

DIODORUS AND CTESIAS

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SOME RECENT DISCUSSIONS OF DIODORUS are much more generous in their attitude to him than has generally been the case.¹ They draw attention to the enormous difficulties facing any author who undertakes to write a universal history based on the works of a series of different historians. Instead of regarding him as a mere copyist, incapable of modifying a source in any way at all, they point out that he has his own interests and even his own style, that he set himself certain objectives which by and large he fulfilled. Yet the traditional view of Diodorus as the slavish excerptor, even though not always held in its most extreme form, is still an influential one.² A detailed analysis of the chapters on Assyria and Media (2.1–34), where Diodorus bases himself principally on the history of Ctesias,³ will perhaps make some contribution to the debate and will perhaps shed some light on Diodorus' methods of compiling history, about which very little is known.⁴ Most of the works, after all, on which Diodorus depended when composing his *Bibliotheca* are very incompletely preserved; of some almost nothing at all remains. Since on the other hand a great deal is known about Ctesias' *Persica*, the problems of how far Diodorus altered or reshaped his original are less elusive for the first part of book 2 than they are elsewhere.

¹See in particular J. Palm, *Über Sprache und Stil des Diodor von Sizilien* (Lund 1955); R. Drews, "Diodorus and his Sources," *AP* 83 (1962) 383–392; C. I. Reid, "Ephoros Fragment 76 and Diodoros on the Cypriote War," *Phoenix* 28 (1974) 123–143, and the introductions to the following volumes of the Budé edition, book 12 by M. Casevitz (1972), book 15 by C. Vial (1977), book 17 by P. Goukowsky (1976).

²The Diodorus of N. K. Rutter, "Diodorus and the Foundation of Thurii," *Historia* 22 (1973) 155 ff., seems capable of little. For W. Peremans, "Diodore de Sicile et Agatharchide de Cnide," *Historia* 16 (1967) 432–455 and K. Meister, "Absurde Polemik bei Diodor," *Helikon* 13–14 (1973–74) 454–459, Diodorus' dependence on his sources is slavish. F. Bizière, *Diodore XIX* (Paris 1975) ix ff., also lays very heavy emphasis on the closeness with which he follows his authorities.

³For recent bibliography on Ctesias see my "Ctesias' Account of the Revolt of Inarus," *Phoenix* 30 (1976) 1 n. 1, "Ctesias as Historian of the Persian Wars," *Phoenix* 32 (1978) 19–41, "Ctesias' Description of Babylon," *AJAH* 3 (1978) 32–52. Physician to Artaxerxes II, he was at the court for some 7 years (from about 404 to 398/7); see F. Jacoby, *RE* 11 (1922) 2032 ff. and my comments in *Phoenix* 32 (1978) 20 n. 3. His history was probably written soon after his return from Persia (Jacoby 2034 ff.).

⁴The question of Diodorus' methods is of course also crucial to the proper evaluation of the early part of Ctesias' history, for which Diodorus' evidence is of major importance. Some recent assessments, in particular those of G. Goossens, "L'Histoire d'Assyrie de Ctésias," *AntCl* 9 (1940) 25–45 and W. F. König, *Die Persika des Ktesias von Knidos* (Graz 1972) especially 31 ff., go sadly astray on this issue.

First of all, however, a few words on the question of whether Diodorus was familiar with the actual history of Ctesias or knew it only through the work of an intermediary author, as has sometimes been claimed.⁵

It is very difficult to believe that Diodorus did not make use of Ctesias directly. The narrative of chapters 1 to 34 is self-consistent, suggesting a single author as the principal source, although some material has obviously been added from other authorities.⁶ That this author is Ctesias is very strongly indicated by the fact that Diodorus explicitly names him 11 times in this section of his history (below, n. 36). Moreover, there are some remarkable correspondences between the version of events given by Diodorus and what is otherwise known of Ctesias' account.⁷ The citations of and allusions to this part of Ctesias' history made by other writers will not of course prove that every detail given by Diodorus derives from Ctesias, but they are sufficiently numerous and sufficiently representative to render the hypothesis that Diodorus is working from an intermediary extremely implausible.⁸ There is in fact nothing in this part of the *Bibliotheca* on which one can build a convincing demonstration that Diodorus' main source is a work which substantially revised Ctesias' account.⁹

If, then, we accept that Ctesias is Diodorus' principal authority, in what ways and to what extent has Diodorus adapted the narrative?

⁵C. Jacoby, "Ktesias und Diodor," *RhM* 30 (1875) 555 ff., proposed Cleitarchus as an intermediary, Volquardsen, *Bursian Jahresb.* 7 (1876) 387 ff., suggested Hieronymus, and J. Marquart, "Die Assyriaka des Ktesias," *Philol. Suppl.* 6 (1891/3) 504 ff., put forward Agatharchides. However, P. Krumbholz, *RhM* 41 (1886) 321-341, 50 (1895) 205-240, and 52 (1897) 237-285, argued at length that Diodorus must have used Ctesias himself and his position was accepted by both E. Schwartz, *RE* 5 (1903) 672 and F. Jacoby (above, n. 3) 2040, 2070 ff. Despite this, the theory of an intermediary source has been slow to die. It is accepted by Goossens (above, n. 4), W. W. Tarn, *Alexander the Great* 2 (Cambridge 1948) 50, König (above, n. 4), and by F. Schachermeyr, "Alexander in Babylon," *SB Öst. Akad. d. Wiss. Phil.-Hist. Kl.* 268 (1970) 60 ff. R. Drews, *The Greek Accounts of Eastern History* (Washington, D.C. 1973) 195 n. 32, believes that Diodorus used Ctesias directly. P. Schnabel, *Berosos und die babylonisch-hellenistische Literatur* (Leipzig 1923) 34 and C. H. Oldfather, *Diodorus* 1 (Cambridge, Mass. 1933) xxvii, are uncertain.

