

Chrysermos of Corinth

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Place of origin	Corinth

Fragment 287 F 1

ID	287 F 1
Source	Pseudo-Plutarch, On Rivers 18.7 = Moralia 1161D
Work mentioned	Peloponnesiaka book 1
Source date	2nd century AD
Source language	Greek
Source genre	etiology; mythology, Greek; oracles
Fragment subject	etiology; mythology, Greek; oracles
Textual base	Jacoby

Text

Χρύσερμος δ' ὁ Κορίνθιος ἐν ᾧ Πελοποννησιακῶν ἱστορίας μέμνηται τοιαύτης. Περσέως φερομένου μετεώρου καὶ κατὰ τὸν λόφον γενομένου τοῦτον, ἐξέπεσεν αὐτοῦ τῆς λαβῆς τοῦ ξίφους ὁ μύκης. Γοργοφόνος δὲ ὁ βασιλεὺς Ἐπιδαυρίων ἐκπεσῶν τῆς ἀρχῆς ἔλαβεν χρησμὸν ἐκπεριελθεῖν¹ τὰς Ἀργολικὰς πόλεις, καὶ ὅπου ἂν² εὖρηι ξίφους μύκητα, ἐκεῖ κτίσαι πόλιν. γενόμενος δὲ κατὰ τὸ Ἄργιον ὄρος καὶ εὐρῶν τὴν ἐλεφαντίνην λαβὴν πόλιν ἔκτισεν, ἣν ἀπὸ τοῦ συγκυρήματος προσηγόρευσε Μυκίνας.

Translation

But Chrysermos of Corinth in the first book of his *Peloponnesian Histories* remembers a story of this kind. When Perseus was being transported in the air and had arrived around

this hill (Argion/Mykenai), the cap (*mykes*) of the handle of his sword fell. Gorgophonos, however, the king of the Epidaurians, who had fallen from power, received an oracle that he should go round the cities of the Argolid and that he should found a city at the place where he found the cap of a sword. When he arrived at Mt. Argion and found the ivory handle, he founded a city, which because of the accident he named Mykenai.

Critical Apparatus

1. ἐκ- Hemsterhuys, Jacoby; ἐμπειριελθεῖν, -μ- in rasura, P, Calderón Dorda, Delattre.
2. ἄν Hercher (and Jacoby, Delattre); ἔάν P, Calderón Dorda.

Commentary on the text

Jacoby's commentary, in *FGrH* 3A, 384, covers all that is essential; what follows here only complements it with recent references.

On rivers 18.6 and 18.7 are closely related, although two different authors are mentioned as sources of the information – one of the learned strategies put in place by the author of *On rivers*.

In the paragraph preceding our fragment, the author of the *On rivers* has given an aetiology of the name 'Mykenai', deriving it from the pained and sonorous 'bellowing' (μυκηθμός) of the two surviving Gorgons when they realized that they would not capture Perseus—an aetiology that he claims to have found in the (otherwise unknown) *Perseis* of Ktesias of Ephesos. The connection with the bellowing of the Gorgons seems to be unique to Pseudo-Plutarch. Stephanos of Byzantium, s.v.M 231 *Mykenai* gives three aetiologies for the name of the city: from Mykeneos son of Sparton brother of Phoroneos; from the cap of Perseus's sword; or from the bellowing of Io when she arrived there; the same appears in Herodian, *De prosodia catholica* 3.1.331 and in Eustathios of Thessalonica, *Commentary on Homer's Iliad* 1.447. The bellowing in connection with the name of Mykenai is thus normally associated with Io, and such a connection would have been perfectly appropriate in a chapter on the Inachos (a river, but also the father, or an ancestor, of Io).

In that same paragraph, *On rivers* 18.6, Pseudo-Plutarch had also given an aetiology, presumably from the same source, for the name of Mount Argion, which he derived from Argos *panoptes*, the many-eyed giant sent by Hera to guard Io. As Jacoby noted (*FGrH* 3A, 384), an *Argion oros* appears only here in all of Greek literature and is most likely invented. (The fact that Nikandros, *Alexipharmaka* 100-5, in retelling a version of the story, mentions a hill Μελανθίς, i.e., black, on which the cap of Perseus's sickle, ἄρπη, would have fallen, is highly suggestive: one of the meanings of the adjective ἀργός is white, Pseudo-Plutarch might have created his story through inversion; note also the slight difference between use of a sickle or of a sword). It is, however, worth noting that according to Pseudo-Apollodoros, *Library* 2.1.5, 18 one of the sons of Aigyptos bore the name Argion: the name is thus attested in local lore.

As pointed out by Jacoby, a mention of the finding of the fallen cap of a scabbard (μύκην) was already in Hekataios (see F. Jacoby, *FGrH* 1A, 324-5 for further parallels, as well as *BNJ*

F 22; also R.L. Fowler, *Early Greek Mythography, I, Texts* (Oxford 2000), Hecataeus F 22, with R.L. Fowler, *Early Greek Mythography II, Commentary* (Oxford 2013), 259); but who it was who found the cap, or whether the story was similar to the one narrated by Chrysermos, is unclear. The oscillation in the text of Pseudo-Plutarch between cap of the sword, cap of the handle of the sword, and handle is in general paralleled in the tradition. But since here it is found within one text, this may be taken as further indication of the lack of attention to details by the author of the *On rivers*--or of problems within the tradition (see A. De Lazzer, in E. Calderón Dorda, A. De Lazzer, E. Pellizer, *Plutarco. Monti e fiumi* (Naples 2003) 7-15).

A Gorgophonos king of the Epidaurians is otherwise unattested; the name is clearly invented on the basis of the myth of the killing of the Gorgons by Perseus (whose own daughter by Andromeda was called Gorgophone, Pseudo-Apollorodos, *Library* 2.4.5, 49; other references in Jacoby; see also C. Delattre, *Pseudo-Plutarque. Nommer le monde. Origine des noms de fleuves, de montagnes et de ce qui s'y trouve* (Villeneuve D'Ascq 2011), 177). Gorgophonos is thus a double of Perseus. De Lazzer, in Calderon Dorda, De Lazzer, Pellizer, *Plutarco. Monti e fiumi*, 244, points out that the story makes Mykenai a sort of colony of Epidauros, while in reality Mykenai is much more ancient than Epidauros. Whether this could be used to support the idea of a rewriting of Peloponnesian history (from a Corinthian viewpoint?) by Chrysermos depends on how much trust one is willing to put in Chrysermos's existence. Even if Chrysermos is one of Pseudo-Plutarch's invented authors, as I would tend to believe (with F. Atenstädt, 'Zwei Quellen des sogenannten Plutarch de fluviiis', *Hermes* 57 (1922), 245, Jacoby, *FGrH* 3A, 383, and others: see below, Biographical Essay), the *Parallela minora* might here preserve a trace of an anti-Spartan tradition.

Commentary on F 1

This passage comes from chapter 18 of Pseudo-Plutarch's *On rivers*, which concerns the River Inachos and more generally the Argolid. It is a rather unusual chapter, peculiar within the treatise because it is much longer than usual (thirteen paragraphs, while most chapters of the *On rivers* count four or five paragraphs, dedicated in turn to an account of the character who in dying gives his name to the river, the plant and/or stone that grows in the river, the mountain close to the river, and the plant and/or stone to be found on the mountain). It is unusual also because it presents discordant stories (see on the general structure of *On rivers*, A. De Lazzer, in E. Calderon Dorda, A. De Lazzer, E. Pellizer, *Plutarco. Monti e fiumi* (Naples 2003), 7-15).

The *On rivers* (whose full title is *περὶ ποταμῶν καὶ ὄρων ἐπωνυμίας καὶ τῶν ἐν αὐτοῖς εὐρισκομένων*, *On the names of rivers and mountains and on what is found in them*) can be consulted in G. N. Bernardakis, *Plutarchi Chaeronensis Moralia vol. 7* (Leipzig 1896), 282-328; but there are also three recent commented editions: E. Calderón Dorda, A. De Lazzer, and E. Pellizer (eds.), *Plutarco. Fiumi e monti* (Naples 2003); C. Delattre, *Pseudo-Plutarque, Nommer le monde. Origine des noms de fleuves, de montagnes, et de ce qui s'y trouve* (Villeneuve D'Ascq 2011); V. Zanusso, 'Sulla denominazione di fiumi e monti, e su quanto si trova in essi', in E. Lelli and G. Pisani (eds.), *Plutarco. Tutti i Moralia*, (Milano 2017), 2232-59 (text and translation) and 3004-19 (introduction and notes). S. Lund Sørensen,

'Introduction to Works *On rivers* (Περὶ ποταμῶν) (1683-1691)', in *FGrHCont* IV E: *Paradoxography and Antiquarian Literature*, fasc 2, 873-6, offers an excellent and synthetic introduction to the genre of writings 'On rivers', with list of authors having composed such works, as well as an introduction to the *On rivers* of Pseudo-Plutarch specifically at 918-25 (in the context of a discussion of the bogus author Agathokles of Miletos, *FGrHCont* 1687).

The text has been transmitted by a rather special manuscript, the *Palatinus graecus Heidelbergensis* 398, produced in Constantinople in the third quarter of the ninth century; this manuscript also preserves other geographical, paradoxographical and mythographical works, including the *Erotika pathemata* of Parthenius and the *Metamorphoses* of Antoninos Liberalis (a history of the text and description of the manuscript in Calderón Dorda, *Plutarco. Fiumi e monti*, 91-7; Delattre, *Pseudo-Plutarque. Nommer le monde*, 12-20, as well as C. Delattre, 'L'alphabet au secours de la géographie. (Dés)organiser le *De fluviis* du Pseudo-Plutarque', *Polymnia* 3, 2017, 55-61; Zanusso, 'Sulla denominazione di fiumi e monti', 3004-5; Sørensen, *FGrHCont* E IV fasc. 2, 1676 (Agatokles of Miletos), 'Introduction'. Digital reproduction of the entire codex at <https://doi.org/10.11588/diglit.303>). The *On rivers* is also preserved in another manuscript, the *Parisinus suppl. gr.* 443 A (B), which has been shown to depend from the above-mentioned *Palatinus graecus Heidelbergensis* 398 (further details in C. Poidomani, 'Il *De fluviis* pseudoplutarcheo nella redazione del codice Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Supplément grec 443A', *Commentaria Classica* 3 (2016), 57-82).

In both manuscripts the work is attributed to Plutarch; but it is commonly accepted that the *On rivers* is not by Plutarch. It does not appear in Lamprias' catalogue of Plutarch's works (a reference to a work *On rivers* by Plutarch first appears in the excerpts by a certain Sopatros, cited by Photius in his *Bibliotheca*, 161); the style is learned but rather poor. The work must have been composed between the second and the third century CE. One of its distinguishing features, which it shares with the *Parallela minora*, is the frequency of source citations, most of them of authors not known otherwise (for a discussion of their reliability, see the 'Biographical Essay'), and a very marked tendency to relate unattested (and rather unlikely) stories. F. Racine, 'Pseudo-Plutarch *On rivers* and the school tradition', in E. Gielen and J. Papy (eds.), *Falsifications and Authority in Antiquity, the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*, (Turnhout 2020) 215-39, rightly emphasizes the parodic, playful aspect of the work.

