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Registrazione presso il Tribunale di Pisa n. 12 del 21 luglio 1999
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There can be little doubt that David Sellwood’s labours have played a pivotal role in establishing the study of coinage as an essential technique of Parthian historical research. Following the methodical and to a large extent fruitful investigations of his predecessors, Sellwood’s erudite contributions in this branch of numismatics have set the highest standards of critical scholarship for over half a century and yet his influence has never been limited to his own writings and research. He has freely communicated his enthusiasm to many and as the world’s leading Parthian numismatist kept in touch with and guided the young scholars coming forward to make their impact on the subject with advice and encouragement of the greatest value.

Chief among Sellwood’s publications are those that appeared in 1967 and 1976. These represented an important landmark in the study of Arsacid coinage of the periods AD 10-190 and 91-55 BC and provided for the first time a chronological framework for the whole series. With such a firmly established sequence and chronology at their disposal, students and scholars have since been able to study the inherent problems of Parthian numismatics in far greater detail than was previously possible.

I am honoured to have been invited to submit an article to this Festschrift commemorating the eighty-first birthday of a distinguished scholar, teacher and writer of considerable erudition, whose friendship I have prized for almost twenty years. And since the elucidation of the chronology and coinage of the Parthian ‘Dark Age’, i.e. the period 91-55 BC of Arsacid power, is generally regarded as one of the outstanding achievements of Sellwood as an acclaimed numismatist, it may not be thought inappropriate that I should try to correlate his findings with the sketchy references in the contemporary Babylonian cuneiform records. It is hoped that this will make a contribution, however small and imperfect, to both explaining the complex numismatic aspects and solving some of the persisting chronological problems of this period.

I should, however, add that without generous help and advice from David Sellwood himself and such scholars as Professors Herman Hunger, Giuseppe Del Monte, Robartus Van der Spek Stephan Maul, and Mr. Christopher Walker of the British Museum I would not have been able to compile this note. To them, I offer my inestimable gratitude. They are, of course, not responsible for my errors. I am also indebted to Messrs Nader Rastegar and Samir Masri for their assistance and encouragement. This work was supported at the St. Catherine’s College, Oxford University, by a grant from the Maclaren Foundation and the Morteza Rastegar Endowment.

Arsaces XII-Sinatruces (93/92-68/69 BC)

The intentional omission by Justin\(^1\) of the approximately thirty-five years between the reigns of Mithradates II and Orodes II has deprived us of what should have been one continuous account of a second Parthian ‘Dark Age’.\(^2\) A sentence in Trogus (Prologue, 42) accords well with the numis-
matic evidence that many kings wore the diadem in fairly rapid succession while two summarising passages in Plutarch (Lucullus, 21.4 and 36.6) attest that it was a chaotic time of internal and frontier warfare that exhausted the imperial resources and seriously diminished Parthian power and prestige. Beyond that we have a few other fleeting literary references, most of them disconnected and fragmentary, but enough additional information from both the cuneiform records and the coinage to confirm that this was indeed a disastrous period of intra-dynastic strife. It would appear, however, that by careful correlation of what has survived we have just enough evidence to reconstruct a reasonable summary of all the reigns and some of the major events in the period 91-55 BC.

As the instigator of the internal conflicts that gradually but surely led to the disintegration of Parthian central authority and eventual downfall of the dynasty, Sinatruces carved out a portion of the Empire and ruled intermittently for over twenty years with mixed fortunes. But although we only hear of him after the demise of Mithradates II, his impact on Parthia’s domestic affairs of the Empire and ruled intermittently for over twenty years with mixed fortunes. But although Parthian central authority and eventual downfall of the dynasty, Sinatruces carved out a portion of his domain and influence and his link with earlier kings.

The absence of a named reference to Sinatruces in our cuneiform documents strongly indicates that he never held Babylon. At the same time we note that of the fourteen different emissions S29-S41 and S44 from the ’Dark Age’, S33 alone is without parallel tetradrachms. It also lacks the normal mint monograms that appeared beneath the bow of the seated archer on the reverse of Parthian drachms from about 67 BC on. These suggest that the issuer had no access to the royal mint at Seleucia on the Tigris and that he struck his S33 drachms before the inception of S36 coinage (cf. below). Given the numismatic material and lack of Babylonian inscriptive evidence we may safely assign the S33 drachms to Sinatruces. These have on the obverse the bust of a visibly aged monarch wearing a crown much influenced in its design by the art of the steppe people. Its central ornament is a bull’s horn, perhaps an idealised quasi-divine characteristic, while its fore-and-aft ridge is ringed with a row of recumbent stags, the totem animal of the Scythian tribes living in the southeastern regions of the Caspian Sea and a prominent feature of their art. These appear both with and without a set of sweeping antlers (probably a seasonal headgear). The tiara therefore immediately and obviously differs in its design from those worn by Mithradates II and his successors, Gotarzes I, Mithradates III (son of Mithradates II), and Orodes I (cf. below).

The inscription of Sinatruces’ drachms from Ecbatanas (S33.1-2) reads ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΘΕΟΠΑΤΟΡΟΣ ΝΙΚΑΤΟΡΟΣ (Fig. 1) with the penultimate epithet occasionally given as ΘΕΟΠΑΤΡΟΣ. Those from Rhagae (S33.3-6), on the other hand, consistently give ΤΕΘΕΟΠΑΤΡΟΣ (Fig. 2) which is further corrupted to ΘΕΠΙΑΤΙ and its meaningless derivatives on specimens from the eastern mint of Margiane (S33.7) and probably even of Areia and Traxiane (Fig. 3). However, this issue had previously been given by leading numismatists to Parthian kings other than Sinatruces. The first to identify the issuer and ascribe the coinage correctly was Sellwood. He argued that the combination of the aged portrait of the coins, wearing the same tiara as that adopted by Phraates III (S39), son of Sinatruces, and the epithets ΘΕΟΠΑΤΟΡΟΣ

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2 Perrin 2001, 536-537, and 590-591, respectively.
3 Simonetta 2001, 90-105 puts the issue in the period 65/64-61/60 BC and attributes to Phraates III.
4 Sellwood 1976, 18 (engraver ‘C’).
5 Lindsay 1852, 142-144 (Mithradates II); De Longpré 1853-1882, pl. V:53-55 (Phraates II); Prokesch-Osten 1874-1875, 20 (Mithradates II); Gardner 1877, 33 (Artabanus II); Markoff 1889, 7-8 (Artaban II); Wroth 1900, 197, 201 and pl. 11:7 (Phraates III); 1903, 51-54 (Phraates III); de la Fôte 1904, 347-348 and pl. vii:17 (Phraates III); Pietrowicz 1904, 36-37 (Artaban I); de Morgan 1923-1936, 156 (Phraates III); Ars Classica-Naville 1926, 136 (Phraates III); Newell 1928, 10 and pl. 141:1 (Phraates III); Simonetta 1997, 158-159 (Phraates III). Rawlinson 1871, 139, n. 4 comments that like Phraates II, Sinatruces employed on his coins the epithet ΘΕ-ΟΠΑΤΡΟΣ. Unfortunately he fails to identify the coins he ascribes to Sinatruces. We cannot therefore be sure whether he referred to S33 drachms or another issue from the ’Dark Age’. ΘΕΟΠΑΤΡΟΣ also appears on S30 and S35 drachms.
and ΝΙΚΑΤΟΡΟΣ in the royal titulature on Σ33 drachms, links the coinage to no other ruler than Sinatruces.

It is evident that by styling himself ΘΕΟΠΑΤΟΡΟΣ Sinatruces claimed descent from a divinized father. Combined with the genealogy of Phraates III in his accession record on Nisa ostraca 2640 (Nova 307) this epithet strongly suggests that Sinatruces was a son of Mithradates I. A better understanding of this link may be obtained by studying the relevant material and the scanty references in our Greco-Latin literature.

Although pertaining to the latter part of the reign of Sinatruces, Lucian (Makrobioi, 15) 9 reports that this prince was restored to his country by the powerful Sacaraucae Scythians when he was already in his eightieth year, assumed the throne and held it for seven years. At the same time, Phlegon of Tralles (Fr. 12.7) 10 places Sinatruces’ death in Olympiad 177.3 (70/69 bc) 11 and adds that he was succeeded by his son, Phraates III surnamed Theos. From these it follows that Sinatruces was born about 156 bc in the reign of Mithradates I and thus around 25 years old when Phraates II took the diadem in 132 bc. 12 We are further told by Trogus in the prologue to his book 41 on the history of Parthia and Bactria 13 that the establishment of the Parthian Empire by King Arsaces was «followed by his successors Artabanus and Tigranes, surnamed the Divine, by whom Media and Mesopotamia were brought into subjection». Ignoring the obvious confusion of Mithradates with Sinatruces 14 the inclusion in the royal titulature of the epithet ΘΕΟΠΑΤΟΡΟΣ on Sinatruces’ coinage can therefore be viewed as an attempt by him to emphasise his paternal ties with Mithradates I and so legitimise his claim to the Parthian throne. 15 I

9 Sellwood 1962, 81-82. Subsequent works give the issuers of these coins as follows: Le Rider 1965, 96-97 and 398 (Phraates III); Sellwood 1965, 124-127 and 133 (Sinatruces); Simonetta 1966, 26 and 39 (Phraates III); Sellwood 1967, 293-294 (Sinatruces); 1971, 89-91 (Sinatruces); Dobins 1974, 70 (Orodes I); Simonetta 1974, 124-125 (Sinatruces); Waggoner 1974, 17 and 23-26 (Phraates III as co-ruler with Sinatruces); Dobins 1975, 32 and 42 (Orodes I); Simonetta 1975, 69-70 and 77 (Sinatruces); Sellwood 1976, 5 and 7 (Gotarzes I); Simonetta, Sellwood 1978, 116 (Phraates III); Mørkholm 1980, 45 (Sinatruces); Sellwood 1980, 87-88 (Gotarzes I); Weiskopf 1981, 140 (Sinatruces, inferred from his reliance on the attributions in Mørkholm 1980); Bivar 1983, 45 accepts attribution of Σ33 drachms to Sinatruces; Sellwood 1983a, 268 (Gotarzes I); Dilmaghani 1986, 220 (Sinatruces); Shore 1991, 24 and 105-106 (Gotarzes I); Loginov, Nikitin 1996, 41, 44 and fig. 6: 49-51 (Sinatruces); Assar 2000, 16 (Sinatruces); Simonetta 2001, 84, fig. 41, and 99-100 (Phraates III); Assar 2003a, 383-389 (Sinatruces); 2004, 89 (Sinatruces); 2005a, 21-22 (Sinatruces); 2005b, 52-53 (Sinatruces); 2006, 145-148 (Sinatruces).


11 Jacoby 1929, 1163-1164; 1930, 842; Henry 1960, 64.

12 Samuel 1972, 224.

13 Cf. Assar 2005, 44-45; 2006, 95-98 for the inception date of the reign of Phraates II.


15 The epithet ΘΕΟΠΑΤΟΡΟΣ on the Σ16 drachms of Phraates II attests to the posthumous divinization of Mithradates I. 16 On the relationship between Mithradates I and Sinatruces cf. Lindsay 1854, 17; Rawlinson 1873, 139 and n. 4; Prokesch-Osten 1874-1875, 20; Sellwood 1976, 8; Assar 2005b, 53.
have shown elsewhere that irrespective of a biological link between Mithradates I and Sinatruces, numismatic material and genealogical records from Nisa leave little doubt about the ‘father-son’ relationship between the two (cf. below). Yet Sinatruces failed to succeed his father perhaps because of his mother’s subordinate status in the imperial court. Our Babylonian cuneiform records clearly show17 that Phraates II acceded as a minor sometime in the period 3/4.4.-27/28.8.132 bc and shared the throne with his mother, Rinnu, for a short period.18 The young Arsacid prince was probably born not much later than August/September 147 bc. As the daughter of a Median magnate (perhaps the head of the Karen family in Ecbatana or Nehâvand) it is possible that Mithradates took Rinnu as his principal queen when Media Magna and Atropatene fell to the Parthians in late summer – early autumn 148 bc. Although the birth-date of Sinatruces suggests that he too was born after Mithradates I had taken the diadem, the superiority of Phraates’ maternal lineage probably led to his appointment as his father’s heir and successor. This may well have contributed to the internecine conflicts that followed the death of Mithradates II in about September 91 bc, continued almost uninterruptedly for over three centuries and eventually led to the collapse of Arsacid power in about ad 224.

As for Sinatruces’ ‘exile’ among the nomads, our only source is Lucian who claims that the Sacaraucae helped the Parthian prince to secure the throne. But Lucian is silent about when and how Sinatruces ended up living among the Royal Sacae. One possibility is that he was captured after Phraates II was defeated and slain by the steppe invaders19 in about autumn 127 bc. Alternatively, he may have disputed the appointment of his younger brother, Phraates, as the heir to the throne and voluntarily gone into exile. If the latter were the case then considering himself a rightful successor of his father, Sinatruces would have played a major role in fomenting troubles around Parthia’s north-eastern frontiers during the reign and following the death of Phraates. A clay tablet from Uruk mentions King Arsaces (Phraates II) and his Queen Obolna in month i around Parthia’s north-eastern frontiers during the reign and following the death of Phraates. The young Arsacid prince was probably born not much later than August/September 147 bc. As the daughter of a Median magnate (perhaps the head of the Karen family in Ecbatana or Nehâvand) it is possible that Mithradates took Rinnu as his principal queen when Media Magna and Atropatene fell to the Parthians in late summer – early autumn 148 bc. Although the birth-date of Sinatruces suggests that he too was born after Mithradates I had taken the diadem, the superiority of Phraates’ maternal lineage probably led to his appointment as his father’s heir and successor. This may well have contributed to the internecine conflicts that followed the death of Mithradates II in about September 91 bc, continued almost uninterruptedly for over three centuries and eventually led to the collapse of Arsacid power in about AD 224.

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Of the wars between Sinatruces and Mithradates II history records nothing. But the ‘annual’ Susian bronze emissions in Table 1 indicate that Sinatruces captured the city from his rival sometime in 93/92 bc. He may have accomplished his victories in Parthia, Media and Susiana with the aid of a large Saca contingent capable of confronting and defeating the Arsacid forces in several
combats. This may have required Sinatruces to strike a limited gold issue to pay the steppe troops in his army and finance his wars against Mithradates II and his successors.

The style and iconography of a countermarked S33.7 gold variant, unearthed in 1979 by the Soviet-Afghan archaeological expedition in Tillya-tepe, indicate that the host coin was minted in the East. Some commentators consider this coin as a gold imitation of Sinatruces’ silver drachms.23

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year SEM</th>
<th>Year SEB</th>
<th>Year BC</th>
<th>Ruler</th>
<th>Le Rider no.</th>
<th>Sellwood no.</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>220</td>
<td>219/220</td>
<td>93/92</td>
<td>Mithradates II</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>28.23</td>
<td>Mithradates II loses Susa and Sinatruces begins his reign in Iran.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220</td>
<td>220/221</td>
<td>92/91</td>
<td>Sinatruces</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>33.13</td>
<td>Sinatruces begins his reign.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>222</td>
<td>221/222</td>
<td>91/90</td>
<td>Mithradates II</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>33.16</td>
<td>Mithradates II dies and Gotarzes I begins his reign.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>223</td>
<td>223/223</td>
<td>90/89</td>
<td>Mithradates III</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>33.17</td>
<td>Sinatruces loses Susa to Gotarzes I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>224</td>
<td>223/224</td>
<td>89/88</td>
<td>Mithradates III</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>33.18</td>
<td>Mithradates III begins his reign.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>225</td>
<td>223/225</td>
<td>88/87</td>
<td>Mithradates III</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>33.19</td>
<td>Orodos I defeats Mithradates III.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>225</td>
<td>224/226</td>
<td>87/86</td>
<td>Orodos I</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>31.16</td>
<td>Orodos I raids Elymais but loses Susa to Arsaces XVI.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>234</td>
<td>233/234</td>
<td>79/78</td>
<td>Arsaces XVI</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>34.10</td>
<td>Orodos I raids Elymais but loses Susa to Arsaces XVI.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>235</td>
<td>234/235</td>
<td>78/77</td>
<td>Arsaces XVI</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>34.11</td>
<td>Orodos I raids Elymais but loses Susa to Arsaces XVI.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>235</td>
<td>235/236</td>
<td>77/76</td>
<td>Arsaces XVI</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>34.12</td>
<td>Orodos I raids Elymais but loses Susa to Arsaces XVI.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>236</td>
<td>235/236</td>
<td>76/75</td>
<td>Arsaces XVI</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>30.33</td>
<td>Orodos I is eliminated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>237</td>
<td>236/237</td>
<td>75/74</td>
<td>Arsaces XVI</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>30.34</td>
<td>Orodos I is eliminated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>238</td>
<td>237/238</td>
<td>74/73</td>
<td>Arsaces XVI</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>30.35</td>
<td>Orodos I is eliminated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>239</td>
<td>238/239</td>
<td>73/72</td>
<td>Arsaces XVI</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>30.36</td>
<td>Orodos I is eliminated.</td>
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<tr>
<td>240</td>
<td>239/240</td>
<td>72/71</td>
<td>Arsaces XVI</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>30.37</td>
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<tr>
<td>241</td>
<td>240/241</td>
<td>71/70</td>
<td>Arsaces XVI</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>30.38</td>
<td>Orodos I is eliminated.</td>
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<tr>
<td>241</td>
<td>241/242</td>
<td>70/69</td>
<td>Arsaces XVI</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>30.39</td>
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<td>243</td>
<td>242/243</td>
<td>69/68</td>
<td>Arsaces XVI</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>30.40</td>
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<tr>
<td>245</td>
<td>243/244</td>
<td>68/67</td>
<td>Arsaces XVI</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>30.41</td>
<td>Phraates III at Nisa (180 AE).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>246</td>
<td>244/245</td>
<td>67/66</td>
<td>Phraates III</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>30.42</td>
<td>Phraates III captures Susa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>246</td>
<td>245/246</td>
<td>66/65</td>
<td>Phraates III</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>30.43</td>
<td>Phraates III captures Susa.</td>
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<tr>
<td>247</td>
<td>246/247</td>
<td>65/64</td>
<td>Phraates III</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>30.44</td>
<td>Phraates III captures Susa.</td>
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<tr>
<td>248</td>
<td>247/248</td>
<td>64/63</td>
<td>Phraates III</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>30.45</td>
<td>Phraates III captures Susa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>249</td>
<td>248/249</td>
<td>63/62</td>
<td>Phraates III</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>30.46</td>
<td>Phraates III captures Susa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>251</td>
<td>250/251</td>
<td>61/60</td>
<td>Phraates III</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>30.48</td>
<td>Phraates III captures Susa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>252</td>
<td>251/252</td>
<td>60/59</td>
<td>Phraates III</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>30.49</td>
<td>Phraates III captures Susa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>253</td>
<td>252/253</td>
<td>59/58</td>
<td>Phraates III</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>30.50</td>
<td>Phraates III captures Susa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>254</td>
<td>253/254</td>
<td>58/57</td>
<td>Phraates III</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>30.51</td>
<td>Phraates III captures Susa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>255</td>
<td>254/255</td>
<td>57/56</td>
<td>Phraates III</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>30.52</td>
<td>Phraates III captures Susa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>256</td>
<td>255/256</td>
<td>56/55</td>
<td>Phraates III</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>30.53</td>
<td>Phraates III captures Susa.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1. Arrangement of the ‘annual’ Susian Bronze Issues in the Period 93/92-57 BC.

