indians and no one else is allowed to possess as much as a drop of it. The rest of the carcass is useless. The oil has such power that if you wanted to burn up a heap of wood and spread the embers, you could pour a *kotyla* of this substance on it and kindle the flame without first putting a spark to the wood. If you wanted to burn up a man or animal, you could pour this on him and he is immediately consumed. They say that the king of the Indians uses this oil to destroy the cities that have become hostile. He does not wait for battering-rams, penthouses, or any other siege engines since he takes the cities by burning them to ashes. He fills the earthenware vessels which contain as much as a *kotyla* each and seals them at the top before hurling them at the gates. When they hit the embrasures the vessels shatter upon impact causing the oil to sink down and an unquenchable fire covers over the doors. The fire burns their weapons and fighting soldiers with its superior strength. However, it can be subdued and extinguished with a large amount of rubbish poured over it. This is the account given by Ctesias of Cnidos.
- **F45σα) Antigon. Hist. mir. 150:** [Callimachus] says that Ctesias writes about one of the lakes in India which does not receive anything thrown into it, like the lakes in Sicily and Media, except gold, iron, and bronze. If something falls into the lake horizontally, it expels

the object upright and it cures the so-called white disease. On another lake oil floats on the surface on a calm day.

- **F45sβ) Paradox. Flor. 3:** There is a spring in India which casts those who dive in back out onto dry land as if from a catapult, according to the history of Ctesias.
- **45t) Plin. N.H. 7.23 (F45p):** Amongst a certain Indian race the women give birth once in their life and their offspring are immediately grey-haired.
- **F46a) Aelian. N.H. 16.31:** Ctesias says in his account of India that the so-called Cynamolgoi, who are adamant dog-breeders, raise many dogs which are similar in size to those in Hyrcania. The Cnidian claims this is done because from the summer solstice to the middle of winter herds of cattle roam about as if a beehive or wasps' nest had been disturbed. The cattle are countless in number and are wild, violent creatures who vent their anger with their horns. They cannot remove these creatures in any other way except to unleash their dogs which are well-bred and always trained for this purpose and so can easily contend with and overcome the cattle. They remove the parts of their flesh deemed suitable for consumption and dole out the rest to the dogs gladly sharing their fruits with their benefactors. During the season when the cattle no longer roam this region, these men use their dogs to hunt other species. They milk their bitches, from which act their name is derived, and drink it as we do with the milk of sheep and goats.
- **F46b) Pollux. 5.41:** The Cynamolgoi are dogs who live around the southern marshes who take their nourishment from the milk of cows. They fight with the Indian cattle who attack the people during the summer, according to Ctesias.
- **F47a) Antigon. Hist. mir. 146 (F I 1'a):** [According to Ctesias] in India there is a spring called the Sila not even the lightest object thrown in floats, but everything sinks.
- **F47b) Plin. N.H. 31.21:** Ctesias writes about a pond called the Side in India in which nothing floats and everything sinks.
- **F48a) Aristot. H.A. 3.22 p. 523 a 26):** It is untrue what Ctesias writes about the sperm of elephants.
- **F48b) Aristot. De gen. an. 2.2 p. 736a 2:** For Ctesias of Cnidos is clearly wrong on what he says about the sperm of elephants, for he says that it hardens when it dries and becomes similar to amber. This does not happen.
- **F49a) Arrian. Ind. 3.6:** Ctesias of Cnidus says that the territory of India is equal to the size of the rest of Asia.
- **F49b) Strabon. 15.1.12:** While Ctesias says that India is no smaller than the rest of Asia.
- **F50) Athen. 10.45 p. 434 D (Eust. Hom. Od. s 3):** Ctesias claims that in India it is not permissible for the king to get drunk.

- **F51a) Plin. *N.H.* 7.23: (F45pα; F45t):** The same author (sc. Ctesias) writes that the race of men who are called the Monocoli have one leg but show amazing agility by jumping. These same men are also called the Sciapodes because when it is hot, they lay on the ground on their back and shade themselves with their feet. They inhabit a region not far from the Troglodytes. Turning again to the west from these people are those who lack necks and have eyes on their shoulders. (24) There are also satyrs in the mountains of the eastern part of India in the region of the so-called Catarcludi. Satyrs are extremely swift animals running sometimes on all fours and sometimes upright in imitation of a human. Because of their speed, they are never captured unless old or sick.
- **F51b) Tzetz. *Chil.* 7.621-641 (Kiesling 629-649):** There is a book by Scylax of Caryanda written about India which claims that there are men called the Sciapodes and the Otoliknoi. Of these the Sciapodes have very broad feet and at midday they drop to the ground, stretch their feet out above them, and give themselves shade. The Otoliknoi have huge ears which they use to cover themselves like an umbrella. This Scylax also writes numerous tales about the Monophthalmoi, the Henotiktontes, and countless other strange marvels. He speaks of them as if they were true and none of them fabricated. Since I have not seen any of it, I consider these tales to be lies. That they have some elements of truth is attested by the fact that many others claim to have seen such marvels and ones even more incredible in their lifetime. This list includes Ctesias, Iambulos, Hisigonos, Rheginos, Alexander, Sotion, Agathosthenes, Antigonos, Edoxos, Hippostratos, and countless others, including Protagoras himself and even Ptolemy, Akestorides and other writers of prose some of whom I am personally familiar with and others I am not.
- **F52) Plin. *N.H.* 7.28 (Onesikritos 134 F11):** Crates of Pergamum calls the Indians who live beyond one hundred years the Gymnetae, but many call them the Macrobiani. Ctesias describes a race of these people called the Pandarae situated in the valleys, who live for 200 years. In youth they have white hair but it turns black as they reach old age. (29) In contrast to these people, there are some neighbors of the Macrobiani whose lives do not exceed forty years and whose women bear children only once. Agatharchides relates this same story and adds that they feed on locusts and are swift runners. Clitarchos gave them the name of the Mandi and Megasthenes names 365 of their villages. Their women gave birth at the age of seven and reach old age at forty.

### Other Works

#### *On The Tributes Of Asia*

- **F53) Athen. 2.74 p. 67 A (F38):** he (sc. Ctesias) also recounts in his book *On the Tributes of Asia* all the preparations for the king's dinner although he never mentions pepper or vinegar.
- **F54) Athen. 10.59 p. 442 B:** For example, Baiton, the surveyor of Alexander, in his work *The Stations of Alexander's March* and Amyntas in his *On Stations* say that the race of the Tapyroi are so fond of wine that they anoint themselves with it and nothing else. Ctesias makes the same assertions in his work *On the Tributes of Asia* and adds that they are very just.

## *Periodos (Periegesis, Periploi)*

### **Book I**

- **F55) Steph. Byz. s.v. Σίγγυνοϲ:** Singynos: An Egyptian city, according to what Ctesias says in his *Periploi*. The citizens are the Singynoi.
- **F56) Schol. Apoll. Rhod. 2.1015b:** This Hieron is a mountain near the Tibarenoi in the territory of the Mossynoikoi and it extends as far as the Euxeinos River. Ctesias also mentions it in Book I of his *Periodoi* and Suidas in the second book of his work entitled the *Macrones*. More precisely, Agathon in his *Periplous of the Pontus* says that it extends one hundred stades from the Trapezon. Eirenaios says that Mnesimachos discusses it in Book I of his work *On the Scythians* but he is misinformed, for Mnesimachos mentions the Scythian region as being in Europe while Apollonius and his predecessors place it in Asia. There is a third Mt. Hieron in Thrace.

### **Book II**

- **F57) Schol. Apoll. Rhod. 2.339-401:** *Here in the region of Kyrtais and the territory of the Amarantoi far from the mountains and the Kirkaian plain the Phasis whirlpool casts a wide stream into the sea:* Amaranton is with a circumflex according to what Herodian says in his *General Prosody*. Amaranta is a city on the Pontus. He claims that the mountains of Colchis are the source of the Phasis River, but Hegesistratos of Ephesus is unaware of this and instead interprets the meadows of Phasis as ‘amarantian’ because they are full of blooms and unfading. Ctesias claims in Book II that the Amaranta Mountains are in Colchis while Eratosthenes contends that the Phasis flows from the mountains of Armenia through Colchis and into the sea.
- **F58) Steph. Byz. s.v. Τίριζα:** Tiriza: a Paphlagonian city; The ethnic name is the Tirizoi. Ctesias calls them Tiribizanoi in Book II: “from the region of the Odrysoi to the Tiribazanoi who live in Paphlagonia”

### **Book III**

- **F59) Steph. Of Byz. s.v. Κοσύτη:** Cosyte: an Umbrian city, according to what Ctesias says in Book III of his *Periegesis*. The ethnic is Cosytaian just as Motyaios is the ethnic for an inhabitant of Motya, a city in Sicily.

### **Book Unknown**

- **F60) Harp. (Sud. S 601) s.v. Σκιόποδες:** Sciapodes: Antiphon in his book *On Concord* claims that they are a Libyan tribe. Ctesias in his *Periplous of Asia* says, “beyond this region are the Sciapodes who have very wide feet just like geese and when it is hot they fall on their backs, raise their legs, and shade themselves with their feet.”

### Fragments of Unknown Works

- **F61a) Antigon. *Hist. mir.* 165:** According to Callimachus, Ctesias says in his history about the water flowing from the rock in Armenia that it carries along black fish which kill whoever eats them.
- **F61b) Plin. *N.H.* 31.25:** Ctesias says that in Armenia there is a spring full of black fish which immediately cause death when ingested.
- **F62) Harp. *s.v. ὑποκυδέω*:** Hypokydeis: There are places covered in shoal water according to Deinarchos in his speech *Against Stephanos*. A moist place is *hypokydes*, as is evident from Book III of Ctesias. Euphorion says, “like a drenched meadow”. However, in some of the copies by the orator it is written ‘hypokoiloi’.
- **F63) Lyd. *De mens.* 4.14:** The origin of pepper according to the ancients and Ctesias of Cnidus is as follows: there is a tribe in the region of Azume called the Bessudai who have very small and feeble bodies and big, unshaven heads with plain hair like the Indians. They live in underground caves and know how to maneuver on precipices on account of their familiarity with them. These men cut down and gather pepper from the short trees which grow along side the bushes. Maximus says, “The plant first existed in India without thorns but was cultivated like the grapevine either up trees or upon a stake. It produces fruit in bunches like terebinth and has longish foliage like ivy. The plant begins to produce fruit after three years and dies after eight. Once it is picked, it turns black, not from being roasted but from being placed in the sun which is why the pepper that is picked and dried in the shade remains white.”
- **F64) Serv. *In Verg. Geor.* I. 30:** The island of Thyle is in the Ocean between the northern and western regions beyond Britain, Spain and the Orkneys. On this island when the sun is in Cancer, it is said that day is continuous without night. From this island originate many other marvels that have been described by Ctesias and Diogenes among the Greeks, and by Sammonicus among the Romans.
- **F65) Scol. Bern.; Brev. Expos. Vergil *Geor.* I. 482:** “Eridanus, King of the rivers”: it is called the Po. There is much dispute about the actual site of Heridanus. Eusebius thinks it is the Rhone because of its size; Ctesias claims it is in India, Choerilius places it in Germany saying it is where Phaethon perished, and Ion says it is in Achaia.
- **F66) Strabo 16.4.20:** Some say that the Erythran Sea gets its name from the color it shows due to reflection, whether it is from the sun being at its zenith or from the mountains which are red from being scorched; both suggestions are just a guess. Ctesias of Cnidus claims that a spring feeds into it which has very red water. Agatharchides, his fellow citizen, says that it was named by someone from Boxos, arguing that it was because a certain Persian named Erythras who first came to the island...who established colonies both there and at other islands and along the coast; he named the sea after himself. Others reveal that Erythras was the son of Perseus and the leader of this region.

## Medical Treatises

- **F67) Gal. on Hipp. II 4.40 [T4]:** They criticize Hippocrates for reinserting a dislocated hip on the grounds that it would immediately pop back out of socket. The first was Ctesias of Cnidos, his relative (for this man too was a member of the Asclepiads). After Ctesias, many others followed suit.
- **F68) Oreibas. Collect. Med. 8.8:** The treatise of Ctesias on hellebore: “In my father’s time and my grandfather’s time, no physician administered hellebore, for they did not understand how powerful it was nor did they know the correct dosage to give. If someone administered hellebore, he ordered the patient to draw up a will since he was going to be taking a serious risk. Many of those who took the drug choked to death while only a few survived. Now, however, it seems to be very safe.”

## Fragments of Doubtful Authenticity

- **F69) Tzetz. Chil. 3.83-101:** The Assyrian king Sesostris, who according to Diodorus was called Sesoosis, was the sole ruler of Assyria and the entire world. He yoked the kings of this region to his chariot and forced them to tow it around the way others do with horses, and he was called ‘ruler of the universe’ and ‘god’ by his contemporaries. One of these kings once reduced him to humility with a riddle on how unpredictable fortune is. While pulling the chariot, he watched the wheels, thus slowing down the pace. When Sesostris said, “Why are you going so slowly along the road? Tell me quickly.” The man replied, “Because after seeing how the wheels are turning, I am not running.” Sesostris understood what this man revealed and reigned in his arrogance. He unyoked the men and in the future acted kindly and with restraint toward them all. Ctesias, Herodotus, Diodorus, Dion, Callisthenes, Simocatus, and others relate this story briefly while others give a more detailed account.
- **F70) Tzetz. Chil. 3.640-647:** . . . and why do I tell you that Cyrus remembered the favor? There is a common Persian custom regarding ingratitude that everyone must repay a favor when he is able to do so, and they harshly rebuke and chastise those who do not. They view those guilty of ungratefulness as acting very impiously towards their fatherland, their family and God. Xenophon wrote a history of Cyrus while Ctesias and Herodotus wrote about the Persian custom.
- **F71) Tzetz. Chil. 8.985-92:** Herodotus, Diodorus, Ctesias, and everyone else say that Arabia happens to be a blessed place and just like India, it is very sweet smelling and gives off aromas, for even the stones when crushed emit a scent. The men of that region find relaxation in the pleasant smell and they smoke certain bones and horns; they also do this to regain their strength.
- **F72) Antigon. Hist. mir. 116:** The historiographer says that the Persian Arsames had teeth right from birth.



## False Fragments

### *On Mountains*

- **F73) Plut. *De fluv.* 21.5 (=Stob. *Flor.* 4.36.20):** There is a stone called the *antipathes* ('remedy from suffering') produced on this site (sc. Mt. Teuthras) which, when rubbed with wine and administered to patients, alleviates the suffering from dull-white leprosy and leprosy, according to what Ctesias of Cnidos writes in Book II of his treatise *On Mountains*.

### *On Rivers*

- **F74) Plut. *De fluv.* 19.2:** In this river (sc. Alpheus) there is a plant called the *kenchritis* which closely resembles a vine. Doctors boil it down and administer it in a drink to patients who have lost their wits and deliver them from their madness, according to what Ctesias says in Book I of his treatise *On Rivers*.

## Interpolations

- **F75) Prima interpolatio cod. Monac. Gr. 287 (Photius) [L]:** The tales of Ctesias of Cnidos on the marvels of the world: The Seres and the inhabitants of upper India are said to have an exceedingly large physique as some of them are found to be thirteen cubits tall, and they live for more than 200 years. On one portion of the Gaitros River there are savage men with skin which most closely resembles a hippopotamus since it cannot be pierced by arrows. In India too they say that at the innermost region on an island in the sea there live men, who have very large tails, like those depicted on a satyr.
- **F76) Altera interpolatio cod. Monac. Gr. 287 (Photius) [L]:** In Ethiopia there is a creature called the *krokottas*, commonly known as the wolf-dog. It has amazing power and they say it mimics a human with its voice and calls men out by name during the night as if using a human voice. They attack in throngs and devour their prey. The animal has the strength of a lion, the swiftness of a horse, and the power of a bull, but it yields to the sword. In Euboea in the land of Calchis the flocks of that region do not have bile, but their flesh is so bitter that not even dogs will eat them. They say that beyond the Maurousian Gates it rains during the summer but it grows very hot in the winter. In the region of Kyonia he says there is a spring which produces a stream of oil instead of water; this is why the natives use it to procure all of their sustenance. On the island called Metadrida, there is a spring situated near the sea which causes a very low ebb in the tide at midday and at midnight which leaves so many fish stranded on dry land, that the natives of that region cannot gather them all, but leave most of them behind and they rot on dry land.

CHAPTER 3  
COMMENTARY

*The Persika*

- **F1a)** The Chronicle of Eusebius has not survived in its original form; however sometime before 600 C.E. an Armenian translation was made. This too was thought to be lost until its rediscovery in 1787. In 1911 Josef Karst made a German translation from a photographic facsimile of the Armenian manuscript which Mommsen claimed was the original for all subsequent copies. This German translation is the text used by both Jacoby and Lenfant in their editions of the *Persika*. See Mosshamer (1979 p.37ff) for a full discussion of the history of the text and the reliability of the Armenian translation. Jacoby was the first to separate the relevant portions into three fragments (1a, 1g, and 1oa). Here I have used the text of Lenfant which follows the organization of Jacoby but gives a lengthier version of the text. Jacoby chose to give an abbreviated version in order to avoid conflict with the other fragments of Ctesias. Lenfant, however, rightly points out that Cephalion, the 2<sup>nd</sup> century C.E. historian whom Eusebius is quoting here, admits to using multiple sources at the beginning of the passage and this is likely the cause for the discrepancies.  
**Zaravyšt:** This figure is not mentioned anywhere else in the sources. Lenfant claims that it is a corruption by one of the sources after Ctesias who confused the king of the Bactrians with Zoroaster whose name in Avesta is Zarathushtra (cf. F1b §6.2 and note).
- **F1b) Ninus:** This is the earliest Greek reference to Ninus as founder of Nineveh. Herodotus (1.7) only mentions Ninus once and simply says that he was the son of Belus, a member of the Heraclids, and the father of the first Heraclid ruler of Sardis. He never refers to him as the king of Assyria or the founder of Nineveh, but does place him as a contemporary of the Trojan War. There have been various attempts to identify the historical figure upon whom Ninus is based. Šamšī-Adad V has been proposed because of the similarities of his wife Sammuramat to Semiramis (see below). This figure, whose reign was short and insignificant (cf. Olmstead 1951 p. 154ff), bears no resemblance to the Ninus of Ctesias. A more plausible figure is Sennacherib (704-681 B.C.E.), who moved the capital of the Assyrian empire to Nineveh where he constructed, amongst other edifices, a palace so magnificent that it bore the title *ekallu ša šānin lā īšû* ‘Palace without rival’ (cf. Russell 1991). Moreover, like Ninus, he subdued Babylon and brought it under Assyrian control. However, here the resemblance ends. After noting the similarities of Ninus to both Sennacherib and Tiglath Pileser III, the eighth century Assyrian king who was responsible for the resurgence of the Assyrian empire, Lenfant (XLII ff.) comes to the conclusion, perhaps rightly, that Ninus is likely based on the common qualities and attributes of several great kings. Auberger’s assertion (1991 p. 142) that the name Ninus is derived from Tukulti-Ninurta is plausible yet need not be the case. Since Ninurta was the name of a Babylonian god this appellation was fairly common. It appears in two other names on the Assyrian King list, Ninurta-apil-Ekur and Ninurta-tukulti-Aššur (cf. Grayson’s emendation to *Chronicle* 15 line 21 where he reads Ninurta-kudurri usur I).  
**Babylon was not yet founded:** This statement is obviously false since Babylon was founded sometime in the third millennium B.C.E. and first appears in the sources near the end of the Akkadian dynasty (2371-2239 B.C.E.). The Babylonians reached their height of power in

the eighteenth century under Hammurabi, who began the Old Babylonian Empire which endured until the early sixteenth century (cf. Saggs 1962 p. 62ff). After an interlude of deterioration, the power of Babylon was again restored under Nebuchadnezzar I (1126-1104). However, this resurgence was short lived and Babylon once again fell into a lengthy period of decline which would last until Nabopolassar returned Babylon to a state of supremacy in 626 B.C.E. (*ABC* 2). It was during this last period of decline before the advent of Nabopolassar that Assyria reached its acme of strength and when any figure that might be the historical basis for Ninus would have lived. This state of decay for Babylon may have led Ctesias (or more likely his source) to the conclusion that Babylon was not yet founded and that Babylonia was merely comprised of villages at that time.

**he invaded Armenia...:** In the 730's Tiglath Pileser I invaded the Haldian territory in Armenia. The war ended in a stalemate when the Assyrian king failed to capture the citadel at Van and gain any success in the mountains. The resulting impasse endured throughout the Assyrian Empire.

**He was taken prisoner...and impaled:** Ctesias uses the term ἀνασταύρω which can mean either to impale or crucify. The term clearly refers to impalement in this passage. Herodotus (III.125 VI.30) uses the term to refer to impalement although as form of mutilation of the dead rather than execution. By Roman times, ἀνασταύρω meant to crucify (cf. *Plb.* 1.11). The Law Code of Hammurabi mentions impalement as a method for execution when a woman is found guilty of murdering her husband in order to be with another man (Law 153). Evidence for the Assyrian practice of impalement can be seen in the depictions of the siege of Lachish by Sennacherib (cf. Olmstead 1951 p. 307ff and p. 87 as a method of execution for rebels).

**The Tanais:** This is the Don River which flows in the western portion of what is now Russia. Cf. *Hdt.* 4.57 The use of the term satrap in this passage is anachronistic since a satrapy was a Persian office

**After seventeen years...except India and Bactria:** The frontiers of the empire described in the following passages do not refer to the historical limits of the Assyrians. They actually correspond to the frontiers of the Achaemenid Empire in the time of Artaxerxes II. Auburger (1991 p. 143) rightly asserts that Ctesias is relating the official history of the empire and is seeking to legitimize the kingdom of Achaemenid Persia by showing that it was the hereditary empire of the east dating back beyond the Medes to the Assyrians.

**The Syrian Vale:** Bigwood (1980 p. 200) claims that Coele Syria is Diodorus' term rather than Ctesias'. She points out that the name was unknown to Herodotus and Xenophon and is only used once before Alexander in the *Periplus* of Scylax written in the early 330's. The term became common in the Hellenistic period and is used several times by Diodorus. In any case it refers to the region west of the Euphrates (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 253 n.96)

**He also conquered...Parthyans:** The Cadusians inhabited a desolate region on the southwest corner of the Caspian Sea. Consequently, little was known about them even after the campaigns of Alexander. However they were mentioned sporadically in the sources (cf. Strabo 11.7.1 for a description of the size of their territory) and Ctesias says that they provided cavalry in the service of Artaxerxes at the Battle of Cunaxa (F19); cf. F5 and F8d for the hostility between the Cadusians and the Medes (cf. Syme 1988 for a full discussion of the Cadusians). The Tapyroi dwell to the south of the Caspian Sea in a region that, according to Strabo (11.8.8), lay between the Hyrcanians and the Arians. They inhabit the region from the Alburz to the Caspian (cf. Herzfeld 1968 p. 249, 317). The Drangians lived in the eastern

part of Iran. The manuscripts give the form Δραγγῶν, which more closely follows the Old Persian *Zraṅka*, than the often adopted Δραγγῶν which is based on Strabo 15.2.5. cf. Kent 1953 p. 211 for the various forms of the name. According to Strabo (11.8.8) the Derbikians are adjacent to Hyrcania but Aelian (*V. H.* 4.1) places them on the southwestern shore of the Caspian. The Carmanians were located in southern Iran in what is now Hormuz. The term Choromnaians presents a controversy because they appear two more times in Ctesias but as the Choramnians (F9) and the Choramnaians (F12). Rhodes has proposed to emend the text here to make it agree with the spelling in F12 but this proposal was met with little acceptance. Regardless of spelling, Schmitt (1979 p. 131) is right to identify them with the Chorasmians of Herodotus (3.93) who lived in what is now Uzbekistan along the Oxus River (the modern Amu Dayra). According to Auburger, the Borkanians, who are elsewhere in Ctesias called the Barkaninas (F9§8 and F9a), lived on the border of Hyrcania. Kiessling (1914), however, claims that they are in fact the same people and that Ctesias mistakenly refers to them as two nations. If *Varkāna*, the Old Persian term for Hyrcania, did in fact lead Ctesias to mistakenly differentiate the two peoples then this could be further evidence for his knowledge of Persian. Although Curtius (3.2.5) distinguishes between Hyrcanians and Barkanians in the service of Darius III, he may be doing so under the influence of Ctesias. The Parthyans occur in Ctesias as the Parthyaioi (F7 and F8d §46), the Parthoi (F5 §34.1), and the Parthioi (F9 §8). Herzfeld (1968 p. 31 and n.1) argues that Parthyaioi, a later form in Greek, renders the Aramaic form of part<sup>h</sup>awāyē and Parthoi corresponds to the Old Persian paryova since the Elamite form *par.to.wa.p* shows that in Old Persian the letter *a* before a *v* was pronounced as an *o*. The appearance of the multiple forms of the term bears evidence to the various sources consulted by Ctesias. It seems evident, especially regarding the passages where Parthoi appears, that Ctesias is obtaining his information orally from a native Persian speaker. The Partyians occupied a region near the Caspian Gates in Khurāsân in Iran.

**be superseded by anything following in posterity:** cf. note above on the palace of Sennecherib.

**along the Euphrates:** Nineveh is actually situated along the eastern bank of the Tigris. Modern historians wishing to discredit Ctesias have often pointed to this as one of many grievous errors that demonstrate his unreliability. The blunder was clearly first made by Ctesias, who may have been relating an oral tradition based on multiple historical events (see note below §27 on the fall of Nineveh), rather than Diodorus who correctly locates the city on the Tigris (17.53.4 for ex.) when he is using a different source (cf. Bigwood 1980 p.197 for a discussion of Diodorus' use of his sources). Lenfant (2004 p. 235 n. 107) argues that the location of Nineveh may not have been known to the Greeks in Ctesias' time since Xenophon passed by the ruins of the city without recognizing it (*Anab.* 3.4.10). While this may have been the case for most Greeks, it is nonetheless surprising that Ctesias would make such a gross geographical mistake regardless of its origin since one would think that a resident of Persia and member of the king's court would be able to correctly locate such a renowned city as Nineveh.

**The city was 150 stades... had a height of 200 feet:** Ctesias utilizes the Attic system of measurements: 1 stade = 177.7 m; 1 plethron = 30 m; 1 orgyia (fathom) = 1.78 m; 1 pechys = 44 cm; 1 pygon (small pechys) = 37 cm; 1 foot = 30 cm. Ctesias describes the city as rectangular which roughly corresponds to the trapezoidal shape revealed by the excavations of the city (cf. Larsen 1994 p. 201 fig. 22.2). In actuality the walls enclosed an area about 5 km in length and 2.5 km in width (Larsen 1994 p.10). According to Ctesias the perimeter of

the walls was 480 stades (ca. 26 km) which is the same figure Herodotus gives for the perimeter of Babylon (1.178), the width was 90 stades (16 km), and the length was 150 stades (16 km). Needless to say, his figures are greatly exaggerated. Nevertheless, the magnificent size of the fortification walls and towers have spurred the imaginations of men since antiquity leading Count Volney to ask upon his arrival “Où sont-ils, ces remparts de Ninive?” (Larsen 1994 p.10)

**He named the city Ninus, after himself:** On the founding of Nineveh cf. Genesis 10:9-11 where Nimrod is the founder of the city. In actuality, Sennacherib moved the capital of the Assyrian Empire from Aššur to Nineveh in the early part of the 7<sup>th</sup> century. Although his building projects were immense in Aššur, his designs in Nineveh were unmatched at that time (cf. Olmstead 1951 p. 316ff). This further contradicts Jacoby's assertion that the early history of Assyria was the product of Ctesias' imagination (see introduction for a full discussion on Ninus and Semiramis).

**he married Semiramis the most famous of all the women:** This is the first detailed account of Semiramis and as such has received much attention from scholars. Herodotus mentions her but once (1.184) and refers to her as a Babylonian queen. Her name appears to be derived from Sammuramat (although see Smith 1887 p.303ff for a different view), the wife of Šamši Adad V (823-811), who served as regent for her child following her husband's death. Sammuramat was a very powerful regent who made dedications in her own name as ‘the Lady of the Palace’. Under her regency the Assyrian Empire was expanded eastward into Mesopotamia possibly giving rise to exaggerated accounts of conquest surrounding her reign (cf. Olmstead 1951 p. 158-60). Berosos even inserts her years of regency into his list of Assyrian kings (*FgrH* 680 F5 §25) although she is absent from the official Assyrian King List.

However, the lack of similarities between Semiramis' husband Ninus and Sammuramat's husband Šamši Adad (*supra*) have lead scholars to seek another basis for the legendary queen. She has been compared to Zakutu, the wife of Sennacherib, (see note above for his similarities to Ninus) and mother of Esarhaddon, who maintained a position of authority throughout her son's reign (Olmstead 1951 p. 401 calls her ‘the greatest of Assyrian queens’). On the contrary, Auberger (1991 p. 145 n. 11) argues that Sammuramat is the basis for Semiramis while Zakutu, whose Semitic name is Naqia, is the basis for the Nitocris of Herodotus (1.185). Ctesias and Herodotus are reporting two variant oral traditions of the powerful queens of Assyria. While both versions are essentially folk lore, they are both based on historical fact.

**there is a city called Ascalon:** Ascalon is a city on the east coast of the Mediterranean just to the north of Gaza. During the Crusades it became a strategic stronghold for naval powers leading to the siege and sack of the city by the Franks in 1153 C.E.

**whom the Syrians call Derketo:** She is also called Atargatis (cf. F1d) and Atar‘atah in Aramaic and later was referred to simply as the Deasura or ‘Syrian Goddess’. Ctesias is the first to use the appellation Derketo.

**that Aphrodite took offense:** She is referred to as Astarte in Phoenicia and according to Herodotus (1.105) her temple in Ascalon was the oldest and led to the founding of the Temple of Aphrodite in Cyprus.

**the infant was exposed:** The exposed child being saved is a common theme in Greco-Roman literature as can be seen in the myths of Heracles, Oedipus, Romulus, etc. cf. Auberger (1991 p. 145 n.12)

**the name Semiramis... the word for doves:** The Middle Assyrian word for dove is *simmutu* and the Akkadian word is *summatu(m)*. Since the name Semiramis most likely is a Greek derivative of Sammuramat and the latter name is unrelated to the word for doves, this etymology is fictitious. Her association with the Babylonian goddess Ishtar, for whom the dove is sacred, led to the natural comparison of her name with the word for dove since the two words bear a striking similarity. This fictitious etymology was likely created to add credence to Semiramis' association with Ishtar.

**a lieutenant was sent by the king:** The Greek has the word ὑπαρχος which is the term used by the Greeks to describe the subordinate magistrates of an empire. Ctesias is again using terms normally relegated to the Persians to describe the offices of earlier empires (cf. note above on use of the term 'satrap'). Lenfant (2004 p. 236 n.123) argues that there is a confusion of terminology in these passages between the words ὑπαρχος, ἑπαρχος, and σατράπης. However, this criticism of Ctesias is unwarranted since the term ἵπαρχω is commonly used simply to refer to a satrap in other authors (cf. Hdt. 3.70 and Xen *Anab.* 4.4.4) and is a general term used for a subordinate magistrate in an empire (cf. Arr. *An.* 3.5.7 where the term is used to describe a Roman praefectus). In most cases Ctesias employs the term ὑπαρχος generally to refer to any subordinate magistrate (cf. below § 20.1) which could include a satrap as it does here (cf. F1πε where both terms are used interchangeably), whereas a σατράπης only refers to the governor of a province (cf. §28.1) and in F1πε Ctesias clearly distinguishes between a σατράπης and a ὑπαρχος. Moreover, the use of the term ἑπαρχος (§16.5), which Lenfant notes is strictly a Hellenistic term and therefore probably one used by Diodorus rather than Ctesias, appears three times in Ctesias, all in citations by Diodorus. This is likely a misspelling either by a later copyist (one of the manuscripts gives ὑπαρχος as a variant for the reading at §16.5) or, more likely, by Diodorus himself. In any case, Ctesias is simply using contemporary terminology to describe offices of the past because he was either unaware of their title or he wanted to put them into words that his Greek audience would readily comprehend.

**Hyapates and Hydaspes:** The two sons of Onnes are mentioned in F1c and in F1ld they are seen plotting against their mother. The plot was uncovered and they were executed. The present passage is the only instance in which the two sons are named.

**her husband was completely subservient to her:** By including this detail in the story, Ctesias may be reflecting his own surroundings at the court of Artaxerxes where the queen, Stateira, and queen mother, Parysatis, both had considerable influence over the king.

**The king...attempted to launch a campaign against the Bactrians:** In 808-807 B.C.E. the Assyrian kingdom reached its most easterly point with expeditions against the Mannai in modern Iranian Azerbaijan. Consequently, the Bactrian campaigns of Ninus and Semiramis are completely unhistorical; however the Mannae campaigns, which took place during the regency of Sammuramat, may be the foundation for the legends (cf. Olmstead 1951 p.159).

**their numbers, as Ctesias wrote in his history, reached... scythed chariots:** While it appears that Ctesias is clearly influenced by Herodotus (7.60), who gives the same number of 1,700,000 for the army of Xerxes in his invasion of Greece (cf. Jacoby 1922 col. 2060), Eck (2003 p. 12 n.1) points out that the number Ctesias gives for the cavalry is different.

Moreover, Herodotus (7.184) lists the actual total of forces including the fleet at 2,317,610.

**the expedition of Darius against the Scythians with 800,000 troops:** Herodotus lists the size of Darius' army in his Scythian campaign at 700,000 including cavalry (4.87).

**This city was called Bactra:** Bactra was the capitol of Bactria (although Arrian *Anab.* 3.29.1 claims that Aornos and Bactra were the two principle towns of Bactria), the region between the Hindu Kush Mountains and the Oxus (Amu Darya) and is now part of Afghanistan. It was also known as Zariaspa (Strabo 11.11.2) and is the modern city of Balkh. Bessus, the pretender to the throne after the death of Darius III, proclaimed himself Great King under name Artaxerxes (Arr. *Anab.* 3.25.3) and was later mutilated in Bactra before being sent to Ecbatana to be executed (Arr. *Anab.* 4.7.3).

**Exaortes, the ruler of Bactria:** There is a discrepancy in the manuscripts regarding the name of the Bactrian king. Other readings include Oxaortes (or Xaortes with the article) and Oxyartes, the reading adopted by Jacoby. The latter reading would give the Bactrian king the same name as the fathers of Rhoxane (Diod. 18.3.3) and Amestris (20.109.7). Unless this was an unusually common name in the East (there is no evidence to suggest that it was), this argument is not very convincing (cf. Eck 2003 p. 114-115 n. 4 and Lenfant 2004 p. 237 n.131 for discussions on the choice of readings).

**to make a show of her own virtue:** Ctesias uses the term *arête* to specifically refer to martial valor. Cf. F1b §1.4 where he characterizes Ninus as 'by nature warlike and desirous of virtue' (a phrase I render as 'ambitious' in the translation) and §6.9 and §18.2 where the valor of Semiramis is described. In the latter passage, Semiramis promises to make a showing of her virtue in a declaration of war against the Indians (see below). cf. also F5 §33.1 where *arête* is coupled with the adjectives *andreia* ('courage') and *synesis* (which in this instance clearly means 'martial knowledge').

**later on the Medes... adopted the robe of Semiramis... the Persians did the same:** Herodotus (1.135) tells us simply that the Persians preferred Median garments to their own because they found them more beautiful. Strabo (11.13.9) is more specific saying that the Persians adopted the Median robe (*stolê*) after conquering them. Strommenger (1980-1983 p. 31-38) identifies this garment as a cape which was worn by both women and soldiers and as such could conceal the identity of the one wearing it. In F17 §3.2 Ctesias describes the coronation process for the Persian kings and states that the new king removed his own robes and took up those worn by Cyrus the Great. Although he never specifies what type of robe is being assumed, it is clear that the new king is donning the Median robe since Xenophon (*Cyr.* 8.1.40) tells us that Cyrus was the first to adopt this garment. Moreover, Xenophon says that the Median robe covers the entire body. This is consistent with the article of clothing described here which is not only able to conceal the identity of Semiramis, but even her gender.

**When she arrived at Bactra...:** for the possible veracity of this passage see Eck (2003 p. 115-116 n.1).

**his daughter Sosane:** This name is a hapax but it corresponds to the Hebrew name for Suzanne. Ctesias likely encountered this name while at the Persian court (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 237 n. 135).

**the treasuries in Bactria:** Bactria was evidently a wealthy province in the Achaemenid period. In his *Indika* (§26) Ctesias claims that the region contains silver mines deeper than those in India. Moreover, the Oxus Treasure, named for the river that runs through Bactria where it was found and now held in the British Museum, is a testament to the wealth of the region during this period.

**a son named Ninyas:** If one accepts the identification of Semiramis as Sammuramat, then this son of hers would refer to Adad-nirari III who ruled for 28 years (810-783) and achieved

moderate success in his conquests (cf. Olmstead p.159ff). However, if one identifies Ninus with Sennecherib and Semiramis with his wife Zakutu, then Ninyas must be based on their son Esharhaddon (680-669) who restored Babylon after its destruction by his father. The name Ninyas does not appear anywhere in the eastern sources.

**built a very large burial mound...:** one sated equals about 185 meters giving this mound incredible dimensions at 1660 meters in height by 1850 meters in width. Both Eck (2003 p. 16 n.1) and Lenfant (2004 p.32 n.138) state the possibility that the description of this mound may have been influenced by the tells found throughout Mesopotamia.

**along the Euphrates...:** See notes above (§3.2) and below (§27) on the confusion of the location of Nineveh.

**the city of Ninus was razed... dissolved the Assyrian empire:** Nineveh was destroyed in 612 B.C.E. during the reign of Sin-šar-iškun. The city was besieged by the Babylonians under Nabopolassar and the Medes under Cyaxares. Although Ctesias credits only the Medes with the destruction of the Assyrian Empire, the Babylonians played an equal if not a greater role in its destruction and aftermath (cf. ABC 3). See note below (§27) for a full discussion of the fall of Nineveh.

**to build a city in Babylonia:** The city is Babylon which was founded well before the time of the Assyrians (cf. note above §1.7). The foundation of the neo-Babylonian Empire and rebuilding of Babylon by Nabopolassar may form the basis for this narrative. By referring to Semiramis as the founder of Babylon, Ctesias depicts her as a worthy wife and successor to Ninus who founded Nineveh (cf. Lenfant 2004 p.238 n.141). This romantic tale may have had its origins in the fact that Samsuramat was Babylonian by birth, but since the rebirth of Babylonian supremacy under Nabopolassar coincided with the downfall of the Assyrian domination (cf. ABC 3) and the founding of Nineveh under Sennecherib marked the zenith of Assyrian power, Ctesias has credited husband and wife with historical events that reflect both the apex and downfall of the Assyrian Empire.

**built a wall around the city 360 stades long:** There were two series of ramparts surrounding Babylon and presumably this figure refers to the outer wall. No evidence from the limited excavations has been found to suggest that the outer ramparts were built west of the Euphrates, although the western part of the city has not been fully excavated (cf. Bigwood 1978b p. 32-52 for a thorough analysis of Ctesias' description of Babylon). Although Ctesias' figure of 360 stades (65 km) for the wall's length is an obvious exaggeration, it is an improvement over the circumference of 480 stades (26 km) given by Herodotus (1.178). Ctesias' figure likely represents a correspondence to the number of days in the years, a figure which Cleitarchs corrected to 365 (cf. Bigwood 1978b p. 36 and n. 22 and 23). The outer ramparts were formed by a double wall with the inner wall being about 7 meters thick and made of unbaked brick, and the outer wall being about 7.8 meters thick and made of baked bricks connected to each other by asphalt. The two walls stood about 12 meters apart and the space between may have been filled with dirt to form a continuous surface of 26.8 meters (cf. Eck 2003 p.117-118 n.7 and Lenfant 2004 p.238 n.144). Eck is right to defend the authenticity of the following passage, which states that the wall was traversable by six chariots, and indicate that the inner and outer walls could hold approximately three chariots apiece (cf. Tzet. *Chil.* 9.586-87; Bigwood ignores this passage in her analysis).

**Using baked bricks connected with asphalt... with 250 towers 60 pecheis high:** Ctesias is clearly referring to only the outer rampart here, as can be adduced by the description of the



baked brick lined with asphalt (cf. Hdt. 1.179). Ctesias' figures of 50 *orgyia* (90 m) for the height of the wall and 60 *orgyia* (107 m) for the height of the towers are incredible. The correction by later authors of substituting *pecheis* for *orgyia* provides the more plausible figures of 22 m and 26 m respectively.

**the city was mostly surrounded by a marsh:** According to Herodotus (1.186-187) the marsh was artificially constructed by Nitocris in order to facilitate the building of the bridge. Philostratus (V.A. 1.20.2) also mentions the marsh but simply states that the Euphrates disappears into it.

**while she herself built a bridge:** Herodotus (1.186) also mentions the construction of a bridge but his account differs greatly from the one given here. Herodotus attributes the bridge (and many other works normally attributed to Semiramis) to Nitocris and states that she diverted the course of the river by digging a large basin and creating a lake. When the riverbed was dry she fabricated the bridge with stones bound together with iron and lead. The river was then returned to its natural course and the artificial lake became the marsh. Ctesias tells a similar story in his account of the tunnel constructed by Semiramis (cf. below). Ctesias tells us that the base of the bridge was laid with beams of cedar, cypress, and palm whereas Herodotus simply states that the square cut logs were laid down over the bridge and then gathered up each night so that no one could cross. Naturally these claims can never be verified since no traces of wood have survived, however all three types of wood mentioned by Ctesias were commonly used in construction in Babylon (Bigwood 1978b p. 40). The excavations at Babylon have uncovered a bridge which dates to the reign of Nabopolassar (626-605) or his son Nebuchadnezzar II (605-562); cf. Eck 2003 p. 120 n. 8 and Bigwood (1978b p.39-40).

**a lavish quay nearly equal to the width of the walls 160 stades long:** These measurements would render the width of the quay walls at nearly 26 meters wide (cf. above) and approximately 28 meters long are highly inaccurate as the quay walls were actually 3.5 meters wide and excavations have uncovered only one quay (Wetzel 1930 p. 48 and Bigwood 1978b p.49 n.49).

**She also built two palaces:** Koldewey (1931 p. 124-125) identifies these two palaces as the Südburg and the Sommer-Palast. Both of these palaces lay along the east bank of the river and not on opposite banks as Ctesias claims. However, it is believed that the Euphrates changed its course during the Achaemenid period so that the two palaces stood on each bank of the river and later returned to its original course during the Parthian period. Herodotus (1.181) mentions only one palace that many feel refers to the Kasr. (cf. King 1969 p. 37-38; Eck 2003 p. 122 n. 5; Lenfant 2004 p. 239 n.161; Bigwood 1978b p. 40 and 34-35 for a reconstruction based on Wetzel).

**where wild beasts of all kinds were engraved... with their splendid colors:** This description of the walls can be verified by the Ishtar Gate which is of glazed brick and depicts colorful dragons and bulls while the walls of the Processional Way show lions on a similar glazed brick (cf. Bigwood 1978b p. 41-42).

**This palace far exceeded... which provided visual entertainment to the spectators:** The palace referred to first is most likely the Kasr, and is the same as that mentioned by Herodotus, and the one described in this passage is probably the Summer palace of Nebuchadnezzar. His figure of 30 stades for the enclosure wall would correspond to about 5.3 km which is an obvious exaggeration since Koldewey (1932 p. 48), based on the archaeological evidence, claims that the wall was about 720 m. There is no evidence to

ascertain the veracity of the statues of Ninus and Semiramis. Koldewey (1931 p. 125) believed that he identified a fragment of a female figure, but now it is widely believed to be masculine (cf. Eck 2003 p. 123-124 n. 9; Lenfant 2004 p. 36 n. 172). The battle scenes mentioned were common in Near Eastern and, especially, Assyrian art (cf. Bigwood 1978b p. 41-43; Olmstead 1951 p. 82 fig. 44 and p. 92 fig. 49 where Aššurnasirpal II [883-859] is depicted hunting a lion and a bull respectively). It is possible that Ctesias had seen such scenes in the larger palace (§6) and assumed (or was told by his informant) that the figures represented Ninus and Semiramis.

**She redirected the river into the cistern and made an underground canal:** This fanciful account of the construction of a tunnel under the Euphrates bears a striking resemblance to Herodotus' account of the construction of the bridge (1.185-186) and Bigwood (1978b p. 38) may be right to call it 'literary embroidery'. However, Eck (2003 p. 125-126 n. 3) points out that the tale may be based on fact. The claim that it was constructed in seven days is certainly pure fiction (cf. Auberger 1991 p. 147 n. 23).