Fragment 287 F 2a

ID	287 F 2a
Source	Pseudo-Plutarch, <i>Parallela minora</i> 3A = <i>Moralia</i> 306A-B
Work mentioned	Peloponnesiaka book 3
Source date	2nd century AD
Source language	Greek
Source genre	military history, ancient; inscription votive offerings
Fragment subject	military history, ancient; inscription votive offerings

Text

Ἄργείων καὶ Λακεδαιμονίων ὑπὲρ Θυρεάτιδος χώρας πολεμούντων, οἱ Ἄμφικτύονες ἔκριναν πολεμῆσαι ἑκατέρ<ων τριακοσί>ους,¹ καὶ τῶν νικησάντων εἶναι τὴν χώραν. Λακεδαιμόνιοι μὲν οὖν Ὀθρυάδην ἐποίησαν στρατηγόν, Ἄργεῖοι δὲ Θέρσανδρον. πολεμούντων δέ, δύο ἐκ τῶν Ἄργείων περιελείφθησαν Ἀγήνωρ καὶ Χρόμιος, οἵτινες εἰς τὴν πόλιν ἤγγειλαν τὴν νίκην. ἡρεμίας² δ' ὑπαρχούσης³, Ὀθρυάδης ἐπιζήσας καὶ ἡμικλάστοις δόρασιν ἐπερειδόμενος τὰς τῶν νεκρῶν ἀρπάζων ἀσπίδας περιείλετο, καὶ τρόπαιον στήσας ἐκ τοῦ ἰδίου αἵματος ἐπέγραψε «Διὶ τροπαιούχῳ». καὶ τῶν δύο⁴ στάσιν ἐχόντων, οἱ Ἄμφικτύονες αὐτόπται γενόμενοι Λακεδαιμονίοις προ<σ> κρίνουσι,⁵ καθάπερ Χρύσερμος ἐν ᾗ Πελοποννησιακῶν.

Translation

When the Argives and the Lakedaimonians were fighting for the Thyreatis, the Amphiktyons decided that three hundred of each side should fight and that the region should belong to those who won. The Lakedaimonians accordingly made Othryades their general, and the Argives Thersandros. And after they fought, two of the Argives, Agenor and Chromios, survived, who announced their victory to the city. Once the battlefield was deserted, Othryades revived and, leaning on half-broken spears, despoiled and stripped the dead of their shields; and having erected a trophy, he inscribed it with his own blood: 'To Zeus Guardian of Trophies'. And because the two peoples were in dispute, the Amphiktyons, after having seen for themselves, decided for the Lakedaimonians, as Chrysermos narrates in the third book of his *Peloponnesian History*.

Critical Apparatus

1. ἑκατέρους codd., De Lazzer 2000, who argues that the paragraph presents evident signs of compression and brevity, and Ibáñez Chacón 2014; ἑκατέρ<ων τριακοσί>ους, proposed by Kurtz 1891 on the basis of Stobaios (F 2b, below), and accepted by Nachstädt, Jacoby and Boulogne, seems necessary in this context.
2. ἡρεμίας codd. and most modern editors; ἐρεμίας Boulogne.
3. ὑπαρχούσης] οὔσης Φ.
4. δύο codd., and most modern editors (De Lazzer, Boulogne, Ibáñez Chacón 2014): δήμων Pohlenz (notes to N.), Nachstädt, Jacoby. There does not seem to be any serious need to intervene on the text here: the 'two' are the two people mentioned in the opening.
5. Λακεδαιμονίους λΣ (the Laur. Plut. 80.21, and the Epitome), Jacoby; Λακεδαιμονίοις all other codices, all editors. προσκρίνουσι Φ, Jacoby; προκρίνουσι all other codices, De Lazzer, Boulogne, Ibáñez Chacón 2014. There is here an interesting crossing of readings: it has to be either Λακεδαιμονίους προκρίνουσι (most editors) or Λακεδαιμονίοις προσκρίνουσι (Jacoby).

Commentary on the text

See below, under Commentary on the text of F 2b.

Commentary on F 2a

The passage is part of the *Parallela minora*, 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 – the treatise cannot be later since Clement of Alexandria appears to know some of the authors and stories mentioned in it – see e.g. A. Cameron, *Greek mythography in the Roman World* (Oxford 2004), 49). Its 41 chapters contain each a Greek and a Roman story, thematically paired together; its avowed intent is to give credibility to the ancient (Greek) myths by comparing them with more recent (Roman) historical events (while this is the stated purpose, there are numerous instances in which the Roman story is definitely earlier than the Greek one). A work of this title is included in Lamprias' catalogue of Plutarch's writings; but because of its style, 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 (Paris 2002), 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').

The text and tradition of the *Parallela minora* present a number of problems (see for a careful description of the textual situation A. De Lazzer, *Plutarco: Paralleli minori* (Naples 2000), 82-139, with the stemma proposed by Jacoby, which De Lazzer by and large accepts, at p. 87). In terms of content, the *Parallela minora* appears to specialise in unattested stories, or surprising tweaks on well-known ones; the same applies to his source-citations, authors otherwise unknown, whose names often replicate those of known authors, but with a different geographical origin. For this and other reasons, the credibility of its source-citations is disputed (discussion in A. De Lazzer, *Plutarco: Paralleli minori* (Naples 2000), 1-38; K. Dowden, *BNJ* 54, 'Biographical essay'; see further below, 'Biographical essay').

Besides the fundamental edition of W. Nachstädt, *Plutarchi Moralia* 2.2 (Leipzig 1935), 1-42, there are three modern editions of Pseudo-Plutarch's *Parallela minora*: A. De Lazzer, *Plutarco: Paralleli minori* (Naples 2000); J. Boulogne, *Plutarque, Oeuvres morales* 4 (Paris 2002); P.D. Bernardakis and H.G. Ingenkamp, *Plutarchi Chaeronensis Moralia editionem maiorem* vol. 2 (Athens 2009), 354-82 (but see on this edition the negative remarks by A. Ibáñez Chacón, '¿De *minora* a *maiora*? Los *Parallela minora* en la nueva *editio maior* de los *Moralia*', *Ploutarchos* n.s., 9 (2011/2012) 37-48); see also the PhD dissertation by A. Ibáñez Chacón, *Los Parallela minora atribuidos a Plutarco (Mor.305A-316B): introducción, edición, traducción y comentario* (Malaga 2014) (<https://riuma.uma.es/xmlui/handle/10630/8488>). The text with introduction, translation and notes by F. Carlà-Uhink, in E. Lelli and G. Pisani, *Plutarco. Tutti i Moralia* (Milano 2017), 570-91 and 2610-16 is also worth consulting.

Fragment 287 F 2b

ID	287 F 2b
Source	Ioannes Stobaios, Anthology 3.7.68
Work mentioned	
Source date	5th century AD
Source language	Greek
Source genre	military history, ancient; history, ancient; inscription votive offerings
Fragment subject	military history, ancient; history, ancient; inscription votive offerings
Textual base	Jacoby

Text

ἐκ τῶν Θησέως. Λακεδαιμόνιοι καὶ Ἀργεῖοι περὶ χωρίου Θυρέας ἐν μεθορίῳ κειμένης μέχρι μὲν τινος ὄλοις τοῖς στρατεύμασι παρετάσσοντο πρὸς ἀλλήλους. τέλος ἔδοξεν αὐτοῖς ἐπιλέξαι παρ' ἑκατέρων τριακοσίους, κάκείνων μαχεσαμένων τοῖς κρατήσασιν διαφέρειν τὸ χωρίον. οὐπὲρ γενομένου, Ὀθρυάδης Λακεδαιμόνιος στρατιώτης¹ πολλοὺς ἀποκτείνας καὶ πολλὰ τετρωμένος ἔκειτο μεταξύ τῶν ἀνηρημένων Λακεδαιμονίων μόνος περιλειφθεὶς, Ἀργείων δὲ δύο, Ἀλκῆνωρ καὶ Χρόμιος². ὧν ἀπελθόντων εἰς Ἄργος ἀπαγγεῖλαι τὴν νίκην, Ὀθρυάδης πολλοὺς σκυλεύσας τῶν πολεμίων τρόπαιον ἔστησε, καὶ χρησάμενος τῷ τῶν τραυμάτων αἵματι ἐπέγραψε «Λακεδαιμόνιοι κατ' Ἀργείων». καὶ τοῦτο πράξας ἀπέθανεν.

Translation

From the work of Theseus. The Lakedaimonians and the Argives were drawn up in battle order with nearly all their entire armies for the land of Thyrea, which lay along the border. Eventually it seemed better to them to choose three hundred from each side, and once they had fought, to assign the territory to the victors. Once this happened, Othryades, a Lakedaimonian soldier, after he killed many and was repeatedly wounded, lay among the Lakedaimonian dead, the only survivor, while there were two surviving Argives, Alkenor and Chromios. When these left for Argos to announce the victory, Othryades stripped many of the enemy and erected a trophy, and with the blood of his wounds inscribed it: 'The Lakedaimonians, against the Argives'. And having done this he died. [= [BNJ 453 F 2](#)]

Critical Apparatus

1. Λακεδαιμόνιος στρατιώτης delevit Hense
2. Ἀλκῆνωρ καὶ Χρόμιος Wesseling ex Herodoto : ἀλκῆνορος καὶ χραμίου codd. : Ἀγῆνωρ καὶ Χρόμιος Gesner ex Plutarcho

Commentary on the text

If F 2a and F 2b are discussed together, it is because a number of stories from the *Parallela minora* are also found in Ioannes of Stobi (see on the relationship between Stobaios and *Parallela*, F. Jacoby, 'Die Überlieferung von Ps. Plutarchs *Parallela minora* und die Schwindelautoren', *Mnemosyne*³ 8 (1940), 98-124 and A. De Lazzer, *Plutarco. Paralleli minori* (Naples 2000), 39-49). Because Stobaios preserves a story (here F 2b) that, in its main lines, is very close to that narrated in *Parallela minora* (here F 2a), while at the same time giving as source a different author (Theseus instead of Chrysermos), the usual assumption is that Stobaios and the *Parallela minora* both depend on an ampler, now lost original version of Pseudo-Plutarch's work (see Jacoby, 'Die Überlieferung von Ps. Plutarchs *Parallela minora*', 98-115 for the general argument, 97 n. 1 for qualifications concerning Theseus, and full discussion of the relationship between Stobaios and *Parallela minora* in respect to Theseus/Chrysermos at 121-3; Jacoby, *FGrH* 3A, 385).