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But the countermark on the gold is identical with the one on S91.1 specimens whose undertype are S33.3 drachms from Rhagae. It also appears on the S33.7 variety from Margiane. These suggest that the original silver was coined for Sinatruces in the Central and East Parthian mints. It is possible that an anonymous ruler subsequently applied the countermark to some of the surviving pieces and ensured that the punch with his frontal portrait did not obliterate the royal bust on the obverse of the host coins. Given that the gold and some of the original and countermarked silver specimens share the same style and iconography, it may not be impossible that Sinatruces struck a gold issue to pay the Saca soldiers who helped him secure the Arsacid throne in 93/92 BC.

My proposed date for Sinatruces’ victory against Mithradates II is close to that given to a rather vague statement in Josephus (Ja, 13.371). Perhaps inspired by the dynastic feud in the Seleucid court, the Parthians are reported to have attacked a certain Laodice, queen of the unknown tribe Γαληνηνων or Σαμηνηνων (Samenian Arabs). She appealed to Antiochus X Eusebes Philopator (94-92 BC and possibly 84-83 BC) who went to her aid. Although the Seleucid king fought courageously he was defeated and slain on the field of battle. It is possible that Sinatruces found Mithradates and his field army preoccupied in the West and moved against his opponent at this point in time. But Josephus’ account of the fate of Antiochus X is unfortunately contradicted by other classical sources. Appian (Syrian Wars, 8.49 and 11.69) reports no Parthian incursion into Northern Mesopotamia and states that Antiochus X was deposed by Tigranes II (96-55 BC) after the Armenian king annexed Syria in 83 BC. Eusebius (Chron., 1.40.25) too is silent about an Arsacid attack and relates that after contesting the kingdom with Philip I son of Antiochus VIII Grypus, Antiochus X was defeated and fled to the Parthians. Later he surrendered to the Roman general, Pompey, hoping to be restored to Syria. However, having received a gift from the inhabitants of Antioch, Pompey ignored Antiochus’ pleas and allowed the city to remain independent. This agrees with Justin (40.2.2-4) who reports that after crushing Tigranes, Lucullus summoned «Antiochus, son of Cyzicenus» to the throne of Syria. However, soon after, Pompey took away what Lucullus had granted. He refused Antiochus’ request to be placed on the Syrian throne arguing that the Seleucid prince had simply lurked in a corner of Cilicia during the 18-year reign of Tigranes. He then began to reduce Syria to a Roman province.

It is clear that both Eusebius and Justin confused Antiochus X with his son, Antiochus XIII Eusebes Asiaticus who was negotiating with Pompey in 65/64 BC for his own return to Syria as king. We cannot therefore be sure that Parthian involvements in Northern Mesopotamia around 93/92 BC led to Sinatruces’ victory over Mithradates II.

Sellwood’s systematic studies of the Parthian drachms from the ‘Dark Age’ show that S28 of Mithradates II, S29 of Gotarzes I and S33.3-6 of Sinatruces share the same celator from Rhagae. This agrees with several published and recently discovered coin hoards establishing the proximity of these types while a S33/S28 ‘mule’ (Fig. 4) confirms that S28 and S33 were contiguous. Combined with his silver drachms from the eastern mints and the western workshop in Ecbatana, the abundance and geographical distribution of Sinatruces’ coinage strongly implies that Mithradates II had ceded to him a substantial portion of the Parthian Empire before his own death. Hence Sinatruces’ adoption of the epithet ΝΙΚΑΤΟΡΟΣ which, in line with its derivatives ΝΙΚΗΦΟΡΟΓ and ΝΕΙΚΗΣΑΣ on other Parthian coins, signifies a momentous triumph over a great opponent.

There is practically very little else on the reign of Sinatruces apart from the fact that his hold over Susa was tenuous and short-lived. Numismatic evidence and Babylonian records show that he was eventually supplanted in that city in 88/87 BC by Gotarzes I, son and heir of Mithradates II. As discussed below later successors of Mithradates II expelled Sinatruces from the greater part of Syria. Cf. below under Mithradates III for a brief discussion.

24 Ibidem, 41-42, 47 and fig. 6:49-51.
25 Grainger 1997, 33-34.
26 Marcus 1998, 410-411; Bellinger 1949, 74-75.
27 White 1999, 196-197 and 236-237. There is some uncertainty over such an early date for the presence of Tigranes in Syria. Cf. below under Mithradates III for a brief discussion.
28 Schoene 1866, 133-134; 1875, 261; Helm 1984, 150; Karst 1911, 123 and 207.
30 Sellwood 1976, 4.
his conquered territory and confined him to the remote north-eastern regions of Parthia. Phle- 
egan places the death of Sinatruces in 70/69 
bc but the Babylonian records suggest that he may have died a few months later in 69/68 bc (cf. below).

Finally, there remains an important contem-
porary document whose allocation to Sinatru-
ces is no longer tenable. This is the earliest dated acces-
sion record from Nisa. It is registered on 
ostracon 2638 (1760) and inaugurates the enthronement of an Arsacid ruler in 91/90 bc. Given the 
above proposed descent, requiring a paternal link between Sinatruces and Mithradates I, I had argued elsewhere that King Arsaces of this record was none other than the octogenarian ruler.31

Although my identification agreed with Sinatruces’ lineage and accession in North-East Parthia 
sometime in 91/90 bc, it led to complications elsewhere.

The partially reconstructed Aramaic-script text of ostracon 2638 (1760) reads:32

Aramaic transliteration:
1 ŠNT I C XX XX X III I ’ršk MLK’ BRY BR’Y(? ) ZY(?) Fry’ptk
2 BRY ’HYBR’ ZY(?) ’ršk

Parthian transcription:
1 sar’d sad (ud) panjást (ud) haft Aršak šāh puhr puhr’r(?) čē(?) Fryd šuțak
2 puhr harďardźadag čē(?) Aršak

Translation
1 Year 157 (AE = 91/90 bc), King Arsaces, son of son (?) of Phriapatius,
2 son of the nephew of Arsaces.

As the son of Mithradates I, Sinatruces was indeed a grandson of Phriapatius who was him-
self a grand-nephew of Arsaces I.33 However, while the above text supports Sinatruces’ relation-
ship with Phriapatius, its compilation date differs from his accession year in Parthia. According 
to the evidence of ‘annual’ issues in Table 1, Sinatruces held Susa in 93/92 bc and struck his first 
bronze coinage there before 1 Dios 221 sem (5/6.10.92 bc). This implies that he initially conquered 
the North-East Parthian territories, including Nisa, then moved west to annex Rhagae and Eb-
batana and finally turned south to capture Susa. Given that his first Susian bronze corresponds 
to 93/92 bc, Sinatruces could not have been recognised in Nisa any later than 156 ae (92/91 bc), 
i.e. a year earlier than the date of the above accession record. Unless we assume that Sinatruces 
ever went as far as Nisa in 93/92 bc and instead overran the central and southern satrapies of 
Media and Susiana first and then marched north to Nisa, or that he captured Nisa first but de-
layed his inauguration until after the death of Mithradates II,34 the above accession record may

31 Assar 2003a, 40-41.
32 Diakonoff, Livshits 1960a, 20-21 and 113; 1960b, 38; Bickerman 1966, 15-17; Diakonoff, Livshits 1966, 143-144, n. 28; Chaumont 1968, 15; 1971, 248; Kosheleko 1976, 33-34; 1982, 138-139; Lukonin 1983, 687-688; Bader 1996, 264; Dia-
33 The reading ZY in lines 1 and 2 are doubtful. Cf. Haru-
ta 2004, 141. It is possible that the link between king Ar-
saces and Phriapatius in line 1 was given as BRY BRY BRY (son of son of son – great-grandson) rather than BRY npt (son of grandson – great-grandson) to emphasise the gen-
der of both the child and grandchild of Phriapatius. Cf. Ger-
shevitch 1973, 74-77. Alternatively, it may have been given as 
BRY followed by a 5- or 6-letters Parthian word for ‘great-
grandson’. The photograph of ostracon 2638 (1760) in Di-
konoff, Livshits 1999, pl. 917 shows a partially preserved 
text after the first BRY in line 1. It also reveals that there is 
enough space for a longer word in the break before Pryptk. The reading ‘great-grandson’ agrees with the genealogy of 
Gotarzes I. He was the eldest son of Mithradates II who him-
self was a grandson of Phriapatius. As for the ZY in line 2, 
the remaining traces show at least one or possibly two let-
ters between the Y in ZY and ‘ršk. Haruta 2004, 141 reads a 
second BRY instead of ZY in this line and translates ‘son of 
son of brother of son of ‘ršk’. But if BRY ’HYBR-YRY ’ršk is confirmed in this line it may be interpreted as ‘son of the 
grandnephew of Arsaces’. This will render Phriapatius the 
great-grandnephew of Arsaces I.
34 Assar 2006, 146-149. I have shown that Mithradates II died before October 91 bc. It should be pointed out 
that building upon an earlier error in Minns who had failed to 
collate the original source and translated from a defective 
copy by Reisner, McDowell claimed that the reign of Mith-
radates II ended about October 91 bc. However, the date of
not be ascribed to him. Instead it should be allocated to Gotarzes I who immediately succeeded his father, King of Kings Mithradates II in 91 bc.\(^{35}\) Especially so if the genealogy on Nisa ostracon 2659 (Nova 366) discussed below turns out to be that of another great-grandson of Phriapatius.\(^{36}\) This poorly preserved text records the accession of Arsaces XVI, the issuer of S\(\text{J}o\) coinage, who also styled himself \(\text{ΘΕΟΠΑΤΩΡΟΣ}\) and began to reign in 78/77 bc. We know that the achievements of Mithradates II earned him the title \(\text{ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ}\) «the Saviour/Deliverer»\(^{37}\) and perhaps led to his posthumous deification. As a son of Mithradates II and therefore a great-grandson of Phriapatius, Arsaces XVI may have adopted the epithet \(\text{ΘΕΟΠΑΤΩΡΟΣ}\) to confirm his link with the Great King of Kings and so justify his own claim to the Parthian throne. Given the discrepancy between the date and royal genealogy of Nisa ostracon 2658 (1760) on the one hand and Sinatruces’ lineage and occupation of Susa as early as 93/92 bc on the other, he cannot be the King Arsaces who acceded in 91/90 bc.

Sinatruces’ long reign of about 23 years,\(^{38}\) overlapping those of Mithradates II and four of his successors, is also supported by the fact that his coins represent the most common type from the ‘Dark Age’. Whether his opponents ever attempted to suppress his coinage systematically cannot be proven because of the absence of overstrikes.\(^{39}\) Our numismatic evidence confirms that during his occupation of the eastern satrapies and Media Sinatruces issued coinage on a massive scale and more often than not concurrently with those of his rivals. This gave rise to occasional ‘mulining’ with adjacent types. I have presented a handful of such pieces throughout this note and briefly discussed their historical and chronological implications.

**Arsaces XIII-Gotarzes I (August/September 91-July/August 87 bc)**

As the Parthian Satrap of Satraps Gotarzes was hailed king in Babylon immediately after the death of his father Mithradates II in August/September 91 bc. At the same time Sinatruces remained in overall control of Susa and Central Parthia. With two Arsacid claimants separately but simultaneously on the throne a simple inclusion of the dynastic name Arsaces proved insufficient for dating requirements. As a result the Babylonian scribes employed a novel method whereby Gotarzes was named jointly with his royal consort in the colophons of the clay tablets to distinguish him from Sinatruces. The earliest extant example of this date-formula is in a bilingual prayer text from Babylon dated 6.xii2.22 bc which is the latest in the series.

\[ \text{9 } [\text{E}][\text{k}] [\text{i }] [\text{i}][\text{i}][\text{DIRIG.ŠE } U_{6} [\text{-KAM } MU_{1}-\text{me}-\text{ṣṣy\text{3-KAM}}} \]
\[ \text{10 } [\text{šd } \text{ṣh}]-\text{i } [\text{MU}_{-2}[\text{me}-21]-\text{KAM } \text{ṣAr-ṣd-ka } \text{LUGAL } \text{ṣd } [\text{<it>}-\text{ṭār}-\text{rā-du}] \]
\[ \text{11 } [\text{ṭGu-}][\text{-}] [\text{ār}-\text{za-a } u \text{ ṚA-ṣi-}][\text{-a-ba-tā-ar}] \]
\[ \text{12 } \text{ṣd } \text{AD DŪK TA } \text{A } \text{DAM-ṣū } \text{GAŠAN}\]

The VAT 245 (SBH 46) tablet was mistakenly quoted by Minns as ‘Tīšī 157 (AE) = 221 (SEB)’, that is September/October 91 bc, and faithfully followed by McDowell. Its correct date is 3.n.n.221 SEB = 30/31 May 91 bc which is the latest in the series that begins in the second half of year 203 SEB (109/108 bc) with the epithet LUGAL LUGAL\(^{40}\) = King of Kings. The original tablet has been collated by Professors Oelsner and Maul (Ruprecht-Karls-Universität, Heidelberg) and the month name was ascribed as \(\text{Sināmû}\) (Sināmu). This is clearly legible in the photograph of the tablet. Cf. Reisner 1986, 25; Minns 1975, 34, n. 21 and McDowell 1935, 207, n. 17 and 210. Cf. also Oelsner 1975, 44; Del Monte 1997, 169, n. 281 and 230-251 for the correct date.

\(^{35}\) Diakonoff, Livshits 1960a, 20-21 (Gotarzes I) and 193; 1966, 143-145, n. 28 (Gotarzes I) 38; Chaumont 1968, 15-19 (Gotarzes I); 1971, 145-159 (Gotarzes I); Koshelevko 1976, 35-34 (Gotarzes I); 1982, 138-139 (Gotarzes I) grandson of Phriapatius but not son of Mithradates II; Bivar 1983, 30-31 (Gotarzes I); Frye 1983, 208-210 (Gotarzes I); Lukonin 1983, 687-688 (Gotarzes I); Bader 1996, 264 (Gotarzes I); Lerner 1999, 26-28 (Gotarzes I); Haruta 2004, 141 (Gotarzes I).

\(^{36}\) For a possible fraternal link between Artabanus I (son of Phriapatius) and Mithradates II cf. Van der Spek 2001, 353-354. Cf. also Assar 2005b, 52 for a probable father-son relationship between Phriapatius and Mithradates II.

\(^{37}\) Sellwood 1980, 72, S25.1 from Ecbatana and S35.1 var. from Rahgae; Sellwood 1983a, 284-285.

\(^{38}\) Mörkholm 1980, 44, n. 40 mistakenly ascribes S\(\text{J}o\) coinage to Sinatruces although he too concludes that the latter reigned for about 17 years.

\(^{39}\) A unique S\(\text{J}j\) drachm in Sellwood’s Collection has had the stags and the central horn decoration of the tiara removed manually to assimilate it to S\(\text{J}29\) or S\(\text{J}1\) drachms.

\(^{40}\) Rawlinson 1873, 260, n. 1; Dittenberger 1903, 641-642, No. 431; Herzfeld 1920, 35-40; 1932, 80; 1935, 54-55; Deboevoise 1938, 44-45; Colledge 1965, 32-33; 1977, 89-91; Bivar 1983, 41; Frye 1983, 215; Assar 2006, 143-144.

\(^{41}\) Reisner 1896, 15, no. 51 (Vath 265+1728 + two Fragments) and 93 (copy) wrongly gives 155 \(\text{AE} = 221 \text{SEB}\). Recent collation by Professor S. M. Maul (Ruprecht-Karls-Universität, Heidelberg) confirms year 157 \(\text{AE} = 221 \text{SEB}\); Minns 1975, 34, Text ‘h’ and n. 22; Oelsner 1975, 49-42; 1986, 276-277 and n. ‘wv’; McEwan 1986, 93; Del Monte 1997, 231, all give 157 \(\text{AE} = 221 \text{SEB}\).
However the introduction of the unusual verb form *iṭarīdu* in this and several later records presented difficulties for modern translators and led to a series of conflicting royal identifications in the period 91/90-80/79 BC. A thorough revision of the published literature shows that most Parthian numismatists considered *iṭarīdu* to derive from the verb *tarādu* ‘to expel’. Others offered several contradictory renditions using alternative verbal roots. As remarked by McEwan, if we derive the form from the verb *tarādu* then *iṭarīdu* would simply imply «(who) is driven out». This is syntactically and grammatically impossible because *iṭarīdu* precedes the personal names in the corresponding colophons and so renders them as agents of the passive verb. Even an *ad sensum* translation «(who) has expelled» would be inadmissible due to the anomalies it creates. Firstly it would lead to the highly unconventional expulsion of the associated queen whose name was included to identify the reign of the ruling king only. Secondly in more than one case the title ‘king’ would be given to the expelled ruler rather than the one responsible for the expulsion (cf. under Gotarzes year 225 sēb and Orodes I year 232 sēb). Thirdly it would defy the very purpose of the date-formula which was strictly to identify both the year of compilation and reign but not to record political events.

