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MMVI
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GEOEALY AND COINAGE
OF THE EARLY PARTHIAN RULERS · II
A REVISED STEMA

The history of Parthia from the revolt of Arsaces I in 247 BC to the overthrow of the last Artabanus by the Sasanian king Ardashir I in AD 224 is rife with political, chronological and genealogical difficulties. This is primarily due to the fragmentary state of the extant Arsacid records, conflicting reports, and lack of precise regnal dates and dynastic links in the classical sources.

Our principal author on the succession of reigns and genealogy of the early Parthian rulers is Justin. He reports, in books 41.4.6 through 41.6.9 of his Epitome of the Philippic History of Pompeius Trogus, that Arsaces I was a man of obscure origin who lived by plunder and deprivations. But on hearing the news of the defeat of Seleucus II (246-225 BC) by the Gauls in Asia, he attacked Parthia, slew Andragoras, the resident Seleucid satrap, and assumed command of the province. He then annexed Hyrcania and defeated the punitive march of Seleucus II to crush the Parthian rebellion. Finally, having enjoyed a successful reign, Arsaces died at an advanced age. His son and successor, Arsaces II, gallantly opposed the eastern expedition of Antiochus III (223-187 BC) and ultimately secured an alliance with the Seleucid king.

At this point, Justin breaks the interrelation between the next Parthian prince and his immediate predecessors. He simply reports that the third Arsaces was Phriapatius who reigned for fifteen years and bequeathed the throne to his elder son, Phraates I. The latter vanquished in war the powerful Mardian tribe and died shortly afterwards, leaving the throne to his brother, Mithradates I, rather than one of his own sons. Mithradates transformed Parthia from a petty kingdom on the north-eastern edge of the Seleucid realm into a world empire. He was victorious in the east against Eucratides I (c. 170-145 BC) of Bactria and took from the Seleucids the satrapies of Media and Babylonia to the west and south-west, defeating and capturing Demetrius II (145-138 BC, 1st reign) in the process. Finally, he annexed Elymais in the South. Justin closes his 41st book with a vague reference to the link between Mithradates I and Arsaces I:

Atque ita adversa valetudine adrepetus, non minor Arsace proavo, gloria senectute decedit.

He (Mithradates I) then succumbed to illness and died with glory at an advanced age, as great a man as his great-grandfather, Arsaces.

In a direct line of descent, proavus specifically denotes both paternal and maternal great-grandfather, and also generically expresses a distant ancestor beyond great-grandfather. This entails an inexact relationship between the two Parthian rulers and so diminishes the genealogical value of the above passage significantly.

It is noteworthy that in three occasions Justin refers to Mithradates I by the patronymic Arsacides and not his personal name: «Arsacides king of the Parthians» in books 36.1.3 and 38.9.3, and «Phraates (II) who had succeeded Arsacides» in book 38.9.6.

In its normal usage, Arscides implies the Arsacid or of Arsaces, or even son of Arsaces. But as a sobriquet it has a diminutive flavour and so is unbefitting a ruler of the rank of Mithradates I. Unfortunately, the sources of Trogus' Historiae Philippicae remain unknown to us. They may have found the patronymic Arscides as more precise and less confusing than the generic throne name

1 For references to Justin cf. Watson 1883, Rubel 1886, and Yaruley 1994.
2 I have followed Bopearachchi 1991 for the inception and terminal dates of Bactrian reigns.
3 Smith 1855, 878; Wagner et alii 1878, 963; Lewis et alii 1973, 1448-1449; Glare 1976, 1464; Thubniir 1998, 1442-1445.
Arsaces, piously adopted by all Parthian rulers. Alternatively, Arsacidès may have been employed to convey an important dynastic affiliation (cf. below). Thanks to the genealogical records in at least one text from Nisa, we now know that Phriapatius came from a collateral branch of the Parthian dynasty. But according to Justin (41.5.8) he too was called Arsaces. As the author of the Arsacid Empire, Phriapatius’ son, Mithradates I, may have assumed the epithet Arsacidès to emphasise his paternal link with the first Arsaces of the new line.

As for the succeeding rulers, Justin (42.1.1-42.2.6) reports that Mithradates I was followed by his son, Phraates II, who crushed Antiochus VII (138-129 BC) and later perished in a war with the Scythians. The next king, a paternal uncle of Phraates II, was Artabanus I. He died from a poisoned arrow while fighting the Tocharian forces and left the crown to his son, Mithradates II the Great. The latter waged successful wars against Parthia’s neighbours, surpassing his forebears in greatness of spirit and achievements.

We then have the brief statement of Strabo (11.9.2) on the Arsacid rise to power. He states that the intra-dynastic wars of the Seleucids ultimately led to the secession of Bactria under Euthydemus I (c. 230-200 BC) and also encouraged Arsaces, the leader of the Aparni branch of the Dahae confederation, to invade and liberate Parthia.

Our next source on the foundation of Arsacid monarchy is the first fragment of Arrian’s Parthica. This is also incorporated in Photius’ summaries (Bibliotheca, 58) and faithfully followed by Syncellus and Zosimus. Yet Arrian is generally believed to have had no access to authentic Arsacid records or firsthand information available to his predecessors. His sources are deemed to have been late and tainted with propaganda. These traced the ancestry of Arsaces I to the Achaemenid king Artaxerxes II (405-359 BC) and modelled his coup against Seleucid authority on the revolt of Darius I (522-486 BC) and his acquisition of the Persian Empire. However, we are told by Arrian that Arsaces and Tiridates were sons of Arsaces, son of Arsaces, a descendant of Phriapites (sic). When Pherecles, the Seleucid satrap appointed by Antiochus II (261-246 BC), attempted to violate the brothers, they killed him, banded together with five others and revolted from Macedonian suzerainty.

As stated above, a similar fraternal link between the two Arsacid brothers is preserved in the manuscripts of Syncellus (284.B-C) and Zosimus (1.18.1). But the former author asserts that at the time of Agathocles, the Macedonian eparch of Persia, Arsaces and Tiridates were satraps of Bactria. When Agathocles became excessively enamoured of Tiridates, the brothers assassinated him and took possession of his country. Arsaces reigned as king of the Persians but was killed two years later. Crown and command then went over to Tiridates who ruled for thirty-seven years. It is noteworthy that in Suda (405.7-8) the death of Arsaces I is attributed to a spear wound to the rib in battle.

Finally, we have Moses of Chorene’s statements on the date of Parthian revolt and duration of several early Arsacid reigns in books 1.8, 2.2 and 2.68-69 of his History of the Armenians. He relates that sixty years after Alexander the Great, Arshak I the Brave ruled over the Parthians in the city of Bahi (Bactra), in the land of the Kushans. He fiercely fought many wars and expelled the Macedonians from Babylon. Finally, having reigned for thirty-one years, Arshak died and was succeeded by his son, Artashes I. The latter reigned for twenty-six years and left the kingdom to his son Arshak II the Great. This king went to war with Demetrius and his son, Antigon, for...
the latter had attacked him in Babylon. Arshak prevailed and led the captive Antigon to Parthia. He then fought against Antiochus Sidetes who had occupied Syria after the demise of his brother. Faced with the severe winter season, Antiochus confronted Arshak but perished with his army. Arshak then appointed as king of Armenia his own brother, Valarshak, departed to the city of Bahl and ruled securely for fifty-three years. He was succeeded, in the thirteenth regnal year of Valarshak in Armenia, by Arshakan who ruled for thirty years. Thereafter, Arshakan reigned for thirty-one years, Arshëz for twenty years, Arshavir for twenty-six years, and the latter's eldest son, Artashës II, for thirty-four years.\(^5\)

Table 1 lists the personal names, dynastic links, and duration of the reigns of Arsacid princes in the above quoted works. These exhibit little agreement between Justin, Arrian-Syncellus-Zosimus and Moses of Chorene. But thanks to the growing volume of contemporary material, we can now clarify some of the discrepancies in our literary sources and present a clearer picture of the early Parthian history. For example, on the one hand we can show that both Justin and Moses conflated a number of shorter or less significant Arsacid reigns with longer and successful

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ruler</th>
<th>Reign No.</th>
<th>Dynastic link</th>
<th>Duration of reign</th>
<th>Sources</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arsaces I</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Founder</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>Justin (41.4.6-41.5.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arsaces I</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Founder</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>Arrian (Parthica, 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arsaces I</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Founder</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>Syncellus (284.B-C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arsaces I</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Founder</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>Zosimus (1.18.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arshak I</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Founder</td>
<td>31 years</td>
<td>Moses of Chorene (2.2 and 68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiridates</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Brother of Arsaces I</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>Arrian (Parthica, 1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiridates</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Brother of Arsaces I</td>
<td>37 years</td>
<td>Syncellus (284.B-C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tiridates</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Brother of Arsaces I</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>Zosimus (1.18.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arsaces II</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Son of Arsaces I</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>Justin (41.5-7.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artashës I</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Son of Arshak I</td>
<td>26 years</td>
<td>Moses of Chorene (2.2 and 68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phriapatius</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>15 years</td>
<td>Justin (41.5.8-9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arshak II,</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Son of Artashës I</td>
<td>53 years</td>
<td>Moses of Chorene (2.68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Great</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phraates I</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Son of Phriapatius</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>Justin (41.5.9-10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arshakan</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>30 years; acceded on the 13th regnal year of Valarshak</td>
<td>Moses of Chorene (2.68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mithradates I (Arsacidës)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Son of Phriapatius and Brother of Phraates I</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>Justin (41.6.1-9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arshakan</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>31 years</td>
<td>Moses of Chorene (2.68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phraates II</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Son of Mithradates I, Son of Arsicës</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>Justin (42.1.1-5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arshëz</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>20 years</td>
<td>Justin (38.9.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artabanus I</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Paternal uncle of Phraates II</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>Moses of Chorene (2.68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arshavir</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>26 years</td>
<td>Moses of Chorene (2.68)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mithradates II</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Son of Artabanus I</td>
<td>Unspecified</td>
<td>Justin (42.3.6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artashës II</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Son of Arshavir</td>
<td>34 years</td>
<td>Moses of Chorene (2.69)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ones. On the other, we can reveal that Moses confused, among other things, certain events of the reigns of Arsaces I and Mithradates I. Hence the conflicting accounts of the two authors on the foundation of Parthia and the identity of several early Arsacid rulers.

Using the literary and numismatic material, I proposed a new stemma for the early Parthian princes in a previous contribution. Yet, for lack of other documents, I was obliged to accept the commonly held views on two important points: Arsaces II reigned for about twenty years (211-191 BC) and Mithradates I ascended the throne around 171 BC. Further analysis of the evidence has since led me to a better correlation of the sources and an improved understanding of the early Parthian genealogy. I have set out below a résumé of the recent work and an improved stemma for the early Arsacid rulers. This entails amending certain regnal dates, adjusting the duration of several early reigns and re-attributing some of the bashlyk drachms.

Inception and Terminal Dates of the Reign of Arsaces I

We have a series of distinct and discordant dates for the secession of Parthia and foundation of the Arsacid dynasty in our extant classical sources:

a) Moses of Chorene (2.2) claims that Arshak I (Arsaces I) began to rule over the Parthians sixty years after Alexander III of Macedon (336-323 BC). This gives 263/262 BC in the reign of Antiochus I (281-261 BC).

b) Justin (41.4.3) places the event in the reign of Seleucus II, the great-grandson (sic) of Antiochus I, during the first Punic War, when Lucius Manlius Vulso and Marcus Attilius Regulus were joint Roman consuls. This falls in 256 BC. But assuming that Justin mistook the substituted consul M. Attilius Regulus for consul ordinarius C. Attilius Regulus, the Parthian insurrection is thus dated to 250 BC.

c) Moses of Chorene (2.1) conflates the chronology of the Diadochi period and then places the Parthian rebellion in the eleventh year of the reign of Antiochus II Theos (261-246 BC). This is 61 aem and 61b (252/251 and 251/250 BC, respectively) if counted from the death of Antiochus I, but 62 aem and 62b (251/250 and 250/249 BC, respectively) if taken from the first full regnal year of Antiochus II. However, because of Moses’ erratic dates in the corresponding passage, it is unclear whether he reckoned the years of Antiochus II as co-ruler with his father, Antiochus I, or enumerated them from the beginning of his independent reign in 261 BC. The triple-regency of Antiochus I, Seleucus, and Antiochus II began in 266 BC. If counted from this date, the Parthian insurrection falls in 256 BC.

d) Eusebius (Chronicle) claims that Arsaces revolted in Olympiad 132,3. This equates with 250/249 BC.

e) Eusebius (Chronicle) assigns the Parthian defection to Olympiad 133, covering the period 248/247 BC-247/244 BC.

f) Justin (41.4.6) refers to Arsaces’ attack on Parthia and elimination of Andragoras after the defeat of Seleucus II at Ancyra, in Asia Minor. The victory of the Galatian forces, allied to Seleucus’ brother, Antiochus Hierax (239-226 BC), is dated to 239-238 BC.

