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Artabanus of Trogus Pompeius' 41st Prologue*

In his pioneering 1937/1938 papers on the early Arsacid chronology, the late Professor Józef Wolski skilfully overturned the traditional scheme that depended entirely on the accounts of Arrian and Syncellus. In its place, he introduced a new theory that relied upon the combined statements of Trogus/Justin and Strabo. This is now generally accepted as the standard version of the inception of Parthian monarchy. As a further contribution to the present memorial volume, I shall attempt to demonstrate that despite Wolski's scepticism, we may identify the Parthian Artabanus in *Prologue* 41 of Trogus Pompeius with the second Arsacid ruler in Justin (41.5.7).

The unfortunate loss of the 44 books of Trogus Pompeius' Philippic History in general and of volumes 41 and 42 in particular has deprived us of an invaluable ancient source on the Parthian affairs of *c.* 250–10 (or 2).[1] Trogus' elected theme for his universal history was the sequence of powers that held dominion in Asia, from the Assyrians through to the successors of Alexander with generous space devoted to the Parthians. The unwelcome deficit, therefore, leaves a hiatus in the 3rd–1st century BC history of the Arsacid kingdom that may only be partly bridged by Justin's *Epitome*, a selective abridgement of Trogus' work, the numismatic evidence and the extant contemporary documents and later literature. The latter includes the *Prologues* to the Philippic History whose compiler and date of completion are unknown.[2] These are condensed extracts of the most significant episodes in Trogus, including the personal names of prominent characters. The *Prologues* thus constitute an important source and both compliment and remain a check on the *Epitome*. However, there are occasional discrepancies between the two since they do not invariably follow the same course of events in their common origin.[3]

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[1] Jal 1987: 194 and Syme 1988: 367, both give 10 BC; Alonso-Núñez 1987: 60 quotes 2 BC. Unless stated otherwise, all dates throughout this note are in BC.

[2] Alonso-Núñez 1987: 56; Yardley 1994: 3.

[3] Steele 1917: 26.

In his often neglected *Preface*, Justin affirms that he only excerpted from Trogus' 44 volumes "all the most noteworthy material" and "omitted what did not make pleasurable reading or serve to provide a moral." [4] This inevitably entailed inconsistencies throughout his *Epitome*. Especially so when he interrupted his narration of one topic to deal with a different subject and then went back to resume the earlier issue after removing or summarising a comparatively large section of Trogus' text. The prime example of this is found in Justin's book 42.4.1–4. It follows the accession of the dynamic Parthian ruler, Mithradates II (121–91),[5] his wars with the neighbouring countries, and the origins of Armenia and her early history. With no desire to record in detail the factional dispute that erupted in the closing years of the reign of Mithradates II and continued afterwards for some 35 years, Justin briefly reports the expulsion from Parthia of a "King Mithradates." [6] He then abruptly recounts the final phase of the fratricidal war between the two Arsacid brothers, Mithradates IV (58–55)[7] and Orodes II (57–38), and follows this with the latter's encounter with the Romans. However, insofar as the Parthian history is concerned, Justin has made no major blunder after omitting an insignificant event, the whole of an unimportant reign or a complex period.[8] Independent studies have concluded that when Justin selected attractive or exemplary episodes, he reproduced them without inordinate abbreviation or much verbal change.[9] He did not, therefore, tamper unduly with the language of his text "save perhaps by enhancing through antithesis the banality of some moral maxims or obtruding his own reflections on events with a profusion eschewed by the better sort of narrator in any age." [10]

The 41st *Prologue*, on the other hand, suffers from a slip, confusing the great Parthian monarch, Mithradates I (164–132),[11] with the Armenian ruler, Tigranes II (96–55):[12]

> Parthian and Bactrian history. The establishment of the empire in Parthia by King Arsaces, followed by his successors Artabanus and Tigranes, surnamed the Divine, by whom Media and Mesopotamia were brought into subjection.

It also records an early Parthian prince called Artabanus who is, apparently, excluded from book 41 of the *Epitome*. In this excursus I will review the relevant evidence to

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[4] Yardley 1994: 13.

[5] Assar 2006b: 134–149.

[6] Mithradates III (87–80) who succeeded Gotarzes I (91–87) and was ultimately supplanted by Orodes I (80–75). For a detailed discussion of the internal strife in Parthia during 91–55 cf. Assar 2005a: 16–33; 2005b: 52–55; 2006c: 55–87.

[7] Assar 2006c: 96–97.

[8] Phraates II was too young to have a mature heir on his death in late 127. The next king, Arsaces VIII (127–126), was probably Phraates' paternal uncle, Artabanus II, as reported by Justin. Sellwood 1980: 54–55 attributes the S18 coinage to a period of *inter-regnum* following the death of Phraates II whereas Babylonian cuneiform texts attest a Parthian king on the throne during 127–126. Cf. Assar 2001a: 25–26; 2001b: 17–22; 2005b: 47–48; 2006b: 112–116 on the attribution of S18.1 tetradrachms to Bagasis. For the accession date and age of Phraates II, cf. Assar 2003: 186 n. 25; 2005b: 43–47; Dąbrowa 2005: 73 n. 1; Assar 2006b: 95–99.

[9] Alonso-Núñez 1987: 61 and 70; Syme 1988: 361; Yardley 1994: 5–10.

[10] Syme 1988: 358.

[11] For a revised Parthian chronology and regnal years of the early Arsacid rulers cf. Assar 2005b: 29–55; 2006b: 88–149.

[12] Ruehl 1886: 264 transfers the faulty text to *Prol.* 42; Seel (1956: 178; 1972: 323) retain the defective passage in *Prol.* 41; Yardley 1994: 284 follows Seel in keeping the erroneous text in *Prol.* 41.

ascertain whether Justin omitted a successor of Arsaces I or simply neglected his proper name in favour of the Parthian dynastic title.

First, Tigranes' presence in *Prologue* 41 and its associated problems. It is possible that, influenced by Strabo (11.14.15) on the Armenian ruler's subjugation of Atropatene, Gorduene and "along with these the rest of Mesopotamia", a later copyist of Trogus' prologues interchanged Mithradates I and Tigranes.[13] However, the latter correctly appears in *Prologue* 40 after the civil wars of *c.* 128–76 in Syria, involving several Seleucid claimants. The 41st prologue, on the other hand, closes before the appointment by Phraates II (132-127) of Himerus in late summer 129, some three decades earlier than the accession of Tigranes and around fifty years before he took the Syrian crown.[14] This probably induced Jean Foy-Vaillant (died AD 1706) to substitute Mithradates for Tigranes rather than move the erroneous passage to *Prologue* 42.[15] The new reading, nevertheless, entailed a fresh discrepancy between *Prologue* 41 and book 41 of the *Epitome*: a successor of Arsaces I (247–211), called Artabanus, was absent in the latter. To remove the disagreement between the two sources Vaillant perceptively identified Arsaces (II) of Justin (41.5.7) with Artabanus in *Prologue* 41.[16] The improved thesis was adopted by leading historians and numismatists[17] until Gutschmid rejected Vaillant's identification nearly two centuries later[18] and transferred the faulty passage to *Prologue* 42.[19] This was primarily intended to justify Gutschmid's attribution to a putative successor of Mithradates II, called "King Artabanus", of a series of Parthian drachms. These carry specific mint names in full and are termed the "Campaign Coins" (S30.18, S30.21–22, S30.24–25, and S30.28–29).[20]

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[13] Eutropius (6.8) also comments that Tigranes had often defeated the "Persians" and made himself master of Mesopotamia, Syria and part of Phoenicia.

[14] The death-date of Menander I Soter (*c.* 155–130), the last ruler in *Prol.* 41, decides the *terminus ante quem* of this prologue. Cf. Bopearachchi 1991: 76 who gives 130. It may also be estimated from the date 129 of the first event in *Prol.* 42, concerning Himerus' war on Mesene and his brutal treatment of the Babylonians. Justin, on the other hand, finishes book 41 with the death of Mithradates I in 132 and begins book 42 with the accession of Phraates II. Cf. Assar 2006b: 105–116 on the situation in Babylonia after the demise of Antiochus VII in 129 and before the accession of Artabanus, the paternal uncle of Phraates II.