Given these difficulties and the fact that homophonic verbal roots with different meanings are not uncommon in Akkadian language, McEwan justifiably concluded that the meaning of *iṭarīdu* had to be determined from the context. In fact aside from misreading the word Strassmaier had already remarked in 1891 that «Zur Bedeutung von *ustarrīdu* führt vielleicht eine andere Variante, *Aršakâ ša šumu-šu Gutarzâ*, Arsaces, dessen Beinamen Gutarzâ ist». In other words the form alternated in the same context with the phrase «Arsaces whose name is Gotarzes» (cf. below). Luckily we now have several records that are unconnected with the Parthian dynastic strife after Mithradates II but support McEwan’s proposed interpretation. The first is from month 1 of 186 sēb (28/29.3.-26/4.126 BC) and uses the feminine form of *tarādu* to describe a river:

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17 [x x x]šú nè šá ta-t-rî-du-ù 16Na-ag-ţa-a Eₐₙ₁... ... 17 ...]šú nè which is therein which is called river Nagrâ, they went up. ... ...
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The second record, dated month 1 of 203 sēb (17/18.4.-16/17.5.109 BC) concerns another water course whose name has survived only in uncertain traces:

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B16 [...] ša ta-t-ţar-ri-du 16x₁[x ...] 16B [...] which is called river [x ...]
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42 The correct interpretation of the uncertain signs at the beginning of this line has so far eluded the Assyriologists. Minns 1995, 34, Text «h» read [šú]-a-št a-t ŠÁ [šú] ta-t-a-tu-du-ù 16Na-ag-ta-a Eₐₙ₁... ... 17 [x x x]šú nè šá ta-t-rî-du-ù 16Na-ag-ţa-a Eₐₙ₁... ... 17 ...]šú nè which is therein which is called river Nagrâ, they went up. ... ...

48 McEwan 1986, 92-93.

49 Epping, Strassmaier 1891, 222 and 226. For the interpretation «called»/«named» cf. also Herzfeld 1932, 71; Degevois 1938, 50, n. 82; Sachs, Hunger 1996, 260, 262, and 456; Del Monte 1996, 4; 1997, 136, n. 239; Van der Spek 2000, 442-444.

47 Sachs, Hunger 1996, 260-262, no. -125A. Hunger comments that «The verb *jārdû* here is probably the one meaning ‘to name, call’».

46 Oppert 1888, 467; Strassmaier 1888, 135 reads *iṭarī-dû* with no translation; Oppert 1889, 311-314; Schrader 1890, 1127-1129; 1891, 3; Minns 1995, 34-35 and 40, n. 53 (after L. W. King); Lewy 1924, 202, n. 59; Bickerman 1966, 17, n. 18 (after I. Mendelson); Chaumon 1971, 133-135, n. 1 (after J. A. Delaunay); Oelsner 1975, 40-42, n. 48; 1986, 276-277, n. «w».

45 If  this is correct the uncertain signs may be read as *šú*-a-t-ăr-ta-a, probably the Akkadian rendering of the Parthian *št-dxt* ‘joyous-daughter’, an appropriate cognomen for an Arsacid princess. Cf. Gignoux 1972, 49 and 64 for BRTY (Parthian duxt ‘daughter’) and Parthian *št* ‘joyous/happy’.
The third example unequivocally proves that in late Akkadian vocabulary *ittari*du indeed had the meaning 'whom they call, (which) is called'. This is found in a text dated 3.11.131 SbIB (5/6.5.181 BC) in the reign of Seleucus IV (187-175 BC). It concerns the sale of a one-third share in a house plot which is the property of Anu and designated as «tenured land (bit-ratti)»:

1. **140.ŠEŠ.MEŠ.MU** A šá *IR-ič.MAŠ* A šá *IR-luč.460 ŠI-PÍR* NIG.GA š60 ina ḫu-ud li[b-bi-tišu] [...]
2. **ḪA-LA-šu gab-bi šá ina Ė ṣé-šu NIG.GA š60 Ri-ti-ti šá *IR-4.MAŠ* AD-šu šá ina kapf ni 1
3. šá *tu-ta-ri-du* kap-ri šá š60 ina KI-tim KĀ.GAL 9INANNA šá qe-reb UNUGK1 [... ...

Anu-aḫe ḫidin, son of Arad-Ninartu, son of Ilu-ḫu-Adnu, parchment scribe of the state of Anu, of his own free will (sold)
his entire share of a built-upon house plot, property of Anu, bit-ratti of Arad-Ninartu, his father, in the village/quarter
which is called the village/quarter of Anu, in the district of the Ishtar-gate within Uruk ...

It can be seen that the meaning «(who/which) is called» is well borne out by the above examples that are connected with the expulsion of a rival Parthian king. Our list of supporting evidence is now augmented by two further texts from the Seleucid epoch. The first is dated 15.XII.156 SbIB (1/2.3.155 BC) and subscribed to Demetrius I (162-150 BC). It gives:

1. **140.ŠEŠ.MEŠ.MU** A šá *Ri-ḫaṭ-ki-it-ti-ṭi* A šá 140.ŠEŠ.MEŠ.MU š60 DÜ-ul-du IM.HI.A šá É.DINGIRMEŠ šá UNUGK1
2. ina mil-ki šá *An-tu-DU-at* AMA-šu DUMUMI šá š60 ŠEŠ.AŠ ina ḫu-ud li[b-bi-tišu] É-šu ep-šu É šá sins SA
3. É-ul-fore šu u É-ru-gu-šu šu É-šu 60 É Ri-ti-ti šá ina KI-tim É.IRIŠ.GAL
4. šá *t-qab-bu* šú šá É.DINGIRMEŠ UNUGK1 [... ...

Anu-aḫe ḫidin, son of Rihat-kitti, son of Anu-aḫe ḫidin, a construction worker of the temple of gods of Uruk,
with the consent of Antu-bānāt, his mother, daughter of Anu-aḫe-apli, of his own free will (sold) his built house, the north room,
his passageway and his upper story, property of Anu, his bit-ratti, in the Irigal district,
which is called the «quarter of the temple of the gods of Uruk», ...

The date of the second document is lost. But the partial royal name King Anti[ochus] places it before 150 SbIB (162/161 BC). The relevant text reads:

1. **KI-din š60 A šá *KAR*-š60 A šá *KI-din*-š60 š60 INI.GA š60 ina ḫu-ud li[b-bi-šu]
2. É-šu ep-šu TÜR u MU-šu-šu NIG.GA š60 É Ri-ti-ti šá ina BÁD šá š60
3. šá É-šu 1 *kap-ri* šá É.DINGIRMEŠ šá qe-reb UNUGK1 [... ...

Kidin-Anu, son of Muṣeziḫ-Anu, son of Kidin-Anu, gate-keeper of the property of Anu, of his own free will (sold)
his built-upon house plot, yard, and its exit way, property of Anu, his bit-ratti, which is within the wall of Anu,
which is called the «quarter of the temple of the gods», which is within Uruk, ...

The new examples clearly show that both *iqabbu* and the logogram É-šu in the corresponding texts alternated with *ittar*idi in the parallel passage from 131 SbIB. These leave little doubt about McEwan’s interpretation of *ittar*idi. We can now safely assume that the above record from March 90 BC attests Gotarzes’ association with Queen Ashiabatar in Babylon rather than their overthrow.

As shown in Table 1, Gotarzes’ lack of ‘annual’ bronze coins suggests that Sinatruces was firmly in control of Susa during the period 93/92-88/87 BC. The former in turn inaugurated his reign...
by striking a series of tetradrachms at Seleucia on the Tigris (S32.1). These are known from four examples that turned up in a huge hoard of Greek and Parthian coins unearthed around 1955 in North-East Iran. They depict on their obverse (Fig. 5) the effigy of a rather aged monarch in a tiara decorated with a central star similar to the one worn by Mithradates II (S28.3). But while copying his father’s earlier titles, Gotarzes introduces into his titulature a new epithet, ΕΥΕΡΓΕΤΟΥ. Hence the inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΕΠΘΑΝΟΤΟΣ ΦΙΛΕΛΛΗΝΟΣ ΕΥΕΡΓΕΤΟΥ on his S32 tetradrachms.

Gotarzes’ drachms (S29.1-3) on the other hand employ the title « King of Kings ». They also drop ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ and add ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ to the string of honorific royal designations (Figs. 6-7). The latter was perhaps intended to justify Gotarzes’ claim to the Parthian throne.

The extant material shows that Gotarzes’ drachms almost exclusively emanated from the two major mints in Ecbatana and Rhagae although a small number of specimens from East Parthian workshops have also come to light (Fig. 8). These copy the obverse bust of the S32.1 tetradrachms while their inscriptions read ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΥ ΕΥΕΡΓΕΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΦΙΛΕΛΛΗΝΟΣ. The presence of the vainglorious title « King of Kings » on Gotarzes’ drachms had led the majority of previous authors to attribute them to Mithradates I, Mithradates II and Mithradates III (son of Mithradates II). Similarly his tetradrachms were ascribed to kings ranging from an « Unknown King I » to Mithradates II, « Arsaces Euergetes, 88/87 BC » and Mithradates III (son of Mithradates II). Given the evidence of hoards and Sellwood’s sequence of Parthian die engravers there is little doubt that he liberated Susa from Sinatruces in 87 BC. The bottom and left-hand side lines of the inscription on the reverse of this bronze have to be examined to ascertain whether or not they read ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ and ΕΠΘΑΝΟΤΟΣ.

Simonetta, Sellwood 1978, 116 suggest similar attribution.

Thompson et alii 1973, 261-262, no. 1814 (Gombad); Mørkholm 1980, 35. It is known that a substantial portion of the hoard was melted down. The original find may have included other types and more specimens of the currently rare issues. The reported figures must be treated with caution.

Mørkholm 1980, 35 states that « while the drachms were struck in Iran, the tetradrachms were issued at Seleucia, and analogies from the Seleucid coinage exist in abundance to show that different mints did not always follow the same lines as regards the royal titulature ». It is also noteworthy that Gotarzes is consistently styled LUGAL (King) in the contemporary Babylonian colophons.

Gardner 1877, 30, no. 28 (Mithradates I); Wroth 1903, 35-36, nos. 117-120 (Mithradates II); Petrowicz 1904, 31, nos. 77-79 (Mithradates I); Newell 1958, 486 and pl. 141.1 (Mithradates II); Sellwood 1973, 75 (Mithradates II); 1978, 6 (Mithradates II); Simonetta, Sellwood 1978, 116 (Gotarzes I); Sellwood 1980, 84 (Mithradates II); 1983a, 285 (Mithradates II); Simonetta 2001, 95 (Mithradates III son of Mithradates II).

Sellwood 1971, 87-88 (« Unknown King I »); Thompson et alii 1973, 262 (Mithradates II); Simonetta 1974, 117 (Arsaces Euergetes, 88/87 BC); Dobbins 1975, 23-26 (Mithradates II); Simonetta 1975, 77 (Arsaces Euergetes, 88/87 BC); Sellwood 1976, 5 and 7 (« Unknown King I »); Simonetta, Sellwood 1978, 116 (Gotarzes I); Mørkholm 1980, 35 (Mithradates II); Sellwood 1980, 93-94 (« Unknown King I »); 1983a, 287 (« Unknown King I »); Dilmaghani 1986, 217-218 (Mithradates II); Simonetta 2001, 95 (Mithradates III, son of Mithradates II).
both denominations were issued by Gotarzes.\(^{69}\) It is also noteworthy that the Characenean ruler Tiraios I minted at least two consecutive tetradrachms\(^{69}\) in his own name in 222 and 223 \(\text{SEM} (24/25.9.91-6/7.4.89 \text{BC})\). He had begun issuing coins under Mithradates II in 218 \(\text{SEM}\.\)\(^{61}\) Perhaps Gotarzes allowed Tiraios to remain a Parthian vassal and continue his coinage for local use. This may explain the inclusion of « King of Kings » in Gotarzes’ titulature on his drachms.

Alternatively, it is likely that Gotarzes inherited this epithet from his father Mithradates II and used it in opposition to Sinatruces’ authority.

Our scanty cuneiform material gives patchy references to the political circumstances of the reign of Gotarzes. We have therefore no knowledge of his possible clashes with Sinatruces in Central and Eastern Parthia. But we do get glimpses of the situation in Babylonia and Susiana. These suggest a prolonged struggle between the two rivals. The earliest reference to military manoeuvres in the southern satrapies is from month \(x\) in 221 \(\text{SEB} (21/22.12.91-19/20.1.90 \text{BC})\). It indicates a possible siege of the city of Susa:\(^{62}\)

\[48\] … … That month

\[49\] [I heard that Mitratu (Mithrates)] the chief of the troops, departed on the other side of the Tigris as before.

The text then continues on the reverse of the tablet and gives:

1 […] departed [to the] surroundings of Susa. A reduction of equivalent happened in this city Susa. That day I heard [that … …]

It is evident that apart from reporting certain troop movements in the vicinity of Susa, the above record also refers to « a reduction of equivalent » in that city. This term was explicitly used by the Babylonian scribes to record price rises of the basic commodities and the consequent drop in the buying power of a silver shekel (about two drachms but not a Parthian denomination).\(^{63}\) Although causes other than war or long siege may have induced such fluctuations, a connection in this particular case between the presence of an army around Susa and the crisis in that city seems inevitable. There is also a further incomplete report\(^ {64}\) on military activities under the same Parthian « chief of the troops » in month \(x\text{i} \) of 221 \(\text{SEB} (20/21.1.-17/18.2.90 \text{BC})\). This happened around the city of Kar-Åšşur,\(^ {65}\) built by the Assyrian ruler Tiglath-Pileser III (744-727 BC) probably in the Diyala region\(^ {66}\) northeast of present day Baghdad. These practically sum up the ‘historical notices’ in the Astronomical Diary fragments down to month \(x\text{iii} \) of 224 \(\text{SEB} (15/16.2.-15/16.3.87 \text{BC})\). The extant colophons in this same period continue to mention Gotarzes and Ashiabatar in broken context, confirming the on-going rivalry between Gotarzes and Sinatruces.\(^ {67}\) However, we now have enough

\(^{69}\) Sellwood 1976, 4 and 18-19 engravers C and E from Ecbatana and Rhagae. Several recent hoards containing S27, S28, S29, and S33 drachms exclusively have confirmed Sellwood’s proposed sequence of types. Mørkholm 1980, 35 and 43-45 attributes the issue to Mithradates II but perceptively places it before the S31 coinage on stylistic and iconographical grounds and also engravers’ sequence.

\(^{61}\) Hill 1922, cxvii and pl. liv:3; Le Rider 1999, 234 and 251.

\(^{62}\) Assar 2006, 141.

\(^{63}\) Sachs, Hunger 1996, 438-439, no. -90. The restoration of « Mitratu » in line 49 of the obverse text is secure since this ‘ chief of the troops ’ is attested in month \(\text{vi} \) of the same Astronomical Diary and remains active until at least month \(\text{iv} \) of 228 \(\text{SEB} (9/10.7.-7/8.8.84 \text{BC})\). Cf. ibidem, 474-475, no. -83, Rev. 17 and 19.

\(^{64}\) Sachs, Hunger 1988, 34. The basic commodities reported in the Astronomical Diaries are barley, dates, mustard, cress, sesame, and wool.

\(^{65}\) Sachs, Hunger 1996, 440-441, no. -90, Rev. 18.


\(^{67}\) Adams 1965, 58-68.

evidence to show that before the end of his reign Gotarzes prevailed against Sinatruces and expelled him from Susa and the greater part of his kingdom. The first clue relates to Gotarzes’ connection with the Armenian Royal House as the son-in-law of Tigranes II. This can be gleaned from the opening lines of the oldest of the three parchments discovered in a stone jar about 1909 in the village of Avroman in Kurdistan, Iran. It reportedly contained many more texts from the Parthian period now lost. The relevant lines of Avroman I sale contract give:

1. In the reign of the King of Kings, Arsaces, the Beneficent, the Just, the Mani-
   fest and the Philhellenic, and of the Queens, Siak, his compatriarch,
   3 sister and wife, and Aryazate surnamed
   4 Automa, daughter of the Great King Tigranes, and his wife,
   5 and of Azate, his compaternal sister and wife, in the year 225,
   6 in the month Apellaios, ...

It should be emphasised that the single date of this and the other Greek documents of the Parthian period are according to the Macedonian version of the Seleucid Era. Nevertheless some commentators have argued that Avroman parchment I was dated by Arsacid Era, that is 23/22 bc in the reign of Phraates IV. I have shown elsewhere that single dates in both the Greek documents and the Babylonian cuneiform tablets of the Parthian epoch are always according to the Seleucid Era. Given that the imperial designations in Avroman I text agree with no other Parthian king’s epithets prior to the reign of Orodes II except Gotarzes I it is possible that the contract was registered under the latter.

The above date-formula unequivocally confirms that Tigranes II was still an ally of the Parthian king as late as Apellaios 225 sem (19/20/10.17/18/11.88 bc); his daughter, Queen Aryazate, is diplomatically placed in the royal titulary between Gotarzes’ two sister-wives Siak and Azate. Lucian (Makrobiou, 15) states that «Tigranes, King of Armenia, with whom Lucullus warred, died of illness at the age of eighty-five». This places the birth of the Armenian ruler around 140 bc. He was thus fifty-two years old in 88 bc and could have had a marriageable daughter for the son of his old ally Mithradates II «King of Kings» of Parthia. However, Gotarzes’ Queen Ashiabatar of the cuneiform records cannot be identified with any of the names in this parchment. While there is no proof for the geographical dispersal of the royal consorts in Parthian courts, it is possible that the three queens of the Avroman parchment I were resident in the imperial court at Ecbatana in Media while Ashiabatar was the principal queen of the royal palace at Babylon. The last historical reference to Gotarzes in the extant records is dated 3.xii.224 seb (17/18.2.87 bc). It refers to a possible ambush on an unknown enemy.

30 U3 kutSAR3 nu-ti ina É-IGI-DU₄ A ša-su-ú ak-ka-’i-su ša 3[E-IGI-DU₄].....
31 1Arš-ša-k₃ LUGAL ša MU-šu ‘Gu-tár-zá ŠUB-úti-su-tu ina ML.KUR N₃ ina 3[E-IGI-DU₄]...
32 DI-BU’ ana 1As-pa-as-ta-nu 3GAL ú-qá ša ina A-ŠA-út-su UD LUL ’ UD [.. ...
30 day 3, these leather documents were read in the House of Observation. According to Ša[...]

68 Minns 1915, 22, 28-29, and 30.
69 Ibidem, 33; Tarn 1932, 586, n. 2; Debevoise 1938, 47, n. 70; Assar 2003, 176-177.
70 Rostovtzeff 1951, 41-42.
71 Assar 2003, 176-180.
72 Appian (Mithradatic Wars, 3.15 and 3.17) reports that before the first wars between Rome and Pontus in about Ol. 173 (88/87-85/84 bc), Mithradates VI boasted of having Tigranes of Armenia as his son-in-law and Arsaces of Parthia as his ally. This suggests an amicable relationship between the three rulers at that juncture. Cf. White 1969a, 264-266 and 268-269. Cf. also Samuel 1972, 224 on the Julian dates of Olympia years.
74 She was simply Gotarzes’ wife whereas, as well as being his wives, Siak and Azate were his compaternal sisters while Aryazate was daughter of Tigranes.
75 Minns 1915, 39, n. 47.
76 Sachs, Hunger 1996, 454-455, no. -87C.
Fig. 9. S31.2 silver tetradrachm of Mithradates III from Seleucia on the Tigris.

