

Notes on Alexander in Central Asia

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Abstract: This paper examines the satrapal arrangements made by Alexander in Central Asia (particularly Baktria, Sogdiana, Areia and Drangiana) in the years leading up to his departure in 327 for India. In the process it examines the relationship of Artabazos' family and adherents to both Alexander and the other nobles of the area. Of particular interest is the position of Artabazos and his daughter Barsine in relation to Oxyartes and Alexander's wife Rhoxane, the discussion of which touches on chronological problems of the years 328 and 327. As a postscript, an attempt is made to make sense of the uprising in Baktria, which occurred after the false news of Alexander's death in India.

Keywords: Areia, Arsames, Arsakes, Artabazos, Baktria, Barsine, Boxos, Chorienes, Drangiana, Oxyartes, Rhoxane, Rock of Sogdiana, Sisimithres, Sogdiana. Mercenary revolt.

1. ARSAKES, ARSAMES, AND THE SATRAPY OF DRANGIANA

The extant Alexander historians provide conflicting details concerning the king's satrapal appointments in the years 330–325, and in many cases the evidence of Curtius is superior to that of Arrian. In part this is due to the latter's decision to discuss a number of key episodes—the Kleitos affair, the introduction of *proskynesis*, the Hermolaos conspiracy, and the king's marriage to Rhoxane—out of historical context. But disagreement is not limited to the events of 329–327. In 2017, I noted that the popular belief that Sibyrtios was briefly installed as satrap of Karmania is based on an incorrect notice in Arrian (6.27.1), who had carelessly summarized events, contradicted by the evidence of Curtius (9.10.21–2).¹ The information about the appointment of Amminapes is similarly confused: we are told that this man, who had spent time in exile in Macedonia during the reign of Artaxerxes III Ochos (Curt. 6.4.25: *exul hic regnante Ocho ad Philippum pervenerat*) and who was with Mazakes when he surrendered Egypt (Arr. 3.22.1: ἦν δὲ οὗτος τῶν Αἴγυπτον ἐνδόντων Ἀλεξάνδρῳ μετὰ Μαζάκου), was installed as satrap of both Parthyaia and Hyrkania soon after Dareios' death (dated to July 330 by Arr. 3.22.2; cf. Beloch 1923, III² 2.319; but Bosworth 1980, 346 prefers August) in part because he was a native of Parthyaia (Arr. 3.22.1; Ἀμμινάπην Παρθυαίων). The satrap of these regions under Dareios III was Phrataphernes (Arr. 3.23.4). When he surrendered to Alexander, the king had already installed Amminapes and was apparently reluctant to overturn this decision

¹ Heckel 2017. For Sibyrtios see Heckel 2021 no. 1044. All subsequent prosopographical references are to this work, which supersedes Heckel 2006.

immediately.² But, if part of Amminapes' appeal was his Parthyaian origin, one would expect that, in order to accommodate Phrataphernes, the king might detach Hyrkania and give it to him, leaving Parthyaia in Amminapes' hands. But, in fact, the first time Phrataphernes is named again after his surrender (two or three months later, Arr. 3.28.2: Φραταφέρνην τὸν τῶν Παρθυαίων σατράπην), he is referred to specifically as "satrap of Parthyaia" (thus also Arr. 4.18.1).³ If Alexander had decided to let Amminapes and Phrataphernes share power, it is curious that he assigned Parthyaia to the latter. But perhaps he had second thoughts about installing a native leader, who might induce his countrymen to rebel. Not until 326 is Phrataphernes finally named as the governor of both Parthyaia and Hyrkania (Arr. 5.20.7: Φραταφέρνης τε ὁ Παρθυαίων καὶ Ὑρκανίας σατράπης). Amminapes, after his appointment as satrap, is never heard of again. Exactly when, and why, Phrataphernes recovered his former position is unknown. Similar difficulties are presented by the sources' accounts of the administration of Areia and Drangiana. What follows is thus a supplement to my views on the career of Artabazos (and his children).⁴

Dareios' satrap of Areia, Satibarzanes, surrendered to Alexander and was promptly reinstated (Arr. 3.25.1; Curt. 6.6.13). However, he wasted no time in rebelling against his new master, slaughtering the forty *hippakontistai* that Alexander had sent to accompany him back to his satrapal capital, along with their commander Anaxippos.⁵ Alexander installed Arsakes, a Persian (Arr. 3.25.7: ἄνδρα Πέρσην), in his place. Curtius (6.6.33–4) describes how Alexander dealt with the rebels in Areia but does not mention the appointment of a satrap. Instead we learn (6.6.36; cf. Arr. 3.25.8) that the king moved into the land of the Drangai, who had been ruled by Barsaentes, one of Dareios' murderers who had fled to India upon the news of the king's approach. Finally, we are told (Curt. 7.3.1) that Alexander installed Arsames as satrap of the Drangai. The neighboring Arachosians, who had also been under the governorship of Barsaentes, were assigned a Macedonian (or possibly Greek) satrap, Menon (Arr. 3.28.1). The composite picture that emerges is that Alexander appointed three satraps in succession: Arsakes in Areia; Arsames in Drangiana; and Menon in Arachosia. If this is correct then Curtius failed to name the satrap of Areia and Arrian omitted the satrap of Drangiana. The scholarly consensus is that Arsames (restored in Curt. 7.3.1 on the basis of 8.3.17) is an error for Arsakes,⁶ and that Alexander added to Arsakes' responsibilities the government of the Drangai. But this appears to be a simplistic solution: we are dealing with two different names, and thus probably

² Amminapes no. 71; Phrataphernes no. 958. Badian 1985, 450: "Phrataphernes, satrap of Hyrcania and Parthia, was gladly received—though too late to be confirmed in office, since Amminapes already held it."

³ For the chronology, see Brunt 1976, 497–501. I am reluctant to accept the conclusions of Khlopin 1980/81, 161–2, who argues that Alexander spent the winter of 330/29 in Parthyaia, where he had the luxury of experimenting with the adoption of Persian dress and court protocol, and that he did not enter Drangiana (where the Philotas affair occurred) until summer 329.

⁴ Heckel 2018. On p. 107, with n.55, I tentatively identified the satrap of Drangiana with the son of Artabazos, a view that I am now virtually certain is correct.

⁵ Satibarzanes no. 1037; Anaxippos no. 95. Arr. 3.25.2, 5; cf. Diod 17.78.1; Curt. 6.6.20.

⁶ The text of Curt. 7.3.1 is corrupt: Bardon's Budé edition has *Ariorum satrape constituto*. Hedicke's proposed *Arsame Drangorum* on the basis of 8.3.17. Müller's text reads *Drangarum satrape constituto*. Julien 1914, 38 believes that the satrap of Areia was named Arsames and that, soon after his appointment to that office, he received Drangiana in addition. Bosworth 1981, 22 distinguishes Arsakes from Arsames but does not identify the latter with the son of Artabazos.

two different individuals; two different satrapies; and two different occasions when these satraps were deposed (Arsakes in 329 and Arsames in 328). Furthermore both names appear in Curtius' summary of events in 328 (8.3.17); even though he clearly confused Arsakes and Atropates in this passage, Curtius was probably guilty of compressing the details concerning the fates of Arsames, Arsakes, and Atropates.⁷