[15] Foy-Vaillant 1725: 2–3 (under *Canon Chronologicus Regum Parthorum*), 4–5 (under *Annales Arsacidarum*), 19 (under *Stemma Prioris Familiae Arsacidarum*), 21 (under *Artabanus Rex Parthorum III*), and 39 (under *Mithridates Parthorum Rex VI*) where the author comments that: *Mitridates autem iste, Arsaces ut alii dictus est: quin & Deus cognominatus, ut nos docet Trogus in Prolog. lib. 41. Verum enim vero a Librariis nomen Tigranis loco Mithridatis, substitutum est, nam inter Parthorum Reges nullus fuit nomine Tigranes: totoque hoc lib. 41. apud Justinum, de Tigrane, sive seniore, sive juniore, Regibus Armeniae, ultum silentium.*

[16] Foy-Vaillant 1725: 2–3 (under *Canon Chronologicus Regum Parthorum*) and 19 (under *Stemma Prioris Familiae Arsacidarum*) gives: Arsaces I, Arsaces II (Tiridates), brother of Arsaces I and the real founder of the Parthian kingdom, followed by Arsaces III (Artabanus), son of Tiridates and the king who confronted Antiochus III in 208 BC. Pages 21–32 (under *Artabanus Rex Parthorum III*) deal with the reign and coinage of Artabanus I.

[17] Lewis 1728: 17–23; Lindsay 1852: 4–6 and 133–135 (coinage); Rawlinson 1873: 54–58; Gardner 1877: 4–5 and 26–27 (coinage). The following authors too accepted Foy-Vaillant: Justi 1895: 31 and 412; De la Fuÿe 1904: 320–322; Minns 1915: 40 and n. 58; Sykes 1915: 336–337; Tarn 1930: 119 and n. 4; Tarn 1932: 575–576 and 613; Debevoise 1938: 16; Colledge 1967: 27–28; Bivar 1983: 29–30; Frye 1983: 209–210.

[18] Gutschmid 1888: 36 n. 4; Jahāndārī 1978: 73 n. 3.

[19] Gutschmid 1888: 81 n. 1; Jahāndārī 1978: 133 n. 2.

[20] Tarn 1930: 119. Cf. Sellwood 1980: 98–99 on the corresponding drachms.

Yet, although several scholars[21] approved Gutschmid's emendation, the subsequently emerging evidence began to disagree with the extent of Tigranes' incursions into Arsacid territories as set out in the defective text of *Prologue* 41. A Greek parchment, discovered in the early 1900s AD in Western Iran, confirmed Tigranes as the father-in-law of the reigning Arsacid ruler, Gotarzes I (91–87), in Apellaios 225 SEM.[22] He was, therefore, a Parthian ally as late as Oct./Nov. 88 BC.[23] Thereafter, Tigranes may have frequently crossed Parthian frontiers and raided Media Atropatene[24] and Northern Mesopotamia during the reign of Mithradates III (87–80). He is, nevertheless, unattested as king in the Babylonian cuneiform texts[25] and, insofar as the numismatic evidence is concerned, he issued no coins from Seleucia on the Tigris and Ecbatana, the two principal mints in Mesopotamia and Media.[26] Lack of primary material, therefore, precludes the Armenian king from having swayed Greater Media and the whole of Mesopotamia in the 80s–70s.

[21] Wroth 1903: xix; Petrowicz 1904: 9–10; De Morgan 1923/1936: 127; Wolski 1962: 136–145 (rejects Vaillant's perceptive correction and comments that*: La correction de Vaillant est inadmissible tant du point de vue de la paléographie que de l'histoire*. He then follows Gutshmid's conjecture); Abgarians/Sellwood 1971: 116–118; Schippmann 1987: 647; Wolski 1993: 58–65 (especially p. 63 where, having retained the faulty text in *Prol.* 42, Wolski argues that Artabanus seems to have succeeded Tigranes on the Armenian throne: *il semble que cet Artaban fût l'un des prédécesseur de Tigrane sur le thrône arménien*). He further comments that because Artabanus succeeded Mithradates II, he could not have reigned around 200. Following this with a reference to the genealogical importance of the inscribed ostraca from Nisa whereby Artabanus appears in several texts, Wolski concludes that this king mounted the throne in the 2nd century BC after Phraates II who in turn was a successor of Phriapatius. He finally removes Artabanus from the early Parthian king list and writes that: *Il résulte clairement de ces faits qu'on ne saurait compter l'Artaban du Prologue de Trogue Pompée dans la série des rois parthes*; Wolski 1999: 48 n. 16 (states that Artabanus I has been introduced to history as a result of a faulty interpretation of the text of the Prologue of Pompeius Trogus), 61 n. 1, and 90–91 n. 14; Wolski 2003: 25 (n. 41), 31–32, 41–44, 46, 48–49, 58. It should be stressed that Wolski is, nevertheless, correct in abandoning the outdated succession from Arsaces I to Tiridates in Arrian-Syncellus, removing from the early Parthian king list Tiridates, the putative brother of Arsaces I, and following Justin's chronology wherein Arsaces I is succeeded by his son, Arsaces II. Although, following Wolski's original publication on early Parthian chronology and genealogy a brother of Arsaces I was attested in an "accession record" from Nisa, he is not registered as an Arsacid ruler. In any case, Wolski's thesis has little bearing on the proper name of Arsaces II, since it simply confirms that Arsaces I was succeeded by his son, not brother. Cf. Wolski 1956/7: 35–52 and Wolski 1993: 29–78 for a detailed discussion of the beginning of Arsacid power in Iran and the corresponding bibliography. On the "accession record" from Nisa, cf. n. 51 below for the relevant bibliography.

[22] Minns 1915: 28–30, Assar 2006c: 67.

[23] Cf. also Appian (*Mithradatic Wars*, 15 and 17) on the alliance between Mithradates VI of Pontus, Tigranes and "Arsaces of Parthia" at about the beginning of Ol. 173 (88/7).

[24] Cf. Strabo (11.14.15), Plutarch (*Lucullus*, 14.5, 21.4, 26.1 and 36.6), Appian (*Syrian Wars*, 48 also *Mithradatic Wars*, 67) and Orosius (6.4.9) on Tigranes' encounters with the Parthians. Isidore of Charax (*Parthian Stations*, 6) reports that Tigranes attacked and destroyed Adrapana, the Parthian royal residence in Ecbatana. This must have been a passing raid, probably for plunder, rather than permanent Armenian presence.

[25] Cuneiform texts from the reign of Mithradates III are all subscribed to "King Arsaces" with no reference to a rival or change of reign in Babylonia. Cf. Assar 2006c: 72–74.

[26] McDowell 1935: 62–146 and 183–200; Le Rider 1965: 119–181 and 190–195; Sellwood 1976: 16–24; 1980: 84–130; Foss 1989: 26–66; Le Rider 1998: 14–27, 52–58 and 71–96; Mousheghian/Depeyrot 1999: 34–44 and 134–164; Assar 2006c: 67–96.

Gutschmid's thesis is further complicated by the fact that it introduces into the Parthian "Dark Age", the period 91–57 after the death of Mithradates II,[27] an unattested Arsacid prince called Artabanus. According to the defective passage in *Prologue* 41, this Artabanus acceded before Tigranes' alleged capture of Media and Mesopotamia. He cannot, however, be one of the named successors of Mithradates II in the contemporary Babylonian cuneiform records and later literature with one exception: Arsaces XVI (*c.* 78/77–62/61). Yet it would be difficult to identify the latter with Artabanus in *Prologue* 41. Recent studies have shown that Arsaces XVI issued the "Campaign Coins" during the last years of his reign when he began a final bid for the Parthian throne.[28] Given that the flawed passage in *Prologue* 41 places Artabanus before Tigranes, Gutschmid's conjecture requires the latter to have annexed Media and Mesopotamia around the end of the reign of Phraates III (70/69–58/57). This is highly unlikely since, following his unsuccessful involvements in the Third Mithradatic War (74–63), defeat by Lucullus at Tigranocerta in 69 and submission to Pompey in 66, the Armenian ruler was in no position to attack Parthia in the late 60s.[29] After all, despite being invited to assume the Seleucid crown, *Prol*ogue 40 makes it clear that Tigranes "was soon afterwards defeated and deprived of it by the Romans". Numismatic analysis has shown that he tenuously held the Syrian throne during 74–69 and not the generally accepted period 83–65.[30].