Above the royal figure and in a somewhat cursive Greek is an inscription giving the name ΠΩ-ΤΑΡΣΗ ΓΕΟΠΟΘΡΟ «Gorazar son of Gév».

Having no knowledge of an earlier king Gorazar, Herzfeld identified the central figure with Gorazar II (c. AD 40-51) celebrating a victory over his antagonist Meherdates. However, a good deal of Parthian history is narrated by Firdousi in his Shāhnāmeh, ‘Epic of the Kings’ where echoes of combats between rival Arsacid magnates are frequently found. In one particular passage we note a battle between the two paladins Šun and Gév. The former has been correctly identified with Sinatruces and the latter taken to be the famous ‘son’ of a certain Gūdarz (Gorazar II) who succeeded Vardanes I (c. AD 40-45) on the throne. 81 This is hardly tenable since the inscription is quite clear about the father-son relationship between Gév and Gorazar. Considering that apart from a personal name Gēv and its probable derivatives ‘Gav’ and ‘Gāv’ can also act as adjectives meaning ‘Great/Mighty’, an ad sensum translation of ΠΩΤΑΡΣΗ ΓΕΟΠΟΘΡΟ gives «Gorazar son of the Great (One)». This in turn leads to the identification of Gorazar with the son and successor of Mithradates II «the Great King of Kings» whose authority was indeed challenged by Sinatruces. 82 The monument may therefore commemorate the victory of King Gorazar I over his rival.

The latest Babylonian colophon mentioning Gorazar and Queen Ashiabatar is dated 1.1.225 SEB (15/16.4.87 BC). 83

1) U 1,1-KĀM IGI-DUJonathan, A-sīmeš f DIB 1, qāmeš u AN-KU Jonathan, meš ša MU 1, meš 1-šū 1-KĀM
2) ša iš-1 MU 2, meš-25 KĀM 1-ša-ka-a ša iš-tār-ri-du
3) Gū-1, ṭār-2-za-a LUGAL u A- ši-a-a-ba-tā-ār-a DAM-šū 1 SAL-GAŠAN
4) kun-nu-1 u
1) Day 1 (of month 1), appearances, passings, and eclipses for year 161,
2) which is year 225, Arsaces, who is called
3) King Gorazar, and Ashiabatar, his wife, the Queen,
4) have been established

We also have Gorazar’s silver drachms from the mint of Margiane and perhaps even those in Aria and Traxiane (cf. above). These extend his authority as far as the North and East Parthian satrapies. Given the textual and numismatic evidence and Gorazar’s association with Tigranes, it is possible that just before his reign ended in some unknown circumstances Gorazar terminated Sinatruces’ hold over Susa and the central and eastern provinces of the Empire. It is therefore of

77 Rawlinson 1873, 260, n. 1; Dittenberger 1903, 642-643; Herzfeld 1920, 40-42; 1935, 56; Colledge 1977, 90-91; Bivar 1983, 41-44.
78 Herzfeld 1935, 56-57; Colledge 1977, 91.
79 Aliev et alii 1965, 136.
80 Shahbazi 1993, 155.
81 Coyajee 1952, 211-212. The rock inscription at Sar-i Pol-i Zohāb in Kirmānšāh, Iran, reads «This is the very image of King Gorazar, son of King Artabanus». It confirms the father-son relationship between Artabanus II (c. AD 10-38) and Gorazar II and thus rules out the ascription of the Bīšīn monument to the same Gorazar. Cf. Haruta 1990, 58-59.
82 Assar 2006, 145-147.
83 Epping, Strassmaier, 1891, 222 partial copy and transliteration; Schrader 1891, 3-6; Minns 1915, 39, no. «j»; Kugler 1924, 447, no. 24; Sachs 1935, xxvi, lbat **1295 = CBS 17 (Goal-Year Text for 225 SEB); McEwan 1986, 93. Cf. Sachs 1948, 282-283 on the Goal-Year Texts.
little surprise that as the sole claimant to the dynastic title the next ruler dispensed with the double-naming in the royal titulary and styled himself King Arsaces.

**Arsaces XIV-Mithradates III (July/August 87-August/September 80 BC)**

As a chronologically outstanding document the BM 41018 cuneiform fragment has retained the only extant reference to the enthronement of a Parthian king. Originally this would have been a short Diary containing the astronomical elements and perhaps brief historical notices in the first six months of the year 225 SEB (15/16.4-8/9.10.87 BC). But in spite of the loss of all its useful dates, enough lunar and planetary data remains to allow the text to be dated precisely. The month with most information is on the reverse of the fragment and includes a reference to the Halley’s Comet that, according to our modern computations, reached perihelion on 6 August 87 BC. This has been identified as the fifth month and hence the one preceding it would be the fourth. Of the latter only four incomplete lines of text remain. The last two of these almost certainly give the terminus post quem of the reign of Gotarzes I’s successor:

3 [... ITU BI U₄-x-KĀM al-te-me šá Mi-it-ra-a-šu GAL.GAL] 1Ú1 ga-an ina a-hu-ul-la-a
4 [šá IDIGNA GIM IGI-₃ TUH-ir U₄ BI Ar-šá-ka-a LUGAL ina] GUZA-šú ú-sib

3 [.... That month, on the xth day, I heard that Mitratu, the chief of] troops on the other side
4 [of the Tigris] departed as before. That day, King Arsaces sat on his throne.

I should add that Mitratu (Mithrates), the Parthian army commander, can be securely restored to our modern computations, reached perihelion on 6 August 87 BC. This has been identified as the fifth month and hence the one preceding it would be the fourth. Of the latter only four incomplete lines of text remain. The last two of these almost certainly give the terminus post quem of the reign of Gotarzes I’s successor:

3 [... ITU BI U₄-x-KĀM al-te-me šá Mi-it-ra-a-šu GAL.GAL] 1Ú1 ga-an ina a-hu-ul-la-a
4 [šá IDIGNA GIM IGI-₃ TUH-ir U₄ BI Ar-šá-ka-a LUGAL ina] GUZA-šú ú-sib

The scanty cuneiform documents of the Achaemenid and Seleucid epochs show that the phrase sat on his throne indeed signifies a royal accession. A generic form sat on the throne is given for the change of reign from Artaxerxes II (404-359 BC) to Artaxerxes III (359-338 BC) and also for the accession of the latter’s son, Arsies (338-336 BC). The same term is later used in a Babylonian King List when Antiochus III (222-187 BC), Seleucus IV (187-175 BC) and Antiochus IV (175-164 BC) take the diadem. Furthermore, a short text from month III of 188 SEB (June 124 BC) reports that following the death of Hyspaosines his wife made one small boy, his son, sit on the royal throne. These strongly indicate that the statement at the end of line 4 in the above incomplete text too reports the inauguration of a new reign.

The sequence of the ‘annual’ issues in Table 1 shows that following the expulsion of Sinatruces in 88/87 BC the next Parthian ruler began minting his S31.16-24 bronzes in Susa. Given the numismatic evidence and the attested Achaemenid, Seleucid and Characenean accession records, it is highly likely that the above fragmentary text from month IV of 225 SEB registers the enthronement in July/August 87 BC of the issuer of S31 coinage.

As for the restoration of King Arsaces in the same line, the extant records from years 226-229 and 231 SEB show that the longer formula, giving the personal name of the ruler and his associated queen, ceased during the reign of Arsaces XIV. It is possible that with the threat of Sinatruces...
abated there was no serious opposition to the authority of the new king and hence a simple dateformula giving the throne name alone was sufficient for royal identification. We do, however, find the personal name of Arsaces XIV in a passage by Josephus (JA, 13:84-86).

This pertains to the struggle between the two Seleucid contenders, Philip I Philadephus (93-83 BC) and Demetrius III Eucaerus Philopator (96-87 BC). Josephus writes that when Demetrius III besieged his brother in Beroea (modern Aleppo in Syria) east of Antioch, the governor of that city summoned aid from an Arab phylarch called Azizus and the Parthian governor Mithradates Sinaces. Demetrius then found his camp encircled and eventually surrendered. He was taken to the Parthian ruler called Mithradates who treated him with honour until his death from an illness. Although Josephus offers no specific date for the final battle, Demetrius’ defeat and capture can be placed in 88/87 BC because his last coins were minted at Damascus in 225 sem.

Having no knowledge of the accession year of Gotarzes I after the death of his father Mithradates II about August/September 91 BC, previous authors had argued that it was the Parthian King of Kings who received Demetrius III. However, with the date of the demise of Mithradates II now firmly decided, we are assured that the hapless Seleucid monarch was delivered to a later King Mithradates who ascended the Arsacid throne in July/August 87 BC.

I have shown below that he too was probably a son of Mithradates II and that he usurped the throne from Orodus I, son and heir of Gotarzes I and perhaps the grandson of Tigranes II of Armenia. This led to a further feud in the Arsacid court and ended with the overthrow of Mithradates III in Babylon in August/September 80 BC and his final expulsion from Susa shortly afterwards.

The coinage of Mithradates III (S31) has on its obverse the bust of a middle-aged man in a tiara similar to that worn by Mithradates II (S28.3) and decorated in the centre with a six or eight pointed star (Figs. 9-11). Its reverse legend reads ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΟΣ ΦΙΛΟΠΑΤΟΡΟΣ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ ΦΙΛΕΛΗΝΟΣ. Although the epithet ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΟΣ may signify Mithradates’ absolute and despotic reign it also suggests that he may not have been a natural successor of Gotarzes I. The earliest attestation of the title « Autocrat » in the Parthian series is on the first coinage of Arsaces I whose inscription reads ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΟΣ. It is now generally accepted that the founder of the Parthian dynasty struck a son of Mithradates II. Cf. McDowell concluded that Mithradates III (S31.9 silver drachm from Margiane (Author’s Collection)).

The latter had reverted from allegiance to his Seleucid overlords about 246 BC. The same title was adopted by the Seleucid usurper Diodotus Tryphon (142/141/139/138 BC). Having probably murdered Antiochus VI (144-142 BC) son of Alexander Balas (150-145 BC) Tryphon took the di-

**Fig. 11.** S31.9 silver drachm of Mithradates III from Margiane (Author’s Collection).
adem and styled himself ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΤΡΙΓΩΝΟΣ ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΡΟΣ on his coins struck at Antioch, Ake-Ptolemais, and Ascalon. Over a century later the Parthian interloper Tiridates (c. 29-27 BC) temporarily deposed Phraates IV (c. 38-32 BC), took the crown and minted a series of tetradrachms inscribed with ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΓΕΡΜΕΝΤΟΥ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ ΦΙΛΕΛΗΝΟΣ ΦΙΛΟΡΜΑΙΟΥ ΑΥΤΟΚΡΑΤΩΡ (sic). These Arsacid and Seleucid examples clearly show that in each case the right to rule as king had been usurped by the coin issuer rather than inherited. It is therefore likely that as the son of Mithradates II King of Kings, Mithradates III too disputed the succession from Gotarzes I to his son Orodes I and arrogated the Parthian crown to himself.

As for the paternal relationship between Mithradates II and Mithradates III the epithet ΦΙΛΟΠΑΤΟΡΟΣ indicates that the latter had an illustrious father. Although there is nothing definitive on the link between Mithradates III and his immediate predecessors, it may be safe to assume that he was a son of Mithradates II rather than inherited. It is therefore likely that as the son of Mithradates II King of Kings, Mithradates III too disputed the succession from Gotarzes I to his son Orodes I and arrogated the Parthian crown to himself.

The bulk of Mithradates’ drachms come from the two major Parthian mints of Ecbatana and Rhagae (S3.5-8). But examples from Margiane (S3.9) and perhaps Aria have also turned up. Given the absence of long colophon dates naming the reigning Arsaces and his consort, Mithradates’ drachms from the northern and eastern provinces indicate that he held sway over the whole of the Empire from the outset of his reign. It should nonetheless be pointed out that earlier scholars had allocated his coinage to a variety of rulers notably Gotarzes I, Sinatruces, Orodes I, « Arsaces IX », and an « Unknown King ». Thanks to Sellwood’s arrangement of the Parthian drachms of the ‘Dark Age’ and Mørkholm’s sequence of the tetradrachms from the same period the S3 series can now be placed immediately after the coinage of Gotarzes I and hence securely attributed to Mithradates III.

However, a S3/S3 ‘mule’ bronze drachm (Fig. 12) weighing 4.65 grams suggests that the reigns of Sinatruces and Mithradates III overlapped at some point in time. But lack of Babylonian colophons naming Mithradates III and his queen indicates that he was not challenged by Sinatruces until probably the final year of his reign. The ‘mule’ could simply have been struck in an East Parthian mint at the beginning of Mithradates’ reign and immediately after Gotarzes’ crushing defeat of Sinatruces in 87 BC. On the other hand, it may have been minted in about 80 BC when Orodes I mounted an offensive against Mithradates III and ultimately overthrew him. As shown further, following the demise of Mithradates III the Babylonian scribes initially reverted to naming Orodes I and his sister-queen Ispubarza. They then dropped his personal name but retained his royal consort in their date-formulas during the remaining years of Orodes’ reign. This...
strongly suggests that Sinatruces had taken advantage of the struggle between Mithradates and Orod in the West, proclaimed himself king in the East and resumed his coinage. Assuming that Parthian mints continued to issue drachms for the Arsacid claimants simultaneously, it is possible that the S33/S31 ‘mule’ was struck from a mistakenly paired set of dies about 80 BC.

The cuneiform fragments from the reign of Mithradates III are quite uninformative. One of these probably refers to the departure of the satrap of Babylonia or the chief of troops to Media in month vii of 225 SEB (9/10.10.-6/7.11.87 BC). But there are no indications of the purpose of the journey.107 We then have the mutilated historical section in month viii of the same year. It reports unhappiness in broken context although the reason for this is now entirely lost. However, the colophon text of a tablet from year 227 SEB (23/24.3.85-10/11.4.84 BC) probably bears some historical significance. It omits the conventional title LUGAL (Akkadian šarru, ‘Kings’) and instead uses Malek (prince’ or Aramaic MLK’, ‘King’):108

9 [... ... lmu] U₄-3-KÁM MU-1-me-1-šu-3-KÁM šā ši-i MU-2-me-27-KÁM
10 ‘Ar-šá-ka-a ma-le-ke

9 [... ... Month x,] day 3, year 163, which is year 227,
10 Arsaces (is) King.

Strabo (11.14.15)109 writes that Tigranes II spent some time as a hostage among the Parthians (during the reign of Mithradates II).110 He was later installed by them on the throne of Armenia after his father died. For this he rewarded his ally with «seventy valleys». However, having grown in power he attacked the Parthians and not only won back the ceded territory, but also annexed Atropatene, Gorduene, Adiabene (including the region around Nineveh), and the greater part of Northern Mesopotamia, advancing as far as Syria and Phoenicia. Plutarch (Atropatene, Gorduene, Adiabene (including the region around Nineveh), and the greater part of

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October/November 88 BC and before the accession of Mithradates III in July/August 87 BC. Indeed we do not know whether Tigranes directed his arms against Parthia immediately after the usurpation of power by Mithradates III. However, we are told that a Parthian embassy was sent to Jerusalem about 85 BC to seek alliance from the Jewish ruler Alexander Jannaeus (104-78 BC) against Tigranes.\textsuperscript{117} This suggests that hostilities between the Arsacid and Armenian Kingdoms began as early as 85 BC during the reign of Mithradates III and ultimately led to substantial Parthian losses. In any case the incomplete and to a large extent unclear historical notices in the contemporary Astronomical Diaries imply turbulent times throughout the reign of this king. The one dated month II of 228 SEB (11/12.5-8/9.6.84 BC) gives:\textsuperscript{118}

\begin{itemize}
\item 2 [...]. That month, there was much coughing-disease in the land. That month M\(\text{i}^{\text{tratu}}\) [...]
\item 3 [...]. as before [...]. [...]
\item 4 [...]. on the Tigris, attacked, and wailing [...]. [...]
\item 5 when they sent [...]. this [M\(\text{i}^{\text{tratu}}\) [...]]
\end{itemize}

We then find, in the section from month III of the same year (9/10.6.8/9.7.84 BC), a reference to Mitratu, the Parthian chief of troops, and the city of Seleucia.\textsuperscript{119} The corresponding Diary finally ends with the following vague statements in month IV (9/10.7-7/8.8.84 BC):\textsuperscript{120}

\begin{itemize}
\item 16 on the other side of the river [...]
\item 17 [...] the 10th, Mitratu [...]
\item 18 [...] with many troops of the city of [...]
\item 19 [...] and Mitratu [...]
\item 20 [...] fear the city gates [...]
\end{itemize}

Unfortunately the sketchy texts on the political situation in year 229 SEB fare no better. What is left of the 'historical notices' from month I (1/2-29/30.4.83 BC) reads:\textsuperscript{121}

\begin{itemize}
\item 20 [...] of the king from Uruk
\item 21 [...] of revolt
\end{itemize}

The note at the end of month VII (25/26.9-24/25.10.83 BC), perhaps mentioning the Jewish leader Alexander Jannaeus (Yannai), gives:\textsuperscript{122}

\begin{itemize}
\item 19 [...] That month, the 7th, leather documents
\item 20 [...] were read [to] the (Greek) citizens who are in Babylon. That month, I heard, killed [...] among them. That <day>, sheep and army [...] on the Tigris; they moved back to their cities
\item 23 [...] That' [day]', the (Greek) citizens for fear of Alexander to [...]
\item 24 [...] they went out [to] Seleucia which is on the Tigris.
\end{itemize}

The reference at the conclusion of month X (23/24.12.83-21/22.1.82 BC) reads:\textsuperscript{123}

\begin{itemize}
\item 18 [...] the general of Babylonia from Seleucia which is on the Tigris [...]
\item 19 [...] battle equipment the gates of the city I[...]
\item 20 [...] above Babylon and below Babylon [...]
\item 21 [...] in the House of Observation [...]
\item 22 [...] [...]
\item 23 [...] they provided. [That] month, [...]
\end{itemize}

Finally we get the following from month XII (20/21.2-20/21.3.82 BC):\textsuperscript{124}

\begin{itemize}
\item 117 Neusner 1965, 25.
\item 118 Sachs, Hunger 1996, 470-471, no. -83; Del Monte 1997, 174.
\item 120 Sachs, Hunger 1996, 474-475, no. -83; Del Monte 1997, 174-175.
\item 121 Sachs, Hunger 1996, 476-477, no. -82A; Del Monte 1997, 175.
\item 122 Sachs, Hunger 1996, 476-477, no. -82A; Del Monte 1997, 175.
\item 123 Sachs, Hunger 1996, 478-479, no. -82B; Del Monte 1997, 176.
\item 124 Sachs, Hunger 1996, 478-481, no. -82B; Del Monte 1997, 176.
\end{itemize}
... they provided ... sacrifices as offering at the 'Gate of the Son of the Prince' of Esangil...