⁶Below n. 11 and 202 ff. Such material does not of course prove that Diodorus bases his account on an intermediary source, although many have believed this.

⁷The brief account of queen Semiramis, for example, given in an anonymous treatise on women (Anon. *De mul.* 1 = *FGrHist* 688 F 1c) and deriving from Ctesias, confirms a whole series of the details in Diodorus.

⁸How representative they are can be readily seen in Jacoby's edition of the fragments.

⁹For the full source analysis see the articles of Krumbholz (above, n. 5). Of those who have recently favoured the theory of an intermediary (above, n. 5), only Goossens has attempted to argue the position in detail. But among other things he underestimates what is known of Ctesias' account, neglecting, for example, the evidence provided by Nicolaus of Damascus, whose history of Assyria and Media (90 Ff 1-5 and F 66) is clearly based on that of Ctesias and who at times follows him very closely indeed; see Jacoby's commentary and my note in *Phoenix* 30 (1976) 5 n. 17.

There can be no doubt that at times Diodorus follows the original very closely indeed. Unlike Nicolaus of Damascus, who corrects Ctesias' blunder of locating Nineveh on the Euphrates, instead of on the Tigris (90 F 3 line 23), Diodorus in book 2 is content to reproduce the error. He repeats it in fact several times (2.3.2, etc.), whereas elsewhere, when he is modelling himself on a different authority (17.53.4 and 55.3), he gives the location correctly.¹⁰

Even more noteworthy are two further passages. Diodorus begins his account of the Median empire with the pronouncement that, since the earliest writers on Media disagree, it is the duty of a historian who loves the truth to set the differing accounts side by side (2.32.1). He follows this first with a summary of what is reported by Herodotus, or so he claims (2.32.2–3), and then with the facts as given by Ctesias (2.32.4 ff.). The sentiments are lofty, but they should not mislead the reader about the quality of this part of Diodorus' history. The alleged summary of Herodotus informs us that the Assyrian empire lasted for 500 years (Hdt. 1.95 gives 520 years), that after the fall of Assyria no ruler arose for many generations (in Hdt. 1.95 ff. the Median empire is created at a time when Assyria is still mistress of Asia), and that finally Cyaxares (Deioces in Hdt. 1.96 ff.) was chosen king by the Medes. Diodorus, who may well have been working in haste, has clearly failed to check the actual words of Herodotus. He is merely repeating in blissful ignorance Ctesias' blatant misrepresentations of his predecessor's account.¹¹

An earlier passage is remarkably similar. When describing Ethiopian burial customs (2.15.1 ff.), Diodorus claims to give first of all Herodotus' account, then that of Ctesias. But Herodotus had stated clearly and unambiguously that the Ethiopians, after covering the bodies with gypsum and painting them, set them within pillars made of *hyelos*. He is not responsible for the absurd statement attributed to him that the Ethiopians poured *hyelos* over the bodies, thus mutilating them. Diodorus again is merely repeating Ctesias' misrepresentations of Herodotus without consulting the original work.

In these passages Diodorus is quite clearly guilty of the "slavish" summarising for which he has often been criticised. But this aspect of his work can be exaggerated. His very close adherence to Ctesias with regard to some details does not mean that he is similarly "slavish"

¹⁰I noted this in *Phoenix* 30 (1976) 24.

¹¹We cannot naturally be dealing with misrepresentations of Herodotus on the part of Diodorus; cf. my discussion of Ctesias' polemic and his distorting of Herodotus' narrative (*Phoenix* 32 [1978] 23 f.). But the comment in 2.32.3 that Cyaxares, according to Herodotus, was chosen king in the second year of the 17th Olympiad (711/0) cannot of course come from Ctesias, who would not have used Olympiad dating. The date perhaps derives from a chronographic source, although Diodorus, who has just been writing about Cyaxares, has perhaps replaced Deioces with Cyaxares (711/0 is much too early for Herodotus' Cyaxares).

throughout the entire section on Assyria and Media, or that this part of the *Bibliotheca* contains nothing at all of Diodorus himself. Let us look at the various ways in which he has adapted his main source.

In the first place and most obviously Diodorus greatly abbreviated Ctesias' history. Ctesias loved protracted tales, as is clear from Plutarch's caustic comments about his manner of writing (*Artax.* 11.11 = T 14 b), or from the wearisome detail preserved by Nicolaus of Damascus, even though Nicolaus provides but a shortened version of the original.¹² Diodorus naturally dispenses with Ctesias' speeches and dialogues,¹³ and where the narrative lingers can ruthlessly curtail it. In addition, a generalisation may replace a series of specific details; Diodorus, for example, who can be quite imprecise where the original was exact, talks vaguely of the silver and gold which Sardanapallus heaped upon his pyre (2.27.2), while Athenaeus, describing the same incident, lists the individual items (F 1 q).¹⁴ Or Diodorus may omit entire episodes; a conspiracy against Semiramis that is related by Nicolaus (90 F 1) disappears and Semiramis' Egyptian campaign, to which Diodorus makes an allusion in book 1 (56.5 = F 1 k), all but disappears (2.14.3). Presumably he did not wish to say very much about a country that he had discussed at such length in his preceding book.