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18 ASSAR 2004, 89.
19 THOMSON 1978, 130-131. A similar date can also be found in the works of Mar Apas Catin and Agathangelos. Cf. LANGLOIS 1867, 43-43 and 368, respectively.
16 Cf. ASSAR 2006 for the identification of Arshak I with Arsaces I.
17 Justin’s genealogy is faulty. Seleucus II was a grandson of Antiochus I.
20 For difficulties of dating by subrogated consuls cf. SAINT-MARTIN 1890b, 249-251; SCOTT 1895, 133-135; SCHÄFER 1876, 569-581; BOUCHE-LESEUR 1886, 58, n. 1; WOLSEY 1956-1957, 51; DROZDZ 1980, 237-238 and n. 241.
22 THOMSON 1978, 131; ASSAR 2006.
23 ASSAR 2006.
24 STOLZER 1993, 46, no. 15; DEL MONT 1997, 228.
25 SCHÖNIG 1866, 120; KAST 1911, 201.
26 SAMUEL 1972, 214.
27 SCHÖNIG 1875, 207; KAST 1911, 97; HELM, TIEU 1984, 132.
g) Finally, we have the Babylonian cuneiform records and a small number of Greek texts with concurrent Seleucid and Arsacid era dates. These attest that irrespective of the true moment and circumstances of the Parthian revolt, the Arsacids themselves took 1 Nišānu 65 SBH (14/15 April 247 BC) as the epoch of their calendar and accession date of Arsaces I. Likewise, numismatic evidence shows that at least one Parthian mint on the Iranian plateau too operated a calendar with 247 BC as its epoch. This consists of S22.2 drachms of Artaeanus I (126-122 BC), struck at Ecbatana and dated EKP = 125 AB (123/122 BC). Accordingly, I have followed the example of Seleucus I (312/311-281 BC) and taken 247 BC as the inception date of the reign of Arsaces I. Although Seleucus was crowned in 305 BC, he backdated his regnal years to 312/311 BC when he returned from Egypt with a small army and wrested Babylon from his rival, Antigonus Monophthalmus.

Justin (41.5.5) claims that Arsaces died at an advanced age. This tallies with the thirty-one year reign Moses of Chorene (2.2 and 2.68) assigns to Arshak I. But the Armenian author excludes the corresponding accession date and so renders the end of the reign of Arshak I unclear. Moreover, his claim in book 2.2 that the founder of the Parthian dynasty seized the entire east and liberated Babylon from Macedonian control is unsupported by other sources. These conquests undoubtedly belong to the reign of Mithradates I, the real author of the Parthian Empire, and not Arsaces I, the founder of the dynasty. Perhaps, the presence of two great architects in the annals of Parthia led the Armenian writer mistakenly to ascribe to Arsaces I certain events of the reign of Mithradates I. The latter was, of course, also known officially as Arsaces. Counting from the epoch of the Arsacid Era in 247 BC, Moses' above quoted figure places the end of the reign of Arsaces I in 217/216 BC.

A better estimate is however obtained from coinage. A hoard (IGCH, 1798) unearthed in 1965 in the river Atrek valley west of Bujurnd in north-east Iran contained, among other examples, several hundred early Arsacid drachms. Upon careful analysis, these were separated into six distinct types (St-S6) and ascribed accordingly to Arsaces I and his son, Arsaces II. In spite of the fact that two single specimens had already been known, the early Parthian issues in the Bujurnd hoard were mostly unreported and exceedingly rare. Further inspection of a portion of the same group of coins showed that those of Arsaces I were noticeably worn whereas the ones minted under Arsaces II had remained virtually uncirculated. The exceptional rarity and state of preservation of these early Parthian types led to the conclusion that they had been taken out of circulation and buried intentionally. At the same time, a systematic die count of the examined coins revealed that far less dies had been utilised to strike each of the five varieties of Arsaces I (St-S5) than the sole type of Arsaces II (S6). Given that extra dies imply more coins, a sizeable Parthian issue must have been minted not long before the interment of the coins, and this, in turn, led to the conclusion that the Parthian year 190 was approximately 217/216 BC.

1999, 30; Wolski 1999, 40, 49, n. 17; 31, 56, 68, 89 and 122 gives several dates for the beginning and the end of the battle in the periods 241-239 BC and 230-228 BC, respectively; Will 2003, 294-296 dates the end of the battle to 240 or 239 BC; Wolski 2003, 26 and 64 dates the conclusion of the battle to 240-239 BC. The Fraternal War must have commenced after the Olympic year 1343 (242-241 BC), when Seleucus II broke the Lagid siege of Orthosia on the Phoenician coast. Cf. Bevan 1902, 190; Karst 1911, 118-119.

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32 Assar 2003b, 176, 177.

33 There is still some uncertainty over the significance of the exergual letters EKP on these drachms as an AB date. All single dates in the extant cuneiform and Greek records of the Parthian epoch are according to the Seleucid era. The Arsacid era dates are noted only on Aramaic-script Parthian records from Nisa, Avroman and Susa. However, a royal decree, written in Greek under Artaeanus II (c. AD 10-38), indicates that certain official Parthian documents bore both a single AB date. Cf. Assar 2003b, 177. Cf. also Prokisch-Osten 1874-1875, 6; Gardner 1877, 27; Rapson 1893, 211-213; Wright 1900, 185; Wright 1903, xvi: 21, no. 10, n. 3; Pietrowicz 1904, 12, no. 10; Minn 1915, 37, n. 41; Arsia Classica-Naville 1926, 130, no. 2126; Le Rider 1955, 43, n. 2; Sellwood 1980, 62; Sellwood 1981, 283; Shorey 1993, 98, no. 63.

34 Assar 2003b, 176.

35 Thompson et alii 1997, 257.

34 Angarian, Sellwood 1971, 104-107.

36 Diodor 1989, 258 describes an S1.1 drachm of Arsaces I without its illustration; Diodor 1989, 5 mentions the same S1.1 drachm; Pietrowicz 1904, 1-4, and Tafel 1, no. 1, an S5.1 drachm of Arsaces I; Arsia Classica-Naville 1926, 126 and pl. 65, no. 2057.

36 Angarian, Sellwood 1971, 104 and 107.

37 Ibidem, 104-107 and 110-114. The authors inspected 116 out of roughly 910 Parthian drachms in the hoard and recorded the following: S1, seven coins examined, 1 obverse and 4 reverse dies recorded; S2, one coin examined, 1 obverse and 1 reverse; S3, ten coins examined, 5 obverse and 9 reverse; S4, ten coins examined, 1 obverse and 4 reverse; S5, twenty-nine coins examined, 1 obverse and 14 reverse; S6, forty-nine coins examined, 14 obverse and 28 reverse dies identified. For the attribution of S5 drachms to Arsaces I, cf. Assar 2004, 78.
hoard. This was, most probably, in response to the expedition of Antiochus III to recover lost Seleucid territories in Parthia and Bactria. According to Polybius (10.27.1-10.31.13 and 11.39.1-16), Antiochus' march began in 210 BC and ended in 205 BC. The combined literary and numismatic evidence therefore points to 211-210 BC as a likely date for the end of the reign of Arsaces I. It also places the hoard's burial shortly after the Seleucid-Parthian alliance in 209 BC. These dates agree with the one obtained from assigning to Arsaces I the thirty-seven-year reign given to his putative brother, Tiridates, by Syncellus (247 + 1-37 = 211 BC).

As stated above, the accounts of Arrian, Syncellus and Zosimus on the beginning of the Arsacid monarchy are believed to suffer from two major drawbacks. They are probably influenced by the traditional Iranian legendary elements, connecting the Parthians with the Achaemenid royal house, and a later custom promoting the role of a collateral Arsacid branch. Perhaps, following Arrian, Syncellus denied the authority of Arsaces I and attributed his long reign to Tiridates. It will be presently shown that terminating the reign of Arsaces I in 211 BC agrees with a number of later sources. These include the Babylonian evidence of the death of Mithradates I, and the duration of the reigns of Arshak I the Great and Artashes I quoted by Moses of Chorene.

COINAGE OF ARSACES I (FIGS. 1-5)

S1-5 silver and bronze denominations are attributed to Arsaces I. These include the following additional varieties that have come to light since the publication of Sellwood's catalogue in 1980:

**Fig. 1. S1.1 silver drachm of Arsaces I**
(Author's Collection).

**Fig. 2. S2.1 silver drachm of Arsaces I**
(Author's Collection).

**Fig. 3. S3.1 silver drachm of Arsaces I.**

**Fig. 4. S4.1 silver drachm of Arsaces I**
(Author's Collection).

**Fig. 5. S5.1 silver drachm of Arsaces I** (Author's Collection).

S1 triobol (hemi-drachm), obverse and reverse as S1.1 drachms.
S2 dichalkous, on reverse bow-in-case with attachment and monogram of S3.1 to its left, flanked by ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ to the left, ΑΥΤΟ-ΚΡΑΤΟΡΟΣ to the right, both reading from inside.

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36 Paton 1935, 164-179 and 300-305.
37 Sellwood 1983, 280 states that Arsaces II ascended the throne in 211 BC or a little earlier.
38 Argarians, Sellwood 1973, 108-118; Assar 2004, 80-81. It is possible that following the Seleucid-Parthian pact, Arsaces II conceded to Antiochus III the right to strike coins. This may explain the reason for the suppression of Parthian types and burial of the hoard. It is highly unlikely that the Arsacids issued any coinage until Antiochus' crushing defeat by the Romans at Magnesia in 189 BC.
40 For the significance of this symbol on early Parthian coins cf. Newell 1978, 202; Gaslain 2005 forthcoming; Assar 2004, 80.
Ignoring the twenty-six year given by Moses of Chorene to Artashēs I, son of Arshak I, modern scholarship terminates the reign of Arsaces II in the period 196-191 BC.43 The suggested dates are, however, unsupported by numismatic evidence and unattested in the extant contemporary and classical sources. Unfortunately, the Armenian writer does not enjoy high esteem among modern scholars who discount his comments on the history of Parthia.44 Yet, comparing with Justin's statements (41.4.6-41.5.7), it is possible to identify Moses' Arshak I and Artashēs I with Arsaces I and Arsaces II, respectively. Accordingly, I have accepted his reported twenty-six year of Artashēs I as the duration of the reign of Arsaces II and so placed its end in 185 BC.

Regrettably, this new date too is absent from our extant literary sources and lacks explicit numismatic support. But its significance and agreement with other evidence will transpire when discussing the reigns of Mithradates I and his successors.