**she built a temple of Zeus...:** The god is called Bel-Marduk by the Babylonians, Baal in Semitic languages and the Old Testament, and may correspond to Elohim mentioned in the Book of Genesis (Auberger 1991 p. 147 n. 22). The temple is known as the Esagila and to the north is the ziggurat called the Etemenanki ('House of the foundation of heaven on earth'), known as the Tower of Babel in the Old Testament, both of which were described in detail by Herodotus (1.181-183). Although Ctesias never mentions the ziggurat specifically, he is likely referring to it when he mentions the statues at the 'top of the staircase' (cf. Bigwood 1978b p. 37). Ctesias' assertion of the statues is in direct contradiction to Herodotus who claims that there are no statues at the top most shrine of the ziggurat. While it is impossible to know for sure if either author was correct, the contention that there were three statues may have some validity, as it was common practice in Mesopotamia to mention deities in triads (cf. Eck 2003 p. 127 n. 4).

**she placed three gold statues of Zeus, Hera and Rhea:** Zeus corresponds to Marduk and Hera to Sarpanitum, the wife of Marduk. It is less clear which goddess is meant by Rhea. She most likely refers to Ishtar to whom the lion is sacred. Although Ishtar is often identified with Aphrodite, she is also often portrayed as the mother-goddess who represents the feminine aspect of life and fertility. Moreover, she is often depicted as a member of a divine triad as she is here (cf. Jastrow 1980 p. 232-236).

**Upon the pedestal sat two *karchesia*:** *Karchesia* are drinking cups fashioned in a figure eight shape. In describing the weight of these objects, Ctesias uses the phrase τὸν σταθμὸν εἴλκε which literally means 'to draw down the scales'. This is an uncommon phrase to delineate weight but appears in Herodotus (1.50) when describing the offerings of Croesus to the oracle at Delphi. All of the weights given here are greatly exaggerated.

**The Persian kings, however, later plundered these objects...:** Herodotus (1.183) claims that Xerxes removed a solid gold statue from the sacred area which has often been taken to refer to the statue of Marduk (cf. Auberger 1991 p. 147-148 n.25). Briant (2002 p. 544-545) has effectively shown that Xerxes most likely did not plunder the statue of Marduk and that his pillaging of Babylon can be attributed to Hellenistic authors who were using propaganda to promote the piety of Alexander which they contrasted with the impiety of Xerxes, the demolisher of temples, because of what he did to Greece during the Persian Wars.

**When she arrived at the mountain called Bagistanon...:** Bagistanon is more commonly called Behistun or Besitun and is located along the route from Babylon to Ecbatana which is

the main caravan route from Baghdad to Tehran. Ctesias claims that the rock was sacred to Zeus, but he is clearly associating the Greek god with Ahura-Mazda (cf. Briant 2002 p. 124). The name Bagistanon comes from the Old Persian *bagastāna*, which means 'Place of the God'. Carved into the rock face about 225 feet above the ground is a trilingual inscription in Old Persian, Elamite and Akkadian describing Darius' suppression of Gaumata the Magus and his followers. The 'Syrian characters' mentioned by Ctesias refer to the cuneiform used for all three languages. There is also a relief on the rock depicting Darius standing over Gaumata with nine rebel captives in tow (cf. Kent 1953 p. 107-108 and 116-135). On the mountain was a sanctuary and cult of the goddess Simirria, Šimalia in Kassite, which may have led to the confusion. During the Islamic period the rock was called *Sinn Sumaira*, the 'tooth of Sumaira' (Herzfeld 1968 p. 14). Moreover, the height and location of the inscription make it unreadable to those passing by below, so Ctesias would clearly have to be using an informant to learn what the inscriptions said. It is nonetheless surprising that as a resident of the royal court he did not know that Darius was the author of so magnificent a monument.

**Chauon, a Median city:** This city is only mentioned by Ctesias and perhaps by Ptolemy (6.2.14) who calls it Choana, thus the actual location of the town unknown (cf. Eck 2003 p. 136 n. 8)

**she slept with them and then had every one of them put to death:** On the licentious relations of Semiramis with her soldiers cf. F1i and F1ld as well as Dio Chrys. 47.24. In another tradition not related by Ctesias, she even became a prostitute later in life (§ 20). Promiscuity in oriental queens is a common motif in Ctesias (cf. Amytis and Amestris in F14 § 44) but not a universal one. For instance, no mention is made of licentiousness on the part of Stateira and Parysatis is even referred to as 'very chaste' (F16 § 60).

**she arrived at Mt. Zarkaroion:** Zarkaroion is a *hapax*, but often identified with the Zagros mountains which are located in West Iran and make up part of their boarder with Iraq (however, cf. Eck 2003 p. 136-137 n. 2 for a discussion on the difficulties of this identification).

**the Road of Semiramis:** This may be the 'Median Gate' referred to by Strabo (13.11.8)

**When she arrived at Ecbatana, a city lying on a plain...:** Ecbatana is located on a plateau in the site of modern Hamadan in Western Iran. Ctesias actually called the city Agbatana, as Stephanus of Byzantium tells us (F42) and the form Ecbatana, which became the standard spelling, was applied by later authors citing Ctesias. The form Agbatana more closely resembles the Old Persian Hagmatana (cf. Schmitt 1979 p.121 ff.) and is the form used by both Herodotus (1.98 et al) and Aeschylus (*Pers.* 16). Herodotus describes the palace of Agbatana (1.98) but attributes its construction to a Median named Deioces.

**there is a mountain called Mt. Orontes...:** This likely corresponds to Mt. Alvand on the foothills of which modern Hamadan now lies. The mountain is 3574 meters in height, slightly less than the 25 stades (4635 meters) given by Ctesias. Given the lack of accurate surveying equipment in Ctesias' age, one can hardly accuse him of exaggeration here. Moreover, since Ecbatana was a residence for the Persian royal family, it is likely that Ctesias personally visited this town and thus his description is fairly accurate. There is, however, no evidence of a tunnel through the mountain, but the idea of one probably stems from the numerous *qatanas* that irrigate the city. Briant's (2002 p. 170) hypothetical conjecture that Darius I initiated these constructions which, like his Behistun monument,

were credited to Semiramis is attractive but, as he himself readily admits, there is no evidence to support this.

**many of her constructions throughout Asia still remain...:** This passage likely refers to the numerous tells throughout the region of Kurdistan (Eilers 1971 p. 22 ff). Herodotus (1.184) credits Semiramis with constructing many mounds and Ctesias claims that these mounds were built on the pretext of stopping floods but they were really tombs for her executed lovers (F1i).

**she invaded all of Egypt... when her son, Ninyas, forms a plot against her:** Ctesias tells us in §2.3 that Ninus conquered Egypt so that the area would have been subdued by the time Semiramis arrived. It is possible that there was a revolt perhaps mentioned by Ctesias but omitted by Diodorus since the story as it stands gives no reason for her campaign in Egypt. The oracle of Ammon is located at Siwa and was famously consulted by Alexander (on Alexander's emulation of Semiramis see Lenfant (2004 p. 243 n. 211). This entire passage bears a striking resemblance to the story in Herodotus of Cambyses' invasion of Egypt and Ethiopia in which the Persian king sets out to attack the Ammonians at the Oasis. Herodotus makes no mention of the oracle in this passage but he does say that Croesus consulted it (1.46). A further similarity in the two passages is the prophecy of overthrow by a family member - Cambyses has a vision that his brother Smerdis is plotting against him.

**They say that there is a square lake in Ethiopia...:** The original text of Ctesias probably mentions a spring instead of a lake as the parallel fragments indicate (cf. F11 a, b, and g). Diodorus then is either incorporating a later version or, more likely, he is guilty of inaccurately transcribing Ctesias' account. Ctesias also mentions a truth serum in India (F45 §31) which likewise comes from a spring and is used by the king of the Indians during criminal interrogations. The comparison of the water color to cinnabar recurs several times in the *Indika* as Ctesias seems fond of using this substance to describe anything that is brilliant red (cf. F45 §8 for the parrot, §15 for the martichora, §45 for the wild ass' horn, and F45pγ for the beetle-like creatures that live in the amber-producing trees). The statement of disbelief is most likely made by Diodorus since nowhere else do we see Ctesias showing such skepticism.

**The inhabitants of Ethiopia build tombs for their dead in a peculiar way...:** The Greek term ὕελος refers to some sort of a transparent material but the exact substance is unknown. Neither Ctesias nor Diodorus is relating an accurate reference to Herodotus. The latter's account states that the body is first covered with gypsum and then set on a pillar made from ὕελος. Most scholars feel that Ctesias is intentionally misquoting Herodotus in order to refute him on scientific grounds and that Diodorus is merely following him without actually checking the text of Herodotus (cf. Bigwood 1980 p. 197 and Tuplin 2004 p. 315). Müller (1844 p.27) made the suggestion that Ctesias read γυμνώσαντες instead of γυψώσαντες. This is a credible assertion and begs the question if perhaps Ctesias, and perhaps even Diodorus, was reading a version of Herodotus with a variant reading that is now lost. The alternative is to accuse both Ctesias and Diodorus of misrepresenting Herodotus, a suggestion plausible in itself, whether intentionally or through carelessness.

**Ctesias of Cnidus, on the other hand...:** Ctesias' description seems to reflect the ancient burial customs of the Egyptians. We know from the numerous coffins found that as early as the Second Intermediate period the Egyptians were fashioning anthropomorphic coffins made of wood and by the eighteenth dynasty such coffins were made of gold, the most famous of which were the series of coffins belonging to Tutankhamen. Ctesias also claims that people

of the lower classes had such coffins made out of silver and clay. There is no evidence to support this but as early as the Predynastic period the Egyptians were using boxed coffins made of clay. In the Middle Kingdom the Egyptians began to make anthropomorphic coffins which contained the bodies of the deceased and which were placed inside of wooden outer coffins. However, there is no evidence to support Ctesias' claim that the inner coffin was visible through any transparent material or that the coffin was ever set upon a stele. As early as the twenty-fifth kingdom Nubian kings were emulating the Egyptian burial customs and this may be the basis for this account. cf. Hdt. 3.24 on the abundance of ὕελος in the area.

**the nation of the Indians was the greatest in the world...:** cf. F45 § 2 and F49 a and b, Hdt. 3.94 and 5.3, and Strabo 2.5.32 on the size and population of India. It has been debated whether this description comes from Ctesias or a different source, perhaps Megasthenes (cf. Lenfant 2004 excises this passage from her text and Boncquet 1987 p. 144 ff argues against Ctesias as the source while Tarn 1926 p. 98ff argues for him). Diod. 2.35-36 is often cited as a parallel passage based on a different source to show that Diodorus was using Megasthenes or Onesicritus. Tarn, however, attributes this second passage to Ctesias as well, but few accept this proposal. Eck (2003 p. 140 n. 2) is certainly right to point out that this passage bears no resemblance to any surviving fragment of Megasthenes while Ctesias discusses many of these elements, including elephants, gold and silver in his *Indika* (ex. F45 §7, 9, 26 et al). However, Eck's insistence that since it cannot be proved that Megasthenes is the source then it must be Ctesias is insufficient. It is still difficult to attribute this passage fully to Ctesias since there are inconsistencies with his account. For example, Lenfant (2004 p. 43 n. 222) correctly points out that in the *Indika* India is not divided by many rivers (only the Indus is mentioned in the fragments by name) and the descriptions of the weather in India (F45 §17-20) could certainly not be called 'temperate'. However, she also claims that it was not 'watered everywhere' and it could not produce two harvests per year, and yet the numerous springs mentioned in the *Indika* could indicate that water was abundant and there is nothing in the fragments to argue against the extreme fertility of the region. Ultimately, it seems that Ctesias is the main source for Diodorus in 16.3-4 but that he probably supplemented his details of the region with another source, although the effect of the latter is minimal.

**Stabrobates:** This figure is unattested anywhere else in the historical record, however cf. Eck (2003 p. 139-140 n. 5) for the textual problems involved with this name. Eck asserts that the name as we have it is not the form that originally appeared in either Ctesias or Diodorus. However, Eilers (1971 p. 24 n. 24), followed by Boncquet (1987 p. 114) argue that the name is Persian.

**an incredible number of elephants far surpassing those in Libya both in forcefulness and bodily strength:** Cf. F45 §6 and note; Ctesias is the earliest writer to describe elephants used in battle so the Greeks were aware of them being employed as weapons of war well before the campaigns of Alexander (cf. Goukowsky 1972 p. 474 ff). It was a common notion in the ancient world that the Indian elephant was larger than the African elephant (cf. Plb. 5.84). Since it is known in the modern world that the African elephant is in fact larger than its Indian counterpart, Tarn (1926) put forth the argument that this error had become a literary commonplace which could be traced to Ctesias as the first writer to make this statement, if in fact he was the source (see note above). However, Scullard has since shown

that Tarn's argument is based on the false presumption that all African elephants are of the same species. In fact, the species of elephant that inhabits northwest Africa and the one that would most likely be used in warfare in that region was the Forest elephant and this species is actually smaller than the Indian elephant thereby verifying the common view of the ancients.

**collapsible river boats:** The idea of disassembling a boat for transport was well known in the Near East (cf. Arr. *Anab.* 5.8.5 and 7.19.3) and dates back at least to Ramses III in the 12<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. who transported ships in sections from Coptos to the Red Sea (cf. Casson 1971 p. 136).

**to construct a likeness of these animals:** The text here is problematic since the mss. give the phrase τ... ἰδίωμα which means 'a distinctive trait or feature' thus rendering the sentence 'she contrived a plan to construct some distinctive trait of these animals'. This makes for a very awkward sentence and much ink has been spilled in trying to remedy it. Hertlein, followed by Eck in his edition, removed the τ and replaced ἰδίωμα with ἴνδαλμα. This is a plausible conjecture as there are parallels for this term used in this sense (cf. Suda s.v. Σεμίραμις). However, as Lenfant (2004 p. 44 n. 225) noted, the removal of the τ is still troublesome and perhaps she was right to follow Jacoby is simply calling it a *locus desperatus*.

**there were no elephants at all outside of India:** This story is completely unhistorical since the Assyrians were in fact familiar with elephants, though they never used them in combat. Tiglath-pileser I captured four from the Ahlami and there is evidence that the Assyrian kings would hunt them (Scullard 1974 p. 28 ff.).

**The numbers of the assembled army:** The numbers given here are obvious exaggerations. The length of four cubits given for the sabers is equal to about 1.84 m.

**riverboats out of reeds:** The earliest riverboats created by the Egyptians were made of bundles of reeds tied together. This was common in marshy areas such as those around the Nile as well as along the Euphrates and Tigris. Reliefs depicting reed boats being used in an Assyrian campaign show that the Assyrians were in fact familiar with this type of craft (cf. Casson 1971 p. 22ff). cf. Megasthenes F13a and Ctesias F45 §14 for his description of the large reeds in India where he describes the reed as being so big that two men could hardly embrace it. Either Photius or Diodorus were careless in relaying this information.

**the construction of the towers:** This is likely an anachronism added in by Diodorus or a later editor of Ctesias. Goukowsky (1972 p. 474 ff) has shown that the tower was likely a Greek invention that dates to the early part of the third century. Pyrrhus may have been the innovator of the new technology in the Battle of Heraclea in 280 B.C.E. (cf. Scullard 1974 p. 104 ff and 240 ff).

**engaged in a naval battle on the river:** Reliefs from the Palace of Sennacherib depicting a naval battle fought on small rafts in a marshy area may indicate that there was some vague historical basis for this account.

**by constructing a lavish bridge:** cf. above 2.8.2-3 where Semiramis constructs a lavish bridge across the Euphrates at Babylon. This episode, however, is reminiscent of Darius'

crossing into Europe in 513 B.C.E. for his campaign against the Scythians (F13 §21; Hdt. 4.87-88) and Xerxes' 480 B.C.E. invasion of Greece (F13 §27; Hdt. 7.36), with both campaigns, like this one, ending in failure. Once again episodes in Ctesias' Assyrian narrative reflect events of Persian history (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 47 n. 230). Xenophon (*Anab.* 2.4.13) differentiates between permanent bridges, which he calls *gefæra*, and pontoon bridges (cf. Briant 2002 p.362). Ctesias makes no such distinction as he refers to this bridge both as a *gefæra* and a *sx̄idia* (§19.8). The latter term can only refer to a bridge of joined boats or rafts which indicates that Ctesias employed the term *gefæra* more generally than Xenophon.

**the smell that hit them:** This account has often been seen as another reflection of Persian events since Herodotus (1.80), followed by Xenophon (*Cyr.* 7.1.27) describes a similar situation in which Cyrus employs camels as his cavalry in order to frighten the horses of the Lydians (cf. Lenfant 2004 p.48 n. 231; Eck 2003 p.36 n.2; ). While this assertion is surely valid, it should be noted that the smell and appearance of camels was widely known to frighten horses and this has continued into the modern era (cf. Glover 1950 p. 3). The so-called tribute friezes found on the staircases of the Apadana (the audience hall at Persepolis constructed during the reigns of Darius I and Xerxes I) depict no less than four camels being offered to the great king, which would indicate that the animals were not rare at the royal court. Ctesias likely viewed these animals personally and perhaps was even able to see the effect they had on horses first hand. He would thus have been able to verify the plausibility of Herodotus' account the battle of Sardis. Of course he would never credit Herodotus with accuracy, but perhaps he may have incorporated this element of the Cyrus story into his account of Semiramis because he knew this information was accurate. The other possibility is that the fear camels instilled in horses was so well known in the Near East that such an account was a common motif in the oral traditions of legendary battles.

**some men were trampled under foot...:** Zonaras 8.3 describes the Battle of Heraclea in strikingly similar fashion: 'many soldiers were killed by the men in the towers on the elephants while others were killed by the beasts themselves with their trunks, tusks and teeth. Others still were trampled underfoot.'

**having lost two-thirds of her force:** cf. F11d for an account of the plot of Ninyas against his mother. Lenfant (2000 p. 295-297) argues that both plots may have appeared in the original narrative of Ctesias and Diodorus chose to suppress the account given by Nicolaus because it was without consequence for his overall account. The plot of Ninyas, however, was necessary to describe the end of Semiramis' reign. If this is the case, then the account given in F11d would have been given at this point in Ctesias' narrative before the description of Ninyas' plot. In F1g Semiramis is said to have 'massacred her own sons', which gives further support to Lenfant's chronology of Ctesias' original narrative, although she does not cite this passage as evidence. Diodorus makes no mention of her killing any of her children.

**She then disappeared:** The Greek uses the phrase  $\epsilon\phi\epsilon\lambda\theta\eta\sigma\alpha\tau\epsilon$ . The active voice with the reflexive literally means 'she made herself disappear as if going to join the gods' which is an awkward phrase, however it makes clear the voluntary nature of her death (cf. Eck 2003 p.144 n.7). That she died is made evident from the  $\mu\epsilon\tau\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\theta\eta\sigma\epsilon$  in the next section. This is the

only mention of a voluntary death for Semiramis (F1c simply says that she died), other accounts attribute her death to Ninyas (ex. F1g).

**that she became a dove:** Semiramis, like her mother Derketo, changes forms upon her death. Her metamorphosis into a dove marks another similarity between her and Ishtar (cf. §4.6 and note). Consequently, Diodorus may be drawing on a different source for this last part of the tale.

**Ninyas, her son with Ninus:** Ninyas is an unhistorical character whose name, like that of his father, is derived from Nineveh. His effeminacy and confinement to the palace recall the character of Sardanapallus and stand in striking contrast to the ambition of Semiramis (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. XLV). Ctesias' narrative of the empire after the reigns of its founders Semiramis and Ninus, begins and ends with the effeminate and luxurious ruler that would become typical in Greek accounts of Eastern despots.

**sending the previous year's troops back home:** This may refer to an early practice of a permanent standing army, but there is no evidence to support Boncquet's (1987 n. 128) assertion that it may reflect an Achaemenid practice.

**after enduring for more than 1360 years:** Cf. §28.8 where Diodorus says that the Assyrian empire endured for over 1300 years. Eck (2003 p. 145 n.1) claims that there is no contradiction between these two passages, but that this one is merely more precise. Numerous attempts have been made to reconstruct Ctesias' chronology for Assyrian history based on the figures he gives and the king list provided by Castor, who no doubt used Ctesias as a basis for it. Goosens (1940 p.32-37) takes as a starting point the ascension of Cyrus which is usually dated to 550 B.C.E., adds 317 years for the Median Empire (see below) and places the fall of Nineveh in 867 B.C.E. Then by adding 1360 years he concludes that Ninus first took the throne before the year 2227 B.C.E. which would conform to the year given by Porphyry for the founding of Babylon, if Burstein's (1984 p. 71-74) emendation is accepted. Drews (1965 p. 138-142), like Goosens, asserts that Ctesias' Assyrian chronology almost certainly comes from Babylonian records and may reflect the same tradition as Berossus' date for the beginning of Babylonian history. According to his calculations, 1240 years passed between the reign of Erishu I (1852 B.C.E.) and the fall of Nineveh (612 B.C.E.) which corresponds to the figure given by Castor. He claims that Ctesias' figures were likely based on a Babylonian list that sought to include the predecessors of Erishu I and that Ninus would have ascended the throne in 2226 B.C.E. Moreover, he maintains that the thirty kings of the Assyrian dynasty also reflect a Babylonian tradition since there were thirty Assyrian kings from the reigns of Tikulti-Ninurta I (1114-1076 B.C.E.), the Assyrian king who conquered Babylon and plundered the palace, and Aššur-uballit II (611-609), the last king of Assyria. Boncquet (1990 p. 5-16) however, maintains that Ctesias' date for Cyrus' ascension was 580 B.C.E. and by adding the 300 years allotted for the Median Empire he reaches a date of 900-880 B.C.E for the fall of Nineveh and 2280-2260 B.C.E. for the ascension of Ninus.

However, the number of kings in the Assyrian dynasty is uncertain since Diodorus seems to contradict himself, a point overlooked by scholars. At §23.1 he counts Sardanapallus as the thirtieth king since Ninus whereas here he seems to indicate that there were thirty kings after Ninyas, as is evident from the phrase οἱ λοιποὶ βασιλεῖς ('the *rest* of



the kings'). This would make the total number of kings thirty-three. Perhaps we should read Ninyas for Ninus at §23.1 (cf. F1g where this very mistake is made).

**the names of these kings and the number of years for which each ruled:** Diodorus has chosen to omit the list since we know from F10α and F33 §76 that Ctesias listed the Mesopotamian Kings from Ninus to Artaxerxes II at the end of his *Persika*.

**Memnon the son of Tithonus:** In the *Aethiopsis* he was the mythical king of Aethiopia and son of Eos and Tithonus. He went to Troy to assist his uncle Priam where while wearing a panoply made by Hephaestus he was killed by Achilles. On his way to Troy he left numerous stele to mark the way which, according to Herodotus (2.106), caused him to be confused with Sesotris. However, Aethiopia in early literature did not refer to the African peoples, but rather were a mythical race from the east (thus, in Greek traditions he becomes the son of Dawn). Clearly the Ctesianic Memnon is an Asiatic figure rather than an African one since he lead men from Aethiopia and Susa, his father Tithonus is the general of Persia, and he built a palace at Susa (cf. Drews 1969 191-192). Perhaps this reflects an eastern version of the Memnon myth in which the Trojans were subordinate to the Assyrians, although there is no historical basis for Assyrian domination of the Troad.

**built on the top of the acropolis the palace at Susa:** Herodotus (5.53-54) also describes the so-called Memneion and calls Susa the 'city of Memnon'. Perhaps he was joined by synchronism to the Elamite deity Humban (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 245 n. 247). Susa was the capital of Elam and the city of the sun, which would help to explain Memnon's lineage from Dawn in the Greek tradition.

**a road through the country-side which to this day is still called the Memnoneion:** Forshaw (1976-1977 p. 454) claims that this is the Achaemenid royal road that went from Susa to Sardis.

**the Ethiopians near Egypt claim him as their own:** In Egypt, not Ethiopia, there were numerous monuments associated with a Memnon, the most famous of which was the statue of Amenhotep III which was referred to as the colossus of Memnon (cf. Strabo 17.1.42; Boncquet 1987 p. 134-135).

**the Royal Archives:** cf. F5 §32.4 where Ctesias again refers to official records when giving a controversial account of an event; see Introduction for a full discussion.

**Sardanapallus was the thirtieth king:** Although Sardanapallus does not directly reflect any specific historical figure, like Ninus he seems to have been created based on attributes drawn from numerous sources, including Ctesias' imagination. The name Sardanapallus is almost certainly derived from Aššurbanipal, the last great king of Assyria. In general these two figures have little else in common. First of all, Aššurbanipal was not the last king of Assyria but was succeeded in turn by his sons Aššur-etel-ilani and Sin-sharra-ishkun, and Aššur-uballit II who ruled for two years in exile after the fall of Nineveh. Secondly, Aššurbanipal was a polar opposite of the effeminate, palace-bound Sardanapallus. He was a warlike king and skilled hunter whose early reign was marked by many conquests, including Egypt and the suppression of Tyre, ultimately elevating Assyria to its acme of power. However, there are some aspects of Aššurbanipal that definitely had an influence on the character of

Sardanapallus. The end of Aššurbanipal's reign was a period of chaos that ultimately resulted in the fall of Nineveh fifteen years after his death. He lived lavishly and squandered many of Assyria's resources with his lifestyle which many scholars feel increased the chaotic climate of the times (cf. Grayson 1991b p. 142-161 and Oates 1991 p. 162-193).

**he was never seen by any outsider:** While this statement is obviously untrue, access to the Assyrian king would have been very difficult. He was revered with near divine status and the splendor of the gates and corridors flanked with colossal statues of bulls and lions and reliefs of the king slaying his enemy would leave the visitor in awe. Only a foreign king was regarded as an equal (cf. Grayson 1991b p. 196).

**He spent his life with the concubines:** Women had an important and influential role at the court of Aššurbanipal. Zakutu, the mother of Esharhadon and grandmother of Aššurbanipal lived well into the latter's reign and held great sway with the king. Furthermore, after her death, it appears that Aššurbanipal's wife, Aššur-sharrat, became prominent (cf. Grayson 1991b p. 160).

**A certain Arbaces:** Although this figure is nowhere else attested in the sources as the founder of the Median Empire, his name corresponds to the Iranian *arbaka*, the Elamite *har-ba-[k]qa*, and the Akkadian *ar-ba-ku* (cf. Hinz 1975 p. 35) and has been connected to a Median chieftain named *Ar-ba-ku* in the time of Sargon II (721-705 B.C.E.) (cf. Tallqvist 1914 p.28). A man of the same name served Artaxerxes II at Cunaxa (Xen. *Anab.* 1.7.12) while another Arbaces is mentioned in (F26 §3) who is convicted of cowardice for defecting to Cyrus during Cunaxa, but obviously this refers to another man.

**Belesys:** This name corresponds to the Babylonian *Ba-la-su* (cf. Tallqvist 1914 p. 50). König (1972 p. 156 n.1) claims that this is a mutilated form of the title [Nabū]-bal-usur, however the historical record would argue against this. Belesys is mentioned by Xenophon (*Anab.* 1.4.10 and 7.8.25) and Diodorus (16.42.1) as satrap of Syria. He is mentioned in several Babylonian records as Bēlšunu and held the title of governor of Babylon from 421-414 B.C.E. (cf. Eck 2003 p.148 n.5; Stolper 1990 p. 195-205). Like Arbaces, Belesys has a name that corresponds to a contemporary of Ctesias and may have influenced its appearance in his text (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 55 n. 258 and p. 56 n. 259).

**Chaldaeans:** The Chaldaeans were made up of three major and two minor tribes who held the land adjacent to the Euphrates and around Ur. By the eighth century they were becoming integrated with the Babylonians to the extent that many of them held Babylonian names and it was not uncommon for a Chaldaean to sit on the Babylonian throne (cf. Brinkman 1991 p. 9). In Greek literature they became associated with the class of Babylonian priests known for their expertise in divination and astrology.

**one of the king's eunuchs:** Athenaeus (F1pα) gives a parallel fragment to this passage and names the eunuch as Sparameizes. The name also belongs to one of Parysatis' most faithful eunuchs in the form Sparamizes (F26 §15.4) and we have already seen Ctesias' propensity for naming figures in his narrative after his contemporaries (this is the third consecutive name to appear in this passage that may have belonged to one of his contemporaries). However, another parallel fragment by Nicolaus of Damascus (F1pε) offers a very vivid narrative of

this scene in which he, like Diodorus, fails to name the eunuch which may indicate that the name given by Athenaeus does in fact come from a source other than Ctesias.

**while he personally led the Medes...:** According to Ctesias, the fall of Assyrian domination was brought about by a coalition of Medes, Babylonians, Persians and Arabs. In reality, the Babylonians under Nabopolassar were at war with Assyria, then ruled by Sin-sharra-ishkun, when the Medes under Cyaxares attacked Nineveh and destroyed Aššur (614 B.C.E.). Soon after Cyaxares gained victory, Nabopolassar arrived and the Babylonians and Medes formed an alliance on the battlefield. In 612 B.C.E. the coalition returned to Nineveh along with the Ummanmanda ('tribal hordes' which included the Scythians). This latter group is likely what Ctesias' version refers to as 'Arabs' (who were actually from Mesopotamia). Ctesias describes the Persians as on equal footing with the Medes, however it is clear from all the sources that the Persians were under the influence of the Medes. Ctesias is likely paying homage to the Persians by elevating their status and enhancing their power from what it actually was at the time. Although Ctesias gives a Medo-centric version of events which one must view with reservations, it is possible that the Persians sent a contingent to join the Medo-Babylonian expedition against Nineveh at the request of the Medes (cf. Briant 2002 p. 23).

**to wait for five days:** König (1972 p. 61 n.4) notes that in Biblical texts the number five often denotes a more general figure such as 'some', 'several', or 'a few' (ex. Genesis 45:22, 2 Kings 7:13, etc.). He claims that Ctesias adopted this practice, which appears elsewhere (cf. F13 §13) from Aramaic, which could give evidence that he employed Semitic sources (see introduction for a full discussion on this passage).

**Salaimenes:** The name is a hapax but corresponds to the Assyrian *Salāmānu*, the Iranian *salamanah*, and possibly the Elamite *šá-la-ma-na* (cf. Eck 2003 p.50 n.1).

**cast themselves into the Euphrates River:** cf. above §3.2 for the mistake of locating Nineveh on the Euphrates. This scene actually recalls the victory of Aššurbanipal over the Elamites at Tell Tuba on the banks of the Ulaya River which was graphically illustrated on a series of reliefs in alabaster and displayed in the Southwest Palace in Nineveh (cf. Moortgat 1969 pl.284).

**Kotta:** This name is a *hapax* but is likely connected to Kotys, the leader of the Paphlagonians and another contemporary of Ctesias (cf. Xen. *Ages.* 2.26; 3.4).

**unless the river would first become an enemy of the city:** cf. Hdt. (3.151) for a similar case of *adynaton* where Darius is besieging Babylon and is told that he will take the city 'when mules give birth'.

**siege was prolonged and maintained for two years:** In fact, the siege of Nineveh lasted just over two months. Aššurbanipal's siege of Babylon (650-648 B.C.E.) lasted two years (see the introduction for a full discussion of this passage).

**the Euphrates swelled:** cf. Hdt. (1.191) on the role played by the Tigris in the siege of Babylon by Cyrus.

**he burned the palace and himself:** This narrative bears striking similarity to the suicide of Shamash-shuma-ukin, the king of Babylon and brother of Aššurbanipal who was besieged by the latter and committed suicide by self immolation when all was lost (see introduction).

**an eternal memorial to those sailing along the Euphrates:** Macginnis (1988 p. 39-40) has conjectured that this a folktale explaining the presence of the ziggurat, which still existed in a ruinous state in the time of Ctesias.

**to exempt this nation from tribute:** Tribute, like the office of the satrapy mentioned in §28.1, is a Persian institution. Ctesias often retrojects Persian customs and institutions into cultures of the past. The image given here that the Medes held sway over the Babylonians after the fall of Nineveh is completely unhistorical. After the destruction of Assyrian power, Nabopolassar, the king of Egypt and founder of the 'Chaldaeian' Dynasty (or Third Dynasty of the Sealand), concluded an alliance with the Medes, but it was on equal footing. Far from being submissive to the Medes, the Babylonians under the command of Nebuchadrezzar, the son of Nabopolassar, annihilated the Egyptian forces of Necho and took over the Assyrian vassal territories in the West. The Medes are depicted as inheriting the Assyrian Empire (cf. Eck 2003 p.152 n.1) which later the Persians will inherit from the Medes. This may be an 'official' version of events circulated by the Persians in order to legitimize their empire.

**to build an empire based on tolerance:** cf. Hdt (1.137) where the idea of tolerance is described as a Persian custom. By emphasizing that the Median rulers acted with leniency from the very beginning of the Empire, Ctesias seems to be indicating that the Persians inherited an honorable empire and continued to govern it justly, just as their predecessors had done. Again this seems to be an attempt of the Persians to legitimize their power.

**he razed the city to the ground:** There is some dispute over whether or not Nineveh actually was razed after the sack of 612 B.C.E. According to Strabo (16.1.3) and the Bible (ex. Nah. 1:14, 3:19; Zephaniah 2:13-15) the city was leveled. However, Eck (2003 p. 152 n.4) argues that the city was not completely abandoned after its sack but that the part of the Sennecherib's palace where the reliefs stood was reoccupied and Cyrus II encouraged a rebuilding of the city. Whatever the case may be, by the time of Ctesias and Xenophon so little of the city survived that it was unrecognizable even to the Ten Thousand when they marched past it (Xen. 3.4.10; cf. note above on §3.2).

**lasted more than 1300 years:** cf. §21.8 and note above on the duration of the Assyrian Empire.

- **F1c) she died at the age of 62:** cf. F1b §20.1-2 where her death is described as voluntary and F1g where Ninyas is the culprit. cf. F1b §9.4 on the Temple to Belos.
- **F1d) they call Dariakes Darius...:** Ctesias actually calls Darius Dareiaios (cf. F15 §50). cf. F1b §4.2 on Derketo and Athen. *Deip.* 8.37 on Atargatis.

- **F1eα) Bambyke:** This city, better known as Hierapolis, was the location of the main cult of Astarte and is situated in what is now Eastern Turkey near the confluence of the Euphrates and the Sagur. The temple of Astarte was sacked in 53 B.C.E. by Crassus on his way to fight the Parthians. Diodorus (F1b §4.2) locates the sanctuary in Ascalon on the philistine coast.

**he saved her:** In the version given by Diodorus (F1b §4.3) Derketo is transformed into a fish. Diodorus' version is likely the most faithful to the original since Eratosthenes may have altered the myth in order to explain the constellation Ichthys (cf. Krumbholz 1895 p. 227-8).

- **F1eβ) she placed amongst the stars a constellation of him:** This may not be a genuine fragment of Ctesias. The reference to the Great Fish shows that Hyginus is not giving the Ctesianic version of the myth (cf. F1b §4.3 and note above on F1e a) but may in fact be given an altered version of what Hyginus gives (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 27 n.285). He simply states at the end of the passage that 'Ctesias also writes about this' but says no more. Perhaps this passage would better fit in the Testimonia.

- **F1eγ) The *Chiliades* of Tzetzes were written in (?) meter.** However, it is impossible to relay this meter into English and so I have given a prosaic translation. Tzetzes' version again differs from that of Diodorus in that here Derketo drowns after jumping into the lake. Curiously, Lenfant has omitted this fragment from here edition.

**the Syrians now refuse to eat any fish:** cf. Porphy. *de Abstin.* (4.16); The Egyptians were well known in Antiquity for not eating fish (cf. Auberger 1991 p. 152 n. 67).

- **F1f) As a Christian apologist, Arnobius attacked Zoroastrianism and Magi as practitioners of dark arts.** He does not confuse Zoroaster with the Bactrian king as happens in Diodorus (F1b §6.2).

- **F1g) how she herself was killed by her son Ninus:** cf. F1b §20 where her death is described as voluntary. There is obviously a corruption of the manuscripts here which should read Ninyas, instead of Ninus.

**how she personally massacred her own sons:** Cf. F1ld for the descriptive narrative of this event; cf. note at F1b §19.10 on the chronology of Ctesias' narrative at this point.

- **F1h) Chauon:** cf. F1b §13.3 and note.

- **F1i) raised mounds of earth:** Diodorus says that Semiramis raised mounds for the burial of Ninus (F1b §7.1), the burial of dead cheiftains (§14.1), and in order to set her tent in an elevated place to view the camp (§14.2). He also describes her harsh policy towards her paramours (§13.4). However, he neither mentions the construction of mounds to stop floods nor their use as a burial for her lovers.
- **F1k) the aforementioned cities:** This statement refers to the cities of Babylon and Troy, both of which were situated in Egypt. According to Diodorus' account, Troy was founded by Trojan captives of Menelaus who revolted from him when he passed through Egypt and founded the city which they named after their homeland. Babylon, he claims, was similarly founded by Babylonian captives who, while laboring harshly over the pharaoh's building projects, revolted and were allowed to establish a colony. Strabo, who mentions both cities, claims that Babylon was a military camp in his day (17.1.30) and he locates Troy near the pyramids in Arabia (17.1.34). None of these stories has any element of truth and they are likely derived from Greek interpretations of Egyptian names that sounded similar to Troy and Babylon (cf. Bertrac and Vernière 1993 p. 116 n. 1). cf. F1b §14 for Semiramis' campaign in Egypt.
- **F1la) cf. F1b §14.4; F45 §31** where in his *Indika*, Ctesias describes a cheese-like substance that forms when water from a certain Indian spring sets which, when ingested, likewise acts as a truth serum.

**as red as cinnabar:** Cinnabar is a favorite substance to evoke when trying to give a particularly colorful description of something (cf. F45 §8, 15, 39, 45).

- **F1ld) cf. Lenfant (2000 p. 293-318)** for the incorporation of all the fragments by Nicolaus of Damascus into the Ctesianic corpus. All of the fragments incorporated into the corpus of Ctesias come from the *Excerpta* of Konstantinos VII. cf. note on F1b §19.10 for its place in the chronology of Ctesias' narrative.

**inspected her army from an *exhedra*:** Diodorus (F1b §14.2) says that Semiramis raised mounds on which to place her tent from which she could view her camp. The term *exhedra* normally refers to a bench or facade with recesses for seats. However, here it is clearly used to denote an observatory. Diodorus uses the term *skene* which is more commonly used in describing military camps.

**a eunuch named Satibaras... plotted against her:** This is the only occurrence of this name. Influential eunuchs and women were a common motif of Ctesias (cf. F1b §20.1 where Ninyas is likewise aided by a eunuch in his plot to overthrow Semiramis and §24.4 where Arbaces gains an audience with Sardanapallus by bribing a Eunuch). However, this theme dates back much further than Ctesias and is based on historical fact. For instance Sin-shumlishir was the chief eunuch who became king of Assyria briefly in 623 B.C.E. and Zakutu, the Assyrian queen mother, held powerful influence over her son Esharhaddon throughout

his reign and into that of her grandson Aššurbanipal (See note on F1b §4.1). The two sons of Onnes are named Hyapates and Hydaspes (cf. F1b §5.1).

**who was lusted after day after day:** cf. F1b §13.4 on Semiramis' sexual escapades with different lovers each day and their unfortunate fate when she was through with them. cf. F1i for their burials.

**He examines this in *On the Speeches*:** This work is now lost but is clear from the last sentence that Semiramis exposed her sons' intentions and from F1g that she put them to death.

- **F1m) Semiramis, a lecherous and murderous woman:** This is evidence of the change in Semiramis' reputation in later periods. The Christian apologist here is referring to her practice of taking a different lover everyday and then putting them to death so as not to allow any of them to pose a threat on her power (cf. F1b §13.4). The execution of her two sons described by Nicolaus (F1ld) may have given the Christians further reasons for calling her 'murderous'. cf. F1b §4.2ff on Semiramis' lineage from Derketo and F1b §20.2 on her transformation into a dove.
- **F1n) Ctesias in the third book of his *Persika*:** Ctesias seems to have treated the exploits of Ninus and Semiramis in the first two books of his *Persika* (See introduction).
- **F1oα) they ruled for a period of a thousand years:** cf. F1b §21.8 and note.

**numbering twenty-three kings:** Diodorus (F1b §23.1) says that thirty kings ruled from Ninus to Sardanapallus. However, at §21.8 (cf. note above) he says after Ninyas 'the rest of the kings ruled like Ninyas for thirty generations'. This is an apparent contradiction of §23.1 because if the rest of the kings after Ninyas numbered thirty then this would make Sardanapallus the thirty-third king since Ninus. In any case, Eusebius' calculation of twenty three is grossly mistaken.

- **F1oβ) up to Beleous...:** While the basic framework of this passage is based on Ctesias, it is obviously supplemented by variant traditions. Not only are Beleous, Derketades, and Beletaras completely absent from the corpus of Ctesias as we have it, but there is no mention anywhere of a dynasty change in his history of the Assyrian Empire. In fact, this version contradicts his statement that the kings all ruled with the kingdom being passed down from father to son (F1b §21.8). Moreover, Ctesias graphically describes how Sardanapallus committed suicide whereas here he is killed by Arbaces and Belesys. Lenfat (2004 p. 249 n. 307) is right to assert that this fragment has limited value in terms of reconstructing the original narrative of Ctesias.

- **F1pα) the son of Anakyndaraxes... Anabaraxaros:** The latter name does not appear anywhere else while the former is associated with the so-called Sardanapallus monument in Anchiath or Nineveh. This lineage does not seem to be from Ctesias as these figures do not appear anywhere else in the corpus. Cauer (1894 col. 2052) argues that this name comes from the phrase *Anaka nadu sar Assur* ('the Great king of Assur') which is found on the Assyrian king list tablets and that the Greeks mistook this phrase for a proper name.

**Sparameizes:** Possibly from the OP *\*Spara-mižda* 'winning a shield as a battle prize'. If this interpretation is accepted, then the form given by Plutarch (F26 § 15.3) more closely reflects the original (cf. Schmitt 2006 p. 277-279); cf. note above on F1b §24.4.

**lifting up the whites of his eyes:** cf. F1pγ. This expression, which is clearly Ctesias', gives a clear indication of the vividness and lucidity of style that Ctesias could achieve in his narrative. This must have been one of his more famous passages since the image of Sardanapallus 'raising the whites of his eyes' is found elsewhere (ex. Clem. Al. *Paed.* 3.11.70.3;).

- **F1pβ)** Lenfant (2004 p. 314 n.250) has questioned the authenticity of this passage arguing that it is unclear if Aristotle was familiar with the *Persika*. However, there is no reason to doubt that Aristotle is directly quoting Ctesias here. Although the passage is concise, it does not diverge from any of the other accounts we have received of this passage (cf. f1b §24.4). Moreover, while Aristotle never explicitly mentions the *Persika*, it is evident that he was quite familiar with Ctesias' *Indika* which he cites on several occasions (cf. F45d a, F45k a, F48 a and b). Of course this does not prove that Aristotle was familiar with all of Ctesias' works. However, the skepticism he displays here for the account of Sardanapallus is consistent with his views of Ctesias' work on India, which he challenges in every instance the Cnidian's work is cited. Obviously, Aristotle thought very little of the reliability of Ctesias and that mistrust is again displayed here. Lenfant, however, is right to point out that this passage shows how as early as the time of Aristotle Sardanapallus had become the quintessential effeminate king of the East.
- **F1pδ) after inheriting the kingdom from Ninus and Semiramis:** Sardanapallus was separated from Ninus and Semiramis by at least thirty generations (cf. F1b §21.8 and note) so he obviously did not inherit the kingdom directly from them. However, since we know that the intervening kings did nothing notable (i.e. conquests and expansion of the empire; cf. F1oα), this passage should be taken to mean that the kingdom inherited by Sardanapallus was exactly as Ninus and Semiramis had left it.
- **F1pε) Median race was perceived as second in courage only to the Assyrians:** This statement is obviously false since it was the Babylonians who posed the greatest threat to Assyrian domination. In the middle of the 7<sup>th</sup> Century Aššurbannipal had to put down a rebellion by his brother, the king of Babylon (see introduction for a full discussion) which



many feel was a pyrrhic victory from which the Assyrians never recovered (cf. Grayson (1991 p. 160). The Medes did attack Nineveh and destroy Aššur in 614 B.C.E. but an alliance was quickly concluded with the Babylonians (see note above F1b §24.5).

**Babylonians were most skilled in astrology...:** These skills are normally attributed specifically to the Chaldaeans rather than the Babylonians in general. (cf. note above F1b §24.2).

**Tigris River which flowed near the city of Ninus:** This is evidently a correction by Nicolaus of Ctesias' geographical blunder of placing Nineveh along the banks of the Euphrates (cf. F1b §3.2 and note).

**lieutenant governor of the entire satrapy:** All of the terminology in this passage ('satrap', 'lieutenant', and 'tribute') refers to the Achaemenid system of government and is therefore anachronistic (cf. note on F1b §5.1).

**I will give you Babylon... exempt from tribute:** cf. F1b §24.3; Arbaces upholds this vow and grants Belesys Babylon free of tribute (cf. F1b §28.1-4).

**one of the most trusted eunuchs:** cf. F1b §24.4; F1p a and note; Athenaios gives the eunuch's name as Sparameizes which may reflect the name of one of Ctesias' contemporaries. However, there is some doubt if Ctesias ever gave a name for the eunuch since this name goes unmentioned by both Diodorus and Nicolaus.