Moreover, the degree of abbreviation, it is clear, is very far from being consistent throughout this part of the *Bibliotheca*. Diodorus deals at considerable length with the history of Assyria, i.e., with the material of the first three books of the original (his account occupies some 47 pages of the Teubner edition).¹⁵ But the history of the Median empire (2.32.1 ff.), which Ctesias related in books 4 and 5 and perhaps a part of 6,¹⁶ is covered much more briefly (it takes up only 5 Teubner pages). Here the reader is given the barest outline. The quarrel of the hero Parsondes with the king receives a vague reference (2.33.2); part of the very lengthy tale can be found in Nicolaus (90 F 4). Diodorus tells us something of the Sacan queen Zarinaea (2.24.3–5), but the pathetic

¹²On Ctesias' manner of writing cf. also Demetrius (T 14 a) and my comments in *Phoenix* 30 (1976) 4 f. At 2.2.4 Diodorus informs the reader that he is abbreviating.

¹³For the evidence of direct speech in Ctesias' narrative see *Phoenix* 30 (1976) 5.

¹⁴In Athenaeus (F 1 p) we have a eunuch named Sparameizes; in Diod. 2.24.3 he is "one of the eunuchs." Athenaeus (F 1 q) writes "3,000 talents of gold;" Diod. 2.26.8 has "much money." Sardanapallus' pyre is 4 plethra high in Athenaeus (F 1 q); "very large" in Diod. 2.27.2. Just possibly in these last two passages Diodorus' imprecision is due to his mistrust of Ctesias' extravagant figures (below, n. 36) rather than to the desire to abbreviate.

¹⁵For the book-divisions of the early part of Ctesias' work see Krumbholz, *RhM* 52 (1897) 242 ff. Diodorus gives books 1 and 2 together some 36 pages. But the summary of book 3 (the story of Memnon and the account of Sardanapallus) is shorter, only about 11 pages. We do not of course know the length of the individual books of Ctesias.

¹⁶A large part of book 6 must have been devoted to the very lengthy tale of Cyrus' youth (cf. Nicol. Dam. 90 F 66), which Diodorus does not summarise.

story of Stryangaeus' unrequited love for her (Ff 7, 8a & 8b, 90 F 5) is totally omitted.

The abbreviation can thus be quite drastic, but Diodorus naturally has altered the original in other ways. After all, although the language of his source may make an impression on him, he writes by and large in his own style and uses his own terminology, as is often forgotten.¹⁷ The opening section of book 2, then, will not tell us much about Ctesias' language (of which very little is preserved in any of the fragments),¹⁸ although in a couple of passages Diodorus has apparently been influenced by the wording of his authority. We may note, for example, in the description of the Ethiopian lake the word "cinnabar" (2.14.4). This is clearly an expression used by Ctesias (it occurs also in the parallel descriptions given by Antigonos and by the Florentine paradoxographer, F 1 α and β). Indeed apparently it was a favourite expression; it occurs a number of times in Ctesias' *Indica*,¹⁹ whereas Diodorus does not use it elsewhere.

In the second passage a change in terminology seems to reflect a change of source. In chapter 10, where Diodorus has abandoned Ctesias in favour of Cleitarchus, he uses "Syrian" in the sense of "Assyrian," as apparently did Cleitarchus. Elsewhere in this section of the *Bibliotheca* and elsewhere in the work as a whole, Diodorus (and presumably also Ctesias) writes for "Assyrian" Ἀσσύριος.²⁰

¹⁷See the discussion of Palm (above, n. 1). Goossens' problem (above, n. 4) 43 with the word *dioiketes* (2.21.7), which in his view is a specifically Seleucid term and an indication that Diodorus' immediate source is a historian of the Hellenistic period, is thus illusory. The word of course can be applied to the chief financial officer of Ptolemaic Egypt (LSJ s.v. *διοικητής*) or to a Seleucid financial official (E. Bickerman, *Institutions des Séleucides* [Paris 1938] 129). It can serve as a Greek term for Latin *procurator* (H. J. Mason, *Greek Terms for Roman Institutions* [Toronto 1974] 38 and 143) and also occurs in a more general sense (cf. Menander *Pk* 280 and *Kolax* 7 and Plutarch *Mor.* 179 f). It could well be not Ctesias' term but that of Diodorus, even though it occurs elsewhere in Diodorus only at 2.41.4.

¹⁸The longest passage of Ctesias' own words is the papyrus fragment F 8 b, which G. Giangrande, "On an Alleged Fragment of Ctesias," *QUCC* 23 (1976) 31–46, unconvincingly argues is from a later elaboration of Ctesias' story (note that the opening sentence of the letter in the papyrus is identical to that of Ctesias as quoted by Demetrius, F 8 a).

¹⁹F 45.8; F 45.15 (cf. the parallel excerpts F 45 d α and β); F 45.39 (cf. F 45 p γ); F 45.45, but not in the parallel description of Aelian F 45 q. F. Bizière, "Comment Travaillait Diodore de Sicile," *REG* 87 (1974) 370, notes terminology in books 18–20 which might derive from Hieronymus.