The combined evidence of Arrian and Curtius allows for the following conclusions. When Satibarzanes rebelled and Alexander was forced to turn his attention to Areia, the king appointed Arsakes as satrap in Satibarzanes' place (Arr. 3.25.7). He then marched into Drangiana, where he installed Arsames as satrap (Curt. 7.3.1) and then continued via the Helmand River valley to the Hindu Kush in pursuit of Bessos. Arsames was in all likelihood the son of Artabazos, one of those assigned the task of suppressing Satibarzanes' revolt. This was done successfully, with Erigyios defeating and killing the Persian in single combat.⁸ Alexander, who was by this time in Baktria, heard reports of unrest in Areia and found Arsakes wanting. Bosworth 1981, 20–1 notes that he was not guilty of rebellion but he had deliberately shirked his responsibilities (ἐθελοκακεῖν).⁹ Hence, he sent Stasanor to assume control of the satrapy, arrest Arsakes, and bring him to the Macedonian headquarters. This he did in the winter of 329/8, when the king was in Zariaspa, also known as Baktra (Arr. 4.7.1). In the following year, Stasanor, now described as satrap of Areia (Arr. 4.18.1), was sent out to govern Drangiana (Arr. 4.18.3); significantly, no charge was brought against the incumbent. Curtius (8.3.17) says that he replaced Arsames on this occasion (*Arsami, Drangarum praefecto, substitutus est Stasanor, Arsaces in Mediam missus ut Oxydates inde discederet*). It appears that something has dropped out of Curtius' text, perhaps a reference to the earlier fate of Arsakes and a notice about Atropates' reinstatement as satrap of Media (cf. Arr. 4.18.3).¹⁰ Neither source ever says that Arsakes was satrap of Drangiana. Arrian seems to know nothing about Arsames' brief tenure there, but he makes it clear that Stasanor was given two satrapies in two successive years. Arrian 4.18.1–3 and 4.7.1 do not refer to the same events:¹¹ indeed, the latter takes place in Nautaka, the former in Zariaspa. The argument that Arsames and Arsakes are one and the same person whose names have been confused by the sources does not convince.

⁷ Curt. 8.3.17: *Arsami, Drangarum praefecto, substitutus est Stasanor, Arsaces in Mediam missus ut Oxydates inde discederet*.

⁸ Arr. 3.28.3; Curt. 7.4.33–7; Diod. 17.83.4–6.

⁹ Recognized by Niese 1893, 1.114: “der dem Angriff des Satibarzanes *absichtlich nur schwachen Widerstand geleistet hatte*.” My emphasis. See also 1.114 n.5.

¹⁰ Bosworth 1995, 121: “presumably his [sc. Curtius'] source had something to say about the prior deposition of Arsaces from the satrapy of Areia.” Cf. Bosworth 1981, 22: “I can only assume that Curtius' source mentioned Stasanor's successful arrest of Arsaces, and although Curtius excised the detail in his narrative, the name remained in his memory strongly enough for him to substitute it subconsciously for the vaguely familiar Atropates.”

¹¹ Bosworth 1981, 23 believes that Arr. 4.7.1 and 4.18.2 refer to the same event (“Arrian's first dating of the event to winter 329/8 is mistaken”), which Arrian reported twice and in separate years. Hence, also, Mendoza Sanahuja 2017, 47: “In 329, he [sc. Stasanor] was sent to capture Arsaces, the satrap of Aria, because of his supposedly tepid response to Satibarzanes' invasion, and to replace him in the job. In 327, he turned in Arsaces in Nautaca, and Alexander added the satrapy of Drangiana to that of Aria.” But the details of Stasanor's missions are different, as are the locations of Alexander's winter quarters. For Stasanor see no. 1076.

Arsames' career can be reconstructed as follows.¹² He surrendered to Alexander along with his father and brothers (Kophen and Ariobarzanes are named: Arr. 3.23.7; cf. Curt. 6.5.4). Ariobarzanes, if he was the former satrap of Persis, was not trusted by Alexander and he received no further office.¹³ Artabazos remained in the king's service and campaigned in Areia and Drangiana, as well as in Baktria and Sogdiana.¹⁴ Arsames, who was with his father, was appointed satrap of the Drangai when it was learned that Barsaentes had fled. Kophen, his brother, served Alexander as an envoy sent to Ariamazes. The father, Artabazos, was made satrap of Baktria (Arr. 3.29.1; Curt. 7.5.1), and after the fall of the Rock of Ariamazes, of Sogdiana as well (Curt. 7.11.29).¹⁵ But, by the autumn of 328, Artabazos was in disfavor—perhaps because he had been unable to win over the Sogdian rebels—and relinquished his office, allegedly, for personal reasons.¹⁶ He and his daughter Barsine, who was now pregnant with Alexander's child,¹⁷ were sent back to the west coast of Asia Minor.¹⁸ At that time, it was

¹² Berve 1926, 2.81 mentions the surrender of Arsames (along with his brothers and their father Artabazos) and follows this with "weiteres von ihm ist nicht bekannt." In fact, it is clear that Berve does not believe in the existence of an Arsames who was satrap of Drangiana.

¹³ Ariobarzanes son of Artabazos no. 183, whom Schachermeyr 1973, 287 identifies as the satrap of Persis. If the satrap of Persis (no. 182) was killed (Curt. 5.4.34) he cannot have been Artabazos' son. But Arrian says he escaped from the Persian Gates (Arr. 3.18.9: αὐτὸς δὲ ὁ Ἀριοβαρζάνης ξὺν ὀλίγοις ἱππεῦσιν ἐς τὰ ὄρη ἀπέφυγεν). Of Artabazos' sons, Kophen, Pharnabazos, and Arsames are attested in the events after 330/29.

¹⁴ For Artabazos' career see no. 223. Sent with Erigyios, Karanos (Koiranos no. 613), and Andronikos against Satibarzanes (Arr. 3.28.2; Curt. 7.3.2). Campaigns in Baktria–Sogdiana (Curt. 8.1.10; cf. 8.1.1; Arr. 4.16.2–3). In both campaigns, Artabazos may have led the Greek mercenaries who had stayed with him after Dareios' death (Curt. 6.5.6: *Graecos quos Artabazus adduxerat*; Arr. 3.23.7–9); their commander in the first campaign was Andronikos (no. 104; cf. Parke 1933, 185); what became of their earlier commanders, Glaukos and Patron (nos. 477, 855), is unknown.

¹⁵ *Artabazus in petrae regionisque quae apposita esset ei tutelam relictus*. I take this to mean that he was now responsible for Sogdiana as well (Heckel 2018, 107 n.56). The two regions were part of Bessos' satrapy, and there is no indication that Alexander appointed a separate satrap of Sogdiana. Briant 2002, 746: "in the time of Darius III, the authority of the satrap in Bactra extended to Sogdiana, where no separate satrap is ever named, either before or after Alexander."

¹⁶ The official reason was that he relinquished the satrapy on account of his age (Curt. 6.5.4 says he was in his ninety-fifth year), but in fact he was only in his late fifties or early sixties. As the son of Pharnabazos and Apame, the daughter of Artaxerxes II, he could not have been born any earlier than 391/0; probably the year of his birth was 387 or 386. See Brunt 1975; Heckel 2018, 94–6. Bosworth 1995, 118: "his old age is likely to have been a diplomatic excuse."

¹⁷ Diod. 20.20.1 says that Herakles, the son of Alexander and Barsine, was seventeen in 310, in which case he was born in 328/7 (Justin 15.2.3 claims he was fifteen, which is far less likely, in light of Alexander's marriage to Roxane in the winter of 328/7). Justin has probably confused Alexander IV and Herakles (see Yardley-Wheatley-Heckel (2011) 67–8, 207–8). Barsine was in Pergamon when Alexander died; it is likely that she and her family returned to the West in 328 or 327. According to Curt. 8.1.19, Artabazos relinquished his satrapy in the late summer or autumn of 328 (the satrapy was allegedly offered to Kleitos, but Badian 1965, 177 n.3 is doubtful).