It is also noteworthy that apart from his brief comment on the conflicts between Mithradates III (87–80 BC) and Orodes I (80–75), Justin refers to no later reign from the Parthian "Dark Age" in his book 42. This suggests that Artabanus of *Prologue* 41 concerns an earlier episode of the Arsacid history. It also renders unlikely Justin's omission of a distinguished successor of Mithradates II whose exploits had qualified him for inclusion in Trogus' *Prologue* 42. Taken collectively, the primary and later sources disagree with the defective text in *Prologue* 41 concerning Tigranes' sphere of influence.

On the other hand, Justin (41.6.6–7), Moses of Chorene (1.8 and 2.68) and Michael Chamish[31] credit Mithradates I with the capture of Media Magna and Atropatene. At the same time, a contemporary Babylonian cuneiform record, several dated coins and later literature confirm the great Arsacid prince as the conqueror of Mesopotamia.[32] These agree with Vaillant's substitution of Mithradates for Tigranes as well as retention of Artabanus in *Prologue* 41.

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[27] Cf. Assar 2005a: 16–33; 2005b: 52–55; and 2006c: 55–104 on the Parthian "Dark Age".

[28] Assar 2006c: 86–87.

[29] Cf. Appian (*Mithradatic Wars*, 104), Dio Cassius (36.52.1–4), Plutarch (*Pompey*, 33.1–6) on Tigrane's surrender to Pompey in 66, resulting in significant territorial losses to Armenia, and ending the Armenian ruler's expansionist policies.

[30] Assar 2006c: 72–74, especially n. 126, referring to Plutarch (*Lucullus*, 21.1–7) on Appius Clodius' audience with the Armenian ruler which took place "in the 25th year of Tigranes" (= 72/1 if counted from 96). This was shortly after Tigranes' subjugation of some cities of Phoenicia, probably in 73; Hoover 2007: 296–298 gives Tigranes a reign of about 5 years (74/73–69/68) in Syria.

[31] Avdall 1827: 57. The Armenian writer reports that "Arsaces the Second" (i.e., Mithradates I) was styled the Great. He extended his conquests to the shores of Indus in India. He also expelled Artavasdes, the governor of the country (of Armenia) and appointed his own brother Valarsaces king of both Armenia Major and Minor, to which he annexed the country of Atropatia.

[32] Sachs/Hunger 1996: 134–135, No. –140A; Dąbrowa 1999: 9–17; Del Monte 1999: 102–103; Assar 2005b: 43; 2006b: 88–92.

Furthermore, it is likely that Artabanus' presence in *Prologue* 41 and absence in the *Epitome* stems from an error in one of the two sources. To identify the origin of the slip and clarify the apparent discrepancy between Justin's book 41 and *Prologue* 41, it is imperative to examine the relevant material on the personal names of the early Arsacid rulers. We begin with the following *dramatis personae* in the extant extracts from Trogus:

Prologue 41:

Arsaces I, Artabanus I, Mithradates I, Diodotus I (the first Bactrian ruler), and the Indian Kings Apollodotus I and Menander I.

Justin book 41:

Diodotus I, Arsaces I, Arsaces II, Arsaces III (Phriapatius), Phraates I, Mithradates I, and Eukratides I of Bactria.

Ignoring the Bactrian and Indian kings and granted that the Latin has reached us unaltered, Justin (41.5.5–6) reports, after recounting the major events of the reign of Arsaces I, that:

> Sic Arsaces quaesito simul constitutoque regno non minus memorabilis Parthis quam Persis Cyrus, Macedonubus Alexander, Romanis Romulus matura senectute decedit, cuius memoriae hunc honorem Parthi tribuerunt, ut omnes exinde reges suos Arsacis nomine nuncupent.
>
> Thus Arsaces, having at once acquired and established a kingdom, and having become no less memorable among the Parthians than Cyrus among the Persians, Alexander among the Macedonians or Romulus among the Romans, died at a mature old age; and the Parthians paid this honour to his memory, that they called all their kings thenceforward by the name Arsaces.

Although the generally accepted free interpretation of *Arsacis nomine nuncupent* is *called by the name Arsaces,*[33] the literal translation should read *called by the title/clan-name Arsaces.* As noted by Justin, Arsaces was only the assumed name (L. *nomen*) and not the first name (L. *prenomen*) of the Parthian kings. This is confirmed by a series of examples from divergent contemporary sources, going back to *c.* 95 when Mithradates II adopted the tiara. The colophon-titles of several Babylonian cuneiform texts style the Great Arsacid prince as *King of Kings Arsaces* (*Aršaka* LUGAL LUGAL.MEŠ) from 109 through to the end of his reign in 91.[34] His vainglorious epithet is also paralleled in the royal titulature on his massive coinage,[35] all ascribed to ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ *(The coin of) Great King of Kings Arsaces (God) Manifest.* However, Mithradates is named, without his dynastic appellation, in the poorly preserved Greek text of the rock monument at Bīsitūn near Kirmānshāh in

[33] Watson 1882: 276; Yardley 1994: 256.

[34] Sachs/Hunger 1996: 352–361, No. –108A+B (203 SEB); 366–371, No. –107C (204 SEB); 394–397, No. –105C (206 SEB); 410–411, No. –96A (215 SEB); 416–417, No. –95A (216 SEB); 436–437, No. –90 (221 SEB); Assar 2006b: 134–149. Prior to 109 BC Mithradates appears as ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥ on his coinage (except S23.3–10 and S24.41–44 which style him as ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ only). S25.1 drachms from Ecbatana and S25.1var. from Rhagae, on the other hand, refer to Mithradates as ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ, in recognition of his successful wars against the Saca invaders and as the "Saviour" of the Empire.

[35] Sellwood 1980: 77–83 (S27–28).

Western Iran, as ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΣ ΜΙΘΡΑΔΑΤΗΣ, *the Great King of Kings Mithradates*.[36] Next are a handful of Babylonian colophons from the period 91––87, all ascribed to *King Arsaces whose name is Gotarzes* (*Aršaka* LUGAL *šá iṭṭaridu Gutarza*).[37] The latest evidence from Babylon, registering both the proper and assumed names of a Parthian ruler, are the date-formulas at the beginning of two lunar texts from 10/11 April and 4/5 October 80. These read *King Arsaces whose name is Orodes* (*Aršaka* LUGAL *šá iṭṭaridu Uruda*).[38]

We also have a series of later Parthian coins, inscribed, almost invariably, with both the dynastic and personal names of their issuing authorities. Chief among these are the S41.1 tetradrachms of Mithradates IV whose inscription, reconstructed from several overstrikes of Orodes II, reads ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΕΠΙΚΑΛΟΥΜΕΝΟΥ ΜΙΘΡΑΔΑΤΟΥ ΦΙΛΕΛΛΗΝΟΣ (*the coin of*) *King Arsaces who is called Mithradates, Philhellene*. a slightly later obol of Orodes II (S48.17) has ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΥΡΟΔΟΥ (*the coin of*) *King of Kings Arsaces Orodes* while the S60 tetradrachms of Vonones I (*c.* AD 8–12) carry (*the coin of*) *King of Kings Arsaces* on the reverse and *King of Kings Vonones* on the obverse. With the exception of S66 tetradrachms of Gotarzes II (*c.* AD 40–51),[39] the above issues are followed by several later outputs inscribed in Greek with both the personal names of the Parthians kings and their title Arsaces.[40] We then note, beginning with the reign of Vologases I (*c.* AD 51–55 and also AD 58–78), the appearance of personal names in Aramaic, originally abbreviated under Vologases I, Vologases II (*c.* AD 78–80) and Pacorus II (*c.* AD 78–105) and then fully inscribed from the reign of Mithradates V (*c.* AD 115–147) onward. These include the S84.184 tetrachalkoi of Vologases IV (*c.* AD 147–191), probably struck at Edessa, with the inscription *'ršk wlgšy* MLKYN MLK' *King of Kings Arsaces Vologases*. The latter text also appears on a small half-bust royal statuette[41] and then, accompanied by its Greek counterpart, on a bronze statue of Heracles,[42] both from the reign of Vologases IV.