**to remember... to his master... he lived there where he died(?):** There is a lacuna in the text here rendering the passage untranslatable. The subject of the last phrase is likely Sardanapallus since he passed his entire life in the palace and ultimately committed suicide there (cf. Lenfant 2004 p.76 n.325).

- **F1q) 150 golden couches and an equal number of golden tables...:** cf. F1b §27.2; The narrative in this fragment is more vivid and detailed and gives us better insight into the original passage.

**†the city of Ninus† to the king:** There is obviously a corruption of the text here since Sardanapallus is in Ninus where he rules as king. Diodorus (F1b §26.8) says that the children were sent to Paphlagonia where Kotta was to look after them. Jacoby proposed to change the verb προπετόμφει ('sent forth') to προεκπετόμφει ('to send away') and Lenfant, while leaving the text alone, suggested possibly changing the phrase to ἀπὸ Νίνου εἰς Παφλαγονίαν. While the latter suggestion would be orthographically difficult (hence Lenfant's wise decision to relegate it to her commentary), it may offer the best solution to the problem since the entire phrase 'to the city of Ninus to the king' is corrupt. Diodorus explicitly refers to Kotta as a lieutenant ἑπαρχος - which itself may be a misspelling of ὑπαρχος cf. note on F1b §5.1 ) rather than a king βασιλεύς

**Sardanapallus... died a noble man:** In presenting the death of Sardanapallus as heroic, Ctesias' Assyrian Empire comes full circle and ends with the admirable and valorous activity with which it began, thus giving the entire *Assyriaka* a sort of ring composition.

- **F3) Ctesias says it was Semiramis:** Unattested elsewhere. The battle on the Indus River (cf. F1b 18.3) is the only instance of a naval engagement among Semiramis' exploits in the surviving fragments. However, the boats she employed on the Indus were collapsible riverboats (F1b 16.6; 17.2), which can hardly be described as 'warships'. Moreover, upon her arrival at the Indus, she found the enemy ships already in formation (F1b 18.2) indicating that the Indians were already accustomed to naval warfare making it impossible that Semiramis is here innovating the use of warships. Finally, if Ctesias ever made such a comment in his narrative of Semiramis' Indus campaign, it was ignored by Diodorus.
- **F4) a festival called the Sakaia:** cf. Strab. 11.8.4-5, Hesych. *s.v.* 'Sakaia'; D.Chr.. *Or.* 4.66. Lous was the tenth month of the Syro- Macedonian calendar. Dio Chrysostomus claims the festival was celebrated by the Persians and that after five days the criminal was flogged and executed. The method of execution could have been hanging, crucifixion, or impalement (cf. Frazer 1920 vol. 3 p.113 ff). Athenaeus likely neglected to mention the execution of the criminal because it was not essential to his discussion of festivals involving the role reversals of masters and servants. According to Frazer, the festival of the Sakaia was possibly the same as Zagmuk, the New Year festival at which the king's authority was formally renewed in the Temple of Marduk. He also points out its similarities to the Roman Saturnalia (vol. 6 p. 354ff.) and the Jewish festival of Purim (p. 359ff.), first mentioned in the book of Esther, which may have been derived from the Babylonian festival during the Jewish captivity (cf. De Jong 1997 p. 379-384).
- **F5) we return to the point from which we digressed:** §28.8 (end of F1b).  
**Herodotus who was born in the time of Xerxes...:** cf. Hdt. 1.95; Diodorus misrepresents the text of Herodotus who says that the Assyrians ruled for 520 years. Moreover, Herodotus says nothing of the Median cities acting democratically, but only asserts that they lived autonomously and lawlessly in villages. Furthermore, it was Deioces, the son of Phraortes and not Cyaxares who excelled in justice and was the first to be chosen king.  
**where he spent 17 years:** Controversial passage. It is certain that Ctesias left Persia in 398/97 and if he spent 17 years in Persia then he would have arrived in 415 B.C.E. during the reign of Darius II. If Müller's suggestion to emend the text to seven years is accepted, then Ctesias would have arrived in 405/04 around the time Artaxerxes was ascending the throne. See Introduction for a discussion of the life of Ctesias.  
**making use of the royal archives:** Cf. F1b §22; see Introduction for a full discussion.  
**after defeating Sardanapallus, as I have already mentioned:** cf. F1b §24ff.  
**Arbaces ruled for 28 years...:** Same name as one of Artaxerxes' generals at Cunaxa (Xen. *Anab.*1.7.12). The Median king list and chronology of Ctesias differs greatly from that offered by Herodotus. The king list of Ctesias names nine kings: Arbaces (ruled 28 yrs.), Maudakes (50 yrs.), Sosarmus (30 yrs.), Artykas (50 yrs.), Arbianes (22 yrs.), Artaios (40 yrs.), Artines (22 yrs.; cf. 34.1), Astibaras (40 yrs.; cf. 34.6), Aspondas/Astyages (?) for total duration of more than 282 years. Herodotus (1.102; 130) names only four kings: Deioces (53 yrs.), Phraortes (22yrs.) Cyaxares (40 yrs.), Astyages (35 yrs) for total duration of 150 years excluding the interim rule of the Scythians before the reign of Cyaxares which lasted for 28 years (cf. Hdt. 1.106). Astyages is the only name common to both lists and is one of only two names from both lists that can be found in the Babylonian sources (cf. note below).

The other name, Cyaxares, has been equated with the *Umakištar* mentioned in the Babylonian chronicle on the Fall of Nineveh (ABC 3.29-30; cf. Schmitt 2002 p.56-58). Many modern scholars make the mistake of only viewing Ctesias' king list in light of Herodotus and trying to establish a connection between the two (cf. Marquart 1891-93 p. 562ff who in order to support his thesis that Ctesias simply doubled the number of kings mentioned by Herodotus must senselessly treat Aspondas and Astyages as two different kings and add a fifth king). Eck (2003 p. 162 n.3) is right to point out the futility of such endeavors. Moreover, his assertion that Ctesias' version of events may reflect an Achaemenid tradition of the Median hegemony that coincided with the variant tradition offered by Herodotus is convincing (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. L-LI who posits a similar argument).

**Maudakes:** from the Iranian *Maudaka*- and may correspond to *Mu-da-ba-ka* mentioned in the Persepolis tablets (cf. Hinz 1975 p. 162; Eck 2003 p. 61 n.4).

**Artykas:** equated with Artouchas in Xenophon (*Anab.* 4.3.4) and derived from OP *Ṛt-uka* (cf. Schmitt 2002 p. 89-91).

**Artaios:** connected to the Elamite *Ir-da-ya* (cf. Mayrhofer 1973 p.166 n. 8.160) and the OP *rtaya*- (cf. Hinz 1975 p.217). The name also appears twice in Herodotus (7.22.1; 7.66.2).

**Incensed... over a certain matter Parsondes...:** cf. F6b for a detailed narrative of this feud. The lengthy description of these events given by Nicolaus of Damascus is here passed over in one sentence by Diodorus demonstrating how the latter thoroughly condensed the original account (cf. Eck 2003 p. 164 n.8).

**the Cadusians have always been hostile:** This war is unhistorical. Syme (1988 p. 137-150) catalogues numerous occurrences of the Cadusians in the sources and reaches the conclusion that they mostly appear in 'fictional history' that can be traced to Ctesias. He is right to point out that Ctesias, and later authors of romances, often give figures names taken from their contemporaries. However, he completely ignores the eastern sources when discussing the nomenclature of this passage, preferring instead to seek where else in the Greek sources these names appear. For instance, he refers to the name 'Artaios' as an 'easy invention' and only acknowledges that it is a documented name for Persians because it appears in Herodotus (cf. note above for the Elamite and OP origins of this name).

**Astibaras:** from the OP *ṛšti*-, and corresponding to the Babylonian *aštabarri* and the OP title *arštibara* meaning 'spear-bearer' (cf. Schmitt 2002 p. 48-49).

**the Saka:** Name given by the Persians originally to both the nomads east of the Caspian and those north of the Danube and Black Sea (cf. Cook 1985 p. 253-255). The Greeks and Assyrians referred to them as the Skuthai (Iškuzai) which, along with Saka, came to be a general term denoting all northern peoples. They are, however, differentiated in some of the sources by specific titles. After Darius' campaigns against the tribal leader Skunkha (DB 74), two nations of Saka were added to the list of subject nations on the Behistun inscription, the *tigrakhaudā* ('with the pointed hood'-DB 74) and the *haumavargā* who are identified with the Amyrgians in Xerxes army (Hdt. 7.64) and the Saka led by Amorges (F9 §3). Both of these groups lived east of the Caspian. A third group, the *paradayā* ('those beyond the sea'), who appear on an inscription of Darius from Naqsh-e Rostam (DNa 3), refer to the Scythians beyond the north of the Danube and the Black Sea against whom Darius campaigned in 514-511 B.C.E. After the campaigns of Darius, the Saka were always labeled with one of these three titles in order to differentiate them (cf. F8c and note; Dandamaev 1989 p. 137-140; Cook 1985 p.253-255; Sulimirski 1985 p. 149-199).

**a woman named Zarinaia:** cf. F7, F8a, and F8b

**the women of this nation ... shared the dangers of war with their men:** Among the Sauromartians, a nomadic people related to the Scythians who inhabited the region of the southern Urals and the lower Don and Volga, it was common for women to be buried with armaments (cf. Sulimirski 1985 p. 190).

**Zarinaia is said to have stood out from the rest:** Diodorus omits the story of her love affair with the Mede Stryangeos which is referred to elsewhere in the fragments (F7a, F8c).

**being three stades in length and one stade high:** about 531m per side and 177m high.

**Aspandas, whom the Greeks call Astyages:** Aspandas is of uncertain origin but not Iranian. Astyages appears in the Nabonidus chronicle under the form *Ištumegu* and is derived from the OP *ršti-vaiga-* ('brandishing the spear'); Ctesias refers to Astyages as Astyigas (F9.1) which more closely corresponds to the OP (cf. Schmitt 2002 p. 48-50 and 1979 p.123-124).

- **F6a) a slave to the king:** Nanaros should not be viewed literally as a slave since in Greek translations of OP documents the term *doèlow* ('slave') is used for to the OP word *bandaka* ('liegeman'), which refers the personal connection and loyalty of the liege to the king, because the Greeks did not have an equivalent. There was a ceremonial exchange of oaths between the *bandaka* and the king in which the former gave a pledge of loyalty to the latter who in turn would fully trust and protect his *bandaka* (cf. Xen. *Anab.* 1.6.6-7; Briant 2002 p.508).
- **F6b) Arbaces the king of the Medes:** This is an error in transmission, possibly by a Byzantine compiler. Parsondes would have lived during the reign of Artaios, the sixth king of the Medes who succeeded Arbianes, rather than Sardanapallus (cf. F5 §32.6; Lenfant 2004 p. 82 n.353). This fragment details the dispute between Parsondes and Artaios that was only briefly mentioned by Diodorus in F5 §33.

**When this man saw Nanaros the Babylonian... grew so disgusted with the man:** It is a recurring theme in Ctesias to have a stalwart subject angered by the effeminate customs of his king resulting in conflict. Cf. F1b §24ff. for the strikingly similar narrative of Arbaces anger at seeing the effeminate customs of Sardanapallus, which led the Mede to overthrow his Assyrian master.

**the petty dealers who follow the king's army:** The Persian army would usually travel from one large city to the next where the soldiers could buy provisions in the local markets (cf. Xen. *Anab.* 1.5.10) or from the camp's market. However, when on a long march, especially in remote areas, the soldiers were forced to rely on these traveling merchants who could charge exorbitant prices, in order to feed themselves (cf. Xen. *Anab.* 1.5.6 who says that the merchants were Lydians; Briant 2002 p.371-372, 377-378). However, although they were somewhat akin to ordinary peddlers, these merchants that followed the army provided a valuable service in helping keep the forces sufficiently provisioned. Cyrus is said to have ordered that no one interfere with these markets and that the peddlers remain adequately supplied (Xen. *Cyr.* 4.5.42). He also welcomes any merchant to follow the army and lays down the rules they must follow (*Cyr.* 6.2.338-39). In the latter passage, Xenophon refers to the merchants as *emporoi* whereas elsewhere they are called *kapeloi*. Although Plato defined *kapeloi* as merchants who buy and sell in the agora while *emporoi* engage in intercity trade (cf. *Rep.* 371d), the terms are by no means exclusive and appear to be used interchangeably in reference to these merchants (cf. Finkelstein 1935 p. 320-336, esp. p. 328).

**hunting:** In the Near East, as often in Greece, the hunt was a sport reserved for the elite. While Parsondes here is hunting on horseback, in Greece men usually hunted boar and deer on foot. After ca. 500 B.C.E., the boar hunt is usually an individual, rather than a group endeavor. In Near Eastern, especially Persian, art hunting scenes often portrayed local rulers in heroic or even divine imagery (cf. Barringer 2001 p.7, 175-76). The fact that Parsondes here employs servants to chase his quarry out into the open, a task normally reserved for dogs (cf. Xen. *Cyn.* 1-16), may further emphasize the high standing he held with the king.

**the kingdom which Arbaces gave to us:** Artaios was the fifth king since Arbaces and the kingdom of Babylon was given to Nanaros' ancestor, Belesys (cf. F1b §28.4) and his descendents, hence the use of the plural 'gave to us' (cf. Lenfant 2004 p.84 n.356).

**Parsondes was a white, smooth, and woman-like man:** Nanaros has transformed the once overtly masculine Parsondes, whose manliness was emphasized in the hunting scenes at the beginning of the passage, into a creature that exceeds even the women of the harem in effeminate qualities. The powerful sense of irony is heightened by the extreme reversal of Parsondes' character and lifestyle. The virile hunter who participated in masculine activities outdoors in the company of men is now confined indoors among only women partaking of only effeminate pursuits. This irony is reiterated throughout the passage, most notably when Artaios is grieving over the loss of 'one so manly' (§4).

**angaroi:** also called *astandai* in the Suda. According to Herodotus (8.98) and Xenophon (*Cyr.* 8.6.17-18) the Persian postal system, known as the *angareion*, functioned much like the later Pony Express in America. Men were stationed along the road, one for each day's journey, who would relay the messages in prearranged stages with one rider covering one day's journey. Although Xenophon attributes this system to Cyrus the Elder and Herodotus says it originated wholly from the Persians, it was actually derived from the Assyrians (cf. Briant 2002 p.928).

**to be seized by the belt:** This was a symbolic gesture employed when a king sentenced a *bandaka* to death (cf. Xen. *Anab.* 1.6.10; Diod. 17.30.4). The belt represented the bond between the king and his *bandaka* and by seizing it the king demonstrated that the bond had been broken (cf. Briant 2002 p.325).

**Susa where the king was:** The king would have been in Ecbatana, the Median capital rather than Susa which was one of the residencies of the Persian kings. Ctesias models his Median empire on that of the Persians and so illustrates it with multiple capitals (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 87 n. 361).

**to exact revenge on the eunuch and Nanaros:** While the story gets cut off here, it can be reconstructed almost in its entirety. In order to gain his revenge, Parsondes conspired with the servants of Nanaros (F6c), got him and the eunuch drunk, and ambushed them when they were intoxicated (F6d). In yet another ironic turn of affairs, Parsondes achieved his revenge by employing the same method by which he himself was originally ensnared (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 252 n. 362). Omitted in the narrative here is the fact that Parsondes was equally upset with Artaios for not avenging him leading to the war between the Medes and the Cadusians (cf. F5 §33).

**On Strategies:** now lost. The reference is made by the Byzantine compiler.

- **F7) When her husband and brother:** Although it cannot be ascertained if certain Scythian tribes practiced incest, the notion here accords well with Greek views of the foreign customs of the northern nomadic peoples. According to Herodotus (4.81), they consciously avoided

Greek mores and, as can be seen from numerous examples in their mythology, the Greeks viewed incest as outside the norm. Ctesias may have elaborated on this marriage more than the passing mention it gets here.

**the Persian king:** This is a mistake by the anonymous author of this work. Astibaras, the king of the Medes, campaigned against the Saka and their queen Zarinaia. (cf. F5 §34).

**She then handed control of her country over to the Persians:** There is no indication in the fragments of how Stryangeios became a captive of the Mermeros nor is there mention elsewhere of the Medes gaining control over the Saka. Diodorus (F5 §34.2) says the war ended with both sides coming to terms in which the Parthians would be placed under the dominion of the Medes and the status quo retained. He does confirm the alliance between the two sides.

- **F7b) who invented the shield:** According to Lenfant (2004 p. 90 n. 369), this statement is based on Aelian (*V.H.* 12.38) and not Ctesias. While the passage does seem to indicate that this information comes from a source other than Ctesias., Aelian says nothing of the Saka inventing the shield. Whatever source was used, it surely was an apocryphal story on the origins of the shield based on the artificial similarities between the name of the Saka and the Greek word for shield (*sakos*) which dates back at least to Homer.  
**while on horseback:** The Saka were renowned horsemen and were apparently capable of some remarkable maneuvers (cf. F45d b and note).
- **F8a) after writing a letter:** cf. F8b and F8c for the contents of this letter.
- **F8b)** This papyrus fragment may be from the original work of Ctesias and if so, then it will be the only bit of his original work to survive. See the Introduction for a full discussion.
- **F8c) Rhoxanake:** name is a *hapax*. A Rhoxonokaia is mentioned by Herodian (*Hdn. Gr.* vol. 3.1 p.283) and Stephen of Byzantium (s.v.). The Persians originally referred to all the Scythians and nomads along the northern frontier as Saka, although in actuality the various Saka were merely a part of the Scythians, who were by no means a homogeneous society (cf. note above). The dominate group of Scythians were the 'Royal Scyths' (cf. *Hdt.* 4.20) who lived in the Crimean steppe and the steppe east of the Dnieper up to the Don or, more likely, the Donets (cf. Sulimirski and Taylor 1991 p. 573-577). Like most other Scyths in this region, the Royal Scyths were nomads who lived in wagons and on horseback having no permanent home in which to build a palace, as is described here (cf. *Hdt.* 4.127; Sulimirski 1985 p. 150-154 although Sulimirski and Taylor 1991 p. 576 assert that the Scythians of the Crimea were 'a sedentary population' that engaged in farming and husbandry). There were certain Scythians who lived in fortified settlements, most notably in the forest-steppe zone in the modern Ukraine and fertile valleys of the mid-Dnieper.  
**if Rhoitaia should find out:** This name is a *hapax*. Since she was the king's daughter, Stryangeios would have faced severe consequences if she heard of his love for Zarinaia.  
**The letter said:** cf. F8b
- **F8d)** This fragment recounts one of three known versions of the ascension of Cyrus. In the version related by Herodotus (1.107-130), Cyrus is the son of the Persian Cambyses and Mandane, the daughter of Astyages, king of the Medes. In response to a warning from an

oracle, Cyrus is ordered to be exposed but is instead raised by a shepherd and discovered to be alive by Astyages whom he eventually overthrows. Justin (1.4.10) tells of a version in which Cyrus is exposed but raised by a female dog. While all three of these stories display strong elements of Near Eastern folklore (cf. Briant 2002 p. 14-16) the other versions have themes common to Greco-Roman mythology (e.g. the story in Herodotus bears striking similarities to the Oedipus myth and that in Justin to the Romulus and Remus myth). The version given here shares many common elements with the story of Sargon of Akkad who likewise was born to humble origins, worked his way up in the court, and eventually overthrew the king to found his own dynasty. Lenfant (2004 p. LVII-LX) rightly suggests that Herodotus and Ctesias were likely relating two different local traditions; however, her assertion that the one offered here is with 'intentions malveillantes' is unfounded. While it may be true that the kings of Persia emphasized their lineage as a form of prestige, by attributing humble origins to Cyrus this tale does not detract from his character but rather it enhances it. The kingdom was not given to him, it was earned meritoriously by a deserving individual who was destined for greatness, despite his lowly birth.

**the king of the Medes:** i.e. Astibaras (cf. F5 §34.6)

**Cyrus, a Mardian by birth:** The Mardians were a barbarous and nomadic tribe from the mountains (cf. Hdt. 1.125) described as a 'warlike people who lead a far different lifestyle than the rest of the Persians' (Curt. 5.6.17). Aelian (*V.H.* 1.34) relates a story in which the Mardians are shown to 'practice agriculture and even horticulture' (Briant 2002 p. 729), however, it is doubtful if there is any historicity to this passage since the reference to horticulture comes in the form of a metaphor. Moreover, it does not accord well with the other references to the Mardians.

**the son of Atradates:** Atradates is from the OP *Āyri-dāta* ('giving fire') and is seen in royal names as *Āṭr-dāta*; in Avestan as *Ātərədāta*; and in Elamite as *Ha-tur-da-(ad-) da* (cf. Schmitt 2002 p. 93). According to Herodotus (1.107 ff), Cyrus was the grandson of Astyages and the son of the Persian Cambyses. While no Near Eastern source links him to the Median royal line, he is called the son of Cambyses on the Cyrus Cylinder. Scholars have long referred to both Cambyses and Cyrus as Achaemenids (e.g. Lenfant 2004 p. 253 n. 380). However, this view has recently come into question (cf. Rollinger 1998; Potts 2005 p. 19-22). According to the Cyrus Cylinder, Cyrus was the son of Cambyses and grandson of Cyrus, both kings of Anšan, and a descendent of Teispes. Darius I, in his hopes to legitimize his claim to the throne, linked his own lineage to Achaemenes with that of Cyrus by proclaiming that Teispes was the son of Achaemenes (cf. DB 2). Achaemenes is never mentioned in any inscription attributed with certainty to Cyrus since the inscriptions at Pasargadae referring to him as an Achaemenid (*CMa-b-c*) are often dated to Darius' reign (cf. Stronach 1978 p. 95-97; Briant 2002 p. 90). Cyrus should be regarded as a Teispid and possibly of Elamite descent rather than an Achaemenid of Persian heritage (cf. Potts *op. cit.*).

**Argoste, the mother of Cyrus:** According to Herodotus (1.107) Cyrus' mother was Mandane, the daughter of Astyages.

**the attendants outside the palace:** This likely means that Cyrus was a gardener of the palace, which would be yet another parallel between Cyrus and Sargon, who also was a gardener to the king he would eventually overthrow (cf. Drews 1974 p. 389-90; although Lenfant 2004 p. 94 n. 383 doubts this assertion).

**Artembares:** The name also figures in the version of Herodotus (1.114) for the father of a child to whom Cyrus acted harshly when playing in his youth. He censured Cyrus and his

adoptive father and they were summoned to appear before Astyages. The king recognized Cyrus as his grandson whom he had ordered exposed.

**personal handler of the king's drinking cup:** According to the Sumerian King List (266ff), Sargon likewise served as cup-bearer for Ur-Zababa(k) (cf. Drews 1974 p. 390-393). The Royal Cupbearer was a prestigious office reserved for the king's most trusted servants. While acting as manager of all the pourers in the court, he was the only one who could pour wine into the king's special egg-shaped cup (cf. Dinon 11.503) and who acted as official tester of the wine to show it was free of poison (cf. Xen. *Cyr.* 1.3.9). It was a highly envied position that may have held even greater responsibility. According to Xenophon (*Cyr.* 1.3.8), Sacas, the cupbearer for Astyages had the respectable task of introducing visitors to the king. Although the historicity of this passage concerning the specific duties of the Royal Cupbearer is far from certain (cf. Briant 2002 p. 258-260), it serves to highlight the prestige of the position.

**performing his duties so elegantly:** cf. Xen. (*Cyr.* 1.3.8) on the refined mannerisms of the cupbearers.

**Astyages had a beautiful daughter:** Elsewhere called Amytis (cf. F9 §1). In Herodotus (1.107), the daughter of Astyages is named Mandane and is the mother of Cyrus. The name of her husband, Spitamas appears again F14 §42.

**I seemed to urinate so much...:** cf. Hdt. 1.107 where Astyages has a dream in which his daughter Mandane 'seems to urinate so much that it was enough to fill up his city and flood all of Asia'. While the language of Ctesias seems to mirror that of Herodotus, there is no reason to suppose, as Jacoby does (1922 col. 2057), that he is simply reworking his predecessors account. The mention of urination in Assyrian dreams is common in foretelling the birth of a great son (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 254 n. 381).

**defer the matter to the Chaldaeans:** In Hdt (1.107) Astyages refers the matter to the Magi for interpretation.

**he made his father satrap of Persia:** The fact that Cyrus' father is elevated to the status of satrap despite his former lifestyle as a known brigand does not seem to have detracted from the transmission of this element of the story despite its utter improbability. There is no indication that Ctesias made a big issue of it and it is probably safe to assume that it was not a cause for disbelief among those circulating this tradition.

**the Cadusians:** cf. F5 §33.6 and note on these people

**how Arbaces earlier removed Sardanapallus and assumed his power:** There are many common elements with the Arbaces story, including the interpretation of a dream by a Babylonian, his encouragement of the rebellion, and the promise to him of compensation for his services (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 255 n.389). The similarities in the transfer of power between the kingdoms may be another attempt by the Persians to legitimize their empire as being 'inherited' in the same fashion which the Medes established their supremacy.

**Oibaras means 'bringer of good news' in Greek:** This figure has been identified with Ugbaru, the governor of Gutium. However, this has been called into question by Dandamaev (1989 p. 42-43 and n. 2) who identifies Ugbaru with Gobryas (cf. Xen. *Cyr.* 4.6.1ff). Elsewhere (1976 p. 166 n. 715) he asserts that Oibaras may correspond to the Elamite name *Ubaruš* or *hu-pāru* meaning 'having well-formed shoulder (blades)'.

**the Persians being mistreated by the Medes:** The Medes overthrew the Assyrians because Arbaces found it disgraceful to be ruled by an effeminate and unworthy king. While on the surface the sentiment of Cyrus seems to be a much more vague *casus belli*, the following



statement that Cyrus should “overthrow the Medes for thinking it right to rule people more powerful than they are” displays the same disdain for being under the dominion of an inferior king or people. Moreover, there is little indication in this passage that the Persians are being mistreated at all (with the exception of Arbaces personal misfortunes). Under Median dominion, Cyrus was able to ascend from obscurity to the honored position of Royal Cupbearer and appoint his father to the powerful position of satrap of Persia, despite his former profession as a brigand. There is no explicit description of their ‘mistreatment’.

**those Cadusians... greatly despise the Medes:** cf. F5 §33.6 for the source of this enmity.

**make votive offerings on behalf of the king's safety and his father:** According to Herodotus (1.132), a Persian is forbidden from making sacrifice on his own behalf, but can only do so for the benefit of the king and all the Persians together which includes himself. Elsewhere in this passage, Cyrus only asks to go to Persia to make a sacrifice on behalf of the king and to ‘tend to his ailing father’ (§20; 22).

**ancestral sacrifices to Selene:** This accords well with the Persian customs of sacrifice given by Herodotus (1.131) who says that they only sacrificed to their version of Zeus (‘the full circle of heaven’) as well as the sun, moon, earth, fire, water and the winds.

**the most trusted of the eunuchs:** Cf. F1b §24.4 for the role of a eunuch in the overthrow of Sardanapallus. In F1pε the eunuch is again referred to as ‘one of the most trusted eunuchs’. On the similarities of these two passages see note above.

**After making obeisance:** The nature of *proskynesis* and what exactly it entails has generated much discussion (cf. Bickerman 1963; Frye 1972; Gabelmann 1984 p. 88-95; Altheim 1950 p. 307-309). It either involved prostrating oneself on the ground before the king (cf. Plu. *Them.* 27.4-5), or bending forward and perhaps blowing a kiss (cf. Ael. *V.H.* 1.31 and Briant 2002 p. 222-223 for possible interpretations of this passage). Whatever physical act was performed, Briant is correct to assert that ‘performing *proskynesis* recognized the majesty of the sovereign’ (cf. Bosworth 1988 p. 284-287).

**Tiridates:** from Elamite *Ti-ra-da-ud-da* (cf. Schmitt 2002 p.115-116). Artaxerxes II had a eunuch of the same name (cf. Ael. *V.H.* 12.1) so Ctesias may again be incorporating the names of his contemporaries into his history (cf. note above F1b §24.2).

**Hyrba:** otherwise unknown.

**On Public Speeches:** Work now lost

**you treated us well:** This contradicts Cyrus’ earlier claim that the Persians were being mistreated by the Medes.

**Those terebinth-eating Persians:** Terebinth is a species of *Pistacia atlantica* which, despite its Latin name, is not the tree that bears pistachio nuts. It was common throughout Mesopotamia both as a food product and a source for oil. As part of the coronation process, the would-be king had to eat a cake of figs and some terebinth and drink sour milk (F17 §3.2). The crops of the tree were gathered in the woods and terebinth was associated in Greek literature (e.g. Strabo 15.3.18) with idyllic life in the wild and the better days of Cyrus the Elder (cf. Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1995 p. 286-292; Amigues 1995 p.71-72).

**Pasargadae:** This name most commonly refers to the first Achaemenid capital northeast of Persepolis founded by Cyrus after his final defeat of Astyages. According to Strabo (15.3.8), Cyrus built a palace here to commemorate his victory. The origin of the name Pasargadae is in dispute. The name is first mentioned in Herodotus (1.125) as belonging to the chief tribe of the Persians to which the Achaemenids belonged. According to the Greek writers, the name means ‘the Camp of the Persians’ (cf. Steph. Byz. s.v. ‘Pasargadae’) and was so named

after Cyrus' victory. However, another theory, one that better accords to the testimony of Ctesias, is that the name comes from the OP *pasârkadriš* or *pasârkadrajah* meaning 'behind (Mt.) Arkadriš' (cf. Treidler 1962 col. 777-779). This interpretation, however, has been strongly disputed on the grounds that the correct reading of the name is Arakdriš (Kent 1953 p. 120). The name has been identified with the *Bat-ra-ka-taš* seen on the Persepolis Fortification Tablets (PF 44: 4-5; 62: 12) from which it has been conjectured that the OP name would have been *Pasragada* or *Pazragada* ('Those who wield strong clubs') or perhaps *pârsa-argada* (or *pârsa-rgada*) meaning 'Persian settlement' (cf. Stronach 1978 p. 280-281).

**by compulsion the Medes and their allies went up to face the Persians:** cf. Justin 1.6 for a similar account from Pompeius Trogus, no doubt based on Ctesias. This tactic of forcing one's army into battle is reminiscent of the Battle of Thermopylae in which Xerxes orders his captains to stand in back of the front lines and flog the men to force them forward (cf. F13 §27; Hdt. 7.223).

**On Brave Deeds and Strategies:** Now lost.

**Cyrus entered the tent...:** The Persian king was far from being a sedentary monarch, as can be seen by the numerous capitals of the Persian Empire. The king would travel from one capital to the other as well as throughout the empire for many reasons, including seasonal climate and to assert his dominion over the vast territory of the empire both in times of war and peace. When on the road, his tent, outfitted with all the splendor and treasure befitting the Great King, served as a monument of his authority and when captured, symbolized a change of power (cf. Briant 1988 253-273 for an excellent discussion on the 'nomadisme' of the Persian king, esp. 267-269 for his use of the tent). Once again, Ctesias is retrojecting Persian customs onto other cultures of the past.

**causing the people and nations to revolt:** cf. the Nabonidus Chronicle (check reference in Grayson).

**Artasyras:** From OP \*Rta-sûra 'heroic through Rta' (cf. Schmitt 2006 p. 139). He is said to have been the most powerful under Cambyses, son of Cyrus (F13 §9). The name appears again in F15 §52; it also appears in an inscription from Pergamum in reference to the father of Orontes, a Bactrian, who has been identified as the satrap that married Rhodogyne, the daughter of Artaxerxes II (*OGIS* 264 and note; cf. *OGIS* 390-392 and notes). Moreover, Artasyras is the name of the King's Eye at the Battle of Cunaxa (cf. F20 §12 and note) and thus another contemporary of Ctesias.

**Then came the Parthians, Saka, Bactrians:** Each of these nations joined Cyrus after he campaigned against them (cf. F9 §2-4). The order of events has been reversed from what is given in the epitome of Photius. In the latter's version, these nations only join Cyrus after he marries Amytis, daughter of Astyages. Moreover, it seems here that Astyages immediately becomes Cyrus' prisoner whereas in the Photian excerpt (F9 §1) it occurs only after Astyages surrenders while hiding in his palace. These discrepancies can likely be traced to an error on the part of the Byzantine compiler of Nic. who sought to condense the end of the narrative (cf. Lenfant 2000 p. 308-309).

- **F9) Astyages, whom he furthermore calls Astyigas:** Cf. note on F5 §34.6 for the etymology of this name. Cf. F8d for Cyrus' lineage and upbringing. The Greek reads οὗτος δὲ αὐτον καὶ Ἀστυίγαν καλεῖ. Lenfant (2004 p. 256 n. 411) correctly points out that the word καὶ should not be taken to mean that Ctesias freely employs both variants of the name,

but rather it is to draw the reader's attention to yet another way in which he contradicts Herodotus who uses the form Astyages. Supporting this assertion is the fact that only the form Astyigas appears in the rest of Photius's epitome.

**Ecbatana:** The capital of the Medes. Ctesias actually spelled the name Agbatana (Cf. F42) as does Herodotus but the later writers, especially Photius and Diodorus, chose to ignore Ctesias' spelling and employ the more conventional form. Agbatana more closely corresponds to the OP *hagmatana*.

**the ram heads of the palace halls:** Much uncertainty surrounds this phrase. Henry (1947 p. 12) simply translates the Greek term κριοκράνοις as the 'top' of the palace but offers no explanation in his commentary. König (1972 p. 50) makes the unlikely assertion that the term refers to a sheepfold and compares this episode to Odysseus' escape from the cave of Polyphemus. Lenfant (2004 p. 257 n. 413) claims it may refer to the capitals of the palace but in the absence of any other testimony, she wisely opts to simply translate the phrase literally.

**his daughter Amytis:** cf. F8d §8 and note.

**her husband Spitamas:** Name also appears as an epithet of Zarathuštra (cf. Benveniste 1966 p. 309).

**Megabernes:** a phonetic variation of Megaphernes which is found in Xen. (*Anab.*1.2.20) and corresponding to the OP *Baga-farnah* ('having the glory of the gods'). Persian names beginning with the OP *Baga-* ('God') were often rendered in Greek phonetically as Mega- (e.g. Megabyzos) (cf. Schmitt 2002 p.110).

**Amytis... became his wife:** According to Herodotus (1.107) the daughter of Astyages in Mandane who is the mother of Cyrus, thus placing him in direct lineage to the king of the Medes. His wife is a Persian named Cassandane who would become the mother of Cambyses. The version given by Ctesias, on the other hand, portrays Cyrus as a man of lowly birth who by marrying the daughter of Astyages, enters into his dynastic line. Lenfant's (2004 p. LXI) assertion that this version was circulated to tarnish the image of the king is not convincing. The idea of a man of lowly birth ascending through the ranks to become king was common in the Near East and was clearly meant to exalt the person who always exhibited heroic qualities unbefitting of his humble origins (cf. note above on Sargon). Most importantly, both versions create a dynastic link to the Median kingdom and thus represent Cyrus and the Persians as the rightful successors to the Median hegemony. Moreover, in Herodotus the daughter of Astyages is the mother of Cyrus while in Ctesias Cyrus honors her like a mother before marrying her thus signifying that in both stories she was significantly older than Cyrus (cf. Alexander's similar matronly treatment of Sisygambis, the mother of Darius III).

**Cyrus went to war with the Bactrians:** According to Herodotus (1.153-54) Cyrus planned to campaign against the Bactrians, the Sacae, and the Egyptians, but was prevented from doing so by a Lydian revolt. Herodotus seems to take no account of the fact that Egypt is in the opposite direction for the Bactrians and the Sacae (see notes above F1b §2.2 and F5§34.1 respectively), especially since Cyrus was setting out from Sardis.

**Cyrus campaigned against the Saka:** i.e. the *haumavargā* (cf. note on F5 §34.1). The name of their king, Amorges, may be related to the term *haumavargā* and Herodotus's descriptive term Amyrgaeon Sakas (cf. Vogelsang 1992 p. 125 n. 3).

**a force of 300,000 men and 200,000 women:** cf. F5§34.3 and note.

**the campaign of Cyrus against Croesus:** Ctesias relates a version of the Croesus legend that was unknown to Herodotus. The chronology of Cyrus' campaigns to this point differs in Herodotus who says that Cyrus campaigns against Lydia before marching against the Bactrians and Saka (1.153; cf. Lenfant 2004 p. LXI-LXIII).

**wooden statues of Persians:** Cf. F1b §16.8 where Semiramis employs animal likenesses to deceive and frighten her opponent. According to Herodotus (1.84), Cyrus took Sardis by storming a section of the city left unguarded because it was deemed inaccessible on account of its sheer steepness. While both authors relate variant traditions, both agree that Sardis was captured by surprise (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. LXII and p. 258 n. 424).

**the son of Croesus... a divine vision deceived him:** According to Herodotus (1.34-43), Croesus had a dream that foresaw the death of his son Atys by a spear. Although never sending his son away as a hostage, Croesus forbade him from participating in any campaigns or hunts. In Herodotus the deception of Croesus by the gods occurs in the famous oracular responses of Delphi and Amphiaraus that he would destroy an empire by attacking Cyrus (1.53).

**Croesus plotted a deception:** Photius is exceedingly vague in his abridgement here so nothing more can be known of this plot by Croesus. In the account of Herodotus (1.43), Croesus' son is accidentally killed by Adrastus while hunting a boar. The account of Ctesias is more tragic in that Croesus and his wife both witness the death of their son whereas in Herodotus Croesus only hears about it. Herodotus makes no mention of Croesus' wife.

**Croesus fled to its temple of Apollo...:** Herodotus (1.86-87) too has Croesus invoke the aid of Apollo after being taken prisoner. However, in the latter case, Croesus is placed upon a pyre and ordered to be burned alive before a sudden rain storm quenches the flames. While the traditions are divergent, they both show Croesus being freed from his unfortunate position by divine intervention. Both stories portray Croesus as being loved by the gods, despite their deception of him.

**after lightning and thunder struck:** lightning was a common divine portent (cf. F8d §41).

**was finally pardoned by Cyrus:** In both traditions Croesus' life is spared. In year nine (547/6 B.C.E.) of the *Nabonidus Chronicle* (ABC 7), Cyrus crossed the Tigris and defeated and killed an enemy. Although the enemy is unknown because the text has been damaged, early scholars restored the first two letters of the text as *lu-* (II.16; cf. Smith 1924 *ad loc.*; Grayson 1975 *ad loc.*) leading to the widespread belief that this referred to Lydia and the king was Croesus. Furthermore, in order to make the evidence corroborate with Herodotus, they translated the verb *idūk* (I.20) as 'defeated' instead of the usual 'killed' (Grayson gives both definitions). While the former is a possible meaning of the verb, it usually means 'to kill' in the chronicles (cf. Grayson 1975 8 n. 3). This fact coupled with the doubt surrounding the reading of *lu-* make the Chronicle an insufficient piece of evidence for the fall of Croesus (cf. Rollinger forthcoming; Oelsner 1999/2000 p. 278-279; Cargill 1977 p. 97-116).

**Barene:** Only mentioned in Ctesias. Cf. Hdt (1.153) where Cyrus intended to bring Croesus back with him to Ecbatana.

**to bring back Astyigas from the Barkanians:** Cyrus made Astyages governor of the Barkanians after his defeat (cf. F9a). According to Justin (I 6.16), Astyages was living amongst the Hyrcanians. The two groups seem to be one and the same, since Barkanians seems to be a variant rendition of *Varkâna*, the OP for Hyrcanians.

**Oibaras plotted with Petesakas to abandon Astyigas...:** cf. F8d §18 for Oibaras' vindictive nature. According to Herodotus (1.130), Astyages died, seemingly of natural causes, in the home of Cyrus. Cf. Isoc. (*Evag.* 38) who claims that Cyrus himself killed his 'mother's father' which, presuming he is following the lineage of Herodotus would refer to Astyages.

**Amytis repeatedly asked for Petesakas:** The vengeful woman demanding control over the one who wronged her and then putting him to death in cruel fashion is a common theme in the *Persika* (e.g. F15 §4; F16 §67; F26 §17.7).

**Cyrus campaigned against the Derbikes:** cf. F1b §2.3 and note; F43. Classical authors tend to locate the Derbikes just to the east of the Caspian (e.g. Strabo 11.8.8, 9.1); however, Vogelsang (1992 p. 188-189) identifies them with the Dyrbaians. This tribe was located in the east from Bactria up to the borders of India (cf. F11). The prominent role of Amorges and the *Saka Haumavargā* who lived beyond Bactria near the passes leading to the Hindu Kush, seem to support this assertion. According to Pliny (*V.H.* 6.92), Cyrus campaigned in this region and destroyed the city of Capisa in the mountain districts closest to the Indus, thus relating a tradition that he did campaign in this area. However, this argument seems to stand in contrast to Ctesias' ethnographic description of the Dyrbaians, who are said to be exceedingly just and 'never killing anybody'. It seems doubtful that Ctesias would make such a statement if he had in the previous book just described how they killed no less a man than Cyrus the Great.

**elephants in an ambush:** Cf. note on F1b §16.2 for the use of elephants in combat.

**inflicting a fatal wound:** There are several variants on the tradition of Cyrus' death. However, while there is no consensus on whom he was fighting, almost all agree that he died in battle on the Northeast frontier of the empire. Herodotus (1.214) claims he died fighting the Massagetae, but says many other versions exist. Berossus (F10) has him fighting the Dahae, and Diodorus (2.44.2) says he was captured by the queen of the Scythians and impaled. All of these people may belong to the same group of Scythians (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. LXIII and n. 227). Only Xenophon (*Cyr.* 8.7) has him dying in his bed.

**on his deathbed...:** Cf. Xen. (*Cyr.* 8.7.6-28) where Cyrus, on his deathbed, names his successor and the offices for his younger son. He most certainly based this episode on the *Persika*.

**Tanyoxarkes:** called Tanaoxares in Xenophon (*Cyr.* 8.7.6ff). Herodotus calls him Smerdis which closely corresponds to Bardiya, the name on the Behistun inscription (DB 1 §10). Tanyoxarkes, which more closely corresponds to the OP *\*Tanū-vazrka-* ('of great stature') than Tanaoxares, was most likely a surname or sobriquet of Smerdis (cf. Schmitt 1992 122-132; 2002 70-71).

**master of the Bactrians, Choramnians, Parthians, and Carmanians:** All four of these nations were mentioned among the conquests of Ninus (cf. F1b §2.3 and note). Tanyoxarkes' place of residence was no doubt in Bactria (cf. F13 §13; DB §38 for the mention of Dâdaršiš, a satrap in Bactria; cf. Olmstead 1948 p. 113) but the extent of his power or his specific function is unknown. He could not have exerted much influence in Carmania since it is located in what is now southern Iran, whereas the other three tribes were located in the northeast of the empire. Briant (1984 p. 71) logically asserts that Tanyoxarkes effectively governed Bactria and reaped the revenues from the other three provinces, especially since they were exempt from tribute (cf. Lenfant 2004 p.LXV).

**Megabernes was made satrap of the Barkanians:** Lenfant (2004 p. 258 n. 432) doubts the historicity of a satrap in Barkania. However, if Barkania is identified with Hyrcania (cf. note above), then it was certainly an important seat of power for the Persians since Hystaspes, the father of Darius I, held a high ranking position in Parthia-Hyrcania (DB 35-36; cf. Olmstead 1948 45-46, 107 who says he was made satrap, but I have found no evidence to support this specification; cf. Briant 2002 p. 82 who is more cautious).

**he then gave the order to obey their mother:** Cf. Introduction on the powerful role of women in Ctesias.

**He made Amorges their friend:** This testifies to the importance of the Scythians in the northeast part of the empire in asserting Achaemenid authority in the area. According to Vogelsang (1991 p. 214; 217-218), Amorges and the Scythians 'must have been in the position to act as a powerful broker between Cyrus' sons, the grandsons of Astyages, and the local elite groups'.

**having ruled for thirty years:** Cf. Just. (I.8.14); Hdt. (1.214) who says that he ruled for 29 years. The fall of Astyages occurred ca. 550 B.C.E. and the death of Cyrus ca. 530 B.C.E. (cf. Parker and Dubberstein 1956 p. 14). Thus, the duration of his reign as king of the empire was twenty rather than thirty years. Cuneiform inscriptions early on depict Cyrus only as 'King of Anšan' (e.g. ABC 7 II.1 – the *Nabonidus Chronicle* - for the year 550/49), the title held by his ancestors (cf. *Cyrus Cylinder* 21-22), before holding the title 'King of the world' (cf. *Cyrus Cylinder* 20; cf. Briant 2002 p. 16-18). The figures related by the Greek authors seem to reflect oral traditions that counted Cyrus' reign from when he first became King of Anšan, a vassal of the Medes (559 B.C.E.) rather than when Astyages fell (cf. Gilmore 1888 p.143).