¹⁸ Berve 1926, 2.84 believes that, after resigning as satrap, he was left at the Rock of Ariamazes. "[Er wurde] 327 nach Eroberung der Ariamazesburg zum Schutze des Platzes und der umliegenden Gegend zurückgelassen. Dort mag er nach Al.s Abmarsch aus Sogdiane geblieben sein und hier sein Leben beschlossen habe." Thus also Lane Fox 1973, 318, who claims Artabazos "was retired to the governorship of the first Sogdian rock in place of the baron Ariamazes who had been crucified" (cf. also Lane Fox 1973, 410). This is arrant nonsense. Not only would such a move have been considered an insulting demotion (cf. the reaction of a certain Menandros no. 705: Plut. *Alex.* 57.3), but it is contradicted by the fact that several months later Artabazos was still satrap of Baktria (Curt. 8.1.19; Arr. 4.17.3). Indeed, after the taking of the Rock of Ariamazes, Artabazos was still

decided that Arsames too should resign and accompany his family to the West. The appointment of Stasanor as Arsames' replacement belongs to the time of Artabazos' departure and ties up the loose ends. Significantly, this scenario suits all the available evidence (which is, in fact, not at all contradictory) and does not require any special pleading.

I have discussed the reasons for Artabazos' disfavor elsewhere, suggesting (Heckel 2018) that he was unpopular with the Sogdianian nobles,¹⁹ who viewed him as an outsider and distrusted him because he knew the full extent of their involvement in the arrest and death of Dareios, an act which Alexander was officially trying to avenge.²⁰ In a forthcoming study,²¹ I investigate the possible relationship between Oxyartes' surrender (and Alexander's planned marriage to Rhoxane)²² and the eclipse of Artabazos and his daughter Barsine. Arsames' stint in Drangiana—both the circumstances that brought him to power and the timing of his departure from the satrapy—fits in with the events in Baktria-Sogdiana.

2. OXYARTES, SISIMITHRES, AND CHORIENES

Very little is known about Oxyartes before his daughter's marriage to Alexander. Before Alexander's campaign in southeastern Sogdiana, in the region where the Wakhsh River

campaigning in Sogdiana with Hephaistion (Curt. 8.1.10) and Koinos (Arr. 4.16.2–3). The capture of the Rock of Ariamazes (also known as the Rock of Sogdiana) must have occurred in 328 (thus Curt. 7.11); for the chronological difficulty see also Holt 1988, 61 n.47. Curtius has twice given contradictory information about Artabazos: 7.11.29 says he was left behind (*relictus*: hence Berve's "zurückgelassen") at the Rock of Ariamazes but then mentions his campaigning in Sogdiana (8.1.10) and his eventual relinquishing of his satrapy (8.1.19); earlier, 6.5.22 he reports that Artabazos was sent home (*Artabazum deinde ... remittit domum*) even though he accompanied Alexander to Areia and eventually to Baktria.

¹⁹ Cf. Vacante 2012, 88.

²⁰ This was not, however, a consistent policy, and only Bessos and Barsaentes were punished for this crime. Nabarzanes surrendered and went unpunished at the time, but he appears to have rebelled some time later, only to be arrested and executed. For the identification of Brazanes (Barzanes) with Nabarzanes see Heckel 1981, 66–7; Heckel 2018, 101–4; rejected by Bosworth 1995, 39, who nevertheless sees no problem with the equating of Phradates with Autophradates (1995, 121–2). Satibarzanes is named by Arr. 3.21.10 (possibly contradicted by Arr. 3.21.1) as a regicide but this may be an error on Arrian's part. See also Heckel 2020, 166–70.

²¹ See my forthcoming chapter on "Alexander and the Iranians" in *Brill's Companion to War in the Iranian Empires*.

²² We must assume that Alexander's marriage to Rhoxane was not the result of a chance meeting at a banquet, which had a fairy-tale ending. Oxyartes was already in Alexander's service months before the king married his daughter (Curt. 8.2.25–7, 30–1; Plut. *Alex.* 58.3; Arr. 4.21.7–8). I do not, however, subscribe to the view of Bosworth 1981, 32–3 that Oxyartes and his family were captured at the Rock of Sogdiana (the fortress of Ariamazes), despite the fact this would bolster the theory that Artabazos' removal from the satrapy of Baktria was motivated by Alexander's decision to make peace with Oxyartes and marry his daughter Rhoxane. Arr. 4.17.3 places Artabazos' retirement before the death of Spitamenes (4.17.7). It was probably the misfortunes of the rebels, Dataphernes and Spitamenes, that prompted Oxyartes to surrender (Arr. 4.20.4 says that he was induced to surrender when he learned that his family had been captured and that Alexander was showing an interest in his daughter), but exactly how Oxyartes' submission impacted Artabazos' position is unclear (cf. Lane Fox 1973, 534). In light of Barsine's pregnancy and Alexander's plans to marry Oxyartes' daughter, it is hardly surprising that (just at this time) he declined to marry a Skythian princess (Arr. 4.15.2–3, 5; Curt. 8.1.9; Plut. *Alex.* 46.3; see Heckel 2021 A54).

approaches the Oxos, he appears only once in the history of the resistance to the Macedonian invasion. He was, as far as we know, not at Dareios' court, not involved in any major battle, nor did he hold military or administrative office before Alexander made him the satrap of the Parapamisadai (Arr. 6.15.3). He was one of the local barons who fled from Bactria in the company of Bessos and appears to have been a close ally of Spitamenes (Arr. 3.28.10: εἶποντο δὲ αὐτῷ [sc. Βήσσῳ] οἳ τε ἄμφι Σπιταμένην καὶ Ὀξυάρτην, ἔχοντες τοὺς ἐκ τῆς Σογδιανῆς ἱππέας). His role as one of the leaders of the Sogdianian cavalry would suggest that he himself was from Sogdiana, but Arrian twice identifies him as Βάκτριος.²³ Unlike Spitamenes, Dataphernes, Katanes, and Haustanes, he did not choose to fight to the bitter end. Instead he defected to Alexander at some point before the siege of the Rock of Sisimithres, which Strabo calls the Bactrian Rock.²⁴

Curtius (8.2.25) tells us that a certain Oxartes acted as Alexander's intermediary in the negotiations with Sisimithres: *Itaque rex ad deditionem metu posse compelli ratus Oxarten misit nationis eiusdem, sed ditionis suae, qui suaderet duci, ut traderet petram* ("Alexander thought they could be frightened into submission, so he sent Oxartes, a fellow tribesman of theirs but subject to himself, to urge their leader to surrender the rock").²⁵ Beyond this observation, Curtius tells us nothing about the man's background or how he came to be a subject of Alexander.²⁶ But, if we accept the order of events as they are recounted by Curtius, it is clear that Oxyartes had submitted to Alexander before the death of Spitamenes and the arrest of Dataphernes by the Dahai.²⁷ It seems virtually certain that Oxartes is identical with Oxyartes, the father of Rhoxane, whose name appears elsewhere as Oxartes in the manuscripts of

²³ Arr. 6.15.3 (cf. Curt. 9.8.10: *praetor Bactrianorum*); Arr. 7.4.4.

²⁴ Strabo 11.11.4 C517: τήν τε ἐν τῇ Βακτριανῇ, τὴν Σισιμίθρου, ἐν ᾗ εἶχεν Ὀξυάρτης τὴν θυγατέρα Ῥωξάνην.