It is noteworthy that unlike Justin (41.5.7) who maintains that the son of Arsaces I was also named Arsaces, Moses (2.68) calls the second Parthian ruler Artashēs. This may be a corrupt form of Artaxerxes or Artabanus. The latter was the personal name of at least four Parthian rulers45 and presumably also of a successor of Arsaces I before Mithradates I, reported in the 41st prologue of Trogus.46 But the authenticity of the corresponding passage in Trogus has long been doubted since it apparently confuses Mithradates I, the conqueror of Media and Mesopotamia, with the Armenian king Tigranes II (96-55 BC). We cannot, therefore, be sure if this Artabanus is not indeed an error for another ruler. In fact, Trogus' summary of the establishment of Parthian monarchy is rather confused. He refers to the founder of the dynasty as king whereas we know the first Arsaces did not style himself ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ on his coins.47 It was Mithradates I who created the Parthian Empire and indeed had a brother called Artabanus as one of his successors. It is quite possible that a later copyist of Trogus' manuscript mistook the reign of Mithradates I for that of Arsaces I and so transferred some of the later events to the period following the inception of Parthian kingdom. Also, we are told by Strabo (11.14.15)48 and Plutarch (Lacallus, 21 and 26)49 that Tigranes II invaded Gorduene, overran the region about Nineveh and took Adiabene with the important centre of Arbela in Northern

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43 Lewis 1938, 22-23 takes 226 BC as the epoch of the Parthian Era and claims that by computation Arsaces II must have ruled for twenty years and therefore died in the year 60 as (196 BC). Cf. page 2 in the same source on the revolt of Arsaces I during the joint consulship of L. M. Vulus and M. A. Regulus (year 236 BC is a slip for 236 BC); Lindsay 1852, 4 gives 596 BC; Rawlinson 1873, 59 gives 596 BC; Wroth 1903, xii and xx gives 591 BC; Petrowecz 1904, 9 gives 591 BC as the end of the reign of Arsaces II; Devereux 1938, 18 gives 591 BC; Collège 1967, 28 gives c. 191 BC; Sillwood 1971, 21 gives 191 BC; Sillwood 1980, 25 gives 191 BC; Bivar 1983, 26 gives c. 191 BC; Wolters 1993, 31, 14, 64, 73 and 209 gives c. 191 BC; Wolters 1999, 31 gives 191 BC; Wolters 2003, 42 gives 191 BC.

44 Gardner 1877, 1-2; Devereux 1938, xxii-xxiii and 9, n. 34; Collège 1967, 21 and 64; Prie 1983, 68 and 288; Widgren 1983, 1266 and 1275.

45 Table 1 shows that with the exception of Arshak and Arsaces, the personal names of the Parthian rulers in Moses and Justin are incompatible. It is possible that Justin incorrectly gave the name of the second Parthian prince as Arsaces otherwise Moses is expected to have named him Arshak rather than Artashēs.

46 Ruben 1886, 264 gives: «In Parthiscis ut est constitutum imperium per Arsacem regem. In Bactriam autem rebus ut a Dioeotae rege constitutum est...» with no reference to a king called Artabanus; Stru 1966, 178, after the sentence on the foundation of Parthia by Arsaces I, continues that: «Successores deinde eius Artabanus et Tigranes cognomine Deus, a quo subacta est Media et Mesopotamia»; Yarlett 1994, 284 follows Seel.

47 «In Parthiscis ut est constitutum imperium per Arsacem regem», cf. Ruben 1886, 264. Cf. also Gaslain forthcoming on the status of Arsaces I who ruled as a king but did not take the royal epithet.


49 Petruin 1914, 534-539, and 532-537, respectively.
Mesopotamia. Then, according to Isidore of Charax, he advanced into Media and burnt the Parthian royal palace at Adrapana, near Ecbatana. Given that Mithradates I also captured Media in 148/147 BC, it is possible that he too was confused with 'Tigranes by 'Trogus' copyist. It should be noted that Tigranes II is known to have adopted the epithet ΘΕΟY on some of his coins. But as far as the numismatic evidence is concerned this is absent from the titulature of Mithradates I on his extensive coinage (cf. below).

**COINAGE OF ARSACES II (FIGS. 1:6-7)**

Sellwood type 6 silver and bronze issues with the inscription ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ are ascribed to Arses II. Given that S6 drachms made up the bulk of coins in the 1665 early Parthian hoard (IOCH, 1798), it is possible to assign them to the period c. 211-209 BC. One likely theory for their extreme rarity prior to the discovery of the hoard is that after the Seleucid-Parthian pact of 209 BC, they were no longer legal tender and therefore withdrawn from circulation. However, having extended the reign of Arses II to 185 BC, we may now attribute the S7 type, also with the reverse inscription ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ, to him rather than Phiropatius. It is possible that the Parthians resumed minting after Antiochus III was defeated by the Romans in 189 BC at Magnesia. The marked differences in iconography, style, and fabric of the S6 and S7 drachms indicate a rather long lapse of time between the two emissions. This agrees with the almost twenty years inactivity at Parthian mints during 209-189 BC. We may thus ascribe the S7 coinage to the period 189-185 BC.

**ARSACES III: PHIROPATIUS**

As briefly expressed above, Justin (41.5.8-9) omits the link between this king and Arses II, but reports that Phiropatius ruled for fifteen years. Given that the end of the reign of Arses II is now placed in 185 BC, Phiropatius’ reign must accordingly end in 170 BC. The genealogical implications of this date, as opposed to the traditional 181-176 BC, are significant. Using the new terminal date of Phiropatius’ reign and the Babylonian cuneiform and numismatic evidence, it can be shown that both Artabanus I (126-122 BC) and Mithradates II (121-91 BC) were sons of Phiropatius, and Gotarzes I (91-87 BC) was his grandson (cf. below).

Phiropatius’ paternal link with the founder of the dynasty is preserved in the royal accession record on Nisa ostraka 2698 (1760):

Line 1: ŠNT IC XX XX X III I 'ršk MLK' BRY B'RY Z'Y 'Pry'ptk
Line 2: BRY 'ršk BRY Z'Y 'ršk
Line 1: Year 177 AE (91-90 BC). King Aršak, grandson of Friyapātak,
Line 2: son of the nephew of Aršak

Accordingly, Justin’s statement (41.6.9) that Arses I was a *great-grandfather* (L pro avus) of Mithradates I (son of Phiropatius) must imply either a maternal or marital link between Phiropatius and the founder of the dynasty. Phiropatius’ father (nephew of Arses I) may have married a

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50 Schoff 1914, 7.
51 Foss 1986, 38, and 47-48; Mousheghian, Dehnehb 1998-1999, 44-45 attribute the corresponding coinage to Tigranes III (20-16/6 BC) but offer no convincing argument in support of their theory.
52 Argabians, Sellwood 1971, 117.
53 Assar 2004, 81-82.
54 Cf. the works in n. 43 above for the commonly accepted date of the end of Phiropatius’ reign.
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daughter or a grand-daughter of Arsaces I. As great-grandfather or a distant ancestor, *proavus* would link Arsaces I with a son of Phriapatus. Alternatively, if Phriapatus himself had married a grand-daughter or a great-grand-daughter of Arsaces I, the latter's affiliation with a son of Phriapatus would also be expressed as *proavus*. Finally, if a grand-daughter and a daughter of Arsaces I had married Phriapatus and his father, respectively, *proavus* would again explain the relationship between Arsaces I and Phriapatus’ offspring. There are certainly other permutations, resulting from marriage among the descendants of Arsaces I and his brother, whereby *proavus* would define the link between the founder of the dynasty and a son of Phriapatus. However, assuming that Phriapatus’ mother belonged to the principal Arsacid branch entails certain problems. If she was a daughter or grand-daughter of Arsaces I then it is difficult to explain why Justin (41.5.8-9) omitted the link between Phriapatus and the founder of the dynasty. He could have conveniently registered the relationship using either *avus* (paternal/maternal grandfather) or *proavus*. Justin’s silence strongly suggests that Phriapatus was not maternally related to Arsaces I. The third Arsaces may have taken as his wife a grand-daughter of Arsaces I who mothered Mithradates I and probably also Phraates I. Yet given the above presented genealogical record, Mithradates was also a great-grandson of the brother of Arsaces I. This strengthens the possibility that while expressing the link between Arsaces I and Mithradates I, Justin simply mistook *proavus* for *propatruus* (great-great-uncle).³⁶

**Coinage of Phriapatus (Figs. 8-11)**

Having allocated the S7 type to Arsaces II, the following series may be attributed to Phriapatus:

S8 silver and bronze denominations as his inaugural output during 185-184 BC. Hence their general rarity. The inscription ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ on these coins agrees with Justin’s statement that Phriapatus was also called Arsaces.

S9.1 drachms (without mint monogram), inscribed with ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ, as his second issue minted during 184-180 BC. This is a generic variety struck for Phriapatus, Arsaces IV, Phraates I and Mithradates I.

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³⁶ Cf. Assar 2004, 84-86 for a number of genealogical blunders in Justin. Note also that in his books 34.3-6 and 41.4-3 respectively Justin mistakenly refers to Demetrius I (162-150 BC) as the uncle of Antiochus V Eupator (164-162 BC) and to Seleucus II as the great-grandson of Antiochus I. In fact Demetrius I, son of Seleucus IV (187-175 BC), was the cousin of Antiochus V while Antiochus I and Seleucus II were grandfather and grandson.
S10.15 drachms, with the inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΘΕΟΥ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ, as a special issue struck in 180 BC perhaps in response to the adoption of the epithet ΘΕΟΥ by the Bactrian king Antimachus I (c. 185-170 BC).

S10.1 drachms (without mint monogram), inscribed with ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ, as his final coinage issued during 180-170 BC. The presence of a link between S10.15 and S10.1 confirms the contiguity of the two varieties (Figs. 10-11 - sharing the same obverse die). S10.1 too is a generic variety minted under Phriapatus, Phraates I and Mithradates I.

**Arsaces IV: Great-grandson of Phraates I**

Justin (41.5.9-10) claims that following the Parthian customs, Phriapatus’ elder son, Phraates I, succeeded him. But, in spite of having several sons himself, Phraates left the crown to his brother Mithradates I and died after a short reign. However, a new text from Nisa shows that a great-grandson of Arsaces I also ascended the throne at some point in time prior to the reign of Mithradates I. Unfortunately, the accession date of this new Parthian prince cannot be ascertained, since his corresponding genealogical record is undated.

| Line 1 | ‘ršk MLK’ BRY wpt | King Aršak, great-grandson |
| Line 2 | ‘ršk Q’YLW | (of) Aršak. Accounted |
| Line 3 | NDBT” ZNH ŠRN ‘II ILP | this offering of barley – 2000 ‘e(phas) |

I have argued, in an earlier contribution, that numismatic evidence favours Phriapatus as the first Parthian ruler to adopt the regal title βασιλεύς. This strongly implies that King Aršak of the new text from Nisa must necessarily have succeeded and not preceded Phriapatus. It is, therefore, possible to place the accession of Arsaces IV in 170 BC. Regrettably, nothing is known of the political circumstances of the reign of this king. We can only guess that he ruled briefly otherwise Justin would have mentioned him in his 41st book.

The genealogy of Arsaces IV explains, to some extent, the reason for the transfer of sovereignty from the line of Arsaces I to that of his brother, probably called Tiridates. The accession record on Nisa ostraca 2698 confirms Phriapatus as a great-grandfather of the founder of Parthian dynasty. Coupled with the fact that a great-grandson of Arsaces I also ascended the throne, this strongly implies that Arsaces II died without a mature heir to succeed him. He may have lost some of his sons during the battle with Antiochus III in 209 BC and the rest to disease or unknown causes before his own death.

It also transpires that on the death of Arsaces II, his grandchildren were younger than fifteen, the Zoroastrian adulthood age, otherwise they would have claimed their grandfather’s throne.

I have assigned to Arsaces IV a reign of approximately two years (170-168 BC) for the following reasons. Firstly, its absence in Justin’s accounts of the early Arsacid history. As discussed below, Justin excludes the successor of Phraates II (perhaps called Bagasis) for the brevity of his reign (126 BC). On the other hand, he mentions, in book 42.4.1, Mithradates IV (c. 57-54 BC), son of Phraates III (c. 68-57 BC), who held power for about three years. This indicates that if the reign of Arsaces IV had exceeded two years, it too should have appeared in Justin’s 41st book.

Secondly, given that Arsaces IV was not fifteen in 185 BC when Phriapatus assumed the crown, he must have been younger than thirty on the death of the latter in 170 BC. The shift of kingship from Arsaces IV to Phraates I, a great-grandnephew of Arsaces I, suggests that like his grandfather Arsaces II, Arsaces IV died without a mature heir. This in turn implies that he lived not long after 170 BC for a son of his to be old enough to succeed him.

