

# Brill's New Jacoby

## Aristodemos of Nysa

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English

Ancient Greek

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### About this Historian

Historian:	Aristodemos of Nysa
Jacoby number:	22
Historian's work:	<i>Mythical collection</i>
Historian's date:	uncertain (I c. BC)
Historical focus:	I. Mythological History ( Genealogy and Mythography)   B. Hellenistic Reference Works and Collections
Place of origin:	Nysa

### BNJ 22 F 1a

Source:	Plutarch (Ploutarchos), <i>Parallela Minora</i> , 35p. 314C
Historian's work:	<i>Mythical collection</i>
Source date:	2nd century AD
Source language:	Greek
Fragment subject:	religion - Library of Congress
Edition:	A. De Lazzar, <i>Plutarco. Paralleli minori</i> (Naples 2000), 289–90

λοιμοῦ κατασχόντος Λακεδαιμόνα, ἔχρησεν ὁ θεὸς παύσασθαι, εἰὰν παρθένον εὐγενῆ κατ' ἔτος θύσωσιν.<sup>2</sup> Ἑλένης δέ ποτε κληρωθείσης καὶ προαχθείσης κεκοσμημένης, ἀετὸς καταπτὰς ἤρπασε τὸ ξίφος καὶ ἐς τὰ βουκόλια κομίσας ἐπὶ δάμαλιν κατέθηκεν.<sup>2</sup> ὅθεν ἀπέσχοντο τῆς παρθενοκτονίας· ὡς Ἀριστόδημος ἐν τρίτῃ Μυθικῇ Συναγωγῇ.

### Apparatus criticus

1 κατὰ τὸ ἔθος the Φ family, the Basel edition 1542, Xylander.

2 θύσωσιν: most msscr., Jacoby and De Lazzer; θύωσιν: E (Paris. Gr. 1672), Nachstädt and Boulogne; καταθύσωσιν (with omission of ἔτος) the Σ family.

3 κατέθηκεν: most msscr., Nachstädt, Jacoby and De Lazzer; Boulogne prefers Naber's emendation καθῆκεν, based on the parallel account of Johannes Lydos.

## Translation

When a plague took hold of Sparta, the god gave an oracle that it would cease if they sacrificed a noble virgin each year. Helen was once chosen by lot; as she was being led forward adorned for the sacrifice, an eagle swooped down, snatched up the sword, carried it towards the cattle, and let it fall on a heifer; whence they desisted from the slaughter of maidens. So Aristodemos in his third *Mythical collection*.

## Commentary

See commentary to F 1b.

## BNJ 22 F 1b

Source: John the Lydian (Ioannes Laurentios Lydos), *De Mensibus*, IV 147 p.165 Wue  
Historian's work:  
Source date: 6th century AD  
Source language: Greek  
Fragment subject: religion - Library of Congress  
Edition: R. Wuensch, *Ioannis Laurentii Lydi Liber de mensibus*, Leipzig 1898

<ὄμοια καὶ><sup>1</sup> Λακε<δαιμ>ονίοις γενέσθαι λόγος ..... Ἄριστείδης, ὃς ἐν τῇ πε<sup>1</sup> .....  
φησί· ἦνίκα .... οὗτος <ὁ λοιμὸς κατεῖχε Λακεδαίμονα, πολ>λῶν ἀπολλυμένων <ἔχ>ρησεν ὁ  
Πύθιος <παύσεσθαι τ>ὴν νόσον, ἐὰν κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν θεοῖ<ς ἀ>ποτροπαίοις ἢ<βῶσά τις καὶ  
εὐγενῆς σφ>αγιασθῆι παρθένος. τῆς <δὲ> ἀνόμου δεισιδαι<μονίας κατὰ π>ᾶν φθινόπωρον  
τελουμένης <συν>έπεσέ ποτε <λαχεῖν> τὴν Ἑλένην· Τυνδά<ρε>ως δὲ τὴν θυγα<τέρα  
ἐ>στεφ<αν>ω<μένην τ>οῖς βωμοῖς προσή<γα>γε. καταρχομένου δὲ αὐ<του> τῆς ἀνό<μου  
θυ>σίας, ἀετὸς καταπτὰς ἤρπασε τοῦ βασι<λέ>ως τὸ ξίφος <καὶ παρ> ἅ τινα λευκὴν δάμαλιν  
ἀφῆκεν. οἱ δὲ δορυφόροι κατό<πιν ἀκο>λουθήσαντες καὶ αὐτόπται γενόμενοι τοῦ συμβάντος  
<τῆ>ν βοῦν πρὸς Τυνδάρεων ἤγαγον· ὁ δὲ θαυμ<άσ>ας τὴν πρόνοιαν <τῆ>ς μὲν  
ἀνθρωπο<κτό>νου συνηθείας ἐπαύσατο, τὴν δὲ δά<μαλι>ν θύσας τοῦ λοιμι<κοῦ> π<άθ>ους  
ἀπηλλάττετο.