²⁵ The identification of Sisimithres and Chorienes has long been established. Geiger 1884, 36-7 noted the similarities between Arrian's description of the Rock of Chorienes and Curtius' account of that of Sisimithres: "Ich gehe aber nun noch weiter, indem ich ebenfalls auf Grund der Einzelheiten der Schilderung bei Arrian und Curtius den Felsen des Chorienes und des Sisimithres gleichfalls für identisch halte," adding "Sisimithres und Chorienes sind also eine und dieselbe Person. Jenes ist der eigentliche Name, dieses ein Epitheton, welches die Herkunft näher bezeichnen." Niese, in a long footnote (1893, 1.122 n.1), observes that the combined evidence of Curtius and Strabo (on which, see below) suggested "das der Fels des Chorienes Arrians derselbe ist, wie der des Sisimithres bei Strabo und Curtius, was auch Plutarch bestätigt." Kaerst 1927, 440, although he places Rhoxane's capture at the Rock of Sogdiana, nevertheless speaks of "die Festung des Chorienes oder, wie sie auch genannt wird, des Sisimithres." Most recent scholarship accepts the identification, but Bosworth 1995, 135 concludes that the two are separate individuals. In fact, the ancients themselves were confused: Arrian mentions only Chorienes, omitting Sisimithres entirely, but on the basis of his description it is clear that Chorienes' Rock is identical with that of Sisimithres; but Curtius, even when the textual problems are taken into account, treats Chorienes (*cohortandus*) as a different individual. It appears that his underlying sources used different names for the same individual.

²⁶ One possibility is that he surrendered voluntarily at the beginning of winter 328/7, after the death of Spitamenes and when the Dahai surrendered themselves. Arr. 3.28.10 says that Oxyartes in 329 was found with Spitamenes, the Sogdianian cavalry and the Dahai (εἶποντο δὲ αὐτῷ [sc. Βήσσῳ] οἳ τε ἄμφι Σπιταμένην καὶ Ὀξυάρτην, ἔχοντες τοὺς ἐκ τῆς Σογδιανῆς ἱππέας, καὶ Δάαι οἱ ἀπὸ τοῦ Τανάϊδος).

²⁷ Curt. 8.1.19: Artabazos relinquishes his satrapy; 8.1.22-52: death of Kleitos; 8.2.25: first appearance of Oxartes (Oxyartes); 8.3: death of Spitamenes.

Curtius, and who is named by Arrian as the intermediary between Alexander and Chorienes.²⁸ Later on, the manuscripts of Curtius (8.4.23) describe a “satrap” of a region not far from the realm of Sisimithres. Textual emendation has turned this *satrapes nobilis* into Oxyartes himself.²⁹ Alde emended the line *cui cohortandus, satrapes nobilis, praeerat* to read *cui Oxyartes, satrapes nobilis, praeerat*. But it is all but certain that *cohortandus* is a corruption of the name *Chorienes*. Translators who followed Alde’s text thus produced historical nonsense. The text, with Alde’s emendation reads as follows:

Inde pervenit in regionem, cui Oxyartes, satrapes nobilis, praeerat, qui se regis potestati fideique permisit. Ille imperio ei reddito haud amplius, quam ut duo ex tribus filiis secum militarent, exegit. Satrapes etiam eo, qui penes ipsum relinquebatur, tradito barbara opulentia convivium, quo regem accipiebat, instruxerat. Id cum multa comitate celebraret, introduci XXX nobiles virgines iussit. Inter quas erat filia ipsius, Roxane nomine, eximia corporis specie et decore habitus in barbaris raro.

After this Alexander entered the country governed by the illustrious satrap, Oxyartes. Oxyartes placed himself under the king’s authority and protection, whereupon Alexander restored his position to him and demanded only that two of Oxyartes’ three sons join him on his campaigns. In fact, the satrap also committed to him the son who was being left behind with himself. Oxyartes had arranged a banquet of typical barbaric extravagance, at which he entertained the king. While he conducted the festivities with warm geniality, Oxyartes had thirty young noblewomen brought in, one of whom was his own daughter Rhoxane, a woman of remarkable physical beauty with a dignified bearing rarely found in barbarians (Curt. 8.4.21-23)³⁰

Simply correcting the text to read *Chorienes* for *cohortandus* does not solve the problem entirely, since that correction would involve identifying Chorienes as the father of Rhoxane. Hence, we must assume that the name Oxyartes has also dropped out and must be restored in the appropriate place. Atkinson’s text reads:

²⁸ Curt. 9.8.10: *oxartes praetor Bactrianorum*. That Oxartes and Oxyartes are different people (Hamilton 1969, 160, suggesting that “Curtius ... seems to think of two men”; implied also by Brunt 1976, 411 n.4) must be ruled out: in each case the man mentioned is sent by Alexander to the commander of the second rock/fortress, who appears in Curtius as Sisimithres (Curt. 8.2.19-31) and in Arrian as Chorienes (Arr. 4.21). Sisimithres and Chorienes are one and the same man. Similarly, the brother of Dareios III is called both Oxathres (Diod. 17.34.2, 77.4; Curt. 3.118; 6.2.9; cf. Plut. *Alex.* 43.7: Ἐξάθρης) and Oxyathres (Arr. 7.4.5: Ὀξυάθρης). For the name see Justi 1895, 232-3.

²⁹ The MSS of Curtius 8.4.21-23 do not name Oxyartes (or Oxartes). The name was inserted by Alde and now appears in the standard translation.

³⁰ Based on Bardon’s Budé text.

Inde pervenit in regionem, cui Chorienes,³¹ satrapes nobilis, praeerat, qui se regis potestati fideique permisit. Ille imperio ei reddito haud amplius, quam ut duo ex tribus filiis secum militarent, exegit. Satrapes etiam eo, qui penes ipsum relinquebatur, tradito barbara opulentia convivium, quo regem accipiebat, instruxerat. Id cum multa comitate celebraret, introduci XXX nobiles virgines iussit. Inter quas erant <filiae suae virgines et> filia Oxyartis, Roxane nomine, eximia corporis specie et decore habitus in barbaris raro.

After this Alexander entered the country governed by the illustrious satrap, Chorienes. This man placed himself under the king's authority and protection, whereupon Alexander restored his position to him and demanded only that two of his three sons join him on his campaigns. In fact, the satrap also committed to him the son who was being left behind with himself. Chorienes had arranged a banquet of typical barbaric extravagance, at which he entertained the king. While he conducted the festivities with warm geniality, he had thirty young noblewomen brought in, among whom were his own virgin daughters and the daughter of Oxyartes, Roxane by name, a woman of remarkable physical beauty with a dignified bearing rarely found in barbarians.

That this is essentially the gist of the story told by Curtius can be seen from the text of the Metz Epitome, which is in most respects very close to Curtius in other places as well.

Alexander then devoted himself to pressing ahead with the journey he had begun towards Gazabes, during which he met a certain satrap named Chorienes with whom he formed an alliance. Chorienes entertained Alexander at his house and introduced as dancers at the banquet his own unmarried daughters along with the unmarried daughters of his friends. Amongst them was the daughter of Oxyartes, Roxane, who was the most beautiful of all.

The difficulty is that, no matter which emendations one chooses, both Curtius and the Metz Epitome describe the submission of a "satrap" and a lavish banquet *after* Alexander's dealings with Sisimithres. This can be explained by the simple fact that the extant sources — and perhaps even their lost underlying source — did not understand that Sisimithres and Chorienes were one and the same person.³² Sisimithres ruled the region of Choriene and, in the manner of local dynasts, took his official name from the area he ruled. The identification of the two is made clear by Strabo 11.11.4 C517, who writes:

³¹ MS. *cohortandus*.