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57 BOPHRACCHI 1991, 59-61, 183-184 (Série 1), and 187 (Série 10).
58 Our earliest dated Nisa ostraca are nos. 2673 (257) and 2669 (Nov. 82 ext.) from years 97 (151/150 BC) and 100 (148/147 BC), respectively. Cf. DIAKONOFF, LIVSHIITS 1999, p134.
60 ASSAR 2004, 82.
Considering the brevity of the reign of this prince, it is highly unlikely that his coinage developed beyond the 89.1 drachms. The inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ on this variety agrees well with 'rîk MLK' in the above discussed genealogical record of Arsaces IV.

**Arsaces V: Phraates I**

Beyond the facts already stated above, nothing is known about the reign of this king. It is generally accepted that Phraates I ascended the throne in about 176 BC and died around 171 BC. However, as in the case of his predecessors, the inception and terminal dates of the reign of Phraates are uncertain. Assuming that a chronological confusion led Moses of Chorene (2.2 and 2.68) mistakenly to ascribe to Arshak I the thirty-one year reign of Mithradates I, we may invoke other evidence to determine the end of the reign of Phraates.

As shown below, a cuneiform text from Uruk attests that Phraates II succeeded his father, Mithradates I, in early summer 132 BC. Combining this with Mithradates I's thirty-one year kingship places the end of the reign of Phraates I in 163 BC. The new date entails a reign of about five years (c. 168-163 BC). Yet there are indications that Phraates I was on the throne for roughly three years.

An interesting reference to the revolt of Arsaces is reported by Tacitus (Histories, 5.8). We are told that Antiochus IV (175-164 BC) endeavoured to abolish Jewish religion and impose Greek civilisation upon the Israelites. The war with the Parthians, however, prevented him from fulfilling his plans, «for it was exactly at that time that Arsaces had revolted».

Some commentators argue that Tacitus mistook the Arsacid rebellion with the Maccabean war of 167-164 BC. Others believe that he intended to record the first eastern campaign of Antiochus IV against the Armenian king Artaxias, or even the attack of Antiochus VII (138-129 BC) on Parthia in 130-129 BC. Yet it is more likely that momentous developments in the east compelled Antiochus IV to abandon his attack on Judaea and «go to Persia to collect the tribute of that country».

1. Maccabees (3.13-37), Josephus (JA, 12.288-297), and Syncellus (280.B-D), report that an army of indignant Jewish partisans defeated Seron, the general of the Syrian troops. The news of this setback enraged Antiochus. He, at once, gathered together the entire forces of his kingdom to crush the insurgent Jews. It is said that having paid his soldiers a year’s salary in advance and prepared them for every emergency, Antiochus realised that he had exhausted his treasury. This claim is found in Maccabees (3.29) and other sources that the revenues of the country were small because of the disaffection and calamities the king had caused in the land. But Josephus (JA, 12.294) attributes part of the shortfall to «uprising among (subject) nations». Thus Antiochus gathered a certain Lysias with the royal affairs, took half of his army, crossed the Euphrates in the one hundred and forty-seventh year, and made his way to the Upper Satrapies. The date 147 in both Maccabees and Josephus is on the Seleucid-Macedonian reckoning and so covers 166-165 BC. But according to Josephus (JA, 12.293), the expedition began about the beginning of the spring in 165 BC.

Now, there is nothing on the political circumstances of the reign of Phriapatius in Justin (41.5.8-9) except that he ruled fifteen years and left the throne to his elder son, Phraates I. Conversely,
Justin (41.5.9) intimates that Phraates I used force of arms to subdue the powerful Mardi nation and died shortly afterwards (probably fatally wounded in battle). Herodotus (1.125)\textsuperscript{76} believes that the Mardi were among the Persian tribes while Strabo (13.7.1, 8.1, and 8.8)\textsuperscript{77} claims that they were one of the resident tribes inhabiting the land on the southern shores of the Caspian Sea in Hyrcania. Pliny (Nat. Hist., 6.18.48, and 6.31-134)\textsuperscript{78} relates that the fierce tribe of the Mardi formed an independent state, extending from above Merv across the ridges of the Caucasus right on to the Bactrians. But they were, nevertheless, subject to the Parthians. Quintus Curtius (6.5.11-27)\textsuperscript{73} and Arrian (Anab. Alex., 3.24.1-3)\textsuperscript{74} are more informative. They write that the Mardians were a poor and warlike people and that owing to the difficulties of transit no one had invaded their country for a long time. Yet they were beaten by the Macedonian forces in 390 BC and finally surrendered to Alexander III (336-323 BC) on his pursuit of Bessus to the east of the Achaemenid Empire. After the death of Alexander and division of his dominion by the Diadochi, the Mardi became subject to Seleucus I and his successors.

According to Justin (41.4.8), Hyrcania was lost to the Seleucids not long after Arsaces I attacked Parthia and slew Andragoras. Yet Phraates’ march against the Mardi implies that by that time Hyrcania had once again been under Seleucid jurisdiction.

Now, Isidore of Charax (Parthian Stations, 2.7) narrates that Phraates I settled the Mardi in Charax, beneath Mount Caspius and near the Caspian Gates.\textsuperscript{75} He further relates that both Charax and Rhagae were in the province of Media, an economically and strategically important Seleucid outpost. The defeat of the Mardi in Hyrcania and occupation of a strong position west of the Caspian Gates, commanding the Seleucid city of Rhagae, clearly reflects Parthia’s westward expansion under Phraates I. It is possible that in 209 BC Antiochus III demanded the return of Hyrcania before accepting Arsaces II as a Seleucid ally. The status quo ante perhaps lasted for roughly four decades until about 170 BC. This may account for Justin’s silence about the aftermath of Seleucid-Parthian pact and the events of the reign of Phriapatius. But Phraates I flouted the treaty of alliance and began attacking the neighbouring satrapies to expand his dominions. Naturally, his actions unnerved Antiochus IV and thus compelled him to postpone persecution of the Jews and move east to quell a far more serious threat. Given the circumstances of the Seleucid march and demise of the Parthian king, I have placed the end of the reign of Phraates I in 165 BC.

**Coinage of Phraates I (Figs. 9, 11-13)**

Unlike the inaugural emissions from 87-77 BC, those of the period 132-121 BC exclude ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ from the titulature of Parthian rulers. The latter were issued by Phraates II and his successors through Mithradates II, and invariably inscribed with ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ.\textsuperscript{76} Justin (41.2.3) claims that the achievements of Mithradates II ultimately earned him the sobriquet the Great. The numismatic and literary evidence thus implies that the epithet ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ was associated with territorial acquisitions or successful defence of the Arsacid realm. Judging from the development of coin inscriptions, it is highly likely that the titulature of Phraates I began as ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ and augmented to ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ by the close of his reign. Unfortunately, absence of date on S9 coinage precludes its attribution to a specific Arsacid prince. We can only

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\textsuperscript{76} Cf. S14.1-2 tetradrachms of Phraates II; S18.1 of Bagasis; S18.2 and S21.1-8 silver and bronze issues of Artabanus I; S23.2 tetradrachm of Arses X (son of Artabanus I); S23.3 drachms and S23.4 didrachm of Mithradates II, all in Snawood’s 1980 catalogue. Cf. also Figures 16, 18-20 and 22 in this work.

\textsuperscript{73} S9.2 silver drachm of Phraates I and Mithradates I (Author’s Collection).
assume that as a generic type this was minted under several early kings. Accordingly, I have assigned the following varieties to Phraates I:

$9.1$, as his first coinage.

$9.2-4$ drachms and $9.5-7$ fractions, struck during his military campaigns to expand Parthian territory. Similar issues may have been minted under Mithradates I.

$10.1-9$, $10.11-13$, and $10.16$ drachms and $10.18-19$ fractions, minted both during and after Phraates' successful expeditions in Hyrcania and Media. With the exception of $10.16$ the same types were also issued under Mithradates I.

As a rare Parthian issue, $10.16$ drachms of Phraates I are of special interest. These have on their obverse the conventional left-facing beardless bust in bashlyk. But their reverse inscription reads ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΜΕΝΕΑ. Sellwood comments that the last word of the legend of these drachms is difficult to interpret. He nevertheless suggests that it may be the abbreviation of Μενεδομός ('standing one’s ground against the enemy') or Μενεδόμος ('steadfast in the battle-din'). Sellwood further comments that ΜΕΝΕΑ may represent the name of a mint magistrate or that of a city or district. On the other hand, Tarn argues that both Alexander and the Seleucid kings founded a number of military colonies throughout the Hellenistic world. Initially these took the names of the nearby native villages. But some were named by the settlers after their original mother-city. According to Tarn, every Greek or Macedonian place-name in Asia, or names ending in -polis, or places bearing a non-dynastic man's name such as Menedemium were once a military colony. It is therefore possible that $10.16$ drachms of Phraates I were minted in a military colony or camp to pay the combatting troops. Their overall unartistic appearance implies that the corresponding dies were cut by unskilled cesators and perhaps hastily.

A R S A C E S VI: M I T H R A D A T E S I

Justin (41.5.19) states that Phraates I gave precedence to Parthia's interests instead of his sons and passed the crown to Mithradates I, his younger brother. This agrees with Phraates' military manoeuvres and Seleucid counter measures discussed above. The impending attack of Antiochus IV must have alarmed Phraates and obliged him to appoint Mithradates, a man of extraordinary ability, rather than an inexperienced son. Justin (41.6.1) then continues that the accession of Mithradates I in Parthia and usurpation of power by Eucratides I in Bactria happened almost contemporaneously. But he dates neither of the two occasions and thus further compounds the chronological difficulties of the period. Assuming that the expedition of Antiochus IV and death of Phraates I were coincident, Mithradates I must have been crowned in 165 BC. This then calls for a revision of the date of Eucratides' accession.

Very little is indeed known of the political developments during the early years of Mithradates' reign. Moses of Chorene (1.8 and 2.68) reports that the Parthian monarch 'killed Antiochus, the king in Nineveh'. At first sight, this appears to be another chronological blunder by Moses, assigning to Mithradates I the Parthian victory of 129 BC in which Antiochus VII and most of his troops perished. But Moses places the event before the appointment of Valarshak (Bagasis) as king of Armenia. This suggests that the reference may well be to the death of Antiochus IV that left his eastern expedition incomplete.

A Hellenistic King List, supported by a Babylonian Astronomical Diary fragment, dates the death of Antiochus IV to month ix of year 148 sbb (19/20 Nov.-17/18 Dec. 164 BC). Unfortunately,
neither the contemporary Diary nor the near contemporary King List reports the manner of his demise. On the other hand, while the literary sources are unanimous about Antiochus' attempt to plunder a temple in Elymais, they report differently how and where he died. Their accounts range from madness at Gabae (near Isfahān, Iran), to a wasting disease following his sacrilegious deeds, lingering illness at Babylon, and falling from his chariot while rushing from Ecbatana to destroy the Jews at Jerusalem. In any case, the Seleucid king met his end during the reign of Mithradates I. This fact may have induced Moses to attribute the death of Antiochus IV to the Parthian king.

Of the events preceding Mithradates' conquests in Media Magna and Atropatene, we have the brief reports of Strabo (11.9.2 and 11.12.5) and Justin (41.6.1-4). These imply that the Parthian king marched eastward not long after his accession. The strenuous and violent wars between Eucratides I (c. 175-145 BC) and Demetrius I (c. 175-170 BC) had left the Bactrians weak and exhausted. It is possible that Mithradates annexed the two strategically important Bactrian satrapies of Turiva (Traxiana?) and Aspionus (Tapuria?) in 163 BC, after the death of Antiochus IV. Justin (41.6.6) then reports that while Bactria was buffeted by various conflicts, Mithradates I waged a series of wars against the Medes without a decisive outcome for some time. Unfortunately, our knowledge of these hostilities is limited to the casual accounts of Justin and imprecise comments of Moses of Chorene. Justin states that both sides in the war enjoyed intermittent success but the Parthians finally prevailed. Moses (2.2), on the other hand, claims that the Parthian king went to war with Demetrius and his son, Antigon, because the latter had attacked him in Babylon with a Macedonian army but was taken prisoner and led to Parthia in iron fetters. Compared with the events in the latter part of the reign of Mithradates I, Moses is almost certainly referring here to Demetrius I and his younger son, Demetrius II (misidentified as Antigon, the elder son of Demetrius I). Yet there are no allusions to direct hostilities between Mithradates I and Demetrius I in other sources. We are then bound to assume that Moses' reference is to the Parthian ruler's wars with the generals of Demetrius I in Media rather than the Seleucid king himself.