²⁰On Cleitarchus as the source of chapter 10 see Jacoby *FGrHist* on 137 F 10 and my "Ctesias' Description of Babylon," *AJAH* 3 (1978) 45 n. 11. Jacoby (on 137 F 2) also comments on Cleitarchus' use of "Syrian" for "Assyrian." But whether in 2.13.2 Diodorus (or his source) wrote Ἀσσυρίους γράμμασιν (Jacoby's emendation) rather than Συρίους γράμμασιν is uncertain. In this expression both forms are used: see Th. Nöldeke, *Hermes* 5 (1871) 443 ff. In Diodorus 19.23.3 and 19.96.1 we have Συρίους γράμμασι.

On the whole, however, the language of the early chapters of book 2 must be that of Diodorus and it is not always appropriate to the life-time of Ctesias. Take the oriental names. It is often assumed that Diodorus reproduces these exactly in the form in which they appeared in the original.²¹ But is this the case? Among the territories conquered by Ninus we find Coele Syria (2.2.3),²² a name unknown to Herodotus or to Xenophon, which in fact occurs in the period before Alexander the Great only in the *Periplus* of pseudo-Scylax (section 104), a work written circa 338 B.C.²³ In the Hellenistic period Coele Syria is very common and whatever Diodorus thought it meant, he makes quite frequent use of it.²⁴ It looks as if here Diodorus has substituted for the original name a term which would be familiar to himself and to his readers.

Again, we may speculate about forms such as Bactriane, Susiane, etc.²⁵ Tarn has pointed out that names for eastern provinces which end in -ene or -iane are very common in Hellenistic times and he suggests that, although the corresponding adjectives (*Bactrianus* etc.) occur quite frequently in authors writing before Alexander, the nominal forms were perhaps not used in the Achaemenid period or at the time of Alexander.²⁶ We may also note (although the argument is not conclusive) that names of this type appear neither in Photius' summary of Ctesias, although

²¹Below, n. 22 and n. 30.

²²The list of Ninus' conquests (in 2.2.2 Diodorus names his source) must be from Ctesias. Note Diodorus' Borkanioi (Barkanioi in Photius F 9.6 and F 9.8; cf. Tzetzes F 9 a). Ctesias distinguished them from the Hyrcanians (cf. Curtius 3.2.5 f., presumably influenced by Ctesias), but in fact they are an imaginary people, the name being an alternative in Greek for 'Τρκάνιοι, O. P. Varkāna-; see Krumbholz, *RhM* 52 (1897) 272 and Tomaschek, "Barkanioi," *RE* 3 (1897) 19. A. Shalit, "Κοίλη Συρία from the Mid-Fourth Century to the Beginning of the Third Century B.C.," *Scripta Hierosolymitana* 1 (Jerusalem 1954) 64 and E. Bickerman, "La Coelé-Syrie; Notes de géographie historique," *Revue Biblique* 54 (1947) 257, among others, assume that Ctesias used the term Coele Syria.

²³F. Gisinger, "Skylax," *RE* 3 A (1927) 641 ff. O. Leuze, *Die Satrapieneinteilung in Syrien und im Zweistromlande von 520-320* (Halle 1935) 210, suggests that the expression in pseudo-Scylax may be a later gloss.

²⁴The origin of the name is disputed (cf. K. Galling, *Studien zur Geschichte Israels im persischen Zeitalter* [Tübingen 1964] 202), and the area which it designates varies according to date and author; see most recently A. B. Bosworth, "The Government of Syria under Alexander the Great," *CQ* n.s. 24 (1974) 46-64. In Diodorus it occurs 5 times in books 1-5; 17 times in book 18 and the following books.

²⁵In the first part of book 2 we also find Caspiane (2.2.3) and Paraetacene (2.11.1-2).

²⁶"Seleucid-Parthian Studies," *ProcBritAc* (1930) 126 ff. and *The Greeks in India and Bactria*² (Cambridge 1951) 1 ff. and 442 ff., although his theory that such names denote Seleucid eparchies has been much criticised; see H. Bengtson, *Die Strategie in der Hellenistischen Zeit*² 2 (Munich 1963) 30 ff. and Altheim in F. Altheim and R. Stiehl, *Geschichte Mittelasiens im Altertum* (Berlin 1970) 325 ff. Tarn does not note that Ctesias has a city named Barene (F 9.5) and that Chares of Mytilene, if Athenaeus' quotation can be trusted, used Susiane (125 F 3).

Photius does not avoid them in other summaries,²⁷ nor in any of the other fragments of Ctesias, and that for Bactriane, in fact, Photius gives *Βακτρία* (F 14.35; cf. Steph. Byz. F 11) and *Βάκτριον* (F 9.2; 9.8, etc.) among other forms.²⁸ When Diodorus, who uses Bactriane, Susiane and such terms frequently elsewhere (particularly, as one would expect, in books 17, 18, and 19),²⁹ makes use of them in book 2, he may be employing Hellenistic terminology, not that of Ctesias.³⁰

Apart from names whose form may be foreign to Ctesias, there are other features of this section of book 2 which are perhaps more characteristic of Diodorus than of his source. The battles, shorn of much of their circumstantial detail, seem stereotyped. Favourite expressions of Diodorus, such as *καταπλήττεσθαι* and its derivatives, occur repeatedly (2.16.8, 2.17.7, etc.)³¹ These particular words do not, as is significant, appear in the lengthy battle-descriptions preserved by Nicolaus F 66.)