³² Cf. v. Schwarz 1893, 83; Berve 1926, 2.354. Brunt 1976, 407 n.1 suggests that Chorienes was a "title." See Heckel 2021 no. 1049 s.v. "Sisimithres"; Heckel 1986. The identification is generally accepted.

ἐλεῖν δὲ καὶ πέτρας ἐρυμνὰς σφόδρα ἐκ προδοσίας, τήν τε ἐν τῇ Βακτριανῇ, τὴν Σισιμίθρου, ἐν ᾗ εἶχεν Ὀξυάρτης τὴν θυγατέρα Ῥωξάνην, καὶ τὴν ἐν τῇ Σογδιανῇ τὴν τοῦ Ὄξου, οἱ δ' Ἀριαμάζου φασί. τὴν μὲν οὖν Σισιμίθρου πεντεκαίδεκα σταδίων ἱστοροῦσι τὸ ὕψος, ὀγδοήκοντα δὲ τὸν κύκλον· ἄνω δ' ἐπίπεδον καὶ εὐγεων, ὅσον πεντακοσίους ἄνδρας τρέφειν δυναμένην, ἐν ᾗ καὶ ξενίας τυχεῖν πολυτελοῦς, καὶ γάμους ἀγαγεῖν Ῥωξάνης τῆς Ὀξυάρτου θυγατρὸς τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον· τὴν δὲ τῆς Σογδιανῆς διπλασίαν τὸ ὕψος φασί.

They say that Alexander captured, through treachery,³³ two rocky outcrops that were extremely well defended, that of Sisimithres in Baktria, where Oxyartes kept his daughter Rhoxane, and that of the Oxos³⁴ in Sogdiana (though some call this one the Rock of Ariamazes). According to the accounts of it, the Rock of Sisimithres is fifteen stades in height, with a circumference of eighty stades, and its top is level and fertile enough to support 500 men. Here Alexander met with a warm welcome and married Oxyartes' daughter Rhoxane. The outcrop in Sogdiana is said to be twice the height of the other.

The realm of Chorienes was Pareitakene, on the Wakhsh River, not far upstream from where it merged with the Oxos. When Strabo puts Sisimithres' stronghold in "Baktria" he is not far off the mark.³⁵ The mountain is today called Koh-i-nor, and it was here that the affairs of Baktria-Sogdiana were finally settled. Oxyartes' role as an intermediary may be explained by the likelihood that he had left his family in Sisimithres' fortress, and it was in his interests to secure that man's surrender and pardon.

Now all this is at odds with Arrian, who names neither Ariamazes nor Sisimithres. Instead he describes the taking of the Rock of Sogdiana (4.18.4–19.5: without naming the commander of the fortress or his fate) and follows this with an account of the Rock of Chorienes (4.21.1–9), whose surrender is facilitated by Oxyartes (4.21.6–7). Nevertheless, Arrian also says that it was Chorienes who gave Alexander provisions for his campaign (4.21.10), something which in the popular tradition is attributed to Sisimithres (Curt. 8.4.19–20), suggesting once again that Chorienes and Sisimithres are two names for the same person. Furthermore, if Curtius (7.11.29)

³³ "Betrayal" in Jones' Loeb translation; "surrender" is an acceptable alternative (cf. Bosworth 1995, 126). *LSJ* s.v. προδοσία: "abandonment in need."

³⁴ I do not accept Schachermeyr's argument (1973, 353 n.422): "bei Strabon 11, 517 ist sicherlich nicht Ὄξου, sondern Ὀξυάρτου zu lesen." Equally unconvincing is Tarn's attempt (1948, 2.75–6) to make sense of Arrian's association of Oxyartes with the Rock of Sogdiana: "Late in 328 Alexander attacked Oxyartes' stronghold, the 'Sogdian rock', perhaps near Derbent; Oxyartes was not there, but his family was."

³⁵ The ancients were either confused by the geography or careless in their use of the terms Baktria and Sogdiana. Metz Epit. 19 says that Nautaka is "in Baktria." Since Sogdiana was ruled by the satrap in Baktra (see Briant 2002, 746) there is no actual inconsistency. Baktria proper was, for the most part, south of the Oxos (Amu-Darya), but it was centered on the head waters of that river system on the eastern side of the Hindu Kush. Paraitakene must have been considered Baktrian in general terms. It is naïve to think that people who identified as Baktrians were restrained by geographic boundaries. One may compare the problems created by the nineteenth century "Durand Line," which separated Afghanistan from what was later to become Pakistan: "The Durand Line ... is a topographically convenient foothill boundary which cuts right across ethnic and tribal divisions" (Griffiths 2001, 39).

is correct in saying that the Rock of Sogdiana and its surrounding area was assigned to Artabazos, then the fortress must have been taken before the late summer or autumn of 328, when Artabazos was replaced—allegedly at his own request—by Amyntas son of Nikolaos.³⁶ Indeed, it must have occurred soon after the king moved out of winter quarters and recrossed the Oxos River. In other words, the capture of the Rock of Sogdiana cannot be dated to spring 327 but rather to the preceding spring.

In spite of all this, an unshakeable (and unmerited) faith in the Arrian has led the majority of scholars to accept his claim that Rhoxane was captured on the Rock of Sogdiana.³⁷ But Arrian, because he chose to discuss the Kleitos affair, the *proskynesis* episode and the conspiracy of Hermolaos in succession, has not only misdated the attack on the Rock of Sogdiana but also associated that campaign with the capture of Rhoxane. Arrian (4.18.4) says that Alexander moved against the Rock of Sogdiana at the beginning of spring (ἅμα δὲ τῷ ἡρι ὑποφαίνοντι προὔχῳρι ὡς τὴν ἐν τῇ Σογδιανῇ πέτρῳ), which would be roughly correct if, as we have noted, it referred to the previous year. But, in Arrian's version, this operation, which involved an extended siege (including both military action and negotiation) and the king's decision to marry Rhoxane, was followed by an attack on the Rock of Choriene, a much more difficult and time-consuming operation (4.21.1-9). After reporting its capture, Arrian says that "the army ... had suffered much in the winter, a great deal of snow having fallen during the siege, and they were also distressed by want of provisions" (ξυνέβη δὲ χειμῶνι τε κακοπαθῆσαν αὐτῷ τὴν στρατιὰν πολλῆς χιόνος ἐπιπεσούσης ἐν τῇ πολιορκίᾳ καὶ ἅμα ἀπορία τῶν ἐπιτηδείων ἐπίεσθησαν).³⁸ This, in itself, is a sign of inept composition on Arrian's part. Except for the detail about the king's marriage, the events described would fall in line with those of Curtius if we assigned the capture of the Rock of Sogdiana (4.18.4-19.5) to the spring of 328, thus equating it with the Rock of Ariamazes (Curt. 7.11).³⁹ The attack on the Rock of

³⁶ Curt. 8.1.19. The satrapy was intended for Kleitos, but after his death it was assigned to Amyntas (Curt. 8.2.14; Arr. 4.1.17; *Itinerarium Alexandri* 103). See also Julien 1914, 43.