Looking only at this specific case may not be sufficient to make such an assumption fully convincing. Jacoby (*FGrH* 3A, 385), for instance, acknowledges that the fact that the story in Stobaios is followed by another excerpt headed τοῦ αὐτοῦ (i.e., from the same author: Theseus: see *BNJ* 2 453 F 2 and F 3), an excerpt also concerning Spartan history but absent from *Parallela minora* (although the story is present in Plutarch, *Moralia* 235F, *Sayings of the Spartans* 63), might give rise to some doubts ('einen ganz leisen zweifel erweckt') as to whether the relationship between *Parallela minora* and Stobaios here is the usual one. Yet consideration of the whole relationship between the two texts, consideration of issues such as the double source references which arise elsewhere in the *Parallela minora*, and finally some details such as the uncanny dovetailing of the text of the dedications in the Greek and Roman stories (see below), led Jacoby (*FGrH* 3A, 385) to accept that both Theseus's account and the story attributed to Chrysermos in *Parallela minora* were part of the original, ampler, and now lost version of the *Parallela minora*.

Jacoby's position has been attacked by M. van der Valk, *Researches on the Text and the Scholia of the Iliad* 1 (Leiden 1963), 401-3, who, developing Jacoby's doubt on the relationship in this instance between Stobaios and *Parallela minora*, argues that the two texts are indeed related, but that the relationship is the opposite: Theseus (in Stobaios) is looking at Chrysermos's text. From this, Van der Valk deduces the real existence (beyond the *Parallela minora*) of Chrysermos's *Peloponnesiaka*. In particular, Van der Valk focuses on the slightly redundant formulation Ὀθρυάδης Λακεδαιμόνιος στρατιώτης ('Othryades, a Lakedaimonian soldier') in Stobaios, where στρατιώτης is not really necessary, to argue that the word is used here to demarcate this version against that of Chrysermos, who made of Othryades a στρατηγός ('general'). The observation concerning the redundancy of the term στρατιώτης is excellent, and the argument on the whole points, I believe, in the right direction, but it presents some flaws: 1. the idea that Theseus is looking at Chrysermos's work, and not at Chrysermos as mediated by Pseudo-Plutarch, is an unwarranted assumption (Theseus does not mention any sources, and could be looking at either text); 2. Van der Valk's reconstruction of Theseus's methods in writing history is far too complex: he would have been attracted by the romantic aspects of Chrysermos's version, but wanted to produce a scientific history and thus corrected it in light of Herodotos, eliminating the

Amphictyons, but retaining, in one final concession to romanticism, the motif of the inscription with blood; 3. more importantly, and in my view decisively, Van der Valk's view does not deal adequately with the uncanny dovetailing of the texts of the inscriptions on the trophies in Theseus, in Chrysermos, and in the Roman parallel to Chrysermos's story in Pseudo-Plutarch (see below for this). This last point implies that Pseudo-Plutarch, when writing *Parallela minora* 3A-B, was building his account around the version we know as 'of Theseus'. In his commentary on Theseus *BNJ 453 F 2*, B.W. Millis does not take position on this (he does not mention Pseudo-Plutarch at all), but, on the basis of onomastic evidence, accepts for Theseus a date after Plutarch, in the second century AD at the earliest; so does also J. Radicke, *FGrH IVA 7*, Theseus 1078, 244. A. Corcella, 'A New Fragment of the Historian Theseus', *CQ²* 46 (1996), 261-6 tends to follow Jacoby's line of reasoning but he does not address this specific issue, and his suggested date for Theseus in the second or third century AD implies that Stobaios can hardly have taken his excerpt from an ampler version of the *Parallela minora* (a work whose redaction is commonly dated to the first part of the second century AD). The existence of a further fragment of Theseus preserved in the *Palatine Anthology* 14.77 (Corcella, 'A New Fragment', 266) shows that his work may have been more widely spread than otherwise assumed but does not prove anything decisively.

In what follows, I shall discuss the text of the *Parallela minora* (attributed to Chrysermos) and also its possible relationship with the text of Stobaios (from Theseus), considering them (with Jacoby, 'Die Überlieferung', 123) not as two versions of the same text, but as two different narratives of the same story, two narratives that, for Jacoby, would have been both comprised within the earlier and ampler version of Pseudo-Plutarch's *Parallela*. In Jacoby's scenario, Theseus would be one of the few authentic authors cited by Pseudo-Plutarch, and his version would have been contrasted to the version of an invented Chrysermos. That the two versions stood together, with the two attributions to Chrysermos and Theseus, is in my opinion difficult to prove and a doubt must remain (the date of Theseus is uncertain, and this is problematic). But it seems to me indubitable that within the *Parallela minora* the version of Chrysermos was shaped so as to contrast it, implicitly or explicitly, to the rhetorical *vulgata* that we perceive now under the name of Theseus.

The conflict between Sparta and Argos for the possession of the Thyreatis can be dated to shortly before 547 BC, following Herodotos 1.82 (the earliest preserved account of the battle), who links it with the request of help from Kroisos and with his fall (see T. Kelly, *A History of Argos to 500 BC* (Minneapolis, MN 1976), 137-9; L. Piccirilli, *Gli arbitrati interstatali greci, I: dalle origini al 338 a.C.* (Pisa 1973), n° 8, 36-41). The later tradition, however, proposed a very different date and context: Ephoros probably put the battle soon after the end of the First Messenian War, in the seventh century BC. (Plutarch, *Sayings of the Lakedaimonians* 231E and Pausanias 3.7.5 state that it happened under the kings Theopompos and Polydoros, whence the dates to 720/19 BC in Eusebios of Caesarea and to 735/34 in Solinus, Gaius Julius, *Collection of Curiosities* 7.9: discussion in N. Robertson, *Festivals and Legends: The Formation of Greek Cities in the Light of Public Ritual* (Toronto, ON 1992), 181-4). In Herodotos, the two armies decide that three hundred champions from each side shall fight. The champions fight the entire day, and at night, only two Argives, Alkenor and Chromios, and a Spartan, Othryades, are still alive. The Argives go back to their city claiming victory, while the Spartan remains, strips the Argive dead of their armour, and

brings it to the Spartan camp. On the following day, the armies return, and there is a dispute, the Argives claiming that they have won because two of their men survived, the Spartans claiming that victory is theirs because their man has remained in control of the battlefield. Eventually, the two armies start fighting, and the Lakedaimonians win. Othryades, the Spartan survivor, ashamed of returning to Sparta, commits suicide on the battlefield. (On this narrative, see Robertson, *Festivals and Legends*, 199-206; J. Dillery, 'Reconfiguring the Past: Thyrea, Thermopylae and Narrative Patterns in Herodotus', *AJP* 117 (1996), 217-54; D. Asheri, in D. Asheri, A.B. Lloyd, A. Corcella, *A Commentary on Herodotus I-IV* (Oxford 2007), 139-40; C. Dewald and R. Vignolo Munson, *Herodotus. Histories Book I* (Cambridge 2022), 297-9).

As Jacoby, *FGrH* 3A, 384 and Asheri, *A Commentary on Herodotus*, 140, have pointed out, the story was soon distorted for rhetorical purposes, e.g., by Isokrates 6.99 who in his Archidamos presents the battle as if the three hundred Spartans had fought victoriously against the entire Argive army. Similarly, in Strabo's account (Strabo, *Geography* 8.6.17) Othryadas is the Spartan general and he leads the three hundred Lakedaimonians to victory. In these versions the suicide does not figure at all (the only text that retains the notion of a suicide is an epigram attributed to Nikandros of Colophon, *Palatine Anthology* 7.526). Notably, Pausanias 2.20.7 states that close to the theatre of Argos one can see a representation of the Argive Perilaos, son of Alkenor, killing the Spartan Othryadas. (See also B.W. Millis, Theseus *BNJ* 453 F 2). Nor does the inscription of the trophy with blood have a place in these narratives. (As P. Liddell points out to me, the idea of inscribing a trophy in blood might have something to do with the fact that trophies are sometimes dedicated in the name of those who have died in the battle: compare the Marathon dedication *IG* I³ 784 = Fornara 49, and perhaps also the Theban monument after Leuctra, P.J. Rhodes and R. Osborne (eds.), *Greek Historical Inscriptions 404-323 BC* (Oxford 2003), n^o 30).

As the story became a topic in rhetorical exercises, numerous variants developed, and in this context the motif of the inscription in blood began to figure prominently: it is attested in Dioskourides, *Palatine Anthology* 7.430, while in *Palatine Anthology* 431 the trophy simply sends a message. The inscribed trophy is present in Valerius Maximus 3.2 ext. 4; the writing is given ample development in Seneca the Elder, *Suasoriae* 2.2 and 16. An inscribed trophy is also present in Lucian, *Charon or the Inspectors* 24, in which Hermes, pointing out to Charon a battle between Argives and Lakedaimonians, adds that 'The general who lies there half-dead, writing an inscription on the trophy with his own blood, is Othryades', and Lucian, *Professor of Rhetoric* 18 (suggesting that τὰ Ὀθρυάδου γράμματα, 'the writing of Othryades', should always be kept handy). The popularity of the topic may also be inferred by the existence of engraved gems with the representation of Othryades writing the word 'Nike' on his shield. According to H.B. Walters, 'Three Engraved Gems', *The British Museum Quarterly* 6.2 (1931), 34-5, this kind of decoration is found on gems dating to the second/first century BC. The theme preserved its rhetorical power, as is shown by the neoclassical studies of 'Othryades dying' by Johan Tobias Sergel (Paris, Louvre, RF 1786; the terracotta served as model for a plaster, now lost, presented as admission piece to the Royal Academy of Painting and Sculpture in Paris in 1779) and by Pierre-Jean David d'Angers (Musée des beaux-Arts, Angers; awarded the second prize in the Prix de Rome of

1810), in both of which the gesture of writing in blood over a shield figures prominently. The most detailed collection of sources for the story is P. Kohlmann, 'Othryades', *RhM* 29 (1874), 463-80.

The versions of the *Parallela minora* and of Theseus/Stobaios share certain distinctive aspects that set them apart from the Herodotean tradition. In both narratives the chronological collocation is left vague; the erection of a trophy, further inscribed with the blood of the Spartan warrior, is common to both. The trophy inscribed with blood is clearly a central element of the story. Tellingly, in the *Parallela minora* the story is presented as a parallel to that of Misunius Amblirenus (? Postumius Albinus? the name is corrupted: see Aristeides of Miletos *BNJ* 286 F 3), who having lost three legions while fighting the Samnites and having fallen wounded, woke up during the night and erected a trophy, dedicating it to Zeus with his blood. When on the following day a Roman general, Maximus, arrived, he took this as a good sign and went on to defeat the Samnites. The Roman story does not revolve around a battle of the champions but rather on the dedication of a trophy with the blood of the general, which leads on the following day to victory. A. Cameron, *Greek mythography in the Roman world* (Oxford 2004), 130-31, does not discuss Theseus in particular, but argues on the basis of the extraordinary 'fit' between Greek and Roman story that although attributed to different sources, these must have been written by the same person. Importantly for our specific problem, the accounts of both Theseus and Chrysermos give what purports to be the actual text of Othryades's dedication, just as the account attributed to Aristeides gives the text of Amblirenus' dedication (see discussion below).

But if the accounts of Chrysermos/Pseudo-Plutarch and of Theseus/Stobaios present some striking points in common, and if they are thus part of the same rhetorical vulgate (Corcella, 'A New Fragment', 264 stresses the 'element of rhetorical elaboration' recognizable in Theseus's fragments *BNJ* 453 F 2 and *BNJ* F 3), there are also some significant differences between the two (minute discussion in J. Schlereth, *De Plutarchi quae feruntur Paralleli minoribus* (Freiburg 1931), 18-22).