As for the date of Mithradates' victories in the west, this may be determined from three independent pieces of evidence. Firstly, we have the inscription of the reclining statue of Heracles, overlooking the road to Bisutūn, near Hamadān, Iran. This confirms that as late as Panemos 164 SEM (28/29 May 26/27 June 148 BC), dedications were made for the safety of Cleomenes, the Seleucid viceroy of the Upper Satrapies, who still held office in Media at that moment. Any permanent Parthian victory in the region must, therefore, have come after the date of this inscription. Secondly, we have the joint statements of Justin and Moses of Chorene on Mithradates' appointment of a satrap for the newly won territories. Justin (41.6.7) claims that a certain Bagasis (Vagasis) was made governor of Media while Moses (1.8 and 2.68) states that the Parthian monarch installed his brother, Valarshak, as king of Armenia. Thanks to the clear testimonies in two contemporary Babylonian cuneiform records, we can now identify both Justin's Bagasis and Moses' Valarshak with Bagāyāš, the brother of Mithradates I (cf. below).

81 Polybius (31.9.1-4) reports that Antiochus IV Epiphanes died at Tabae in Persia, smitten with madness. Cf. PTOLEMY 1927, 276-277. For the emendation of Tabae to Gabae cf. MARCUS 1943, 185, n. 4; IBAR 1983, 32-33.
86 TARN 1930, 122-126; TARN 1932, 579.
However, unlike Justin, Moses (2.68) furnishes us with an important chronological framework: Mithradates' successor ascended the Parthian throne «in the thirteenth year of Valarshak, king of Armenia». This is counted, most probably, from Bagasis' appointment as the governor of Media Atropatene, since it is highly unlikely that Mithradates' conquests had then stretched as far as Armenia Proper. Perhaps, the satrapy of Media Atropatene covered part of what Moses perceived as Greater Armenia.

Now, as shown below, the terminus post quem of the reign of Phraetis II, initially as co-ruler with his mother, is 3/4 April 132 BC. Combining this with Moses' above statement on the accession of the successor of Mithradates I places Bagasis' appointment «as King of Armenia» in 145 BC. Whether the latter took office immediately after Mithradates' conquests in the east is, unfortunately, unclear. Nevertheless, Bagasis' accession date suggests that the Parthians wrested Media Magna from the Seleucids no later than 145 BC.

Finally, the same cuneiform text, attesting the joint rule of Phraetis II and his mother, Rimnu, clearly shows that on taking the diadem in 132 BC, the young prince was still a minor. This is mirrored by Phraetis' very youthful portrait on S14 tetradrachms (Fig. 16), depicting him with a very young and lightly bearded face. Yet, further records attest that beginning with year 181 SBB (131/130 BC), the Babylonian scribes dated their colophons to the young Parthian king alone. This signifies that Phraetis had come of age a year after his accession. He must, therefore, have been born in 146 BC.

In an earlier contribution, I had suggested that as the daughter of a Median magnate, Rimnu was given in marriage to Mithradates I after the Parthians took the satrapy and expelled the Seleucids. If so, the dates of the reclining Heracles' inscription quoted above (148 BC) and birth of Phraetis II (146 BC) fix the conquest of Media Magna by Mithradates to the period mid-148 to 147 BC in the reign of Alexander Balas (150-145 BC).

The fall of Media cleared the way for further Parthian conquests. Justin (41.6.7) reports that following the appointment of Bagasis, Mithradates left for Hyrcania. On his return he fought against the Elamite king, defeating him and annexing his country. Thus Mithradates' victories brought many nations under Parthian sway and led to the foundation of an empire that stretched from the Caucasus to the River Euphrates. Unfortunately, our extant contemporary sources offer nothing on Mithradates' movements after the capture of Media and before his march on Mesopotamia. But compared with the evidence from Babylonian texts, Justin's sequence of the last events of the reign of Mithradates appears somewhat flawed. There are sketchy references in the cuneiform material to the Parthian king's presence in Hyrcania after his triumph in Mesopotamia. Yet the same records clearly testify that war with Elymais broke out several months later and not, as Justin claims, before the pacification of Babylonia.

The historical notices in an Astronomical Diary fragment attest that in early summer of 141 BC Mithradates and his army overran Mesopotamia. They first took the Royal City of Seleucia on the Tigris and then entered Babylon on 28.III.171 SBB (5/6 July 141 BC). The same Diary confirms Mithradates' presence in Hyrcania, perhaps to counter the steppe invaders who must already have been pressing on north-eastern Parthian frontiers. His subsequent departure from Hyrcania is reported in month IX of 171 SBB (3/4 Dec. 141 BC-1/2 Jan. 140 BC) which saw the establishment of Parthian suzerainty over the greater part of Elymais.

Mithradates' last reported victory was against Demetrius II. In this, Justin (36.1.1-6) concurs with the contemporary Babylonian account in month IV of 174 SBB (7/8 Jul.-1 Aug. 138 BC).
However, the corresponding cuneiform record shows that the captured Seleucid king was despatched to Media and not, as reported by Justin, to Hyrcania.

It is generally believed that the last coinage of Mithradates I (S13.5 and S13.10) marks the end of his reign and heralds the accession of his son, Phraates II, before October 138 BC. I have shown, in some detail, that there are, in fact, strong indications that Mithradates lived until early 132 BC. But as a result of a debilitated illness, vaguely attested in some cuneiform fragments and also alluded to by Justin (41.6.9), the Great Parthian king gradually lapsed into an insensate state after 138 BC.

The most compelling evidence of Mithradates' prolonged reign is contained in two contemporary Babylonian colophons. The first, dated 5 IX 179 SBB (9/10 Dec. 133 BC), reads:

\[\text{Line 16: } \ldots \text{ KAM MU-1-me-15-KÂM} \quad \text{Line 17: } 15-
\text{KÂM ša ši-i MU-1-me-15-KÂM} \quad \text{Line 18: } \text{Ar-ša-na-a} \quad \text{Line 19: LUGAL KUR KURmed}\]

The second, from month v of year 180 SBB (30/31 Jul.-27/28 Aug. 132 BC), reports:

\[\text{Line 11: } \ldots \text{ UNUG}^{46} \text{URNE} \quad \text{Line 12: } [U_{\text{x}}-KÂM MU-1-me-16 ša ši-ta]_{1} \text{-me-1,20 } h \text{ Ar-ša-ki-a} \quad \text{Line 13: LUGALmed}\]

The last record strongly implies that if Phraates II had succeeded Mithradates I in 138 BC, there would have been little sense in his mother joining him as a co-regent some six years later. As briefly discussed above, this text clearly shows that Phraates was still a minor in mid-132 BC and therefore required his mother's association for some time. Hence the very youthful and lightly bearded bust of Phraates II on his earliest coinage struck at Susa (S14 tetradrachms).

Moreover, it would be difficult to ascribe to Phraates II the vain-glorious epithet King of Countries in the earlier record quoted above. A number of Great Achaemenid kings, and then Alexander III and some successful Seleucid rulers adopted this title. It remains unique in the entire Parthian period and therefore rather suits a ruler of Mithradates' rank and prestige than his young and less experienced son.

The date 132 BC for the termination of Mithradates' reign also agrees perfectly with two important but largely neglected regnal dates quoted by Moses of Chorene. As shown in Table 1, Moses assigns twenty-six years to Artashēs I (Arsaces II), son of Arshak I (Arsaces I). He then neglects

\[\text{96 Wroth 1903, xxi; McDowell 1935, 204; Deheynshove 1938, 26; Bivar 1983, 26; Assar 2002a, 21.} \]

\[\text{97 Assar 2003a, 7-8.} \]

\[\text{98 Sachs, Hunger 1996, 182-85, no. 136 B (117 BC), line 16 of the obverse; ibidem, 194-95, no. 134B, line 15 of the obverse.} \]

\[\text{99 Unpublished Astronomical Omen Text (BM 49715).} \]

\[\text{100 Clay 1913, 13, 187, and pl. 48 (MC 2536 - Deed of Gift to the House of Gods), dates the tablet to c. 172 BZ; Osler 1975, 31-31, n. 33 restores the partially preserved year number as 180 BZ; DOTY 1977, 377, year 180 BZ; Osler 1984, 275, n. 'x', and 408, n. 170, year 180 BZ; Osler 1995, 107-148, year 180 BZ; Dr. Montfleury 1980, 245, year 180 BZ; Simonetta 2001, 56 wrongly ascribes to year 174 BZ.} \]

\[\text{101 With its two variants LUGAL KUR KUR and LUGAL KURmed, the epithet LUGAL KUR KURmed is attested in numerous cuneiform documents from the Achaemenid epoch. For a few examples from the reigns of Cyrus II the Great, Cambyses, Darius I, Xerxes I, Artaxerxes I and II, c.f. BIVRTA 1892, 91-94; STRAßMAIER 1897, 389; UNGnad 1907a, 53-57; UNGnad 1907b, 51-61; UNGnad 1908a, 52-54; UNGnad 1908b, 52-53; KINIT 1950, 119; UNGnad 1959-1960, 77-78; KESSLER 1984, 288-270; McPHERSON 1984, 62-92. For possible Median origin of the title, cf. HERBRECHT 1929-1930, 15.} \]

\[\text{102 A. C. 2. 24/25 AD. 268 CE to Antiochus III, cf. RAWSON 1884, 66; WEINSTOCK 1991, 212 and 104-105; PUTCHARD 1975, 237. It is possible that Antiochus III also adopted this epithet. Cf. KENNEDY 1968, pl. 39, no. 134, line 17 gives LUGAL 'KUR KUR'; STOLPER 1993, 335 reads LUGAL 'GAL-Š' (Great King). Cf. also WILSON 1905, 179-207 for a detailed list of Persian imperial titles.} \]
the succeeding reigns, conflates the intervening period with the reign of Arshak II the Great (Mithradates I) and claims that the latter was on the throne for fifty-three years. This last figure is, however, unparalleled in other literature and clearly at odds with the contemporary textual and numismatic evidence. But it transpires that the sum of the twenty-six and fifty-three year reigns of Artashēs I and Arshak II precisely covers the period from the accession of Arsaces II in 211 BC to the death of Mithradates I in 132 BC. This manifest harmony between the numismatic and cuneiform evidence on the one hand and Moses’ regnal dates on the other lends credence to the above conclusions on the inception and terminal dates of the reigns of Arsaces II and his successors. Further genealogical implications of these dates, in particular those concerning the link between Artabanus I and Mithradates II, are assessed below.

**Bashlyk Coinage of Mithradates I (Figs. 9, 11, 14-15)**

Although Mithradates may well have demonstrated his great leadership qualities both before and during the brief reign of Phraates I, it is unlikely that he adopted the epithet ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ at the outset of his own reign. We may therefore assume that his initial coinage bore the inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ. However, since Mithradates was the first Parthian king to issue coins at Ecbatana, some of S10 drachms can be assigned to him securely. These terminated the bashlyk coinage which had been modelled on the issues of Arsaces I, depicting the Parthian leader beardless and clad in the satrapal cap. Thereafter, the succeeding emissions bore more realistic images of the issuing authorities and so made their identification less difficult. I have assigned the following varieties to Mithradates I:

S9.1, as his first coinage.
S10.1-9 and S10.11-13 drachms and S10.18-19 fractions, issued before his conquest of Media Magna and Atropatene.
S10.10 and S10.14, struck at Ecbatana following his capture of Media.
S10.17 with ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΘΕΟΠΙΑΤΟΡΟΣ, a special issue honouring his father, Phriapatius.

As for the successors of Mithradates I, I have utilised the cuneiform and numismatic evidence, and the sketchy information in the classical sources, to reach the following conclusions.