³⁷ Droysen 1877 (Bayer, ed. 1952, 1. 304): "Der König wandte sich mit dem ersten Beginn des Frühlings [i.e. 327] gegen den 'Sogdianischen Felsen'..."; Niese 1893, 1.121-2 places Rhoxane on the "Felsenburg Sogdianas," dating this to "Anfang Frühling 327"; Kaerst 1927, 440: "Im Frühjahr [327] wandte er sich dann gegen zwei Felsenburgen, die durch ihre natürliche Festigkeit gegen jeden feindlichen Angriff gesichert schienen, die Burg des Arimazes, die wahrscheinlich in dem heutigen Derbentgebirge, nicht weit vom 'Eisernen Tore', gelegen war, und die Festung des Choriene oder, wie sie auch genannt wird, des Sisimithres in Paraitakene, deren Lage wohl im heutigen Hissar oder Ostbuchara zu suchen ist. ... Auf der Burg des Arimazes hatte Roxane, die Tochter eines vornehmen Baktriens, des Oxyartes, Zuflucht gesucht" [emphasis added]; similarly, Tarn 1948, 1.77-8; Schachermeyr 1949, 289 (repeated in 1973, 354); Wilcken 1967, 160-1; Hamilton 1973, 101; Hammond 1981, 195; Martin and Blackwell 2013, 127-8. Lane Fox 1973, 314-17 speaks of a "first rock" (he does call it the Rock of Sogdiana or Ariamazes) at which both Oxyartes and his daughter were captured, but he dates its capture after both the Kleitos affair and the death of Spitamenes. He correctly identifies Sisimithres with Choriene (cf. 534); however, in his notes, Lane Fox writes: "QC 8.4.21 (emending the Ms. to Oxyartes) implies a return visit to Oxyartes; the wedding probably belongs there (after Arr. 4.21.10)" (534). Green 1974, 368-9 places Rhoxane's capture on the "Soghdian Rock," but he adds that "Oxyartes, the local baron had garrisoned it strongly" (368) and that "Oxyartes' troops were so taken aback by this *coup de théâtre* [i.e. the appearance of "winged men"] that they capitulated on the spot" (369).

³⁸ Arr. 4.21.10. Translation by Brunt 1976, 411.

³⁹ Cf. Rodgers 2004, 161; Howe 2015, 174-5; Bosworth 1995, 125: "This tradition is not only coherent but credible" Holt 1988, 66 n.64 observes: "Note that the 'rock' of Ariamazes had no snow, but rather racing streams from the spring run-off; that operation belongs to the previous year and must not be confused with the 'rock' of

Chorienes (= Sisimithres) would then belong to the winter of 328/7; at the end of winter, the supplying of the army by Chorienes, reported by Arrian (4.21.10), matches what Curtius (8.4.19–20) says about Sisimithres. We know why Arrian's chronology is flawed, but we have absolutely no reason for doubting the accuracy of Curtius' order of events (see Appendix I).

3. OXYARTES AND ARTABAZOS, RHOXANE AND BARSINE

If we follow Curtius' chronology,⁴⁰ as clearly we must, Oxyartes' submission to Alexander occurred before the attack on the Rock of Sisimithres, that is, apparently between the time of the Kleitos affair and Alexander's move to winter quarters in Nautaka (winter 328/7). Hence, we must rule out Arrian's claim that he submitted to the king when he heard about the favorable treatment of his family, and especially Alexander's interest in Rhoxane, in the spring of 327 (4.20.4). Furthermore, since it is clear from Arrian's description that the Rock of Sogdiana is the same fortress that, in Curtius, was commanded by Ariamazes, the presence of Kophen son of Artabazos as a mediator and the subsequent assignment of the territory surrounding the Rock to Artabazos himself,⁴¹ demonstrate that this campaign could not have occurred after Artabazos relinquished his satrapy. Nor does the treatment of Ariamazes and the most powerful nobles who were with him—Curtius says they were whipped and crucified (7.11.28)—suggest that Oxyartes and his family were captured at this point and treated mercifully. Curtius mentions neither the man nor his daughter in connection with the Rock of Ariamazes for the precise reason that they were not there. It is possible that Oxyartes surrendered when he learned of the capture and execution of Ariamazes; and, if he did, he must certainly have left his family in some other safe location. Furthermore, if he submitted at this time, he may have played some role in undermining the authority of Artabazos. But he may have surrendered shortly before the Sisimithres campaign. Curt. 8.2.14–15 says that the area around Xenippa was a stronghold of the Bactrian exiles (8.2.15: *Bactrianorum exsulum qui ab Alexandro defecerant receptaculum fuerat*). These men fought a desperate battle against Amyntas, only to suffer defeat. They surrendered and were treated with leniency despite the fact that they had revolted a second time (8.2.18: *veniam tamen etiam post alteram defectionem*

Sogdiana. The similarities in operational detail might derive from Alexander's repetition of a plan that worked." But Ariamazes' remarks about men with wings or Alexander's ability to fly and the king's sarcastic response, found in both traditions (Curt. 7.11.5–6, 24; 4.18.6, 19.3; Metz Epit. 18), constitute specific, circumstantial evidence that cannot be dismissed as "similarities in operational detail." In short, and in simple terms, the fortress on which Arrian (incorrectly) claims Rhoxane was captured is identical with the Rock of Ariamazes, and this was taken in the first half of the year 328, not the spring of 327.

⁴⁰ The same order of events in Diodorus (though we know this only from the "Contents" of the 17th book): ἀπόστασις Τρίτη Σογδιανῶν καὶ ἄλωσις τῶν εἰς τὴν Πέτραν καταφυγόντων (Curt. 7.11; Metz Epit. 15–18); Περὶ τοῦ ἐν Βασιτίστους κυνηγίου... (Curt. 8.1.10–19; Bazairia); Περὶ τῆς εἰς τὸν Διόνυσον ἀμαρτίας καὶ τῆς παρὰ τὸν πότον ἀναιρέσεως Κλείτου (Curt. 8.1.20–52); Στρατεία τοῦ βασιλέως εἰς τοὺς καλουμένους Ναύτακας καὶ φθορὰ τῆς δυνάμεως ὑπὸ πολλῆς χιόνος (Curt. 8.4.1–17; Metz Epit. 24–7); Ὡς Ἀλέξανδρος ἐρασθεὶς Ρωζάνης τῆς Ὀξυάρτου ἔγημεν αὐτὴν (Curt. 8.4.21–30).

⁴¹ Kophen as negotiator (Curt. 7.11.23–6: Cophes; Metz Epit. 17: Dares). Governance of the Rock and surrounding area: Curt. 7.11.29. This was an expansion of Artabazos' power into Sogdiana, as I have noted above (n.16). But it appears merely to have stiffened the resolve of the rebels.

impetraverunt). The reference to a second revolt must be to the time after Bessos' capture, when many Bactrian nobles refused to heed Alexander's summons to a conference in Zariaspa (Arr. 4.1.5: ὥστε καὶ τῶν Βακτριανῶν ἔστιν οὓς σφισιν οὗτοι ξυναπέστησαν, εἴτε δὴ καὶ δέισαντες Ἀλέξανδρον, εἴτε καὶ λόγον ἐπὶ τῇ ἀποστάσει διδόντες, ὅτι ἐς ἓνα ξύλλογον ἐπηγγέλλετο Ἀλέξανδρος ξυνελθεῖν τοὺς ὑπάρχους τῆς χώρας ἐκείνης εἰς Ζαρίασπα ... , ὥς ἐπ' ἀγαθῷ οὐδενὶ τοῦ ξυλλόγου γιγνομένου).⁴²

Oxyartes' role, soon afterwards, as intermediary in the negotiations with Sisimithres was motivated by self-interest; for he had left his family in the safekeeping of that man (thus Strabo 11.11.4 C517). He induced Sisimithres to surrender. Arrangements for Alexander to marry Oxyartes' daughter may have been made after Sisimithres' surrender and realized towards the end of spring 327, when Alexander made a second visit to Sisimithres/Chorienes (Arr. 4.21.10; Curt. 8.4.21–6), whose official residence may have been separate from the fortress which was used only in times of emergency.⁴³ What appears in the sources as a nearly spontaneous act—the young king, smitten by the maiden's beauty, decides then and there to marry her—was in fact a ceremony planned over the winter of 328/7. The booty brought to Sisimithres from the Sakai campaign (Curt. 8.4.20) was perhaps the king's contribution to lavish festivities that were to follow.