The most important difference is the presence of Amphiktyons in Pseudo-Plutarch's account. Amphiktyons are never mentioned in the rest of the *vulgata* on Thyrea (see A. De Lazzer, *Plutarco. Paralleli minori* (Naples 2000), 318, and Kohlmann, 'Othryades', 472). Pausanias 4.5.1 mentions an Argive amphiktyony in the context of the dispute leading to the first Messenian War, which would have been in a position to settle the dispute between Spartans and Messenians, but he does not mention the fight over the Thyreatis. Jacoby, *FGrH* 3A, 384, points out that for Pseudo-Plutarch the Amphiktyony here must be the Delphic one. One aspect that has been discussed is the formula οἱ Ἀμφικτύονες αὐτόπται γινόμενοι ('after having seen for themselves'): Piccirilli, *Gli arbitrati interstatali greci*, I, 38-9, has argued that the expression αὐτόπται γινόμενοι corresponds to περιηγησάμενοι ('having surveyed the land') and similar expressions which appear in epigraphical documents whenever judges are called to decide on a territorial question. On this basis, Piccirilli suggests that Chrysermos was consulting a well-informed source and that indeed an amphiktyony took part in the decision. But the equivalence of the two expressions is questionable; more importantly, this would only prove that Pseudo-Plutarch could use the language typical of arbitrations (so P. Sánchez, *L'Amphictionie des Pyles et des Delphes*

(Stuttgart 2001), 82-4). It seems clear that a statement such as the following: 'Chrysermos of Corinth ... adds a tantalizing scrap of information to our knowledge of this battle between champions, that it was organized by an amphictyony or religious league' (P. Walcot, 'Cattle Raiding, Heroic Tradition, and Ritual: The Greek Evidence', *History of Religions* 18 (1979), 332 n. 16) gives excessive weight to Pseudo-Plutarch's testimony. The role of the Amphiktyony is much more likely to be a variant introduced by Pseudo-Plutarch.

A further difference between the two narratives concerns the rank and the names of the fighters: Theseus (in Stobaios) presents Othryades as a simple soldier (στρατιώτης) and names the two Argive survivors Alkenor and Chromios. In Pseudo-Plutarch, Othryades is a general (as in other texts, e.g., in Strabo 8.6.17, discussed above, and Lucian), while the otherwise unknown Thersandros appears in the role of the Argive leader. Moreover, one of the two Argive survivors is named Agenor (but the name is close enough to Alkenor for it to be an error rather than a variant).

More interesting is one further difference which concerns the text of the inscriptions: while the fact of inscribing the trophy with blood is one of the elements linking together the text of Chrysermos in Pseudo-Plutarch and that of Theseus in Stobaios, the two epigrams are different, the first being a short dedication to 'Zeus of the trophies', while the second focuses on the two fighting groups, 'Lakedaimonians, against the Argives'. Strikingly, however, in the Roman parallel that follows this story, *Parallela minora* 3B, supposedly from the *Italian Stories* of Aristeides of Miletos, Misunius Amblirenus writes with his blood 'The Romans against the Samnites, to Zeus of the trophies'. The inscription of the Roman story appears thus to combine the two Greek inscriptions (a point highlighted by Schlereth, *De Plutarchi quae feruntur Parallelis minoribus*, 21). Schlereth concluded from this that the original, ampler text of the *Parallela minora* contained both versions (Chrysermos' and Theseus'); and that Stobaios preserves one of them, while *Parallela minora* in its actual state the other. The same conclusion, although supported by a more stringent analysis of the tradition, was reached by Jacoby, who further considered Theseus a real, authentic author, while Chrysermos was an invented one, whose origin (Corinth) might actually derive from the title of one of Theseus's works, *Korinthiaka* (*Corinthian Stories*). This hypothesis is also aired by Radicke, *FGrH* IVA, Theseus 1078, 245-6, who however does not pursue the chronological implications of such a statement. The assumption that Theseus and his *Korinthiaka* are the impulse behind the creation of the fictitious Chrysermos of Corinth implies a dating of Theseus in the first century AD – something that goes against the prosopographical data, but that we may have to accept.

As stated above, it seems to me that while it is not entirely necessary to accept a scenario in which the text of the *Parallela minora* contained the versions of both Theseus and 'Chrysermos' (attractive though the connection ethnic origin/title of work may be! But see also Jacoby's residual doubt, above), the narrative of *Parallela minora* 3AB presupposes knowledge of Theseus's version (or of what became Theseus's version).

An intriguing note by a scholiast to Statius, 4.48 helps measure the remarkable flexibility of the story. Here, Othryades is the general of the Lakedaimonian army but the affair involves the two armies in their entirety, and as the Lakedaimonians are winning, Othryades is mortally wounded. At this point, he orders his men to erect a trophy, and dipping his finger

in his blood, inscribes the story--the passage is corrupt, so that the text of the inscription remains uncertain, but it is likely that something like κατὰ Ἀργείων ('against the Argives') was meant: see P. Kohlmann, 'Die Inschrift des Othryades beim Staiusscholiasten', *RhM* 31 (1876), 302-4.

On the epithet *tropaiouchos* ('Zeus Guardian of Trophies') for Zeus (rather than the more frequent Ζηνὶ τροπαίῳ), see K. Preisendanz, 'Tropaiouchos', in W.H. Roscher, *Ausführliches Lexikon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie* 5 (Leipzig 1916), 1265; A.B. Cook, *Zeus. A Study in Ancient Religion* 2.1, 110-11 n. 9. On the inscriptions, see Kohlmann, 'Othryades'; in general, De Lazzer, *Plutarco. Paralleli minori*, 318-19.

Commentary on F 2b

Ioannes Stobaios, native of Stobi in Macedonia and active in the fifth century CE, is the author of an anthology in four books, the Ἀνθολόγιον, comprising excerpts of Greek literature from Homer to the fourth century CE, grouped by theme. Rather than consulting the texts themselves, Stobaios seems to have made use of earlier collections. For a good introduction to the whole, see R.M. Piccione and D. T. Runia, 'Stobaios', *BNP* (2006, Consulted online on 30 December 2022

<http://dx.doi.org.libproxy.ucl.ac.uk/10.1163/1574-9347_bnp_e1123320>); see also E. Dickey, *Ancient Greek Scholarship. A Guide to Finding, Reading, and Understanding Scholia, Commentaries, Lexica, and Grammatical Treatises, from Their Beginnings to the Byzantine Period* (Oxford 2007), 105-6. The *Anthology* can be consulted in the edition by K. Wachsmuth and O. Hense, *Ioannis Stobaei Anthologium* (Berlin 1884–1912 = *TLG*).

Our passage comes from book 3 chapter 7, which is dedicated to 'Courage' (περὶ ἀνδρείας). 3. 7.67 and 68 are both excerpts of Theseus, close however, as we have seen, to an account given by Pseudo-Plutarch in his *Parallela minora*. The six preceding excerpts in Stobaios (3.7.63: 'from the narrations of Plutarch'; 3.7.64: 'from Agatharchides of Samos, in the fourth book of *Persika*'; 3.7.65: 'Aristeides in the third book of *Persika*'; 3.7.66: 'Kallisthenes in the second book of *Metamorphoses*'; 3.7.67: 'Kallisthenes in the third book of *Makedonika*'; 3.7.67 (bis): 'Sostratos in the second book of *Thrakika*') all refer to authors and (Greek) stories found only in the *Parallela minora*, and come moreover from the same part of it: respectively, *Moralia* 305B, 305D, 306C, 306E, 307D, and 310A (Chrysermos is at *Moralia* 306 AB). This is rather suggestive: Stobaios appears to have 'lifted' his excerpts not from different authors, but from a source that had already grouped them – the *Parallela minora*, or a version of it.

Fragment 287 F 3

ID	287 F 3
Source	Pseudo-Plutarch, On Rivers 1.3 = <i>Moralia</i> 1150A-B
Work mentioned	Indika book 80
Source date	2nd century AD
Source language	Greek

Source genre	ethnology; geography, ancient; ritual; sacrifice; hymnlaw, ancient; law, ancient
Fragment subject	ethnology; geography, ancient; ritual; sacrifice; hymnlaw, ancient; law, ancient
Textual base	Jacoby

Text

οἱ δὲ ἐγγώριοι¹ τὰς ἀσεβῶς ἀναστρεφομένας παρθένους¹ σταυροῖς προσηλώσαντες εἰς αὐτὸν βάλλουσιν, τῇ σφῶν διαλέκτῳ τὸν Ἐφροδίτης ὕμνον αἰδοντες. Κατορύσσουσι δὲ κατ' ἐνιαυτὸν γραῦν κατάκριτον παρὰ τὸν ὀνομαζόμενον λόφον Θηρογόνον³· ἅμα γὰρ «τῶι» τὴν πρεσβῦτιν «κατορυχθῆναι»⁴ ἔρπετῶν πλῆθος ἐκ τῆς ἀκρωρείας ἐξέρχεται, καὶ τὰ περιπτώμενα⁵ τῶν ἀλόγων⁶ ζώων κατεσθίει, καθὼς⁷ ἱστορεῖ Χρύσερμος ἐν π' Ἰνδικῶν. Μέμνηται δὲ τούτων ἀκριβέστερον Ἀρχέλαος ἐν τῷ Περὶ ποταμῶν.

Translation

The local inhabitants nail the maidens who behave impiously to a cross and throw them in it (the Hydaspes River), singing in their dialect the hymn of Aphrodite. Every year they bury a condemned old woman beside the hill called Beast-bearer (Therogonos). For, at the same time as the old woman is buried, a multitude of reptiles emerges from the mountain ridge and devours the brute animals which are flying around. So records Chrysermos in Book 80 of the *Indika*. And Archelaos (*BNJ* 123 F 7) has recounted these matters more fully in Book 13 of *On rivers*.

Critical Apparatus

- οἱ δὲ ἐγγώριοι ... κατεσθίει Schol. H. Dion. Per. 1139
- παρθένους: πόρνας Schol. H. Dion. Per. 1139
- Θηρογόνον omittit Schol. H. Dion. Per. 1139
- «τῶι» τὴν πρεσβῦτιν «κατορυχθῆναι» vel καταχωσθῆναι Hercher, Schol. H. Dion. Per. 1139, Jacoby; ἅμα γὰρ τὴν πρεσβῦτιν ἔρπετῶν πλῆθος ἐκ τῆς ἀκρωρείας ἐξέρχεται P, Calderón Dorda, Delattre.
- περιστάμενα Schol. H. Dion. Per. 1139
- ἀλόγων P, Schol; ἄλλων Wytttenbach
- καθὼς — ποταμῶν omittit Schol. H. Dion. Per. 1139

Commentary on the text

It is unclear how much of this is supposed to come from Chrysermos. Jacoby, *FGrH* 287 F 3, prints only the text of *On rivers* 1.3 from the end of the second paragraph, and I have followed him here (not so in *BNJ* 287 F 3). But in the absence of any references the whole might be thought to be from Chrysermos--the second and third paragraph of *On Rivers* 1.3

certainly are, as together they mirror the story told in *On Rivers* 1.1, concerning the Hydaspes. So the question is whether also *On rivers* 1.2, on the stone *lychnis*, and the first paragraph of *On Rivers* 1.3, which concerns a plant similar to the heliotrope, should also be attributed to Chrysermos. Ultimately this is a moot point, since all of this stems from the pen of Pseudo-Plutarch; but at any rate for the *lychnis* there is another strong candidate, Derkyllus, see below.