## Apparatus criticus

1 the restorations, here and in what follows, by C.B. Hase, *Lydi De Ostentis quae supersunt, una cum fragm. libri de mensibus*, Paris 1823, and R. Wuensch, *Ioannis Laurentii Lydi Liber de mensibus*, Leipzig 1898, are based on the text of Plutarch.

2 πέμπτη ('fifth book') Hase, Schlereth and most scholars.

## Translation

and it is said that <something similar> happened to the Lake<daim>onians... Aristeides, who in the fi<fth ? book>... says: when... that <plague held Lakedaimon, since ma>ny were dying, the Pythian god prophesied that the illness <would cease> if every year a <young and well born> virgin were sacrificed to the gods averting evil. As the impious superstition was celebrated every autumn, it once happened that <the lot fell> on Helen: and Tyndareos brought his daughter, adorned with garlands, towards the altars. As he was beginning the impious sacrifice, an eagle swooping down took away the king's sword, and let it go near a white heifer. The guards, who had followed and had been direct witnesses to the events, brought the cow to Tyndareos; and he, astonished by the divine providence, put an end to the habit of human sacrifices, and having sacrificed the heifer instead, kept away the sufferings of the plague.

## Commentary on the text

F 1a is the only extant mention of an Aristodemos, author of a *Mythical collection* (Μυθικὴ Συναγωγή) in at least three books. The source reference (a characteristic of early imperial mythographic literature: instances in A. Cameron, *Greek Mythography in the Roman World* (Oxford 2004), 26-32) is a standard feature of [Plutarch]'s *Parallela minora*; indeed, in the preface of the *Parallela*, [Plutarch] states that he has made a point of giving his source for each story (*Moralia* 305B). The reference is usually given at the end, with ὡς followed by the name of the author and the title of the work, as here and in 61 more instances, or also καθάπερ ιστορεῖ, followed by the name of the author and the title of the work, as in 4 instances (once without the verb); list of the various possibilities, with indication of the passages, in R. Hercher, *Plutarchi Libellus De Fluviis* (Lipsiae 1851), 16; statistics and comparison with the use of other early imperial mythographers in Cameron, *Greek Mythography*, 107.

The story narrated in F 1a remains on a fairly general level, but it is clear that the Helen of [Plutarch] is the daughter of Tyndareos, and that the god is Apollo of Delphi, as in F1b, the more detailed narrative of Johannes Lydos. F 1a highlights the fact that the text of *Parallela* is an epitome: for it omits entirely the sacrifice of the heifer (a logical consequence of the sword having been dropped on it, and an element that could not be absent if the story was to make sense). An analysis of the differences between the two accounts (and that of Tzetzes, see below) may be found in J. Schlereth, *De Plutarchi quae feruntur Parallelis minoribus* (Freiburg 1931), 62-68; on Johannes Lydos' *De Mensibus* and the antiquarian tradition on which it relies, see M. Maas, *John Lydus and the Roman Past* (London 1992), 54-55, and M. Hooker, *John Lydus. On The months*, 2017 (available at <https://archive.org/details/JohnLydusOnTheMonthsTr.Hooker2ndEd.2017>), with updated bibliography.

F 1a is also a good specimen of the rather *recherché* language used by (many of the authors cited by) [Plutarch]: the term *παρθενοκτονία* is found only here in all of Greek literature (the adjective *παρθενοκτόνος*, referring to Thetis, had been used by Lykophron, *Alexandra* 22, to indicate the Hellespont, in whose waters Helle died; it reappears in the scholiast's comment on that same passage). *ἀνθρωποκτόνος*, the term used by Lydos, is more frequent.