That there was a direct relationship between Artabazos' removal from the satrapy and Oxyartes' submission to Alexander is impossible to prove. But there appears to have been some correlation. If, as I maintained in Heckel 2018, Artabazos was a threat to those Iranian nobles who were either involved in the conspiracy against Dareios or were at some point supporters of Bessos, then Oxyartes, who at least briefly campaigned with Bessos, may not have considered it safe to surrender while Artabazos was Alexander's satrap. On the other hand, the king may have recognized that Artabazos had been an unhappy choice for the office, being both an outsider (from the West) and distrusted by the Bactrian and Sogdianian rebels. Alexander, therefore, deposed Artabazos, using old age as a face-saving pretext. Success in the region depended on reaching a political accommodation with the local chiefs. The same men who distrusted him in 329 could more easily be won over if Artabazos were removed from office. Once Alexander made the decision to marry Rhoxane, Artabazos and his sons, and especially his daughter, Barsine, who was pregnant with the king's child, needed to be

⁴² Arr. 4.1.5: “so that they also drew into the revolt some of the Bactrians; it may be that they were really terrified of Alexander, or that it was a pretext they gave for revolt that Alexander had instructed the hyparchs of that country to come to a joint conference at Zariaspa..., and that this conference was not for their benefit” (translated by Brunt 1976, 339). Rawlinson 1912, 42–3 extrapolates: “In Bactra the rumour was industriously circulated that a massacre of the Iranian knightly class was being planned, which had the effect of stirring up considerable feeling against Alexander's viceroy, Artabazus.”

⁴³ This would explain why Curt. 8.4.21 implies that he moved into a new territory. As noted above, the text is corrupt. Without emendation of *cohortandus* to *Chorienes* (confirmed by Metz Epit. 28), Curtius would be guilty of introducing Oxyartes twice and of knowing nothing about the existence and identity of Chorienes. It is worth noting that Arrian does not actually say that the marriage of Alexander took place on the Rock of Sogdiana (Arr. 4.19.5: καὶ ταύτην ἰδόντα Ἀλέξανδρον ἐς ἔρωτα ἐλθεῖν αὐτῆς. ἐρασθέντα δὲ οὐκ ἐθέλησαι ὑβρίσαι καθάπερ αἰχμάλωτον, ἀλλὰ γῆμαι γὰρ οὐκ ἀπαξιώσαι), only that Alexander thought it proper to marry her; for if that had been the case, Oxyartes would not have been present, as he is in other accounts. Arr. 4.20.4 adds that Oxyartes was encouraged because of Alexander's “concern for his daughter.”

removed from the scene as a gesture of good faith.⁴⁴ Removal from Central Asia did not involve a repudiation of Artabazos and his family—though the local barons may have been happy to believe this was so—as we can see from their later treatment (Arr. 7.4.6, 6.4). We are left with a “chicken or egg” dilemma, which the dearth of evidence does not allow us to solve, but the simple fact cannot be denied: there was no place for Artabazos and Barsine in Alexander’s new political and personal arrangement with Oxyartes and Roxane.

4. BOXOS, ATHENODOROS, AND THE BAKTRIAN REVOLT (326/5)

In 323, the news of Alexander’s death in Babylon sparked an uprising in Bactria-Sogdiana, where the military colonists, most of them Greek mercenaries, were anxious to return home. Our only source for this revolt and its suppression is the eighteenth book of Diodorus. At 18.7.1 he says: “The Greeks who had been settled in the so-called Upper Satrapies by Alexander sorely missed the Greek culture and way of life, cast away as they were in the furthest corners of the realm” (Οἱ δ’ ἐν ταῖς ἄνω καλουμέναις σατραπείαις κατοικισθέντες Ἕλληνες ὑπ’ Ἀλεξάνδρου, ποθοῦντες μὲν τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν ἀγωγὴν καὶ διαίταν, ἐν δὲ ταῖς ἐσχατιαῖς τῆς βασιλείας ἐξεργιζόμενοι), adding that “while the king still lived they tolerated the situation through fear, but on his death they rebelled” (ζῶντος μὲν τοῦ βασιλέως ὑπέμενον διὰ τὸν φόβον, τελευτήσας δὲ ἀπέστησαν).⁴⁵ But, in his account of Alexander (Book 17), Diodorus says that, in 326/5, they were prompted to rebel by the false news of Alexander’s death in India (17.99.5: οἱ κατὰ τὴν Βακτριανὴν καὶ Σογδιανὴν κατοικισθέντες Ἕλληνες ἐκ πολλοῦ μὲν τὸν ἐν τοῖς βαρβάροις κατοικισμὸν χαλεπῶς ἔφερον, τότε δὲ φήμης προσπεσούσης αὐτοῖς ὅτι τρωθεὶς ὁ βασιλεὺς τετελεύτηκεν ἀπέστησαν ἀπὸ τῶν Μακεδόνων). The main points of difference between the two accounts given by Diodorus are (1) that, in one version, the Greek rebellion was delayed until Alexander’s death and, in the other, it occurred when they received news (in this case false) of the king’s death; and (2) that in 323 there was a full-scale rebellion, whereas in 326/5 only 3,000 joined the revolt (ἐπὶ πολλάς δὲ ἡμέρας τοῦ βασιλέως ἀσχοληθέντος περὶ τὴν θεραπείαν ἀθροισθέντες δὲ εἰς τρισχιλίους κατὰ τὴν εἰς οἶκον ἀνακομιδὴν πολλὰ πονήσαντες, ὕστερον ὑπὸ τῶν Μακεδόνων κατεκόπησαν μετὰ τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρου τελευτήν).⁴⁶ A different version is given by Curtius 9.7.1, who says “unrest had arisen among the soldiers recently settled by the king in colonies around Bactria, and they had revolted against Alexander, less out of hostility towards him than from fear of punishment” (*Graeci milites nuper*

⁴⁴ For a very different picture of Barsine’s relationship with Alexander see Müller 2021.

⁴⁵ Translation in Heckel and Yardley 2003, 83.

⁴⁶ Diod. 17.99.6. This passage makes little sense. If the three thousand rebels made their way home, they were safe from reprisals. But it appears that what Diodorus is thinking of when he mentions the slaughter of the military colonists is their fate at the hands of Peithon in 323. Rawlinson 1912, 48 merely adds further confusion: “Some of them [sc. the military colonists] revolted immediately after Alexander’s departure, and tried to set up a certain Athenodorus as their king. He was murdered; whereupon a body of malcontents, under a leader named Bico [sic], left Bactria. Amyntas probably made no effort to detain them.” He adds in n.2 that Curtius “may be relating what really happened after Alexander’s death” [original emphasis].