Additional material includes three lapidary inscriptions, all recording the personal names of the corresponding rulers and of their fathers without the dynastic title Arsaces. The first of these is ascribed to Gotarzes II and comes from Sar-e Pol-e Zohāb in Kirmānshāh.[43] It reads *ptkr* ZNH NPŠH *gwtrz* MLK' BRY *'rtbnw* MLK' *This is the very image of King Gotarzes son of King Artabanus*. The second inscription is carved on a boulder in Bīsitūn,[44] showing the standing figure of a Parthian king next to an altar with a partially preserved text. It reads *ptkr* ZNH *wlgšy* MLKYN MLK' BRY … *This is the very image of King of Kings Vologases son of* … Finally, we have, *'rtbnw* MLKYN

[36] Curtis 2000: 24–25; Assar 2006b: 144.

[37] Assar 2006c: 62–69.

[38] Hunger/Sachs 2001: 72–75, nos. 25 and 26; Assar 2006c: 75–82.

[39] This type bears the personal name of the king only. Cf. Wroth 1903: 162, nos. 10–11; Sellwood 1980: 218 (S66.1–3).

[40] Sellwood 1980: S72–79, S84, S86–88 tetradrachms.

[41] Ghirshman 1954: 280 and pl. 33a.

[42] Al-Salihi 1984: 223–226; Invernizzi 1985a: 421–422; 1985b: 424–425; Al-Salihi 1987: 161–164; Pennacchietti 1987: 171–173; Invernizzi 1989: 76–77; Bernard 1990: 23–26; Lipiński 1990: 128–129; Morano 1990: 230–237; Rezai 2002: 153–154; 2006: 141–142.

[43] Haruta 1990: 58–59.

[44] Kawami 1987: 160–162; Mathiesen 1992: 175–176, no. 96.

MLK' BRY *wlgšy* MLKYN MLK' *King of Kings Artabanus, son of King of Kings Vologases*, on the stele of Khwasak from Susa, depicting the Parthian king, Artabanus V (*c.* AD 216–224), seated and passing the ring of power to the Susian satrap.[45]

The above divergent examples support Justin who probably followed Trogus in asserting that all the successors of Arsaces I adopted the dynastic title Arsaces to revere the memory of the founder of their kingdom. They further confirm that the commonly accepted interpretation of *Arsacis nomine nuncupent* as *called by the name Arsaces* in Justin's book 41.5.6 may be inadmissible and that the correct translation would have to be read as *called by the title Arsaces*. Yet these documents and coins fail to identify the successor of Arsaces I who ascended the throne as Artabanus. To clarify the discrepancy, we must turn to the political situation in Parthia, beginning with the inception of the kingdom under Arsaces I through to the accession of Mithradates I. This would enable us to explain the reasons for Artabanus' inclusion in *Prologue* 41, his omission from book 41 of the *Epitome*, and the apparent absence and presence of Arsaces II in the same two sources, respectively.

Now, granted that the three Parthian reigns in *Prologue* 41 appear in their correct chronological order, Artabanus must have assumed the throne before Mithradates I. His absence in book 41 of the *Epitome*, therefore, implies that while abbreviating the early Arsacid history, Justin committed an error. He either omitted Artabanus altogether, conflated his reign with that of an adjacent ruler, or simply misidentified him with one of the three named princes in book 41.5.7–9 of the *Epitome*. The latter were Arsaces II, Phriapatius, and Phraates I whose reigns also preceded that of Mithradates I. As set out in the following paragraphs, closer inspection of the corresponding passages shows that Justin made no mistake other than dropping the personal name of the second Arsaces.

Having narrated the achievements of Arsaces I in some detail in book 41.4.6–41.5.6, Justin (41.5.7) goes on to report that:[46]

> Huius filius et successor regni, Arsaces et ipse nomine, adversus Antiochum, Seleuci filium, centum milibus peditum et XX milibus equitum instructum mira virtute pugnavit; ad postremum in societatem eius adsumptus est.

Overlooking the thrust of Justin's narrative in the immediately preceding sentence in book 41.5.6, concerning the adoption by all Parthian rulers of the dynastic epithet Arsaces, this has been persistently interpreted as:

> His son and successor on the throne, whose name was also Arsaces, fought with the greatest bravery against Antiochus (III), the son of Seleucus (II), who was at the head of a hundred thousand foot and twenty thousand horse, and was at last taken into alliance with him.

The next sentence in Justin (41.5.8) begins with a clear remark that the third Parthian king[47] was Phriapatius (Priapatius): *Tertius Parthis rex Priapatius fuit* and ends with:

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[45] Ghirshman 1950: 99–100; Henning 1952: 176; Mathiesen 1992: 168–169, no. 87.

[46] Watson 1882: 276. I have adopted Watson's translation of Justin throughout this note, occasionally adjusting his free interpretation to clarify certain points.

[47] Justin refers to such great kings as Darius I, Xerxes I, Artaxerxes I, Philip II of Macedonia, and the Seleucid monarchs Antiochus III and Antiochus IV as *rex*. Styling Phriapatius also as *rex* suggests that the third Parthian prince had adopted the title king (βασιλεύς) before his death.

sed et ipse Arsaces dictus. Nam sicut supra dictum est, omnes reges suos hoc nomine, sicuti Romani Caesares Augustosque, cognominavere.

but he (Phriapatius) was also called Arsaces, for, as has just been observed, they (the Parthians) distinguished all their kings by that name, as the Romans use the titles of Caesar and Augustus.

According to the "accession record" on ostracon 2638 (1760) from Nisa,[48] Phriapatius (185–170) was a grandnephew[49] of Arsaces I, BRY 'ḤY BRY ZY(??) *'ršk = puhr brādarzādag čē(??) Aršak* = son of brother's son of Arsaces, and therefore came from the collateral Parthian branch. His appointment as the third ruler after Arsaces II indicates that except for an infant grandson,[50] the latter died without a mature male successor. Consequently, Phriapatius stood as regent for fifteen years until the child prince came of age and claimed his grandfather's throne as the fourth Arsaces.[51]

Now, setting aside the link between Artabanus and Arsaces II for the moment, it has been noted that while excerpting the complex section on *varia conplurium regum*, alluded to in *Prologue* 42, Justin confused some of the kings and affairs of the Parthian "Dark Age".[52] It may, therefore, be argued that he equally confounded one of the rulers from the formative years of the Arsacid history. However, the period 91–55 is renowned for its internecine wars and bitter rivalry between various Arsacid claimants.[53] In stark contrast, following the cessation of hostilities between Antiochus III and Arsaces II in 208, Parthia enjoyed nearly forty tranquil years until Phraates I attacked the Mardi in Hyrcania in 167/166. The intervening period covered the reigns of Phriapatius, Arsaces IV and Phraates I in Parthia and of Seleucus IV (187–175) and his younger brother Antiochus IV (175–164) in Syria.[54] It is possible that the unimpressive reign of Seleucus IV, occasioned by the misfortunes in the closing years of his father, Antiochus III,[55] enabled Phriapatius to manage the affairs of his kingdom equally quietly throughout the greater part of his own reign. Thereafter, the developing crisis in the West, involving a series of wars with the Ptolemaic Egypt and disaffected Jews in Judea, preoccupied Antiochus IV for about a decade. This granted the third Arsaces the opportunity to end

[48] Diakonoff/Livshits 1960a: 20–21 and 113; 1960b: 38; 1966: 143–144 n. 28; 1976: 2; 1999: pl. 917; 2003: 174; Assar 2004: 74–75.

[49] Or great-grandnephew if the partially preserved text in line 2 of the inscription is restored as BRY 'ḤY BRY BRY, that is, "son of the brother's grandson". Cf. Assar 2006c: 61 n. 53. If, on the other hand, the original text read BRY 'ḤY BRY BRTY, that is, "son of the brother's granddaughter", then Phriapatius would be "son of the grandniece" of Arsaces I.

[50] The inscription on ostracon 2L from Nisa attests the accession of a great-grandson (BRY *npt* = "son of grandson") of Arsaces I. Cf. Livshits/Nikitin 1994: 315; Bader 1996: 265. He ascended the throne as Arsaces IV about 170 and died shortly afterwards (around 168), prompting, once again, the transfer of authority to the cadet Arsacid line. Cf. Assar 2004: 71; Assar 2005b: 38.

[51] Assar 2004: 82–87; 2005b: 38–39; 2007: 3–14. Cf. Appendix I for further evidence.