The sacrifice of a virgin to solve an impasse, with the last minute substitution of an animal, is a well-known theme of Greek mythology (see on it K. Dowden, *Death and the Maiden. Girls' Initiation Rites in Greek Mythology* (London 1989); J.L. Larson, *Greek heroine cults* (Wisconsin 1995), 101-109); its most famous instance is probably that of Iphigenia. D. Lyons, *Gender and immortality. Heroines in ancient Greek myth and cult* (Princeton 1997), 138-141 and 159-162 (162 for a reference to [Plutarch]'s account of Helen's sacrifice), stresses similarities and points of contacts between the figures of Helen and Iphigeneia. However, [Plutarch], and Johannes Lydos after him, are the only authors who record a story involving the potential sacrifice of Helen. F. Schwenn, *Die Menschenopfer bei den Griechen und Römern* (Giessen 1915), 126 suggested that this story might have been invented to provide a female counterpart to the well-known account of the whipping of boys at the altar of Artemis Orthia, as substitution for a human sacrifice (see Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 3.16.9-11, who attributes the substitution of whipping to human sacrifice to Lykourgos). This story is probably a relatively late invention, linked to the increase in cruelty of the whipping attested at the time of Cicero (so D.D. Hughes, *Human sacrifice in ancient Greece* (London 1991), 79-81); the version implying the sacrifice of Helen, if it is not an outright invention of [Plutarch], will then also be relatively late (see again Hughes, *Human sacrifice*, 82-3, who leaves open the possibility that this story may have been connected to an existing sacrificial rite).

Mention should here be made of some similar (and similarly unique) stories: *Parallela minora* 20 (*Moralia* 310D) compares the well-known story of the sacrifice of his daughter by Erechtheus in the war against Eumolpos (see Demaratos, *BNJ* 42 F 1) to the (otherwise unheard of) sacrifice by Marius of his daughter Calpurnia, in order to obtain a victory against the Cimbrians ( *FGrH/BNJ* 289 F 1a, *FGrH/BNJ* 289 F 1b, and *FGrH/BNJ* 289 F 1c, with Jacoby's remarks); [Plutarch] (*On Rivers* 16.1, compare *Moralia* 1159AB) tells the story of how Aegyptos sacrificed his daughter Aganippe to put an end to a famine, and then threw himself in the river Melas, which as a result received the name Aegyptos (cf. A. De Lazzer, *Plutarco. Paralleli minori* (Naples 2000), 356 n. 302); and in *On rivers* 23.1 (*Moralia* 1164E) [Plutarch] narrates the story of the sacrifice in two steps of the daughters of Araxes, as a result of which the father threw himself into the river, which was then named after him. Finally (and intriguingly!), Tzetzes in the scholia to Lykophron, *Alexandra* 182 concludes a long digression on Iphigeneia's parentage, in which he refers to the tradition according to which she was the daughter of Helen, with a comparison of the story of Iphigeneia's sacrifice with a version of the Roman story transmitted in [Plutarch], *Parallela minora* 35B (the young woman is named Ioulia Luperca rather than Valeria Luperca, but otherwise the story is the same).

Although the story is the same in Johannes Lydos and in the *Parallela minora*, and although in general Lydos can be shown to have relied on (a version of) the *Parallela minora*, the authority quoted by Lydos is an Aristeides (the title of the work is lost in a lacuna), while [Plutarch] refers to the third book of Aristodemos' *Mythical collection*. The origin of the writer, which could have

been helpful in assessing the situation and which is usually present in *Parallela minora*, is missing: thus, only general criteria can help us decide whether we are facing two authors telling the same unique story, or whether there is only one author (irrespective of whether he is fictive or real), and the other is due to a confusion/scribal error. In a few instances, [Plutarch] gives one authority for a story, for which the remaining tradition (Stobaios or Lydos) mentions a different source; this might be one of these instances (detailed list and discussion in Schlereth, *De Plutarchi quae feruntur Parallelis minoribus*, 13-86, and De Lazzer, *Plutarco. Paralleli minori*, 38-48).