²⁷In cod. 92 p. 71 b (Arr. *History of Alexander's Successors*) Photius writes Susiane, Bactriane, etc.

²⁸It may be significant that Photius in his summary of Ctesias also avoids Bactrianoi, although he uses similar forms elsewhere (e.g. *Σουσιανῶν* in the summary of Arr. *Anab.* cod. 91 p. 68 a). Diodorus on the other hand, who nowhere uses *Βακτρία* or *Βάκτριον*, uses Bactrianoi 6 times in the first part of book 2 as well as elsewhere.

²⁹Bactriane, for example, occurs 10 times in the early part of book 2, 11 times in books 17–19, and not elsewhere. Susiane occurs once at the beginning of book 2, 10 times in books 17–19, and not elsewhere.

³⁰Altheim, (above, n. 26) 328, on the basis of Diodorus, believes that Ctesias used Bactriane.

The form assumed by many of the geographical names in Ctesias is, in fact, uncertain, the evidence (none of which can be regarded as reliable on this question) being often contradictory. With *Χωρομναίων* in Diod. 2.2.3 compare *Χωραμνίων* (Photius F 9.8) and *Χωραμναῖοι* (Steph. Byz. F 12). Diodorus himself is inconsistent over the inhabitants of Parthia (O. P. Parthava). In 2.2.3 they are called *Παρθναῖοι*; cf. Anon. *De Mul.* 2 = F 7 and Nicol. Dam. 90 F 66.46 (*Παρθναία* occurs 7 times in Diod. books 17–19). But in Diod. 2.34.1–2, which is also based on Ctesias (F 5), they are *Πάρθοι* (the form used in the Constantinian excerpts from books 33 and 34/35). Photius, who uses the other forms in other summaries, in 688 F 9.8 gives *Πάρθοι*. For the Median capital we have in Diod. 2.13.5–7 etc. *Ἐκβάτανα*, the only form of the name which appears in Diodorus (cf. Phot. F 9.5 and F 13.26), but according to Steph. Byz. (F 42), who need not be correct, Ctesias used *Ἀγβάτανα*. Again, in both Diod. 2.2.3 and Phot. F 9.7 we find *Δέρβικες*. Steph. Byz. F 43 states that Ctesias used *Δερβίους* (?) . . . ἢ *Τερβισσοῦς*. The meaning is unclear (did Ctesias allegedly use both forms or one of the two?) and the comment might be based on a passage of Ctesias which was corrupt. And would Ctesias have written *Δράγγαι* (Diod. 2.2.3) for the people of Drangiana, O.P. Z(a)ra(n)ka? Hdt. writes *Σαράγγαι*. In Arrian we have both *Ζαράγγαι* and *Δράγγαι* (see A. B. Bosworth, "Errors in Arrian," *CQ* n.s. 26 [1976] 127 ff.). Diodorus elsewhere (6 examples in books 17–19) uses the form in delta, the more common form in the Hellenistic period (Bosworth 129).

³¹On the frequent appearance of this word in Diodorus see Palm (above, n. 1) 167. Vial (above, n. 1) xx ff. discusses stereotyped battles in book 15, and C. B. Welles, *Diodorus* 8 (Cambridge, Mass. 1963) 14, comments on stereotyping in the battles of book 17.

Equally noteworthy are the descriptions of character. Ctesias himself was apparently fond of stereotypes. Besides the sluggish and effeminate Ninyas and Sardanapallus, there is the very similar Annarus (F 6; cf. 90 F 4). Along with the warrior queen Semiramis, we have two more, the Saka queens Zarinaea (Diod. 2.34.3 ff.) and Sparethra (F 9.3). In Diodorus, however, the characters become even more stereotyped. To several are given the conventional epithets which describe many of Diodorus' heroes. The Mede Arbaces bears the label *ἀνδρεία καὶ ψυχῆς λαμπρότητι διαφέρων* (2.24.1), as do Memnon (2.22.3), Epaminondas (15.88.3), Philip (16.1.6.), and others. Later he receives praise for those favourite virtues of Diodorus, *μεγαλοψυχία* (2.28.5) and *ἐπικεικία* (2.28.5–7). In the slightly more detailed descriptions of Nicolaus (90 F 2), where among other things he is a skilled huntsman, he is less uninteresting. When Diodorus comes to the hero Parsondes, who is admired *ἐπ' ἀνδρεία καὶ συνέσει* and other virtues (2.33.1; cf. Cyrus the Great in 9.22, Mar-donius in 11.1.3, Epaminondas and Pelopidas in 15.62.4, Alexander in 17.1.3 etc.), once more we have a formula.³² Nicolaus, who notes his good looks, hunting prowess, skill in all kinds of armed combat (90 F 4), is again less bland.

In Diodorus' hands Ctesias' highly colourful narrative has clearly become something rather dull and conventional. But a further aspect of the opening part of book 2 should receive attention, an aspect of Diodorus' writing which is easily overlooked. Although Diodorus could very well have been content merely to summarise his one principal source, Ctesias, this is not his method. Supplementary information has been added from other authorities.³³ Let us look at some examples before asking which other sources were consulted.³⁴

Diodorus does not present Ctesias' version of the tale of Semiramis as if it were the only one. He also provides an outline of the very different account given by Athenaeus (2.20.3–5), whoever this Athenaeus was. Elsewhere, he notes that to give an accurate description of the ziqqurrat at Babylon was not at all an easy task; this great monument was in ruins and there were discrepancies in the reports given by his authorities (2.9.4).³⁵ Again, although he does not systematically compare the description of Babylon given by Ctesias with that given by Cleitarchus, he does indicate that over a number of details the two historians disagreed

³²Goukowsky (above, n. 1) xxxiv ff. and Vial (above, n. 1) xxii discuss the clichés which Diodorus applies to his heroes.