- **F9a) Ctesias the physician . . . composed his *Persika* in twenty-three books:** Cf. T1b **chief of the Barkanians:** Cf. F1b §2.3 and note; F9 §6, §8 and notes. Photius never mentions this appointment, but simply states that Astyages was among the Barkanians. This indicates that Tzetzes was most likely using Ctesias directly.  
**she impaled him on a stake leaving his body for the birds to feast on:** Not mentioned in the epitome of Photius but Amytis certainly displays traits in common with other powerful and ruthless women in Ctesias (See Introduction for a full discussion).
- **F9b) Ctesias says:** This is likely an accurate and verbatim quote of Ctesias since Theon normally quotes others faithfully (e.g. 84.9-10 = Dem. *Olyn.* 2.1; 82.14-15 = Hom. *Il.* 2.547-548).
- **F9c)** This fragment contains the most detailed description of the fall of Sardis in the Ctesiasianic corpus. If Theon is quoting Ctesias faithfully in F9b, then it would appear that Polyaeus is embellishing a bit, which is not unusual (cf. Krentz and Wheeler 1994 p. xv-xvi).
- **F9d)** Cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 260 n. 455 on the introduction of this fragment into the corpus of Ctesias.
- **F10a) in the tenth book of his *Persika*:** Although only a small amount survives, it seems from the four existing fragments that Book 10 of the *Persika* contained an *ekphrasis* on the

natural history and ethnography of north central Asia. This book likely bore some resemblance to the format and content of the *Indika* although seemingly less fantastic. **here were certain camels...:** i.e. the Bactrian camel which is distinguished from the dromedary by having two humps instead of one. The Bactrian camel has an inner coat of down and an outer coat that is shaggier. They shed both coats and the hair is often gathered and separated before being spun into yarn for knitting. The fiber is similar to cashmere wool.

- **F10b) Caspian goats:** It is impossible to decipher the specific breed of goat, but the description recalls the Angora, a native species of Turkey which is a small breed, usually white and with a flat or concave nose. However, both male and female Angoras have horns.
- **F11) Dyrbaians:** Cf. F1b and note; F9 §7 and note.  
**Its men are blessed, wealthy, and very just...:** This recalls Ctesias' description of several Indian peoples (cf. F45 and Introduction).
- **F12) The Choramnians:** Identified with the Chorasmians in Herodotus (3.93) who inhabited modern Uzbekistan (cf. F1b §2.3 and note).
- **F13) Bagapates:** from the OP *\*Baga-pāta-* meaning 'protected by the gods'. OP names beginning with *Baga-* are often rendered into Greek as *Mega-*, however Ctesias has retained a form more faithful to the original (cf. Schmitt 1979 p. 128; 2002 p. 61; 2006 156-157).  
**sent the body of his father... to Persia to be buried:** The tomb of Cyrus is located in Pasargadae and is virtually intact. It was located about 1 km from the palace with a garden-park in between the two structures. For a full description and analysis with accompanying plates cf. Stronach 1978 p. 24-43.  
**Artasyras the Hyrcarnian:** Cf. F8 §46 and note.  
**Cambyses campaigned in Egypt:** Cf. F13a and note for full discussion; The Greek is not precise at this point literally saying 'this man campaigned in Egypt'. The subject of the sentence is clearly Cambyses based on the description of the campaign and subjugation of Egypt in the following section (cf. Hdt 3.1). Henry (1947 p.19) has Bagapates leading the expedition in his translation (cf. also Briant 2002 p. 268), but Lenfant (2004 p. 117 n. 465) is right to refute this.  
**Amyrtaios, the king of the Egyptians:** The outbreak of hostilities was originally between Cambyses and the pharaoh Amasis (cf. F13a; Hdt. 3.1ff). Amasis died before the Persian invasion of Egypt (525 B.C.E.) and was succeeded by Psammetichus III, called Psammenitus by Herodotus and Psammecherites by Manetho (F66). The name Amyrtaios appears in reference to the king of the marshes in Egypt during the revolt of Inaros ca. 464-454 (cf. Thucy. 1.110; Hdt. 3.15) and again regarding a king from Saïs who revolted against the Persians ca.405 B.C.E. The latter king was presumably the grandson of the former (cf. Briant 2002 p. 619; Dandamaev 1992 p. 272; Olmstead 1948 373-374) and the sole member of the 28<sup>th</sup> Dynasty who was able to establish the final period of freedom for Egypt during the civil war of Cyrus and Artaxerxes II (cf. *Demotic Chronicle* III.18-19). Recently discovered demotic ostraka show that Amyrtaios II also went by the name Psammetichus (cf. Chauveau 1996 p. 44-47). It seems likely then that Ctesias assumed that the previous Psammetichus (III) was also named Amyrtaios and so gave the 'correct' version of his name (cf. his

decision to give the legitimate variant Tanyoxarkes instead of the more common Smerdis; cf. Lenfant 2004 p. LXIX-LXX).

**Kombaphis, the eunuch:** a figure of legend with perhaps some semblance of truth. An Egyptian statuette of Udjahorresnet from Saïs with a hieroglyphic inscription refers to Cambyses and Darius as pharaohs (cf. Posener 1936 p. 1-26 for translation and commentary). This has led to the widespread belief that he treasonously collaborated with Cambyses (cf. Briant 2002 p. 57-59). According to Herodotus (3.4), Phanes, a mercenary from Halicarnassus, after escaping from the eunuch sent by Amasis to recover him, defected to Cambyses and told him the safest route to Egypt. Many see Kombaphis as a deformation of this episode (cf. Briant 2002 p. 886) with the two figures of Phanes and the eunuch merged into one (cf. Benveniste 1939 p. 251). Schwartz (1949 p.71-74), however, questions this view and convincingly shows that Ctesias is likely relating a local tradition different from that of Herodotus (cf. Lenfant p. LXX and note 258). The name appears later in Lucian (*Syr. D.* 17-27) about a eunuch who, anticipating the advances of the queen, castrates himself, an act which later proves his innocence. He is honored by the king and seen as an example of the faithful eunuch (cf. Firdawsi's *Book of Kings*). The name also appears on a hieroglyphic inscription as the surname of Ptah-hotep who faithfully served Darius. This later character more closely resembles Kombaphis. (cf. Posener 1986; Lenfant *op. cit.*).

**forced him back to Susa with 6,000 Egyptians:** The deportation of the vanquished was commonly practiced by the Persians as well as the Assyrians and the Neo-Babylonians (cf. Briant 2002 p.433-435). According to Diodorus (1.46.4), Cambyses brought craftsmen back from Egypt to construct the palaces at Susa and Persepolis.

**died in the battle:** Probably the Battle of Pelusium (cf. Polyaen. 7.9; Hdt. 3.10) which resulted in a resounding victory for Cambyses. Afterwards, Psammetichus retreated to Memphis where he was besieged and taken prisoner (cf. Hdt. 3.13).

**A certain Magian named Sphendadates:** from Op \**Spanta-dāta-* meaning 'endowed by Spəntā (Ārmaiti)' (Avestan for a class of divinities in Zoroastrianism; cf. Schmitt 2002 p.68). Like with Tanyoxarkes, this may be a surname of Gaumata, the usurper in DB10ff. (cf. Dandamaev 1976 p.110-112; 1989 p. 85 n. 6; Lenfant 2004 p. LXXII; cf. De Jong 1997 p. 387-413 for the role of Magi as priests). See Introduction for a full discussion of this episode.

**since the Magus strongly resembled Tanyoxarkes:** cf. Hdt. 3.61 where the resemblance of the Magus' brother to Smerdis allows him to seize the throne as an imposter.

**Tanyoxarkes drank the blood of a bull:** This was a common form of poisoning in legendary deaths and usually used for suicide. According to Herodotus (3.15) Cambyses put Psammetichus to death by having him drink bull's blood. The legendary death of Themistocles is the most famous example of one perishing by drinking bull's blood (cf. *Ar. Eq.* 83-84; *Plut. Them.* 31). It was believed that the blood would quickly congeal and suffocate the drinker (cf. *Nic. Alex.* 312-318; *Arist. H.A.* 3.19). Since in actuality drinking bull's blood is harmless, scholars have struggled to explain this phenomenon. Some have equated the phrase "bull's blood" with the Egyptian plant Marubium (cf. André 1958 *s.v.*), although it is not toxic. Others claim the phrase is from the mysterious language of Egyptian priests used for a toxic mixture (cf. Strömberg 1940 p.131) while still others claim that the blood itself becomes toxic from bacteria (cf. Touwaide 1979 p. 5-14 for a full discussion, citations of ancient sources and refutation of previous explanations; cf. Arnould 1993 p. 234-235 who identifies the substance as arsenic). Regardless of the explanation, that Ctesias, a



noted physician, believed the substance to be fatal is a testament to how widespread the belief was in the ancient world.

**Labyxos:** According to Schmitt (1971 p.8-10) this name may be derived from the form \*Gabyxos which is a corruption of (*Ba*) *gabuxša* (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 261 n. 473).

**After five years passed:** According to Justin (1.9.11), this masquerade was easily concealed because the Persian king is kept out of sight. Cambyses died in 522 B.C.E after his campaign in Egypt which lasted for three years. Since Amytis discovered the imposter before the death of Cambyses, this would place the murder of Tanyoxarkes before the Egyptian campaign thus agreeing with the chronology of the Behistun inscription (DB 10; cf. Lenfant 2004 p. LXXI-LXXII; Briant 2002 p. 100). According to Herodotus (3.30), the murder of Smerdis and usurpation of the imposter occurred during the campaign and Justin (1.9.4-11) says they both happened after.

**She asked Cambyses for Sphendadates:** cf. F16 §66 and F26 §17 where men are handed over to Parysatis and executed in cruel fashion.

**he accidentally cut a gash in his thigh to the muscle:** It seems that Cambyses died from some sort of an infection caused by the wound, possibly tetanus. According to Herodotus (3.64-66) Cambyses suffered a wound to the thigh when his sword slipped from its scabbard while he was mounting his horse. The wound became infected with gangrene and he died twenty days later. Persian sources (DB 11) merely state that Cambyses died by his own hand.

**after ruling for 18 years:** Herodotus (3.66) says that Cambyses reigned for 7 years and 5 months.

**Then seven Persians nobles conspired against the Magus:** Herodotus (3.70) names the Seven as Otanes, Intaphernes, Gobryas, Megabyzus, Hydarnes, Aspathines and Darius. The Behistun Inscription (DB 68), for the most part corresponding to Herodotus's list, gives the names as Utāna, Vidafarnah, Gaubaruva, Bagabuxša, Vidarna, Ardumaniš and Darius (cf. Lenfant 1996 p.373-379 and 2004 p. LXXVII-LXXX for a convincing explanation of the differences of these three lists). Of these, only Aspathines and Ardumaniš do not match up, although the name Aspathines is seen on Darius' tomb at Naqš-i Rostam as Aspacānā (DNd; cf. Schmitt 2000 p. 46; Briant 2002 p. 108). It is unclear if the Otanes of Herodotus and Onophas of Ctesias are the same person (cf. Briant 2002 p. 135). Herodotus (7.62) names Anaphes as the son of Otanes (cf. Diod. 31.19.1 who names Anaphas as one of the Seven). Ctesias also mentions Mardonius among the seven whereas the Behistun inscription (DB 68) and Herodotus both name his father Gobryas instead. Thus, in both cases it is possible that Ctesias or his informant confused father and son (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 262 n. 484).

**Bagapates who possessed all the keys to the palace:** It was not uncommon for the king's eunuchs to hold important posts within the palace. Xerxes' chamberlain was a eunuch named Mithradates (Diod. 11.69.2) and Bagoas, a eunuch under Artaxerxes III rose to the eminent position of chiliarch, an office in charge of admitting visitors to the king's presence (Diod. 17.5.3). As keeper of the palace keys, Bagapates likewise had control over access to the inner chambers of the palace. In Herodotus' version of the plot of the Seven (3.77), the eunuchs who bring messages to the king barred the conspirators from entering and were killed indicating that it was common for eunuchs to have privileged access to the king (cf. Briant 2002 p. 275).

**after ruling for seven months:** Herodotus (3.67) gives the same duration for the reign of the Magus. Akkadian documents indicate that the reign lasted from the beginning of the revolt

in March until the death of the Magus on September 29, 522 B.C.E. (cf. Frye 1984 p. 99; Olmstead 1948 p. 108).

**his was the first horse to neigh:** cf. Hdt. (3.84-86) where Darius was able to make his horse neigh first thanks to a ruse devised by his groom Oibares. Hippomancy was practiced by the Persians into the Sassanian period (cf. Dandamaev 1976 p.166; Lawrence 1935 *ad loc.*) and the Germans in the first century (Tac. *Germ.* 10.4). This entire episode stands in sharp contrast to Darius' claims of being the legitimate successor to the Persian throne. In the official propaganda, Darius attempts to tie his lineage in with that of Cyrus (DB 1-5) in order to legitimize his claim to the throne. An account of him winning the right to the throne in a contest of fate obviously contradicts the 'official' version of his accession (cf. Cook 1983 p. 25-26; Briant 2002 p. 109-113; cf. Rollinger 1998 p. 155-209 and Potts 2005 p. 7-28 for analyses of the lineages of Cyrus and Darius). Herodotus and Ctesias appear to be relating folk traditions of the ascendance of Darius. Lehmann-Haupt (1922/3 p. 59-64) argues that this legend stems from a bronze sculpture of Ursa, king of Urartu with his horses and charioteer which bore an inscription stating that he captured his kingdom with them. Sargon removed the statue from Musasir and the legend was later transferred from Ursa to Darius (cf. Pritchett 1993 173-179).

**a festival called the slaughter of the Magians:** Much controversy surrounds this festival which, according to Herodotus (3.79), is celebrated on the most holy of days and during which no Magus can set foot in public, but all must remain confined indoors. Auberger's (1991 p. 157 n. 13) claim that this festival was racially and religiously motivated since the Magi were Median is unfounded since nowhere else do we see such racial intolerance towards the Medes by the Persians. The murder of the Magus king took place on the tenth day of the month of *Bāgayādiš* and may have occurred during the *Mithrakāna*, the festival in honor of Mithra. That a festival was held on the same day as the murder may have been responsible for a misinterpretation of its meaning (cf. Dandamaev 1989 p. 97). Eilers (1953 p. 27-30) suggests that the name of the festival called *Bagakāna* was misconstrued as *\*maga-kana* meaning 'murdering the Magus' thus leading to the false history of the festival. Others simply believe this to be an invention by the Greek authors (cf. Balcer 1987 p. 113). Unfortunately, not enough evidence survives to make a valid assertion on the true nature of this festival (cf. De Jong 1997 p. 377-379 and Dandamaev *op. cit.* for fuller bibliography).

**Darius ordered a tomb to be constructed:** The tomb of Darius and those of his successors down to Darius II are at Naqš-i Rostam. The tomb is only accessible by a pulley system (cf. Diod. 17.71.7). Cf. Schmidt (1970 p. 86-90) for a full description of the tomb.

**on a smooth hill:** The mss. give the term δισσοῦ, however most editors (e.g. Jacoby and Lenfant) accept the emendation of Roscher (1911 p. 537) to λισσοῦ thus changing the meaning from 'a double hill' to 'a smoothed out hill'. Although Cook (1983 p. 50) attempts to identify the 'double-hill' as a 'hill with two cliff-girt flat crowns' that stands about a mile from the tomb, all evidence seems to support Roscher's emendation. The face of the hill containing the tomb was polished smooth to make way for decoration and inscriptions (cf. Diod. 17.71.7 who describes the rock face as κατεξαιμμένη). Moreover, this act of polishing smooth a cliff face as part of a monument corresponds well to Ctesias' description of the Behistun rock, which he attributes to Semiramis (F1b §13.1-2 although there is no indication in Photius that the cliff here was artificially smooth).

**when the priests... saw snakes:** Text uncertain. The term 'snakes' (ὄφεις) is missing from all but one ms. Only ms. A provides the term but it was clearly added by a later hand,

possibly to correct a lacuna (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 263 n.495; Cook 1983 p. 50 n.2). If the term is left omitted, then the pronoun ‘them’ becomes the object of two verbs and should be rendered ‘when the priests saw them (i.e. Darius’ parents)’, they became frightened and dropped them. While their fear may be explained by looking to the warning given to Darius by the Chaldaeans, the omission of the term renders the sentence awkward. Unfortunately, the details of the event as Photius gives them are too insubstantial to warrant a conclusion with any certainty.

**Ariaramnes:** also the name of Darius’ great-grandfather who was the father of Arsames and son of Teispis (DB 1-4; cf. Briant 2002 p. 110-111). His name in OP is Ariyāramna (cf. Kent 1953 p.116).

**cross over into Scythia:** cf. Hdt. 4.1; 4.83ff; Ctesias is the only source to mention this preliminary campaign into Scythia. Although its authenticity cannot be determined, it has been deemed plausible by modern scholars (e.g. Briant 2002 p.143; Cook 1983 p. 92; Burn 1984 p. 131 despite his altogether negative view of Ctesias). These Scythians are the Saka *paradayā* (‘those beyond the Sea’) who lived beyond the Danube in the eastern frontier of Europe. They are differentiated from the *tigrakhaudā* (‘with the pointed hood’) and the *haumavargā* (cf. note on F5 §34.2). The expedition dates to ca. 513 B.C.E. (cf. Briant 2002 p.142; cf. Grote 1869 vol. 4 p.188 n. 2 who dates it to 516/515 B.C.E.)

**Skytharbes:** Text uncertain. Ms. M reads ‘Scytharches’ which is a Greek term meaning ‘leader of the Scyths’. Jacoby is often followed in retaining the former reading (e.g. Briant 2002 p. 143). Lenfant accepts the latter reading although acknowledging that it is not an Eastern name. However, it is difficult to believe that Ctesias, who usually offers authentic Eastern names often rendered more closely to the original than other Greek authors, would interpolate a fabricated Greek name. On the other hand, it is reasonable to see how a later scribe with knowledge of Greek would ‘correct’ the text to a comprehensible Greek phrase.

**gathering an army of 800,000 and bridging the Bosphoros and the Danube:** An obvious exaggeration. Herodotus (4.87) gives the only slightly more credible figure of 700,000 with 600 ships.

**the Ister:** the Danube

**the two sides exchanged volleys of arrows and the Scythians were victorious:** According to Herodotus (4.120), a supply shortage led to Darius’ withdrawal from Scythia, in part thanks to the scorched earth policy adopted by the natives. (cf. Cook 1983 p. 92-93; Briant 2002 p. 142-143; Lenfant 2002 p. LXXXII-LXXXIV who details the similarities between the narratives of Herodotus and Ctesias).

**before his entire army had crossed over:** Herodotus (4.135) says that Darius abandoned those who were infirm and of little use to him along with the asses. These men surrendered to the Scythians but their fate is not reported.

**Darius burned down the temples... in the name of Zeus Diabaterios:** In the account of Herodotus, the Ionian Greeks who were guarding the bridge in ships, refused to fully destroy it at the bidding of the Scyths (4.136-142). Herodotus makes no mention of the Chalcedonians or of the erection of an altar. He states (4.87) that before crossing Darius set two steles of white stone on which were written in Assyrian and Greek the names of the nations within his army. Zeus is the Greek name for Ahura-Mazdā but the surname Diabaterios is purely Greek. The *diabateria* were offerings made before crossing the border to set out on an expedition (cf. Thucy. 5.54-55). Ctesias may be attributing Greek customs to Ahura-Mazdā (cf. De Jong 1997 p. 262; Lenfant 2004 p. 263 n. 504).

**at Marathon Miltiades met him:** Historically, the Ionian revolt preceded Darius' expedition into Greece. Either Ctesias neglected to mention it in his history or Photius passed over it in his epitome. Ctesias, being an Ionian, may have chosen to omit the rebellion in his history since it does not appear in Photius as a cause of the second Persian invasion (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. LXXXV). On the other hand, it is hard to believe that Ctesias would omit the rebellion, whatever his motivations, since it was so well known in the Greek world.

**after Datis himself was killed:** According to Herodotus (6.119), Datis returned to Asia after Marathon. There is no way of knowing for sure which of the two accounts is accurate. Cagnazzi (1999 p. 371-393) argues that Herodotus falsified his account in order to cover the fact that the Athenians refused to return his body. It seems doubtful that Herodotus would deliberately falsify his account in order to conceal an act of sacrilege on the part of the Athenians and that the latter would not boast of the death of the leader of the expedition. Lenfant (p. LXXXVI) contends that Ctesias is likely relating a Persian account of the events spread in order to give an excuse for the sound defeat and to provide another motive for the second invasion (§25). While the latter argument is a convincing explanation of the variants, the version related by Ctesias would have to have appeared some time after the wars since contemporaries of Marathon would surely have known that Datis did not perish in the war when he returned to Asia Minor.

**Darius...before dying at the age of 92 having ruled for 31 years:** Darius died in November of 486 B.C.E. (cf. Parker and Dubberstein 1956 p. 16-17). According to Herodotus (7.4), Darius ruled for 36 years, a figure that corresponds with Babylonian documents (cf. Stolper 1992 p. 61-62). Unclear if the error should be attributed to Ctesias or Photius

**Artapanos, the son of Artasyras:** Herodotus (7.10-12) mentions Artabanos, the son of Hystaspes and thus brother of Darius and uncle of Xerxes, as one of the latter's councilors. Momigliano (1931 p. 203) may be right to conjecture that Ctesias has confused two separate individuals. This Artapanos, though not as high born as the son of Hystaspes, would likely have become the chief of the Hyrcanians after the death of his father (cf. F8d §46) and as such would have been a man of distinction. Moreover, the importance of Hyrcania can be seen by the significant post that Hystaspes himself held there in 522 B.C.E. (cf. note above F9 §8; cf. DB 35 which contradicts Herodotus 3.70 that he was *hyparchos* of Persia; cf. Briant 2002 p. 926). Lenfant's (2004 p. LXXXVI-LXXXVII) characterization of him as an 'obscure subalterne' thus seems excessive.

**Natakas:** Gilmore (1888 p. 153) equates this figure with Mordecai, the Jew described in the Book of Esther (10:3) as 'next unto King Ahasuerus (Xerxes)'.

**Dariaios:** Form closer to OP *Dārayavauš* meaning 'he who holds firm the good' (cf. Kent 1953 p. 189; Dandamaev 1992 p. 68-69; but cf. Herzfeld 1935 p. 40 who argues that this form is hypocoristic of *\*dāraya-vahumanah* – 'he who sustains the good thought'). The usual spelling Darius is derived from an OP form of the name abbreviated by haplology – *\*Dārayauš*. Despite the fact that both forms represent the same name, Ctesias employs the more common spelling for Darius I but uses the longer and more faithful form for the son of Xerxes and Darius II Ochus (cf. F15 §50; §56; F16 §57). Xenophon (*Hel.*2.1.8) likewise uses the longer form for Darius II but the passage is suspect (cf. Schmitt 2002 p. 53-55).

**the grave of Belitanas:** Often equated with the temple of Marduk Esagila (cf. Briant 2002 p. 962-963; Macginnis 1987 p.1-11; Olmstead 1948 p. 236). In F13b, Aelian describes the

same story but says it occurred in the tomb of Belas. The latter term came to be applied universally to the sanctuary of Marduk at some later point since Ctesias (F1b §9.4), like Herodotus (1.181.2), refers to the building as the ‘temple of Marduk’ while later authors call it the ‘tomb of Marduk’ (cf. Diod. 17.112.3; Strab. 16.1.5). Ctesias is here referring to a separate structure, possibly a royal tomb in the palace (cf. Lenfant 2004 LXXXVIII-LXXXIX). The confusion may have developed from Euhemerus’ *Sacred History* (late 4<sup>th</sup> C B.C.E.) which claimed that Belus was a mortal leading Aelian to later substitute Belus for Belitanas in his version of Xerxes’ visit to Babylon (cf. Garstad 2004 p. 256 and n. 72).

**the Babylonians had revolted:** Ctesias is the only Greek author to mention a Babylonian revolt under Xerxes. The Babylonian evidence shows that there were two rebellions under Bēl-šimānī and Šamaš-erība. The first rebellion scarcely lasted two weeks but the second much longer though both leaders briefly bore the title ‘King of Babylon, King of Lands’ (cf. Olmstead 1948 p. 236-237). The exact dates of the two rebellions are not known with certainty but most scholars feel they both occurred early in the reign of Xerxes (cf. Cameron 1941 p. 319-325 followed by Olmstead, dates both to 482 B.C.E.; Cook 1983 p. 147-148, following Böhl 1962 p. 110-114, dates them 484 and 482 respectively; Burn 1984 p. 317 and n. 12 only mentions one revolt but follows Ctesias in placing it before the invasion).

Although most scholars follow the chronology of Ctesias and date both rebellions before Xerxes invasion of Greece (cf. Cuyler Young Jr. 1988b p. 74), Briant (1992 7-20 and 2002 p. 525, 543-545, 962-963) dates them to ca. 481 and 479 placing the last one after the invasion (cf. Arr. 7.17.2). If the latter chronology is accepted then it must be assumed that Ctesias’ informant confused the date of the latter and more serious rebellion with the former, which surely took place before the expedition. Briant’s argument against Xerxes’ destruction of Babylon is supported by the fact Ctesias never mentions it and the actions of Xerxes following the invasion (see below); On these revolts see also Waerzeggers (2003/2004).

**Ctesias gives a different account of this than Herodotus...:** Photius is likely mistaken in his juxtaposition of the two accounts since Herodotus (3.150-160) may be describing a different Babylonian revolt which occurred early in the reign of Darius (cf. Briant 1992 p. 9-13 and Balcer 1987 p. 125-130 for opposing views). This revolt occurred under a pretender named Nidintu-Bel who assumed the name Nebuchadnezzar III, son of Nabonidus (DB 16-20; cf. Olmstead 1948 p. 112). In the narrative of Herodotus, Zopyros played a major role in recovering the city with Darius. It is possible that Zopyros helped put down the first revolt and was killed during the second which his son Megabyzos helped to suppress (cf. Lenfant p. XC).

**Xerxes gathered a Persian army that numbered 800,000 men ...:** An obvious exaggeration but an improvement on Herodotus’ ridiculous figure of 1.7 million (7.60; cf. Brunt 1984 p. 326-332). Modern scholars vary greatly in their estimates of the force but many number it to a few hundred thousand (cf. Cawkwell 2005 p.237-254; Cook 1983 p. 168-173; Grundy 1901 p. 222; cf. Briant 2002 p. 526-527 and 960 for the problems with such estimations). Aeschylus (*Pers.* 341 says that the Persian ships at Salamis numbered 1,000 with 207 especially swift ones. Because of the ambiguity of the text, it can be argued that total figure for the fleet is 1,000 corresponding with Ctesias (cf. Cook *op. cit.*), or 1207 corresponding with Herodotus (7. 89; cf. Briant *op. cit.* p. 527). Herodotus’ figure may have been influenced by Aeschylus (cf. Cawkwell *op. cit.* p. 266-267).

**Demaratus the Spartan:** a dethroned Spartan king who took refuge at the court of Darius (cf. Hdt. 6.70). He acted as advisor to Xerxes for the Greek expedition and warned him of

the dangers in attacking the Spartans (cf. Hdt. 7.101-105; 7.209) but actually urged an attack on Sparta rather than prevent one (7.235; cf. Bigwood 1978 p.22-23).

**Xerxes attacked the Spartan general Leonides at Thermopylae:** The account of Thermopylae as it survives in Photius makes no mention of the Thespian and Theban allies (cf. Hdt. 7.222). While this may indicate that Ctesias is rendering a Spartan version of the event in which the Spartans receive all the glory, it is possible that Photius simply omitted the mention of the allies. Herodotus mentions the allies and yet the center of the glory still falls to the Spartans (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. XCII).

**They were whipped into fighting:** cf. Hdt. 7.223

**Thorax, a Thessalian:** A member of the Aleuadae from Larissa who helped Mardonius gain safe passage into Greece (cf. Hdt. 9.1). The Aleuadae were well known Medizers (cf. Hdt. 7.6; Bigwood 1978 p. 25).

**an army to Plataea numbering 120,000 men:** A slight exaggeration though an improvement on the figure of 300,000 given by Herodotus (9.32). Modern estimations of the Persian forces vary from 50,000 (cf. Hignett 1963 p.355; Green 1996 p.249-250) to 70,000 (cf. Burn 1984 p. 511: 60,000-70,000; Cawkwell 2005 p. 251: 50,000-70,000). One wonders why Xerxes with an army of 800,000 at hand only sent 120,000 to Plataea. On the distorted chronology of these events see Introduction.

**300 Spartans, 1,000 Perioikoi, and 6,000 men from other cities:** An absurdly low count which may have resulted in an inexcusable confusion with the forces of Leonides at Thermopylae (cf. Bigwood 1978 p. 28; Lenfant 2004 p. XCIV). Like Herodotus, Ctesias obviously meant to emphasize the valor of the Spartans.

**Mardonius was wounded and fled:** In the version of Herodotus (9.63) Mardonius is killed on the battle field.

**This Mardonius was sent by Xerxes to plunder the temple of Apollo:** cf. Hdt. 8.35-39 on how the Persians intended to plunder Delphi before the Battle of Salamis. Such stories of the Persians' failed attempts to attack Delphi may have been created after the war to cover up the possible Medism of the sanctuary. It has recently been argued that the sanctuary may not have actively Medized so much as remain neutral since the Persians did not normally destroy sanctuaries (cf. Hdt. 6.97 for Datis' respect of Delos; cf. Green 1996 p. 66-67). In any case, even neutrality would have been frowned upon in the fervor following the Greek victory thus giving rise to such stories in order to maintain the reputation of the famous oracle.

**the Athenians filled 110 triremes:** Herodotus (8.44) claims that the Athenians contributed 180 ships to the fleet at Salamis. While there is some ambiguity as to whether these ships were only used to evacuate the Athenians to Salamis (cf. Labarbe 1952 p. 407), most scholars accept this as Ctesias' figure for their contribution to the Battle of Salamis (e.g. Bigwood 1978a p. 30).

**they fled during the night:** cf. Hdt. 8.53 for a vivid description of the massacre of all the Athenians who held the Acropolis. He makes no mention of any escaping by night but some may have before the final assault (cf. Green 1996 p. 167 n.).

**a place called Heraklion:** location unknown (cf. Pritchett 1959 p. 261; Bigwood 1978a p. 39-41); Evidently the term refers to a shrine of Heracles. Herodotus makes no mention of it and Diodorus (11.18.2) simply locates it near the straits of Salamis and the mainland. Plutarch (*Them.* 13), following the Attic historian Phanodemus (= *FGrH* 325 F24), likewise places it near the straits and says it was in the area where Xerxes placed his throne to watch the battle but makes no mention of the mole. Aristodemus (*FGrH* 104 F1 §1.2) says the

mole was impossible to finish so Xerxes watched the battle from there. He locates it near Mt. Parnes. Several attempts to locate the shrine have been made by modern scholars. Leake (1841 vol. 2 p.33-34) linked the shrine to the sanctuary of Heracles Tetracomus in the deme of Thymaetadae. Hammond (1973 p. 256) places it at Perama. Unfortunately, the evidence is too sparse to offer any conclusion with conviction.

**heaped up earth in mounds:** Herodotus (8.97) places the construction of the mole after the defeat at Salamis saying it was meant to act as cover for Xerxes' retreat. This is one instance where the account of Ctesias is superior to that of Herodotus since the mole would be useless after the Persian defeat and would be an arduous method of covering for the king's retreat (cf. Lanzani 1900 p. 598-599). It seems likely that Xerxes, unable to tempt the Greek fleet to abandon the confines of the straits and join battle in open waters, sought next to attack Salamis by land with his infantry. Needless to say if the mole were successfully completed, the Greeks would have been unable to withstand such an attack and there would have been no need for a naval fight. Beloch (1916 vol. 2 p. 122) and Green (1996 p. 172-174) accept Ctesias' account and Burn (1984 p. 437-440 and n. 32) prefers it but with some hesitation. Hammond (1973 p. 273-274 and 300-301) follows both sources and believes Xerxes made two attempts to build the mole. Momigliano (1931 p. 206-207) argues in favor of Herodotus since to build the mole before the battle would ruin the element of surprise and hinder their later naval maneuvers. This line of argument is unconvincing since the Persians, having the Athenians trapped on an island and far superior numbers would have little need for surprise and if the mole succeeded then there would be no need for naval maneuvers since they would be able to attack the Athenian fleet where it was moored. Bigwood's (1978a p. 33-34) rejection of Ctesias' account simply because it contradicts Herodotus and 'adds to the drama and suspense' is wholly unpersuasive since she makes no attempt to rationalize Herodotus' account. The mole likely would have crossed over from Perama to St. George Island which may have been wading distance from Salamis (cf. Green *op. cit.*; Pritchett 1959 p. 257 and 1961 vol. 1 p. 101; Hammond *op. cit.* p. 256; Burn *op. cit.*).

**archers were summoned from Crete:** It seems that in the narrative of Ctesias the arrival of the Cretan archers caused the Persians to halt construction on the mole (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. XCVI; Green 1996 172-174). According to Herodotus (7.169), the Cretans refused to send help to the Greeks at Salamis in response to an oracle from Delphi which has led to controversy. Both Green and Hammond (1973 p. 273) accept Ctesias' version of events and Burn (1984 p. 439-440) acknowledges the plausibility of his account but again proceeds with caution. Hignett (1963 p. 101) is skeptical and Bigwood (1978a p. 34-36) argues against it again on the grounds that it contradicts Herodotus (in itself by no means acceptable grounds for discarding other versions of events – cf. Van Effenterre 1948 p. 35-36, 53; Spyridakis 1976 p. 345-355) and that the evidence for Cretan archers on the mainland before the end of the fifth century is suspect (cf. Paus. 4.8.3-4.10.1). The account of Herodotus may be the result of his pro-Athenian bias while Ctesias could be recounting a Spartan or even a Cretan version he heard while in Persia since there were Cretan mercenaries in the army of Clearchus (cf. Spyridakis *op. cit.* p. 348-349; Bigwood *op. cit.* p. 36; Lenfant 2004 p. XCVI). A passage in Plato's *Laws* (4.707b) may allude to Cretan participation in the battle which would indicate that at least such an account existed and was accepted by some (cf. Spyridakis *op. cit.* p. 345-355; Viviers 1995 p. 257 views the passage with caution).

**the Persian fleet numbering over 1,000... a Greek fleet of only 700 ships:** Aeschylus (*Pers.* 339-340) gives the total number of allied ships at 310 and Herodotus gives 380 with

180 being supplied by Athens. The figures of Ctesias, although inflated, show a more plausible proportion of Greek to Persian ships. According to his account, the Greek fleet totaled 700 to 1,000 Persian ships. According to Aeschylus the numbers were 310: 1,000 or 1,207 (see above) while those of Herodotus were 380: 1,207. The latter accounts sought to maximize the glory of Athens. Ctesias may be relating a Spartan version of the wars and thus minimizing the Athenian role in the battle since they supply only 110 of 700 allied ships whereas in Herodotus they supply 180 of 380 (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. XCVI-XCVIII); however Jacoby's assertion (1922 col. 2061) that his figures stem from an anti-Athenian bias seems a bit excessive since Themistocles and Aristides are not deprived of their glory in his account (cf. Bigwood 1978a p. 30; see Introduction for full discussion).

**120,000 Persians died in all the subsequent battles:** cf. Green (1996 p.271) who by removing a zero to obtain a figure of 12,000 accepts Ctesias' estimation as credible and compares to that of Ephorus (10,000[0]).

**the temple at Delphi:** Often taken as an error on the part of Photius in transcribing what in the narrative of Ctesias would describe the sack of the temple of Apollo at Didyma rather than Delphi (cf. Reuss 1905 p. 144-148). Herodotus (6.19) says that Didyma was sacked and burned at the end of the Ionian revolt while others claim the city was betrayed to Xerxes by the Branchidae after the second invasion of Greece (cf. Strab. 17.1.43, 14.1.5; Curt. 7.5.28; Paus. 8.46.3 who only states that Xerxes carried off the statue of Apollo). Since a second attack on Delphi after the war would have been illogical and Didyma was known to have been sacked at some point by the Persians, scholars are for the most part in agreement that Didyma is meant here (cf. Jacoby 1922 col. 2069; Bigwood 1978a p. 37-39). In sacking Didyma, Xerxes was likely reacting to the 'Second Ionian Revolt' and sought to punish the Milesians above all for the cowardice they showed at the Battle of Mycale (cf. Paus. 8.46.3; Briant 2002 p. 535).

**Xerxes arrived in Persia from Babylon:** Xerxes may have gone to Babylon from Sardis in response to the rebellion of Šamaš-erība (cf. Briant 2002 p. 535 and see note above).

**plotted... to kill the king:** cf. Diod. (11.69); Just. (3.1); Ael. (*VH* 13.3) for similar versions of this episode and Ar. *Pol.* 5.10.1311b for a variant. All versions are filled with literary motifs such as aristocratic conspirators acting with help from inside the palace and the chief conspirator later being betrayed and killed. The killing of Darius, the eldest son of Xerxes (cf. Diod. 11.69.2), also ensured the accession of Artaxerxes which was a common practice among dynastic rivals (e.g. Cambyses murder of his brother Tanyoxarkes and the ascendancy of Ochos; cf. Carlton 1994 p. 70-79). Since all of these stories portray Artaxerxes in a good light, they may have been circulated after his accession in order to exonerate him by placing all of the blame on Artapanus (cf. Briant 2002 p. 564-567). This story then may have been spread in order to counter the notion circulating in the east that Xerxes was killed by one of his sons (cf. BM 32234 cited in Stolper 1988). The assassination occurred between August 4 and August 8, 465 B.C.E. (cf. Stolper *op. cit.* p. 196-197).

- **F13a) for the sake of a woman:** Although this is a common motif in Greek literature (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. LXIX), this account likely had its origins in the Near East, possibly Babylon. Although kings would often give their daughters to other kings as a matter of diplomacy, there is one known instance of a Babylonian king being denied his request to marry a daughter of the Egyptian pharaoh since it was not the latter's custom to give his daughters to anyone in marriage. The Babylonian king then asked for a daughter of any Egyptian,



repeatedly emphasizing their renowned beauty (EA 4:4-14; cf. Westbrook 2000 380-382 for the negotiating tactics involved with the Babylonian king's request). Since Babylonian kings had long been in diplomatic negotiations with the Pharaohs it seems possible that a story spread that Cambyses was similarly rebuffed in order to explain his invasion of Egypt. The motif of deceitfully giving a substitute bride can likewise be traced to the Near East. In *Genesis* (29:16-26), Laban promises to give his daughter Rachel to Jacob but on the wedding night gives him his elder daughter Leah instead.

**Amasis, the Egyptian king:** cf. note on F13 §10

**Neitetes, the daughter of Apries:** cf. Hdt. 2.161-163; Apries is equated with Hophra of the OT (*Jerem.* 44:30) and Waphres in Manetho (F66).

- **F13b)** on this passage cf. F13 §26 and note. This passage ultimately derives from Ctesias but Aelian may have consulted other sources in addition (cf. Lenfant 2004 p.265-66 n. 538).
- **F14) suspected adultery of his wife Amytis:** cf. F13 §32  
**Artapanos was killed in the same fashion he was going to kill Artaxerxes:** According to Diodorus (11.69.5-6), Artapanos stabbed Artaxerxes with a sword but failed to inflict any damage. Artaxerxes then put him to death with a 'timely blow' (cf. Just. 3.1).  
**he was exposed in a tub to die slowly while being eaten by insects:** cf. F26 and note for details of this method of torture. Cf. F13 §33 on his role in the plot against Xerxes.  
**a doctor from Cos named Apollonides:** Long before Ctesias, Greek doctors had served in the Persian court (cf. Briant 2002 p. 264-266). Democedes of Croton was said to have treated Darius I of a foot injury and served in his court (Hdt. 3.129; cf. Griffiths 1987 p. 37-51 who doubts the historicity of this passage). Nor was Ctesias the only Greek physician to serve at the court of Artaxerxes II (cf. Plut. *Artax.* 21.3 who mentions one Polycritus). They are often depicted curing an important person of some ailment or wound. It is significant that even Ctesias first appears in his own narrative (as we have it) when tending to Artaxerxes II who was wounded at Cunaxa.  
**Bactria revolted from Artaxerxes... another Artapanos:** Campaign is otherwise unknown (cf. Plut. *Them.* 31.3 who simply says that Artaxerxes was occupied with affairs in the 'High Country'). According to Diodorus (11.69.2), the satrap of Bactria was Hystaspes, the brother of Artaxerxes which would make this battle part of a dynastic struggle rather than a rebellion by a subject ruler (cf. Briant 2002 p. 570). However, the name Artapanos is found in Persian sources as *Irdabanuš* who was satrap of Bactria in 500/499 B.C.E. (PF 1287; PF 1555; PF 1992). Since Artaxerxes came to power in 465 B.C.E., this would indicate that Artapanos served as satrap for at least 35 years, a very long reign that has caused some doubt (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 266 n. 542). While it is possible that the manuscript used by Photius contained a scribal error in reiterating the name Artapanos from the previous narrative of the attempted plot against Artaxerxes, the mention of *Irdabanuš* in the Persian sources renders this argument doubtful. Moreover, lengthy reigns were not uncommon in the Achaemenid empire (cf. note below on Sarsames).  
**Egypt revolted under the leadership of the Libyan Inaros and another Egyptian:** The revolt occurred between 464-454 B.C.E. Cf. Thucy. 104, 109-110; Diod. 11.71, 74; the bibliography of this controversial episode is immense (some of the most important studies include Quack 2006; Hoglund 1992 p. 97-164; Briant 1988b; Bigwood 1976; Salmon 1965 90-192; Kienitz 1953 69-72). The rebellion likely arose after the death of Xerxes and the

dynastic struggle that followed (cf. Meiggs 1972 p. 93). A recently discovered ostrakon bearing the name of Inaros as 'chief of the rebels' is thought to be the first Egyptian evidence mentioning the rebellious leader (cf. *BIFAO* 2002 p. 478; Chauveau 2004 p. 39-46), but Quack (2006 p. 499-504) argues that it likely refers to an earlier Inaros who lived during the Assyrian invasion of Egypt by Esharhaddon. The 'other Egyptian' is no doubt Amyrtaeus, the king of the marsh who remained in power after the fall of the rebellion (cf. Thucy. 1.110; Hdt. 3.15; cf. Briant 2002 p. 575-576; Lenfant 2004 p. 266-267 n. 545).

The mss. give the term 'Lydian' to describe Inaros but most editors accept the emendation to Libyan since Thucydides and Herodotus both make clear that he was a Libyan (cf. Thucy. 1.104 and 1.110; Hdt. 3.12 and 7.7; cf. Jacoby *ad loc.*; Lenfant 2004 p. 266 n. 544; Hatzopoulou 2007 p. 470 n. 89). Bichler (2005 445-457) has recently argued in favor of following the mss. saying that Ctesias was engaging in a literary game with his predecessors, namely Herodotus, and as a joke referred to Inaros as a Lydian instead of a Libyan. This contention is unconvincing for many reasons. Most importantly, since Herodotus only mentions Inaros in passing and never deals with the revolt in detail, who would get the joke if Ctesias were making one here? Surely he could not expect his readers to have memorized Herodotus or even to consult his passing references to Inaros in order to understand Ctesias' play on words. He certainly was not engaging Thucydides since the latter died sometime in the 390's with his work incomplete. It is thus almost certain that Ctesias had not read Thucydides when he composed his *Persika* in the mid 390's. While Bichler's view that Ctesias mainly sought to entertain his audience is essentially correct, there is nothing in his work to suggest that he did not expect to be taken seriously. Clearly this was a scribal error either on the part of Photius himself, the manuscript he was using or, most likely, the copyists of the *Bibliotheca* (cf. Bigwood 1976 p. 8).

**the Athenians, at the request of Inaros, sent 40 ships:** According to Thucydides (1.104 and 1.110), the Athenians sent a contingent of 200 ships not counting the allies, of whom Ctesias makes no mention. They later sent an additional 50 ships as a relief force (διάδοχοι - cf. Westlake 1950 p. 213). Neither account has satisfied scholars. Some feel the figure of Thucydides is much too high since Athens would not have been able to sustain such a loss without suffering disastrous consequences and Ctesias' figure is too low to represent an effective force (cf. Meiggs 1972 p. 104-108, 475-476; Bigwood 1976 p. 12-14). Caspari (1913 p. 199-201) has proposed that Thucydides' figure of 200 ships refers to the entire expedition force sent out to Cyprus which was then divided with part of the fleet guarding the Phoenician coast and the 40 ships of Ctesias being the Athenian contingent sent to Egypt (which along with allies he totals a force of 60 ships). It has also been suggested that perhaps Ctesias confused the numbers for the main force with that of the reinforcements (cf. Høglund 1992 p. 155-157; Salmon 1965 p. 134-135). Unfortunately, the evidence for the campaigns is too muddled and flimsy to ascertain with any conviction the size of the forces involved. Ctesias' numbers, which some feel reflect a Persian tradition (cf. Raccuia 1978-1979 p. 210-227), of 40 Athenian ships and 80 Persian ships may have resulted from an oral account of the fighting that said the Athenians were outnumbered 2 to 1.