As the two names (Aristodemos and Aristeides) are fairly close, as furthermore the Roman parallel which follows the story attributed to Aristodemos in [Plutarch]'s work is the story of Valeria Luperca in Falerii, said to derive from the *Italian History* of Aristeides of Miletos (*BNJ* 286 F 18), i.e. from the work of an author whose name is very close to that of Aristodemos, and who is the source most often mentioned by [Plutarch] (21 times, mainly with reference to his *Italika*), it is possible to assume that Lydos confused the two names, and attributed the Greek story to the source that had been mentioned for the Roman parallel (so F. Jacoby, 'Die Überlieferung von ps. Plutarchs *Parallela Minora* und die Schwindelautoren', *Mnemosyne* 3, 8 (1940), 120; *FGrH* 3A, 372; De Lazzer, *Plutarco. Paralleli minori*, 42 n.144). However, Lydos also preserves in the same passage the Roman parallel, although again in a fragmentary version, and gives as source reference for it Varro: the difficulty, here as in the other cases, goes deeper than a simple confusion of names, and may involve the hypothesis of the original presence, in an ampler version of the *Parallela minora*, of frequent double source references (for the alternative possibilities that the original text may have mentioned Varro too, or that Johannes Lydos may have added Varro of his own initiative, see Jacoby, 'Die Überlieferung', 120; Schlereth, *De Plutarchi quae feruntur Parallelis minoribus*, 66-67; De Lazzer, *Plutarco. Paralleli minori*, 80-81; and Cameron, *Greek Mythography*, 133 n. 5).

## Commentary on F 1

Besides the fundamental edition of W. Nachstädt, *Plutarchi Moralia* 2.2 (Leipzig 1935), 1-42, there are two modern editions of Pseudo-Plutarch's *Parallela minora*: A. de Lazzer, *Plutarco. Paralleli minori* (Naples 2000) and J. Boulogne, *Plutarque, Oeuvres morales* 4 (Paris 2002). The *Parallela minora* is a short work of uncertain authorship and uncertain date (between the end of the first century AD and the end of the second century AD). Its 41 chapters contain each a Greek and a Roman story; its avowed intent is to give credibility to the ancient myths, by comparing them with more recent historical events. A work of this title is included in Lamprias' catalogue of Plutarch's work; but because of the style in which the work is written, scholars almost unanimously agree that the *Parallela minora* cannot have been written by Plutarch (note however the position of J. Boulogne, *Plutarque, Oeuvre morales* 4, 240, for whom the *Parallela* might be the work of the 'team of secretaries that Plutarch must have employed to exploit a considerable historiographical library'). See further De Lazzer, *Plutarco. Paralleli minori*, 1-38; K. Dowden, *BNJ* 54, 'Biographical essay'.

The *The Mensibus* should still be consulted in the edition by R. Wünsch (ed.), *Ioannis Laurentii Lydi Liber de mensibus* (Leipzig 1898); for problems in the recent (posthumous) edition by A. C. Bandy, *Ioannes Lydus. On the Months (De mensibus). The Three Works of Ioannes Lydus*, 1.

Lewiston; Queenston; Lampeter, 2013), see the review by A. Kaldellis, <http://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2014/2014-01-09.html>. M. Hooker, *John Lydus On the Months* (2017), available at <https://archive.org/details/JohnLydusOnTheMonthsTr.Hooker2ndEd.2017>, provides an excellent English translation, with commentary and ample bibliography.

Because a relatively high number of the stories narrated in the *Parallela minora* (and in the *On rivers* of the same author) appear, with almost the same wording and in the same order, also in Stobaios and in Johannes Lydos (besides further individual instances in Clement of Alexandria, in the scholia to Ailios Aristeides, and in the commentary of Tzetzes to Lykophron's *Alexandra*), it is necessary to assume either that all these writers rely on a (fuller) version of the *Parallela minora* (not exactly the one we have, since there are discrepancies as well as similarities) and of the *On rivers*; or that they all (including [Plutarch]) used the same sources in the same way. The second alternative is extremely unlikely; it is defended by the Budé editor of the *Parallela minora*, J. Boulogne, *Plutarque*, 239-41, and for the *On rivers* by J. Bidez, 'Plantes et pierres magiques d'après le Ps. Plutarque *De Fluviis*', *Mélanges Octave Navarre* (Toulouse 1935), 25-38, followed by R. Halleux & J. Schamp, *Les lapidaires grecs* (Paris 1985), xxv-xxvi. The first alternative (i.e. the thesis that all these authors rely on a fuller version of the *Parallela minora* and on the *On rivers*) has been defended, although with differences at the level of the relationship of the various texts, by Hercher, *Plutarchi Libellus de Fluviis*, 11; Schlereth, *De Plutarchi quae feruntur Parallelis minoribus*, 9-86; F. Jacoby, 'Die Überlieferung', 143; A. De Lazzar, *Plutarco. Paralleli minori*, 82-89. See now the excellent *status quaestionis* by Cameron, *Greek Mythography*, 127-34, as well as K. Dowden's general discussion (*BNJ* 54, 'Biographical essay') of the problems posed by the *Parallela minora*.