**Arsaces VII: Phraates II (Figs. 16-17)**

Our sources on the reign of this king are, unfortunately, scanty and extraneous, only offering a fleeting account of its latter part. But we now know that Phraates was the son of Mithradates I’s principal queen, Rinnu. He ascended the throne in early 132 BC and ruled comparatively briefly.\(^{103}\) We also know that he issued no tetradrachms at Seleucia on the Tigris to inaugurate his reign.\(^{105}\) Rather, he minted a series of the large silver and small bronze at Susa (S14.1-4) followed by tetradrachms at Ecbatana (S15.1).\(^{104}\) This may have interesting political implications.

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\(^{103}\) Sachse, Hunger 1996, 234-235, no. 131D. The latest dated Babylonian colophon mentioning King Arsaces (Mithradates I) covers months vii-xii of 179 SRB (5/8 Oct. 133 BC-2/3 Apr. 132 BC). Phraates II could have taken the diadem any time after this date and before the end of month v of 180 SRB (27/28 Aug. 132 BC). The latter is the date of the colophon registering Phraates’ co-regency with his mother.

\(^{104}\) McDowell 1935, 201-202 incorrectly assumes that S14 tetradrachms were minted at Seleucia to mark the accession of Phraates II. Beginning with Phraates’ successor, every Parthian ruler who held the Royal City celebrated his reign with a tetradrachm issue there.

\(^{105}\) Le Rider 1965, 337, n. 5; 331; 384, n. 4, and pl. lxxi:11. This unique piece is in the Baku Museum Cabinet in Azerbaijan.
In his narration of the march of Antiochus VII on Mesopotamia, Justin (38.10.5-6) reports that as the Seleucid king approached Babylon, many eastern princes welcomed him and expressed their detestation of Parthian pride. Antiochus then won three battles, seized Babylon and was dubbed the Great.

The numismatic legacy of Antiochus’ presence in Babylonia comprises a series of rare silver tetradrachms and drachms, and bronzes from Seleucia on the Tigris. Of these, the silver is undated whereas the bronzes are from years 182, 183 and 184 BC (131/130, 130/129 and 129/128 BC, respectively). But they all share the same reverse inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΝTYΟΧΟΥ ΕΥΕΡΓΕΤΟΥ and lack Justin’s reported epithet ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ.

We then have a unique gold stater dated ΘΟP = 179 BC (9/20 Sep. 134 BC - 6/7 Oct. 133 BC). This carries on its reverse a left facing Nike driving biga and the inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΝΤΙΟΧΟΥ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΕΥΕΡΓΕΤΟΥ. It is obvious that the reverse motif of Antiochus’ gold closely follows the iconography of S11.9 tetrachalkoi and S12.4 dichalkoi of Mithradates I, albeit inverted. The Parthian bronzes were minted after Mithradates I conquered Media in 148/147 BC. They have, on their reverse, Nike driving biga to the right and the inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ.

The combination of gold as the metal of Antiochus’ stater and its reverse design and legend, leaves little doubt that the issue was struck to celebrate an otherwise unattested victory. It is possible that Antiochus raided Mesopotamia before the end of the reign of Mithradates I and penetrated briefly as far as Seleucia on the Tigris. This may account for Phraates’ lack of an inaugural tetradrachm issue from the Royal City. But there may be other explanations for the unreported Seleucid triumph of 134/133 BC, including Antiochus’ attack on Judaea. According to Josephus (AJ, 13.236-246), the Seleucid ruler besieged the Jews in Jerusalem in his fourth regnal year (136/135 or 135/134 BC depending on the era). Yet he failed to take the city and ultimately made a league with the High Priest, John Hyrcanus, before setting out for Parthia. Perhaps Antiochus deemed this alliance worthy of a celebratory gold coinage.

Our Babylonian records from the accession of Phraates in 132 BC to Antiochus’ Parthian expedition in 130 BC are unfortunately both meagre and fragmentary. Even so, they confirm Arsacid jurisdiction in Babylon and Seleucia on the Tigris until month III of 182 SC (9/10 Jun.-8/9 Jul. 130 BC).

The evidence of Antiochus’ occupation of Mesopotamia comprises the above mentioned silver and bronze coins and at least three dated Babylonian colophons. The earliest of the bronze at least November 135 BC (the 4th year of Antiochus VII), to October 134 BC.

issues (182 SEM) places the capture of Seleucia on the Tigris before 5/6 Oct. 130 BC (1 Dios 183 SEM) but not earlier than 9/10 June in that same year (1 III. 182 SEM). The cuneiform texts, on the other hand, attest Seleucid presence in Babylon as late as 19/20 May 129 BC.109

The documented events of the latter part of Phraates' reign relate to his victory over the Seleucid forces and war against the marauding Sacae. Given that Antiochus' unique bronze coin from Seleucia is dated 184 SEM, we may conclude that the Parthians defeated and slew him shortly after 24/25 Sep. 129 BC (1 Dios 184 SEM). Justin (42.1.1-4) states that following his victory over the Seleucid king, Phraates left a certain Himerus in charge of his kingdom and marched out to meet the Scythians. These had arrived late to aid the Parthians fend off Antiochus' incursion. When Phraates refused to reimburse them, they began to lay waste Parthian territory.

Judging from the S16 drachms with mint names, Phraates must have been initially successful against the enraged Sacae, driving them back as far as Margiane.110 Justin (42.1.5) alleges that the Parthian king had enlisted into his army the Greek prisoners from the war with Antiochus. These eventually defected to the enemy and so destroyed the Parthian forces and slew the young king. A sketchy cuneiform reference suggests that Phraates perished in early 126 BC111 although this may have taken place a few months earlier.

ARSACES VIII: BAGASIS (FIGS. 18-19)

According to Justin (42.2.1), the king following Phraates II on the throne was his paternal uncle, Artabanus I. He is commonly identified with the issuer of the S19-22 coinage who reigned about four years and died c. 124 BC.112 Yet the contemporary Babylonian cuneiform records and numismatic evidence confirm that the immediate successor of Phraates II held the crown for less than a year.113 He inaugurated his reign with a tetradrachm issue at Seleucia on the Tigris (S18.1). These have the head of an aged king on the obverse and the reverse inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ. One example, overstruck on a tetradrachm of Hysaspis, confirms successful expulsion of the rebellious Characene ruler from Babylon by Arsaces VIII.114 Unfor-

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109 Sachs 1955, 171, no. 1337, an Almanac compiled about the beginning of month 1 of 183 SEM (30/31 Mar.-27/28 Apr. 129 BC). The dated colophon mentions "King Antiochus." Cf. also Oehler 1975, 32; Del. Monte 1997, 248; Van der Spek 1998, 231; Asar 2003a, 9-11. I have shown that "King Arsaces" in the colophon of an unpublished Normal Star Almanac from year 183 SEM is a rare scribal error for King Antiochus. Cf. Sachs 1955, xxii, *1045 (BM 33466); *1046 (BM 47747) now joined to BM 35418 (33745); Asar 2003a, 9-11. The date formula at the end of a Sumero-Babylonian hymn, compiled on 22.11.183 SEM (19/20 May 129 BC), refers to King Antiochus CF. Reisner 1896, viii, no. 25, date given as 183 SEM; *thidem, 55 gives year 182 SEM; Clay 1913, 12, year 82 for 182 SEM; Dederer 1938, 32, n. 18, year 182 SEM; Oehler 1975, 22, n. 21, year 183 SEM; Oehler 1976, 276, 308, n. 108, year 183 SEM, and 506; Del. Monte 1997, 247, year 183 SEM; Van der Spek 1998, 311, year 183 SEM; Asar 2003a, 9-10. Collation by Professor S. M. Mau (Ruprecht-Karls-Universität, Heidelberg) has confirmed year 183 SEM.

110 Sellwood 1995, 98-101 discusses a unique silver obol of Phraates II with an obverse bust wearing not only a diadem but, for the first time in the Parthian series, also a radiate crown similar to the one on some Seleucid issues, e.g., Antiochus VI (145/144-142/141 BC). The reverse is even more unusual in that it shows a walking Nike holding in her right hand a semi-circular arc which may have had a religious or regal implication for the nomad peoples. The same object also appears on certain coins of the descendant of the Indo-Scythian prince Maces, reigning about 50 BC. The combined obverse and reverse features of Phraates' obol raise the possibility of both Greek and Saka contingents in Phraates' army. Sellwood also suggests that the counter attack carried the Parthian flag as far as Herat prior to the disastrous defeat. This is now confirmed by a few unpublished S16 type drachms of Phraates II with the abbreviated mint names ΜΑ and ΜΑΡ, most probably representing Margiane.


114 Asar 2003a, 41; Asar 2003b, 17-22.
unfortunately, we know very little about the state of affairs under this king. His latest tetradrachms
(S18.1 var.), known from half a dozen examples, are dated ZIPP = 187 SEM (20/21 Sep. 126 BC-7/8 Oct. 125 BC). Their relative rarity, as compared with the undated specimens, implies that the
issue terminated not long after October 126 BC.

John of Antioch (Fr. 66.2) reports that following the massacre of the Parthian army and death of Phraates II, the
Sacaev ravaged Parthia and advanced as far as Mesopotamia. If so, this must have diminished Arsacid sway over a
very large area of the empire and interrupted coin production in the Iranian mints. Yet there is a unique drachm
in the BM trays (no. 1906, 4-6-1) with a left-facing obverse effigy resembling that on
S18.1 tetradrachms. The inscription on this coin reads [ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ] ΜΕΓΑ-
ΛΟΥ, ΑΡΣΕΝΟΓ (sic) ΘΕΟΠΑΤΩ (sic) and its iconography ties it probably with the mint of
Ecbatana. Assuming that this single specimen represents a regular coinage, we probably have
evidence of a tenuous Parthian hold on Media in 126 BC.

I have tentatively identified Arsaces VIII with Bagáyish (Bagasis), attested as the brother of
Mithradates I in two contemporary Babylonian cuneiform texts discussed above. He was made
governor of Media Atropatene about 145 BC. To mark his appointment, the mint of Ecbatana
issued a series of silver obols (S12.4-5) and bronzes (S12.13, S12.17-18, and S12.23-24). These have
the obverse bust of Mithradates I and the reverse effigy of Bagasis clad in bašlyk, the satrapal
headgear of the Achaemenids.

ARSACES IX: ARTABANUS I (FIGS. 20-21)

Taking 176 BC as the terminal date of the reign of Phriapatius, the youngest sons of that king
would have been at least forty-nine years old in 126 BC. Yet compared with a number of adjacent
issues, the royal portrait on S19-22 coinage, generally attributed to an Artabanus as Phriapatius’
son, appears younger than fifty. The iconographical question and the epithet ΘΕΟΠΑΤΟΡΟΣ
on S19 drachms, also found on S16 coinage of Phraates II, son of Mithradates I, led me to con-
clude that Artabanus too was a son of Mithradates. However, the amended regnal dates now
terminate Phriapatius’ kingship in 370 BC. Admittedly, this is not significantly later than 176 BC.
But coupled with the numismatic evidence, royal genealogy from Nisa and an important dy-
nastic link attested at Babylon (cf. below), the new date conforms to the father-son relationship
between Phriapatius and Artabanus.

From the outset, Artabanus had to face the nomad menace in the north, major rebellions in
the southern states of Elymais and Characene, and persistent Arab incursions into Babylonia.
But the cuneiform evidence attests that he distinguished himself by crushing the insurgent Ely-
maite and Characene leaders, and also keeping the Arabs in check. The same Babylonian
sources show that Parthian sway over the southern and western satrapies was completed by
January 124 BC.