[52] Cf. Assar 2006c: 69–75 and 96, n. 200 on the possibility that Justin confused the dispute between Mithradates III and Orodes I with the later conflict between Mithradates IV and Orodes II and thus conflated the two episodes.

[53] Sellwood 1962: 73–79; 1965: 113–135; Simonetta 1966: 15–40; Walton Dobbins 1975: 19–45; Sellwood 1976: 2–25; Mørkholm 1980: 33–47; Dilmaghani 1986: 216–224; Assar 2006c: 55–97.

[54] Seleucus IV was succeeded by his young son, called Antiochus, who was nominally king until his murder in 170. Cf. Grainger 1997: 23 and 37.

[55] Appian (*Syrian Wars*, 66); Grainger 1997: 64.

his remaining years on the throne undisturbed. The scanty sources further suggest that following the death of Phriapatius, there was no immediate Parthian irruption into the neighbouring satrapies to provoke Seleucid reprisal. Considering both the primary and later sources, the Seleuco-Parthian alliance of 208 must have left the Arsacid kingdom unmolested down to 167/6. It is, therefore, possible that lack of complexity prevented Justin from mistaking the third Arsaces with Artabanus while abbreviating the reign of Phriapatius. The brevity of the corresponding passage in book 41.5.8, as compared with Justin's accounts of the immediately preceding and succeeding reigns, agrees with both the untroubled period 208–167/6 in Parthia and the uneventful reign of Phriapatius. It thus justifies the latter's exclusion from *Prologue* 41. It also confirms that the following sentence in book 41.5.9 of the *Epitome* concerns no other Arsacid kings except Phriapatius and his sons Phraates I and Mithradates I:

> Hic actis in regno XV annis decessit relictis duobus filiis, Mithridate et Phrahate.
>
> He, after reigning 15 years, died, leaving two sons, Mithradates and Phraates.

As for the exclusion of Arsaces IV from *Prologue* 41 and Justin's book 41, we have, once again, consistency between the ephemeral reign of the young prince and the fact that he too ascended the throne during the quiet period 208–167/166. Irrespective of his direct link with the founder of the Parthian dynasty, the brief and uneventful reign of Arsaces IV neither qualified him for *Prologue* 41 nor attracted Justin's attention. He may, therefore, not be identified with Artabanus in the same prologue.

We then catch a glimpse of the high point of the reign of Phraates I as the conqueror of the powerful Mardi dwellers of the Hyrcanian uplands in Justin (41.5.9–10):

> Quorum maior Phrahates, more gentis heres regni, Mardos, validam gentem, bello domuit nec multo post decessit pluribus filiis relictis.
>
> of whom (the two sons of Phriapatius) the elder, Phraates, being, according to the custom of the nation, heir to the crown, subdued the Mardi, a strong people, by force of arms, and died not long after, leaving several sons.

According to Isidore of Charax (*Parthian Stations*, 2.7), Phraates relocated the defeated Mardi in the fortress town of Charax at the foot of Mount Caspius, to guard the Caspian Gates near Rhagae. The latter was a strategically important Seleucid outpost in Eastern Media. The fifth Arsacid ruler[56] was, therefore, the first successor of Arsaces I to begin the westward expansion of Parthia. His incursion into Hyrcania shattered the peace treaty with the Seleucids and impelled Antiochus IV (175–164) to entrust the Maccabaean insurrection to his generals and march east in early spring 165 to quell the Parthian rebellion.[57] Yet Phraates' absence in *Prologue* 41 suggests that his deeds were

[56] The introduction between Phriapatius and Phraates I of Arsaces IV, the great-grandson of Arsaces I, renders Phraates the fifth Arsaces. This is further confirmed by Orosius (5.4.16) who refers to Mithradates I as the sixth Arsacid ruler. Cf. Assar 2004: 77–88 and 2005b: 27–46 on early Parthian genealogy.

[57] Assar 2005b: 39–40; 2006a: 78; 2006b: 88–89. It is possible that Phraates' attack on Hyrcania was inspired by Antiochus' setback in Egypt and humiliation by the Roman envoy, Gaius Popilius Laenas, who threatened the Seleucid ruler with punitive measures and ordered him out of the Ptolemaic kingdom in mid summer 168. Cf. II.Maccabees (5.1 and 5.5–6); Polybius (29.2.1–4 and 29.27.1–13); Livy (44.19.6–14, 45.10.1–15, 45.11.1–11; 45.12.1–8); Diodorus Siculus (31.1–2); Josephus (*Jewish Antiquities*, 12.244–257); Appian (*Syrian Wars*, 66); Justin (34.3.1–4). Cf. also Sachs/Hunger 1989: 496–7, No.–164B+C on Antio-

overshadowed by those of Artabanus. Otherwise he too would have been included in the same prologue. Justin's passing remarks on the comparatively less impressive reigns of Phriapatius and Phraates I indicate that he properly structured his summary of the early Parthian chronology down to the inception of the reign of Mithradates I. He selected only the most important incidents from the intervening years and removed the brief and unimportant reign of Arsaces IV. They further imply that none of the longer Arsacid reigns from the quiet period 208–167/6 presented Justin with unmanageable complications to merit outright omission. After all, it has already been adduced elsewhere that Justin's accounts in books 2.10.1–11, 3.2.5–6, 16.2.7–9, and 21.1.1–2 confirm his keen interest in hereditary succession and primogeniture.[58] These report the accessions of Xerxes I (486–465), Charillus, the posthumous son of the Spartan king Polydectes, Ptolemy II (282–246), and Dionysius II, the elder son of the Sicilian tyrant Dionysius I. It would, therefore, be inconceivable that Justin failed to recognise a distinguished successor of Arsaces I, called Artabanus, or declined to summarise the latter's successful reign in book 41 of the *Epitome* in association with his fleeting commentaries on Phriapatius and Phraates I.[59]

It is also noteworthy that Polybius (10.49.1–15 and 11.39.1–10) recounts, in some detail, the 2-year confrontation between Antiochus III and Euthydemus I (*c.* 230–200),[60] culminating in the Seleuco-Bactrian pact of 206. Yet, in spite of a reference to Euthydemus as *the Greatest of all Kings* (πάντων μέγιστον Εὐθύδημον βασιλέυων),[61] the Bactrian ruler appears neither in *Prologue* 41 nor Justin's book 41. This suggests that the compiler of Trogus' prologues did not rank Euthydemus as high as Arsaces I, Artabanus I, and Mithradates I. It may, nevertheless, be countered that because Justin omitted Euthydemus and overlooked the two Indian kings Apollodotus I and Menander I in *Prologue* 41, he may well have removed an earlier Arsacid reign too.[62] However, Justin did not simply exclude those rulers, replacing them or conflating their reigns with other Bactrian and Indian kings. He purposely erased from his book 41 the whole of Trogus' "Indian History",[63] highlighted in *Prologue* 41. Instead, he briefly recounted, in book 41.4.5-9, some Bactrian affairs under Diodotus I who appears in the same prologue, and augmented this with his fleeting remarks on Eucratides I (*c.* 171–148)[64] in book 41.6.1–6.

As for an onomastic error, resulting from Justin's misnaming Phriapatius or Phraates as Artabanus, it should be reiterated that the third and fifth Arsacid rulers are attested in-

chus' presence in Armenia in September 165. Pliny (*Natural History*, 6.31.139) mentions Antiochus IV, "the fifth king of Syria", who re-founded the city of Charax (Spaosinu) on the Persian Gulf and named it after himself. This must have been accomplished during Antiochus' eastern anabasis and before his incursion into Elymais in late 165.

[58] Yardley 1994: 7.

[59] Yardley 1994: 10 suggests that Justin was probably affected by a desire to pass on, as quickly as possible, to the next good story. It is, therefore, unlikely that he found nothing interesting to report on the reign of Artabanus of *Prol.* 41.

[60] Bopearachchi 1991: 47–49.

[61] Cf. the dedicatory inscription from Tajikistan in Rougemont 2004: 332–335; Rougemont 2005: 133––134; and MacDowell 2005: 203.

[62] Cf. Appendix II.

[63] Justin's only reference to an Indian ruler, called Demetrius, is in book 41.6.4 of the *Epitome*.