*in colonias a rege deducti circa Bactra, orta inter Ipsos sedition, defecerant non tam Alexandro infensi quam metu suplicii).*⁴⁷

Their leader was *Athenodorus*, who had even assumed the title of king, though his desire was not so much for power as for returning home with men who acknowledged his authority. A certain Biton, who was his countryman but hated Athenodorus because of personal rivalry, *hatched a plot against him, and through the agency of a Bactrian called Boxus*, invited him to a banquet and had him murdered at the table. Calling a meeting the next day, Biton persuaded most of the people that Athenodorus had actually been plotting against his life, but there were others who suspected Biton of treachery and this suspicion gradually began to spread. Accordingly, the Greek soldiers took up arms and would have killed Biton, if they had been given the chance, but their leaders appeased the anger of the mob. Unexpectedly rescued from imminent danger, Biton shortly afterwards conspired against those responsible for saving him. His treachery was discovered, however, and the Greeks arrested both him and Boxus. They decided that Boxus should be executed immediately, but that Biton should be tortured to death (Curt. 9.7.3–8).⁴⁸

Curtius (9.7.3) says that Athenodoros declared himself “king” for the purpose of leading the rebellious mercenaries home (*Athenodorus erat princeps eorum, qui regis quoque nomen assumpserat, non tam imperii cupidine quam in patriam revertendi cum eis, qui auctoritatem ipsius sequebantur*), adding that he was joined by Boxos “a Baktrian.” Why a Greek mercenary would take the title of king in order to lead his troops home is incomprehensible.⁴⁹ Perhaps, this is *color romanus*: Curtius, writing in early years of Imperial Rome, was thinking of usurpers who were proclaimed emperor in the military camps. But possibly he confused the actions of Athenodoros and Boxos, ascribing to the former the actions of the latter. Boxos may have been yet another Iranian rebel who rose up against Alexander in his absence. Curtius tells us that the rebels seized the citadel of Baktra and “forced the barbarians to join their revolt” (9.7.1: *barbaros quoque in societatem defectionis impulerant*). It may be at this time that the satrap Amyntas son of Nikolaos was killed. If Curtius has confused the actions of Athenodoros and Boxos, it may be that a certain number of Baktrians rose up in support of Boxos, who assumed the upright tiara, and attacked Baktra with aid of some 3,000 Greek military colonists. The remainder of Greeks—over 20,000 of them, as we learn from Diodorus (18.7)—remained faithful to Alexander and ordered the death of Boxos and his supporter, Biton. Biton escaped and successfully led his 3,000 supporters back to Greece.⁵⁰ Many things are left unexplained, particularly why Boxos and Biton arranged the murder of Athenodoros. This was clearly a

⁴⁷ Heckel and Yardley 2003, 82.

⁴⁸ Heckel and Yardley 2003, 82.

⁴⁹ Iliakis 2013, 188–9 recognizes the problem but offers no plausible solution.

⁵⁰ Diod. 17.99.6 says that those who returned home were killed after Alexander’s death (ὕστερον ὑπὸ τῶν Μακεδόνων κατεκόπησαν μετὰ τὴν Ἀλεξάνδρου τελευτήν), which is surely confusion with the rebels who died at the hands of Peithon’s forces in 323 (Diod. 18.7.8–9).

power struggle between two mercenary leaders. But it appears that there was at least a small scale native uprising in Baktria, headed by Boxos and supported by some Greek mercenaries. The overwhelming majority of military colonists remained true; hence there is no indication of punishment when Alexander returned to the West. Boxos' actions may be compared to those of Baryaxes the Mede, Ordanes, and Zariaspes, who unsuccessfully challenged Macedonian authority.

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APPENDIX: CHRONOLOGY OF 329/8–328/7

Date	Curtius	Arrian	Other
Winter 329/8	Alexander returns to Baktra; Bessos sent to Ekbatana; Ptolemy and Melanidas (Maenidas) arrive; also Asandros and Asklepiodoros (7.10.10–12)	Alexander returns to Zariaspa (Baktra); Phrataphernes and Stasanor bring Arsakes and Brazanes in chains; arrival of Ptolemy, Melamnidas, Asandros, Nearchos and Askepliodoros. Bessos sent to Ekbatana for punishment (4.7.1–3).	
Spring 328	Alexander recrosses sthe Ochos and Oxos Rivers; water springs up near the king’s tent (7.10.14); Alexander founds cities near the town of Margiana (Curt. 7.10.15)	Alexander recrosses the Oxos River into Sogdiana; spring of water, and another of oil near the king’s tent (4.15.7–8)	Oil at the Oxos (Plut. <i>Alex.</i> 47.5–8)
Spring/Summer 328	Siege of the Rock of Ariamazes (7.11.1–28)		Metz Epit. 15–18.
	Ariamazes and the principal nobles are crucified (7.11.28)		Ariamazes murdered by his own men (Metz Epit. 18). Alexander spared everyone else.
	Artabazos left to govern the Rock and the region around it (7.11.29)		
Summer 328	Macedonian campaigns in Sogdiana; defeat of Attinas; arrival of Phrataphernes (error for Phradasmenes) ruler of Chorasmians (8.1.1–8)	Reported by Arrian under the events of spring 328 (Arr. 4.16)	
	Skythian king offers his daughter to Alexander in marriage; the offer is declined (8.1.9)	Envoys from the “European” Skythians. Marriage offer declined (4.15.1–3, 5)	Cf. Plut. <i>Alex.</i> 46.3.

Notes on Alexander in Central Asia

Late Summer or Autumn 328	Lion hunt in Bazira (8.1.10–16)		
Autumn 328	Artabazos relinquishes the satrapy of Baktria (8.1.19)	Artabazos relinquishes his satrapy (4.17.3)	
Autumn 328	Banquet in Marakanda; death of Kleitos (8.1.20–2.12)		
Late Autumn 328	Hephaistion sent to Baktria to prepare for winter (8.2.13); Amyntas son of Nikolaos appointed satrap of Baktria (8.2.14)	Amyntas son of Nikolaos installed as satrap of Baktria (4.17.3)	
Autumn/Winter 328	Alexander comes to Nautaka; besieges Rock of Sisimithres (8.2.19–33). Oxyartes acts as intermediary (8.2.25–32)		Metz Epit. 19. Oxyartes sent to Sisimithres (Plut. <i>Alex.</i> 58.3–4); Rhoxane captured (Strabo 11.11.4)
Winter 328/7	Death of Spitamenes (8.3.1–15); Dataphernes arrested by the Dahai (8.3.16)	Death of Spitamenes (4.17.7)	Metz Epit. 20–3.
Winter 328/7	Phrataphernes sent to arrest Autophradates; Stasanor sent to Drangiana; Atropates (wrongly Arsakes) sent to Media to arrest Oxydates (8.3.17)	Winter in Nautaka. Phrataphernes sent to arrest “Phradates”; Stasanor sent to Drangiana; Atropates replaces Oxydates in Media (4.18.1–3)	
Winter/Spring 327	Alexander campaigns in Gazaka (or Gazaba); army suffers from cold (8.4.1–18); supplies brought to the army by Sisimithres (8.4.19–20)		Metz Epit. 20–8
Spring 327		Beginning of Spring, siege of the Rock of Sogdiana. Family of Oxyartes on this rock (4.18.4–19.3)	
Spring 327		Capture of Oxyartes’ family. Alexander marries Rhoxane (4.19.4–5). Oxyartes surrenders to Alexander (4.20.4)	
Spring 327		Alexander attacks the Rock of Chorienes; Oxyartes acts as intermediary (4.21.6–7); persuades Chorienes to surrender (4.21)	
Spring 327	Alexander entertained by Chorienes (= Sisimithres); marries Rhoxane (8.4.21–7)		Alexander marries Rhoxane at banquet given by Chorienes (Metz Epit. 28–29, 31)