16 Leibl, 22, figs. 9 and 25. The reverse exergual date on the coins is given as ZIPP.
16 KÜSSL, 566; DEWAUX 1938, 36, n. 32 and 37, n. 37.
16 ASSAR 2003a, 18-19.
16 Justin (41.5.9) states that Phriapatius left behind two sons, Phraates I and Mithradates I, both of whom were old
enough to ascend the Parthian throne. He then informs us in his book 42.2.1 that following the death of Phraates II
the crown went to his paternal uncle, Artabanus I. The latter must therefore have been the third son of Phriapatius.
This strongly indicates that at the time of his father’s death Artabanus I was very young otherwise Justin would have
named him as a potential successor to Phriapatius.
16 SACHS, HUNGER 1996, 278-279, no. -14B, rev. text. For additional restoration of the text cf. VANDER SPEK 2001, 451-
Artabanus’s victories occasioned the issue of S18.2 and S21 tetradrachms at Susa and Seleucia on the Tigris, respectively. These have a seated Apollo (S18.2) and a goddess holding Nike (S21) flanked by the inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ on the reverse. It should be stressed that Artabanus’ coinage was struck from some of the most elaborate and skilfully executed dies in the whole of Parthian series. His later drachms, the majority of the extant specimens, show the inclusion of the epigraph ΦΙΛΑΑΕΛΦΟΥ in the imperial titulature. This was to honour his illustrious brother, Mithradates II (cf. below).

There are no references in the cuneiform records to Artabanus’ presence in Babylonia beyond 124 BC. On the other hand, we have a handful of coins from Ecbatana with the reverse exergual date EKP = 125 AE (25/26 Mar. 123 BC-11/12 Apr. 122 BC).120 These imply that soon after the pacification of southern states, the Parthian king moved to Media to co-ordinate an expedition against the nomads. The evidence of coins, struck at the central and eastern Parthian mints of Rhaegae (S20.3) and Margiane (S20.4-5 and S22.4), confirms Artabanus’ successful campaigns. Justin (42.2.2) claims that he succumbed to a poisoned arrow to the arm while fighting the Tocharians. Unfortunately, our Babylonian cuneiform fragments have not retained the date of Artabanus’ demise. We learn of an excessively chaotic situation, exacerbated by prolonged fighting, in and around Babylon during month VI, in 189 SBB (17/18 Sep.-15/16 Oct. 123 BC).121 This indicates little Parthian authority in the region and that the king had probably died at about the same time. But Artabanus’ terminal bronze issue from Susa corresponds to 190 SEM (16/17 Oct. 123 BC-5/6 Oct. 122 BC),122 implying that he may still have been alive in October 123 BC. At the same time, extant numismatic evidence shows that the next Arsacid ruler cannot have begun his reign earlier than month VII of 190 SBB (Oct./Nov. 122 BC). Although unsupported by contemporary evidence, it is thus possible to date the death of Artabanus I to late September–early October 122 BC.

**Arsaces X: Son of Artabanus I (Fig. 22)**

A Babylonian eclipse record places the first regnal year of Mithradates II in 191 SBB,123 beginning on 1 Nisānu (31 Mar./1 Apr. 121 BC). Considering that dating by accession year had ended in Ba-

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120 Prokosch-Osten 1874-1875, 6 and pl. 1, no. 6 reads 125 SEM = 188/187 BC and attributes the coin to Phriapatus; Gardner 1877, 27 and pl. 1, no. 10 accepts 125 SEM and attribution to Phriapatus; Kasparek 1895, 211-213 and pl. XVI, no. 3 suggests an AE date and ascription to Artabanus I; Wroth 1903, 185 accepts 125 SEM but also suggests that the letters could be the abbreviation of a proper name; Wroth 1903, XVI, 21, no. 10 and n. 3 and pl. v, no. 7 reads 125 AE (123/122 BC); Petrowicz 1904, 12, no. 10, and Taf, v, no. 16 gives 125 SEM; Minas 1905, 37, n. 41 suggests that EKP could be a monogram; Ars Classica-Noville 1936, 90, no. 2126 and pl. 62 accepts 125 AE; Le Rider 1965, 43, no. 2 suggests the possibility of a mint magistrate’s mark; Sellwood 1980, 62 reads 125 AE; Sellwood 1983, 283 gives 125 AE; Shore 1993, 98, no. 63 accepts 125 AE.


123 Neugebauer 1952a, 109-112, erroneously assigns the tablet to Antiochus VIII (141-86 BC) who never held Babylon; Neugebauer 1955b, pl. 41 (transcription), and 229 (photo); Aasar 2003A, 27.
bylon with Philip III Arrhidaeus (323-316 BC). Mithradates must have ascended the throne no earlier than April 121 BC.

We then have two distinctly different groups of coins from Seleucia on the Tigris attributed to Mithradates II. The first consists of S23.4 dichalkoi dated ΑΦΡ = 191 SM and overstruck, almost exclusively, on an issue of the Characenean ruler, Hyspaosines.225 These depict a right-facing and fully bearded bust of Mithradates on the obverse, and the reverse inscription ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ (Fig. 23).

There is little doubt that the date of S23.4 bronze is on the Seleuco-Macedonian reckoning and thus corresponds to 122/121 BC.226 However, given that Mithradates began his reign officially on 11.191 SM, his dated bronze must have been minted no earlier than 1 Artemisios 191 SM (31 Mar./1 Apr. 121 BC) or later than 30 Hyperberetaios 191 SM (24/25 Sep. 121 BC).

The second group comprises S23.1-2 tetradrachms. These have a right-facing youthful portrait of an Arsacid prince on the obverse. The inscription of the earlier specimen (S23.2) reads ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ ΦΙΛΑΔΕΛΦΟΣ. But the later variety (S23.1) has ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΕΠΙΦΑΝΟΥΣ. Naturally, if minted for Mithradates II, the terminus post quem of the issue cannot have preceded the inception of his reign. This places the S23.1-2 tetradrachms with a youthful portrait in the same period as the S23.4 bronzes with a mature and fully bearded bust.

Furthermore, we have the reverse monogram ΤΤ on S23.1-2, S24.4 and S24.6-7 tetradrachms. Taking this as a mint magistrate mark implies that S23 and S24 were either contiguous types or minted very close in time.227 However, the royal bust on S24 coinage, securely ascribed to Mithradates II, is visibly older than that on the extant S23.1-2 specimens.

The sudden and pronounced facial disparity between the obverse portraits of the S23.1-2 large silver on the one hand and those of S23.4 bronze and S24 coinage on the other is unparalleled in the Parthian series.228 It is, therefore, possible that a prince other than Mithradates II issued the S23.1-2 tetradrachms. He may well have been son of Artabanus I. Unfortunately, our published Babylonian cuneiform records from the period 190-192 SM (12/13 Apr. 122 BC-18/19 Apr. 120 BC) are limited to a handful of small fragments.229 Beyond the fact that Babylon remained under Parthian control, they offer little on the identity and reign of this young ruler. Yet lack of date on S23 tetradrachms indicates that they were theoretically minted in the period 1 Dios-30 Hyperberetaios 191 SM (6/7 Oct. 122 BC-24/25 Sep. 121 BC) but nevertheless before the inauguration of Mithradates II. At the same time, absence of contemporary drachms from the Iranian mints confirms occupation of the greater part of the empire by steppe invaders. This must have followed the death of Artabanus I at the hands of the Tocharians.

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224 Assar 2003a, 164, n. 7 and 169, n. 12. With Philip III, the remaining portion of the last year of the previous reign was taken as year 1 of the succeeding ruler. However, in practice dating by regnal years terminated with the reign of Antiochus I. Cf. Assar 2003b, 175.


227 The monograms on S33 coinage of Mithradates I, S7 of Phraeae II, and S21 of Artabanus I confirm that mint masters held office for about six months to a year at Seleucia on the Tigris.

228 The royal portraits on the immediately preceding issues of Phraeae I, S14-S17, and Artabanus I, S8.2-S2a, and the succeeding S24 coinage of Mithradates II show a high degree of consistency and only subtle and gradual facial changes with time.

As for the personal name of Arsaces X, we are left in ignorance. I had assumed that he was called Artabanus,\textsuperscript{10} attested as the brother of Mithridates II in a cuneiform record from 193 SBB (119/118 BC). However, I now accept that this filial reference is in fact to Artabanus I rather than his heir (cf. below). Justin (42.2.3) believes the son and successor of Artabanus I was called Mithridates whose deeds earned him the sobriquet the Great. The royal titulature on S23.4 tetradrachm confirms adoption of MīŠAAN at the latter part of the young king’s reign. This agrees with Justin’s statement. However, the inscription on S24 silver shows that Mithridates II also took the same epithet not long after his accession. The cuneiform evidence discussed below implies that Artabanus I and Mithridates II were brothers and not father and son. Perhaps, the similarity of personal names caused Justin to confuse the young king of S3 tetradrachms with Mithridates II.

Unfortunately, we do not know how this juvenile prince met his end. It is possible that he too led his forces against the pillaging nomads and perished in battle.

ARSACES XI: Mithridates II (Figs. 23-25)

As the saviour of Parthian Empire, Mithridates II ascended the throne sometime after 1 April and before 25 September 121 BC. This date agrees with a run of thirteen annual Susa bronzes,\textsuperscript{11} covering the period 191-203 SBB (121/121-110/109 BC), before Mithridates adopted the epithet King of Kings. The presence of these annual types and a few recently discovered tetradrachms from Susa, depicting a right-facing bust of Mithridates,\textsuperscript{12} signifies uninterrupted Parthian hold over that city. At the same time, S23.4 dichalkoi, overstruck on I lysaionienes’ bronze, confirm subjugation of Characene at the outset of Mithridates’ reign.

Our contemporary sources from the reign of Mithridates II are limited and sketchy at best. The earliest indication of his campaigns to crush the Saca invader is contained in a Babylonian Astronomical Diary fragment.\textsuperscript{13} This reveals, in a broken context, Mithridates’ presence in Media as early as month 1 of 192 SBB (19/20 Apr.-18/19 May 120 BC). It also confirms audacious Arab raids and plunder in Babylonia. However, the first unambiguous Parthian triumph over the invading hordes, probably the Royal Saca tribe, Sacaracae, emerges in month VII of 193 SBB (7/8 Oct.-1/2 Nov. 119 BC):\textsuperscript{14}

\textbf{Fig. 23.} S23.4 bronze of Mithridates II, dated 191 SBB.

\textbf{Fig. 24.} S24.4 silver tetradrachm of Mithridates II.

\textsuperscript{10} Assar 2002a, 27-39 and 32-34.  
\textsuperscript{11} Assar 2002a, 29 and 69, table 1.  
\textsuperscript{12} Two specimens in private collections in the UK are known to me. A third example has been reported in another cabinet elsewhere.  
\textsuperscript{14} Ibidem, 326-327, no. -18A; Del Monte 1997, 149-150; van der Spek 2001, 453-454; Assar 2002a, 32-33.
A18: ... ... That [month], the 15th, a leather document of King Arsaces, A19: [which] was written to the governor of Babylon and the (Greek) citizens who were in Babylon, was read in the House of Observation; accordingly, many troops assembled and went to fight against the son of the king and his troops of the [remote] cities A20: [of the Gutian (country)] who killed my brother Artabanus, and I set up (troops) opposite them, and fought with them; a great killing I performed among them, except two men [...].

A21: [...] were not killed; and the king’s son and his troops fled from the fight and withdrew to the difficult mountains. That month, the general who is above the four generals for damming
A22: [...] ... departed. That month, the Arabs became hostile, as before, and plundered. That month, King Arsaces [went] to the remote cities of the Gutian country in order to fight.

The historical value of this passage is in little doubt. It clearly demonstrates Mithradates' successful expulsion of the Gutians. These were nomad invaders from beyond Parthia’s north-eastern frontiers. We also learn that Mithradates carried his arms into the Gutian country. This must have ultimately led to the liquidation of the Sacae and saved the empire from disintegration. It is likely that 2,51 drachms with the epither ΣΩΤΗΡΟΣ ('Deliverer' or 'Saviour') were minted at about the date of this text to commemorate Mithradates’ victories over the Gutis.

Furthermore, the above text mentions a brother of Mithradates II, called Artaianus, who had been slain by the same Gutis. In my previous treatment of the literary and numismatic evidence, I had concluded that this Artabanus was the juvenile king who issued the 2,1-2 tetradrachms at Seleucia. Accordingly, I followed Justin (42.2.3) and maintained the father-son relationship between Artabanus I and Mithradates II. My premise for discounting the filial reference in the above text as the link between Mithradates II and Artabanus I was that the former did not appear in Lucian’s list of octogenarians.