[64] Wilson and Assar 2007: 24–25. Eucratides may have occupied the throne in *c.* 168 and backdated his reign to *c.* 171 when he was a governor under Demetrius I (*c.* 185–170/167).

dependently of Trogus' book 41. We have Phriapatius from Nisa[65] and Phraates, as stated above, in Isidore, in connection with the Mardi. The apparent harmony between Justin and Isidore, both naming Phraates I as the conqueror of the powerful Mardian tribes in Hyrcania, indicates that the fifth Arsaces was not called Artabanus. Phriapatius too may be excluded from having been mistakenly called Artabanus by the fact that his uneventful reign would not have qualified him for inclusion in *Prologue* 41 in any way.

It is equally difficult to plead that having set out to extract from Trogus' books the most noteworthy episodes, Justin intentionally conflated the reign of a celebrated Parthian ruler called Artabanus with that of a less important prince before the accession of Mithradates I. As already indicated, following his pact with Antiochus III in 208, Arsaces II and his successors remained inactive and at peace with their neighbours until 167/6. Given that Mithradates I is present in *Prologue* 41 as a successor of Artabanus I, the latter's reign must necessarily have preceded the Seleuco-Parthian alliance. It could, therefore, not have been confused with one from the quiet period in Parthia.

The same arguments may be extended to the unknown compiler of Trogus' prologues although the known text of his work incorporates an erroneous name. The unattested Araetheus[66] in *Prologue* 35 is a slip, most probably, for Ariarathes V (*c.* 163–130), the Cappadocian ruler, or less likely, the Armenian prince, Artavasdes I (160–123). However, the manifest dissimilarity between Artabanus on the one hand and Phriapatius and Phraates on the other, renders their confusion improbable.

Now, returning to the reign of Arsaces II (211–185), assuming that he too bore the name Arsaces requires Justin to have uncharacteristically neglected Artabanus, a prominent Arsacid ruler who took the crown before Mithradates I. As already stated, Justin's style of epitomization precludes his intentional omission of the reign of this king who, judging from his place in *Prologue* 41 between the two illustrious Parthian sovereigns Arsaces I and Mithradates I, was himself an outstanding ruler. Moreover, because Justin reports that the Parthians called all their subsequent kings, *omnes exinde reges suos*, by the epithet Arsaces,[67] there would be little sense in his awarding this title to a prince whose proper name was Arsaces. Given that the central theme of Justin's narrative in his books 41.5.6–9 is basic chronology with special emphasis on the adoption by the successors of Arsaces I of the dynastic title Arsaces, it is possible that he simply reported the epithet of the second Parthian ruler when he wrote *Arsaces et ipse nomine* in book 41.5.7

[65] For Nisa ostracon 2638 (1760), dated 157 AE (91/90) cf. Diakonoff/Livshits 1960a: 20–21 and 113; 1960b: 38; 1966: 143–144 n. 28; 1976: 2; 1999: pl. 917; 2003: 174; Assar 2004: 74–75. For Nisa ostracon 2640 (Nova 307), dated 180 AE (69/68), cf. Diakonnoff/Livshits 1966: 143–4 n. 28 and pls. X and Xa; Chaumont 1968: 16; 1971: 145–146; Bader 1994: 264; Diakonoff/Livshits 1999: pl. 918; 2003: 174; Assar 2004: 75–76.

[66] Ruehl 1886: 262; Seel 1972: 320; Yardley 1994: 283.

[67] Strabo (15.1.36) confirms Justin and reports that: "Such is also the custom among the Parthians; for all are called Arsaces, although personally one king is called Orodes, another Phraates, and another something else". Moreover, the alleged epitaph of Phraates II for Antiochus VII after the death of the ambitious Seleucid ruler in 129 implies that the Parthians had named their Empire after Arsaces I. The preserved Fragment 63 of Posidonius (in turn retained in Athenaios, 10.439D–E) quotes the Parthian king as having remarked: "Your boldness and drunkenness, Antiochus, caused you fall; for you expected to drink up the Kingdom of Arsaces (Αρσάκου βασιλείαν) in huge cups". This further underlines the importance of the title Arsaces. Cf. Kidd 1988: 302 (commentary); Edelstein/Kidd 1989: 83 (Greek text); Kidd 1999: 132 (translation). Cf. also Ammianus Marcellinus (23.6.2) on the kingdom of Parthia taking its name from Arsaces I.

of the *Epitome*. Accordingly, with Artabanus in *Prologue* 41 already unidentifiable with Phriapatius, Arsaces IV and Phraates I from the quiet period 208–167/6 in Parthia, he may be recognised as Arsaces II, the remaining ruler in book 41.5.7–10 of Justin.

Historically, there can be no objections to this. Justin (41.5.7) intimates that Arsaces II fought with admirable gallantry, *mira virtute pugnavit*, against Antiochus III and was finally accepted by the latter as an ally and not a subject, *ad postremum in societatem eius adsumptus est.* He must have successfully opposed Seleucid advances into the Parthian heartland in 209–208 and distinguished himself by avoiding capture or death in the hands of his powerful antagonist. Unfortunately, in recording the campaigns of Antiochus III in Parthia, Polybius (10.27.1–10.31.13) terminates his narration of the Seleucid incursion with the fall of the Parthian city Tambrax and the provincial capital Syrinx in Hyrcania.[68] Justin, on the other hand, paints a different picture in which Arsaces II is portrayed as a courageous warrior. Although the details of the combats between Antiochus III and Arsaces II are lost, Justin's summary implies that the second Arsacid prince retained his imperial status when, at the end of several inconclusive encounters, he was accepted by Antiochus III as a partner. He was, therefore, not a Seleucid vassal[69] and the Parthians probably held him in great esteem as the saviour of their nascent kingdom from total subjection to their former overlords, the Seleucids. We are told by Justin that Arsaces I rebelled from Seleucid suzerainty, attacked Parthia and slew her resident satrap, Andragoras (246–238). Soon afterwards, he annexed Hyrcania, founded the Arsacid kingdom and defended her independence by scoring a momentous victory against an earlier Seleucid invasion under Seleucus II (246–225).[70] Finally, he died as renowned a leader as Cyrus II the Great (559–529) and hence his appearance in *Prologue* 41 as the liberator of the Parthians. We also know from Justin (36.1.2–6) that Mithradates I the Great defeated and captured a later Seleucid ruler, Demetrius II (145–138, 1st reign), who invaded Mesopotamia in early 138.[71] Unsurprisingly, therefore, as both the architect and protector of the Parthian Empire, Mithradates I emerges in *Prologue* 41 as a distinguished sovereign. Given the Seleuco-Parthian alliance of 208, only hastily registered by Justin (41.5.7), it is equally not surprising that as an accomplished Parthian ruler, Arsaces II, called Artabanus, was justifiably included in *Prologue* 41. He was placed between his illustrious predecessor, Arsaces I, and a celebrated successor, Mithradates I, to signify his successful campaign against Antiochus III, the greatest of all Seleucid rulers after Seleucus I (311–281).[72]

However, equating Artabanus in *Prologue* 41 with Arsaces II in book 41.5.7 of the *Epitome* still requires Justin to have purposely omitted the personal name of the second Parthian prince in favour of his title, Arsaces. Although this view has already been con-

[68] Polybius may have continued his commentary on Antiochus' invasion of Parthia and the protracted wars with Arsaces II in the lost pages of his book.

[69] If Antiochus III had vanquished Arsaces II, Justin would have used a Latin verb such as *expugno* or *domo, perdomo, debello, subigo, subjungo* to define the outcome of the conflict and indicate that the Arsacid state had, once again, become feudatory to the Seleucids.

[70] Assar/Bagloo 2006: 28–31.

[71] Justin (36.1.3–6 and 38.9.2–3); Sachs/Hunger 1996: 160–1, No.–137A; Dąbrowa 1999: 9–17; Assar 2005b: 43; 2006b: 90–91.

[72] Rawlinson 1873: 58–59; Grainger 1997: 20. Cf. Appian (*Syrian Wars*, 1 and 66) on the epithet "the Great" of Antiochus III after the latter's exploits in Media, Parthia "and other countries that had revolted from his ancestors".

sistently reflected in several major works on the history of Parthia,[73] it has, nevertheless, been overlooked in the extant translations of the *Epitome*. Yet a re-examination of the relevant text reveals that Justin does not explicitly contend that the proper name of the son of Arsaces I was Arsaces.