The fact that this passage claims to be from the eightieth book of Chrysermos' *Indian Stories*, a work otherwise unknown, makes it all the more likely that this is an invention (so, after others, M. van der Valk, *Researches on the Text and the Scholia of the Iliad* 1 (Leiden 1963), 400 n. 356). C. Delattre (ed.), *Pseudo-Plutarque. Nommer le monde. Origine des noms de fleuves, de montagnes et de ce qui s'y trouve* (Villeneuve d'Ascq 2011), 25 notes that this extraordinarily high number is possibly meant to appear as fabulous as the Indian stories referred to here. As for Archelaos, here and in the other passage of the *On rivers* in which he is mentioned (*On rivers* 9.3) he serves the purpose of providing an alternative source-reference: see F. Atenstädt, 'Zwei Quellen des sogenannten Plutarch de fluviis', *Hermes* 57 (1922), 238-9; and *FGH/BNJ* 123 F 7-9. Jacoby follows Atenstädt in considering that the homonymous king of Cappadocia is meant here and that the references are only in part fictional, while some elements may indeed go back to Archelaos's work (see also A. De Lazzer, in E. Calderon Dorda, A. De Lazzer, E. Pellizer, *Plutarco. Fiumi e monti* (Naples 2003), 70-1, with further references).

The two customs narrated here reflect the narrative of *On rivers* 1.1 (two paragraphs earlier) about the illicit love of Chrysippe for her father Hydaspes, caused by the anger of Aphrodite, and its consequences. Chrysippe, with the help of her old nurse, united herself with her father. When Hydaspes found out, in his anger he punished his daughter by nailing her to a cross and the old nurse by burying her alive. Finally, Hydaspes threw himself into the river (then named Indos), giving it his name. The actions of nailing impious maidens to a cross and throwing them in the river while singing a hymn to Aphrodite, and of burying a condemned old woman every year, are transformations into ritual actions of the *aition* narrated above (of course the story is imagined through and through, and it would be wilful to consider that the ritual actions gave origin to a story meant to explain them).

Such an understanding requires however a small intervention on the transmitted text. A different approach has been followed by Pellizer: working on the basis of the transmitted text (see above, apparatus), Pellizer takes *κατορύσσω* here to mean 'to dig up' (rather than 'to bury'); this leads him to understand the passage as follows: 'Every year they dig up (*κατορύσσουσι*) the (tomb of) the condemned old woman (Chysippe's nurse) in the place called 'beast-bearer'; for together with the old woman a multitude of reptiles emerges from the mountain ridge...' (in E. Calderón Dorda, A. De Lazzer, E. Pellizer, *Plutarco. Fiumi e monti* (Naples 2003), 124-5. However, there are problems with this solution. As emphasized by Delattre, *Pseudo-Plutarque. Nommer le monde*, 75-77, who also prefers to stick to the transmitted text, *κατορύσσω* means 'to bury', rather than 'to dig up', and *ἄμα* used as preposition requires the dative. Delattre's conclusion is that the Greek text is very elliptical, and that we need to assume an intended participle *κατορύσσοντες*, in the genitive absolute. Thus for Delattre, as already for Hercher and Jacoby, every year an old woman is buried, in a scapegoating ritual. The intervention proposed by Hercher and accepted by Jacoby finds

support in the scholia to Dionysios the Perieget, schol. *H* 1139 – see apparatus, and the discussion below; this is thus the position adopted here.

No sources are given for the story of Chrysippe, her nurse, and Hydaspes, which opens the *On rivers* (1.1); nor are source-reference given for the stone *lychnis* mentioned in 1.2. However, in Johannes Lydos *On months* 3.11, p. 51, 16 Wü, who may derive from Pseudo-Plutarch, a source is mentioned for a passage that concerns the *lychnis*, growing in the Hydaspes – so our stone: Derkyllos (*BNJ* 288 F 8b). The *On rivers* may then here present a lacuna (strikingly, Derkyllos is referred to as the source for a story concerning the elephant of Poros in the following paragraph of *On rivers*, 1.4, *BNJ* 288 F 5: all this is very close). On the relationship between Pseudo-Plutarch's *On rivers* and the *On months* of Lydos see the commentary on [BNJ2 288 F 8](#). The references to Chrysermos's *Indian Stories* (and to Archelaos's *On rivers*) are thus the two first source-references of the small treatise.

In terms of textual tradition, it should be noted here that the entire first three paragraphs of *On rivers* (1.1 until 1.3, i.e., the story of Chrysippe's love for her father, her punishment, and the behaviour of the locals) are also present, with minimal variations and without the source-reference, in the scholia to Dionysios the Perieget, schol. *H* 1139 (vol. 2 p. 456 Müller). According to K. Müller, *Geographi graeci minores* 2 (Paris 1861), 456, the text of the *scholion*, which clearly derives from Pseudo-Plutarch, *On rivers* 1.1-3, is in a different hand from the rest. Thus, at least one ancient reader thought that the three paragraphs went together (this is, for instance, not the case of the scholion to Dionysios the Perieget 1165, Müller *Geographi graeci minores* 2, 457, which also probably derives from the *On rivers*, but which preserves only the last part of paragraph 2.1). Another element for taking the three paragraphs together resides in the possibility that the name of the source-reference Chrysermos was invented on the basis of (or so as to resonate with, as I would tend to think) that of Chrysippe, the heroine of *On rivers* 1.1, for whose story no source-reference is given; see R. Hercher, *Plutarchi libellus de Fluviiis* (Leipzig 1851), 22, and A. Cameron, *Greek mythography in the Roman world* (Oxford 2004), 129-30.

Commentary on F 3

On the textual transmission, content, and purpose of the *On rivers* see above, Commentary on F 1.

This passage is from the very first chapter of the *On rivers*, which concerns the Indian river Hydaspes (the last chapter of the treatise, *On rivers* 25, will discuss the Indus river, so that two Indian rivers open and close the treatise – the connection between the two is made explicit by the fact that in *On rivers* 1.1, Pseudo-Plutarch states that initially the Hydaspes was named Indus). The naming of the river is discussed first, and the stories linked to it. Next come details on a stone that grows in it (the *lychnitis*), used by important men, and on a plant similar to heliotrope, which the indigenous population uses to defend themselves from the excessive heat. This is followed by a further discussion of the practices of the local inhabitants, which are closely linked to the story told in the first paragraph (for this part, Chrysermos and Archelaos are named as sources); a story concerning how the elephant of Poros gave his name to the mountain located near the river closes the chapter (source, Derkyllos, *BNJ* 288 F 5).

Fragment 287 F 4a

ID	287 F 4a
Source	Pseudo-Plutarch, <i>Parallela Minora</i> 10A = <i>Moralia</i> 308B (A. De Lazzer, <i>Plutarco. Paralleli minori</i> (Naples 2000))
Work mentioned	Historika book 2
Source date	2nd century AD
Source language	Greek
Source genre	major wars history, ancient; biography-to 500; magistrates, roman
Fragment subject	major wars history, ancient; biography-to 500; magistrates, roman
Textual base	A. De Lazzer, <i>Plutarco. Paralleli minori</i> (Naples 2000)

Text

Περσῶν τὴν Ἑλλάδα λεηλατούντων Πausanίας ὁ τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων στρατηγὸς πεντακόσια χρυσοῦ τάλαντα παρὰ Ξέρξου λαβὼν ἔμελλε προδιδόναι τὴν Σπάρτην. φωραθέντος δὲ τούτου, Ἄγησίλαος¹ ὁ πατὴρ μέχρι τοῦ ναοῦ τῆς Χαλκιοίκου συνεδίωξεν Ἄθηνᾶς, καὶ τὰς θύρας τοῦ τεμένους πλίνθωι φράξας λιμῶι ἀπέκτεινεν, ἡ δὲ μήτηρ καὶ ἄταφον ἔρριψεν, ὡς Χρύσερμος ἐν δευτέρῳ Ἱστορικῶν.

Translation

When the Persians were plundering Greece, Pausanias the general of the Lakedaimonians having received five hundred talents of gold from Xerxes intended to betray Sparta. But after he was discovered, his father Agesilaos joined in pursuing him up to the temple of Athena Chalkioikos, and having blocked the doors of the sanctuary with bricks he killed him through hunger, while his mother threw him out to remain unburied, as Chrysermos narrates in the second book of his *Histories*.

Critical Apparatus

1. Nachstädt, Ducat, De Lazzer, Boulogne, Ibanez- Chacon; Ἄγησίλαος Jacoby

Ἄγησίλαος most codices and editors (Guarinus, Xylander, Nachstädt, Ducat, De Lazzer, Boulogne, Ibanez- Chacon) ; Ἄγησίλαος (F² Σ) Jacoby

Commentary on the text

See below, commentary on the text of F 4b.

Commentary on F 4a

The text is that of A. De Lazzer, *Plutarco. Paralleli minori* (Naples 2000); Jacoby printed as F 4 the text of Stobaios (here below, under F 4b), and confined in apparatus the divergences offered by *Parallela minora*. For more on the text, tradition, and content of *Parallela minora* see above, Commentary on F 2a.

Fragment 287 F 4b

ID	287 F 4b
Source	Ioannes Stobaios, Anthology 3.39.31
Work mentioned	Persika book 2
Source date	5th century AD
Source language	Greek
Source genre	major wars, capital punishment; law, ancient biography-to 500
Fragment subject	major wars, capital punishment; law, ancient biography-to 500
Textual base	Jacoby

Text

Χρύσερμος ἐν δευτέρῳ Περσικῶν. Περσῶν τὴν Ἑλλάδα λεηλατούντων καὶ πάντων τῶν ἐγχωρίων συγκεχυμένων, Πausanίας ὁ τῶν Λακεδαιμονίων στρατηγὸς ἀπὸ Ξέρξου πεντακόσια τάλαντα χρυσοῦ λαβὼν ἔμελλε προδιδόναι τὴν Σπάρτην. τῶν δὲ ἐπιστολῶν μεσολαβηθεισῶν, Ἡγησίλαος ὁ πατὴρ τοῦ προειρημένου περὶ τῶν συμβεβηκότων ἀκούσας τὸν υἱὸν μέχρι τοῦ ναοῦ τῆς Χαλκιοίκου συνεδίωξεν Ἀθηνᾶς, καὶ τὰς θύρας τοῦ τεμένους πλίνθοις ἐμφράξας μετὰ τῆς γυναικὸς τὴν εἴσοδον ἐφρούρησε καὶ λιμῶι τὸν προδότην ἀνεῖλεν, ὃν ἡ μήτηρ αἰείρασα ὑπὲρ τοὺς ὄρους ἔρριψεν.