³³Cf. the comments of Goukowsky (above, n. 1) xiv f. on the procedure probably followed by Diodorus in book 17.

³⁴All the additions to which I allude, except for those discussed below (204 f.), are indicated by the small type in Jacoby's edition.

³⁵For the alleged discrepancies between the sources, which Diodorus outlines in 2.15.1 ff. and in 2.32.1 ff., see above, 197 f.

(2.7).³⁶ Whatever his failings elsewhere and whatever his procedure in other parts of the work, in this section of the *Bibliotheca* at any rate Diodorus shows some concern for accuracy and some awareness of the difficulties involved in ascertaining the truth. Hence some of the additions to his main source.

But not all of the information supplementary to Ctesias is of this nature. Diodorus clearly had to turn to a different authority when his principal source, which could supply him with so much of what he wanted—mighty deeds of all description, marvels of every variety—let him down.³⁷ Ctesias' comments on astrology (Belesys and the unnamed Babylonian in Nicolaus F 66 are astrologers) were perhaps rather brief. Diodorus, who refers in several books to Chaldaean forecasts of the fate of Alexander the Great and that of Antigonos,³⁸ and who must surely have had some interest in Babylonian astrology, adds a substantial section on the Chaldaeans from a different authority (2.29.1–31.10, where the references to events after Ctesias' lifetime show that the source cannot be Ctesias).

Equally noteworthy are some further passages. One of Diodorus' chief aims, as is very clearly stated in the preface to the *Bibliotheca*, was to write a moralising history.³⁹ He may improve upon his source by his edifying insertions. "When men enjoy good fortune," we read in the account of Ninus, "their success prompts the desire for more" (2.2.1)—a comment surely of Diodorus not of Ctesias. Then there is Sardanapallus. Ctesias' descriptions of this degenerate, spinning purple wool among his concubines (2.23.1–2), was highly colourful and certainly famous, but evidently for Diodorus' moral purposes it was insufficient.⁴⁰ Diodorus

³⁶On Cleitarchus as the source of the corrections in this chapter see *AJAH* 3 (1978) 45 n. 11. This passage is also significant for Diodorus' attitude to the grossly inflated figures characteristic of Ctesias' history. Of his 11 citations of Ctesias in book two 7 are for figures, all of them absurd. In 2.7.4 he gives the more plausible numeral of Cleitarchus along with that of Ctesias. He also notes the figure supplied by each in 2.7.3, although he does not realise that here both Ctesias and Cleitarchus hopelessly exaggerate (*AJAH* 3 [1978] 36). Despite his stout defence of the enormous army size of 2.5.4, he evidently has some awareness that over numbers Ctesias is not to be trusted. At least he seems to feel it desirable either to note the existence of controversy or to absolve himself of the responsibility by citing his source.

³⁷Since Diodorus himself is greatly interested in marvels (cf. Palm [above, n. 1] 195), it is amusing that he criticises Ctesias' description of the remarkable Ethiopian lake (2.14.4).

³⁸Both prophecies are referred to in 2.31 and in 19.55. That concerning Alexander occurs also in 17.112, while that concerning Antigonos appeared in a missing section of book 21.

³⁹This is properly emphasised by R. Drews (above, n. 1) 383 ff.

⁴⁰Sardanapallus of course, with his idle, effeminate, and self-indulgent ways, is the very opposite of the kind of character whom Diodorus admires. Note in connection with him the repeated use of the word *τηρυφή*, a vice which Diodorus abhors; cf. his criticism

reinforces the king's utter shamelessness, tacking on to Ctesias' story the well-known epitaph which portrays Sardanapallus revelling in his depravity,⁴¹ and ending the section with his own explicit condemnation of the base manner in which the king ended his life (2.23.4), a condemnation which clearly conflicts with the tale as related by Ctesias (cf. F 1 q).

When he writes about the Assyrian and Median empires, Diodorus makes a substantial number of additions to his main source, however brief some of these are. He may in fact habitually supplement his basic authority with a much greater degree of freedom than is usually imagined. Two further examples from the beginning of book 2, which have not hitherto been recognised as additions, may be noted.⁴² In his description of the principal monuments of Babylon (the primary source here is certainly Ctesias) Diodorus makes the statement that the palaces and other buildings are now in ruins (2.9.9). But this must be a comment added to the material supplied by Ctesias. It is quite inappropriate to the Babylon of Ctesias' lifetime.⁴³

In a later passage dealing with the events leading up to the final destruction of Nineveh, Diodorus again cannot be merely repeating a statement of Ctesias when he claims that various types of siege equipment had not yet been invented: *πετροβόλοι . . . ἢ χελῶναι χωστρίδες ἢ κριοί* (2.27.1). Ctesias, of course, writing his history soon after 398/7, might well have alluded to battering rams, which were much used in his day.⁴⁴ But it is difficult to believe that he could have commented on *petroboloi*. No form of artillery is known in the Greek world or in the Near East before about 399 when Dionysius I of Syracuse introduced the arrow-shooting catapult.⁴⁵ Machines which discharged stones, although possibly invented soon after 399, are not heard of before Philip's conflict with the Phocian Onomarchus in 354 B.C.⁴⁶ To one scholar the sentence is proof that a historian writing in the period of Demetrius Poliorcetes

of Pausanias (11.44.5 and 11.46.2), of Acrotatus (19.7.3), and of Damophilus of Enna (34/35.2.34 f.), with the comments of Goukowsky (above, n. 1) xlii.