As noted earlier, Justin is still preoccupied with the adoption by all the successors of Arsaces I of the throne name Arsaces when he begins, in book 41.5.8, the reign of the third Parthian ruler, Phriapatius. He promptly asserts that: *but he was also called* (or better still, *declared*) *Arsaces*. He then places special emphasis on this last point by reiterating that: *for, as has just been observed, they (the Parthians) distinguished all their kings by that name* (in fact, *clan-name*), *as the Romans use the titles of Caesar and Augustus.* Justin's reference to Caesar (in Gaius Julius Caesar Divus) and Augustus (in Gaius Octavius Augustus) as titles[74] confirms his correct use of the trinomial Roman nomenclature. This consisted of *prenomen*, *nomen*, and *cognomen* (occasionally accompanied by a second or third title called *agnomen*). Of these, the first stood before the clan or race (gens) name and distinguished one member of the familia from another. The second and third separated, respectively, one clan from another and one familia from another. Since the adoption of the title Arsaces is one of the central points in the short passage in Justin (41.5.6–8), the sentence *Huius filius et successor regni, Arsaces et ipse nomine* may be interpreted as *His son and successor on the throne, whose title was also Arsaces*. In other words, the correct translation of *nomine* in this particular case should be "title" or "entitled" rather than "name" or "named". After all, it is unlikely that having already employed *nomine* in book 41.5.6 to establish Arsaces as a title, Justin unhesitatingly used it in the next sentence in book 41.5.7 to record the personal name of Arsaces II. As shown in book 41.4.9, Justin disregards *nomine* and follows a simple and unambiguous formula to report that a father and his son shared the same name:[75]

> Sed cito morte Diodoti metu liberatus cum filio eius, et ipso Diodoto, foedus ac pacem fecit,
>
> But being soon relieved of his fears by the death of Diodotus, he (Arsaces I) made peace and an alliance with his son, who was also named Diodotus.

It should, nevertheless, be pointed out that Justin has employed *nomine* throughout his *Epitome* to register the proper names of persons of royal and common background. One example in book 42.4.16 is of particular interest:

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[73] Cf. the works in n. 17 above.

[74] Steele (1917: 24–25) and Alonso-Núñez (1987: 60) adduce that the allusion to the Roman rulers could well be an insertion by Justin. Yardley (1994: 5) remarks that there are nothing in Justin's excerpts to assert that they were taken *verbatim* from Trogus rather than reworked by himself.

[75] Cf. also Justin (37.1.6): *Mithridates quoque repentina morte interceptus filium, qui et ipse Mithridates dictus est, reliquit; …Mithradates (V of Pontus) also, being cut off by a sudden death, left a son, who was likewise called Mithradates.* Wolski (1962: 143) remarks that: *Je n'ai pas besoin d'insister d'avantage sur l'expression Arsaces et ipse nomine; on voit clairement qu'ici Justin parle exclusivement du nom propre du roi. Il n'est pas question ici de nuncupatio, dictio ou de cognominatio comme dans les cas cités ci-dessus.* This is inconsistent with Justin who properly structures the sentences involving *Arsacis nomine nuncupent* in book 41.5.6, *et ipse Arsaces dictus* and *omnes reges suos hoc nomine* in book 41.5.8 to ensure that the title of the Parthian rulers is not confused with their proper names.

> Sed fatum Parthiae fecit, in qua iam quasi sollemne est reges parricidas haberi, ut sceleratissimus omnium, et ipse Phrahates nomine, rex stateuretur.
>
> But the fate of Parthia, in which it is now, as it were, customary that the princes should be assassins of their kindred, ordained that the most cruel of them all, Phraates by name, should be fixed upon for their king.

However, here Justin is not concerned, as he is in book 41.5.6–8, with the adoption of the dynastic title by the successors of Arsaces I. The context, therefore, signifies that he is using *nomine* to confirm that the son of Orodes II was also called Phraates. In fact, *et ipse Phrahates nomine* suggests a connection with another prince with the same name or the father of Orodes whose name was indeed Phraates.[76]

Conversely, in relation to the accession of the last Achaemenid king, Darius III (336––331), Justin (10.3.5) intimates that:

> Ob haec decora idem Codomannus praeficitur Armeniis. Interiecto deinde tempore post mortem Ochi Regis ob memoriam pristinae virtutis rex a polulo constituitur, Darei nomine, ne quid regiae maiestati deesset, honoratus.
>
> For this honourable service Codomannus was made governor of Armenia. Some time after, on the death of Ochus (Artaxerxes III), he was chosen king by the people from regard to his former merits, and, that nothing might be wanting to his royal dignity, honoured with the name (in fact, throne-name or title) Darius.

The date-formulas in at least two Babylonian astronomical texts from 335 and 333 confirm that the personal name of Darius III was Artashāt and that he received the throne name Darius upon his accession (*Artašata šá Dariawuš* LUGAL MU-*šú nabû*).[77]

The above examples leave little doubt that the correct interpretation of *nomine* is decided by the context in which it appears and that it may not be invariably translated as "name" or "named".[78]

Finally, it should be pointed out that Moses of Chorene (2.2 and 2.68) reports that the first Parthian ruler was Arshak while his son and successor called Artashçs.[79] Although Moses' historical comments may not be taken *prima facie* as reliable unless validated by

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[76] Dio Cassius (36.45.3, 36.51.1–3, 37.5.2–4, 37.6.1–3, 37.7.1–4, 37.15.1, 39.56.2); Phlegon of Tralles (Fr. 12.7); Jacoby 1929: 1163–1164; 1930: 842; Henry 1960: 64.

[77] Sachs/Hunger 1988: 168–175, No.–332A+B (regnal year 3 of Darius III); Hunger/Sachs 2001: 268––269, Planetary Text 66 (regnal year 1 of Darius III).

[78] Cf. also Justin (38.1.10) on Mithradates VI Eupator of Pontus who, after killing the Cappadocian king Ariarathes VII Philometor (*c.* 115–100), awarded the latter's name to his own 8-year old son, Ariarathes VIII Eusebes Philopator (*c.* 100–96), giving him the kingdom of Cappadocia and appointing Gordius his guardian: *... regnum Cappadociae octo annorum filio inposito Ariarathis nomine additoque ei rectore Gordio tradit.* However, Justin (38.2.1) reports that the Cappadocians soon revolted from Mithradates and sent for the brother of their murdered king *who was also "called" Ariarathes … et ipsum Ariarathen nomine*. It is difficult to decide whether Ariarathes IX Epiphanes (*c.* 96/5) actually bore the same name as his brother or adopted the dynastic title when he took the crown, as did his grandfather, Ariarathes V (163–130), whose name was, according to Diodorus (31.19.7), Mithradates. Like the Arsacid kings of Parthia, with the exception of Ariamnes II (280–262 or 230), son of Ariarathes II (301–280), and the pretender, Orophernes (157), the Ariarathid rulers of Cappadocia were called Ariarathes, after the founder of their dynasty, Ariarathes I (331–322).

[79] Thomson 1978: 130–131 and 257.

independent evidence, it is, nevertheless, interesting that the Armenian writer too calls the first two Arsacid rulers by two different names.

Perhaps the Parthian kings simply followed the old and deep-rooted Iranian tradition of adopting the clan-name rather than deciding, *ad hoc*, to take upon themselves the name of the founder of their dynasty. Several texts in Old Persian cuneiform attest that in order to perpetuate the memory of their distant ancestor, Achaemenes, Darius I (522–486) and his successors styled themselves *Haxāmanišiya* in addition to their personal and throne names.[80] These include three texts from Hamadān (all from early 6th century BC under Darius I), two of which name Ariaramenes, and one mentions Arsames, as well as three texts from Pasargadae ostensibly cut under Cyrus II the Great (559–529) but probably added by Darius I or one of his successors. We then have the trilingual rock inscription at Bīsitūn followed by several short texts from Persepolis, Naqsh-e Rustam in Fars, Susa, Alvand, and Hamadān in which Darius I calls himself an Achaemenid. Xerxes I (486–465), Artaxerxes I (465–425), Darius II (424–405), Artaxerxes II (405–359), and Artaxerxes III (359–338) too are well attested as an Achaemenid in several records from Persepolis, Susa, Van, and Hamadān. It is, therefore, not impossible that on the death of Arsaces I, the dynastic name Arsaces was automatically adopted by his son and successor, Arsaces II called Artabanus I, rather than conferred on him by the Parthians.