**his brother Achaemenides:** According to Herodotus (3.12, 7.7), the leader of the Persian forces was one Achaemenes who was the brother of Xerxes and thus Artaxerxes' uncle. Herodotus is to be preferred here for several reasons. First of all, the name Achaemenides has a Greek termination and was used only as a patronymic to describe the Achaemenids before Alexander, at which point the name Achaemenides begins to appear (cf. Bigwood

1976 p. 7 n. 25). Scholars have tried to reconcile the two accounts by suggesting that Photius or a later scribe miscopied the text. Although the copyists of the *Bibliotheca* were notorious for confusing eastern names (see note above), Bigwood is right to exercise caution here since the required emendations, while all easily validated on their own, are too numerous to accept simply as errors. The name Achaemenides appears no less than three times and the correction would require changing the name of his brother from Artaxerxes to Xerxes twice (although a confusion of these two names occurs repeatedly in Photius – cf. F14 §38 and F15 §47 twice) and eliminating Jacoby’s emendation of Amytis to Amestris at §39. Interestingly, Ctesias does not name him among the three sons of Amestris (cf. F13 §24; although nor does he name Artarios, the brother of Artaxerxes mentioned in F14 §40). Bigwood’s assertion (p. 19 n. 69) that he is a complete fabrication by Ctesias is, however, unconvincing. Nor need we accept her claim that he is a completely different person from that of Herodotus (cf. also Lenfant 2004 p. 267 n. 547) since the similarity on the two names and their relation to the royal house show that both authors are giving different accounts of the same man. There is obviously some confusion but it is impossible to decipher who is at fault for it. Might Ctesias have contradicted Herodotus not by correcting the name of the Persian leader but by saying that he was simply ‘an Achaemenid’ without naming him?

**Charitimides distinguished himself as commander:** Figure unknown and unattested elsewhere (cf. Bigwood 1976 p. 9 and n. 31). The historicity of the figure is somewhat plausible (cf. Meiggs 1972 p. 104) since the name appears in Aristophanes (*Eccles.* 293) indicating that it was an Athenian name.

**Inaros was also victorious at sea:** A fragmentary inscription first published by W. Peek (1939 p. 289-306) from the Heraion at Samos describes a Greek naval victory over a Phoenician fleet which some have taken as corroborating the testimony of Ctesias (cf. Westlake 1950 p. 209-214). Many scholars, however, remain skeptical (cf. Bigwood 1976 p. 17; Salmon 1965 p. 150; Kienitz 1953 p. 72; cf. Meiggs 1972 p. 101 who argues that it confirms Thucydides testimony).

**under the command of Oriskos:** Otherwise unknown. According to Diodorus (11.75), the leader of the Persian fleet was Artabazos (cf. Bigwood 1976 p. 21-23).

**Byblos (a very powerful city in Egypt):** Cf. F14b; possibly a reference to one of the many towns located on the island of Prosopitis (cf. Hdt. 2.41) where Thucydides (1.109) says the Greek fleet was blockaded and destroyed (cf. Salmon 1965 p. 173). Lenfant (2004 p. 267-268) is right to reject the argument of Bigwood (1976 p. 23-25) that Ctesias’ geography is confused on this location since Stephen of Byzantium (F14b), who undoubtedly was following Ctesias directly, differentiates between two cities named Byblos.

**Megabyzos made peace with Inaros:** According to Thucydides (1.110.3), Inaros was betrayed and captured. He makes no mention of a peace between the two sides, but it seems fairly certain that the Greeks surrendered after a fierce resistance (cf. Diod. 11.77.4-5; Meiggs 1972 p. 103; Westlake 1950 p. 213). It is possible that under the terms the survivors were allowed to escape to Cyrene via Libya, as Thucydides claims the Greeks did. Both authors agree that Inaros was impaled.

**Sarsamas satrap of Egypt:** Likely a textual corruption of Arsames (‘*Aršam*’ in Akkadian and *Aršammu* in Babylonian – cf. F15 §49 where he is called Arxanes), the satrap of Egypt known from Aramaic and Akkadian documents (cf. Driver 1965 p. 9, 10-12; Briant 2002 p. 456-459; cf. Poly. *Strat.* 7.28). He bore the title ‘the son of the house’ indicating that he was probably a member of the Achaemenid dynasty. The sources mostly date him to the last third

of the fifth century. If Sarsames and 'Aršam are the same person, then he will have held power for more than 50 years. This lengthy reign has caused some to distrust the testimony of Ctesias (cf. Bigwood 1976 p. 9 n. 30); however, there is no reason to doubt him here (cf. Driver *op. cit.* p. 92-96). While 50 years is a long reign, it is by no means impossible; especially if he is an Achaemenid (cf. the reigns of Darius I – 36 years; Artaxerxes I – 40 years; and Artaxerxes II – 45 years; cf. Driver *op. cit.* p. 13, 96). That Egypt is virtually absent from the historical record until the accession of Artaxerxes II in 404 B.C.E. (cf. Gardiner 1999 p. 362; Briant 2002 p. 577) may indicate that the country entered into an era of relative tranquility after the revolt of Inaros which could have been the result of a long and competent rule by one man. However, it is equally possible that Sarsames and 'Aršam are two separate people from the same branch of Achaemenids. There are two other Achaemenids bearing the name Arsames; one was the grandfather of Darius I (cf. Hdt. 1.209) and the other was the son of Darius I who commanded the Arab and Ethiopian forces in Xerxes' army during the Greek invasion (cf. Hdt. 7.69) and may have later been made satrap of Egypt (cf. Aesch. *Pers.* 36-37). Since this was a family name, there is the possibility that Sarsames was a member of this branch of Achaemenids and may have been succeeded by another family member of the same name.

**taking along Inaros and the Greeks, returned to Artaxerxes:** There is some confusion here owed undoubtedly to the abridgement of Photius. If the Greeks were free to return home then why would any of them follow Megabyzos back to Persia? Thucydides' account of the Greeks retreating to Cyrene is certainly plausible. If the relieving force of 50 ships mentioned by Thucydides arrived after the surrender took place, they would not have been protected by the agreement and may have been seen by the Persians as violating the newly formed peace. It stands to reason then that the Persians took these men captive back to Persia. Furthermore, the 6,000 survivors conform well to the 40 or 50 ships mentioned in the two sources. Perhaps Ctesias confused the relieving force with the main force in his account. It is equally possibly, even probable, that the abridgement of Photius left out many vital details to the narrative of Ctesias causing the confusion.

**Amestris:** the mss. give 'Amytis'. Jacoby's emendation, followed by most editors, makes the text conform to the genealogy of Achaemenides as the brother of Xerxes (see note above). Bigwood (1976 p. 8) claims that the reading of the mss. is impossible because 'Amytis had no son Achaemenides'. However, outside of this very confused and textually corrupt passage, there is no indication that Amestris had a son Achaemenides either. She is correct to point out that the vengeance of Amestris for her son's murder strongly seems to mirror the brutal vengeance meted out by Parysatis for the death of her son Cyrus after Cunaxa (Bigwood *op. cit.* p. 19-20).

**his territory of Syria:** Since Megabyzos' family was Persian (his grandfather was one of the Seven with Darius I), this may refer to his satrapy in the Trans-Euphrates (cf. Petit 1990 194-195; Lenfant 2004 p. 131 n. 559). The satrapy was originally called 'Babylon and Across-the-River' and was comprised of Babylonia, coastal Syria and Palastine, and North Syria inland. It was divided into two separate satrapies possibly during the reign of Xerxes (cf. Stolper 1989 291-303). Since the name Megabyzos never appears in any of the Babylonian legal documents as satrap, Ctesias may simply mean that he was granted estates in this area (Briant 2002 p. 577-578).

**revolted from the king:** Høglund (1992 126-127) doubts the historicity of this revolt. While Ctesias' overall account is far from credible, certain figures in the narrative can be corroborated

by Babylonian documents giving the episode an element of plausibility. Most scholars accept its veracity and emphasize its importance for other events. Lewis, (1977 p. 51) argues that the revolt weakened the king's hold over the region, a scenario which some feel resulted in the Biblical mission of Nehemiah (cf. Myers 1968 p. 109-111; Briant 2002 584-586 denies this). Rahe (1980 p. 88-90) maintains that Megabyzos was an innovator in using Greek infantry with Persian cavalry, a tactic later adopted by Pisuthnes and Cyrus the Younger and possibly his son Artyphios (see below).

**Ousiris was sent to face him:** Figure unknown. Codex M gives the name Osiris leading some to postulate that this was a Persian with the name of an Egyptian god (cf. Balcer 1993 p. 197). However, the *lectio difficilior* in Codex A is confirmed at §42 in Codex M. The name may well be of Iranian origin (cf. Schmitt 2006 p. 263-264).

**Menostanes the son of Artarios...brother of Artaxerxes:** The mss. give the name Menostates, but Lenfant (*ad loc.*) is right to correct the text (cf. F15 §49 where the name is given correctly) since the latter form more closely corresponds to the Babylonian name (cf. Lewis 1977 p. 18 n.94). Both figures appear in the *Murašu* Archives, the Babylonian tablets from Nippur, as *Manuštanu* and *Artareme* respectively (cf. Cardascia 1951 p. 105 n. 10; Stolper 1985 p. 90-91; Dandamaev 1992 p. 41-43 n. 43-44 for *Artareme/Artarios* and p. 96-98 n. 185 for *Manuštanu*; Donbaz and Stolper 1993 n. 102). Moreover, *Manuštanu* is classified as *mār bīt šarri* ('royal prince') which seems to confirm Ctesias' testimony that he is the brother of Artaxerxes. Like Achaemenides, he is not listed among the children of Xerxes and Amestris (cf. F13 §24) which may indicate that he was Xerxes' illegitimate child by another woman. The appearance in the Archives of many of the other principle characters from this narrative (see below) adds credibility to Ctesias' account (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. CVI-CVII and n. 423).

**Artoxares, the Paphlagonian eunuch:** Appears in the *Murašu* Archive as *Artahšaru* as an important official and estate-holder in Nippur (cf. Stolper 1985 p. 91-92; König 1972 p. 19 n. 49). The OP form would be *\*Rta-xšara-* 'Brave through Rta' (cf. Zadok 1977 p. 109; Dandamaev 1992 p. 36-37 n. 33).

**Petesas... Spitamas:** Corresponding to *Patēšu* (cf. Dandamaev 1992 p. 112 n. 234) and *Ispitāmu* (cf. Dandamaev *op. cit.* p. 88 n. 166) mentioned in the *Murašu* Archives. *Patēšu* is named as the father of *Ispitāmu* in the Archives as well corroborating the testimony of Ctesias (cf. Stolper 1985 p. 94; König 1972 p. 78).

**the king went on a hunt:** On the hunt in Persia see note above.

**a city near the Erythrian Sea named Kyrta:** The Erythrian Sea is the Red Sea and was where the Persian king sent his exiles (cf. Hdt. 3.93). Cf. F14a.

**pisagas, the Persian term for lepers:** from the OP *paesa*, *pīs*, *pēsak* used to denote lepers and leprosy (cf. König 1972 p.78). Cf. F14c where Hesychius, clearly following Ctesias, uses the term *pissatai* and says they are carriers of white leprosy. Greeks used three terms to describe lepers – *αλφόν*, *λευκή*, and *λύπρα*. Ctesias seems to confirm the statement of Herodotus (1.138) that lepers were deemed unapproachable by the Persians. According to Herodotus, they were outcast because they were guilty of committing an offense against the sun but he fails to mention if the Persians feared contagion. It is left unclear by the abridgement of Photius if Ctesias, a noted physician, discusses leprosy as a communicable disease. On leprosy in the ancient world cf. Stol 1987-1988 p. 22-31; Manchester 1992 p. 31-49.

**a Tablemate:** A title within the hierarchy of the court signifying a close and honored relationship with the king (cf. Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.25; Briant 1989 p. 41 and 2002 p. 308). One could attain this status by virtuous and heroic deeds done on behalf of the king (cf. Hdt. 3.132 who says that Democedes, the physician from Croton was a Tablemate of Darius). **that she would fully recover... in her uterus:** Hippocratics believed that there were many hygienic benefits to be gained by women from sexual intercourse. They felt that frequent intercourse would aid in the passage of menstrual blood from the uterus because the moisture prevented the blood from relocating (cf. Hp. *Genit.* 4.3 on the necessity of keeping the uterus moist) and intercourse kept the uterus from closing over (cf. Hp. *Mul.* 1.2). Soranos (*Gyn.* 1.31) believed that intercourse relaxed the body thus aiding in the passage of menstruation. Menstruation was critical to a woman's health because its suppression could lead to numerous diseases (cf. Hp. *Mul.* 1.2; *Nat. Mul.* 18; *Epid.* 4.24). Cf. Dean-Jones 1994 p. 126-144 for a full discussion of this topic. Intercourse, however, was not always beneficial since it too could lead to a variety of illnesses (cf. Hp. *Int.* 13; *Aff.* 2.51; cf. Tuplin 2004 p. 353-354). In any case, it seems that Apollonides was following standard procedure in his treatment of Amytis. Ctesias, a noted physician, would have been very familiar with his methods and seen nothing extraordinary in them. The Persians, however, may have been surprised by his prescription of sex giving rise to the dramatic account of his love for Amytis and his deceitful methods of treating her.

**before burying him alive:** Amestris was infamous for her practice of live burials. According to Herodotus (7.141), she had 14 sons of noble Persians buried alive as an offering to the god of the underworld.

**Zopyros, the son of Megabyzes and Amytis... went to Athens:** Cf. Hdt. 3.160

**Caunus:** A Carian city located in Modern Turkey east of Bodrum. The Caunians may have revolted from the Athenians sometime between 437 and 433 B.C.E or between 431 and 425 B.C.E. According to the *ATL*, they paid one-half of a talent in tribute until 438. The evidence then becomes fragmentary until 435 when they are paying ten talents, perhaps as punishment for the revolt (cf. Meiggs 1972 p. 436-437).

**Artaxerxes passed away after ruling for 42 years:** His death occurred between December 424 and February 423 B.C.E. According to Babylonian documents, his reign lasted for 41 years. Ctesias may have mistakenly calculated his reign until the accession of Darius II and not counted the reigns of Xerxes II and Sekyndianos (cf. Stolper 1983 p. 225-226; Lenfant 2004 p. CV-CVI).

- **F14a)** cf. F14 §43 and note. The mention of Kyrta occurs between Books 14-17 of the *Persika*, according to Photius, so the book number given here is clearly wrong.
- **F14b)** cf. F14 §37 and note.
- **F14c)** cf. F14 § 43 and note.
- **F15) After the death of Artaxerxes:** For the events between the death of Artaxerxes and the ascension of Darius II cf. Stolper 1983 p. 223-236 and 1985 p. 116-120; Depuydt 1995 p. 32-42; Briant 2002 p. 588-591; Lewis 1977 p. 70-77.

**Damaspia:** Otherwise unknown. She was likely from an important Persian family. Her name means simply ‘daughter of \**Damaspa* who was known in OP as *Djāmāspa* from the House of *Hwō(g)wa*, son-in-law of Spitamas (cf. König 1972 p. 80-83).

**Bagorazos brought the bodies... back to Persia:** Xerxes, Artaxerxes I, and Darius II were all buried at Naqšī-Rustam continuing the trend begun by Darius I. Cf. Schmidt 1970 vol. 3 for a full description and discussion on the tombs; cf. Schmitt 2000 for text and translations of the inscriptions. Artaxerxes II and his successors were buried near Persepolis (cf. Diod. 17.71.7).

**Sekyndianos:** Sogdianos, the form given by Manetho (*FGrH* 609 F2) and Diodorus (12.71), more closely corresponds to the OP \**Sugda-* or \**Sugdiya* - an ethnic patronymic meaning ‘the Sogdian’ (cf. Schmitt 1979 p.123; Mayrhofer 1973 n. 8.1574; Hallock 1969 p. 758). The name appears in OP inscriptions (*PFT* 1660) as *Šu-ug-da* (cf. König 1972 p. 83-85).

**a Babylonian named Alogoune:** Actually a Persian name meaning ‘the color red’. Royal and Persian noblewomen often had names denoting their complexion which are rendered in Greek with the ending *-goune* (cf. Rhodogoune; cf. Benveniste 1966 p. 121-123). The Iranian origins of her name may indicate that she was in fact a Persian woman living in Babylon (cf. Zadock 1977 p. 97; Dandamaev 1992 p. 28 n. 9).

**Parysatis:** From OP *Purušātu* and Elamite *Barušiyatiš* meaning ‘with much joy or fortune’ (cf. Hinz 1975 p.182). Her name appears in several Babylonian documents as a powerful landowner and landlord (cf. Stolper 1985 p. 63-64). She also appears in a similar capacity in numerous Elamite documents from Persepolis (*PFT* 1290-1294; *PTT* p. 93). Cf. Dandamaev 1992 p. 115-116 n. 250; Mayrhofer 1973 n. 8.266.

**It was the 45<sup>th</sup> day after his father's death:** According to Manetho (*FGrH* 609 F2), Xerxes II ruled for two months. Since neither Xerxes II nor Sekyndianos were recognized by the Babylonian scribes (cf. Stolper 1985 p. 104-124; Briant 2002 p. 588), it is impossible to verify the duration of his rule.

**Menostates became his *azabarites*:** from OP *hazarapatiš* (‘Commander of one thousand’) often in Greek called *chiliarch*. Hesychius (*s.v.*) uses the more accurate form *azarapateis* (in the plural). The *hazarapatiš* has been identified as either the commander of the royal body guard which was comprised of 1,000 troops selected from the elite force known as the Immortals or as the commander of the elite group of Persian cavalry which also numbered 1,000 (cf. Hdt. 7.41; Lewis 1977 p. 17-19). The office held more than one function and was clearly a very high ranking position which has been compared to that of Grand Vizier (cf. Briant 1994a p. 291-298). By the time of the Hellenistic kings it seems that the chiliarch was the second-in-command (cf. Diod. 18.48.4-5; cf. Benveniste 1966 p.67-71 for an analysis of the term *hazarapatiš* and its origins).

**abandoning the body of his father without consulting him:** After the murder of Xerxes, the only legitimate son of Artaxerxes, there arose a succession crisis between Sekyndianos (Sogdianos) and Ochus which led to each party launching a propaganda campaign professing legitimacy. The heir to the throne had the duty of organizing the funeral rites for the dead king (cf. Briant 1991 p. 1-11). In abandoning the body before burial, the action of Bagorazos can be seen as calling into question the legitimacy of Sekyndianos (cf. Briant 2002 p. 590) which would explain his harsh reaction. In one account, ten months after ascending the throne and taking the name Darius II, Ochus declared a royal mourning for his father (Poly. *Strat.* 7.17) thus asserting his claim to the throne.

**they hated him because he had murdered his brother Xerxes and Bagorazos:** Ctesias appears to be relating the official version of events circulated by Ochus (cf. Briant 2002 p. 590). However, it seems certain that he had popular support. Pausanias (6.5.7) gives evidence of the official version of Sekyndianos in which Ochus, referred to as *nothos* ('illegitimate') overthrows Sogdianos (Sekyndianos), called *gnesios* ('legitimate') with the backing of the people. Although Sekyndianos lost the throne, his propaganda left a lasting impact with the result that later authors attached the epithet *nothos* to Darius II. It should be noted, however, that the attestation of *nothos* as an epithet does not appear until the early Christian writers (cf. Lewis 1977 p. 77-78 and n. 181). We see in the few surviving OP texts from his reign that Darius II, following the formula of his predecessors, propagated his own legitimacy by declaring his lineage back to Darius I and proclaimed himself an Achaemenid (cf. Paper 1952 p. 169-170 and Lewis *op. cit.* p. 78 n. 182 for texts and translations of two such inscriptions).

**Arbarios, the commander of the cavalry:** Identified as *Arbareme*, an Achaemenid prince mentioned in the *Murašu* Archive who oversaw the care of the horses. The idea of him being commander of the cavalry may have come from a misinterpretation of his Babylonian title 'equerry' (cf. Stolper 1985 p. 95-96), however, it is entirely plausible for a member of the royal house to command the cavalry. The name in OP is \**Arba-raiva* meaning 'young (and) rich' (cf. Zadock 1977 p. 109; Dandamaev 1992 p. 30 n.16).

**Arxanes the satrap of Egypt:** A variant form of the name Arsames (OP – *Aršam*) mentioned above as Sarsamas (see note F14 §38).

**Artoxares the eunuch... from Armenia:** Cf. note F14 §42. He was banished to Armenia for speaking on behalf of Megabyzos (F14 §43).

**Ochos became king, changed his name to Dariaios:** Cf. note F13 §24. According to Babylonian astronomical texts, the birth name of Darius II was *Umakuš* (cf. Sachs 1977 p. 130-131; Schmitt 1982 p. 89) sometimes read as *Umasu* (cf. Stolper 1985 p. 115 n. 21; Schmitt 1992 p. 133 n. 316). The name is also used in the Babylonian chronicles (*ABC* 9:1) in reference to Artaxerxes III, who is likewise called Ochos by Greek sources (cf. Diod. 31.19.3).

**thrown into a room full of ash:** According to Valerius Maximus (9.2 ext.7), an enclosure surrounded by high walls was filled with ash and a beam was placed across the top upon which the victim sat. As the victim passed out, he would fall into the ash and die from asphyxiation or carbonization. Ovid (*Ibis* 315-316) says that the ash was dropped on the victim from above; however, the account of Ctesias makes it clear that Valerius is to be followed. According to *2 Maccabees* 13:4-8 Antiochus puts Menelaus to death by having him thrown down into the ashes as punishment for sacrilege (cf. König 1972 p. 85-88 for a full discussion of this manner of execution).

**a rule of six months and 15 days:** According to Manetho (FGrH 609 F2) he ruled for 7 months. Neither Xerxes II nor Sekyndianos were recognized as kings in Babylonia since the tablets from Nippur show Artaxerxes' reign lasting until December 424 B.C.E. (with a nearby village dating by his reign until February 26, 423 indicating that the news of the new king was slow to reach them). The earliest tablets from Darius' reign from Nippur date to February 24, 423 leaving no room for two intermediate kings whose reigns lasted a combined eight months (cf. Lewis 1977 p. 70-71). According to Lewis, the forty-first regnal year of Artaxerxes was extended to obscure the dynastic uncertainties. Stolper (1985 p. 120),



however, attributes the period of their reigns to the beginning of Darius' reign (cf. Zawadski 1995-1996 p. 45-49).

**Artibarzanes:** equivalent of *Šātibarzanes* (cf. F16 §60; cf. König 1972 p.19 n.22). Possibly from OP *\*rta-brāza* ('exalting truth'; cf. Gershevitch 1969 p. 230). The name is also confirmed in Elamite (cf. Mayrhofer 1973 n. 8.596; see also Schmitt 2006 p. 140-141). **and a son named Arsakas who was later called Artaxerxes:** OP *Aršaka* ('heroic'), an adjective derived from *Arša-* meaning 'male, hero' (cf. the Greek term ἄρσην; cf. Kent 1953 p. 51, 54-55, 171). Cf. F15a, F16 §57. The name Artaxerxes corresponds to *Artaxšaça-* (*Rta-xšaça*) in OP; *Artašassu* in Babylonian (cf. Dandamev 1992 p. 37 n.34; Schmitt 2002 p. 47; Benveniste 1966 p. 102) meaning 'having a kingdom of justice' (cf. Kent 1953 p.170-171).

**son named Cyrus after the sun:** OP *Kuruš* (Elam. *Kura* – *CMA*; Ass. *Ku-ra-aš* -). The exact etymology of the name remains uncertain. If the etymology of Ctesias is followed then Cyrus must be derived from the OP *\*hvar* (Avest. *hvar*), the word for sun. It seems likely that Ctesias was given a false etymology of the name by a Persian informant (perhaps Parysatis – cf. Lenfant 2001b p. 414) trying to idealize the great king. Cf. Hdt. 6.98 where fictitious etymologies are given for Darius ('the Doer' – see note on the etymology of this name above F13 §24), Xerxes ('the Warrior'), and Artaxerxes ('the Great Warrior' – see note above). Cf. Schmitt 2002 p. 59-60; Dandamaev 1992 p.94-95 n. 180. On the births of Cyrus in relation to Darius' accession cf. Lenfant *op. cit.* p.417-418.

**Artostes:** Plutarch gives the more credible name Ostanes (cf. F15a and note; cf. Schmitt 1979 p. 129).

**Oxendras:** Likely a corruption since there is no Near Eastern parallel. Plutarch (*Artox.* 2.1 = F15a) gives the more etymologically correct name Oxathres.

**Arsites:** likely corresponding to the prince *Arrišittu* mentioned in the *Murašū* Archives during the reign of Darius II (cf. Stolper 1985 p. 66).

**his Greek contingent:** Although it is not attested what precise role this Greek force played, it seems likely that Artyphios was adopting the tactic begun by his father in using Greek mercenaries as infantry with a Persian cavalry (cf. Note above; Rahe 1980 p. 88-90; Briant 2002 p. 578 ).

**thrown into a room full of ash:** Cf. note above.

**Pisuthnes revolted:** Pisuthnes was the satrap of Sardis who assisted the Samians in their revolt against Athens in 441 B.C.E. (cf. Thucy. 1.115.2-5; cf. Lewis 1977 p. 55). This revolt is otherwise unknown but it may have occurred ca. 424-423 B.C.E. when the alleged peace between Persia and Athens mentioned by Andocides (*Pace* 29) was negotiated (cf. Briant 2002 p. 591).

**Tissaphernes:** Aram. *Čiθra-farnah-* and Neo-Ass. *Šiṭirparna* (cf. Mayrhofer 1973 n. 8.1885; Dandamaev 1992 p. 129 n. 296).

**Spithradates:** A member of an aristocratic Persian family (cf. Xen. *Hell.* 4.1.6) who compelled Otys, the king of the Paphlagonians, to form an alliance with Agesilaus in 395 B.C.E. (cf. Xen *Hell.* 4.1.2). His name appears in Xenophon as Spithridates but the *Hellenica Oxyrhynchus* (*P.Oxy* 5.842 F1 464) gives Spithradates. Both spellings closely correspond to OP *\*Spiθra-dāta* (cf. Schmitt 2002 p. 70-71). The name is possibly connected to the Babylonian *Iš-pi-ri-da-a-ta* (cf. VAT 15609; Dandamaev 1992 p. 114 n. 244 misreads the name as *Piridātu* corrected by Stolper) which corresponds to Iranian *\*Spihra-dāta*

whence comes *Spiθra-dāta* (cf. Stolper 1994 p. 620). Since this would be a very early case of Iranian *θr* > *hr*, some hesitate to connect the name Spithradates to the Babylonian *Iš-pi-ri-da-a-ta* (cf. Schmitt *op. cit.* p. 71 n. 83).

**Lycon the Athenian:** Otherwise unknown otherwise unknown although the name is Athenian. Lycon of Thorikos was one of Socrates' accusers (cf. Pl. *Ap.* 36a 8; Is. *De Dic.* 12), however this is likely a separate individual (cf. Kirchner 1901-1903 p. 29).

**cast him into a room full of ash:** Cf. Note above.

**He ordered a woman... so he could appear as a man:** While it has recently been doubted that all of the eunuchs of the Persian court were castrates (cf. Pirngruber *Forthcoming*), some were certainly emasculated (cf. Hdt. 3.92, 6.32; see also Llewellyn-Jones 2002 p. 23-24). It seems evident that Artoxares, a non-Iranian, falls into the latter category. He apparently lacks the masculine features to grow a beard and mustouche. While the king and nobles at the court wore hairpieces, there is no evidence to support the assertion that Artoxares sought to 'acquire the appearance not of a man but of the king' (cf. Briant 2002 p. 274). The text clearly states that Artoxares simply wanted to pass for a man (ὡς ἄνηρ) rather than impersonate the king. Ctesias, who had an infamous penchant for the dramatic, would not have failed to mention this. Cf. Guyot 1980; Llewellyn-Jones *op. cit.* for studies of eunuchs in antiquity.

**Arsaces, the son of the king who later was renamed Artaxerxes:** cf. F15a and note.

**Terituchmes, the son of Idernes:** Otherwise unattested; meaning 'family of Tīra'. The first element of the name corresponds to the deity *Tīra* mentioned in the zoroastrian calendar and the second is derived from avest. *taoxman-* 'relation' and OP *taumā-* 'family, clan' (cf. Schmitt 2006 p. 199-202 who disproves Sancisi-Weerdenburg's 1987 p. 41 assertion that the name stems from Ctesias' imagination). Olmstead (1948 p. 364) claims that Tissaphernes, the skilled satrap of Asia Minor was a member of this family since his father's name was Hydarnes (cf. the Xanthus Pillar Inscription; see Demargne 1958 p. 79-105 for a publication of the text). Lewis (1977 p. 84 n. 13), however, rightly points out that Ctesias would hardly have failed to mention him if he were connected to this story, and he certainly would have said if he were the brother of Stateira. It is also uncertain if this Idernes is a descendant of Vidarna, one of the Seven conspirators with Darius I (cf. Briant 2002 p. 589-590), however the importance bestowed upon his family by the royal marriages renders the hypothesis plausible.

**pierced by the 300 men with whom he planned his revolt:** The idea seems to be to obtain everyone's loyalty by having them share in the guilt of the homicide of Amestris.

**a certain Udiastes:** Unattested elsewhere. The OP origins of this name are in dispute. Justi (1895 333a) claims that it corresponds to the OI *\*hu-*jasta-** 'blessed' while Bartholomae (1906 p. 161) prefers OP *\*ud-yāsta-* 'well-girded'. Schmitt (2006 p. 262-263) has recently proposed OI *\*Aujiyasti-* 'den preisenswerten zum Gast habend'.

**Mithridates, the son of Udiastes:** OP *\*Mitra-dāta* 'created by Mithra' (cf. Hinz 1975 p. 167; Dandamaev 1992 p. 100 n. 197). The Greek gives him the title ὑπασπιστής ('shield-bearer') which was an honorable position for a subordinate in training (cf. Hdt. 5.111) and seems to have been comparable to the medieval esquire.

**the city of Zaris:** Cook (1983 p. 255, 278) identifies this with Zranka or Drangiana (modern Seistan in southwest Afghanistan and east Iran; cf. note F1), but Zaris may have been the 'principal ancient name' of the region.

**This concludes Book 18:** See Introduction for the arrangement of the *Persika*.

**F15a) Darius and Parysatis had four children:** According to the summary of Photius, (F15 § 51), Parysatis had thirteen children but only five survived. Four sons and a daughter, Amestris, are said to have survived infancy. He names the youngest two Ostanes and Oxathres, forms closer to the original OP and likely more faithful to Ctesias since he would surely have known the names of the royal family members who also be patients of his (see below and note on F15 §51). The Greeks evidently had trouble in transmitting Iranian names, even after they were rendered into Greek. Cf. the three variants of Artaxerxes' birthname – Arsikas in F15a, Arsakas in F15 §51 and Arsakes in F15 §55 (note the last two variants both come from Photius). According to Xenophon (*Anab.* 1.1.1), Parysatis had only two children, although it seems likely that he only knew of Artaxerxes and Cyrus.

**Ostanes:** corresponding to Hystanes (Hdt. 7.77) and OP *\*/Uštāna/* 'having high class' (cf. Schmitt 1979 p. 129; cf. F15 §51).

**Oxathres:** OP *\*Hu-xšaθra* 'with good governance' (cf. Schmitt 1979 p. 123; cf. F15 §51).

**Cyrus was named after Cyrus the Elder...:** The summary of Photius says nothing of the younger Cyrus being named after Cyrus the Elder. The verb 'they say' undoubtedly refers to Ctesias (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 274 n. 630). Its position in the sentence, along with the testimony of Photius, makes it clear that Ctesias only says that Cyrus was named after the sun (cf. note on F15 §51). The connection to Cyrus the Elder undoubtedly comes from another source, most likely Deinon who is quoted in the following sentence.

**Arsikas... Oarses:** Artaxerxes' birth name appears several times in Babylonian Astronomical Texts as 'Aršu called *Artakšatsu* the king'. If the name given by Deinon is actually Arses with the article (ὁ Ἄρσεϛ), then it would conform well to the Babylonian texts whereas that given by Ctesias may be a faithful transcription of the name Arses with the hypocoristic ending *\*-ka* or *\*-ika* (cf. Schmitt 1982 p. 92). Lenfant (2004 p. 275 p. 632) may be right to suggest that the hypocoristic form given by Ctesias reflects the emotional form of the name employed by members of the royal family, especially Parysatis. However, this is based on the assumption that the Persians affectionately employed the diminutive as a term of endearment in the same manner as the Greeks.

- **F15b) a beautiful and noble woman...:** i.e. Stateria whose brother was Terituchmes (cf. F15 §55-56 and notes).
- **F16) after ruling for 35 years:** This figure is patently wrong. Cf. Diod. 12.71.1 who correctly says that Darius ruled for 19 years (cf. Manetho *FGrH* 609 F2).

**Arsaces became king:** Cf. note on F15a.

**put to death by having his tongue cut out:** Although not normally a fatal form of mutilation (cf. 2 *Maccabees* 4-5), the text of Photius indicates that the removal of the tongue from its root was the cause of death. Undoubtedly the victim would choke on the excessive blood caused by the deep incision in the back of the throat (ἐξόπισθεν), or perhaps due to excessive blood loss.

**at the insistence of Stateira despite the objections of Parysatis:** This episode highlights the animosity of rivalry between Parysatis and Stateira who both struggled to have supreme influence over Artaxerxes. It also shows the fruition of Darius' warning to Parysatis that she would regret her decision to allow Stateira to live after her family had been put to death (cf. F15 §55-56 and F15b).

**Cyrus was denounced by Tissaphernes:** Lenfant (2004 p. 276 n. 641) is right to point out that the events described in F17 show that the allegations of Tissaphernes were not without merit. Moreover, her suggestion that the testimony of Xenophon (*Anab.* 1.1.3) describes the charges of Tissaphernes as mere slander since his source for these events is likely Cyrus himself is essentially correct. However, she fails to acknowledge the similarities between the two passages. Like Xenophon, Ctesias uses the verb διαβάλλω to describe Tissaphernes' actions as slander (the appearance of the noun διαβολή in the next line of Photius' summary reinforces this sentiment). Lenfant opts to translate these terms as 'est accusé' and 'accusation' respectively arguing that Plutarch (*Artox.* 3.5 = F17) employs the term διαβολή and κατηγορεῖν interchangeably (p. 276 n. 642). It seems, however, that διαβολή in F17 refers to a false allegation since it is used in one of two versions given for Cyrus' arrest. The first version, for which Ctesias is likely the source, says that Cyrus was arrested simply as a result of the allegations while the other version says that Cyrus actually entered the temple and attempted to kill Artaxerxes. Parsysatis is a likely source for Ctesias for this account and it stands to reason that she would refer to all the allegations made against her son as 'slander' and that her version of events would accord well with that of her favorite son, especially since he fled to her soon after Tissaphernes levied his accusations.

**his own satrapy:** According to F17 §5, Cyrus held the position of satrap of Lydia and commander of all of the forces along the coast. This would effectively place all of Asia Minor under his command.

**Satibarzanes:** from Bab. *Šá-ta-bar-za-nu* (OP \*Š(iy)āti-brzāna-; cf. Zadok 1977 p. 98; Benveniste 1966 p. 119-120; Schmitt 2006 p. 188-189). The name appears in several Babylonian and Aramaic business documents as a witness (cf. Dandamaev 1992 p. 121 n. 273; Stolper 1985 p. 238 13:25').

**Orondes:** OP \**Arvanta-* 'fast, quick'. The name is well attested in Greek and Near Eastern sources. It appears in Xenophon as Orontas (*Anab.* 1.6.1. et al), in Plutarch (*Artox.* 27.7) as Orontes, and in Herodotus (4.165) as Aryandes. An Orontes, called Aroandes in the inscriptions from Mt. Nemrut (OGIS 391, 392) held the post of satrap of Armenia throughout the reign of Artaxerxes, but since he survived the king he must be a different Orontes than the one mentioned here. He was the son of Artasyras and was married to Rhodogyne, the daughter of Artaxerxes II (cf. Plut. *Artox.* 27.7). He is also said to be Bactrian by birth (cf. OGIS 264).

**contrary to custom, his father placed his body on a pyre:** It is widely attested in the sources that the Persians practiced inhumation for their dead (cf. Curt. 3.12.14; Hdt. 7.117) and that it was against their customs to cremate their dead (cf. Strab. 15.3.18). Some Iranians, most notably the Magi, would expose the bodies of the dead to be ravaged by birds and dogs before depositing the bone in an ossuary (cf. Strab. 15.3.20; Hdt. 1.140; cf. the study of Grenet 1984 p. 31-42). However, it seems that the Persians only employed this practice as a punishment for the disloyal (cf. Strab. 15.3.17). The Persian practice of inhumation is corroborated by numerous archaeological finds. The royal cemeteries at Pasargadae (cf. Stronach 1978) and Persepolis (cf. Schmidt 1957, 1970) have been well documented. Most importantly, the cemetery at Deve Hüyük (Carchemish) where tombs date as early as the 8<sup>th</sup> century show a shift from cremation to inhumation during the Achaemenid period (cf. Moorey 1975 p. 108-117; 1980).

**he charges Hellanicus and Herodotus with lying:** It is impossible to see what the exact nature of these accusations are from the abridgment of Photius. The criticisms of Ctesias

definitely pertain to comments made by his predecessors regarding the funerary customs of the Persians since both authors predate the events in question. Herodotus (3.16) was certainly aware that the Persians did not cremate their dead, an act he says the Persians viewed as sacriligious while Ctesias simply says it 'contrary to custom'. Elsewhere (1.140) he relates a report that the bodies of Persians were first ravaged by dogs and animals before being interred (see note above) although he expresses uncertainty about this. Perhaps Ctesias' criticism stemmed from one of these passages, but the abridgement of Photius and the scanty remains of Hellanicus' work make any hypothesis difficult to support.

**Clearchus as the general of the Greeks:** According to Diodorus (14.19.8), Clearchos was only the leader of the Peloponnesian contingent with the exception of the Argives, while the Boeotians, the Achaians and the Thessalians each had their own leader. This testimony is corroborated by Xenophon (*Anab.* 1.2.3) who adds that the Arcadians were also under a separate command. The elevated position of Clearchos to commander of all the Greeks may come from the testimony of Clearchos himself or from Parysatis, who favored the Greek general (See Introduction for full discussion of Clearchos).

**Syennesis:** The *syennesis* was a title held by the local dynasty of Cilicia that came to be interpreted as a personal name in the Greek sources (cf. Hdt. 7.98; Aes. *Pers.* 327). He had a residence at Tarsus (cf. Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.23) and appears to have held some degree of autonomy, although Cilicia was a tributary (cf. Hdt. 3.90) and supplied troops for the king's campaigns (cf. Hdt. 7.91). Cf. the study of Casabonne 1995; cf. also Lemaire and Lozachmeur 1990; Desideri and Jasink 1990 p. 178-202; Benveniste 1930). On the interaction of the *syennesis* and Cyrus the Younger cf. Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.12-25; Diod. 14.20; cf. Erzen 1940 p. 116-120; Briant 2002 p. 498, 625.

**Menon the Thessalian:** cf. Xen. *Anab.* 1.5 on the hostilities between Menon and Clearchos.  
**Many men deserted....:** cf. Xen. *Anab.* 1.9.29

**Arbarios intended to join Cyrus... thrown into the ashes:** cf. note on F15 §50.

**Cyrus attacked the king's army....:** This is the Battle of Cunaxa (cf. Xen. *Anab.* 1.9)

**His body was mutilated....:** his act was necessary for Artaxerxes to prove his ultimate victory, especially since he just lost the battle (cf. Olmstead 1948 p. 267).

**one of the cities under Parysatis' dominion:** Parysatis held several estates in the area of Babylonia from which she collected rent as a source of revenue (cf. Xen. *Anab.* 1.4.9). Her land holdings are widely attested in the accounts of the Murašû Firm (cf. Stolper 1985 p. 63-64) and some have been located 100 km south of the confluence of the Lower Zab and the Tigris near modern Baiji (cf. Joannes 1995 p. 196-197). On the estates of Parysatis cf. Cardascia 1991; Briant 1985 p. 59-60.

**Bagapates:** cf. note on F13 §9 for analysis of this name. He is called Masabates in F26 §17.1 (cf. note).

**She then played a game of dice....:** cf. F26 §17.5-7

**Cyrus' saddle-cloth:** cf. F20 §6

**the Carian who reportedly killed him:** cf. F26 §14.7-10. Artaxerxes intended to kill the Carian himself for stealing his glory, but was persuaded by Parysatis to hand him over to her.

**she put him to death in cruel fashion:** See Introduction on the methods of torture and execution in the *Persika*.

**Books 19 – 20:** See Introduction for the organization of the *Persika*.

- **F17) Their mother loved Cyrus more:** cf. Xen. *Anab.* 1.1.4

**Parysatis employed the plausible rationale:** cf. Hdt. 7.3 on the accession of Xerxes I and Demaratus. The succession amongst the Achemenids was based on royal prerogative rather than premogeniture; however, preference was regularly given to the eldest (cf. Ath. *Deipn.* 12.515a; Plat. *Alc.* 1.121c). Cyrus appointed Cambyses as successor over Tanyoxarkes (cf. F9 §7-8) and although Artaxerxes II received appeals to follow premogeniture in naming his successor (cf. Plut. *Artox.* 26.1), the choice clearly rested with him (cf. Briant 1991b; 2002 p. 520-522). Royal prerogative seems equally attested in the Near eastern sources where the title *maθišta* ('the greatest after he king') was bestowed upon the favored son. In an inscription at Persepolis, (*XPf* 30-32) Xerxes claims 'Darius, my father, made me the greatest (*maθišta*) after himself' (cf. Schmitt 2000 p. 81-85) which seems to clearly indicate that Darius appointed Xerxes as his successor.

**satrap of Lydia and commander of the forces along the coast:** According to Xenophon (*Anab.* 1.9.7) Darius appointed Cyrus to be satrap of Lydia, Greater Phrygia and Cappadocia.  
**the Persian priests:** i.e. the Magi (see below).

**There is a temple of some warrior goddess...:** Identified with Anaitis/Anāhita (cf. Briant 2002 p. 523; however, De Jong 1997 p. 279-280 doubts this identification) who seems to have gained importance during the reign of Artaxerxes II (cf. Beros. *FGrH* 680 F11 although here she is equated with Aphrodite; Paus. 7.6.6 calls her 'Persian Artemis' – cf. Brosius 1996 ; cf. Boyce 1982 p. 201-204 who unconvincingly traces the resurgence of the cult back to Darius II and Parysatis). Her name first appears in the royal inscriptions during his reign (cf. *AŠa*, *AŠc*, *AŠHa*; cf. Kent 1948 p. 154-155). Cf. Kellens 2002-2003; Briant 2002 p. 676-679, 998-1001 for studies of Anaitis/Anāhita; cf. Moorey 1979; Shepherd 1980 on her iconography.

**the garments worn by Cyrus the Elder:** The object of the ritual seems to be for the future king to acquire the virtue and founder and first king of the empire. This is reiterated by the food consumed (see note below) and that the ceremony takes place at Pasargadae, the first capitol of the empire and the home of Cyrus' tomb (cf. Orsi 1988 p. 143-144; Sacncisi-Weerdenburg 1983 p. 29).

**eat a cake of figs...:** Figs and milk are both typical food item of a pastoral diet while terebinth was a common food source for archaic populations of hunter-gatherers (cf. Orsi 1988 p. 144). The purpose of this part of the ritual may be to recall the legends circulating about the humble and wild origins of Cyrus the Elder (cf. F8).

**the appropriate education:** Part of the education of the would-be king was to learn how abide by a pastoral lifestyle (cf. Xen. *Anab.* 1.9.3-5 who emphasizes the need to learn self-control) and this is reflected in the diet of the coronation ceremony (cf. Alföldi 1951 p. 15). This aspect of the royal education may have Indo-European roots and can be seen in several other cultures including the Roman legends of Romulus and Remus (cf. Widengren 1960 p. 236-237). Hunting too would have played a role in this portion of the discipline (cf. Orsi 1988 p. 145-146). This emphasis on the pastoral knowledge may serve to create another link to Cyrus the Elder and his savage roots. The royal princes would receive a military training learning such skills as horsemanship, archery, and hand-to-hand combat (cf. *DNb* 32-45; Hdt. 1.136). They were placed under the tutelage of royal instructors at the age of 14 (cf. Plat. *Alc.* 121e-122a) some of whom were Magi who instructed them in their arts as well as Truth and temperance (cf. Nic. Damas. *FGrH* 90 F67; Cic. *De Div.* 1.41.91 who says such training was mandatory for anyone to become king). Combined, all of these various aspects of a

royal education were to prepare the would-be king to rule politically, militarily, and religiously (cf. Briant 2002 p. 521).