... the 16th of month IV in fear of the (Greek) citizens and of ...

... they entered [...]. That day, this chief of the troops to the camp [...]

... he killed. The (Greek) citizens and Raznumitra, the [...]

... when they said this [...] and at the command of the chief of the troops and their judges [...]

Whether all or some of the above patchy references relate to the Partho-Armenian conflicts cannot be ascertained. But given the combined contemporary and classical sources it is quite likely that Mithradates III bore the brunt of Tigranes' attacks and was worsted in most of his encounters with the Armenian ruler. This in turn throws into question the inception date of Tigranes' reign in Syria which is generally taken as 83 BC. According to Justin (40.1.1-4) the mutual animosities of the two Seleucid brothers, Antiochus VIII Grypus (128-96 BC) and Antiochus IX Cyzice-nus (114/113-96/95 BC) and then of their sons compelled the people of Syria to look for a foreign prince to take up the reins of power as their king. They ruled out Mithradas VI of Pontus and Ptolemy IX of Egypt and unanimously settled on Tigranes who, in addition to the strength of his own kingdom, was a relative of Mithradas VI and also supported by an alliance with Parthia. Tigranes occupied the Syrian throne and reigned peacefully for eighteen years without having to go to war with others or to defend himself. He was ultimately defeated by Lucullus and replaced with Antiochus XIII Asiaticus (66/65-64 BC). The latter was in turn deposed by Pompey who refused to reinstate him because the Seleucid prince had simply lurked in a corner of Cilicia during the eighteen-year reign of Tigranes. If counted backward from 65 BC, this places the beginning of the reign of Tigranes in Syria in 83 BC. But Appian (Syrian Wars, 11.11.70) gives Tigranes a fourteen-year reign. Obviously this has to be reckoned retrospectively from 69 BC to yield the same inception date. Unfortunately both Justin and Appian are very poorly informed about Seleucid rulers after Antiochus X who is confused by Justin (40.2.2) with Antiochus XIII. Given the evidence of Partho-Armenian quarrrels which probably began with the usurpation of crown by Mithradas III in July/August 87 BC, this questions the veracity of Tigranes' above given reign-length in Syria. However, it may just be possible to take Appian's figure of fourteen years and count backward from 65/64 BC to arrive at 79/78 BC in the reign of Orodes I. The latter was probably the son and heir of Gotarzes I from his Armenian queen Aryazate, daughter of Tigranes and so an ally of his Armenian grandfather. It may therefore not be impossible that Tigranes supported Orodes I to depose Mithradas III in August/September 80 BC and begin his own reign as the next Parthian king.

The latest extant cuneiform document from the reign of Mithradas III is a lunar eclipse text dated 14.1.231 SEB (21/22.4,81 BC). It opens with:127

1. MU-1-me-1-tu-73-[KÁM šá ši-i MU-2-me-31-KÁM]
2. 1Ar-šá-ka-a [LUGAL]
3. auBAR GE4 14 ...

1. Year 167, [which is year 231],
2. Arsaces (is) [King],
3. Month I, night of the 14th, ...

We then have an unwelcome twelve-month gap during which Mithradas' authority must have been challenged by Orodes I. A further lunar eclipse text dated 13.1.232 SEB (10/11.4,80 BC) gives crown in 83 BC it is inconceivable that he was still in the process of extending his sway over the Phoenician cities more than a decade later. Unless he had assumed power in Syria not long before 72 BC. It is likely that Tigranes ascended the Syrian throne in 76 BC and ruled for about eight years before being driven out by the Romans.

126 Cf. Plutarch (Lucullus, 21.1-7) in Perrin 2001, 344-539 on the date of Appius Clodius' audience with Tigranes. The Roman demanded that because of his defeat Mithradas VI must be sent back to Lucullus as an ornament. Plutarch places this event in the 25th year of Tigranes (71/70 BC) and states that the Armenian king was still engaged in subduing some cities of Phoenicia. If Tigranes had taken the Syrian

the following date-formula and so confirms that Babylon had been lost to Mithradates in early 80 BC:

1. \text{MU-}1\text{-me-1-šú-8-[KÁM šá] ší-i}
2. \text{MU-2-me-32-[KÁM 1]-šá-kám LUGAL}
3. šá iš-tár-ri-šú-\text{[KÁM šá]-i šú-
4. \text{iuBAR GE} 13 \ldots \ldots
1. Year 168, [which] is
2. year 232, King Arsaces,
3. who is called King Orodes.
4. Month I, night of the 13th, \ldots \ldots

On the other hand, the 'annual' bronze coinage in Table 1 shows that Mithradates III was still in control of Susa sometime in 233 SEB (23/24.8-20/21.9.80 BC). Although the historical notes at the end of month vi of 232 SEB (23/24.8-20/21.9.80 BC) are very poorly preserved, the inclusion of a date formula at the beginning of the next month in the same record supports Orodes' final victory over Mithradates III in August/September 80 BC (cf. below). The latter may have taken refuge in Susa for a short period or retreated to Ecbatana and died in unknown circumstances. What is nevertheless clear is that the struggle between the two contenders lasted for at least half a year. This is probably summarised by Justin (42.4.1) who relates that following his war with Armenia, King Mithradates was charged with cruelty and banished by the Parthian senate from his kingdom.

I have allocated a small number of rare drachms (S31.7) to the final phase of hostilities between Mithradates III and Orodes I (Fig. 13). These are struck from a single obverse with a somewhat neutral bust and two or possibly three reverse dies.

The royal portraiture and tiara on the S31.7 drachms very closely resemble those on S34.4 issue of Orodes I. But the characteristic 'double pellet' decoration round the crest of the head-dress of Orodes is conspicuously absent on this special coinage. On the other hand its reverse inscription is identical with that on the S31 of Mithradates III. I believe this rare issue was, to quote Sellwood, «a politic attempt by a mint official to hedge his bets during the height of the civil strife». Either of the two contenders could have claimed the coinage.

**Fig. 13. S31.7 transitional silver drachm from Rhagae with obverse of Orodes I and reverse of Mithradates III (Author’s Collection).**

**Arsaces XV-Orodes I (March/April 80-March/April 75 BC)**

Although the above eclipse text acknowledges Orodes I in Babylon about the middle of month i of 232 SEB, the scanty remarks in the Astronomical Diary of the same year suggests a continued factional dispute that lasted for several months. Of these the aforementioned incomplete historical notes at the end of month vi in 232 SEB read:

9 \ldots \ldots \text{ITU BI U-20 kuš-pir-tu, šá ſx\text{[...].}}
10 \ldots \ldots \text{fx\text{[...].}} \text{[Ar]-šá-kám šá iš-tár-ri-šú-\text{[u] ſy-ru-da-a LUGAL \ldots \ldots}}

128 **Strassmaier** 1888, 155, no. 9, and 147-148 copy of Rm IV 118A. The author erroneously reads «King of Kings Arsaces». Several collations of the same tablet have confirmed «King Arsaces». Cf. also Oppert 1888, 467 for «King of Kings Arsaces» and the year 232 SEB as an ae date; Strassmaier 1889, 78 reads «King of Kings Arsaces»; Schrader 1890, 1325-1328 gives «King Arsaces»; Strassmaier 1893, 112 gives «King of Kings Arsaces»; Minns 1913, 35, no. «m» and n. 28 gives «King Arsaces»; Kugler 1924, 447, no. 26 gives «King of Kings Arsaces»; Sachs 1955, xxxiii, lbat **1445 report of lunar eclipse of 13.1.232 SEB; Chaumont 1971, 153 gives «King of Kings Arsaces»; Oelsner 1975, 41, n. 47 gives «King Arsaces»; Del Monte 1997, 254 gives «King Arsaces»; Hunger, Sachs 2001, 72-73, no. 25, give «King of Kings Arsaces».

129 **Sellwood** 1965, 115.
It is possible that the original text registered a summary of the battle between the two warring camps with Orodes ultimately prevailing. Hence a new date-formula had to be included at the beginning of month vii (21/22.9.-20/21.10.80 BC) of the same record to herald the change of reign in Babylon: 130

12 [MU-1-me-1-šú-8-KÁM šá ši-i MU-2-me-32-KÁM 11 Ar-šá-kám šá i[t-tár-ri-du]1 Ú-ru-da-a LUGAL ...]

12 [Year 1]68, which is year 232, Arsaces, who is called King Orodes ...]

I should add that the reconstructed text in this line is modelled on a contemporary lunar eclipse tablet dated 4/5 October 80 BC whose opening lines read: 131

1 [MU-1-me-1-šú-8-KÁM šá ši-i]1 MU-2-me-32-KÁM>
2 ('Ar-šá-k)šú-a šá ši-tár-ri-du]1
3 [Ú-ru-da-a] LUGAL u ši-p[...-za-a]
4 [NIN-šú]1 GAŠAN3 [DU₆ GÉ₆ 14 ... ...]
1 [Year 168, which is year 232,]
2 [Arsaces, who is called]
3 King [Oro]des and Ispubar[za],
4 [his sister], the Queen. [(Month) vii, night of the 14th, ...]

In spite of its pitiful state this incomplete eclipse record contains two important historical and chronological points. First, the title LUGAL (King) is given to Orodes and not Arsaces. This accords well with the above discussed interpretation of the verb form ittaridu as ‘is called’ rather than ‘has expelled’ in some earlier publications. Second, Ispubarza is the sister-queen of Orodes I. This identifies the latter with ‘King Arsaces’ of some later texts who is consistently associated with the same royal consort and so extends the reign of Orodes to early 75 BC.

The first of these records is the following two partial but complementary colophons from month i of year 234 SEB (6/7.4.-4/5.78 BC): 132

11 [meṣ-šú KUR-dIMŠUL šá dU-DU-IDIM mel šá MU-1-me-1,10-KÁM šá ši-i]¹ MU-2-me-34-KÁM
12 ['Ar-šá-kám LUGAL u ši-p[...-za-a] NIN-šú GAŠAN

[Measurements of the entries of the planets (into zodiacal signs) for year 170, which is year 2(3),]
12 [King Arsaces and] Ispubar[za, his sister, the Queen.]

and

12 [meṣ-šú KUR-dIMŠUL šá dU-DU-IDIM mel šá MU-1-me-1,10-KÁM šá ši-i]¹ MU-2-me-34-KÁM
13 ['Ar-šá-kám LUGAL u ši-p[...-za-a] NIN-šú GAŠAN]

12 Measurements of the entries of the planets (into zodiacal signs) for year 170, which [is year 234],
13 King Arsaces and Ispubar[za, his sister, the Queen.]

Although Orodes’ personal name is excluded from both date-formulas the corresponding documents were certainly compiled under him. But the reason for the omission in these and the subsequent records is not entirely clear. It may be that Orodes’ rival was not a potential threat or sufficiently close to Babylon to confuse his identity as ‘King Arsaces’.

Unfortunately there are no references to the political circumstances of the reign of Orodes in our classical literature and the preserved information in a handful of cuneiform fragments is ex-

130 Sachs, Hunger 1996, 484-489, no. 79. For the inclusion of a date-formula at the beginning of the month following a change of reign cf. ibidem, 136-137, no. 140A, Rev. 10. It gives the first full month of the reign of Mithradates I after expelling the Seleucid forces from Babylonia.

tremely meagre. However, combining the inscriptional and numismatic evidence can shed some welcome light on the events of his short and turbulent reign.

Following his predecessors Orodes began an inaugural tetradrachm issue at Seleucia on the Tigris (Fig. 14). This may have lasted throughout his short reign (cf. below). The only known example of this emission (S34.1) shows on its obverse the bust in a tiara of a king of uncertain age but not necessarily any older than that on the issues of his rival, Mithradates III (S31). Orodes’ tiara however differs from those worn by Mithradates II (S28), Sinatruces (S33), Gotarzes I (S29 and S32), and Mithradates III (S31). Its unique design includes a row of double pearls on stalk around the crest and a central fleur-de-lys decoration. The latter probably symbolised the “Lily” associated with Susa.134

The inscription of Orodes’ coinage (S34.1-12) runs ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΆΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΕΥΕΡΓΕΤΟΥ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ ΦΙΛΕΛΛΗΝΟΣ with no allusion to his father. This practically replicates the titulature on the S32.1 tetradrachms of Gotarzes I and thus suggests that the latter fathered both Orodes and Ispubarza. But the extant material offers nothing on the relationship between Orodes and his sister-queen Ispubarza on the one hand and Gotarzes’ Babylonian queen Ashiabatar, or Siake, Aryazate, and Azate in Ecbatana on the other. Given the above brief references to the hostilities between Mithradates III and Tigranes, it is possible that Orodes was the son and heir of Gotarzes I from his Armenian queen Aryazate.

An extremely rare drachm in Sellwood’s collection, struck at Rhagae with an obverse design similar to that of S34.1 tetradrachm and without the ‘anchor’ symbol, may be taken as a limited early issue of Orodes from an Iranian mint (Fig. 15). Conversely the more common S34.2 drachms from Ecbatana, S34.3-4 from Rhagae (Figs. 16-17) and a small output from Margiane (S34.5) make up the bulk of his coinage. These all have the ‘anchor’ on the obverse behind the royal bust and probably belong to the period after Orodes’ victory over Kamnaskires II/III in Elymais (cf. below). They show that he kept Media and also temporarily held sway over at least some of the eastern satrapies by about the middle of his reign. It is possible that having lost the throne to Orodes in Babylon Mithradates III fled north and fought for awhile until he was finally eliminated around a year later. This may explain the extreme rarity of Orodes’ early drachms with no ‘anchor’. Equally Sinatruces could have exploited the dynastic strife in Babylonia and once again pushed westward as far as Rhagae and Ecbatana suppressing Orodes’ coinage in the process at the corresponding mints. The persistent presence of Ispubarza in the Babylonian colophons from the period 80-75 BC indicates that the entire reign of Orodes was punctuated by conflict with one or more rivals. This may also account for the alterations to some of his original dies and drachms (S34.5-8) to assimilate them to the S31 coinage of Mithradates III (cf. below). Although inconclusive, the numismatic evidence indicates that Orodes’ authority on the Iranian plateau was continuously challenged by different claimants.

133 Waggoner 1974, 24. She was the first to ascribe the entire coinage to Orodes I. Cf. also Dilmaghani 1986, 218-219.
134 Romanoff 1944, 45-51.
It is noteworthy that until fairly recently the whole of $S_{34}$ series was attributed to several different Arsacid rulers including Mithradates II, Artabanus II, Sinatruces, Phraates III, and Vonones I of the Scythian dynasty of Arachosia.\(^{136}\) Given the relative rarity of the issue as a whole in comparison with the rest of the Parthian emissions from the ‘Dark Age’ and that Orodes’ reign was the shortest in the same period, allocation of type $S_{34}$ to him is secure.

Unfortunately the Babylonian records give no detailed accounts of Orodes’ military campaigns in Elymais and elsewhere in Parthia. What remains implies that some of these may have been prolonged expeditions. The one concerning his battle in Elymais alone appears to have taken half a year to complete. Our scanty information on this raid begins with the following notice from month vii of 234 seb (30.9./a year to complete. Our scanty information on this raid begins with the following notice from month vii of 234 seb (30.9./

Regrettably the name of the city in the above line is now lost. But given the severity of winter in the Iranian uplands and Media after October/November, Northern and Western Parthia may be precluded. It is possible that Orodes began his campaign a month earlier in Media and reached as far as Northern Mesopotamia by October. Support for this perhaps lies in the incomplete text of the next month (30/31.10.-27/28.11.78 BC) mentioning the city of Kar-Aššur in Central Mesopotamia:\(^{137}\)

27 [...] ... [...] turned towards the surroundings of Kar-Aššur.

With the historical notices in months ix and x completely destroyed we cannot follow the course of events from Babylonia to Elymais. But some details of the battle against the Elymaean ruler have survived in broken context in month xi (26/27.11.-23/24.2.77 BC). These leave little doubt about Orodes’ complete victory and pacification of the province:\(^{138}\)

13 [...] KUR NIM-MA\(^{1}\) GIN-ma LÚ([NE] KI\(^{1}\) Qu-bi-na-dà-shi-i-ri LUGAL KUR NIM-MA\(^{1}\) DÜ-ma 'x\(^{1}\) x\(^{1}\) [x\(^{1}\) 'x\(^{1}\) ina lieu-bi-šú GAR-ma URU\(^{1}\) mel [...] 14 [...] \(x\(^{1}\) A 'x x ERIN\(^{-1}\) išu-tú-tú ša Kl-šú ina IGI-šú BAL-ma ana KUR-u-ì-te-el-ù [a]ll\(^{-1}\)-te-me ša ana tar-šà KUR-ú dâš-šú [...] 15 [...] x ìr U\(^{-2}\) ša ak-ku-ù lišÀ-TAM É-sag-gil u liš\(^{-1}\) k\(^{-1}\) mel [1-c]n GU\(^{4}\) ut 2 SISKUR\(^{1}\) mel NID(BA ... ...}

\(^{135}\) Gardner 1877, 35 (Mithradates II); Wroth 1903, 54-55 (Phraates III or a contemporary); Petrowicz 1904, 44 (Artabanus II); Newell 1918, 482 (Phraates III); Simonetta 1957, 118 and 121 (Phraates III); Sellwood 1962, 83-84 (Phraates III); Le Rider 1965, 97-98 and 396-397 (Phraates III); Sellwood 1965, 133 (Phraates III); Simonetta 1966, 38-39 (Phraates III); Sellwood 1971, 93-94 (Phraates III); Simonetta 1972, 130 and 138 (Arsaces Euergetes Epiphanes); Waggoner 1974, 24-26 (Orodes I); Dobkins 1975, 36 (Phraates III); Simonetta 1975, 70, n. 8 and 77 (Arsaces Euergetes Epiphanes); Sellwood 1976, 5 (Sinatruces); Simonetta, Sellwood 1978, 116 (Vonones I of the Scythian dynasty of Arachosia); Sellwood 1980, 102-103 (Sinatruces); Mørkholm 1980, 43 and 45 (Arsaces X Euergetes); Sellwood 1983a, 287 (Sinatruces); Dilmaghani 1986, 218-219 (Orodes I); Shore 1993, 111 (Sinatruces); Simonetta 2001, 100 (Orodes I).


probably correspond to year 230 sem (83/82 BC). We then have a series of dated specimens from Queen Anzaze (Fig. 18). The defeated Elymaean king is no doubt Kamnaskires II/III who appears on his coinage with his crest decoration, the central 'pearl-on-stalk' decoration of the tiara and the 'anchor'. The S34.5-8 drachms are on the other hand known to us of Orodes' S34.