The latest Babylonian record from the reign of Mithradates II is dated 3,III,221 SEB (30/31 May 91 BC). The earliest entry under the next king (Gotarzes I) is from month IX of the same Babylonian year (22/23 Nov.-21 Dec. 91 BC). These place the death of Mithradates II somewhere between June and December 91 BC.

Now, the commonly accepted date 176 BC as the end of Phraipatius’ reign requires Mithradates II, as his son, to be at least eighty-five years old in 91 BC. Given that Lucian (Makrobiot, 15-16) speaks of a number of lesser oriental rulers who were eighty or older, it is unlikely that he would have overlooked the octogenarian King of Kings Mithradates II.

With the new chronology, terminating the reign of Phraipatius in 170 BC, the possibility strengthens that he fathered Mithradates II just before his death. The latter may have been born in 170 BC or even 169 BC posthumously. In either case, he would not have been an octogenarian on his death in 91 BC.

The probability that Artaianus I and Mithradates II were brothers is further reinforced by the epithet ΦΙΑΛΑΔΕΛΦΟΥ on S20 and S22 drachms. These were minted just before and throughout Artabanus’ campaigns against the Guti.

The annual Susa bronze issues indicate that as early as 93/92 BC a rival Arsacid claimant had

**ARSACHES XII: SINATRUCES (FIG. 26)**

The annual Susa bronze issues indicate that as early as 93/92 BC a rival Arsacid claimant had
wrested the city and probably the satrapy of Susiana from Mithradates II. 41 He was Sinatruces, son of Mithradates I and grandson of Phriapatius. His S33 coinage, inscribed with ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΜΕΓΑΛΟΥ ΑΡΣΑΚΟΥ ΘΕΟΠΑΤΟΡΟΣ ΝΙΚΑΤΟΡΟΣ, celebrates a great victory over the King of Kings. Unfortunately, Justin is silent about the Parthian affairs after the death of Mithradates II through the accession of Orodes II. But in his 42nd prologue, Trogus speaks of a number of kings in those intervening years who ascended the Parthian throne in rapid succession. 44 The period 91-57 BC is termed the Parthian 'Dark Age'. It constitutes a chaotic time of intra-dynastic and frontier warfare that exhausted the imperial resources and seriously diminished Parthian power.

As the original instigator of the factional disputes, Sinatruces ruled over an unspecified portion of the Parthian Empire. In this, according to Lucian (Makrobiot, 15), he was assisted by the Sacaraucae. 43 His coinage shows that he had access to the mints in Ecbatana, Rhaqae, Margiane and probably those in Mithradatkart and Nisa. 44 However, absence of Sinatruces' tetradrachms and a named reference to him in the Babylonian records confirms his lack of authority in Babylonia and access to the royal mint of Seleucia on the Tigris.

Sinatruces' link with Mithradates I can be established through numismatic evidence and brief references in literary sources. The epithet ΘΕΟΠΑΤΟΡΟΣ on S33 coinage testifies his descent from a deified father. We then learn from Appian (Mithradatic Wars, 12.104) 45 and Phlegon (Fr. 12.7) 46 that Phraates III was son and successor of Sinatruces. At the same time, the genealogical record on Nisa ostraca 2640 confirms Phraates III as a great-grandson of Phriapatius: 47

Since it is inconceivable that the dynastic links in the inscriptions of S33 drachms and the above Nisa ostraca constitute two different lines of descent, the combined sources leave little doubt that Sinatruces was indeed a son of Mithradates I and grandson of Phriapatius.

Numismatic evidence also shows that Sinatruces was expelled from Susa by a son of Mithradates II in 88/87 BC. 48 He retreated beyond Parthia's eastern frontiers and lived for some time among the Saka. However, aided by the Sacaraucae about 77/76 BC, once again Sinatruces occupied the Parthian throne and held it for a further seven years. 49

ARSACES XIII: GOTARZES I (Figs. 27-32)

Upon the death of Mithradates II in 91 BC, Gotarzes I took the diadem in Babylon. He was, according to an unequivocal testimony in a cuneiform fragment dated month IX of year 221 SEB

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41 Sellwood 1965a, 81-82; Sellwood 1965b, 124-133; Sellwood 1971, 89-91; Sellwood 1976, 4 and 7 on the sequence of coins from S39 through S43; Assar 2003a, 20.
44 Sellwood 1976, 4 and 16 on the engravers C (from Rhaqae) and E (Ecbatana) who cut dies for S33 drachms. Cf. also Sellwood 1980, 87, S33:7 from Margiane. Certain S33 drachms of rather barbarous style may be attributed to the mints of Nisa and Mithradatkart.
45 White 1912, 438-439.
46 Jacob 1929, 116-116; Henry 1960, 64.
47 Diakonoff et alii 1966, 143-146, n. 38 and pls. x and xa; Chauveau 1968, 16; Chauveau 1971, 145-146; Loudou 1983, 687-689; Bader 1994, 264 (read 2638 for 2538); Diakonoff et alii 1999, pl. 918; Diakonoff et alii 2003, 174.
48 Assar 2003a, 40 and 43-47.
49 Assar 2003a, 57-58.
(Nov./Dec. 91 BC), son of Mithradates II. Numismatic evidence (S29 drachmae) from Ecbatana, Rhagae, and probably Mithradatkart and Margiane, shows that Gotarzes held the central, northeastern and eastern Parthian satrapies at the outset of his rule. But he probably struck no bronze at Susa. This implies that Sinatruces firmly held the city throughout the reign of Gotarzes. I had previously argued that Nisa ostraca 2638 (760) inaugurated the reign of Sinatruces in 91 BC. However, having established the father-son link between Phriapatius and Mithradates II, that record can now be ascribed to Gotarzes. In any case, as evidenced by the annual Susa bronzes, Sinatruces had already ruled for at least a year before Gotarzes’ accession. This fact alone probably precludes the text of ostraca 2638 from marking the beginning of Sinatruces’ reign.

With two Arsacid claimants separately but simultaneously on the throne, a simple application of the patronymic Arsaces proved insufficient for dating purposes at Babylon. As a result, the scribes associated with Gotarzes his royal consort, Ashiabatar, in the colophons of their clay tablets. This enabled his contemporaries and present scholars to distinguish him from Sinatruces. The earliest and latest extant examples of the new date formula under Gotarzes are from 6.xii, 221 SBB (25/26 Mar. 90 BC) and 1.i.225 SBB (15/16 Apr. 87 BC).

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200 Sellwood 1980, 84, S29.1-S29.3, attributes to Mithradates II. In the third edition of his catalogue, Sellwood will ascribe S29 drachmae and S24.1 tetradrachm to Gotarzes I. Certain unpublished S29 specimens may also be assigned to the east Parthian mints on stylistic grounds.
201 Assar 2003a, 40; Assar 2004, 74-75.
203 Reisner 1906, ix and 93, no. 51 incorrectly reads year 155 AD = 221 SBB. Recent collation by Professor S. M. Maul (Rupert-Karls-Universität, Heidelberg) has confirmed year 157 AD = 221 SBB. Cf. also Minne 1985, 34, no. 'v', and n. 22; Oelsner 1975, 40-42; Oelsner 1986, 276-277 and n. 'w'; McBroom 1986, 93; Del Monte 1997, 35; Assar 2003a, 41.
204 Emping et alii 1891, 222, partial copy and transliteration;
Once again, our scanty cuneiform material offers little on the reign of this king, particularly about his possible encounters with Sinatruces. We do, however, get glimpses of the situation in Babylonia and Susiana. These imply that Susa probably remained a bone of contention between the two Arsacid rivals.\textsuperscript{96}

Below is set out a summary of the amended regnal dates, dynastic links, and a revised stemma of the early Arsacid rulers:

| Arsaces I | 247-211 BC |
| Arsaces II | 211-185 BC, son of Arsaces I. |
| Arsaces III | Phriapatius, 185-170 BC, grand-nephew of Arsaces I. |
| Arsaces IV | 170-168 BC, great-grandson of Arsaces I. |
| Arsaces V | Phraates I, 168-165 BC, son of Phriapatius. |
| Arsaces VI | Mithradates I, 165-132 BC, son of Phriapatius. |
| Arsaces VII | Phraates II, 132-126 BC, son of Mithradates I. |
| Arsaces VIII | Bagasis, 126 BC, son of Phriapatius. |
| Arsaces IX | Artabanus I, 126-122 BC, son of Phriapatius. |
| Arsaces X | Oct. 122-Apr. 121 BC, son of Artabanus I. |
| Arsaces XI | Mithradates II, 121-91 BC, son of Phriapatius. |
| Arsaces XII | Sinatruces, 93/92-87 BC (1\textsuperscript{st} reign), son of Mithradates I. |
| Arsaces XIII | Gotarzes I, 91-87 BC, son of Mithradates II. |

\begin{figure}
\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
  \node (Arsaces I) {Arsaces I\textsuperscript{1}};
  \node[below of=Arsaces I] (Arsaces II) {Arsaces II\textsuperscript{2}};
  \node[below of=Arsaces II] (Son) {Son (did not rule)};
  \node[below of=Son] (Daughter) {Daughter (?) = Phriapatius\textsuperscript{3}};
  \node[below of=Daughter] (Arsaces IV) {Arsaces IV\textsuperscript{4}};
  \node[below of=Arsaces IV, xshift=0.5cm] (Phraates I) {Phraates I\textsuperscript{5}};
  \node[right of=Phraates I] (Mithradates I) {Mithradates I\textsuperscript{6}};
  \node[below of=Mithradates I, yshift=0.5cm] (Bagasis) {Bagasis\textsuperscript{8}};
  \node[right of=Bagasis, xshift=0.5cm] (Artabanus I) {Artabanus I\textsuperscript{9}};
  \node[right of=Artabanus I, xshift=0.5cm] (Mithradates II) {Mithradates II\textsuperscript{11}};
  \node[below of=Mithradates II, yshift=0.5cm] (Arsaces X) {Arsaces X\textsuperscript{10}};
  \node[right of=Arsaces X, xshift=0.5cm] (S23.1-2) {S23.1-2};
  \node[below of=Arsaces X, yshift=0.5cm] (S14-S17) {S14-S17};
  \node[right of=S14-S17, xshift=0.5cm] (Sinatruces) {Sinatruces\textsuperscript{12}};
  \node[below of=Sinatruces, yshift=0.5cm] (S33) {S33};
  \node[below of=S33, yshift=0.5cm] (Phraates II) {Phraates II\textsuperscript{7}};
  \node[below of=Phraates II, yshift=0.5cm] (S35-S39) {S35-S39};
  \node[right of=S35-S39, xshift=0.5cm] (Orodes I) {Orodes I\textsuperscript{15}};
  \node[below of=Orodes I, yshift=0.5cm] (S34) {S34};
  \node[below of=Orodes I, yshift=0.5cm] (Mithradates IV) {Mithradates IV\textsuperscript{18}};
  \node[below of=Mithradates IV, yshift=0.5cm] (S40-S41, S44) {S40-S41, S44};
  \node[right of=Mithradates IV, xshift=0.5cm] (Orodes II) {Orodes II\textsuperscript{19}};
  \node[below of=Orodes II, yshift=0.5cm] (S42-S43, S45-S48) {S42-S43, S45-S48};
  \node[below of=Arsaces X] (S24-S28) {S24-S28};
  \node[below of=Arsaces X] (S19-S22) {S19-S22};
  \node[below of=Arsaces X] (S18.1) {S18.1};
  \node[below of=Arsaces X] (S18.2) {S18.2};
  \node[below of=Arsaces X] (S31) {S31};
  \node[below of=Arsaces X] (S29, S32) {S29, S32};
  \node[below of=Arsaces X] (S30) {S30};
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}
\end{figure}

### Abbreviations

- **ACT**: Astronomical Cuneiform Texts, Babylonian Ephemerides of the Seleucid Period for the Motions of the Sun, the Moon, and the Planets
- **AD**: Anno Domini
- **ADRTB**: Astronomical Diaries and Related Texts from Babylonia
- **AE**: Arsacid Era. Epoch = 1 Nisãnu (14-15 April) 247 BC = 65 Seleuco-Babylonian Era

\textsuperscript{96} Assar 2003\textsuperscript{a}, 45-46.
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