## Biographical Essay

Any decision on the identity of the Aristodemos mentioned by [Plutarch] as the source for the story of Helen's 'sacrifice manqué' must depend on the overall evaluation of the reliability of the source references in the *Parallela minora*. Traditionally, since Hercher's fundamental study (R. Hercher, *Plutarchi Libellus de fluviis* (Leipzig 1851)), the majority of the source- and work-references contained in the *Parallela minora* and in the *On rivers* have been considered bogus: see the clear exposition of the problem by K. Dowden (*BNJ* 56 F 1b, commentary on F 1b). This has been contested, for instance by J. Schlereth, *De Plutarchi quae feruntur Parallelis minoribus* (Freiburg 1931). As F. Jacoby, 'Die Überlieferung von Ps. Plutarchs *Parallela minora* und die Schwindelautoren', *Mnemosyne* 3, 8 (1940), 78 pointed out in his discussion of Schlereth's approach, there may be indeed a few exceptions where the source reference is real, but in general this is not a matter where one can decide case by case: there is no way of proving the non-existence of an author, as long as he has a plausible name.

As a result, two general stances are possible: with J. Schlereth, *De Plutarchi quae feruntur Parallelis minoribus*, J. Boulogne, *Plutarque, Oeuvre morales 4* (Paris 2002), 241, and K. Dowden, one can think that "Given the hit and miss knowledge that we have of ancient authors, and given the fact that several of the authorities cited are real, we cannot know which authorities, or how many, are simply invented ... Consequently, for any particular author we must first proceed on the assumption that he is real" (Dowden, *BNJ* 56 commentary on F 1b). Or, with R. Hercher, *Plutarchi Libellus de fluviis*, 17-24, Jacoby, 'Die Überlieferung', *passim*, K. Ziegler,

*Plutarchos von Chaironeia* (Stuttgart 1949), 230-4 (= ‘Plutarchos von Chaironeia’, *RE* 21 (Stuttgart 1951), 867-70), and most recently A. Cameron, *Greek Mythography in the Roman World* (Oxford 2004), 127-34, one can look at [Plutarch]’s work as a whole: the stories recounted are so inane, present such odd ‘errors’, and are at the same time so similar to each other, that it is difficult not to agree on the extreme unlikelihood that a number of real, different authors would have written so many multivolume works made of so evidently implausible, yet similar, and at the same time unique stories. This second approach seems to me methodologically sounder, as it takes into account the overall context and not each reference by itself; as a result, I would tend to assume that the source-references in [Plutarch] are fictive, unless there is good evidence to the contrary.

This said, not all in *Parallela minora* is fictional; and even for his bogus references [Plutarch] seems to have used the names of real authors. Thus, from a methodological point of view, the possibility has to be explored that we may be in front of one of the (rare) references to a real author. On the various writers named Aristodemos Jacoby, *FGrH* 3b (Text), 173-174 and 3b (Noten) 115 is still very much worth consulting: the personalities that might come in question are an Aristodemos whose name appears, without further precisions, in the context of a list of authors who have written *On inventions* in Clemens, *Miscellanies* 1.77.1 (not in the *RE*); an Aristodemos author of *Γελοῖα ἀπομνημονεύματα* (*Ludicrous memoirs*), mentioned more than once by Athenaios, who might be the same as the Aristodemos cited by Clemens (E. Schwartz, ‘Aristodemos (29)’, *RE* 2 (Stuttgart 1896), col. 925), and possibly also the same as Aristodemos of Alexandria/Theben ( *BNJ* 383, see E. Schwartz, ‘Aristodemos (28)’, *RE* 2 (Stuttgart 1896), col. 925).