If the change took place in situ and not in a different location or mint, a rival must have impounded but not destroyed Orodes' dies and then modified and used them for his own issue, it is possible that a contemporary rival authorised the alterations for political reasons. As suggested above Mithradates III was probably not totally eliminated by Orodes in late 80 BC and forced to retreat to some remote regions of Parthia. With very limited resources at his disposal for striking a proper coinage he could have reworked Orodes' coins and also modified his captured or unused dies for his own issue. Hence the inclusion of Ispubarza in the Babylonian colophons to distinguish Orodes from his opponent. Evidence supporting this probably comes from the cities Ecbatana and Rhagae (S34.2-7), where a very small number of S34.5 drachms minted at Margiane with the 'anchor' erased from the dies. A Revised Parthian Chronology of the Period 91-55 BC

The defeated Elymaean king is no doubt Kamnaskires II/III who appears on his coinage with Queen Anzaze (Fig. 18). Of the known examples of this type at least two are undated. These probably correspond to year 230 sem (83/82 BC). We then have a series of dated specimens from 231 and 233-240 sem (82/81 and 80/79-73/72 BC, respectively). They indicate that although Kamnaskires was roundly defeated and put to flight by Orodes I in early 77 BC he returned, regained control of Susa before 1 Dio 237 sem (8/9,10,76 BC) and probably issued coins dated 236 sem.

After his victory in Elymais, Orodes struck both silver drachms and bronze fractions in Ecbatana and Rhagae (S34.2-9) with an obverse 'anchor' symbol. This had been the royal emblem of the Kamnaskirid dynasty. But for reasons unknown to us Orodes' S34.10-12 'annual' Susian bronzes omit from the obverse design both the 'pearl-on-stalk' decoration of the tiara and the 'anchor'. The S34.5-8 drachms are on the other hand struck from altered dies while the crest decoration, the central fleur-de-lys, the 'anchor' or a combination of these elements have been manually removed from some normal specimens (Figs. 19-21). This was obviously an attempt to integrate them into the S31 coinage of Mithradates III. Considering that any later ruler who found Orodes' coins objectionable would have seized and restruck the entire issue, it is possible that a contemporary rival authorised the alterations for political reasons. As suggested above Mithradates III was probably not totally eliminated by Orodes in late 80 BC and forced to retreat to some remote regions of Parthia. With very limited resources at his disposal for striking a proper coinage he could have reworked Orodes' coins and also modified his captured or unused dies for his own issue. Hence the inclusion of Ispubarza in the Babylonian colophons to distinguish Orodes from his opponent. Evidence supporting this probably comes from a very small number of S34.5 drachms minted at Margiane with the 'anchor' erased from the dies. Assuming that the change took place in situ and not in a different location or mint, a rival must have impounded but not destroyed Orodes' dies and then modified and used them for his own issue.

This suggests that as a result of years of internal dispute a remote workshop in Margiane may have been dormant for some time and only partially operational upon resumption of mint activities. It would naturally have utilised any unused or useable dies, with minimal modifications, for striking an emergency issue at times of civil strife to replenish a rival’s war chest. If so, Orodes’ opponent who found little objections to a stock of slightly reworked S34 obverse dies and drachms must have been active after 78/77 BC since the appearance of ‘anchor’ most probably post-dated Orodes’ victory in Elymais in that same year. This however practically rules out both Mithradates III and Sinatruces as Orodes’ challengers for the following reasons. Firstly, as discussed below, Nisa 2639 (Nova 366) ostracon registers the accession of a new king in 78/77 BC and not the presence of an earlier ruler in North-East Parthia. Secondly, it is possible that rather than Mithradates III himself a brother (issuer of S30) or a later prince deliberately altered some of Orodes’ drachms to adapt them to the design of S31 coinage while restriking the rest with his own dies. Thirdly, and more importantly, cuneiform texts show that following the overthrow of Orodes I the Babylonian colophons once again reverted to the simple wording using the dynastic name Arsaces without an accompanying queen. If Sinatruces or Mithradates III had eliminated Orodes in Parthia and maintained his claim to the throne the subsequent date-formulas would have recorded, in addition to the dynastic appellation, either the personal name of the next king in Babylon and/or his associated queen. As shown below the successor of Orodes reigned unopposed for about a decade and was only challenged from 69/68 BC on. The extant material suggests, rather strongly, that whatever the situation around Parthia’s northern frontiers, the real threat to Orodes’ authority surfaced in Susa where the next prince mounted a serious move for power. Unfortunately we cannot determine the precise terminal date of the reign of Orodes. The last record mentioning King Arsaces and his sister-queen Ispubarza in Babylon is a small Astronomical Diary fragment beginning with month IX in 236 SEB (5/6.12.76-3/4.1.75 BC). Its colophon is only partially legible and lack of detailed planetary data prevents its latest month from being positively identified on astronomical grounds. Comparison with other short Diaries however suggests that the original text may have comprised months IX–XII with roughly two on each side of the tablet. But it could well have had no more than two or even a single month. Assuming that this fragment belonged to a slightly larger tablet covering the last four months of 236 SEB, the latest record from Orodes’ reign would correspond to month XII of 236 SEB (3/4.3.-1/2.4.75 BC). In any case the next text, dated 4.1.237 SEB (5/6.4.75 BC) mentions «King Arsaces» and no associated queen.  

141 Sachs, Hunger 1996, 236-239, no. -131B is a single month Diary covering days 22-25 of month IX in year 180 SEB.  
142 Sachs 1995, 201, letat 1300 (Goal-Year Text for 245 SEB, Venus paragraph, 245 – 8 = 237 SEB).
This may be regarded as the terminus ante quem of the reign of Orodes I in Babylon.

Yet the 'annual' bronze series in Table 1 shows that Orodes lost Susa to a rival sometime after his victory over Kamnaskires II/III in January/February 77 BC (month xi of 234 SEB = month v of 235 SEM) and before 1 Dios 236 SEM (19/20.9.77 BC). As commented above the next Arsacid prince, probably a younger son of Mithradates II, eliminated Orodes in Babylon in March/April 75 BC. The early coin portraiture of this prince shows him not much older than fifteen when he issued probably a younger son of Mithradates II, eliminated Orodes in Babylon in March/April 75 BC. His first tetradrachms at Seleucia on the Tigris (cf. below). These are the S30.

Assuming that the issuer of S30 coinage minted these tetradrachms immediately after his victory over Orodes in Babylon in March/April 75 BC, he must have been about two years younger when he captured Susa in the first half of 77 BC. This however does not rule out the possibility that the successor of Orodes campaigned for the throne as a minor. The issuer of S49 coinage (probably a son of Phraates IV) appears on his drachms quite youthful and unbearded and styles himself « King of Kings ». Furthermore we know that Pacorus II (c. AD 78-105) was certainly young when he disputed the throne with Vologases II (c. AD 77-80). He too turns up on his inaugural coinage (S73) with no beard and moustache. It is possible that the prince who minted the S30.12 tetradrachms was slightly older than the issuer of S49 drachms and also Pacorus II since he is visibly lightly bearded with a meagre moustache on his inaugural emission. This then suggests that he must have been about 13-14 years old in 235 SEM (78/77 BC) when he took Susa. However it is possible to show that the S30.12 tetradrachms too were issued at Seleucia on the Tigris in 235 SEM and perhaps simultaneously with S49.1 of Orodes I.

Having no access to the extant material, Dilmaghani concluded that S30.12 tetradrachms had no corresponding drachms. Yet such specimens are known together with a unique S30/S34 'mule' drachm in Sellwood's Collection, struck from an obverse die with an early royal portrait. On the other hand, a further unique S30/S33 'mule' in Sellwood's Collection shows an older portrait of the same prince. This was minted, most probably, after 70 BC when Sinatruces made a final but unsuccessful dash for the throne (cf. below).

As noted further, the obverse bust on the inaugural S30.12 tetradrachms presents the hair in three concentric waves above the diadem. This is analogous with the hairstyle on the early S30 drachms but is absent on the later specimens. Also, part of the hair on the initial tetradrachms covers the royal forehead and temple below the diadem. This too is found on at least one of the parallel bronzes from Susa. It is possible that the S30.12 tetradrachms as well as the early S30 drachms and Susian bronzes were minted in 235 SEM either immediately after or concurrently with the S49.1 of Orodes I. This is mirrored in some later series notably the S60 tetradrachms of Vonones I (c. AD 8-12) and S61 of Artabanus II (c. AD 10-38), S64.22-30 of Vardanes I (c. AD 40-45) and S65.1-3 of Gotarzes II (c. AD 40-51), S66.29 of Gotarzes II and S68.1 of Vologases I (c. AD 51-78), and the majority of S72 of Vologases II and S73 of Pacorus II. It now appears that shortly after pacifying Elymais in early 77 BC, Orodes lost the satrapy to a new Arsacid claimant.

Assuming that Orodes was indeed a grandson of Tigranes it seems he received little or no support from his Armenian grandfather and King of Kings against his Parthian rivals. The reason for this may lie in the fact that Tigranes was preoccupied in Syria from about 79 BC on and then gradually but surely drawn into the Mithradatic wars against Rome. It is even possible that Orodes'
Armenian links eventually made him objectionable to the Parthian elite who then switched allegiance and supported a son of the Arsacid King of Kings, Mithradates II.

**Arsaces XVI (78/77-62/61 BC in Parthia, March/April 75-67/66 BC in Babylon)**

As shown above this young prince established his authority in Susa in 235 sem (78/77 BC). This agrees with the date of the incomplete accession record on Nisa ostracon 2639 (Nova 366) whose pitiful text missing, almost certainly, the important dynastic links with both an earlier king and Arsaces I, reads:148

![Image of coins](image)

**Aramaic transliteration:**
1. šNT I C XX XX XX 'X' rd MLK 'BRY(?)'
2. 'BRY(?) x x x x x'

**Parthian transcription:**
1. satš sadl (ud) haštād Aršak šāh 'puhr(?)'
2. 'puhr(?) x x x x x'

**Translation**
1. 'Year 1/70 (AE = 78/77 BC), King Arsaces, 'son of(?)'
2. 'son of(?) (very faint traces of some signs)

Whether Arsaces XVI accomplished his victory with the aid of a Kamnaskirid ally cannot be determined with confidence. Granted that Orodes I was a grandson of Tigranes, it is highly unlikely that the Armenian ruler assisted Arsaces XVI on the Parthian throne. But the possibility for an Elymaean involvement may not be too remote. The extant coins of Kamnaskires II/III and Queen Anzaze from the period 83/82-73/72 BC and also of Kamnaskires IV (c. 73/72-56/55 BC) strongly imply that the young Arsacid prince too had approved an independent Elymaean coinage. This was probably in return for military aid he had received against Orodes I. After all for reasons unknown to us Orodes routed the Elymaean army in early 77 BC and put Kamnaskires to flight. Naturally the latter would have been conscious of the humiliating defeat some months earlier and only too eager to reverse his fortunes by supporting an insurrection against an erstwhile enemy.

The cuneiform historical notices from the reign of Arsaces XVI are unfortunately limited to two mutilated Astronomical Diary fragments from years 238 and 239 SEB (74/73 and 73/72 BC respectively). The first of these has lost all its useful notes while the second yields no more than a few lines of uncertain information in month viii (3/4.11.-1/2.12.73 BC). Beyond these we have only a handful of dated colophons and a series of coins that may be utilised to reconstruct some of the events of the reign of Arsaces XVI. However since the earliest of the two cuneiform records is from November/December 73 BC, we are obliged to examine the numismatic evidence first to clarify the circumstances of the period 78/77-74/73 BC.

As briefly mentioned above an inspection of the extant Parthian coinage...
establishes a close link between S30.12-13 tetradrachms of Arsaces XVI (Figs. 22-23) and S34.1 of Orodes I through their common exergual control mark ΣΤΜ and also strong stylistic similarities. A S30/S34 ‘mule’ drachm in Sellwood’s Collection too suggests that the two issues were contiguous (Fig. 24). Coupled with the evidence of the ‘annual’ bronzes in Table 1 the portraiture of the earliest coinage of Arsaces XVI suggests that he was about 15-16 years old when he supplanted Orodes I in Susa and issued his S30.12-13 tetradrachms at Seleucia on the Tigris. These took place in the first half of 77 bc.

An unwelcome lacuna in our Babylonian documents unfortunately deprives us of an insight into the political situation in Mesopotamia during the period 77-75 bc. However, the presence of a series of long date-formulas from this period, all mentioning queen Ispubarza, signifies an ongoing strife that preoccupied Orodes I throughout his short reign. Assuming that the latter was still in possession of the royal mint shortly before the compilation of the above quoted tablet from March/April 75 seb, Arsaces XVI must have captured both Seleucia on the Tigris and Babylon very soon after this date.

The inscription on S30 tetradrachms of this young monarch reads ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΘΕΟΠΑΤΟΡΟΣ ΕΥΕΡΓΕΤΟΥ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ ΦΙΛΕΛΛΗΝΟΣ. Moreover, a single example (S30.11) replaces ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ with ΕΓΕΣΕΙΒΟΥ «(of) Devout or Pious». 149 Omitting the two epithets ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ and ΦΙΛΕΛΛΗΝΟΣ the S30 drachms of Arsaces XVI are inscribed with ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΘΕΟΠΑΤΟΡΟΣ ΕΥΕΡΓΕΤΟΥ. The majority of these (Figs. 25-27) are from Ecbatana (S30.14-15 and S30.26-27) and Rhagae (S30.16-17). They show that the western and central satrapies remained under Arsaces XVI throughout his reign. A few rare examples from Nisa (S30.23) and Margiane (S30.20) indicate that he also had a tenuous hold over the north-eastern and eastern provinces of the Empire. Beside these and unlike the earlier rulers from Mithradates I to Orodes I, Arsaces XVI minted a series of silver drachms at Susa (Fig. 28). His successors followed suit down to Phraataces (c. 2 BC-AD 2) and then only intermittently until Vardanes I terminated the practice about a century after its inception. It should nonetheless be added that S30 coinage too has been differently interpreted and ascribed to kings ranging from Phraates II to Gotarzes I, an ‘Unknown King II’, Sinatruces, and Orodes I. 150

149 PETROWICZ 1904, 33, no. 10 and 34; ARS CLASSICA-NAVILLE 1926, 133, no. 2179 and pl. 64.
150 GARDNER 1887, 32-33 (Phraates II); WROTH 1903, 38 (Artabanus II); PETROWICZ 1904, 32-34 (Phraates II); McDowell 1933, 208-210 (Gotarzes I, Mithradates III and Orodes I); NEWELL 1938, 480-481 (Gotarzes I); SIMONETTA 1957, 117 and 121 (Orodes I); SELLWOOD 1962, 78-80 (Gotarzes I); LE RIDER 1965, 92-95 and 394-395 (Arsaces Theopator Euergetes); SELLWOOD 1965, 332 (Gotarzes I); SIMONETTA 1966, 39 (Orodes I); SELLWOOD 1971, 76-79 (Gotarzes I); Dobbins 1974, 71-74 (Orodes I).
The epithet ΘΕΟΠΑΤΟΡΟΣ on S30 coinage indicates that the issuer descended from an illustrious father. Given that his sheer youth precludes Arsaces XVI from being a son of the deified Mithradates I who had died over five decades earlier, his father must necessarily be one of the latter’s successors. Of these only Mithradates II could have been divinized for his meritorious achievements during a thirty year long reign. It is possible that Arsaces XVI employed ΘΕΟΠΑΤΟΡΟΣ to promote his paternal link with Mithradates II and legitimise his claim to the Parthian throne as a rightful heir of his father. However, it is noteworthy that this young prince abandoned the tiara worn by Mithradates II and his immediate successors, Gotarzes I, Mithradates III, and Orodes I. This may be politically significant.

Following his analysis of the Parthian series from Seleucia on the Tigris during c. 90-55 BC, Mørkholm concluded that S30 tetradrachms presented four distinctly different portraitures.151 These depict the royal bust with individually fashioned hair above and below diadem and thus correspond to different periods in the reign of Arsaces XVI. Perhaps the young prince abandoned the tiara of Mithradates II because it had by then become emblematic of Tigranes’ tyranny. According to Mørkholm the S30 tetradrachms were minted over an eleven year period under different controllers.152 Although we know very little about the changeover frequency of the Parthian mint magistrates in Seleucia, Mørkholm’s proposed period of mintage for S30 in that city agrees with the number of corresponding ‘annual’ Susian bronzes (LR149-160) in Table 1. These indicate a period of 10-11 years of uninterrupted output. Yet no more information can be gleaned from the evidence of tetradrachms regarding the political situation in Babylonia and Sinatruces’ comeback. As quoted above, the joint statements of Lucian and Phlegon indicate that Sinatruces was on the throne about 77 BC. Our only reference, albeit quite vague, to some movements in Eastern Parthia involving the «Guti» (perhaps the Sacaraucae) is found in a small cuneiform ‘flake’ dated month viii of 239 SEB (3/4.11-1/2.12.73 BC). It gives:153

Fig. 28. S30.19 silver drachm of Arsaces XVI from Susa (Author’s Collection).

Fig. 29. S30/S33 ‘mule’ silver drachm of Arsaces XVI-Sinatruces (Sellwood’s Collection).

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4 [...] they set …., seized each other …., […]
5 [...] …., cattle and sheep …., […]
6 [...] …., ships which …., […]
7 [...] spoke […] in the land …., […]
8 [...] the rest of them …., their possessions, their belongings and equipment …., […]
9 [...] which is on the Euphrates, the (Greek) citizens …., […]
10 [...] the chief bursar° of the temples who …., in month VI the shandabku-official, the chief […]
11 [...] the chief of troops from the remote cities of the Guti land towards […]

But we cannot press for Sinatruces’ involvement here since the reference to both the «chief of troops» and «Guti» may be to an unrelated issue now lost. Nevertheless a S30/S33 ‘mule’ drachm

and Sinatruces); Simonetta 1974, 122 (Orodes I); Waggoner 1974, 24-25 (Gotarzes I); Dobins 1975, 27-30, and 42-45 (Orodes I and Sinatruces); Simonetta 1975, 77 (Orodes I); Sellwood 1976, 5 («Unknown King II»); Simonetta, Sellwood. 1978, 116 (Orodes I); Mørkholm 1980, 36-37, 43, n. 40 and 44-45 (Sinatruces); Sellwood 1980, 96-97 («Unknown King II»); 1983a, 286-287 («Unknown King II»); Dilmaghani 1986, 219-220 («Unknown King II»); Shore 1993, 108-111 (Orodes I); Simonetta 2001, 105 (Gotarzes I).