Appendix I:

Irrespective of the duration of Phriapatius' reign, the decision by the Parthians to install him as the successor of Arsaces II confirms that the grandson of the latter was a minor when his grandfather died. In fact, the extant contemporary and later records indicate that the young prince was less than a year old on the death of Arsaces II. Otherwise, having attained majority at 15, he would have inherited his ancestral throne before the termination of Phriapatius' 15-year reign. The colophon-title of a contract text from Uruk shows that upon his accession in Jul./Aug. 132, Phraates II (132–127) shared the throne with his mother, Rīnnu, for a few months because of his tender age. Combined with his portrait on S14.1–2 tetradrachms, this attested co-regency indicates that Phraates was just short of fifteen when his father, Mithradates I, died. However, beginning with Nīsānu 181 SEB (Apr./May 131), the subsequent Babylonian colophons are all subscribed to "King Arsaces" alone. They thus confirm that on reaching 15, Phraates II inaugurated his independent reign.[81]

A later example concerns the accession of Hyspaosines II (124–121/0), the young son and successor of the charismatic Characenean ruler Hyspaosines I (129/8–124, as king). According to an incomplete entry in a contemporary Babylonian astronomical record, Hyspaosines I died on 10/11 June 124.[82] He was succeeded by his son who is styled, in the corresponding text, as: 1 ^{lú}DUMU *ṣa-aḫ-ri*, i.e., "one small boy". However, the adjective

[80] Kent 1950: 116–156.
[81] Assar 2003: 186 n. 25; 2005b: 44–45; Dąbrowa 2005: 73 n. 1; Assar 2006b: 95–96.
[82] Sachs/Hunger 1996: 282–283, No. –123A, Obv. 18–20; Assar 2006b: 126.

ṣaḫri also stands for "young, minor",[83] implying that the Characenean prince had not yet reached majority. Although we have no indication of the age of Hyspaosines II, numismatic evidence suggests that he was about 14 at his accession. The extant coins confirm Hyspaosines I as king in 129/8 (ΔΠΡ), 126/5 (ΖΠΡ) and 125/4 (ΗΠΡ).[84] There are no known examples from year ΘΠΡ (124/3) naming Hyspaosines. However, production must have resumed in the following year since specimens dated ϘΡ (123/2), ΑϘΡ (122/1) and ΒϘΡ (121/0) have come to light, all inscribed with ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΥΣΠΑΟΣΙΝΟΥ. It is possible that the young Characenean price began issuing coins as soon as he came of age, less than two years after his accession.

We are also told by Justin (37.2.4) that as a young boy, Mithradates VI Eupator (121––163) of Pontus, faced treasonous plots by his guardians. Since Memnon (FGrH 434.22) relates that Mithradates took the crown at 13, he would have been a stripling when his father, Mithradates V (*c.* 150–121), died and left him the command of the Pontic kingdom. Furthermore, al-Tabari reports that the Sasanian king Shapur II (AD 309–379) was born after the death of his father, Hormazd II (AD 302–309). Accordingly, the viziers and secretaries retained the official functions they had held during the reign of Hormazd and continued in these positions until Shapur "reached sixteen years of age and was able to bear weapons and ride cavalry horses, and his physical strength became great". This implies that Shapur's independent reign started at the Zoroastrian adulthood age of fifteen.[85] The accessions of Phraates II and Shapur II, both having their roots in old Iranian traditions, differ from similar practices elsewhere in the ancient world. For example, according to Strabo (13.4.2), the Attalid king, Eumenes II (197–160), left the throne to his brother, Attalus II Philadelphus (160–139), appointing him guardian of his own young son, Attalus III Philometor (139–133). However, the latter took up the reins of power on the death of his uncle who had reigned for 21 years.[86] Moreover, Polybius (2.44.1–2.45.2) and Justin (28.3.9) report that when the Macedonian king Demetrius II (239–229) died, his son Philip V (221–179) was a mere boy. As a result, Antigonus III Doson (229–221), a grandson of Demetrius Poliorcetes (and cousin of Demetrius II), acted as his guardian. Although Justin (28.4.16) intimates that Philip ascended the throne at the age of 14 on the death of Antigonus, Polybius (4.5.3–4) remarks that the Macedonian prince was "not more than seventeen" in 221, that is, a delay of about 2–3 years in his accession.[87] Apparently, the fourteenth birthday was symbolic of reaching manhood in the Hellenistic world. Although Hercules, the son of Alexander III from Barsine was actually 17/18 years old in 309, Justin (15.2.3) reports that Cassander was afraid of him "who had passed his 14th birthday" lest he seized the throne of Macedonia because of the prestige of his late father's name. He thus ordered the mother and son to be secretly murdered and buried unceremoniously.

[83] Cf. *CAD* 16, 1962: 61–62 (*ṣaḫḫaru*, *ṣaḫḫarūtu*, and *ṣaḫru*), 120–124 (*ṣaḫru*, to become small, to become few, to be young, to be a minor), 174–176 (*ṣiḫḫirūtu*, small, young), 179–186 (*ṣiḫru*, small, young, second in rank).

[84] Assar 2006b: 105–109 and 118–125. Arsaces VIII suppressed Hyspaosines' coinage and prevented him from minting in years 128/7 and 127/6. Cf. Assar 2006b: 114–116.

[85] Bosworth 1999: 50–54.

[86] Allen 1983: 181–194.

[87] Cf. also Polybius (2.70.4–8) and Plutarch (*Aratus*, 46.1).

Appendix II:

Given the numismatic evidence and the scanty Babylonian records from the period 127–121, there is little doubt that Justin conflated the ephemeral reigns of the issuers of S18.1 tetradrachms (both the undated and dated varieties) and S23.1–2 with those of the king of S18.2 and S19–21 coinage. Although I have already ascribed elsewhere the S18.1 emission to Bagasis (127–126), the brother of Mithradates I, given S18.2 and S19–22 to Artabanus I (126–122), and S23.1–2 to a young Arsacid prince (probably the son of Artabanus I), I now believe that Bagasis did not reign as a Parthian king. Following the death of Phraates II in late 127, his paternal uncle, called Artabanus in Justin (42.2.1), acceded and died of unknown causes in 126. He was followed by his elder son, probably also called Artabanus, who first pacified the rebellious southern and south-eastern satrapies of Characene and Susiana and then set out, in 123, to confront the marauding Scythians in north-east Parthia. He may be the king Artabanus in Justin (42.2.2) who was killed in a battle with the Tocharian tribes. His young son, the issuer of S23.1–2 coinage, took the crown but unexpectedly died some months later, leaving the vacant throne to Mithradates II. Justin's summary of the Parthian history in books 41 and 42 of the *Epitome* almost invariably involves the Seleucids, later superseded by the Romans, in the West with practically no allusions to the Characeneans and Elymaeans in the South and the nomads around the eastern frontiers. His reference to a single king Artabanus after Phraates II and before the accession of Mithradates II suggests that he was uninterested in the internal affairs of Parthia, including their wars in the East. He thus conflated the above mentioned three reigns. However, unlike Artabanus in *Prol.* 41, none of the successors of Phraates II before the reign of Mithradates II appears in *Prol.* 42. Justin's conflation of their reigns, therefore, does not imply that he omitted Artabanus of *Prol.* 41 or merged his reign with that of another Arsacid prince.[88]

[88] For a revised Parthian chronology of the period 127–121 cf. Assar 2001a: 18–27; 2005b: 47–51; 2006b: 112–134.

Abbreviations

AE	Arsacid Era. Epoch = 1 Nisānu (14/15 April) 247 = 65 SEB
CAD	*The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*, Chicago, Il.
CIIr	*Corpus Inscriptionum Iranicarum*
FGrH	Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker (cf. Jacoby)
NIB	*Nāme-ye Irān-e Bāstān. The International Journal of Ancient Iranian Studies*
PEDN	*Parthian Economic Documents from Nisa. CIIr*, D.N. MacKenzie (ed.), Part II: *Inscriptions of the Seleucid and Parthian Periods and of Eastern Iran and Central Asia*, vol. II: *Parthian*, London
SEB	Seleucid Era of the Babylonian calendar, beginning 1 Nīsānu (2/3 April) 311
SEM	Seleucid Era of the Macedonian calendar, beginning 1 Dios (6/7 October) 312

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