Translation

Chrysermos in the second book of his *Persian Histories*. When the Persians were plundering Greece and all the inhabitants were in confusion, Pausanias, the general of the Lakedaimonians, accepted five hundred talents of gold from Xerxes and intended to betray Sparta. But when the letters were intercepted, Hegesilaos, the father of the above-mentioned, heard what had happened and helped to pursue his son up to the temple of Athena of the Brazen House, and he walled up the doors of the sanctuary with bricks and with his wife stood guard at the entrance. He killed the traitor by starvation, and his mother took the body and threw it outside the borders.

Critical Apparatus

Commentary on the text

The fragment is transmitted in the *Parallela minora* (F 4a) and in a slightly longer version in Ioannes Stobaios, 3.39.31 (F 4b; the differences are underlined). Clearly, a common

narrative underlies both texts. The *Parallela minora* simply offers a more compressed version (minute comparison of the two texts in J. Schlereth, *De Plutarchi quae feruntur Parallelis minoribus* (Freiburg 1931), 27-9).

The difference in the title of the work from which the story is taken need not be significant, especially since the book number is the same. *Historika* may be understood as a general title, covering the *Persika* and possibly also the *Indika*, rather than as the title of yet another work (so Jacoby, *FGrH* 3A, 385; De Lazzer, *Plutarco. Paralleli minori*, 44 and 330). Similarly, the fact that in the *Parallela minora* Pausanias is simply 'caught out', while Stobaios has the usual (Thucydidean) version in which letters are intercepted, need not imply the existence of 'diversas recensiones' (so Schlereth, *De Plutarchi quae feruntur Parallelis minoribus*, 29): it is sufficient to think that the original ampler version of the *Parallela* was richer in details and that Stobaios and *Parallela minora* both summarized it, although in different ways and to a different extent. (Indications as to how the epitomator proceeded are in F. Jacoby, 'Die Überlieferung von Ps. Plutarchs *Parallela minora* und die Schwindelautoren', *Mnemosyne*³ 8 (1940), 113, who comments concerning *Parallela minora* 10A that the people [the ἐγχώριοι] can be left out as unimportant, here and elsewhere, when the story concerns a king and that the Roman parallel, with the simple φωραθείς ['discovered'], may have influenced the choice in *Parallela minora* of φωραθέντος δὲ τούτου ['But he was discovered'] instead of the more elaborate τῶν δὲ ἐπιστολῶν μεσολαβηθεισῶν ['the letters were intercepted'] of Stobaios). At any rate, that a common narrative is behind these two versions is proven by the fact that both contain common mistakes or oddities too surprising to be independent. In particular:

1. The general setting is wrong: the events narrated should be located well after the end of the Persian Wars (even if one were to accept Diodoros of Sicily's chronology of the events).
2. Pausanias's father was Kleombrotos (Thucydides 1.94.1), and not Hegesilaos or Agesilaos; and it was after his death in 480/79 that Pausanias became the regent (Herodotos 9.10.2-3). Thus, Pausanias's father cannot have played a role in his son's death. Incidentally, the very form Ἡγησίλαος (Hegesilaos), shared by both strands of the tradition (although not by all manuscripts) is striking, with its Ionian beginning and Dorian conclusion. J. Ducat, 'Crypties', *Cahiers du Centre Glotz* 8 (1997), 27-8, has argued that this is not just a mistake of copyists because it has thoroughly permeated both traditions and because this form reappears in the P. Lond. Lit. 114 (LDAB 826, a constitution of the Cretans by Ephoros? Latest discussion in F. Valerio, 'PLond inv. 187 recto = PLondLit 114. Testo, traduzione e commento', *Papyrologica Lupiensia* 17 (2008), 61-83), and because Agesipolis as the name of Pausanias's father appears in Vitruvius Pollio, M., *On Architecture* 1.1.6. Jacoby, *FGrH* 3A, 385, advances the hypothesis that the name Hegesilaos for the father may have followed from the definition of Pausanias as *strategos* (for once, surprisingly, correct: he was regent, not king). This seems slightly difficult to accept; it may be better to assume a confusion (innocent or wilful) with Agesilaos, the Euripontid who accessed kingship in 401 BC and whose Agiad colleague was for a while a king Pausanias, who having been condemned to death in absence went into exile in 395 (Xenophon, *Hellenika* 3.5.25) and who, however one wants to interpret Ephoros's statement preserved in Strabo 8.8.8, was involved in suggestions of political reforms that went against the

ephors (see, e.g., J.T. Hooker, 'Spartan Propaganda', in A. Powell, *Classical Sparta: Techniques behind her Success* (London 1989), 127-8).

3. The corruption by means of 500 talents (an amount that recurs elsewhere in *Parallela minora*) is a crude oversimplification of Pausanias's complex and ambitious dealings with Persia, as narrated in Thucydides 1.128-30 (see also on the affair Diod. 11.45; Aelian, *V.A.* 4.7; Polyain. 8.51). Such a sum is never mentioned in the rest of the tradition concerning Pausanias, but it is typical, in its round number, of the *Parallela minora*.

As in the case of the Battle of Thyrea (see above, [F 1](#)), a rhetorical tradition set in early on for the story of the death of Pausanias. Jacoby, *FGrH* 3A, 385 (who gives the text of Diodoros) has rightly highlighted the change from the terse Thucydidean narrative, in which the ephors handle everything alone, to the introduction into the action of Pausanias's mother, as in Diodoros 11.45.6 and probably already in Ephoros (note that the brick, πλίνθος, is present from the start). From then onwards the mother is present, in Cornelius Nepos, *Life of Pausanias* 5 (text quoted in Jacoby, *FGrH* 3A, 385), in Polyainos, *Stratagemata* 8.51, where she receives the name Theano (a choice possibly influenced by the stories on the philosopher Theano?), and in Tzetzes, *Chiliades*, 1.134. In the *Parallela minora*, Pseudo-Plutarch simply transposes to Pausanias's father what the other sources had related of his mother. As for leaving the body unburied or throwing it outside the borders, this was a theme already present in Thucydides 1.134.4, who presents us with a discussion and with an ultimate outcome totally different from the narrative of Pseudo-Plutarch since the oracle at Delphi ordered that Pausanias be buried where he had met his death, on sacred ground (see also Diodoros 11.45.7, and the rhetorical tradition, closer to that of Pseudo-Plutarch, in Aelian, *Various History* 4.7, with Jacoby's discussion, *FGrH* 3A, 385).

Commentary on F 4b

See above, Commentary on F 2b. This particular excerpt comes from the section of Stobaios' anthology dedicated to 'The Fatherland' (περὶ πατρίδος); here the patriotism clearly is that of the parents. This passage is the first of a series of three excerpts (3.39.31, 3.39.32, and 3.39.33) of authors and texts attested in Pseudo-Plutarch's *Parallela minora*: besides Chrysermos, Demaratus, for two stories: one told in the second book of his *Arkadika*, *Moralia* 309C (see T. Banchich on *BNJ* 2 42 F2a); and one from the third book of *Tragodoumena*, *Moralia* 310D (see M. Cuypers' commentary on *BNJ* 2 12 A, F1). For such clusters in Stobaios, see above, Commentary on F2b.

Fragment 287 F 5

ID	287 F 5
Source	Pseudo-Plutarch, On Rivers 7.4 = <i>Moralia</i> 1154B-C
Work mentioned	<i>On rivers</i> book 3
Source date	2nd century AD
Source language	Greek
Source genre	science; geography, ancient; technology

Fragment subject	science; geography, ancient; technology
Textual base	Jacoby

Text

γεννᾶται δὲ¹ βοτάνη πορφυράνθεμος, καλουμένη χρυσόπολις²· πρὸς αὐτὴν γὰρ αἱ ἀστυγείτονες πόλεις τὸν ἀκέραιον χρυσὸν δοκιμάζουσιν. ἅμα γὰρ αὐτὸν χωνευθῆναι ἄπτουσι³ τὴν βοτάνην· καὶ ἐὰν μὲν ἀνόθευτον τὸ χρυσίον ᾗ, τὰ φύλλα χρυσοῦται [καὶ διατηρεῖ τῆς ὕλης τὴν οὐσίαν],⁴ ἐὰν δ' ἐφθαρμένον ὑπάρχηι, τὴν ἠλλαγμένην ὑγρασίαν ἀποπτύει <καὶ διατηρεῖ τῆς ὕλης τὴν οὐσίαν>, καθὼς ἱστορεῖ Χρύσερμος ἐν γ' Περὶ ποταμῶν.

Translation

A plant with purple flowers grows there (in the Paktolos River), called *chrysolopolis*: for against it the neighboring cities test the unmixed gold. For at the moment when it is melted, they bring in the plant; and if the gold is pure, the leaves become gold, but if it happens to be corrupted, they refuse the adulterated liquid < and preserve the essence of their nature >, as Chrysermos records in the third book of *On rivers*.

Critical Apparatus

1. δ' (ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ) βοτάνη Hercher
2. χρυσόπολις Tzetzes, *Chiliades* 4.140.415-19, schol. Hes. *Op.* p. 11 Gaisford (Aristainetos, Ep. 1, 10); -λη P. χρυσοδόχη or χρυσοπόλη? Mueller
3. ἄπτουσι P, Calderón Dorda (in E. Calderón Dorda, A. De Lazzer and E. Pellizer, *Plutarco. Fiumi e monti* (Naples 2003), 146) and Delattre, citing in support of the transmitted reading a parallelism with Aristainetos, *Letters* 1.10, where Kydippe attaches herself, συνήπτετο, to the boy just as the chrysolopolis plant to the gold. <β>ἄπτουσι Kaltwasser, followed by most editors, including Jacoby, based on Tzetzē *Chiliades* 4.415-9: χωννεύεται πρὸς βάθος βεβαμμένη.
3. Jacoby accepts Hercher's proposal, to transpose the sentence καὶ διατηρεῖ τῆς ὕλης τὴν οὐσίαν two lines below, right after ἀποπτύει. The move does indeed yield a slightly better meaning (although it is possible to make a case for the text as it stands: Calderón Dorda and Delattre for instance accept the paradosis).