151 Mørkholm 1980, 36-37.
152 Mørkholm 1980, 36.
in Sellwood’s Collection (Fig. 29) suggests that the reigns of Arsaces XVI and Sinatruces overlapped and hence both types were, at times, concurrently struck at the same mint.

There is virtually no allusion in the classical literature to the struggle between the two Arsacid claimants during the period 77/76-70/69 BC. The uninterrupted tetradrachm production at Seleucia on the Tigris as well as the ‘annual’ Susian bronzes under Arsaces XVI show that Sinatruces never went as far as Susiana and Babylonia after he was brought back to power by his Scythian allies in c. 77 BC. He was most probably confined to the regions east of the Caspian Gates. In any case, lack of Babylonian colophons dated 75-69 BC and naming Arsaces XVI and/or his associated queen strongly implies that Sinatruces was not a serious threat until about 69 BC.

The following colophon from a ‘fable’ text implies that on 22.XII.242 SEB (19/20.3.69 BC) Arsaces XVI was still unchallenged in Babylonia: 155

18 ... ... [E]K1 i}s{E U,-22-[KĀM MU-1-me-1,18-KĀM šd ši-i]
19 MU-2-me-42-KĀM [År]<šd>-ka-a LUGAL
18 ... ... Babylon. Month xii, day 22, [year 178, which is]
19 year 242, Arsaces (is) King.

The next record, a badly damaged colophon of an astronomical tablet from year 243 SEB (27/28.3.69-13/4.4.68 BC), introduces into the date-formula the name of a new royal consort, Piruztana, to separate Arsaces XVI from his contemporary: 156

6 [MU-1-me-1,19-KĀM] [Year 579,]
7 [šd ši-i MU-2-me(c-4)]-KĀM [which is year 2,4],
8 [Å]šd-ka-a LUGAL [Arsaces (is) King,
9 [u] P]-ri-us-ta-na-a [and Piruztana,
10 [DAM]-šū GAŠJAN [his wife, the Que]en.

Left edge of tablet:
1 [ZI šd ši-in šd 4,[3] [Velocity of the mon]on for year 24[3].

I had assigned elsewhere 157 this and the following tablets mentioning Queen Piruztana to the reign of Phraates III. However, a new text giving «King of Kings Arsaces» in association with his mother, Queen (...)-Ishtar attests that Phraates established his authority in Babylon about 67/66 BC (cf. below). He could therefore not be the Arsacid prince who ruled jointly with Piruztana during 69/67-66 BC. Given the scanty cuneiform records and ‘annual’ Susian bronzes, it is now possible to separate Arsaces XVI from his contemporary: 156

155 SELLWOOD 1976, 4 and 19 has perpectively identified the creators of the S33 coinage. The absence of engraver’s clearly indicates that after his crushing defeat by Gotarzes I in 87 BC Sinatruces never regained the satrapy of Media and therefore issued no more drachms at Rhagae and Ecbatana.

156 Walker 1972, pl. 32, no. 93 (BM 34654, fable concerning the duqduq bird).

157 NEUGEBAUER 1955a, 23 colophon Zkc (No. 1943 = BM 45818+45838+4692) and 182. The author assigns the tablet to the reign of Phraates III; 1958b, pl. 225 (copy) and pl. 239 (Photo); McEwan 1986, 93; DEL MONT 1997, 256 allocates to Phraates III.


159 McGUSHIN 1994, 47-51.

160 CARY 2001, 4-5.

161 SYME 2002, 196. Cf. also Appian (Mithradatic Wars, 13.87) in WHITE 1999, 404-405 on the events of 68 BC and following the Battle of Tigranocerta. It relates that Mithradates of Pontus and Tigranes traversed the country collecting a new army, the command of which was committed to Mithradates, because Tigranes thought that his disasters must have taught him some lessons. They also sent messengers to Parthia to solicit aid from that quarter. DEBEVOISE 1938, 70 and n. 3 erroneously assigns the letter of Mithradates VI to before the Battle which took place in 69 BC.
This required the insertion of a queen’s name in the Babylonian date-formulas to separate the two Arsacid opponents.

The latest cuneiform record from the reign of Arsaces XVI reports the lunar eclipse of 15.x.244 ṣeb (19/20.1.67 BC) and confirms the ongoing factional dispute in Parthia:163

1 Year 180, which is 2 year 244, Arsaces (is) King, 3 and Piruztana, 4 his wife, the Queen. Month X, night of the 15th, ...

We also have a series of rare drachms (S30.18, S30.21-22, S30.24-25, and, S30.28-30)164 known as the ‘campaign coins’ (Figs. 30-35). Except for S30.30 which may carry the monogram of Mithradatkart, these bear the full mint names ENRAGAI, NISAIA (or NICAIA), MARQIANH, TRAXIANH and APEIA.165 This implies that Arsaces XVI had jurisdiction over the central regions as well as the northern and eastern provinces of Parthia. To these are also added the specimens from Ecbatana and Rhagae with the somewhat unconventional term KATA ΣΤΡΑΤΕΙΑ signifying the

![Fig. 30. S30.18 silver drachm of Arsaces XVI from Rhagae (Author’s Collection).](image1)

![Fig. 31. S30.24 silver drachm of Arsaces XVI from Nisa (Sellwood’s Collection).](image2)

![Fig. 32. S30.21 silver drachm of Arsaces XVI from Margiane (Sellwood’s Collection).](image3)

![Fig. 33. S30.22 silver drachm of Arsaces XVI from Traxiane (Author’s Collection).](image4)

![Fig. 34. S30.25 silver drachm of Arsaces XVI from Areia (Author’s Collection).](image5)

![Fig. 35. S30.30 silver drachm of Arsaces XVI from Mithradatkart (Sellwood’s Collection).](image6)

163 Kugler 1924, 447, no. 30; Sachs 1955, 227, lbat 1448; McEwan 1986, 93; Del Monte 1997, 250; Steele 2000, 56; Hunger, Sachs 2001, 74-77, no. 27. The authors read the queen’s name as Pi-ir-muš-ta-na-a (Pirwuštana).


165 Weiskopf 1981, 129 and pl. 23, no. 16 (currently in Sellwood’s Collection).
peripatetic mint attached to the royal court as it progressed through the Empire (Fig. 36). While some or all of the 'campaign coins' may have been struck when Arsaces XVI was still recognised in Babylonia, I have shown below that the majority of these drachms were minted after he was ousted by Phraates III and forced to flee to North-East Parthia.

Our next cuneiform record was undoubtedly compiled under Phraates III on 14.IX.246 SEB (28/29.12.66 BC) in Babylon (cf. below). In the absence of an earlier document from the intervening period we may take this date as the terminus ante quem of the authority of Arsaces XVI in the southern and central Parthian provinces. This agrees with Dio (36.45.3) who places the death of Arsaces XVI about the time of Pompey’s first contact with Phraates III in 66 BC.166 However, I have shown further that this prince contested the throne with Phraates III for a few more years until he was finally eliminated about 62 BC.

We have regrettably no reference to the personal name of Arsaces XVI in our extant cuneiform material. He is simply called Arsaces by the classical authors. According to Dio (36.1.2) Tigranes and Mithradates VI sent an embassy to «Arsaces of Parthia» in 69 BC seeking his assistance against Lucullus in Asia Minor and Armenia. At that time «Arsaces» was hostile to Tigranes because of some disputed territory. This they pledged to yield to him. Dio (36.3.1-2) further reports that learning of these negotiations Lucullus too sent an envoy to «Arsaces», threatening him with war but also making promises if the Parthian king aided the Romans instead. Since «Arsaces» was, at that time, still unhappy with Tigranes he received the Romans and entered into rapport and alliance with Lucullus.

We then have the aforementioned report of the death in 66 BC of «Arsaces, King of Parthia» in Dio (36.45.3) and that Pompey anticipated Mithradates VI by quickly establishing friendship with the succeeding ruler, Phraates III.

It is true that on ascending the throne the Parthian kings took the dynastic appellation Arsaces. However, Dio consistently registers the personal names of the successors of Arsaces XVI, notably Phraates III and his sons, Mithradates IV and Orodes II, throughout his 36th-40th books. It is therefore not impossible that he also recorded the personal name of the young son of Mithradates II in the aforementioned passage. He was probably christened Arsaces in memory of the founder of the dynasty. This agrees with the unexpected appearance of the seated archer – representing the founder of the dynasty – on the earliest Susian bronze of Arsaces XVI alluded to above.

Finally it is noteworthy that Arsaces XVI was still disputing with Tigranes certain territories in Northern Mesopotamia as late as 69 BC. This may have involved the city of Nisibis which Dio (36.6.2-3) claims Tigranes had seized from the Parthians and installed his brother there to guard his treasures and most of other possessions. As indicated earlier the Armenian ruler annexed a large part of Media and Northern Mesopotamia in about 85 BC during the reign of Mithradates III. Dio’s statements clearly suggest that Tigranes held at least part of the captured Parthian territory for over ten years. This ultimately strained the Partho-Armenian ties and led to prolonged quarrels between the young Arsacid prince and Tigranes. Dio’s comments also imply that the Armenian ruler probably lent no help to Arsaces XVI to overthrow Orodes I in early 75 BC.

**Arsaces XVII-Phraates III (70/69, in Parthia, 67/66-58/57 BC in Babylon)**

As shown elsewhere,167 one of the reasons for extending the end of the reign of Mithradates I from the traditional date 139/138 to 132 BC was a text mentioning his minor son Phraates II and the

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166 Cary 2001, 74-75. He could not be Sinatruces who died in 70/69 BC and was succeeded by his son Phraates III. The latter inaugurated his reign in Nisa in 69/68 BC. Cf. the same work for other passages in Dio.  
co-regent Rimnu in 180 SEB; the latter was Mithradates’ principal queen. The premise for that conclusion was that an undisputed king on the throne for several years hardly requires the association of a co-ruler, albeit his mother, to legitimise his authority or identify his reign. As it turned out in that particular instance the joint kingship was due to Phraates’ young age and probably even a conscious attempt to stress that the throne had passed to the son of Mithradates I’s principal queen and not one born to a subordinate wife or concubine. I have also shown that in times of dynastic strife the inclusion in the Babylonian date-formulas of the name of a royal consort distinguished the ruling king from his antagonist.

The accession record on Nisa ostracon 2640 (Nova 307) clearly indicates that Phraates III had been recognised in Northern Parthia sometime in 68/67 BC.\[168\]

Aramaic transliteration:
1 ŠNT I C XX XX XX ‘XX’ ršk MLK
2 [B]ősRY npt Pryptk
3 [BRY ḨYBRY ‘riš’k]

Parthian transcription:
1 sarš šad (ud) haššād Aršāk šāh
2 puhr nāb ‘Frya’pātak
3 [puhr barādarzādāg Aršāk]

Translation:
1 Year 180, King Arsaces,
2 son of the grandson of Phriapatius,
3 [son of the nephew of Arsaces]

This evidently alarmed Arsaces XVI and also compelled the scribes in Babylon to name his Queen Piruztana in their colophons.

In the above quoted lunar eclipse text dated 14.IX.246 SEB (28/29.12.66 BC) once again we find a Parthian monarch associated with his mother, this time as his Queen: 169

1 MU-1-me-1,22-KĀM šā šā-i MU-1[me-46-KĀM]
2 ‘Aršā-kām LUGAL LUGALmeš u 1[1]’[….]
3 1[45] AMA-šū GAŠAN GAN GE 14 […]

1 Year 182, which is year 2[46],
2 Arsaces (is) King of Kings and […]
3 -Ishtar, his mother, the Queen. Month IX, night of the 14th, […]

This is an interesting document on several counts and so offers a series of clues about the identity of the «King of Kings Arsaces» and his coinage. Firstly, the inclusion of the name of Queen Mother (…) -Ishtar in the date-formula suggests that there may have been either a serious opposition to her son’s authority or that he was still too young to rule independently or both. Secondly, it reveals the resurrection of the vaunting title «King of Kings» in the cuneiform colophons after the reign of Mithradates II. This immediately brings to mind the statement by Dio (36.6.1-3) that when Pompey wrote to Phraates III on the disputed territory of Gorduene in 65 BC he showed contempt for the latter’s title and addressed him merely as «King» rather than «King of Kings». 170

It is highly likely that the above text was compiled under Phraates III a few months after his victory over Arsaces XVI and so gives the terminus ante quem of his accession to the throne in Babylon. 171 But the reason for the inclusion of his mother’s name in the date-formula is not entirely


\[171\] The BM 45729 unpublished ‘incomplete’ Almanac for year 246 SEB should have been finalised by the end of 245 SEB with its date formula added at the beginning of 246 SEB. However, not only the astronomical computations in this record remain unfinished, but also there are no signs of a dated colophon or even a single date on any of the edges or reverse of the tablet which is largely uninscribed. Since of all the extant astronomical tablets from the Achaemenid,
clear. Phraates may have lost his principal queen and yet the presence of an active opponent in Parthia called for the association of a royal consort to identify him as the ruling monarch. This probably led to a temporary joint reign with his mother.

Returning to the Parthian series from Seleucia on the Tigris we may recall that the early examples of S30 tetradrachms have a youthful and lightly bearded portrait. The later specimens of this type naturally show a progressively older royal bust with a short but fully developed beard. Mørkholm perceptively remarks that the last tetradrachms of Arsaces XVI (Fig. 37) and the isolated S37.1 (Fig. 38) are linked by their common control mark B which is placed in the same position on the reverse of both types under the bow of the seated archer. He also underlines the striking stylistic similarities between the two types with virtually similar facial features of the obverse busts and identical reverse designs and disposition of the inscriptions. These confirm the same celator at work and place the S37 immediately after the final S30 output.

Having fixed the sequence of the issues from the ‘Dark Age’ Mørkholm allocates the S30 tetradrachms to Sinatruces and takes S37 as the initial coinage of Phraates III as his father’s co-regent. It should be pointed out that other numismatists have differently attributed the S37 tetradrachms. Their choice of the issuer varies from Gotarzes I to Darius (vassal king of Media Atropatene), Arsaces Philopator, Mithradates III and Orodes II. What is noteworthy about this isolated and rare coinage with no corresponding drachms and bronzes is the central bull’s horn and two concentric rows of pearl on the royal tiara. These are also noted on S39 tetradrachms which are generally regarded as the terminal issue of Phraates III. A slightly different headdress too is worn by Phraates’ father Sinatruces on his S33 drachms. Given the inscriptions, literary and numismatic evidence the S37 coinage may be taken as the inaugural issue of Phraates III marking his capture of Babylonia in 67/66 BC. Its extreme rarity implies that shortly after its inception S37 was superseded by a new issue. As shown below, beginning in 67/66 BC the S36 coinage was minted throughout the Parthian Empire for about three to five years. Although as early as 1877 Gardner had assigned this type to Phraates III, later numismatists gave it to a variety of rulers.
ers including Gotarzes I, an «Unknown King», Arsaces XI, Darius, Mithradates III, and Orodes II. It will be shown presently that Phraates III minted the S36 series after supplanting Arsaces XVI in Susiana and Babylonia in 67/66 BC.\(^\text{174}\)

The 'annual' Susian bronze emissions in Table 1 indicate that in 246 sem (67/66 BC) a new type (S36.23-27) superseded the S30 series of Arsaces XVI. According to Le Rider, of the fourteen examples of S36 recovered at Susa, nine were definite and two remained possible overstrikes on earlier types.\(^\text{175}\) In cases where the undertype was identifiable, it turned out to be a S30 variety of Arsaces XVI. This strongly suggests that the transition from S30 to S36 was immediate and un-interrupted. Given that the five distinct S36 bronze varieties from Susa amount to three annual and two quasi-annual outputs, they would cover a minimum of three full years of mintage in the period 66/65-64/63 BC with one type assigned to the latter months of 67/66 and at least part of 63/62 BC taken up by the fifth variety. Our classical sources inform us that Phraates III was in regular contact with Pompey during 66-64 BC, initially concerning co-operative action against Ti-

\(^\text{174}\) Gardner 1877, 36 (Phraates III); Wroth 1903, 56-60 («Unknown King»); Petrowicz 1904, 54-55 (Mithradates III); Newell 1938, 482-484 (Mithradates III); Simonetta 1957, 119 and 121 (Gotarzes I); Le Rider 1965, 403-404 (Orodes II); Sellwood 1965, 13 (Darius’); Simonetta 1966, 39 (Arsaces XI, Philopator); Sellwood 1971, 89-102 (Orodes II); Simonetta 1974, 122-123 and 138 (follows Wroth and Sellwood); Dobbins 1975, 41 (Arsaces Philopator Euergetes); Simonetta 1975, 77 (Arsaces Philopator); Sellwood 1976, 5 (Darius’); Simonetta 1978, 116 (Arsaces Philopator); Sellwood 1980, 106-110 (Darius’); Mørkholm 1980, 45 (Phraates III as co-regent with Sinatruces); Sellwood 1983a, 288-289 (Dari-

\(^\text{175}\) Le Rider 1965, 99-100; Simonetta 1966, 30-31; Sellwood 1967, 284; Dobbins 1975, 40; Mørkholm 1980, 44; Simonetta 2003, 91.

\(^\text{176}\) Dio Cassius (36.45.3; 36.51.1-3; 37.5.1-37.7.5). Cf. Cary 2001, 74-75, 86-87, 106-113, respectively. Cf. also Plutarch (Pom-

\(^\text{177}\) BM 33522+33569+33580+338...
A Revised Parthian Chronology of the Period 91-55 bc

ther, Sinatruces. A similar inscription also appears on the S36 Susian bronzes and silver drachms and copper denominations from the Parthian mints. Coupled with their close iconographical and stylistic similarities, the identical inscriptions on S37 and S36 tetradrachms leave little doubt that they were both issued by Phraates III.

A Diary fragment with an astronomically determined date offers the following scanty information from month 1 of 249 SEB (20/21.4.-18/19.3.63 bc): 180

1 [...] MU-1-me-1,25-KĀM šā šī-i MU-2-me-49-KĀM Ar-šā-kām LUGAL LUGALmek u Ṭe-le-ū-ni-qqē-e
2 [DAM2 šā GAŠAN ... ...]

1 [...] year 185, which is year 249, Arsaces (is) King of Kings and Teleonike,
2 [his wife, the Queen ... ...]
13 [...] šē-im ina SILAmek E2 KUDmek
13 [...] trade in barley was interrupted in the streets of Babylon,

Upper edge text
1 [EN-NUN šā gi-nē-e šā TA inuBAR EN TIL inuKIN šād MU-1-me-1,25-KĀM šā šī-i
MU-2-me-49-KĀM Ar-šā-kām LUGAL LUGALmek
1 [Diary from month 1 to the end of month vi of year 185, which is year 249.
Arsaces (is) King of Kings.