**Some say that his arrest stemmed from this allegation:** ‘Some say’ likely refers to Ctesias (cf. F16 §59 and note).

- **F18) Xenophon all but brings the reader face to face with the action:** cf. *Anab.* 1.8 for Xenophon’s vivid description of the battle.  
**is called Cunaxa:** This is the only attestation of the name Cunaxa in the sources. It’s exact location is debated; some scholars identify the site with Tell Aqar Kuneesha (Kuneise) about 57 miles north of Babylon while others place the battle at Fallujah (cf. Herzfeld 1968 p. 219-220) or Al Nasiffiyat which was originally called [\*ku]neise-safyat [ib] and located about 50 miles north of Babylon (cf. Barnett 1963 p. 15-17). The name Cunaxa is generally accepted as a Grecised version of the term *kenishta* ‘synagogue’.  
**500 stades from Babylon:** about 57 miles. This figure corresponds well to the distance between Babylon and Al Nasiffiyat where the battle may have been fought (cf. Barnett 1963 p. 17).
- **F19) Artagerses, the leader of the Cadusians:** from OP \**Rta-garša* or preferably \**Rta-grša* meaning ‘rejoicing in Arta’ (cf. Schmitt 2006 p. 224-225; 2002 p. 46). According to Xenophon (*Anab.* 1.7.11) he was the cavalry commander of Artaxerxes and was stationed directly in front of the king in the battle array where his contingent would have served as part of the royal bodyguard. On the Cadusians cf. note on F1b §2.3. The Homeric imagery of this passage is most likely the creation of Ctesias made to heighten the sense of drama for his Greek audience  
**through his neck near the collar-bone:** Since Artagerses was positioned close to the king, it is possible that Ctesias personally attended to him after being wounded which would allow him to be so precise in describing the wound. Cf. Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.24  
**Xenophon briefly and simply deals with the death of Cyrus:** Cf. Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.27-29
- **F20) Ariaaios, a friend of Cyrus:** According to Xen. 1.8.5 Ariaaios commanded the left flank of Cyrus’ army. Xenophon makes no mention of Ariaaios in Cyrus’ fight with Artaxerxes. It is logistically possible that he was nearby since Artaxerxes’ army extended so far beyond the left of Cyrus that the king’s center was beyond the left of Cyrus (*Anab.* 1.8.23). Xenophon makes it clear, however, that Ariaaios did not follow Cyrus in pursuit of Artaxerxes since he flees upon hearing news of Cyrus’ death (*Anab.* 1.9.31).  
**Satiphernes:** Only attestation of this name in Greek (cf. Justi 1895 p. 291-292) corresponding to OP \**š(iy)āti-farnā* (Mayrhofer 1973 p. 234 n. 8.1562). The name appears in the Elamite tables from Persepolis as *Šiyatiparna* (PF 1368). Cf. Schmitt 2006 p.189-190; Benveniste 1966 p. 93 who translates the name as ‘gloire de félicité’.  
**struck him in the chest... inflicting a wound in his flesh two fingers deep:** cf. F21  
**a young Persian named Mithridates:** It is impossible to decipher whether or not this is the same man as the son of Oudiastes (F16 §58) since he is simply referred to as ‘a young Persian’ (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 278 n. 663; Schmitt 2006 p. 110-111). One would expect Ctesias to have indicated if they were in fact the same person based on the prominent role he played in a previous narrative of the *Persika*.

**Caunians, low-living paupers...perform menial tasks:** cf. F14 §45 and note on the Caunians who lived in Caria. Their destitute situation at the end of the fifth century may have been the result of the high increase in tribute they were forced to pay the Athenians after a possible revolt in the mid-430's (cf. Meiggs 1972 p. 436-437).

**they recognized the crimson tunics:** Xenophon (*Anab.* 1.2.16) indicates that the Greek forces in Cyrus' army wore crimson tunics but says nothing of the rest of his forces.

**The blow ruptured the artery in his hamstring:** The physician in Ctesias seems to compel him to often give graphic and detailed descriptions of the wounds people receive (cf. the wound of Artaxerxes above; see the Introduction for a full discussion).

**Such is the account of Ctesias...:** See the Introduction on Ctesias' use of dramatic elements in his narrative.

**Artasyras:** cf. note on F8 §46 for the etymology and occurrences of this name in the *Persika*. This may be the same man as the Bactrian who was appointed satrap of Armenia and helped put down the revolt of Artyphios and Arsites who was connected to the royal family by marriage (F15 §52).

**the king's Eye:** The Greek sources are vague and varied on this title. According to some, there was only one Eye of the king who held a high-ranking position in the court (cf. *Aes. Pers.* 978-985; *Ar. Ach.* 91-125). Others, however, maintain that there were numerous Eyes and Ears, often seen as two separate offices, who reported to the king any suspicious activity (cf. *Arist. Pol.* 1287b 29). Xenophon (*Cyr.* 8.2.10-12), however, seems to reject the widespread belief of an institution of the king's Eye but states that the king listens to anybody with information on dissenters. Although the institution is widely attested in the Greek sources, there is no conclusive reference to it in the Eastern sources. It is unclear if the *gaušaka* mentioned in the Aramaic documents from Egypt (*DAE* 101) referring to satrapy inspectors indicates the same office (cf. Briant 2002 p. 343-344; Oppenheim 1958 especially p. 178 who interprets the *gaušaka* as a reference to the king's Ear). Balcer (1977) proposes that the Athenians may have adopted the office of the king's Eye in the creation of the office of the *Episkopos*, the imperial Overseer. Unfortunately, the sources are too unclear to ascertain what the nature of this office was or even if it existed at all (cf. Hirsch 1985 p. 101-139 for a full discussion).

**Pariskas:** This name appears to be of Iranian origin, however its exact etymology is unknown (cf. Schmitt 2006 p. 264-265).

**there were rumors abounding about the Greeks... victorious in every way:** The Greeks, while pursuing the enemy opposite them (cf. *Xen. Anab.* 1.8.17-22), were separated from the rest of Cyrus' army by about thirty stadia (1.10.4) and did not know of his death (1.10.16).

**Satibarzanes the eunuch:** Cf. note on F16 §60

**eight kotylai:** About 2.18 liters or 2 *choenices*. One kotyle = 0.27 liters; cf. Bivar (1985 p. 631-634) for discussion of Achaemenid liquid measurements and table on 638; Lang and Crosby (1964) on weights and measurements in general with modern equivalents; Richardson (2004) for a brief introduction on the subject.

**following Persian custom, had the right hand and head removed from the body:** Cf. F16 §64; the eunuch Bagapatos removed the head and hand of Cyrus (cf. F16 §66; F26 §7 where he is named Masabates). It was custom to remove the head and hand of a usurper (cf. *Strab.* 15.3.17).



- F21) The king commanded the center of the army but was still beyond the left wing of Cyrus:** Some scholars doubt the validity of this statement and instead propose that the king was simply beyond the left flank of the Greek contingent and Xenophon was mistaken (cf. Bigwood 1983 p. 342).

**is said to have killed Artagerses, their commander, by his own hand:** cf. F19; Artagerses was the leader of the Cadusians who were stationed directly in front of the king and acted as the royal bodyguard. Neither Jacoby nor Lenfant has chosen to include this passage in their texts, although the λέγεται clearly refers to Ctesias (although Lenfant 2004 p. 226 n. 12 acknowledges the likelihood that this passage is from Ctesias).

**the 600 men under Cyrus scattered and set out in pursuit:** Xenophon contrasts the reckless actions of the Persians with the discipline of the Greek contingent who after routing their counterparts, remained in formation during the pursuit (cf. *Anab.* 1.8.19).

**Table-Companions:** cf. note on F14 §43

**Ctesias records the number dead:** Ctesias claims that Artaxerxes lost 9,000 men (F22).
- F22) the figures given by Dinon and Xenophon are much larger:** Xenophon (*Anab.* 1.7.12) claims that the king had an army of 900,000 men and 150 scythed-chariots. Dinon's figures are unknown. While the numbers of Ctesias are much lower, they are still deemed too high by modern scholars who offer a more plausible figure of 60,000 (cf. Bigwood 1983 p. 341-342; 347).

**the number of dead reported to Artaxerxes was 9,000:** This is a more plausible figure than the 15,000 reported by Diodorus (14.24.5-6). Ctesias' skepticism may stem from his belief that those reporting the number dead were purposefully lowering them in order to please the king.
- F23) This is a matter of dispute:** This dispute refers to the number dead in the king's army at Cunaxa (cf. F22).

**he was sent to the Greeks with Phalinus of Zacynthos:** Xenophon (*Anab.* 2.1.7) not only fails to mention Ctesias on this embassy, he claims that Zacynthos was the only Greek among the messengers. However, Xenophon never explicitly refutes the claims of Ctesias although he was very familiar with his work, which he cites on more than one occasion. It is possible that it is Xenophon rather than Ctesias who is exaggerating when he says that Phalinus was the only Greek on the embassy. In any case, it seems fairly clear that if Ctesias were present then he played only a minor role in the affair (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. XII).
- F24) It is also this way in the following examples:** Cf. T14a

**Scythian discourse:** This is a term first coined in reference to the Scythian philosopher Anacharsis who was said to have spoken freely and without restraint (cf. D.L. 1.8.101; also Plut. *Prov.* 1.62 for a different description of Scythian discourse). Demetrius is making clear that the messenger in this passage is not using Scythian discourse because to do so would entail bluntly informing Parysatis of the death of her son.

**He can only blame Tissaphernes:** It was Tissaphernes who informed Artaxerxes of Cyrus' alleged plot against him (cf. F16 §59; Xen. *Anab.* 1.2.4-5).
- F25) her son's horses:** At Cunaxa Cyrus rode 'a high-bred but hard-mouthed and arrogant horse' named Pasakas (cf. F19 §1).

- **F26) After the battle: The Battle of Cunaxa.**

**Artagerses, who was killed by Cyrus:** Cf. F19; F21 §24.

**honored Ctesias:** Ctesias was honored for treating the wound which Artaxerxes received at the hands of Cyrus (cf. F21 §26).

**found the Caunian who gave him the wineskin of water:** cf. F20 §12.5-6

**Arbaces, a Mede:** One of the four commanders who each led contingents of 3,000 men (cf. Xen. *Anab.* 1.7.12 who makes no mention of his desertion). Artaxerxes was fairly lenient with his treatment of many of the nobles who sided with Cyrus, possibly in an effort to solidify his position on the throne (cf. Briant 2002 p. 631).

**he wanted all men to think and say that he personally killed his brother:** This was the official version of events circulated by Artaxerxes after the battle (cf. below §16.2). Ctesias is clearly not a mouthpiece for royal propaganda since he contradicts the official version here, as he does in F22 §4 (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. CXI-CXII). The truth that Cyrus died at the hands of Mithradates and the Caunian was widely known (see below §14.7), however most people knew that to contradict the king's version would result in severe punishment (see below §14.7-10 for the punishment of the Carian and §15-16 for that of Mithridates both of whom contradicted the official version; cf. especially §15. 7 where all of the guests at the dinner party instantly knew the fate that awaited Mithradates after he boasted of personally killing Cyrus).

**Mithridates, who first wounded Cyrus:** Cf. F16 §67; F20 §11.5-6; an attendant of Mithradates picked up the saddle-cloth after the latter wounded Cyrus with a blow to the temple.

**the Carian who dealt Cyrus the fatal blow to his hamstring:** Cf. F20 §11.9-10; specifically the fatal blow was delivered by a member of the Caunians who inhabit a region of Caria (cf. F14 §45 and note).

**Artasyras:** cf. note on F20 §12.1

**Sparamizes:** cf. F1pα and note where the name is spelled Spameizes. This spelling may better reflect the OP \**Spara-Mižda*, if one accepts this interpretation (cf. Schmitt 2006 p. 277-279).

**I did not cast my spear and miss like Artagreses....:** cf. F19 §3 on the death of Artagerses and F20 §11.5 on the wounding of Cyrus by Mithradates.

**the good fortune of the king:** the Greek uses the term δαίμων which likely reflects the Iranian religious concept of *xvarenah*, the royal splendor or good fortune of the king (cf. Orsi 1980).

**he was caught lying:** This statement further reinforces the fact that Ctesias, if he is in fact Plutarch's source here, gave the popular version of the death of Cyrus and contradicted the royal propaganda of Artaxerxes (cf. note above).

**He therefore ordered that Mithridates be put to death:** Cf. F16 §67 where Mithridates is given over to Parysatis to be put to death. Plutarch is either using another source for this information, possibly Dinon, or he simply altered the account to have the king put Mithridates to death.

**the trough-torture:** This method of execution was also employed on Aspamitres who took part in the murders of Xerxes and his son Darius (F14 §34). See Introduction for a discussion of the method of execution described in the *Persika*.

**Masabates:** called Bagapates in the epitome of Photius (cf. F16 §66; cf. note on F13 §9), which more accurately reflects an Iranian original \**Baga-pāta*- ‘protected by the gods’. Cf. Schmitt 2006 p. 163-166 for a full discussion.

**She was also present at and assisted in his love affairs:** See Introduction on the powerful and domineering role of Parysatis within the royal house and her rivalry with Stateira.

**1,000 darics:** The daric was a gold coin weighing approximately 8.35 gm. and was introduced as part of the currency reforms of Darius I sometime after 515 B.C.E (cf. Robinson 1958 p. 187-193). The Greeks believed that the coin took its name from Darius himself (cf. Poll. *Onom.* 3.87; Suda s.v. *δαρεικός* disagrees with the common sentiment). Cf. Bivar 1985 p. 610-625; Carradice 1987 p. 73-93.

**that he be flayed alive...:** cf. F16 §66

- **F27) Tissaphernes plotted against the Greeks...:** Cf. Xen. *Anab.* 27-42 who corroborates this statement.

**the majority of his men... compelled him against his wishes to go to Tissaphernes:**

Xenophon (*Anab.* 2.5.27; 2.5.30) claims that it was Clearchos who actually compelled the Greeks to send five generals and twenty captains to Tissaphernes against their objections that all the generals go. The account of Ctesias, which likely derives from Clearchos himself, tries to vindicate the general of carelessly falling into the trap set by Tissaphernes.

**Proxenos, the Boeotian:** One of the ten Greek generals under whose command Xenophon likely served (cf. Xen. *Anab.* 2.5.37).

**Ctesias...personally tended to Clearchos:** One can see the influence of Clearchos throughout the narrative of Cyrus’ campaign. Clearchos obviously made a big impression on Ctesias during these meetings. See Introduction for a full discussion on the influence of Clearchos on the *Persika*.

**a burial mound appeared out of thin air:** The numerous tells which marked the landscape were later believed to be burial sites (cf. F1b §14.1; F1i on the burial mounds of Semiramis’ lovers). It seems appropriate that Clearchos, who appears in a wholly favorable light in the *Persika*, would miraculously receive one of these legendary burials (cf. note below for its possible similarities to the burial of Cyrus the Great).

**with the exception of Menon:** Xenophon (*Anab.* 2.6.29) likewise states that Menon was not put to death with the rest of the generals, however he adds that Menon was kept alive and tortured for a year and so died ‘like a rogue’ (ὡς πονηρός); Xenophon (*Anab.* 2.6.21-29) also corroborates Ctesias’ description of Menon as a traitor to the Greeks (cf. Diod. 14.27.2).

**a small bird the size of an egg which the Persians call the *Rhyndake*:** cf. F29b §4-5; F29c and notes.

**Ginge, a companion of Parysatis:** This name, referred to as Gigis by Dinon (cf. F29b §19.2), is not of Iranian origin (cf. Schmitt 2006 p. 236-237). The name may be Babylonian and has been equated to Gigitu, the name of the daughter of the Babylonian king Neriglissar (559-556 B.C.E.; cf. König 1972 p. 25 n. 14). It is highly plausible that Parysatis would have Babylonian attendants given her vast landholdings and estates in the region (cf. note on F15 §48; note on F29b §19.2 on the Babylonian ethnicity of Parysatis’ other accomplice Belitanas).

**the judges:** These likely refer to the ‘royal judges’ the institution of which is unclear and often debated. There are several references to them in the sources, however none of them clarifies the matter. A passing reference in the Book of Ezra (7:14) referring to seven

councilors of the king (cf. also Esther 1:13-14; Xen. *Anab.* 1.6.4-11) has led some to argue that these refer to seven royal judges chosen from the families of the Seven conspirators against Smerdis. However, most scholars now agree that these men served a role which was more advisory than judiciary and there is no firm evidence that there was a permanent board of advisors (cf. Lewis 1977 p. 23; Cook 1985 p. 234-235 acknowledges a possibility of such a board but adds that its members were certainly not chosen from the seven families; Ael. *V.H.* 1.34 tells of a peasant being appointed as royal judge). Most sources are ambiguous as to their number, (cf. Hdt. 3.14; Plut. *Art.* 29.8-12; Ael. *V.H.* 1.34; Diod. 15.10-11 gives an account of a trial presided over by three judges) but we know from Herodotus (3.31) that they were appointed for life or until they were removed for acting unjustly. While judges (OP *dātabaru*, *dayyānu*) regularly appear in the Eastern sources (cf. Stolper 1985 p. 91), the only appearance of ‘royal judges’ (*dyny mlk*’) occurs in the Aramaic documents from Elephantine in Egypt (*DAE* 2). However, it is doubtful if these judges can be equated with the ‘royal judges’ of the Classical sources (cf. Tuplin 1987 p. 119-120; Briant 2002 p. 129-130; 510-511). In any case, it is clear that ultimately judicial discretion resided with the king.

**After eight years...:** If Ctesias is reporting this from first hand knowledge, then he could not have returned to Greece before 393 B.C.E (cf. Rettig 1827). This assertion, however is highly doubtful (see Introduction for a discussion on the biography of Ctesias).

**surrounded by date-palms:** Cf. F28 §18.8; The tomb of Clearchos may have been located within a ‘Paradise’ (Elam. *Partetaš*; OP *\*paradaida*; cf. Briant 2002 p. 442-444 on the equation of these terms to the Greek ‘paradise’) similar to that of Cyrus the Elder at Pasargadae (cf. Arr. *Anab.* 6.29.4; Strab. 15.3.7; Stronach 1978 p. 25-43; 1985 838-839).

- **F28) After Tissaphernes deceived Clearchos...:** cf. Xen. *Anab.* 2.5.31-32

**The emblem on the ring showed caryatids dancing:** The caryatids were a chorus of young Spartan girls who danced in honor of Artemis Caryatis at Caryae in Laconia (cf. Paus. 3.10.7; Calame 1977 p. 264-276). Dancing girls were frequently depicted on rings and gems from Laconia and formed a common Spartan motif, thus adding plausibility to Ctesias’ story (cf. Bigwood 1995 p. 140).

**Ctesias, however, refused to do this out of fear:** Cf. Introduction on Ctesias’ environment at the court of Artaxerxes.

**this is why Parysatis plotted against Stateira:** Plutarch may have misunderstood Ctesias regarding the motives of Parysatis. While she may in fact have plotted against Stateira in response to having Clearchos killed, it probably was not out of devotion to the general. Stateira had shown her powerful influence with the king when she convinced him to put Clearchos to death. She thus showed herself to be a powerful rival of Stateira who needed to be eliminated (cf. F29 §19.1; Lenfant 2004 p. 162 n.733).

**but a windstorm brought a mass of earth over the corpse of Clearchos:** cf. F27 §69  
**some dates scattered over the hill and created an amazing grove:** Ctesias says that these dates were planted by Parysatis. The burial of Clearchos may have been located within a ‘paradise’ (cf. note on F27 §71). Cf. the similar language used by Arrian (*Anab.* 6.29.4) to describe the ‘paradise’ around the elder Cyrus’ tomb.

- **F29a) the plot was brought to fruition:** i.e. the plot to of Parysatis to kill Stateira (cf. F27 §70; F29b).

- F29b) She therefore plotted against Stateira:** (cf. F28 §18.6 and note).  
**Gigis:** Cf. F27 §70 and note.  
**Belitaras:** A Babylonian name with the original form *Bēl-ētir* meaning ‘Bēl has saved’. (cf. Schmitt 2006 p. 236). The fact that both of Parysatis’ accomplices are Babylonian gives an element of plausibility to the account of Ctesias (cf. note on ‘Ginge’ F27 §70).  
**Rhyntakes:** from OP *rund* signifying a small bird from the rice-marshes (cf. Benveniste 1966b p. 485). Ctesias gives the more faithful form *Rhyndake* as transmitted by Photius (F27 §70; cf. F29c).  
**Poisoners in Persia are legally executed in the following way:** There was a constant threat of poisoning looming over the court giving need for the office of the royal taster (ἐδέατρος; cf. Kalléris 1954 I p. 162-69). While the statement of Xenophon (*Cyr.* 8.8.14) that more people died from poisoning there than anywhere else may be exaggerated (cf. Briant 2002 p. 262-263), the Persians evidently felt that the threat of poisoning was real enough to warrant a specific method of torture and execution for those practicing it.
- F29c) Rhyndake:** Cf. F29b §19.4 and note.
- F30) Evagoras the king of Salamis:** Evagoras was a member of the Teucid family who ruled Cyprian Salamis in the first half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century before being displaced by a Phoenician line. Evagoras regained his ancestral power in 411 B.C.E. and became a champion of Hellenism, for which he was praised in an encomium by Isocrates. He was honored by the Athenians for receiving many Athenian refugees after the Battle of Aegisopotamoi and assisting Conon in his negotiations with Artaxerxes (Lewis and Stroud 1979). Although he served as a faithful tributary for several years, after the battle of Cnidus (394 B.C.E.) he rebelled from Persia. He was reinstated as a tributary but with the honor of a king in 381 B.C.E. and was assassinated in 374 B.C.E. Cf. Costa (1974) for a discussion of this figure; Shrimpton (1987) and Rubincam (1988) on his death.  
**Evagoras sent envoys to Ctesias....:** See Introduction for discussion of these negotiations and Ctesias role in them.  
**Aboulites:** Possibly corresponding to Baby. *Nabū-nā'id* and translated into OP as *Nabunaita-* (cf. Schmitt 1971 p. 23; Lenfant 2004 p. 285 n. 737; Zadok 1977 p. 112 n. 250 suggests a West Semitic origin for the name). However, the name is attested in an Elamite inscription of Šutruk-Nahhunte II (late 8th C king of Elam) as *A-bu-li-ti* (EKI 74.8; cf. Schmitt 2006 p. 211-213).  
**Anaxagoras the king of Cyprus:** Unknown elsewhere.  
**Satibarzanes:** Cf. F16 §60 and note.  
**Conon was appointed as commander of the fleet:** According to Diodorus (14.38.2-3), Conon was appointed leader of the Persian naval forces in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of the 95<sup>th</sup> Olympiad (399 B.C.E.); cf. Xen. *Hel.* 4.8.14. Most scholars agree that the events described here occurred in 398 B.C.E. (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 286 n. 744).  
**Pharnabazos:** From OP *\*Farna-°vazdā* meaning ‘having prosperity through Farnah (Glory)’ or ‘Providing prosperity to Farnah’ (cf. Schmitt 2006 p. 125-126). He was a satrap of Hellenistic Phrygia residing in Dascylium who played an active role in the affairs of the Greeks towards the end of the Peloponnesian War as an ally of the Spartans (cf. Thucy. 8.6.1-2; 39.1; 99.1).

**Ctesias went to his homeland Cnidos...:** See Introduction for discussion on the biography of Ctesias.

**At Rhodes there was a trial concerning the Spartan envoys followed by an acquittal:**

Many scholars have taken this passage to mean that Ctesias was brought to trial by the Spartan envoys and acquitted (cf. Jacoby 1922 col. 2036; Brown 1978 p. 18; Eck 1990 p. 423-424). While the Greek seems to indicate this, the resume of Photius is very elliptical and unclear at this point. This trial is never mentioned anywhere else and there is nothing in the narratives of the surviving fragments which would suggest a reason for Ctesias being brought up on charges by the envoys. Consequently, Lenfant (2004 p. XX-XXII) is right to exercise caution concerning this passage.

- **F31) Zenon the Cretan:** Cf. F32
- **F32) The king drove the Lacedaimonians from the sea:** This refers to the Battle of Cnidos (394 B.C.E.). Plutarch is using a source other than Ctesias here since the *Persika* only covers events down to 398 B.C.E., the year Ctesias returned to Greece (See Introduction).  
**through Zenon the Cretan dancer:** Cf. F31  
**Polycritos the Mendaean physician:** This may be the same man as the historian whose work only survives in a few fragments (*FGrH* 559; cf. note on F45 §49). He may also be the same man for whom there is a statue dedicated in the Asclepieion in Athens (cf. BCH 1887 pl. IX; Girard 1881 p. 17).  
**It is said that... Ctesias added to Conon's proposal:** Cf. F32 §73 for Ctesias' version. This criticism of Ctesias may ultimately derive from Dinon, who often contradicted his predecessor (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 227 n. 20). It is, however, conceivable that Ctesias did in fact make this addendum to Conon's letter if he saw this as a chance to escape the confines of the court and return home (See Introduction for a full discussion).
- **F33) stations and parasangs:** Stations were stopping points or relays for travellers placed along the vast network of royal roads which permeated the empire (cf. Graf 1994; Briant 1991a). A parasang is a Persian unit of distance equal to about 5.4 km. When describing distances within the Persian Empire, Greek authors often gave distances in terms of parasangs and stations (cf. Hdt. 5.52-54).  
**He lists the kings from Ninus and Semiramis:** This list is not reproduced by any later authors in its entirety. Later chronographers have altered it to fit their view of history (cf. Boncquet 1990 for a full discussion of Ctesias' Assyrian king list). However, it is possible to partially reconstruct it based on the fragments, especially for the Median and Persian periods (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 337). The Assyrian kings on Ctesias' list, although often based on historical figures, do not conform to those on the actual Assyrian King List (cf. Marquart 1891-1893) and it has often been assumed that Ctesias fabricated many of them in order to fill in the long duration of his Assyrian Empire (cf. Lenfant *op. cit.* p. 287 n. 751).
- **F33a) five kingdoms:** Ctesias writes about the Assyrians, Medes and Persians. The final two kingdoms are those of the Macedonians and the Romans.  
**having lasted for 1,450 years:** According to Diodorus, who was certainly using Ctesias, the Assyrian empire lasted for more than 1360 years (cf. F1b §21.8 and note).

**for a period of 470 years...:** The figures given here for both Ctesias and Herodotus are seriously flawed. The years for the reigns of the Median kings as given by Diodorus total 282 years not counting Astyages, whose duration is never given by Ctesias (cf. F5 §32.6 and note; 34.1). Regardless of the how long Astyages reigned, it would be impossible to reach total of 470 years for the Median hegemony. The figures given by Herodotus 1.102; 130 add up to 150 years excluding the 28 year interim reign of the Scythians which preceded that of Cyaxares (1.106) which, if included would total 178 years.

**Herodotus claims it lasted for 128 years:** Apparently there is some confusion in the text at this point. The texts of Jacoby and König give the figure 125 years (Ϡκϵ´) without mentioning any textual variants in the mss. Lenfant gives the figure 128 years (ϠκϠ´) which she claims is the figure given by the codices and attributes the reading of 125 years to Jacoby.

**covering a period of 215 years:** The figures given by Ctesias for the reigns of the Persian kings only add up to 157 years (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 335). However, this total excludes the reigns of Xerxes, whose duration he never gives, and of Artaxerxes during whose reign his work concludes. Ctesias seems to be the primary source of Persian history for the scholiast since he fails to mention any Persian king after Artaxerxes II.

- **F33b) concludes his work in this year (398/97):** See Introduction for a discussion of the dating of the end of the *Persika* and the departure of Ctesias from Persia.

#### **Miscellaneous Fragments from the *Persika***

- **F34a) one hundred pales of water to irrigate the dryer places:** In actuality, the Persians had a complex system of canals (qanāts) which they used to irrigate the more arid regions of their empire (cf. Briant 2001).
- **F34b) These phenomena:** This passage comes in the middle of discussion on the use of medicine by certain animals.
- **F35) the Persian city of Sittake:** A town along the road from Babylon to Susa situated at the crossing of the Tigris near modern ‘Azīziyya (cf. Herzfeld 1968 p. 10-11). According to Xenophon (2.4.13) it was ‘a large and well-populated city’ located 15 stadia (2.7 km) from the river (cf. Tuplin 1991 p. 51-54). Like Ctesias, Stephen of Byzantium (s.v.), following Hecataeus, calls it simply ‘a Persian city’.  
**a river called the Argades:** Unknown elsewhere.
- **F36) the Thessalian town of Crannon:** One of the four major cities of Thessalia located northwest of modern Larissa, it was the site of a famous battle (322 B.C.E.) between the Macedonians under the leadership of Antipater and a coalition of Hellenic forces following the death of Alexander.  
**I will skip over this extract:** Antionus seems to be reading extracts rather than the original text.
- **F37) Herodotus states in Book 1:** Cf. 1.188  
**the Choaspes River:** the modern Karkheh River. It is located in Ancient Susiana (modern Khuzestan in Iran) and was sometimes identified with the Eulaeus (cf. Plin. 21.35; cf. Briant 1994b p. 46).

**this is the only water he drinks:** This practice of the Persian kings is widely attested (cf. Strab. 15.3.22) and may have originated with Xerxes (cf. Ael. *V.A.* 12.40; Dinon *FGrH* 690 F12 claims Artaxerxes never eats or drinks ‘anything foreign’, but he never explicitly mentions his water or the Choaspes). According to Pliny (21.35), this custom was practiced by the Parthian kings. Cf. Briant 1994; Bequignon 1940.

**it is the purest and sweetest water:** The river was renowned in antiquity for its clear and delicious tasting water (cf. Quint. Curt. 5.2.9; Strab. 15.3.22).

- **F38) Carmania:** OP Karmanâ, a region in southern Iran near Gedrosia. Ctesias gives a more accurate form of the name than Herodotus (1.125) who refers to the inhabitants as Germanioi (cf. Schmitt 1979 p. 127; F1b §2.3 and note).
- **F39) dined in the company of 15,000 men and spent 400 talents on the dinner:** The magnificence of the king’s dinner is well attested in the Greek sources who often viewed such opulence as a form of decadence (cf. Hdt. 9.82; Strab. 15.3.22; Ael. *V.H.* 5.1; Athen. 4.150b-c; Briant 1989). The most detailed source for the king’s dinner comes from Polyaeus (*Strat.* 4.3.32) who lists all the ingredients with Persian measurements for the daily feast (cf. Lewis 1987). The large feast was redistributed to the soldiers and table-companions of the king each day (cf. Heraclid. *Cum. FGrH* 689 F2; Briant 1989; 2002 p. 286-292; Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1989).
- **F40) whomever the king holds in contempt drinks from terracotta cups:** Wealthy Persians usually drank from highly ornate cups of gold and silver (cf. Athen. 11.781f-782a; Hdt. 7.190; Amandry 1958a and 1958b; Gunter 1988 p. 22-30).
- **F41) Sarapis:** From Elam. *sarpi*. This garment is attested in the Elamite tablets found on the acropolis at Susa (cf. Scheil 1907; Briant 2002 p. 21).
- **an off-white Persian robe:** Athenaeus (12.525c-e) mentions sarapeis of yellow, crimson and white.
- **F42) Agbatana:** A more faithful transcription of the OP *Hagmatāna* than Ecbatana, which would later become the standard form of the name for Greek writers. Like Ctesias, Herodotus (1.98, 1.110, et al) gave the more accurate form of the name. The name Ecbatana occurs several times in the fragments of Ctesias by Diodorus (F1b §13.5-7; §28.7), Nicolaus of Damascus (F8d §11); Photius (F9 §1; §5), and Antigonus of Carystos (F36) and always with the more common spelling. It is clear that each of these later writers ‘corrected’ the spelling of Ctesias to what had by their time become the standard form (cf. Schmitt 1979 p. 121-122).
- **F43) Ctesias calls them Derbisses or Terbisses:** Elsewhere in the fragments, only the form Derbisses is used. There is no evidence that Ctesias ever employed either of these forms of the name (cf. F1b §2.3; F9 §7 and notes on this ethnic group).
- **F44) the Persians openly sleep with their mothers:** The practice of incest (defined here as relations between immediate family members) was not uncommon in the East. According to a tradition given by Aelian (*NA* 6.39; cf. Plut. *Mor.* 328c), which itself may originate from



Ctesias in what may form the basis for the present passage, Cyrus the Younger had an incestuous affair with his mother Parysatis. Incestuous marriages were common in the Persian royal family; Cambyses married two of his own sisters (cf. Hdt. 3.88) and Artaxerxes II married two of his own daughters (Plut. *Art.* 23.2-5; cf. Herrenschmidt 1994 p. 113-118). The Egyptians were renowned for the marriages between brother and sister within the royal family (cf. Černý 1954) and by the Roman period incestuous marriages between siblings frequently occurred among the Egyptian commoners (Sext. Emp. 1.152; Diod. 1.27; see also Hopkins 1994 for a full discussion). It was believed that the Zoroastrians regularly slept with their mothers (*FGrH* 765 F31) and their incestuous practices are confirmed by the Avesta (*Av. xwaêtvadatha* ‘familial marriage’: Herrenschmidt *op. cit.* p.118-124; Frye 1985). Although it was not regularly practiced by the Greeks (with the notable exception of the Ptolemies, cf. the criticism of Paus. 1.7), they viewed the custom with fascination (e.g. the Oedipus saga and the numerous accounts of incest amongst the gods in their mythology; discussion in Lévi-Strauss 1967).

### **The Indika**

- **F45) [Ctesias] says about the Indus River that it is forty stades wide at its narrowest point and two hundred at its widest:** Cf. F45a; the width of the Indus River, by Ctesias’ calculations, would have ranged from 7-35 km. The narrowest point of the lower Indus in modern times is at Sukkur in Pakistan where in 1932 the British completed a barrage across the river which had a length of nearly 1.6 km. The actual width of the river would be no more than 20 stades, however Ctesias’ exaggerated claims may stem from an observation of the river when flooded beyond its banks (cf. Arora 1996 p. 20-21). During flood season (July-September) the river can be several miles wide, although in modern times embankments often prevent flooding.

**the Indians:** It should be noted that the ‘Indians’ discussed by the early Greek authors were for the most part not within the realm of Sanskrit culture (cf. Karttunen 1991 p. 83 n. 50). What the Greeks called ‘India’ actually refers to the northwestern territory of the country around the Indus (from which the country gets its name) in mostly what is now Pakistan (cf. Karttunen 1989 p. 7).

**the population of the Indians is nearly greater than the rest of the world combined:** Herodotus (5.3) simply says that the Indians are the most populous nation on earth. While both authors are in agreement about the magnitude of the Indian population, Ctesias makes his assessment of the Indian population in a more emphatic and exaggerated manner than his predecessor. This passage offers a glimpse into the dramatic style of Ctesias’ writing showing how he sought to entertain and amaze his audience (See Introduction).

**the only animal to live in it:** Hdt. (4.44) states more accurately that the Indus is the world’s second largest producer of crocodiles. It is possible that Ctesias’ worm is actually a fantastic interpretation of the crocodile, however he is more likely describing a serpent influenced by Indian beliefs (see note on §46). It is evident by his use of the term ‘animal’ (θηρίων) that Ctesias is not including fish in this statement but rather he is only referring to the lack of other types of ferocious beasts (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 171 n. 780).

**no men live beyond India:** The Greeks viewed India as the end of the inhabited world (cf. Karttunen 1989 p. 157). Herodotus (3.98) also claims that India is the furthest east of any known nation and that to the east of them is nothing but desert. The testimony of these

authors seem to be geographically based on the Thar in modern Pakistan which lies to the west of the Indus (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. CXXXVIII-CXXXIX and p. 291 n. 781).

**It does not rain but India is irrigated by the river:** While this statement was rightfully acknowledged as untrue by later writers (cf. Diod. 2.36.4-5; Arr. *Ind.* 6.4-5), attempts have been made to discern its source. Lenfant (2004 p. 291 n. 782) contends that this statement reflects observations of the Sind, the region to the south and east of the Indus where the lack of rain was noted by Aristobolus on the Alexander campaign (cf. Strab. 15.1.7). While this assertion is plausible enough, she equally acknowledges the possibility that Ctesias is simply drawing a comparison between the Indus and the Nile based on the statement of Herodotus (2.13) that the Nile valley was irrigated by the river. Although she fails to discuss why Ctesias would make such a comparison, she may be right on both accounts. It is certainly plausible enough that Ctesias heard of the intense draughts that plague the Sind region from either Indian visitors to the court or Persian travellers who had visited the region. Since we know Ctesias was well familiar with the works of Herodotus, his predecessor's accounts of the arid conditions of the Nile would likely spring to mind upon hearing these tales of a rainless India; thus he probably was not simply following a *topos* modelled on the Nile valley but drew the comparison himself.

**a gemstone called *pantarba*:** This stone has not been identified with certainty. The gem also appears in the Photius' epitomes of Heliodorus (cod. 73 p. 51a) and Philostratus (cod. 241 p. 326ab/327a; cf. Bigwood 1989 p. 314 and n. 55). Philostratus (3.46) gives a vivid description of the stone saying that, in addition to its magnetic properties to other stones, it glows at night like fire and sparkles when in the daylight. Veltheim (1797) suggested that this stone was based on some type of opal which emitted a rich display of colors after being submerged in water, but most subsequent scholars agree that there is not enough evidence to warrant a plausible proposal (cf. Ball 1884 p. 231).

**a Bactrian dealer:** Bactrian merchants who lived on the fringes of the Achaemenid Empire and frequently came into contact with Indians form a major source for Ctesias (cf. F45h; See Introduction for a full discussion on Ctesias' sources).

**the wall-destroying elephants:** Cf. F45b $\alpha$ ; F1b §16.4 and note; F48a and b with note; Although 18<sup>th</sup> century scholars often cited this comment as evidence for the unreliability of Ctesias, his description of the elephant was remarkably accurate (cf. Karttunen 1980 p. 106). There is ample evidence in Indian sources to indicate that elephants were in fact used to tear down fortification walls, which were often made of wood (cf. Megasth. *FGrH* 715 F17; whose testimony is confirmed by archaeological finds in Page 1930 p. 135-140). In the *Samgāmāvacarajātaka*, for example, there is a description of an elephant breaking apart the gates of Benares and in the *Arthaśāstra* elephants are used to attack fortresses. Despite his criticisms of Ctesias (see F48a and F48b), it is clear that even Aristotle used him extensively in his treatment of the elephant (659a2; cf. Scullard 1974 p. 37), much of which is accurate (see the excellent discussion of Bigwood 1993a). While it is clear that Ctesias gave a detailed description of the elephant (see the greater detail in F45b $\alpha$ ), little of his account survives, probably because after the campaigns of Alexander and into the Roman period elephants ceased to be a source of amazement.

**the small monkeys with tails four cubits in length:** Cf. Megasth. *FGrH* 715 F21; F21b although he claims the monkeys are larger than the biggest dogs. These monkeys are most often equated with the langurs which still inhabit India today (cf. Ball 1885 p. 279-280; Lenfant 2004 p. 294 n. 786), where they are deemed sacred. In fact the name langur is

derived from the Sanskrit word *langulin* meaning ‘long tale’ (cf. Thapar 1997 p. 265). The gray langur (*Semnopithecus entellus*), also called the Hanuman langur (see Jerdon 1867 p. 4-6), is seen as a descendant of Hanuman who, according to the the *Sundara Kanda* (the fifth book of the *Ramayana*), was a monkey warrior who helped Rama rescue his wife from Ravana. He was captured by Ravana and his tail was lit on fire and the black face, hands and tale of the gray langur are said to be a testament to this event.

**roosters of enormous size:** cf. F45bβ and note.

**a bird called the *bittakos*:** Aristotle (*H.A.* 597b27) calls the bird a *psittake* (with the variant *sittake* also found in the mss.) and the forms *psittakos* and *sittakos* also occur in later works (cf. Bigwood 1993a p. 541).

**It has a crimson face... like cinnebar:** The text at this point is hopelessly corrupt. Clearly the phrase ‘like cinnebar’ cannot be used as a comparison for something dark blue indicating something missing from the text. Numerous attempts have been made to solve the textual problems. Baehr (1824) deleted the ὄς, which in reference to an object rather than a person is unusual in Attic prose (cf. Smyth n. 3003), as mistakenly inserted in anticipation of the following ὄσπερ. Mueller (1844 following Bekker) argues for a lacuna in the text and inserts the phrase \*\*\*ἐρυθρόν δὲ before τὸν τράχηλον. Bigwood (1993b p. 324) argues for the insertion of the phrase τὸν δὲ ὄμω ἐρυθρόν rendering the entire phrase ‘is blue as far as its neck, but on its shoulder it is red like cinnebar’. In any case, I have chosen to conservatively follow the text despite my misgivings.

**It can converse like a human:** The species of parakeet being described here may be the plum-headed parakeet (*psittacula cyanocephala*). The male of the species has mostly green (of varying shades) plumage but has a red patch (‘like cinnebar’) on its upper wing, a narrow black collar that leads to a black stripe under the beak (‘a black beard’). Its head is a deep red (‘crimson face’) tinged with purple on the lower cheek and back of the neck (‘dark blue as far as the neck’). For a full discussion see Bigwood 1993b p. 324-327. The accuracy with which Ctesias describes this bird indicates that he likely saw one in person. The fact the the bird ‘can speak Greek’ was probably the result of the bird mimicing Ctesias himself. That it speaks ‘Indian’ may indicate that the bird was brought to the court by an Indian traveller, rather than a Persian or Bactrian merchant who had interacted with the Indians. As such, this passage provides valuable insight into the sources of Ctesias for the *Indika*. We know elsewhere that he had seen several Indians at the court, so he likely obtained some of his testimony directly from Indians (See Introduction for full discussion on Ctesias sources).

**There is a spring...:** Ctesias was fond of miraculous springs as there appears no less than ten in his extant fragments (See Introduction for full discussion). According to Herodotus (3.96), the Persian king melted down the tribute he received and stored it in clay jars. This has led to the assumption that Ctesias often takes Herodotus and reinvents the account according to his own imagination (cf. Jacoby 1922 col. 2059; Lindegger 1982 p. 104 n. 5 simply draws the comparison with no comment). However, this does not appear to be the case since beyond the vessels themselves, there is very little in common between the two stories (cf. Bigwood 1995 p. 139-140). Perhaps Ctesias saw these vessels at the palaces in Persia and received a different explanation of their use and origins. The tradition may have originated from Nuristan on the southern slopes of the Hindu Kush mountains where there were accounts of lakes with magical properties which contained valuable items (cf. Karttunen 1989 p. 8-9 n. 18). On the gold of India see Lenfant 2004 p. 295-297 n. 791; Von Hinüber 1985 p. 1123-1124, Vogelsang 1992 p. 204-206.

**a perimeter of sixteen cubits and a depth of one *orgyia*:** ca. 7-8 m in circumference and 1.8 m deep.

**There is iron at the bottom:** Iron replaced copper in metalurgy in northern India ca. 1000 B.C.E. (cf. *CHIn* vol. 1 p. 56, 112, 615). It was thus commonly employed by Ctesias' time (cf. Bigwood 1995 p. 136).

**Ctesias says two swords were fashioned and given to him:** The Persian monarchs often gave daggers or swords as gifts, among other fine objects such as bracelets and jewelry, to their benefactors (cf. Briant 2002 p. 302-315). Mithridates received a Persian dagger ('*akinakēs*') from Artaxerxes (cf. F26 §15.2) and Artapates received one of gold from Cyrus the Younger for being a loyal scepter-bearer (cf. Xen. *Anab.* 1.8.29). Ctesias may have received this gift from Artaxerxes for his role at Cunaxa and from Parysatis for the services he rendered to Clearchos (cf. Bigwood 1995 p. 137-138).

**ward off clouds, hail and typhoons:** It was common practice in the East to ritually attempt to control the forces of nature (cf. Frazer 1920 vol. 1 p. 244-331; Bigwood 1995 p. 138-139). Ctesias appears to be relating an actual ritual performed by the the Persian king in an attempt to control the weather. Polyaeus (7.11.12) gives a similar account in which Darius I while on his Scythian campaign planted his scepter in the ground as part of a ritual to cause rain since his army was destitute in a barren region (see the study of Calmeyer 1989 p. 125-129). The king apparently acted as an intermediary between man and deity who sought to control the elements by fixing a royal symbol (sceptre or sword) into the ground (cf. Briant 2002 p. 239-240).

**The dogs in India:** These dogs were famous in antiquity and were kept in various parts of the Near East (cf. Hdt. 1.192; see also 7.187 where we are told Xerxes took them with his army). Their size and courage are well attested in both Greek and Indian sources. There is a description in the *Ramayana* (2.64.21) of huge dogs with fangs like spears and the strength and courage of tigers. Comparisons such as this, although common, may have resulted in confusion for the Greeks leading Aristotle (*H.A.* 8.28 607a4; cf. *G.A.* 746a34) to claim that the Indian dog is a hybrid of a dog and a tiger (it is unclear if he is using a source other than Ctesias). However, there is evidence to support the assertion that these dogs fought with lions. Sopeithes, an Indian king, gave Alexander a gift of Indian dogs and demonstrated their prowess by having them fight a lion (Diod. 17.92). In Indian literature, the *Mācala* dogs of the Vidarbha country were said to have the ability to kill tigers (*JB* 2.442) and in the *Mahābhārata* (2.37.8) a pack of hunting dogs is seen attacking a sleeping lion. Even in the present day packs of dogs in India are known to chase tigers away from their kill and feed on their catch (cf. Thapar 1997 p. 255). Although the Brahmans generally despised dogs, there is ample evidence in Indian literature showing that the dogs were kept and used as watchdogs and in hunting (cf. *RV* 7.55.2-4; see also Xen. *Cyn.* 9.1, 10.1 although he may be describing a different breed of dog and one not necessarily of Indian origin - cf. Platt 1909 p. 242). On the Indian dog see Kartunnen 1989 p. 163-167; Chattopadhyay 1967.