Commentary on the text

A plant of this name is also mentioned by Tzetzes, *Chiliades* 4.140.415-19 (text in Jacoby, *FGrH* 3A, 386: it is there appended to a story concerning the magnet stone), Tzetzes, *Chiliades* 4.713 (the epistle summarizing what precedes) and Tzetzes, *Scholia in Hesiodi Opera et Dies* p. 11 Gaisford (*Poetae Graeci minores* II, 1823), as well as by Aristainetos, *Letters*, 1.10 (also quoted in *FGrH* 3A, 386). Tzetzes, here as in other instances, got his information from Pseudo-Plutarch. The same may have been the case for Aristainetos, whose activity is probably to be located in the early sixth century AD. But even if

Aristainetos's source was Pseudo-Plutarch, there is some truth in the observation of J. Bidez, 'Plantes et pierres magiques d'après le Ps. Plutarque *De Fluviis*', in *Mélanges offerts à O. Navarre* (Toulouse 1935), 30, that the mention of the *chryso polis* in a passing comparison seems to imply that the plant was well-known. The Paktolos was famous in Greek tradition for carrying gold in its waters, and thus the presence in it of a plant named *chryso polis* is not particularly surprising. However, the existence of such a plant is only mentioned by the above-mentioned authors. The second part of the name seems less easy to explain, and Bidez, 'Plantes et pierres magiques', did indeed suggest to correct the name in χρυσόπωλις, 'gold-seller' (note that the manuscript tradition has χρυσοπόλη). It seems, however, preferable to follow R. Hercher, *Plutarchi Libellus de Fluviis* (Leipzig 1851), 24-5, in accepting that a number of plant names mentioned in the *On rivers* have been invented on the basis of the names of cities (Hercher mentions Cinyra, Charisia, Chryso polis, and Alinda). This theory has been further developed by F. Atenstädt, 'Zwei Quellen des sogenannten Plutarch *de fluviis*', *Hermes* 57 (1922), 221 and 224. Atenstädt accepted that the plant *chryso polis* and two other obscure plants, the *alinda* and the *araxa*, mentioned in *On rivers* 14.2 and 23.2, correspond to (are transpositions into plants of) three cities of the same name; and having noticed that in the entries dedicated to these cities Stephanos of Byzantium refers to the writing of Alexander Polyhistor (resp. *FGrH* 273 F 56 [Araxa], F 113 [Alinda], F 140 [Chryso polis]), he further suggested that Alexander Polyhistor is the remote source for these passages, a source that would of course have been suitably adapted by Pseudo-Plutarch. Stephanos of Byzantium s.v. mentions two cities called Chryso polis, one in Bithynia (modern Üsküdar, located across the Bosphoros from Byzantium, and also mentioned by Ephoros, *BNJ* 70 F 83, and other authors), and one in Cilicia (mentioned by Polyhistor, and not located): see S. Blakely on *BNJ* 273 F 140. A verse inscription from Phrygia addresses Hierapolis (Pamukkale) as Chryso polis, evidently because of its golden river, the Χρυσοπόας (CIG 3909 = R. Merkelbach and J. Stauber, *Steinepigramme aus dem griechischen Osten*, vol. 1 (Stuttgart and Leipzig 1998) 02/12/05); otherwise, Chryso polis appears as a woman's name.

There is no way to know whether the extraordinary passage on the stone *arouraphylax*, also found in the Paktolos and discussed just before our passage, in *On rivers* 7.3, without any source references, should be thought of as also from Chrysermos's work (an ultimately unimportant issue, if Chrysermos is a fiction): see Jacoby, *FGrH* 3A, 386.

Commentary on F 5

On the textual transmission, content, and purpose of the *On rivers* see above, Commentary on F 1.

This passage comes from the chapter concerning the Lydian river Paktolos. The first paragraphs detail its changes of names (first called Chrysorrhoeas, 'golden river', from a young man of Chios who stole gold from Croesus and then, chased by the guards, threw himself in the river, it then took the name Paktolos from a homonymous son of Helios, who unknowingly violated his sister Demodike and then threw himself in the river, paragraphs 1 and 2). We then hear of a special stone, the *arouraphylax*, that is born in the river: this stone protects treasuries from thieves – obviously a story linked to the first one. No source references are given for any of these stories; the first reference of the chapter is

Chrysermos, for the plant chrysopolis. The chapter closes with a story concerning the naming of Mount Tmolos, next to the river (again no source reference), and with details on a stone similar to pumice, which grows on this mountain, and which protects maidens from sexual violence. The source is here Kleitophon, *BNJ* 293 F 4; but clearly this part of *On rivers* (7.6) is thematically connected with the opening of the chapter, 7.1.

Fragment 287 F 6

ID	287 F 6
Source	Pseudo-Plutarch, <i>On rivers</i> 20.2-3 = <i>Moralia</i> 1162E (Stobaios, <i>Anthology</i> 4.36.13)
Work mentioned	<i>On rivers</i> book 13
Source date	2nd century AD
Source language	Greek
Source genre	science; medicine, ancient; everyday culture, women; linguistics
Fragment subject	science; medicine, ancient; everyday culture, women; linguistics
Textual base	Jacoby

Text

γεννᾶται δ' ἐν αὐτῷ λίθος ἀετίτης¹ καλούμενος, ὃν αἱ μαῖαι ταῖς δυστοκούσαις ἐπὶ τὰς γαστέρας ἐπιτιθέασι, καὶ παραχρῆμα τίκτουσιν ἄτερ ἀλγηδόνος. (3) γεννᾶται δ' ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ βοτάνη ἄξαλλα² (?) καλουμένη, μεθερμηνευομένη θερμόν. ταύτην οἱ τεταρταίζοντες ὅταν ἐπὶ τοῦ στήθους θῶσιν, ἀπαλλάττονται παραχρῆμα τῆς ἐπισημασίας, καθὼς ἱστορεῖ Χρύσερμος Κορίνθιος ἐν < <τῷ> > ἰγ' Περὶ ποταμῶν.

Translation

And in it a stone called *aetites* is produced, which the midwives put on the stomachs of women having difficult labors, and immediately they give birth without pain. (3) And in it, too, grows a plant called *axalla*, which translated means 'warm'. Those who have quartan fever, when they set this on their chest, are immediately freed from the symptoms, as Chrysermos of Corinth records in the thirteenth book of *On rivers*.

Critical Apparatus

1. ἀετίτης Stobaios; ἀστιγῆς P
2. ἄξαλλα Stobaios, editors; ἔξαλλα P

Commentary on the text

Pseudo-Plutarch, *On rivers* 20 discusses the River Euphrates. Paragraphs 2 and 3 are both probably supposed to rely on Chrysermos's authority—at least, that is how Ioannes Stobaios

(*Anthology*, 4.36.13) understood it, since the entire passage is presented under the one heading, with minimal differences in the text:

Χρύσερμος Κορίνθιος ἐν τῷ ιγ' Περὶ ποταμῶν. Εὐφράτης ποταμός ἐστὶν τῆς Παρθίας. γεννᾶται δ' ἐν αὐτῷ λίθος ἀετίτης καλούμενος, ὃν αἱ μαῖαι ταῖς δυστοκούσαις ἐπὶ τὰς γαστέρας ἐπιτιθέασι, καὶ παραχρῆμα τίκτουσιν ἄτερ ἀλγηδόνης. (3) εὐρίσκεται δ' ἐν αὐτῷ καὶ βοτάνη ἄξαλλα, μεθερμηνευομένη θερμόν. ταύτην οἱ τεταρταίζοντες ὅταν ἐπὶ τοῦ στήθους τιθῶσιν, ἀπαλλάσσονται παραχρῆμα.

Chrysermos of Corinth in the 13 book *On rivers*. The Euphrates is a river of Parthia. In it a stone is born, called aetites, which the midwives put on the stomachs of women having difficult labors, and immediately they give birth without pain. (3) And in it one finds also a plant *axalla*, which translated means 'warm'. Those who have quartan fever, when they set this on their chest, are immediately freed.

The *aetites* stone and the *axalla* plant are part of a fairly large number of stones and plants in the *On rivers* whose peculiarity lies in their medical and curative virtues (list of passages in F. Atenstädt, 'Zwei Quellen des sogenannten Plutarch *de fluviis*', *Hermes* 57 (1922), 234). The unifying element of these curative plants and stones lies in their magical, rather than natural, action, enhanced in Pseudo-Plutarch's *On rivers* by the fact that the virtues of plants/stones are often related to the mythological stories narrated.

The *aetites* is fairly well known (to the attestations collected by F. Jacoby, *FGrH* 3A, 386 (Pliny, *Natural History* 36.39.149-151; 30.130; Aelian, *History of Animals* 1.35; Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius* 2.14 (I 57.15 Kayser); Dioscorides, *On medical material* 5, 160), should be added the Arab quote of Xenokrates by al-Gāfiqī, text edited and translated in M. Ullmann, 'Das Steinbuch des Xenokrates von Ephesos', *Medizinhistorisches Journal* (1972) 53-55 and 64, with further references; see also M. Ullmann, 'Neues zum Steinbuch des Xenokrates', *Medizinhistorisches Journal* (1973), 65-66), and S. Macrì, *Pietre viventi. I minerali nell'immaginario del mondo antico* (Torino 2009), 85-8 and 139-40. What is striking is that in the authors mentioned the effect of the *aetites* is opposite to that stated by Pseudo-Plutarch, inasmuch as the stone is supposed to stop parturition and avoid abortion (this applies to all of the four varieties of *aetites* known to Pliny, *Natural History* 36.39.149-151: two are found in the nests of eagles, and a fourth, called '*taphiusan aetites*', in rivers, but all of them 'Attached to pregnant women or to cattle in skins of sacrificed animals, they prevent abortion, and should not be removed until the moment of parturition; for otherwise procidence of the uterus results. But if they are not removed at the moment of parturition, there is no parturition at all' (Pliny, *Natural History* 36.39.151; see also Pliny, *HN* 30.130: 'The stone *aetites*, found in the eagle's nest, preserves the foetus against all attempts of abortions').

The presence of the verb μεθερμηνεύειν ('translated') and the gloss *thermon* ('warm') for the local name *axalla* of the plant make it likely that the source for this passage is Alexander Polyhistor, who in his writings appears to have given ample space to glosses, often introduced by a form of (μεθ-) ἐρμηνεύειν (so Atenstädt, 'Zwei Quellen des sogenannten Plutarch *de fluviis*', 219-20; see also the commentary to Theophilus of Antioch, [BNJ 296 F 3](#)).

Commentary on F 6

On the textual transmission, content, and purpose of the *On rivers* see above, Commentary on F 1.

This passage comes from the chapter concerning the Euphrates river. The first paragraph concerns the changes in name of the river (first called Xarandas, then Medos, then Euphrates, with stories that all involves some sort of sexual misdeed and violence, and no source reference); paragraphs 20.2 and 3 concern the stone and the plant, and the source is here given as Chrysermos (but Stobaios took Chrysermos to be the source of the entire block 20.1-20.3); the last paragraph concerns a stone found on nearby Mount Drimylos, and the source is Nicias of Mallos in his *On stones* (BNJ 60 F 3).

As for Stobaios, see above, commentary on F 2b. The passage discussed here comes from a section of the *Anthologion* dedicated to illness and release from its pains (4. 36). It is worth noting that the excerpt that precedes ours (4.36.12) is a passage from the *On rivers* of Agathon of Samos (corresponding to Pseudo-Plutarch, *On rivers*, 18.1-2); also excerpts 4.36.14, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22 quote authors and stories that are also only attested in Pseudo-Plutarch's *On rivers*: clearly Stobaios took these stories as a group from a collection – either Pseudo-Plutarch's *on rivers*, or some work that already had a similar shape. While the order of the series of excerpts in Stobaios is not the same as in Pseudo-Plutarch, it is worth noting that the narrative attributed to Chrysermos (*On rivers* 20.2-3 = Stobaios, *Anthologion* 4.36.13) is followed, in both *On rivers* and in Stobaios, by the account attributed to Nicias of Mallos of the stone found on Mount Drimylos: clearly at least these two excerpts of Stobaios come from a common source.