Although the above date-formula attests Phraates’ authority in Babylon, the incomplete line of historical text in the same record implies a war or a major calamity that interrupted the sale of barley in that city. 181 This was probably due to the on-going struggle between Phraates III and Arsaces XVI.

The sequence of ‘annual’ Susian bronze issues in Table 1 shows that S36 coinage terminated in 250 sem (63/62 bc) and a new type (S38) began in 251 sem (62/61 bc). 182 Considering that the last of S36 bronze may have been minted in the first month of 250 sem and the first of S38 issued in the last month of 251 sem, we could theoretically have a period of nearly two years between the two types with no output from Susa.

As mentioned earlier, we have a series of rare drachms from the reign of Arsaces XVI termed the ‘campaign coins’. Except for the examples from Ecbatana and Rhagae these are struck from unprofes-

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181 Sachs, Hunger 1988, 34.
182 Le Rider 1965, 99-100, 402-404 and pls. xvi-xvii, nos. 184-188 (S36.23-27) all overstruck on earlier issues (probably Syo alone). No. 186:2 has [Θ]ΕΟΙΑΤ[ΟΡΟΣ] [Ε]ΤΕΡ[ΕΤΟΥ] on the obverse. No. 186:3 shows an almost complete bust of Arsaces XVI on the reverse and ΘΕΟΙΑΤΟ[ΡΟΣ] ΤΕΕ[ΕΤΟΥ] on the obverse. These epithets are found exclusively on Syro coinage.
sionally executed dies and thus imply lack of bullion and skilful artisans. I believe that while some or all of these varieties may have been issued during the long Parthian campaigns of Arsaces XVI against Sinatruces and then his son and successor Phraates III during 69-66 BC, some were also minted later to finance the invasion of the Kingdom to reclaim the throne. To counter that threat Phraates may have left Babylonia to confront his rival in Parthia. To pay for his own operations he minted S35 drachms (Figs. 43-47) – generally regarded as the issue of an «Unknown King», Sinatruces, Darius, or Mithradates III – with his facing bust at this juncture in response to the ‘campaign coins’ of Arsaces XVI. Perhaps one reason for the appearance of a frontal portrait was to separate S35 from S30 when Phraates introduced into his titulature the epithet ΘΕΟΠΑΤΟΡΟΣ. 

Having finally eliminated his opponent in the East, I believe Phraates abandoned his S35 coinage in favour of the S39 drachms which he issued on his journey back to Babylonia (Fig. 48). Two examples of this variety in my collection are struck from reverse dies cut by Sellwood’s artificer «F».

Fig. 43. S35.1 silver drachm of Phraates III from Ecbatana (Author’s Collection).
Fig. 44. S35.7 silver drachm of Phraates III from Rhagae (Author’s Collection).
Fig. 45. S35.3 var. silver drachm of Phraates III from Court at Rhagae (Author’s Collection).
Fig. 46. S35.4 var. silver drachm of Phraates III from Margiane (Author’s Collection).
Fig. 47. S35.4 silver drachm of Phraates III from Mithradatkart (Author’s Collection).
Fig. 48. S39.17 silver drachm of Phraates III from Ecbatana (Author’s Collection).

183 Gardner 1877, 36 (Phraates III); Wroth 1903, 56-58 («Unknown King»); Petrowicz 1904, 54-55 (Mithradates III); Newell 1938, 483-484 (Mithradates III); Simonetta 1957, 119 and 121 (Gotarzes I); Sellwood 1962, 85 (Mithradates III); Le Rider 1965, 403-404 (Mithradates III); Sellwood 1965, 133 (Darius); Simonetta 1966, 39 (Arsaces XI, Philopator); Sellwood 1971, 99-97 (Darius); Dobbins 1975, 43 (Sinatruces); Simonetta 1975, 77 (Arsaces Philopator or Darius); Sellwood 1976, 5 (Darius); Simonetta, Sellwood 1978, 116 (Arsaces or Mithradates III); Mørkhøj 1980, 45 (Sinatruces); Sellwood 1980, 111-113 (Darius); 1983a, 288-289 (Darius); Dilmaghani 1986, 221-222 (Phraates III); Shore 1993, 114 (Phraates III); Simonetta 2001, 101 and 105 (Darius).

184 Simonetta, Sellwood 1978, 108.
A Revised Parthian Chronology of the Period 91-55 BC

(Fig. 49). It was thought that this celator had engraved dies for the earlier types S31, S34, S30, S35, and S36 but not the S38 and S39 drachms of Phraates III. The new specimens naturally imply that of the two S38 and S39 series, the latter is anterior and therefore belongs to the period immediately after Phraates’ decisive victory over Arsaces XVI.

A mutilated Babylonian colophon dated 251 SBR (61/60 BC) apparently lacks an associated queen and thus suggests the absence of a rival king:188

56 [l1-l1-n, U.J-x,-KÂM MU]-1-mc-1,27-KÂM šd ši-i MU-2-mc-[51-KÂM] 3A[r-šd-kÂm]
57 L[UAGAL] LUGAL[me3]
56 [Month x1, day x2, year] 187, which is year 2/51, Arsaces (is)
57 K[ing] of King[s].

Perhaps it took Phraates no more than a year in his campaign to eliminate Arsaces XVI. Having returned to Babylonia he celebrated his victory by striking the S39 tetradrachms with the epithet QEOU and showing on the reverse Phraates enthroned and holding an eagle in place of a flying Nike (Fig. 50). It is possible that following his earlier consecutive types S37 and S36 Phraates’ S38 coinage (Figs. 51-54) superseded his S39 emission with five distinct ‘annual’ Susian bronzes (S38.24-28). These were minted in the period 251-255 SBR (62/61-58/57 BC).

The above scenario however fails to explain why types S35 and S39 have no parallel Susian bronzes. Plutarch (Pompey, 36.2) states that on his return through Lesser Armenia in 65 BC Pompey entertained ambassadors from Media and Elymais who may have sought Roman assistance against Parthian domination. Given the amicable relationship between the House of Mithradates II and Khamskares II/III, it is possible that the latter’s successor, Khamskares IV, took advantage of Phraates’ preoccupation with fighting Arsaces XVI in Parthia and recovered Susa. He then terminated Arsacid issues in that city and minted his own coinage during 250-251 SBR (63/62-61 BC).191

The resumption of Parthian issues after Phraates’ triumphant return from the East involved a limited silver emission from Susa, namely the S39.14-16 and S38.15-16 drachms. These bear on the reverse and beneath the bow of the seated archer the monograms ΠΠ/Σ, ΔΠ/Σ and ΒΠ/Σ respectively (Figs. 55-57). Such composite symbols on Parthian drachms are quite rare and the ones on Phraates’ Susian silver have been differently interpreted by numismatists as either Seleucid Era dates or letter combinations with literal rather than numeral significance. Initially and after the discovery of a S38.15 drachm during the extensive French excavations at

185 Sellwood 1976, 59.
186 Jacobson, Mørkholm 1965, pl. 3.80 (not recorded by Sellwood).
187 A pair of drachms in Sellwood’s Collection, one with a S38 and the other with a S39 obverse, share the same reverse die. This suggests that the two types were either parallel or contiguous. Cf. Simonetta 2001, 99-104 for references to these ‘links’.
188 George 1992, 71, Tablet 1 (BM 31491+31826), and pl. 4 (copy).
189 Sellwood 1980, 118 (read 38.28 for 38.29). 
190 Perrin 1990, 208-209.
191 Alram 1986, 144-145, no. 480 could have been minted by Khamskares IV in 62/61 BC.
Susa, Le Rider considered the possibility of a date, i.e. 282 SEM (31/30 BC) in the reign of Phraates IV. But for lack of epigraphical, stylistic and iconographical consistency between that coin and those firmly assigned to Phraates IV (S50-54) he abandoned his original conjecture and conceded that these ‘monograms’ must represent letters of control. Later, having taken the letter pi in these symbols as a degenerated form of mu, Waggoner read them inclusively as ΒΠΣ, ΓΠΣ, ΔΠΣ, and concluded that they resolved into 242, 243, and 244 SEM year dates (71/70, 70/69, and 69/68 BC, respectively). However, this entailed serious implications in that it required a S40.16 drachm of Mithradates IV, son of Phraates III, with the ΒΠΣ symbol to be contemporary with S38.15 drachms ostensibly struck in 242 SEM (71/70 BC) at the very beginning of Phraates’ reign. To resolve this complex situation in which two Parthian kings apparently struck three types of silver drachms (S38-39 and S40) contemporaneously, Waggoner argued for a co-regency between Phraates III and his son Mithradates as soon as the former acceded to the throne. Nevertheless, given the uncommon and unprecedented disposition of these ‘dates’ under the bow of the seated archer, normally reserved for mint monograms, Sellwood suggested that by analogy with other monograms, the letter sigma stands for Susa while beta, gamma, and delta may have a sequential value. Yet he conceded that the reason for the presence of the letter pi escaped him.

According to the arrangement of Susian bronzes in Table 1, S38 series may be securely placed after S36. The latter began in 246 SEM (67/66 BC) by overstriking S30 and ended in 250 SEM (63/62 BC). This places the inception of S38 in 251 SEM (62/61 BC) and shows that putting the S38 in 242 SEM requires S36 to start in 237 SEM (76/75 BC) and thus coincide with the first regnal year of Arsaces XVI in Babylon. Given that Phraates III secured the Susian mint in 67/66 BC, we may safely preclude the above composite symbols from being Seleucid Era dates.

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192 Le Rider 1965, 197, n. 481.
193 Wroth 1903, Ixvii-ixlviii, and 49, no. 32, a S39.14 drachm attributed to Phraates III.
195 Cf. Dio (36.14.2) in Cary 2001, 20-21 on «Mithradates from Media, the son-in-law of Tigranes (II) of Armenia who attacked a detachment of Roman soldiers in Lucullus’ army in 67 BC and «killed many of them». He must have been Mithradates (IV) son of Phraates III, and his father’s governor of Media. This precludes Darius from having usurped the Arsacid throne and minted S35-37 coinages about 70 BC. 

Accepting the chronological significance of the first letter in these monograms I have concluded that the second and third letters may represent ΠΡΟΣ ΣΟΥΣΟΙΣ. This probably implies ‘from’ or even ‘emanating from’ Susa. Perhaps, starting with letter alpha and to mark the re-imposition of Arsacid power in Susa after Phraates’ absence in Parthia, the S39 variety was minted first for a few months followed by S38 before the resumption of the normal bronze types. In any case, the overall rarity of S39.14-16 and S38.15-16 drachms confirms their brief period of mintage as special issues.

Of particular interest is also a ‘mule’ drachm in Sellwood’s Collection (Fig. 58) struck from a S38 obverse and a S30.18 reverse with ENRAGAI. This indicates that Phraates’ last issue and the ‘campaign’ coinage of Arsaces XVI were either contemporary or contiguous. I had suggested elsewhere that given the proximity of the two types the ‘mule’ may well have been struck from an unused S30.18 reverse die unintentionally paired with a S38 obverse of Phraates III. But the possibility of a last bid for power and minting of coins by Arsaces XVI cannot be entirely ruled out. The manual removal of both the stag decoration around the crest and the central horn of the tiara on a S39.3 drachm of Phraates III (Fig. 59) suggests that an active rival attempted to integrate the issue into the S31 coinage of Mithradates III. The arrangement of the ‘annual’ Susian bronzes in Table 1 shows that this could have happened in 62/61 BC shortly before the inception of the S38 coinage of Phraates III. Assuming that Arsaces XVI was minting his ‘campaign’ coinage while fighting Phraates in the period 67/66-62/61 BC it is possible that the ‘mule’ was struck from a wrong set of S38 obverse and S30.18 reverse dies. This implies that Phraates III finally eliminated Arsaces XVI in about 62/61 BC.

The latest extant cuneiform record from the reign of Phraates III is a broken colophon of an Almanac compiled in year 253 and dated in month 1 of 254 SEB (25/26.3.-23/24.4.58 BC).\(^{198}\)

\[\begin{align*}
5 \text{ meš-}\hat{\text{hi}} \text{ šá KUR-düm} & \text{ šá } 4 \text{ UDUD-IDIM} \\
6 \text{ 'Ar-šá-kám LUGAL LUGAL} & \text{ meš}
\end{align*}\]

5 Measurements of the entries of the planets (into zodiacal signs) for year [190, which is year 254].

6 Arsaces (is) King of Kings.

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\(^{196}\) Sellwood 1976, 15-16, and 23. Cf. also Dilmaghani 1986, 222-223; Simonetta 2001, 97-98 and 104 who take the symbols as composite Susian mint monograms.

\(^{197}\) Assar 2003, 65.

\(^{198}\) Sachs 1995, 177, LBAT 1184.
On the other hand, Phraates’ ‘annual’ Susian bronzes indicate that his terminal type was minted in 255 sEM (20/21.58-7/8.10-57 bc). Although somewhat inconclusive, when combined with the statement of Dio (39.56.2) our cuneiform and numismatic evidence suggests that Phraates was murdered by his sons Mithradates IV and Orodes II sometime after late September 58 bc.

**Arsaces XVIII-Mithradates IV**

(58-55 bc)

Having disposed of their father, Mithradates and Orodes soon found themselves at war over the succession. The sequence of drachms from the Parthian ‘Dark Age’ shows that the elder brother assumed the diadem first. However lack of cuneiform colophons and historical notices from the period 255-262 sEB (57/56-50/49 bc) compels us to reconstruct the events of the reign of Mithradates IV from his coins and a small number of sketchy classical references. These will be reviewed in some detail in a future publication. Nevertheless, I believe it is appropriate to end this note with a brief analysis of the reasons for attributing S44.1 tetradrachms to Mithradates IV.

With the exception of Petrowicz who assigned the issue to Phraates III this type had generally been taken as an early coinage of Orodes II. It shows on its reverse an enthroned archer holding a bow in his out-stretched right hand and the inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΝ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΤ ΚΑΙ ΚΤΙΣΤΟΤ, «(the coin of the) Great King of Kings, Arsaces, and the Founder» (Fig. 60). The attribution to Orodes seemed secure until Simonetta ascribed it to Pacorus I or an earlier issuer and then Mørkholm took it as a «neutral coinage» struck by mint officials at Seleucia on the Tigris during the period of struggle between Mithradates IV and Orodes II. As already discussed elsewhere, there is no evidence that a coinage was ever struck on behalf of the mint personnel at Seleucia on the Tigris. The genitive style of the royal titulature on Parthian issues strongly implies that they were minted at the behest of an Arsacid king on the throne.

The overall fabric and workmanship of the known examples of S44.1 tetradrachms, struck from a multitude of dies, clearly link them with the S38.1 of Phraates III rather than the subsequent types (S45-S48) of Orodes II. Furthermore, the latter never employs the epithet ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ whereas it is found in the inscriptions of the S40 and S41 drachms of Mithradates IV. These read...
A Revised Parthian Chronology of the Period 91-55 BC

Given the numismatic considerations I believe that in 58 BC Mithradates IV emulated his predecessors and issued the S44 coinage to inaugurate his reign in Seleucia on the Tigris. We know that Orodes II seized and overstruck S41 tetradrachm of his brother (Fig. 61).209 As their distinctive feature, these too had on their reverse a right-facing seated archer although a flying Nike held a laurel wreath above his bow. Their inscription, reconstructed from a few overstrikes, reads ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΕΠΙΚΑΛΟΥΜΕΝΟΥ ΜΙΘΡΑΔΑΤΟΥ ΦΙΛΕΛΗΝΟΣ. It is possible that the unprecedented use of the personal name induced Orodes to suppress Mithradates’ S41 tetradrachms. On the other hand, there are no known S44 overstrikes. Sellwood argues that the epithet ΚΤΙΣΤΟΥ on S44 tetradrachms may be a reference to the re-establishment of Arsacid power by Orodes II after years of anarchy at home and dominance abroad by Rome and Armenia.210 Yet the coinage may well have escaped Orodes’ attention because of its non-committal titulature.211

Abbreviations

A Prefix to registration number of tablets in The Oriental Institute (Chicago)
ACT Astronomical Cuneiform Texts – Babylonian Ephemerides of the Seleucid Period for the Motions of the Sun, the Moon, and the Planets
AE Arsacid Era, beginning 1 Nisānu (14/15 April) 247 BC (cf. ASSAR 2003b)
ADRTB Astronomical Diaries and Related Texts from Babylonia
«AfO» «Archiv für Orientforschung»
JA Jewish Antiquities (Josephus)
«AOAT» «Alter Orient und Altes Testament - Veröffentlichungen zur Kultur und Geschichte des Alten Orients und des Alten Testaments» (Münster)
«AOF» «Altorientalische Forschungen»
«BAI» «Bulletin of the Asia Institute»
«BibMes» «Bibliotheca Mesopotamica»
BM British Museum
«BO» «Bibliotheca Orientalis»
«BOR» «The Babylonian and Oriental Record: A Monthly Magazine of the Antiquities of the East»
BRM Babylonian Records in the Library of J. Pierpont Morgan (Yale University)
CBS Catalogue of the Babylonian Section (University Museum, Pennsylvania University, Philadelphia)
CHH The Cambridge History of Iran

Gholamreza F. Assar

«CRAI» «Comptes Rendus de l’Académie des Inscriptions et Belles Lettres»

CT Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum (London)

FGRH Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker

Fr Fragment

«JCS» «Journal of Cuneiform Studies»

LATE Late Babylonian Astronomical and Related Texts. Cf. Sachs 1955. Here the abbreviation is used as a prefix to the tablets in the same publication

«LCL» «The Loeb Classical Library»

LR Prefix to the entries in Le Rider 1965

MLC Morgan Library Collection (Yale University)

«NC» «The Numismatic Chronicle»

«NABU» «Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires»


«RN» «Revue Numismatique»

S Prefix to Parthian coins types and varieties in Sellwood 1971 and 1980

SBH Sumerisch-babylonisch Hymnen (cf. Reissner 1896)

SEB Seleucid Era of the Babylonian Calendar, beginning 1 Nisānu (2/3 April) 311 BC (cf. Assar 2003b)

SEM Seleucid Era of the Macedonian Calendar, beginning 1 Dios (6/7 October) 312 BC (cf. Assar 2003b)

SH Shamto Collection (British Museum)

SSB Sternkunde und Sterndienst in Babel. – Assyriologische, Astronomische und Astralmythologische Untersuchungen

VAT/VATH Vorderasiatische Abteilung Tontafeln - Vorderasiatischen Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

«ZfA» «Zeitschrift für Assyriologie»

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