But the most likely candidate is Aristodemos from Nysa. Strabo, *Geography* 14.1.48, C650, mentions, in a list of illustrious personalities from that city, a Menekrates, student of Aristarchos, and his sons Aristodemos (whose courses, given when he was already very old, Strabo attended in his youth) and Sostratos ( *BNJ* 23), as well as another Aristodemos, their older cousin, who trained Pompey the Great (discussion of the family and their activities in M. Dana, ‘Nysa et ses hommes célèbres’, *REG* 129 (2016), 276–284). These were all, Strabo goes on to say, notable grammarians; but his own teacher also taught rhetoric in two schools, in Rhodes and in Nysa, teaching rhetoric in the morning and grammar in the evening; this same Aristodemos was moreover also for a while in Rome, where he taught grammar to the children of Pompey the Great. His activity can thus be dated to the first half of the first century BC. (E. Schwartz, ‘Aristodemos (30)’, *RE* 2 (Stuttgart 1896), cols. 925-26; more recently M. Dubuisson, ‘Homérogie et politique: le cas d’Aristodémos de Nysa’, *Stemmata: mélanges de philologie, d’histoire et d’archéologie grecques offerts à Jules Labarbe* (Liège/Louvain-La-Neuve 1987), 15-24; P. Ascheri, ‘Aristodemos (3)’, in: *Lexicon of Greek Grammarians of Antiquity*). Aristodemos of Nysa has always been the main candidate for an identification with the Aristodemos of [Plutarch]. The thesis was first advanced by E. Hefermehl, ‘Menekrates von Nysa und die Schrift vom Erhabenen’, *RhM* (1906), 296-97; he was followed by G. Knaack, ‘Aristodemos(30)’, *RE* 1 (Stuttgart 1908), col. 133, and by Schlereth, *De Plutarchi quae feruntur Paralleli minoribus*, 66-67 and 106-108.

Hefermehl went so far as to claim that Aristodemos (whom he dubbed “a rather decadent personality”, dedicated to “paradoxen Homerstudien”, 296) and Sostratos, his brother, were two

of the main sources of [Plutarch], basing his claim on a promised study of P. Amherst 2.20, which never appeared. As Hefermehl's position is still cited without comment (e.g. by De Lazzer, *Plutarco. Paralleli minori*, 56), it is worth looking further into his argument. P. Amherst 2.20 preserves scholia to Kallimachos, *Hymn to Artemis* 107 ff. on the *recto*, and 172 ff. on the *verso*. On P. Amherst 2.20 *verso*, ll. 22-23, Halai Araphenides is mentioned, while at ll. 25-36 the commentator recounts the story of Iphigenia, skipping lightly over the missed sacrifice, and giving details of her stay among the Taurians and the reunion with Orestes (in a version different from that of Euripides, since an ivory shoulder blade plays here a role in the recognition). At l. 34-35, towards the end of the story, the papyrus has a fragmentary -]τόδημος; Hefermehl must have thought of restoring Ἀρισ]-τόδημος, a proposal first advanced by Croenert in 1903 and accepted by R. Pfeiffer (ed.), *Callimachi fragmenta nuper reperta* (Bonn 1921), 92, and by Schlereth, *De Plutarchi quae feruntur Paralleli minoribus*, 67. But Pfeiffer had second thoughts, and his restoration Κλει]τόδημος, for the Attidographer Kleidemos, whose variant name Kleitodemos is well attested, has since been universally accepted (R. Pfeiffer, *Callimachus II* (Oxford 1953), pap. 43 (p. LII + 56-58), 58 for the restoration and its rationale). The text is commonly included among the fragments of Kleidemos (*FGrH/BNJ* 323 F 29): an Attidographer would talk of Iphigenia and of the myth located at Halai, while nothing in the text transmitted by the papyrus points to a close, specific connection with what is known of Aristodemos' work.