⁴¹Very popular with the historians of Alexander, as well as with others; see Jacoby *FGrHist* on Aristobulus 139 F 9 and the literature cited there. For another example of Diodorus' adding of moralising material to his main source see 31.26.2, where Diodorus, who is here basically following Polybius, adds a comment on his own times.

⁴²They are not indicated in Jacoby's edition.

⁴³See *AJAH* 3 (1978), especially 40 ff.

⁴⁴Frequently employed of course by the Assyrians (Y. Yadin, *The Art of Warfare in Biblical Lands* 2 [Jerusalem 1963] 314 ff.), they are used in Greek sieges from the second half of the fifth century onwards; cf. Y. Garlan, *Recherches de poliorcétique grecque* (Athens 1974) 137 ff. On the dating of Ctesias' *Persica* see above, n. 3.

⁴⁵E. W. Marsden, *Greek and Roman Artillery* (Oxford 1969) 48 ff. and Garlan (above, n. 44) 164 ff.

⁴⁶Polyaenus 2.38.2 and Marsden (above, n. 45) 43. One may also wonder whether Ctesias alluded to *χελῶναι χωστρίδες*; cf. Diod. 17.24.4 (Fischer's emendation),

has revised Ctesias' history.⁴⁷ Surely, however, it is an observation made by Diodorus himself. Diodorus certainly appears to have had some interest in sieges and in siege equipment.⁴⁸

If Diodorus has thus enlarged his basic source with a considerable amount of supplementary information, from where does he derive the extraneous material and will it shed any light at all on his methods of working, to turn briefly to the final and most vexed of the problems?

Some details no doubt come from Diodorus' general knowledge, e.g., the stratagem employed by Perseus when faced with elephants in the Roman army (2.17.3), or the size of Dionysius' army and fleet (2.5.6), Sicilian history being naturally one of Diodorus' major interests.⁴⁹ As we have seen, Cleitarchus, who is named as a source in 2.7.3, has supplied some information—the corrections to Ctesias' description of the walls of Babylon in chapter 7 (above, 202 f.), the account of the Hanging Gardens in chapter 10 (above, 199), and very possibly part of the description of Babylonia in chapter 11. He may well have provided more.⁵⁰ Apart from the mysterious Athenaeus (above, 202), no other authorities are named, although Jacoby has suggested that Agatharchides might be the source of the Ethiopian claims that Memnon was an African, not a man of Asia (2.22.4),⁵¹ and others have postulated that the section on the Chaldaeans (2.29.1 ff.) comes from Poseidonius.⁵²

20.91.8, and 20.95.1, Athenaeus *Mechan.* 15.12 ff. etc., and Garlan (above, n. 44) 234 ff. Although no doubt some form of the "tortoise" was in use by the fifth century, the *χελώνη χωστρίς* seems to be first mentioned in connection with Philip of Macedon's siege of Methone (Didymus citing Theopompus, *FGrHist* 115 F 52).

⁴⁷To Goossens (above, n. 4) 43.

⁴⁸See R. K. Sinclair, "Diodorus Siculus and Fighting in Relays," *CQ* n.s. 16 (1966) 249–255, especially 254 f., and Goukowsky (above, n. 1) xv.

⁴⁹The size of Darius' army in Scythia (80 myriads), referred to in this same passage, must be from Ctesias (cf. F 13.21).

⁵⁰Ctesias cannot have referred to the Ganges (11.1) or to the seven wonders of the world (11.5); see Krumbholz, *RhM* 52 (1897) 276. And how much of the material in chapters 11 and 12 comes from him is uncertain. As Krumbholz believed (275 f.), Cleitarchus may have provided the description of Mesopotamia (11.1–3), which has parallels with Curtius 5.1.13. Jacoby (*app. crit.* 442 and commentary to 137 F 2) has suggested that the source for Sardanapallus' epitaph (2.23.3) might be Cleitarchus. Could he also have supplied the account of Semiramis which Diodorus attributes to Athenaeus (2.20.3–5)? It is very similar to the story related by Deinon, Cleitarchus' father (690 F 7).

⁵¹*App. crit.* 442. In Jacoby's edition lines 10–16 are printed in small type. But the material supplementary to Ctesias is surely only lines 10–13. Memnon does not, it seems, appear as an African until the Hellenistic period; see R. Drews, "Aethiopian Memnon, African or Asiatic?," *RhM* 112 (1969) 191–192. Diodorus' information might possibly derive once more from Cleitarchus, if Cleitarchus is Curtius' source for an African Memnon (4.8.3).

⁵²E. Schwartz, "Diodoros," *RE* 5 (1905) 672 and K. Reinhardt, "Poseidonios," *RE* 22 (1953) 823 ff., but considered very doubtful by Jacoby *FGrHist* II C 157. For Diodorus' possible use of a chronographic source see above, n. 11.