**There are large mountains ...:** Although the epitome of Photius is meagre at this point, it seems clear that Ctesias equated these mountains with the Mt. Sardo mentioned below (§17; see also §33). This mountain has often been identified with the Sardonyx Mountains mentioned by Ptolemy (*Geog.* 7.1.20; cf. Hermann 1920 col. 2496) seen as part of the Vindhya (cf. Lassen 1875 vol. 2 p. 653) or its parallel range the Satpura, both located in central India (cf. McCrindle 1885 p. 77 followed by Hermann). Extending from the Saptura towards the south are the Western Ghats which may be another possibility (acknowledged by

Lassen *op. cit.* p. 653 n. 4). Since the major range of the Ghats is the Sahyadhri ('the benevolent mountains'), might the name Mt. Sardo be a corruption of this name? Recent scholarship, however, rejects the idea that Ptolemy and Ctesias are referring to the same mountain. Lindegger (1982 p. 105 n.1) locates Ctesias' Mt. Sardo in the Himalayas and Kartunnen (1989 p. 84), who proceeds with caution, proposes the Aravalli near the Rajasthan desert in Northwest India. Although Kartunnen's proposal would place the mountain in the region mostly associated with the *Indika*, it is impossible to conclusively solve its location (see also Lenfant 2002 p. 298-299 n. 798).

**It is very hot there....:** According to Herodotus (3.104), in India it is hotter in the morning than at midday. This likely comes from the belief that the Indians were located at the eastern end of the world and how a rising sun in the east appears larger than at midday. It seems plausible that both Ctesias and Herodotus made their statements based on personal observation after hearing of the extreme heat in India.

**the Greek Sea:** i.e. the Aegean Sea. The sea in India referred to here is likely the Eastern Ocean which to the Greeks formed an eastern boundry of the world (cf. Hecat. *FGrH* 1 F36) or what Herodotus referred to as the Red Sea (4.40). There is nothing in the fragments of the *Indika* to indicate that Ctesias encountered any travellers, Indian or otherwise, who had been far east enough to know of the Bay of Bengal. Perhaps this is a reference to the Arabian Sea into which the Indus flows in modern Pakistan.

**four dactyls:** ca. 7 cm.

**the so-called Indian reed:** Cf. F1b §17.5 and F45c and note where we are told that one section between the nodes can make two boats; see also Megast. *FGrH* 715 F27b and Plin. *N.H.* 7.2.21 both of whom seem to be influenced by Ctesias, and Thphr. *HP* 4.11 also treats the subject. Various attempts have been made to identify this plant. Lassen (1874 vol. p. 645-646) first proposed that the plant in question was a species of bamboo since it has nodes and can reach up to 35 meters in height. Furthermore, many species have a hollow stem and are thus called 'female' while those with a solid stem are referred to as 'male' (cf. *Wealth of India* p. 145; see also Lenfant 2004 p. 300 n. 804). Although Lassen's proposal is generally accepted, Ball (1885 p. 335-336) suggested instead a species of the Palmyra palm since it has a much larger girth (six foot circumference at the base) than bamboo, one more fitting for constructing canoes. The tree, which is native to the Sind region, can also grow between 40-60 feet in height and up to 100 feet in some places. He also notes that the Sanskrit word for the Palmyra is *Trīnarāja* meaning 'king of the reeds'. However, he fails to acknowledge the presence of nodes, which the Palmyra lacks and which are so prevalent in the sources (cf. Hdt. 3.98; Kartunnen 1989 p. 189 n. 267). Furthermore, it is often overlooked that bamboo grows in cluster and it is possible that the reference to the girth of the reed originates from the girth of an entire cluster. Perhaps Ctesias' informant mistook a cluster for a single tree or, more likely, the confusion occurred in translation and Ctesias misunderstood his informant. While the extreme size of the reed accords well with the Greek view on the far reaches of the world, there may be eastern origins to this account since fantastic reeds also occur in Indian literature. In the *Mahābhārata* (2.48.2-4) and the *Rāmāyana* (4.42.37-38) along the banks of the Sila river (cf. F47a and note) on the boundry of the mythical land Uttarakuru, there grows the *kīcaka* reed which is the only thing that does not turn to stone when touched by the water. Thus, boats formed of this reed are the only means of crossing the river. Moreover, like the Ctesianic reed, the *kīcaka* is often identified as a species of hollow bamboo (cf. Kartunnen *op. cit.* p. 188-189).

**There lives in India a beast called the *martichora*:** CF. F45d $\alpha$ - $\delta$ ; Believed to be derived from OP *martiya*- ('man') and *khordēh* ('eating') (cf. McCrindle 1881 p. 298 n. 25; see also Avest. *khwar*- 'eat') – cf. Modern Persian *mard-kwār* as a designation for the tiger. The Near Eastern root indicates that Ctesias likely received his information from a Persian source (cf. Arora 1991 p. 90) or at least through a Persian interpreter (F45d $\beta$  seems to indicate an Indian source; perhaps the interpreter simply translated the phrase man-eater into Persian rather than give the exact Indian phrase). Since antiquity this creature has been identified with the tiger (cf. F45d $\gamma$ ). Although some have rejected this identification and seen the beast as pure fantasy (cf. Lassen 1874 vol. 2 p. 652), most accept it as plausible (see for example Bigwood 1964 p. 74-75). In fact, many of the attributes ascribed to the *martichora* can be discerned in the tiger. For instance, at the tip of the tail is a small dermal protrusion like a nail which is seen as the basis for the stinger of the *martichora* (although Ctesias would have seen one with the stinger already crushed – cf. F45d $\beta$ ). The tiger's whiskers are seen by natives of India as harmful and are removed from tiger hides when hunted (they are also believed to endow someone with power over the opposite sex). Unlike ruminants and equines, the carnivorous molar of the tiger has three lobes thus giving rise to the belief that the *martichora* had three rows of teeth (cf. Ball 1885 p. 280-281). Ctesias likely accepted his informant's statement that it had a human face since this is a matter of opinion and we do not know how close he was able to get to the animal's cage (cf. Karttunen 1991 p. 79). However, many aspects of the *martichora* are in fact rooted in pure fantasy since there is still no accounting for the *martichora*'s ability to fire its stinger like an arrow and to create the shrill sounds of the trumpet. While Ctesias is most likely basing his description on what his informant told him, he may have supplemented what he did not understand by looking at some of the artistic images surrounding him at the Persian court where creatures were often depicted with features from several different animals (cf. Jacoby 1922 col. 2038; Arora *op. cit.* proposes that he may have seen an image of the *martichora* on an Indian artifact). The Dragon of Marduk shown on the Gate of Ishtar at Babylon immediately comes to mind which has a red scaly body, serpent's head with horns, front feet of a feline and rear feet of a bird, and a scorpion's tail (see also Lenfant 2004 p. 302 n. 810 who likens it to the *chimaera*). In any case, while it is clear that the tiger forms the basis of the *martichora*, it evolved into a mythological creature common in medieval folklore continuing to the present day (See Introduction on the Nachleben of Ctesias).

**a *pletheron*:** ca. 30 m

**he also describes their customs and manners:** Evidently Ctesias devoted a portion of his work on mundane aspects of India which were neglected by later authors who were often more interested in the fantastic. Despite what the fragments may indicate, the *Indika* was not merely a collection of marvels. Unfortunately for the modern scholar, Photius (and other excerpters) often ignored such ordinary discussions, or as here, relegated them to mere titles (cf. Karttunen 1991 p. 77-78; See Introduction for a full discussion on Photius methods of summarization and the nature of the *Indika*). It is perhaps from this portion of the *Indika* that F50 derives.

**where they honor Helios and Selene:** The sun played a major role in the religions of India and was prominently featured in the *Rigveda* pertaining to various deities including Viṣṇu (*RV* 1.154) and personified at times as Mārtāṇḍa (*RV* 10.72.8) and Vivasvan (*RV* 10.14). The sun is primarily personified as Sūrya (*RV* 1.50) who, like his Greek counterpart, drives a chariot across the sky. However, there is no clear evidence for a cult to Sūrya (or any other

solar deity) in Indian literature and the earliest definitive references to a sun cult date to the Kushan period (130 B.C.E. – 185 C.E.; cf. Karttunen 1989 p. 220 and 222 n. 202), well after Ctesias. Still it is possible to conjecture that Ctesias was in fact telling the truth. The ‘uninhabitable region’ is most surely the Thar desert. Near the Thar is Multan which later became a famous center for the sun cult and is hailed as the original cult of the sun god in India (cf. Karttunen *op. cit.* p. 220). Although there is no evidence to support a cult existing here during the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E., it would be an amazing coincidence if Ctesias referred to a cult in a region where none existed in his time but would arise several centuries later. It is possible that the later cult was continuing or reviving an earlier tradition of worshipping the sun. However it is equally possible that Ctesias is in fact referring to a cult of Iranian origin. Early sun worship in this region is attested by the discovery of fire altars and a sun disc at Balambat in Pakistan (cf. Dani 1967) which date to the Achaemenid period. Moreover, in Nuristani mythology, the sun and moon are often coupled together as they are here (cf. Karttunen *op. cit.* p. 223 n. 210). Unfortunately, due to the scant nature of the fragments and a lack of external evidence, any hypothesis for a factual basis of this cult will be mere conjecture (see also Lenfant 2004 p. 303-305 who acknowledges the possibility of an authentic solar cult but contends Ctesias’ view of sun worship is heavily influenced by Greek mythology).

**Mt. Sardo:** Likely the same mountain as the one mentioned in §11 (see note).

**There are no thunder, lightning....:** Cf. §5; In fact there are thunderstorms and rain in India. The heavy wind is likely a reference to the monsoons. Hurricanes are still prevalent in India and were obviously of great concern to the Indians of the ancient world (cf. §9 on the sword which can ward off hurricanes).

**The rising sun until midday stays cool....:** This is a complete contradiction of Herodotus (3.104) who claims that in India it is hottest in the morning when the sun is rising but then it cools in the afternoon.

**Indians are not dark-skinned from the sun but by nature:** Ctesias is rightly correcting Herodotus (2.22) who says of the Ethiopians that they are black because of the extreme heat in their region. Onesicritus (*FGrH* 134 F22 §24), perhaps influenced by Ctesias, later criticized Theodectes for believing the sun to be the cause of black skin. Ctesias also correctly points out that not all Indians are dark skinned (cf. Hdt. 3.101 who says all Indians were black, but he seems to refer only to the south portion of the country) giving credibility to his claim of having encountered Indians at the Persian court.

**the fire flowing from Aetna....:** This account has been connected with the story of the brothers from Catana in Sicily who after an eruption of Aetna tried to carry their parents to safety. They were caught in the path of the lava flow but for their piety they were spared and the lava flowed around them. Since the story first appeared in Lycurgus (in *Leocr.* 95-96 who only tells of one son carrying his father to safety), it seems that Ctesias is giving the earliest account of this wonderful tale before it evolved into what became a well known story to the Greeks (see Holland 1926 for a full discussion).

**In Zacynthus, there is a spring:** Herodotus (4.195) confirms this statement and claims to have seen the lake personally.

**In Naxos, there is a spring:** Stephen of Byzantium (*s.v.* Νάξος), who may be following Ctesias, also testifies to this phenomenon. Philostratus (*Im.* 1.25) mentions a stream of wine in Andros but makes no mention of its sweetness (see also Plin. *H.N* 31.2; D. Chr. *Orat.* 35.18 mentions rivers flowing with translucent wine, milk, honey and oil).

**there is an unquenchable fire:** The Eternal Flame in Olympos in Lycia is still a source of amazement for visitors to the area. The Flame exists along the Lycian Way in an area known as Chimera named for the mythical fire-breathing monster once believed to be the source of the fire from its underground lair. The fire is actually formed by natural gases seeping through the rocks which combust upon coming into contact with the air.

**Pygmies:** Cf. F45f  $\alpha$ - $\gamma$ ; The Pygmies first appeared in Greek literature in Homer who described their battle with the cranes (*Il.* 3.3-7). Because Megasthenes (*FGrH* 715 F27a and b, F29) reiterated the Homeric story placing the action in India (he called the Pygmies the Trispithamoi ‘those who are three spans long’), many scholars have assumed that he was following Ctesias who must have described a geranomachia himself and simply transposed a Greek story to India (cf. Lassen 1874 vol. 2 p. 661-663 who contends that Ctesias did so after hearing an Indian parrallel; Wittkower 1942 p. 160). However, nothing in the two extensive fragments on the Pygmies supports this assertion. If Ctesias did include a geranomachy in his account, Photius surely would have included it. It is clear that the Pygmies of Ctesias are not the same people as those mentioned by Homer since their only common attribute is their size. Perhaps upon hearing of this race of small people, Ctesias gave them a name familiar to the Greeks and Megasthenes, thinking they were the Homeric race, later included the famous description of their battle with the cranes (cf. the discussion of Karttunen 1989 p.128-130). It seems apparent that the Greeks used the term Pygmies (literally ‘the size of a fist’) to denote a dwarf (cf. Arist. *Pr.* 892a. 12; Hdt. 3.37; at 2.32 he refrains from using the term Pygmie to describe the little people). Ctesias then may simply have been referring to a race of dwarfs without giving their tribal name (see F45f $\gamma$  and note for the possible name).

Various attempts have been made to identify an historical basis for Ctesias’ Pygmies. The suggestion of Baehr (1824 p. 40) that they referred to a species of monkey is completely unsubstantiated by the text since Ctesias makes clear that he is describing people (they speak Indian and share their customs, serve in the king’s army and are just). Malte-Brun (1819 p. 351-358) offers a slightly more plausible suggestion with the Ainu tribe from the Kuril Islands northeast of Japan who had full beards never shaving after a certain age. However, their location northeast of Japan is far too removed from the area of India described by Ctesias and it is highly doubtful he ever spoke to anyone who had come into contact with these people of the Far East. Similarly, Mund-Dopchie and Vanbaelen (1989 p. 215 n. 37) propose the inhabitants of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal who, located east of the Indian subcontinent, are likewise too far distant from the area in question. Without elaborating, Kumar (1974 p. 239) identifies them with the Gonda tribe of Madhya Pradesh near the Vindhya range who are of short stature. Moreover, like the Pygmies they raise cattle and their location in central India conforms to Ctesias’ statement that they lived ‘in the middle of India’.

**Their penises are so large that they reach their ankles:** This conforms well to the Greek idea of monstrous beings where sizes tend to be extreme. The Pygmies are extremely small but still have extremely large penises. Thus nothing is moderate at the confines of the world.

**Their sheep are like lambs...:** Cf. Arist. *Pr.* 892a On raising pygmie-sized animals.

**They hunt hare and fox ... with ravens, kites, crows, and eagles:** Cf. F45g and note where it is made clear that this is not a reference to the Pygmies but to the Indians in general; This is the earliest testimony of falconry in western literature. Its first attestation is in Mesopotamia where it was practiced possibly as early as Sargon II (cf. Salonen 1973 p. 184, 207). The absence of falconry in Xenophon’s *Cynegeticus* suggests that it was no longer practiced in



the Achaemenid period. Oppenheim (1985 p. 579-580) argues that the Persian official called the *ša ana muḥḥi iššurī ša šarri* ('he who is in charge of the king's birds') oversaw the maintenance of the king's falcons rather than that of his poultry. However, since there is no other evidence that falconry was still practiced in the Achaemenid period, this is a tenuous argument. If the king hunted with falcons we could hardly expect Ctesias to attribute the art to the Indians without mentioning that the Persian king employed the custom as well. The art may have been practiced in northwest India during the time of Ctesias. A passage in Pānini (6.3.71) makes a possible reference to falconry (although Karttunen 1981 p. 106-107 admits it is vague) indicating that it was likely known in this period (cf. Karttunen 1989 p. 160-163 for a full discussion of the Indian evidence). The accuracy of Ctesias' testimony strongly supports this contention (see note on F45g). Eagles are still used for hunting in Asia (cf. Le Coq 1914) and the similarity of kites to other species of hawks as birds of prey make them a plausible candidate as well. Pliny (*N.H.* 10.60.124) refers to the use of ravens in hunting and their similarity to crows should not exclude the possibility that attempts were made to use the latter as well. On falconry in the ancient world see the studies of Lindner (1973) and Vögele (1931).

**800 stades:** ca. 142 km

**they also use sesame oil:** Oils of various types and fantastic properties are prevalent in the *Indika* (cf. §42, 46 nd 47; F45i  $\alpha$ - $\gamma$ ; F45r). The Indians in fact used various types of oils for numerous applications. They used sesame and mustard oil in cooking (cf. Auboyer 1965 p. 196; see also F45i $\beta$ ), but sesame was (and continues to be) the most common type of oil used (cf. Auboyer *op. cit.* p. 30; Ball 1885 p. 340-341). They also used oils in the worship of *yakṣas*, nature spirits, by rubbing oils on the trunks of their trees (cf. Auboyer *op. cit.* p. 154). Certain tribes of India used oil for anointing themselves (cf. *Mbh* 8.30.15-18; see also §42 nad §47) and they may have derived some medicinal benefit from it. The ancient Indian surgeon Suśruta (*Cikitsāsth* 24) speaks of the virtues of anointing oneself with oil.

**they say the mines in Bactria are deeper:** Bactrian merchants likely made up a large portion of Ctesias' sources, as seems to be the case here (See introduction for a full discussion).

**the Paktolos River:** located in modern Turkey, the river flows from Mt. Tmolos and through Sardis. It produced gold (cf. Hdt. 5.101) which was mined and became the lifeblood of the Lydian economy (see Young 1972 who describes the unique qualities of the gold from this river).

**where the griffins live:** Cf. 45h; The passage of the gold-guarding griffins bears a striking resemblance to Herodotus' description of the gold-digging ants (3.102-105; Ball 1885 p. 281-282 identifies both the griffins and the ants with the Tibetan Mastiff). However, gold-guarding griffins were not unknown to Herodotus, who relates an account of Aristeas of Proconnesus (on whom see the study of Bolton 1962) describing the gold-guarding griffins beyond the one-eyed Arimaspians (4.13 and 27; 3.116). However, it is doubtful that Ctesias is merely combining elements from several Herodotean anecdotes to fabricate a new legend (as Bolton *op. cit.* p. 65 suggests). Ctesias seems to be relating an Eastern tradition, one different from which Herodotus gives. Herodotus tells us he obtained his information on the ants from Persians and it is impossible to ascertain the source of Aristeas since his work is lost. The reference to Bactria implies that Ctesias is using a Bactrian source (See Introduction on this matter).

Although in India the griffin appears to have been a late import from the Achaemenids or Hellenistic Greeks (cf. Karttunen 1989 p. 177), it was well known in Mesopotamia (see the studies of Bisi 1964 and 1965) and Bactria (cf. Sariandi 1988 p. 1284-1285) frequently appearing in iconography. The figures appeared either with lion-heads (cf. Goldman 1960) or bird-heads with the former being far more common (cf. Bisi 1964). Although Ctesias describes the bird-headed griffin which is more common to Greece and differing from the Achaemenid royal griffin which always had the head of a lion, he appears to have been influenced by Iranian traditions. Both his griffins and the Achaemenid royal griffins share the common trait of being guardians. Moreover, the motif of the gold-guarding creature appears in Iranian traditions in the form of the giant bird *Sēnmurv/Sītmurg* who guarded a treasure from its mountain lair (cf. Schmidt 1980). Ctesias then may have been told of lion-headed griffins (bird-headed griffins are absent from Bactrian art in his time) and simply retold the story in Greek fashion and described the griffin to be more recognizable to his Greek audience (see note on F45h for influence of artistic representations on his description of the griffin).

**The sheep and goats of the Indians:** Cf. F45ia-γ; Although fat-tailed sheep are absent from Indian literature (cf. Karttunen 1989 p. 167-168), they are commonly found today in Western India, Pakistan and Afghanistan where they are called *dumbas* (cf. Wilson 1836 p. 46; Ball 1885 p. 286) and there is no reason to believe they did not exist in these regions in Ctesias' time (as Karttunen suggests). The sheep inhabited Arabia early on (cf. Hdt. 3.113), were depicted in Sumerian art as early as the fourth millennium (cf. Anati 1968 p.1), and may have been mentioned in the Old Testament (*Lev. 3:9* though the reference is vague). Since sheep, featuring prominently in the *Indika* (§42; see also §22), evidently played a vital role in the livelihood of the inhabitants of the Indus and northwest India, it is plausible that this breed of sheep reached the Indus valley by Ctesias' day.

**There is no swine:** Cf. F45ka-δ; Hdt.4.192 who makes the same statement about Lybia. This statement is untrue since swine are well attested in Indian literature (e.g. *SB* 12.4.1.4) and even appear in a religious context since one of the avatars of Vishnu is a boar called the *Varāha-Avatāra*. Today certain parts of India have no wild boars and large segments of the population abhor the pig, even banning them from being raised in villages. However, in other regions pigs are kept and some Hindus eat wild boar (cf. Ball 1885 p. 286 who also notes that fossil remains of pigs prove that they were not a later importation into the region). Ctesias may have misunderstood his informant or simply obtained false information (possibly from Scylax – see Introduction).

**The palms in India:** The date palm (*Phoenix dactylifera*) is the most common palm in the Indus valley (cf. Ball 1885 p. 336; see *WOI* s.v. 'Phoenix' for a full description). However, the large fruit of the tree indicates that the tree in question is likely the coconut palm (*Cocos nucifera* – see *WOI* s.v. 'Cocos'; cf. Lassen 1874 vol. 2 p. 645) which is common in the southern portion of the Indian subcontinent but found as far north as Bombay. It is possible that Ctesias may have seen the coconut first hand from a traveler since even today it remains an important trade commodity for the Indians.

**there is a river of honey:** The image of flowing honey is also found in Indian literature. The *Rāmāyana* (4.43.1-62) gives a vivid description of the mythical land Uttarakuru where flows milk and honey. The image of freely flowing honey was common in Eastern literature when describing a paradise (cf. the famous passage of *Exodus* 3:17). This accords well with

Ctesias' utopian view of India and he may be simply following an Eastern topos to describe a blissful locale.

**He speaks at length about the just nature of the Indians...:** Cf. note on §16.

**The king uses this when he wants to discover the truth in allegations:** The use of truth serum to force the guilty to confess is attested elsewhere. According to the 5<sup>th</sup> century Chinese pilgrim Fahien, in Udjāna, a land in north Peshāwar west of the Indus in modern Pakistan, the inhabitants employed a truth serum when guilt was in doubt in order to force a confession from the guilty (cf. Lassen 1874 vol. 2 p. 654). The practice may have appeared in Hindu sources as well (cf. Kumar (1974 p. 240). According to Pliny (*N.H.* 24.102), certain Indians used the root of a plant called the *achaemenis* which when taken by day would cause the guilty to be tormented at night by vengeful deities. On the administration of justice by the Indian king see Auboyer 1965 p. 52.

**The Indians do not suffer from headaches...:** It was a common topos to describe peoples at the fringes of the world or from an earlier age as experiencing extreme longevity and freedom from illness. According to Herodotus (3.23), the Ethiopians live up to 120 years (cf. F45kε; once again Ctesias is giving an account more exaggerated than his predecessor no doubt in attempt to impress his audience). Similar attributes were given to men remote in chronology as well as geography. Men of the mythical Golden Age who were earliest chronologically were likewise free from illness (Hes. *WD* 92). Such concepts were also common in Eastern literature as testified by the story of *Genesis* where the first humans lived blissfully in Eden. Furthermore, the generations of Adam (*Gen.* 5) enjoyed extreme longevity living upwards of 900 years (see also the utopia described in the *Book of Isaiah* 65:17-25). In Hindu literature, the four Ages of Man as described by Hesiod have a parallel in the Four Yugas. In the *Krita Yuga*, also known as the *Satya Yuga*, which corresponds to Hesiod's Golden Age, men lived without disease, aging, evil, or even toil as the earth provided whatever bounty was needed (*MBh* 1:144). Ctesias differs from the rest of these accounts in the detail he gives regarding the illnesses, which should come as no surprise considering his profession as a physician (cf. Nichols *forthcoming?*; Tuplin 2004). However, the very specific nature of his list of diseases seems to imply the result of an enquiry rather than simply trying to one-up his predecessors and show off his knowledge of medicine. He never says that the Indians live free of disease, rather free of these specific diseases. Perhaps these were ailments which he frequently treated at the Persian court and asked his visitors from India what sort of remedies they had for them only to find out that they had no experience with these problems. If this is the case, then this passage provides valuable insight what Ctesias may have discussed with visitors to the court. It shows that he was not just interested in marvels and romantic tales. It also may shed light on some of the common ailments with which Persians were afflicted.

**There lives in these parts a serpent:** Cf. F45l; While this species of snake cannot be identified, the description given here, though perhaps not accurate, is not fantastic. The characteristics of the snake could be applied to several species of snake. Its small size (ca. 22 cm in length) is similar to the highly venomous saw-scaled viper which inhabits the Thar Desert and grows to an average of 30 cm. The act of 'vomiting' its venom is also confirmed in several species of spitting cobras which are known to spit venom into the eyes of a predator. While no species of spitting cobra lives in India today, several species inhabit Indonesia and Malaysia (e.g. golden spitting cobra - *Naja sumatrana*) and Thailand (e.g. Black and White spitting Cobra - *Naja siamensis*). The assertion that Ctesias' snake has no

teeth may stem from a misunderstanding from the fact that spitting snakes do not use fangs to inject their venom as most other snakes do. Since the cobra is one of the most prevalent snakes throughout India and Pakistan, it is possible that some species of spitting cobra now extinct or removed was known to the inhabitants of India at that time.

**When a sesame-seed size droplet of the poison...:** The precision Ctesias uses in discussing the manner of death caused by the poison again reflects his profession as a physician and may reflect the sort of enquiries he made to visitors at the Persian court (see note above).

**There is a bird called the *dikairon*:** Cf. F45m; This animal has been identified as the dung beetle (*Scaraboeus sacer*) and its dung pellets as *charas*, a hand-made resinous extract from *Cannabis sativa* (cf. Ball 1885 p. 310-311). The first part of this identification is difficult to accept since the dung beetle in no way resembles a bird and apart from burying its feces, it shares no attributes with the *dikairon*. Moreover, Ball's attempt to connect the name to the Arabic word *zikairon* ('concealer') is a stretch. However, the identification of its excrement with *charas* is plausible. Although at first glance opium would seem a better suggestion, the substance was not introduced into India until much later (cf. Lassen 1874 vol. 2 p. 652). *Charas* is often found in small balls which could easily be mistaken for dung pellets. Moreover, the idea of being 'deprived of one's senses' and the euphoric feeling of 'forgetting one's troubles' (see F45m) are compatible with descriptions of *charas*, with the obvious exception that it does not cause death when ingested in small amounts. Since the dung of the *dikairon* was given both to the Persian king and his mother (F45m), it is likely that Ctesias had seen the substance firsthand and was told a fanciful story about its origins and potency. See also James (1887) who connects this bird with the *Dikaiois* bird which appears in the Sahidic Acts of Andrew and Paul.

**There is a tree called the *parebon*:** Cf. F45n $\alpha$ - $\beta$ ; Identified with the *pîpal* tree (*Ficus religiosa*) which though common in the tropical parts of India, is only grown in gardens in the northern part of the country. Its figs are very small and may have gone unnoticed while its roots are often visible at the ground's surface some distance from the trunk of the tree. As it is sacred to the Hindus, idols and metal offerings are often placed around the trunk thus accounting for its 'magnetic' properties (a much more plausible explanation than Lassen 1874 vol. 2 p. 647 who argues that the root was used as a divining rod). Furthermore, the juice of the stem of the tree is often used to make birdlime in order to trap birds thus enhancing the trees 'magnetic' properties. Finally, the seeds are said to be alterative while the leaves and shoots are used as a purgative (cf. Ball 1885 p. 336-337).

**a span:** ca. 22cm

**a cubit:** ca. 44cm

**a chous of water:** ca. 3.25L

**This is given as a remedy for bowel irritation:** Once again the physician in Ctesias is a apparent (see note above).

**two stades wide:** ca. 371m

**the *Hyparchos*:** Cf. F45o, F45o $\beta$ ; Also called *Hypobarus* (F45o) and *Spabarus* (F45o $\beta$ ). The latter form of the name is most often accepted as the closest to the original corresponding with the OP *Vispabara* ('bearing all things') and possibly coming into Greek as 'Υσπάβαρος (cf. Shulze apud Maas 1924; Karttunen 1989 p. 184 n. 227). It seems likely that either Photius himself or a later editor of his text 'corrected' the foreign name to the familiar Greek word for lieutenant governor. Since the name has no corresponding Sanskrit

term, Ctesias likely heard a Persian translation of an Indian name as occurred with the *martichora* (see note above; cf. Lassen 1874 vol. 2 p. 563; Johnston 1942 p. 32-35).

The river was often identified with the Ganges (cf. Lassen *op. cit.* p. 563 and p. 658-559; Kiessling 1916 col. 329-330; Johnston *op. cit.*; but see the criticisms of such an identification by Karttunen 1989 p. 83-84 and p. 184 n. 227) since it flows to the east (F450α). However, Schafer (1964 p. 499) identifies the river as the *Dr̥ṣadvāti*, a small tributary of the *Sarasvāti* which according to Schafer was the most important river in epic India. Levi (1904 p. 83 followed by Andre and Filiozat 1986 p. 370) proposes the Swat (called *Suvāstu* in vedic writings) which flows through Afghanistan.

**the siptachora:** Cf. F450, F450β, F450γ; Also called the *psitthachora* (F450) and the *zetachora* (F450β). The form of the name given by Photius is preferable if one is to accept the etymology of the name given by Tyschen (as cited in McCrindle 1881 p. 301 n. 60 and Lassen 1874 vol. 2 p. 645 n. 1) who correlates the name to the Persian *shiftekhōr* ‘agreeable to eat’ (for an analysis of the name see Johnston 1942 p. 31-32). Regarding its identification, Ball (1885 p. 310 and 337-338) proposes that Ctesias’ tree was based on the properties of two separate trees from the same region which were combined into one. He suggests that the *khusum* (*Schleichera trijuga*) which is a common producer of shell-lac (see note below), was confused with the *mahwwā* (*Bassia latifolia*) whose dried flowers are used both as food and to distill into an alcoholic beverage. Lenfant (2004 p. 312 n. 854) gives the more plausible suggestion of the Indian Jujube (*Zizyphus mauritiana*) or the Banyan (*Ficus Indica*; both of these species were mentioned by Ball but for some reason left unexplored). Both species of trees produce shell-lac, host lac insects and produce fruit which is dried and eaten. However, another plausible candidate is the hitherto ignored *Ficus glomerata* which, like other figs, produces its edible fruit in clusters which are often eaten dehydrated, produces latex and is a host of the Indian lac insect. Moreover, it is found throughout India often ‘along the banks of streams and the sides of ravines’ (cf. *WOI s.v.* ‘F. glomerata’).

**the amber:** Since India does not produce any amber (cf. McCrindle 1881 p. 301 n. 61), this substance has been identified with the shell-lac secreted by the Indian lac insects (see below) which often dwell on various species of trees (See Ball 1885 p. 309). Lassen (1874 p. 644-645) suggests that it comes from gum exuding from the trees (see also Johnston 1942 p. 30-31 who likens the substance to the Manna exuding from certain species of pine). Lassen’s assertion can be corroborated by the latex exuding from various species of ficus (see above).

**the nuts from Pontus:** i.e. hazelnuts.

**men who have the head of a dog:** Cf. F450β, F450γ; There are several earlier references to Cynocephaloi in Greek literature, however Ctesias gives the first detailed description of them. Hesiod (WD ) refers to the ‘Half-dogs’ but apart from having canine attributes, nothing suggests that they are related to the Cynocephaloi. Herodotus (4.191), possibly following Hecataeus, makes passing reference to Cynocephaloi living in Lybia. However, he may have been relating an African account created to explain the dog-headed figures which appear on numerous rock engravings (cf. Karttunen 1984 p. 34) or perhaps be describing monkeys (cf. Marquart 1913 p. 203) since the term was soon after used for baboons (cf. Ar. *Eq.* 415-416; Arist. *H.A.* 2.8.502a). In any case, they bear no relationship to the Cynocephaloi of India. A fragment of Aeschylus (apud Strab. 1.2.35) refers to Cynocephaloi (see also Strab. 16.4.14), but this may be a reference to the same Cynocephaloi of Herodotus. The Cynocephaloi of Ctesias can be corroborated with Indian sources. In several of the Purānas there is mention of *śunāmuhka* corresponding to the Cynocephaloi (cf.

Karttunen 1989 p. 181-182 who adds several citations to Lassen's original). Moreover, the *śvapāka*, a low caste of Indian society whose name means 'dog-eaters' have been associated with the Ctesianic Cynocephaloi (cf. Wecker 1925 col. 26), however the derogatory nature of this term given to members of the lower class does not agree with Ctesias' positive description of the Cynocephaloi. There are also Chinese accounts referring to Dog-heads which, although of a later date, share some characteristics with Ctesias and the Indian accounts (cf. Lindegger 1982 p. 57-62). Various attempts have been made to identify this tribe of people. Shaefer (1964), who identifies them with the Kauravas, the heroic tribe found in the *Mahābhārata*, has found few adherents (see also Lévi 1904 p. 83 and Lindegger *op. it.* p. 55 who both see them as Tibetan). Lassen (1874 p. 659-661; followed by Wecker) more plausibly suggests that they were a tribe in the Himalayas of black aborigines of non-Aryan stock as evidenced by their foreign language (here referred to as 'barking'), black skin, and shepherding lifestyle (cf. Karttunen 1989 p. 183; see also *Mhb* 8.8 on the keeping of sheep by peoples of northwest India). White (1991 p. 28-29, 48-50, 71) argues against any identification suggesting instead that that Ctesias was simply reporting Indian mythology as ethnography.

**Kalystrioi:** While this name does not appear to reflect any known Sanskrit or Iranian word, numerous attempts have been made to find its origin. Reese (1914 p. 85-86 n.1) attempts to connect the name to *kaluṣa* (misprinted as *kaluṭa* – cf. Karttunen 1989 p. 184 n. 234) meaning 'unclean'. Schafer (1964 p. 499-500) sees a corruption of Kurukṣetra, the kingdom described in the *Mahābhārata* belonging to the Kauravas whom he argues was the object of Ctesias' account, and *kukura*, the term for 'dog'. Lindegger (1982) connecting the name to the Kallatai, the tribe of Indian cannibals mentioned by Herodotus (3.38) proposes both *kālīstrīya* (p. 53) meaning 'black women', and *kauleyaśrita* (p. 108 n. 1) meaning 'dog-shaped'. Marquart (1913 p. CCVIII-CCIV, followed by White 1991 p. 233 n. 11) sees the name as a transliteration of the OP *\*sa-dauxstr* from the Sanskrit *śva-duhitṛ* 'milker of dogs'. However, this last suggestion requires the unnecessary correction of the Greek text giving them the name Σαδύστριοι (On the Cynamolgoi see F46a and F46b).

**crimson blossom:** Identified with the *dhāvā* tree (also known as *Grislea tomentosa* or *Woodfordia fruticosa*) whose petals are used to make a red dye. The tree is native to Northwest India and Pakistan.

**There are animals there the size of the Cantharus beetle:** Most likely the lac insect (*Laccifer lacca*, formerly known as the *Coccus lacca*; cf. Ball 1885 p. 310). The lac insect is found on over 100 species of host plant throughout India where it is cultivated and exported for its dye. Among the host trees of the lac insect include the *Ziziphus mauritiana*, *Ziziphus jujuba*, and various species of the *Ficus* (cf. *WOI* s.v. 'Lac and Lac Insect'), including the *Ficus glomerata* (see note above).

**the pests that destroy the vines in Greece:** Crop-destroying insects were a cause of serious concern for the Greeks who were known to rub bear fat on their vines to prevent infestation (cf. *Gp.* 5.30; see also *Luc. Ep. Sat.* 26; *Gal.* 6.572, 12.17, 14.290).

**the king of the Indians:** As Ctesias was writing before Chandragupta unified most of the subcontinent and founded the Maurya Empire (323 B.C.E.), it is unclear which king he means when mentioning the 'king of the Indians' (although Shaefer 1964 p. 501 considers this to be the Kuru kings who were the dominant power in the *Mahābhārata*). The northwestern part of the country was ruled by several smaller kingdoms called Janapadas (or Mahajanapadas in Buddhist texts such as the *Anguttara Nikaya*). The two Janapadas in the

northwest part of the country known as Uttarapatha were the Kumbhajaras and Gandharas (see for example *P* 4.1.168-175) both of whom were allies of the Kurus in the epic war of the *Mahābhārata*. As both kingdoms were contemporary to Ctesias, either one could be his 'king of the Indians'.

**cotton garments:** Ctesias actually uses the term 'garments made from trees'. The clothes of the 5<sup>th</sup> century Greeks were made of wool and other fabrics from animals while cotton was isolated to the East. The Greeks seem to have viewed such fabrics made from trees with wonder (cf. *Hdt.* 3.106). Ctesias also informs us that the Pygmies wore such fabrics.

**Every fifth year the king gives them a gift:** It is unclear why the king gives them a gift of martial weapons if they are 'unfamiliar with war'. This inconsistency is more likely the result of Photius' methods of summarization than a reflection of the original which may have provided a more detailed explanation of these gifts.

**they are fast runners:** Cf. F12 where the Choramnaians hunt in similar fashion.

**anoint their bodies three times per month with the oil from milk:** According to Henry (1947 p. 99 n. 37), this a reference to melted or clarified butter which is melted down to produce ghee. According to the *Laws of Manu* (2.29; 3.274; 5.37 et al), it is often used in sacred Indian rituals (cf. Lindegger 1982 p. 111 n.1 on the use of butter by the Tibetans).

**They fornicate with their women on all fours like dogs:** The idea of copulating *a tergo* ('like dogs') was not a source of amazement for the Greeks who regularly employed such positions (See *Erotica*). Rather the source of amazement for them is that the Cynocephaloi only fornicate in this manner which gives them yet another canine characteristic.

**They are just men who enjoy the greatest longevity:** Cf. §32 and note.

**another race lives beyond these people:** Cf. F46, F46b and note.

**drink only milk:** The *Mahābhārata* (8.30) describes people in the northwest region of the country who, having obscene customs, drank all types of milk and ate impure food from foul containers ('licked by dogs'). Such stories likely formed the basis for Ctesias' account.

**There are wild asses in India...:** Cf. F45q; Ctesias gives the earliest western account of the unicorn (cf. Shepard 1930 p. 26-33) and his description has continued to influence artists' renditions of the mythical beast up to the present day. Herodotus (4.191) mentions horned asses living in western Lybia but his use of the plural (κέρεια) indicates they were not unicorns. Several elements of Ctesias' description, including the alexipharmic powers of the horn (see note below), indicate an Eastern origin for his account (cf. Karttunen 1989 168-179; Briggs 1931). While several suggestions have been made as to the origin of this creature (for example Trotter 1908 suggests that the animal is based on an Indian antelope called the Nilghai, *Boselaphus tragocamelus*), it is generally accepted that the Indian rhinoceros (*Rhinoceros unicornis*) forms the basis for the unicorn of Ctesias (cf. Ball 1885 p. 284-285; Lassen 1874 vol.2 p. 650-652; Karttunen *op. cit.*; Briggs *op. cit.*, et al; doubted by McCrindle 1881 p. 303 n. 74). Although now mostly found in northeast India up to Nepal (cf. Jerdon 1867 p. 233), rhinoceroses once inhabited the northwest from the Himalayas to Peshāwar. As late as the sixteenth century (1519), Babar hunted rhinos near the Indus (quoted in Briggs *op. cit.* p. 279). The proposal of Shepard (*op. cit.*) that Ctesias is relating an account based on a confusion of the characteristics of the Indian rhinoceros with those of the wild ass and of the Tibetan antelope (*Antbolos Hodgsoni*) has won few adherents. However, there is some plausibility to this since rhinos are not known to bite or kick when fighting as asses and antelopes do.

**They have a white body...:** The fantastic colors of this animal are difficult to explain. Ball (1885 p. 285) suggests that Ctesias is describing a domesticated rhino which was whitewashed and its head painted with cosmetic pigments in order to take part in some pageant or event, as the Indians still do today with elephants. Shepard (1931 p. 28-30) offers the more likely suggestion that Ctesias' description was influenced by a work of art. The exportation of dyed fragments is indicated elsewhere in the *Indika* (e.g. §39) so the hypothesis that Ctesias may have seen an Indian garment with a colorful depiction of a unicorn is highly plausible (see also the view of Eastman 1906 p. 195 that Ctesias was looking at animal reliefs of a ruminant in profile on the palace walls at Persepolis; cf. Briggs 1931 p. 276-277 on the representations of unicorns in Mesopotamia). Such a depiction may also have resulted in his referring to the animal as asinine (however he may have been just trying to equate the animal to something more familiar as the Greeks occasionally did. The hippopotamus, 'river-horse', bears no more resemblance to an equine than the rhinoceros does to an ass). Regarding the horn, Ctesias may still be describing an image seen on a work of art or he may have seen firsthand a cup fashioned from a rhinoceros horn painted with three bands of colors (see note below) since we know he had seen an astragalus from the same animal. After seeing firsthand such colorful creatures as the parrot (see note above), one can see how Ctesias would readily accept that there were other animals similarly colored with brilliant hues in this remote land.

**one and a half cubits in length:** ca. 66 cm; for the reading cf. F45q.

**whoever drinks from the horn...:** Cups fashioned from rhinoceros horns have a long history of medicinal use. It was used in China for medicinal purposes probably even before Ctesias' time (cf. Shepard 1931 p.28; Laufer 1914 p. 75). While there is no evidence that the ancient Indians themselves used the horn medicinally (although Philostr. VA 3.2.1 says that the Indian kings drank from such cups as protection against poison, but he is likely just reinterpreting Ctesias), natives of India as recent as the 19<sup>th</sup> century drank from such cups as an antidote to poison (cf. Ball 1885 p. 285). By the sixteenth century, rhinoceros horns were sought after in Europe as a preventative to disease (cf. Briggs 1931 p. 277). Ancient inhabitants of the northwest region may have exported cups made from the horn to China for such purposes and thus were familiar with their beliefs regarding its power. In any case, it is apparent that Ctesias is relating a genuine Eastern tradition (cf. Karttunen 1989 p. 168-169).

**the holy sickness:** The Greek term for epilepsy.

**The astragalus:** i.e. the ankle-bone. Ctesias' statement regarding the lack of astragaloi in solid-hoofed animals is incorrect. It seems that Ctesias had seen a specimen which was painted red and weighted to be used as an amulet or decorative ornament (cf. Ball 1885 p. 285). Although its exact function is unknown, Ctesias clearly stresses the importance of the object. In the west, the astragalus was used to make dice which perhaps is why Aelian (F45q) claims they were black (Shepard 1931 p. 35-36).

**Their flesh is inedible on account of its bitterness:** The flesh of the rhinoceros was used by the Indians in rituals. According to Manu (3.272), the flesh of the rhinoceros is offered to the Manes and it produces satisfaction for endless time (cf. Briggs 1931 p. 289). It is possible that the Indians offered food they found inedible to the gods in the same way the Greeks offered bones and fat in reference to the Prometheus myth. Its meat was used medicinally to ward off cough, promote long life and help the liver (cf. Karttunen 1989 p. 169).

**there is a worm...:** Cf. §3 and note; often identified with the crocodile (cf. Baehr 1824 p. 335; Ball 1885 p. 306-308). To be sure, the eating habits of the creature described as well as



the methods of catching it accurately correlate to the crocodile. However, the Indus worm, which is clearly of a serpentine nature, hardly resembles a crocodile. Furthermore, there is no sound explanation for the poison produced by the worm if the crocodile is meant (Ball's identification of the substance with petroleum from the Punjab is unconvincing). The source of Ctesias' worm may instead lay in the realm of Indian mythology rather than zoology since the worship of snakes was of particular importance in the northwest (cf. Lassen 1874 vol. 2 p. 647). Nāgas were a race of supernatural beings usually depicted as snakes who were capable of issuing forth a blast of fire from their nostrils (see the study of Vogel 1926). Śeṣa, the king of the Nāgas who is said to have held the world (*Mhb* 1.36) and who often appears as the avatar Balarāma, is described as a white serpent. Philstratus (VA 3.1), who is clearly following Ctesias (cf. Reese 1914 p. 90-91), describes the Indus worm as white. Moreover, in the *Harivamśa-Purāna*, Śeṣa is seen hanging from a tree with *kālakūṭa* poison flowing from its mouth which burns the earth. Thus, it is quite plausible that the Indus worm is in fact Śeṣa and Ctesias is relating a tradition from the northwest now lost (cf. Karttunen 1989 p. 190-192). A tradition of Śeṣa localised to the northwest would also explain the depiction of the worm as an aquatic animal and its attributes of the crocodile since the latter was a much feared beast in those parts.