Aristodemos of Nysa is also indicated as the source for the story of Herippe in the manchette (the term commonly used for the short notices in the margin of the manuscript, indicating the source of the story) to Parthenius *Love sufferings* VIII: ιστορεῖ Ἀριστόδημος ὁ Νυσαεὺς ἐν α΄ Ἱστοριῶν περὶ τούτων (Ἱστοριῶν περὶ τόπων Calderón Dorda), πλὴν ὅτι τὰ ὀνόματα ὑπαλλάττει ἀντὶ Ἡρίππης καλῶν Εὐθυμίαν, τὸν δὲ βάρβαρον Κανάραν, “the story is told by Aristodemos of Nysa in the first book of his *Histories*, except that he changes the names and calls the woman Euthymia instead of Herippe, and the barbarian Cauaras”. Before discussing the story, we must confront another problem. It is commonly accepted that the manchettes, because of their position in the margins among other things, are later additions (mid-third century?) to the text of Parthenios (detailed argument in J.L. Lightfoot (ed.), *Parthenius of Nicaea: The poetical fragments and the Erotica Pathemata* (Oxford 1999), 246-56 and esp. 248). This has been recently disputed by Cameron, *Greek Mythography*, 106-114: for him, they are the work of Parthenios himself, in which case the reference to Aristodemos would be almost contemporary to the work of Aristodemos himself. However this may be, everyone agrees that the information of the manchettes, whenever it can be checked, is reliable, but also partial, in the sense that the manchettes do not give the source of the story, but rather indicate that the story was also alluded to, or mentioned, in some other author. The manchette to Parthenius VIII is a case in point, since it explicitly avoids telling who the source is for Parthenius' narrative, and points instead to a similar story with modified names, told by Aristodemos. The story is a rather unusual one, of a noble Gaul who after having sacked Miletus brings away a woman, Herippe, who becomes his wife; her husband (Xanthos in Parthenius; the name he might have had in Aristodemos is not given) tries to ransom her, and actually succeeds, but the woman betrays him to the Gaul; the Gaul however respects the link of friendship with Xanthos and beheads the woman, in a parody of a sacrifice, while persuading Xanthos not to take this in bad part. It is difficult to see how such a story fits with the Aristodemos portrayed by Strabo as a grammarian and rhetorician, interested in Homeric studies – M. Dubuisson, ‘Homérologie et politique’, 17 and n. 1 simply mentions the possibility that the grammarian / rhetorician may be the source of Parthenius (he does not



mention at all the Aristodemos of the *Parallela minora*). However, the manchette is explicit in indicating Nysa as the origin of the writer; the only alternative would be the older cousin, the preceptor of Pompey, of whom nothing else is known.

If we accept (with Jacoby, *FGrH* 3b (Text) 174, and with Lightfoot, *Parthenius*, 412) that the grammarian and rhetorician Aristodemos of Nysa wrote books (more than one at any rate) of *Histories* in which he collected stories such as that of Euthymia/Herippe (it is a relatively important ‘if’, because of the imprecision of the manchettes), then there is no obstacle in assuming that the story narrated in [Plutarch] came from that same book, all the more since, as pointed out by Schlereth, *De Plutarchi quae feruntur Paralleli minoribus*, 107-108, the two stories share the notion of female sacrifice: in Parthenius, the Gaul affirms that he desires to make a sacrifice before the separation, asks Herippe to hold the victim, as she used to, and then beheads her instead of the victim, in a neat inversion of the more common pattern of substituting an animal victim for a human one (see also Lightfoot, *Parthenius*, 418, for how sacrifice here turns into execution). This appears to be the position of Lightfoot, *Parthenius*, 224 and 247.

It remains of course possible to think, with Jacoby, *FGrH* 1a, 498, that the existence of a relatively well-known Aristodemos of Nysa gave [Plutarch] the idea for his (bogus) source reference (Jacoby *FGrH* 3b (Text), 174 settled for the cousin, the preceptor of Pompey, as the model, without giving any reasons for this). One small final point: the title of Aristodemos’ work, as given by [Plutarch], sounds slightly odd: for this reason Hercher suggested to correct the last sentence in μυθικῶν ἱστοριῶν συναγωγῆς, on the basis of the comparison with the title of a work attributed to Sostratos in [Plutarch] *On rivers* 24.4. Whatever one may think of this suggestion (the correction does not appear necessary), those who think that [Plutarch] here refers to a real Aristodemos, brother of a real Sostratos (see discussion in *BNJ* 23), also referred to by [Plutarch] as authority, and who identify the two with the sons of Menekrates of Nysa, must accept that the two brothers wrote two multivolume works bearing the same, or a very similar, title.

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