Two further passages, where again the information cannot derive from Ctesias, are of interest. One is the brief description of Arabia in 2.1.5–6, which is very similar to what is said about Arabia in 2.48.1–5.⁵³ The second passage (2.16.3–4), which introduces India to the reader, closely resembles the lengthier description of India given in 2.35.3–36.4, where possibly the source is Megasthenes.⁵⁴ To Krumbholz these descriptions are apparently not part of Diodorus' original account of Assyria, but insertions of the author, added perhaps after he had composed the later descriptions.⁵⁵ Krumbholz apparently believes that Diodorus would not have been familiar with works which dealt with Arabia and India when he began the writing of book 2. But would Diodorus have been utterly incapable of doing a little reading in advance? It is at least possible that both passages alluded to belong to the period of initial writing.

However negligently Diodorus summarises, and he can be very careless, surely he must have planned the *Bibliotheca* with a certain amount of attentiveness. After all, his intention of writing about Ethiopia, carried out in book 3, was formulated, as we can see from the reference at 2.15.5, considerably in advance of the actual writing.⁵⁶ It seems entirely possible that he planned the later sections of book 2, including those on India (2.35 ff.) and Arabia (2.48 ff.), long before he began to compose his account of Assyria, and that at that point he did a considerable amount of preliminary reading. Pieces of information from authors such as Megasthenes could quite well have been inserted into an account of Assyria based largely on Ctesias at the time of first drafting.⁵⁷

⁵³Cf. also 19.94 and Krumbholz, "Wiederholungen bei Diodor," *RhM* 44 (1889) 291, who suggests that Diodorus' source in 2.48.1–5 made use of Hieronymus.

⁵⁴Jacoby, *app. crit.* 434. The very brief description of Bactria in 2.2.4 (cf. 2.5.3 and 2.6.1) is also similar to that of 17.74.2 (Cleitararchus?). Krumbholz, *RhM* 44 (1889) 296, comments that Cleitararchus would have made use of Ctesias.

⁵⁵*RhM* 44 (1889) 291 ff.; cf. Jacoby, *app. crit.* 421 and 434. Krumbholz suggests in the case of other passages in book 2 which repeat material given elsewhere in the *Bibliotheca* that Diodorus possibly inserted them while he was revising his work for publication. However, it is very uncertain how far the history was revised; clearly Diodorus did not make a thorough revision after the whole had been completed (cf. A. Burton, *Diodorus Siculus Book I, a Commentary* [Leiden 1972] 43 f.). And the question of which authors he would have read before embarking on the writing of book 2 deserves some attention.

⁵⁶If the comment at 2.15.5 is not a later addition, which there is no reason to believe it is. We do not of course know in what order Diodorus composed the individual books of the *Bibliotheca*. But it is reasonable to suppose that he wrote them in roughly their present order (cf. Burton [above, n. 55] 43 f.). If taken at their face value, the references in the first part of book 2 suggest that book 2 was written before books 9 (2.34.6), 17 and 19 (2.31.2), as well as before book 3.

⁵⁷He could have reread works dealing with Arabia and India when he came to give his own account of those areas. We may note that when Diodorus composed book 1, which was presumably written before book 2 (above, n. 56), he was already familiar with

In other words it can be plausibly argued that Diodorus was tolerably well read when he began writing about the Assyrian and Median empires.⁵⁸ The material supplementary to Ctesias, a considerable part of which was perhaps added from memory (surely Diodorus did not painfully unwind and rewind a large number of papyrus rolls in order to locate all the individual pieces of information), may be derived ultimately from a variety of authors.

To conclude, although Diodorus is obviously not a historian of the first rank, neither is he the purely mechanical compiler that he is often represented as being. For his history of Assyria and Media Diodorus has clearly made extensive use of one basic author, Ctesias, and despite passages where the abbreviation is extreme, he gives us a great deal of information about the original narrative. But although his account may not be a drastic adaptation, it is still an adaptation—in Diodorus' own style, using mostly Diodorus' terminology and with a significant number of additions from other authorities. The question of Diodorus' sources in the *Bibliotheca* as a whole may in fact be far more complex than many would care to admit. In this particular section of the work, at any rate, there would appear to be much more of Diodorus in Diodorus than is often supposed.⁵⁹

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Ctesias' history. There seems no reason to believe that the reference in 1.56 is a citation at second hand or a comment added later.

⁵⁸His methods of working in general may well have been similar to those which have been suggested for other ancient authors; for Livy see T. J. Luce, *Livy: the Composition of his History* (Princeton 1977), especially 139 ff., and for Plutarch in the *Roman Lives* see C. B. R. Pelling, "Plutarch's Method of Work in the Roman Lives," *JHS* 99 (1979) 74–96. Pelling (91 ff.) comments that a number of writers appear to have carried out extensive preliminary reading. He also suggests that to rely (for any individual episode) on one principal source, which the author might have at hand and to which he might add supplementary material from a variety of other sources, would have been a not unusual procedure and one which is readily understandable given the difficulty of working with papyrus rolls.

⁵⁹I am very grateful to M. B. Wallace for a number of helpful suggestions. My information about the frequency with which Diodorus uses certain terms has been provided by C. R. Rubincam from her computer-compiled concordance. I am deeply indebted to her for supplying me with all these details and also for her comments on an earlier draft of this article.