**seven cubits:** ca. 3.25 m

**ten attic *kotylae*:** ca. 2.7 L

**the *karpion*:** McCrindle (1881 p. 303 n. 81) connects this term to the Tamil-Malayām word *karrupu* or *kârppu* used to describe cinnamon oil. He identifies them both with Sanskrit term for camphor, *karpūra* (cf. Lassen 1874 vol. 2 p. 564-566 who also identifies the substance as cinnamon oil). Camphor is obtained from a species of laurel (*Cinnamomum camphora*). This hypothesis is made even more plausible by the fact that some forms of *C. camphora* do not produce camphor but only an aromatic oil, such as that described by Ctesias (cf. *WOI s.v.* 'cinnamomum'). However, this tree was not found in India in Ctesias' time, although about 20 species of *C. camphora* are now grown in various parts of India which were introduced from the Far East. It is possible, though unlikely, that a vial of camphor oil reached Ctesias from the Far East. Ball (1885 p. 339) plausibly contends that Ctesias, or his source, has combined the characteristics of a species of laurel (*Laurus cinnamomum*) with those of the screw pine (*Pandanus odoratissimus*). The latter species more closely corresponds to the palm-like characteristics of the *karpion* and its leaves are distilled to create a perfume called *keorâ*.

**five stades:** ca. 877 m

**their cheese and wine:** While the grapevine was not introduced to the Indian subcontinent until much later, grapes were cultivated in the northwest region since antiquity. Greek sources speak of a cult of Dionysus (on whom see Karttunen 1989 p. 212-219; Dahlaquist 1996 p. 270-276) at Nysa near a Mt. Meros (cf. Megasth. *FGrH* 715 F4 §38.4; Arr. *Anab.* 5.2.6; Strab. 15.1.8 mentions the grapes from Mt. Meros). Although Mt. Meros cannot be identified with certainty, it is clear that it belongs in the northwest region, perhaps the Hindu-Kush (see the study of Dahlaquist *op. cit.* p. 270-272). According to the *Arthaśāstra* (2.25), wine originated in the northwest and in Chinese sources it seems that among the northwestern provinces the Nuristani, located on the southern slopes of the Hindu-Kush, were especially known for their wine (cf. Laufer 1919 p. 220; on the wine of the northwest and India see Karttunen *op. cit.* p. 207-210).

It equally possible that what Ctesias tasted was in fact palm wine fermented from the fruit of the Palmyra palm which grows abundantly around the Indus delta.

**five *orgyia*:** 5 fathoms or ca. 9 m

**three cubits:** ca 1.4 m

**three *orgyia*:** 3 fathoms or ca. 5.5 m

**In Indian it is called the *Ballade* which in Greek means 'useful':** Cf. F45s  $\alpha$ - $\beta$ ; According to Lassen (1874 vol. 2 p. 654), the spring's name comes from the Sanskrit term *baladâ* meaning 'strength-giving'. Lindegger (1982 p. 75 n. 4) while acknowledging the possibility of this claim, suggests that the name may also come from the Sanskrit term *bâlyadâ* meaning 'youth-giving'. Lenfant (2004 p. 318 n. 883) following Fussman claims that these are fabricated terms and therefore Ctesias is not relating a genuine Indian term. However, *balada* is a partiple of a term found in the *Agni Gr̥ihyâs* and the *Mahâbhârata* meaning 'strength-giving'. The term is also used to describe a bullock and a medicinal plant, the *Physalis Flexuosa* (cf. Monier-Williams s.v. 'balada'; see also McCrindle 1881 p. 304 n. 84). The medicinal benefits of the spring indicate the Indians discovery of the therapeutic aspects of mineral springs.

**where the reed grows:** Cf. §14

**there is a tribe of men numbering 30,000...:** Cf. F45t, F52 where it is noted they are called the Pandarae (see note). The resume of Photius is a little confused as it seems to imply that the long-eared people known as the *Otoliknoi* (on whom see note below) are the same as the Pandarae, also known as the *Henotiktontes* ('those who give birth once'; cf. Megasth. *FGrH* 715 F27a-b) whereas Pliny and Tzetzes show that this is not the case. Clearly, Ctesias described two separate tribes which Photius hastily summarized into what seems to be one tribe. Ctesias' testimony is corroborated by Indian sources as well. The *Henotiktontes* are found in Sanskrit literature as *Ekagarbha* (cf. Lassen 1874 vol. 2 p. 656 n. 1). The name Pandarae is connected to the term *pândara* (OIA) meaning 'white' (cf. Karttunen 1989 p. 207).

**they have ears big enough to cover their arms:** Cf. Megasth. *FGrH* 715 F27a-b who calls them Enotokoitai. In the *Mahâbhârata* (2.28.44; 6.47.13) there is a race of long-eared people known as the *Karnaprâvarana* meaning 'the people who cover themselves with their ears' (cf. André and Filliozat 1986 p. 355-356 n. 121; Lassen 1874 vol. 2 p. 656 n. 1). The Indians often held the view that barbarous tribes had long ears. Thus the Indian sources mention other similar races such as the *Ushtrakarnâs* ('camel-eared'), the *Oshthakarnâs* (those who have ears close to their lips) and *Pânikarnâs* (people who have hands for ears; cf. Wittkower 1942 p. 164). The *Ramâyana* (4.40) mentions them along with the several other fabulous races like the One-Footed men (as Scylax also seems to do – cf. F51b). These long-eared people have been identified with Indian tribes from the hills who practiced ear distension (cf. McCrindle 2000 p. 74 and note). On the tribes of long-eared people in literature see the study of Kirtley (1963).

**he personally saw some of the things he wrote about while others he heard from first-hand witnesses:** This line is parodied by Lucian (*V.H.* 1.2-4 = T11h). This passage clearly indicates that while Ctesias relates many accounts which can be found in Indian literature, he acquired all of his information by autopsy and from oral reports. Visitors from India likely told him of peoples and things taken from their great epics (See Introduction for a full discussion of Ctesias' sources).

- **F45a) the Indus River at its most narrow point is 40 stades across:** Cf. F45 §1 and note.

- **F45bα) war elephants:** Cf. F45 §7 and note, F1b §16 and note;

**an Indian mahout:** There is no reason to doubt that Aelian is directly following Ctesias here. The presence of an Indian mahout is further evidence that Ctesias encountered several Indians at the Persian court and obtained some of his information on India directly from the Indians themselves (See Introduction for full discussion). It is likely that the elephants Ctesias saw were gifts sent to the Persian king by the Indians. The fact that these elephants came with an Indian trainer shows that the Persians themselves had very little experience in keeping elephants and that the beasts were probably a curiosity for them as well. In any case they certainly did not make much use of them in combat (see F9 §7 on the use of elephants against Cyrus by the Indians who were fighting with the Derbikes; cf. Goukowski 1972 p. 475).

**There are huge roosters:** Cf. F45 §8; On the inclusion of this fragment into the corpus of Ctesias see Lenfant 2004 n. 891. This bird has been identified with the *munâl* pheasant (*Lophophorus impeyanus*) which is native to the Himalayas. (cf. Ball 1885 p. 305; see also Lassen 1874 p. 649 n. 1). This bird is adorned with beautifully bright shades of green, blue, turquoise, red and yellow. The males (referred to as cocks) have a tall crest on the top of their heads (associated with the combs of roosters by Ctesias) which has often been compared to that of the peacock. Today, the variegated feathers of the bird are often sought after for ornamentation leading to a depletion of their stocks (cf. *WOI* s.v. ‘Birds’ sect. 5).

- **F45c) the reeds of India:** Cf. F45 §14 and note.
- **F45dα) the Martichora:** Cf. F45 §15 and note; F45dβ-δ.
- **F45dβ) In Indian it is called the Martichora:** The term is actually of Persian origin; cf. F45 §15 and note, F45dα, F45dγ, F45dδ.  
**it stretches its tail out flat like the Saka:** On the Saka see F5 §34.1 and note; The name denoted the peoples all along the northern fringes of Asia and those living north of the Black Sea. They were especially renowned for their skill with the horse (cf. F7b; Hdt. 9.71). The implication here is that the Saka while riding on horseback, were able to lay back flat with their head towards the tail of the horse and fire a bow over their heads at enemies behind them. Such a depiction of horsemanship is not implausible when one looks at the marvelous skill in equitation displayed today by the Cossacks, who it should be noted, live north of the Black Sea in an area once inhabited by the Saka.
- **F45dγ) the Martichora:** Cf. F45 §15 and note; F45dα, F45dβ, F45dδ.
- **F45dδ) amongst these same men:** i.e. the Ethiopians; Pliny misrepresents Ctesias and mistakenly places the Martichora in Ethiopia. There was much confusion between Ethiopia and India for ancient commentators who often either saw no difference between the two or transposed features from one to the other (on this confusion see Aroroa 1982; Karttunen 1989 p. 134-138).  
**the Mantichora:** Although Pliny gives the form of the name which would become the standard in the Middle Ages into the present day (Manticore), the form given by Ctesias and

reflected in the other parallel fragments more closely resembles the original Persian (see F45 §15 note for a full discussion; cf. also F45d $\alpha$ - $\gamma$ ).

- **F45e $\alpha$ ) the so-called immortal flame:** Cf. F45 §20 and note; F45e $\beta$ .
- **F45e $\beta$ ) the flame is undying:** Cf. F45 §20 and note; F45e $\alpha$ .
- **F45f $\alpha$ ) those called the Pygmies:** Cf. F45 §21 and note; F45f $\beta$ , F45f $\gamma$ .  
**cotton garments:** Cf. F45 §41 and note.  
**Throughout their childhood...:** Since this detail is omitted in the Photius excerpt, it is clear that the *Excerpta* of Constantine were likely made directly from the text of Ctesias rather than through the intermediary of Photius (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 323 n. 906).
- **F45f $\beta$ ) the Pygmies:** Cf. F45 §21 and note; F45f $\alpha$ , F45f $\gamma$ .
- **F45f $\gamma$ ) The so-called Psylloi:** Lenfant is perhaps right to include this passage in the fragments as the description of their miniscule livestock almost exactly corresponds to the account of the Pygmies livestock in the other fragments (cf. F45 §22; F45f $\alpha$ ). However, it is unclear if Aelian is using Ctesias here directly (as he certainly does elsewhere – e.g. F45g) or an intermediary, but the use of the name Psylloi cannot easily be explained. Mueller (1844 p. 94-95) cites this passage as evidence that Ctesias used both names for this tribe, with the name Pygmies being the Greek term while the Psylloi represent the Indian name of the tribe. However, the absence of the name Psylloi in two other parallel fragments clearly indicate that Ctesias never used the term. The Psylloi are frequently mentioned by other authors as inhabitants of Lybia (e.g. Hecat. *FGrH* 1 F332; Hdt. 4.173; Strab. 2.5.33) but there is never any mention of their small stature or that of their livestock. In fact, the descriptions of the Libyan Psylloi bear no resemblance to the Pygmies. Thus, the contention of Bigwood (1989 p. 309-310 n. 35) that Aelian simply confused the two is unsubstantiated since there is no sound reason for this simple confusion to occur. Moreover, Aelian explicitly says they are different from the Libyan tribe of the same name. It seems that a source after Ctesias (possibly Aelian himself) transferred the name of the Psylloi to that of the Indian Pygmies for reasons that remain unclear.
- **F45g) The Indians hunt hare and fox in the following way...:** Cf. F45 §24; The fact that Aelian says ‘the Indians’ rather than ‘Pygmies’ shows how Photius’ careless summary of the *Indika* can lead to confusion as commentators have long credited the Pygmies with use of falconry.  
**This is their method:** The method of training the birds for falconry described here is strikingly accurate and is very similar to the techniques still employed in Turkestan at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century (see the study of Lecoq 1914 p. 5-6 for a description of the modern method of training; cf. also Karttunen 1981 p. 106). The precise and accurate description of these training techniques indicates that Ctesias likely obtained his information directly from a falconer, as this could hardly have been common knowledge. He may even have been able to witness a demonstration on their training techniques since a falconer could easily have brought his bird to the Persian court. Throughout the *Indika*, Ctesias is most accurate when describing things he was able to witness firsthand (cf. his description of the

elephant [F1b §16.4; F45 §7; F45bα; F48a and b with notes] and that of the parrot [F45 §8]) while the most fantastic elements of his narrative obviously stem from oral reports.

- **F45h) the griffin is an Indian animal:** Cf. F45 §26 and note.  
**similar to what an artisan would draw:** see note on F45 §26; This statement has led some scholars to infer that Ctesias was actually describing an artistic rendition of a griffin perhaps from a Greek artifact (cf. Karttunen 1989 p. 178-179) or from Persian sculpture (cf. Jacoby 1922 col. 2038). The variegated colors of this fantastic creature makes such an assertion plausible (cf. note on F45 §45 for the possible influence of art on Ctesias' description of the unicorn).
- **F45iα) The sheep:** Cf. F45 §27 and note; F45iβ; F45iγ.  
**these men:** i.e. the Indians.  
**a cubit wide:** ca. 46 cm
- **F45iβ) the Indians have sheep...:** Cf. F45 §27 and note; F45iα; F45iγ.  
**a cubit in width:** ca. 46 cm  
**ten minae of fat... only five:** ca. 4.3 kg and 2.2 kg respectively  
**They make oil:** The Indians were very fond of cooking with oil, usually using sesame oil or mustard oil (cf. Auboyer 1965 p. 196).  
**three minae...up to four:** ca. 1.3-1.7 kg.
- **F45iγ) I hear that the goats and ewes...:** Cf. F45 §27 and note; F45iα; F45iβ. On the inclusion of this passage into the Fragments see Lenfant 2004 p. 325 n. 919.
- **F45kα) there are no swine in India:** Cf. F45 §27 and note; F45kβ; F45kγ; F45kδ;
- F45kε.
- **F45kβ) Ctesias says there are neither wild nor tame pigs in India:** Cf. F45 §27 and note; F45kα; F45kγ; F45kδ; F45kε.
- **F45kγ) there are no swine in India either tame or wild:** Cf. F45 §27 and note; F45kα; F45kβ; F45kδ; F45kε.  
**No Indian would ever eat the meat of swine:** While in certain parts of India the pig is despised, it is consumed by some Hindus (Ball 1885 p. 286 and note on F45 §27).  
**anymore than he would that of a human:** Cf. F45kδ and note.
- **F45kδ) They say that there are no swine in India:** Lenfant rightly includes this passage in the corpus of the fragments based on its similarity to F45kγ.  
**they would never eat human flesh:** In fact there is ample evidence of cannibals living in the Northwest region of the country. According to Herodotus, an Indian tribe known as the Kallataie (3.38) and another called the Padaioi (3.99) are known to eat the bodies of their parents. Pliny (*N.H.* 6.20.55) mentions a cannibalistic tribe called the *Casiri* (cf. also Megasth. *FGrH* 715 F27b who mentions a tribe of cannibals but offers no name for them). Cannibals were also known to Indian literature such as the *Nāgas* (*NīLP* 68-73) and the

*Piśācas* (*Rājat* 1.184; *NīlP* 203-214), inhabitants of the Kashmir region, and the *Rākṣasas* (See Karttunen 1989 p. 197-202 for a full discussion).

- **F45kε) this king:** Arganthonius of Gades.
- **the same assertion is made about the Indians by Ctesias:** Cf. F45 §32 and note.
- **F45l ) the snake:** Cf. F45 §33 and note.
- **F45m) The Indians call it *Dikairon... Dikaion*:** Cf. F45 §34 and note.
- **the king himself and his mother:** Artaxerxes II and Parysatis.
- **F45nα) the *parebon*:** Cf. F45 §35 and note; F45nβ.
- **F45nβ) *parebon*:** Cf. F45 §35 and note; F45α.
- **F45oα) the Hypobarus:** On the name and identification of this river see note on F45 §36; cf. F45oβ.  
**the *pitthachora*:** On the name and identification of this tree see note on F45 §36; cf. F45oβ.
- **F45oβ) the *spabaros*:** The preferred form of the name and the one most likely given by Ctesias (see note on F45 §36; cf. F45oα).  
**the *zetachora*:** Cf. F45 §36 and note; F45oα.  
**the Pontic nut:** the hazelnut.  
**who have the head of a dog...:** Cf. F45 §37 and note; F45 §40-43; F45pα-γ.  
**They eat... the raw meat from wild animals which they hunt:** Actually, Ctesias says that the Cynocephaloi cook the meat from their game in the sun (cf. F45 §40). Psellos has perhaps misunderstood the process of making a jerky out of meat and because of the absence of fire cooking viewed the product as ‘raw’ (see also Lenfant 2004 p. 326 n. 932 who rejects the idea of Maas 1924 that Psellos misread the text).
- **F45pα) a race of men with the head of a dog:** Cf. F45 §37 and note; F45 §40-43; F45pβ-γ.  
**They are armed for the hunt with talons...:** Although Ctesias mentions the talons of the Cynocephaloi (F45 §37), nowhere else in the fragments does it say they were used for hunting. In fact, Ctesias explicitly says that they hunted with bows and javelins (F45 §42). Furthermore, nowhere else in the fragments is it indicated that they specifically feasted on birds, but rather that they ate wild game (F45 §40, 42; F45oβ; F45pγ). This indicates that Pliny is likely using another source for this information, probably Megasthenes who in turn drew much of his information on the Cynocephaloi from Ctesias. He likely did refer directly to Ctesias for their longevity, as Megasthenes makes no mention of it. As such, this passage may provide valuable insight into the account of Megasthenes. He evidently misinterpreted (or embellished) the description of their talons as being used for hunting while omitting the detail about their longevity.
- **F45pβ) amber-producing trees:** Cf. F45 §36 and note.  
**dog-headed peoples:** Cf. F45 §37, §40-43 and notes; F45oβ; F45pα; F45pγ.

- **F45pγ) There are creatures in India the size of dung beetles:** Cf. F45 §39 and note.  
**the amber-producing trees:** Cf. F45 §36 and note.  
**the revered Sardinian robes:** Sardinian purple was highly revered among the Greeks (cf. Ar. *Pax* 1173-1174).  
**Cynocephaloi:** Cf. F45 §37, §40-43 and notes; F45oβ; F45pα-β.
- **F45q) there are wild asses in India:** Cf. F45 §45 and note.  
**They say their astragaloi are black...:** Actually, Ctesias says that the astragaloi of the unicorn are red like cinnabar. Either Aelian is basing his description on dark colored gaming dice made from astragaloi, or he is following a source other than Ctesias for this information. The phrase 'they say' seems to indicate the latter and that Aelian chose to follow a later source which contradicted Ctesias on the color of the astragalus (see note on F45 §45).
- **F45r) the worm:** Cf. F45 §46 and note.  
**a ten year old boy would hardly be able to embrace it:** Ctesias is fond of describing the width of objects in terms of a human's embrace (cf. his description of the Indian reed F45 §14).  
**a pygon in length:** ca. 39 cm  
**ten kotylae:** ca. 2.7 L  
**he takes the cities by burning them to ashes:** This account describes a substance similar to Greek fire which was invented in late antiquity by Alexandrian chemists. It is possible that such tales of besieging cities with unquenchable fire inspired the Byzantine chemists to search for a formula for creating so powerful a substance.  
**a kotyla:** 0.27 L
- **F45sα) one of the lakes in India:** Cf. F45 §49 and note; F45sβ.  
**On another lake oil floats:** Cf. F45 §25.  
**the so-called white disease:** A type of leprosy (cf. Hdt. 1.138; Hp. *Prorrh.* 2.43; Arist. *HA* 518a13).
- **F45sβ) There is a spring in India:** Cf. F45 §49; F45sα.
- **F45t) Amongst a certain Indian race:** Cf. F45 §50 and note.
- **F46a) the so-called Cynamolgoi:** Cf. F46b; Some scholars have concluded that the Cynamolgoi were not treated by Ctesias but rather by Agatharcides of Cnidus (cf. Lassen 1982 p. 67; Karttunen 1984 p. 35) who locates them in Ethiopia. To be sure, there was great confusion surrounding these people for the ancient writers. Pollux (F46b) claims that the Cynamolgoi were dogs and Pliny (*N.H.* 6.195), who places them in Ethiopia, says they had dog-heads (*Cynamolgi caninis capitibus*). However, Aelian, who here gives the most detailed account of the Cynamolgoi, clearly shows them to be human and offers no indication that they had dog-heads thus indicating that they were a tribe wholly independent of the Cynocephaloi. It is doubtful that Aelian confused the Cynamolgoi with the Cynocephaloi and attributed the former to Ctesias rather than his countryman Agatharchides. This hypothesis rests on the unlikely assumption that both Aelian and Pollux are guilty of the same mistake independently (as already noted by Lenfant 2004 p. 327-328 n. 950; it is clear

that both Aelian and Pollux read Ctesias directly since Aelian cites him numerous times in his work and Pollux names Ctesias as a source on one other occasion [F1pγ]). Indeed Pollux displays carelessness in his account since he erroneously claims that the Cynamolgoi were dogs rather than breeders of them and that they get their nourishment from cows rather than dogs thus nullifying the meaning of their name. However, there is no reason for Aelian to display such negligence to detail since often his citations of Ctesias conform accurately with other parallel fragments (e.g. F45dβ and F45 §15). There is no valid reason to believe that Ctesias did not give an account of both the Cynocephaloi and the Cynomolgoi.

Agatharchides' transference of them to Ethiopia is simply a return to the old confusion between Africa and India by the ancients (on which see the Introduction). Furthermore, there is some evidence that the Cynamolgoi may be of Indian origin. In the *Amarakoṣa* (2.10.44-46), the sixth century Sanskrit lexicon, there is mention of a tribe of outcasts called the *Śvapāka*, whose name means 'nourished by dogs' (cf. White 1991 p. 71-72). The confusion between the two may have originated with Ctesias himself if one accepts the proposal of Marquart (1913 p. CCVIII-CCVIV) that the tribal name he gives to the Cynocephaloi, the Kalystrioi, is related to the OP *\*sa-dauxštr* from the Sanskrit *śva-duhitṛ* 'milk of dogs' (however see note on F45 §37 for problems with this suggestion). Ultimately, it seems that Ctesias described both Cynamolgoi and Cynocephaloi as two independent tribes of India, perhaps in consecutive passages, thus leading to the confusion for later authors.

- **F46b) The Cynamolgoi are dogs:** Clearly a mistake either by Pollux or a copyist since the testimony of Aelian (F46a) shows clearly that the Cynamolgoi were a tribe of men who reared dogs (see F46a and note).  
**take their nourishment from the milk of cows:** Another obvious mistake on the part of Pollux (or perhaps a copyist?) since this mundane statement would remove all meaning from the Cynamolgoi's name (see note on F46a).
- **F47a) the Indian spring called the Sila:** On the name Sila cf. F47b and note; The Sila has the exact opposite features of the *Ballade* (F45 §49; cf. Andre and Filiozat p. 429-430 n. 558). The spring is first mentioned in Greek literature by Hellanicus (*FGrH* 4 F190) and later by Megasthenes (*FGrH* 715 F10b), Democritus and Aristotle (apud Strabo 15.1.38), and Diodorus (2.37 who seems to be following Megasthenes). Herodotus (3.23) describes a river with similar qualities in Ethiopia. The Sila appears in several Indian and Chinese sources thus showing that the story has an Eastern origin (cf. Lassen 1874 vol. 2 p. 657-658). In all the Eastern accounts, the Sila is actually a river rather than a spring (although Megasthenes mentions a river beginning from a spring). In the *Mahābhārata* (2.48.2-4) and the *Rāmāyana* (4.42.37-38), the boundary of the paradise Uttarakuru is formed by the river *Śilā* ('stone') or *Śailodā* ('stone-water') which can only be crossed by boats made of the *kīcaka* reed (on which see F45 §14 and note) because all other objects turn to stone upon coming into contact with the water. Chinese sources refer to the river as *Jo-shui* meaning 'soft-water' in which not even a feather can float (cf. Lindegger 1982 p. 75-81 for a full discussion of these sources). In Buddhist literature it is called the *Sīdā* ('sink'; see note below) because everything in it sinks. See also the studies of Karttunen 1985 and 1989 p. 186-189; Sachse 1982.



- **F47b) called the Side:** This has long been thought to be a corruption of the name Sila, which is the form appearing in several other sources both Greek and Eastern (see note above). Based on the similarity of the Greek lambda to the delta, Mayhoff proposed to correct the text to read Sile (arguing that Pliny misread or had a copy of Ctesias with the erroneous transcription of ΣΙΔΗΝ instead of ΣΙΛΗΝ). While this emendation is generally accepted, the form Side can be corroborated in Buddhist literature. In the *Nimijātaka* (J. 541 v. 424-425), the river is called the *Sīdā*. However, the prevalence of the form Sila in the Greek sources, especially authors such as Megasthenes who most certainly followed Ctesias, coupled with the fact the form Sila appears elsewhere in the fragments of Ctesias (F47a) indicate that the Cnidian most likely gave the form Sila. The fact the form Side also appears in Buddhist literature is merely coincidental.
- **F48a) what Ctesias writes about the sperm of elephants:** Cf. F48b and note.
- **F48b) what he says about the sperm of elephants:** Ctesias evidently gave a detailed discourse on the elephant but surprisingly little of it survives. Unfortunately, Photius quickly glosses over this account no doubt because of its mundane nature (F45 §7). Apart from this obviously false statement regarding their sperm, much of what can be extracted from Ctesias account of elephants has been shown to be accurate (see notes on F45 §7 and F1b §16.4). The statement of Aristotle comes amidst a discussion of the general qualities of sperm in which he also criticizes Herodotus for claiming that the sperm of Ethiopians is black.
- **F49a) Ctesias of Cnidus:** Arrian spells his name Κτησίης in an apparent attempt at Ionization since his *Indika* was written in Ionic. In his *Anabasis*, he uses the normal spelling (T11g; cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 11 n. 39).  
**the territory of India is equal to the size of the rest of Asia:** Cf. F49b; This statement corresponds well with Ctesias' overall view of India as an enormous land with an enormous population (cf. F45 §2).
- **F49b) India is no smaller than the rest of Asia:** Cf. F49a
- **F50) it is not permissible for the king to get drunk:** Cf. Megasth. *FGrH* 715 F32 §55 who also mentions a prohibition on intoxication for the king. While the Indians were familiar with wine and often fermented alcoholic beverages from other fruits (cf. note on F45 §48), drinking was strictly condemned by the Brahmins.
- **F51a) the same race:** This is a continuation of F45t.  
**the Monocoli... also called the Sciapodes:** Cf. F51b; F60; Pliny seems to have erroneously described the Monocoli and the Sciapodes as one tribe, a mistake which influenced medieval depictions of the Sciapodes. Scylax, the first Greek author to write on the Sciapodes (cf. F51b and note) describes them as having two very large feet (note the use of the plural) and elsewhere (F60) it is shown that Ctesias too depicted them with two feet (cf. Lenfant 2004 p. 329-330 n. 966; see also Karttunen 1989 p. 132 n. 74 who accepts the one-footedness of the Sciapodes). This is confirmed by Indian sources who often make mention of tribes of one-footed people and Sciapodes, always independent of each other, but describe them as demons. The Monocoli are found in the *Harivamśa* (Vul. 9553) where they are called the

*Ekapāda* ('Those with one foot'). In the same list there is also mention of the *Tālajangha* ('Those with a palm for a leg' - see Andre 1981 p. 105). Likewise, both tribes appear in a list of monstrosities in Buddhist literature. In the *Lalitavistara* (XXI) there is mention of both *Ekapādaka* ('those who have one foot'; they also appear in both the Rāmāyana and the Mahābhārata - cf. Lassen 1874 vol. 2 p. 656-657 n. 1) and *Karoṭapāda* ('those who have a branch for a foot'). See Andre and Filiozat 1986 p. 355 n. 121.

**those who lack necks and have eyes on their shoulders:** Cf. Hdt. 4.191 who places this tribe in Lybia. Elsewhere (5.8.46) Pliny describes the Blemmyes who are an African tribe of men who have no heads but eyes and a mouth on their chest.

**There are also satyrs in the mountains...:** It is generally accepted that this passage is not attributed to Ctesias (although Jacoby, acknowledging that it is not from Ctesias, nevertheless includes it). The satyrs of India have been identified with monkeys, most notably langurs (cf. Andre and Filiozat 1986 p. 355-356 n. 121; see Puskás and Kádár 1980 on the Indian satyrs).

- **F51b) Scylax of Caryanda:** Although most people accept that this refers to the Scylax who was commissioned by Darius to explore the Indus (Hdt. 4.44), Herrmann (1929 col. 518) instead proposes that this is the younger Scylax, author of the *Periplus* (ca. 350 B.C.E.). This would make Ctesias the oldest source for these fantastic tribes. Unfortunately, there is not enough evidence to corroborate such a claim. In fact, Tzetzes seems to take Scylax as the ultimate source for these peoples thus implying that the elder Scylax is meant.

**the Sciapodes:** Cf. F51a and note; F60.

**The Otoliknoi:** Cf. F45 §50 and note.

**the Monophthalmoi:** Cf. Megasth. *FGrH* 715 F27a-b.

**the Henotiktontes:** Cf. F45 §50 and note; Megasth. *FGrH* 715 F27a-b.

- **F52) the Pandarae:** Cf. F45 §50 and note; F45t.  
**who live for 200 years:** Ctesias says the same about several tribes of Indians; see note on F45 §32.

### *On the Tributes of Asia*

- **F53) On the Tributes of Asia:** On this work See Introduction.  
**he never mentions pepper or vinegar:** Polyaeus (Strat. 4.3.32) catalogues the ingredients for the king's lunch and dinner. He claims that he obtained his information from a bronze pillar, an assertion most feel is fabricated. In fact, it is very likely that his source is Ctesias himself. His account, which also omits pepper, only includes vinegar among the commodities distributed by the king, but not among those consumed by him (cf. the study of Lewis 1987; Briant 2002 p. 286-292; see also the more recent study of Amigues 2003). On the king's meals see also Heracleides *FGrH* 689 F2; Deinon *FGrH* 690 F4, F12, F24. Elsewhere, Ctesias gives an account on the origins of pepper (cf. F63 and note).
- **F54) the Tapyroi:** Cf. F1b §2.3 and note.

## *Periodos (Periegesis, Periploi)*

### Book I

- **F55) *Periploi*:** On this work see Introduction.
- **F56) the Tibarenoi in the territory of the Mossynoikoi:** These tribes are located in the southeastern region of the Black Sea; cf. Hdt. 3.94, 7.78.

### Book II

- **F57) Ctesias claims in Book II:** Although the title of the work is not mentioned, it seems that this refers to the *Periodos*. It is clear from the other fragments that Ctesias dealt extensively with the regions of the Black Sea in this work. However, it is possible that this citation comes from a passing reference to these mountains in Ctesias' description of Ninus' Armenian campaign which was discussed early in the *Persika* (F1b §1.8-19).
- **F58) Tiriza:** Otherwise unknown. There is a cape on the coast of the Black Sea called variably Tiriza (*Anonym. peripl.* p. E 75), Tirizis (Strab. 7.319), and Tiristis (Ptolem. 3.10.3). The site, always referred to as a cape (ἄκρα), is located in lower Moesia (Scythia) on the west coast of the Black Sea in modern Bulgaria. It later took the name Γαλιάκρα in Byzantine sources (now called Caliacra). Ctesias may have been misinformed as to its location on the Black Sea and mistakenly placed it on the southern coast in Paphlagonia. The name of the site is Thracian (*ter, tir* meaning 'end' or 'point') thus confirming its true location on the western coast of the Black Sea (cf. Fluss 1937 col. 1446-1447).
- **Ctesias calls them Tiribizanoi in Book II:** cf. note above on the omission of the title of the work.

### Book Unknown

- **F60) Sciapodes:** Cf. F51a-b and note.  
*Periplous of Asia:* Harpocration is the only author to mention this title. Elsewhere the work is simply called the *Periplous* (F55), the *Periodos* (F56), and the *Periegesis* (F59). It seems evident that these are all variant titles of the same work. The mention of the Sciapodes in this work is difficult to explain. Ctesias mentions them in the *Indika* (F51a-b) where he clearly locates them in India (from F45t) and an analysis of Indian sources shows that they are clearly of Indian origin (see note on F51a). Ctesias may have mentioned them in both works, in which case he would have located them on the eastern edge of Asia. However, in the *Indika* Ctesias locates them further east of the men with no necks indicating that they, like other fabulous races, are on the fringes of the world, not the fringes of Asia. If in fact he did mention them in the *Periplous*, it was likely a passing reference rather than a full discussion as occurred in the *Indika*. Ultimately, Lenfant (2004 p. 331 n. 978) may be right to want to attribute this fragment to the *Indika* rather than the *Periplous*. Although there are only a few fragments from the latter work, there is no indication of any other fabulous tribes discussed (See Introduction for full discussion) giving more plausibility to Lenfant's suggestion.

## Fragments of Unknown Works

- **F61a) in his history:** Cf. F61b; This fragment may come from the *Periplous* (cf. F57 and note). However, it may equally have originated from the *Persika* in the account of Ninus' expedition in Armenia (cf. F1b §1.8-19), or perhaps the banishment of the eunuch Artoxares (F14 §43, F15 §50).
- **F61b) in Armenia...:** Cf. F61a and note.
- **F62) Book III of Ctesias:** This fragment is too scanty to decipher which work this belongs to. It may be either the *Periodos* or the *Persika* both of which had at least three books.
- **F63) The origin of pepper:** Pepper comes from the dried berry of the *Piper nigrum*, which is a vine (as Maximus asserts) indigenous to Southern India. It may have originated in the Western Ghats on the western peninsula of the Indian subcontinent. The word originates from the Sanskrit *pippalī* (cf. Steier 1938 col. 1421-1425 for a full discussion). The Indian origins of pepper along with the comparison of the Bessudai to the Indians suggest that this account comes from the *Indika*. The earliest account of pepper in Greek sources is found in Hippocrates (*Morb. Mulier* 1.81 [8 p. 202 L]) who refers to it as an Indian drug (φάρμακον). Ctesias would undoubtedly have been familiar with the medicinal aspects of this spice as he shows great interest in many medicinal benefits from Indian commodities throughout the *Indika* (cf. note on F45 §32).
- **F64) The island of Thyle:** It is difficult to determine in which work Ctesias would have discussed the island of Thule which belongs to the northern edge of the world. Nowhere else in the fragments is there any indication of an interest in the north. On this island cf. Strab. 63; Plin. *N.H.* 4.104; Stat. *Silv.* 5.1.91; Sil. Ital. 597; Juven. 15.112. For a full discussion see De Anna 1998; MacDonald 1936 col. 627-630.  
**when the sun is in Cancer:** June 21-July 22.
- **F65) Heridanus:** There is little agreement among ancient commentators for the Eridanos, as this passage indicates. Hesiod (*Th.* 338) makes the earliest mention of the Eridanos as the child of Ocean and Tethys. Since Ctesias locates the river in India, it is tempting to attribute this fragment to the *Indika*.
- **F66) the Erythran Sea:** the Red Sea.  
**a spring feeds into it:** See Introduction for discussion of Ctesias' fondness of springs.

## Medical Treatises

- **F67) The first was Ctesias of Cnidos:** Ctesias' criticism of Hippocrates here would begin what would be a long running debate over the proper method for setting a dislocated hip (cf. Jouana 1999 p. 435 n. 14). Because Ctesias was only a generation after Hippocrates, this passage has been taken as support for identifying the treatise *On Joints* as a genuine Hippocratic work (see however Jouana *op. cit.* p. 65 for the difficulties encountered when trying to identify authentic works of Hippocrates). The criticisms of Ctesias have also been taken as a reflection of the rivalry between the Cnidian and Coan schools of medicine. This

rivalry, long the source of dispute amongst modern scholars (cf. Lonie 1978), was neither violent nor hateful. None of the malicious stories of Hippocrates committing plagiarism and arson stem from his Cnidian rivals (the earliest report of such slanderous tales comes from Andreas, the 3rd century B.C.E. physician to the Egyptian king Ptolemy Philopater apud Polyb. 5.81.6; cf. Plin. *N.H.* 29.1-2 for the account, based on Varro, of his burning of the temple of Asclepius after consulting inscriptions to hide his sources; see also Tzetz. 963-965). As can be seen from Ctesias' criticism, the rivalry was strictly professional (cf. Gal. *De methodo medendi* 1.1.6). There was even an association (κοῖνον) formed between Asclepiads from the two schools, as is shown by an inscription found at Delphi (cf. Rougemont 1977 vol. 1 122-124 no. 12; see also note below).

**his relative (for this man too was a member of the Asclepiads):** The Asclepiads were two branches of the same family that claimed descent from Asclepius. Although the term later came to describe all physicians, in its proper and more narrow sense it only refers to members of this family, regardless of their profession (cf. Tzetz. 10.721-727). Thus when Galen refers to Ctesias as a relative of Hippocrates, he means it in the strictest sense of the term. The Asclepiads passed their knowledge down from father to son (cf. F68 and note) beginning with Asclepius himself and his two sons Podalirius and Machaon (cf. Hom. *Il.* 2.729-732). An inscription from Delphi indicates that the Asclepiad lineage was only transmitted by male descent. This inscription is also significant in showing the association between the two branches of Asclepiads (see note above) and the special privilege they enjoyed at Delphi (cf. Rougemont 1977 vol. I p. 122-124 no. 12). On the Asclepiads see especially the study of Jouanna 1999 p. 10-12, 50-52.

- **F68) The treatise of Ctesias on hellebore:** On these medical treatises see Introduction. **In my father's time and my grandfather's time:** This passage clearly reveals that the medicinal knowledge of the Asclepiads was familial and passed down from father to son (cf. F67 and note). It also shows that Ctesias was a true Asclepiad and not just a physician who received the title based on his profession. **hellebore:** Black hellebore (*Helleborus cyclophyllus*) was a small plant used as a purgative by the ancients to remedy illness (see for ex. Hipp. *Coan Prognoses* 2.304 [V. 650L]), but the term hellebore can also refer to white hellebore (*veratrum album*; cf. Plin. *N.H.* 25.48). It was also called *melampodion* (e.g. Theophr. 9.10.4) and *polyrrhizon*. It was often used as a cure for madness and paralysis (cf. Plin. *N.H.* 25.54) and several other diseases including leprosy and toothaches. When inserted as a suppository it can be used to induce an abortion (cf. Hp. *Mul.* 8.154; Dsc. 4.162.1-3; Riddle 1992 p. 54-55; see also Kapparis 2002 p. 13-16 for a discussion of the use of herbs to induce abortion). Ctesias' statement regarding the safety of the drug by his time is confirmed by Pliny (*N.H.* 25.51) who states that in his day some academics took it to sharpen their minds (see also *N.H.* 25.59-61 on how to use hellebore). see Theophr. *h. pl.* 9.9.2; 9.14.4). On hellebore see the studies of Andre 1955 and Girard 1988.

### Fragments of Doubtful Authenticity

- **F69) Ctesias, Herodotus, Diodorus...:** Nowhere else in the fragments does Ctesias mention a Sesostris and at no point is there any indication he may have. Sesostris is always mentioned as king of Egypt rather than the Assyrians. The accounts of Herodotus (2.102-110) and

Diodorus (1.53-57 who calls him Sesoostris) afford no place for this anecdote as there is no indication that Sesostris mistreated any of the kings he conquered (Diod. 55.10 even says he acted mildly towards all conquered peoples). At the conclusion of his summary Diodorus (1.56.5) compares the conquests of Sesostris with those of Semiramis described by Ctesias (given by Diodorus himself at 2.14). The naming of Ctesias here was likely the cause of confusion for Tzetzes thus resulting in his inclusion of Ctesias among the authors who treat Sesostris. The anecdote likely comes from Theophylactus Simocatta (6.11.8-17).

- **F70) Xenophon wrote a history of Cyrus:** In the *Cyropaidea* (8.3.49), Xenophon speaks of gratitude and repayment of favors and (8.7.3) giving thanks for favor received from the gods, but never makes any mention of chastisement for ingratitude.  
**Ctesias and Herodotus wrote about the Persian custom:** There is nothing in Herodotus about this custom nor is there any reason to believe Ctesias wrote about it. As he has done elsewhere (F69; F71), Tzetzes has carelessly listed a series of authors on Persian history without verifying his statements.
- **F71) Herodotus, Diodorus, Ctesias...:** Cf. F69 on Tzetzes habit of grouping these authors together. It seems clear he misread Ctesias who certainly would have made such comments regarding India rather than Arabia in comparison to India. Throughout the *Indika*, Ctesias makes constant reference to the Indians as a just and blessed people.
- **F72) The historiographer says:** It is difficult to decipher if the historian in question is Ctesias. To be sure, Arsames appears in the *Persika* as satrap of Egypt (F14 §38; the text gives the name Sarsamas but this is likely a corruption; see note *ad loc.* See also F15 §49 where he is called Arxanes) and Ctesias describes an Indian tribe whose children have beautiful teeth (F45 §50). If this is an authentic fragment then it likely comes from the *Persika* and is a reference to the satrap of Persia.

## False Fragments

### *On Mountains*

- **F73) the antipathes:** Dioscorides (5.122) takes this stone for black coral and says that, like regular coral, it is used to reduce excrescences and cicatrize wounds among other remedies. He says nothing of its use to treat dull-white leprosy or leprosy. This term does not appear in any of the Hippocratic writings and is not employed until Hellenistic times leading many to doubt this fragment's authenticity. Although Ctesias makes several mentions of leprosy (cf. F14 §43) including treatments for it (cf. F45 §49), the fact that this work is not mentioned anywhere else is cause for doubt.  
**Mt. Teuthras:** A mountain in Mysia in northwest Asia Minor named for the mythical king who took in Auge, the daughter of Aleus and raised her son Telephus (cf. Apollod. 2.7.4; Paus. 8.4).

### *On Rivers*

- **F74) Alpheus:** A river in the Peloponnese.

**Book I of his treatise *On Rivers*:** The medicinal aspect of this fragment renders it plausible that this is a genuine work of Ctesias. However, as with the treatise *On Mountains*, the fact that it is nowhere else mentioned invites suspicion (cf. F73 and note).

### Interpolations

- F75) The tales of Ctesias of Cnidos:** On the inclusion of these last two fragments with the corpus of Ctesias see Lenfant 2004 p. 334-335 n. 1001. Their authenticity is highly suspect leading Jacoby to refrain from including them in his corpus. Certain aspects of the passages such as the Seres belong to a time period later than Ctesias (cf. Janvier 1984 p. 264). However, while these passages do not seem to directly reflect the works of Ctesias, they are certainly under his influence. The excessive size and longevity of the Seres recalls several tribes of the *Indika* (e.g. the Pygmies [F45 §21] are exceedingly small and the Indians [F45 §32] and Cynocephaloi [F45 §43], like the Seres, can live as long as 200 years). Moreover, the flocks of Eubeoa, like the unicorn (F45 §45), have no bile and their flesh is extremely bitter. Finally, the mention of fabulous springs is paralleled numerous times by Ctesias who had a propensity for discussing such locales (cf. Introduction).

**The Seres:** The Seres are a tribe dwelling on the fringes of the world often thought to live in China. They became popular subjects for writers of the Roman period (e.g. Plin. *N.H.* 6.20; Hor. *Car.* 3.19.25-28; et al). On the Seres and various attempts at their identification see the studies of Janvier 1984 and Sergent 1998; see also Schwartz 1986.

**thirteen cubits:** ca. 6m

**they live for more than 200 years:** Cf. Strab. 15.1.34, 37.

**the Gaitros River:** The Ganges?
- F76) In Ethiopia:** Cf. F45dδ on the confusion between Ethiopia and India.

**there is a creature called the krokottas:** Cf. Ael. 7.22; According to Pliny (*H.A.* 8.107) who calls the animal the Leucrocota, it is a hybrid of a hyena and a lion. The *krokottas* may be itself a fabulous description of the hyena, in which case Pliny's statement would be the result of a later confusion. By Pliny's time the hyena was well known so it would understandably be assumed that the fantastic *krokttas* of earlier literature was a different animal. Ball (1881 p. 281) identifies it with the spotted hyena (*Hyena crocuta*) which is native to Africa thus corresponding with the statement that it belongs to Ethiopia (McCrindle 1881 p. 305 n. 86 refers to it simply as 'a sort of hyena'). However, if Ctesias discussed this animal then he certainly was describing the Indian variant (*Hyena strita*) which was later transposed to Africa (see note above). Equally plausible is the assertion of Lassen (1874 vol. 2 p. 650) who identifies the animal with the jackal, in Sanskrit called the *koṭṭhāraka*, which he claims comes into Greek as *krokottas*. This hypothesis would also help to explain why Pliny saw the *krokottas* and the hyena as two distinct animals.

**the Maurousian Gates:** Possibly the Pillars of Heracles (i.e. the Straits of Gibraltar); cf. Plin. *N.H.* 5.2; Strab. 17.3.2.

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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Andrew Nichols was born and raised in Miami, Florida graduating from Miami Killian High in 1995. He received his BA in Classics and History from Florida State University in 1999. He received his MA in Classics from Florida State University in 2002. In 2006-2007 he served as the Philip Lockhart Fellow at the American School of Classical Studies in Athens and he is currently a member of the British School of Archaeology in Athens. Since 2002 he has been a member of the University of Florida's Tiber Island Survey Project and since 2005 has served on the University of Florida's Thessalian Survey Project.