Fragment 287 F 7

ID	287 F 7
Source	Natalis Comes, <i>Mythologies</i> 5. 5 p. 294 (Venice 1581)
Work mentioned	Peloponnesiaka
Source date	16th century AD
Source language	Greek
Source genre	mythology, Greek; etiology; genealogy
Fragment subject	mythology, Greek; etiology; genealogy
Textual base	Natalis Comes, <i>Mythologies</i> 5. 5, p. 294 (Venetiis 1581)

Text

Suscepit (sc. Mercurius) Erycem ex Aglauro Cecropis filia; e Daura Oceani Eleusinem, Bunum ex Alcidamea, e Philodamea Danai filia Pharim, Caicum ex Ocyrhoe, qui se in fluvium Zaureum deiecit, & dedit nomen Caico Mysiae flumini, ut scripsit Chrysermus Corinthius in Peloponnesiacis. Polybum ex Rihonophila,¹Myrtilum e Cleobula filia Aeoli, e nympha Ladonis filia Euandrum...

Translation

And he generated Eryx from Aglauros the daughter of Kekrops; from Daura daughter of Okeanos Eleusine; Bunos from Alkidamea; Pharis from Philodamea daughter of Danaos; and Kaikos from Okyrhoe, Kaikos who threw himself into the Zauraios River and gave his name to the Kaikos river of Mysia, as Chrysermos the Corinthian wrote in his *Peloponnesian Affairs*. From Chthonophile, Polybos; Myrtilos from Kleobula daughter of Aiolos; from a nymph daughter of Ladon Euander...

Critical Apparatus

1. sic: Chthonophyle (Mulryan and Brown 2006, 368): cf. Pausanias 2.6.6.

Commentary on the text

This fragment is not in Jacoby, because it most likely is not by Chrysermos. The part underlined in the text above was added by Conti to the second edition of his *Mythologiae, sive explicationis fabularum libri decem*, published in Venice in 1581. On Natalis Comes's work, see J. Mulryan and S. Brown, *Natale Conti's Mythologiae* (Tempe 2006), xi-xlvi, as well as P. Ceccarelli, 'Sostratos' [BNJ 23 F 1b](#), [BNJ 23 F 1c](#), and [BNJ 23 F 1d](#). The title of the work of Chrysermos from which the story is supposed to come, *On Peloponnesian Affairs*, corresponds to one of the titles ascribed to Chrysermos by Pseudo-Plutarch; however, the story as such is unattested. Mulryan and Brown, *Natale Conti's Mythologiae*, 368, point to a passage of Pseudo-Plutarch, *On rivers* 21.1. The story narrated there, without any source reference, concerns Kaikos and the naming of the river as a result of his plunge in it, and moreover gives the same genealogy for him. But the earlier name of the river is different, although close enough (in Pseudo-Plutarch, it is the Astraios), and the story is more elaborated. This may thus be simply a distraction or misremembering on the part of Natale Conti; it is very unlikely that he came across a source, now lost, attributing the story of origin of the name of the Kaikos river to Chrysermos. The book title, *Peloponnesiaka*, is also problematic. *Peloponnesiaka* of Chrysermos are cited in *On rivers* 18.7 – see above, F 1; but there the title is appropriate, as that chapter of the *On rivers* concerns the Argive river Inachos; why Chrysermos should talk of the Mysian river Kaikos in a work on *Peloponnesian histories* is unclear (although see below, 'Biographical essay', for possible links between the various works that Pseudo-Plutarch attributes to Chrysermos). A close reading of the passage shows that the addition made in the second edition does not really fit its context.

Commentary on F 7

Natalis Comes (Natale Conti), who is the only source for this particular fragment of Chrysermos, is known for his *Mythologiae sive explicationis fabularum libri decem*, the most popular and influential of Renaissance mythographies, whose first edition was published in 1567: see A. Cameron, *Greek Mythography in the Roman World* (Oxford 2004), 249, who refers for this to P. Ford, 'The *Mythologiae* of Natale Conti and the Pléiade', in J.F. Alcina et al. (eds.), *Acta Conventus Neo-Latini Bariensis: Proceedings of the Ninth International Congress of Neo-Latin Studies, Bari, 29 August to 3 September, 1994* (Tempe, AZ 1998), 243-

50; and already M. Corbett and R.W. Lightbown, *The Comely Frontispiece: The Emblematic Title-Page in England, 1550-1660* (London 1979), 29 n. 1. The *Mythologiae* were reprinted a number of times; for the complex story of the various editions of the work, see J. Mulryan and S. Brown, *Natale Conti's Mythologiae* (Tempe, AZ 2006), 937-58, as well as R.M. Iglesias Montiel and M.C. Álvarez Morán, *Natale Conti. «Mitología»* (Murcia 1988), 11-13 (available online at

[http://interclassica.um.es/investigacion/monografias/natale_conti_mitologia/\(ver\)/1](http://interclassica.um.es/investigacion/monografias/natale_conti_mitologia/(ver)/1)), who, however, maintain their belief in a first edition of 1551. Importantly, a second, enlarged edition was published in Venice in 1581 (and in Frankfurt, also 1581), probably one year before Conti's death; later editions all rely on the enlarged editions of 1581.

In this work, Natale Conti collected into an overarching structure all sorts of mythical narratives, contrasting the various versions (for which he systematically gave the source) and offering a symbolic, allegorical interpretation of them. However, notwithstanding the popularity of the work, from the very beginning Natale Conti's reliability has been suspected: following a recommendation of Casaubon, Scaliger, in a letter to the humanist Calvisius, defined Conti 'homo futilissimus', and recommended to his friend not to include in his work any citations from the *Mythologiae* (letters 1606 05 30, Casaubon to Scaliger, and 1606 06 19, Scaliger to Calvisius, in P. Botley and D. van Miert (eds.), *The Correspondence of Joseph Justus Scaliger* (Geneva, 2012), vol. VI, 424 and 441; Scaliger's letter was then printed as an appendix to Calvisius' *Examen hypothesium chronologicarum a Davide Pareo... propositarum*, Leipzig 1606, <https://books.google.co.uk/books?id=dZBmAAAACAAJ&dq>). Mistrust remained alive through the centuries: S. Whately's dismissal of the attack on Bentley made by Bennet in his book on Callimachus, mentioning in particular the use by Bennet of Natalis Comes, is worth reading: *An answer to a late book written against the learned and reverend Dr. Bentley, relating to some manuscript notes on Callimachus together with an examination of Mr. Bennet's appendix to the said book*, London 1699, 371-2.

The source-reference to Chrysermos is part of a number of instances in which Natale Conti is the only witness for an otherwise unattested story (and author). Of course, it is possible that he may have found his information in manuscripts now lost; this is why Jacoby included some fragments found only in the *Mythologiae* in the *addenda* to his *FGrH* (while adding words of caution: see e.g., his comments on *FGrH* 572 FF 17-21). For a thorough discussion of the sources used by Conti, see Iglesias Montiel and Álvarez Morán, *Natale Conti*, 18-32; specifically for the extent to which he used ancient Byzantine commentaries, see R.M. Iglesias Montiel and M.C. Álvarez Morán, 'Escolios griegos en la *Mythologia* de Natale Conti', in F. Dominguez Dominguez (ed.), *Humanae Litterae. Estudios de humanismo y tradicion clasica en homenaje al profesor Gaspar Morocho Gayo* (Leon 2004), 241-50, esp. 243 for their belief in the authenticity of Conti's source-references. However, a case has been made that quite a few of the source-references he gives are either erroneous or plainly invented (references to scholarship on the topic in Mulryan and Brown, *Natale Conti's Mythologiae*, xv-xvi; the most important recent items are A.G. Roos, 'De fide Natalis Comitidis', *Mnemosyne* 49 (1947), 69-77; Cameron, *Greek Mythography*, 250-1; R. Fowler, *Early Greek Mythographers* 1 (Oxford 2000), xxxiii and *Early Greek Mythographers* 2 (Oxford 2013) 735-737); V. Costa, 'Natale Conti e la divulgazione della mitologia classica in

Europa tra Cinquecento e Seicento', in E. Lanzillotta (ed.), *Ricerche di antichità e tradizione classica* (Tivoli 2004), 257–307; V. Costa, '«Quum mendaciis fallere soleat.» Ancora sui frammenti della storiografia greca traditi da Natale Conti', in C. Braidotti, E. Dettori, E. Lanzillotta, οὐ πᾶν ἐφήμερον. *Scritti in memoria di Roberto Pretagostini* (Roma 2009), 915–925. For one instance in which it can be demonstrated that Conti added a source reference which was absent in the text from which he took the story, see Ceccarelli's commentary to BNJ2 23 F 1d.

It is worth noting here that Natale Conti knew the *On Rivers*: he is the author of a Latin translation of [Plutarch], *On Rivers*, published in Basel in 1560 as *Natalis de Comitibus Venetus, De terminis rhetoricis libri quinque... Plutarchi item opusculum de montibus et fluminibus, et de iis quae admirabilia in illis inveniuntur, eodem Natale interprete* (see A. De Lazzer, in E. Calderón Dorda, A. De Lazzer, E. Pellizer (eds.), *Plutarco. Fiumi e monti* (Naples 2003), 36, as well as Calderón Dorda, in Calderón Dorda, De Lazzer, Pellizer, *Plutarco. Fiumi e monti*, 97-8; Mulryan and Brown, *Natale Conti's Mythologiae*, xvii-xviii; and R.G. Ortega, 'Natale Conti, traductor del De fluviis de Plutarco', in M. García Valdés (ed.), *Estudios sobre Plutarco : ideas religiosas actas del III Simposio Internacional sobre Plutarco* (Madrid 1994), 407-18). Conti's translation is available online at <http://daten.digitale-sammlungen.de/~db/0003/bsb00035038/images/index.html?seite=00001&l=de>. According to De Lazzer, *Plutarco. Fiumi e monti*, 36, Conti conducted his translation directly on the *Palatinus graecus Heidelb.* 398, then in Basel, where the translation was also published; but a Greek print edition of the *On Rivers* already existed, conducted on that same manuscript by S. Gelenius, and published by Froben in Basel in 1533, and Conti may rather have used this. At any rate, Natale Conti had access, shortly before publishing his *Mythologiae*, to the text on which our editions of the *On Rivers* are based. M.C. Álvarez Morán, 'Ecos del *De fluviis* del Pseudo Plutarco en la *Mitología* de Natale Conti', in J. García López and E. Calderón Dorda (eds.), *Estudios sobre Plutarco: Paisaje y Naturaleza* (Murcia 1990), 143-54 gives a list of the passages of the *Mythologiae* relying on [Plutarch]'s *On Rivers*, and shows that Conti made use of his own translation of the work.

Fragment 287 F 8

ID	287 F 8
Source	Natalis Comes, <i>Mythologies</i> 7.1 p. 445 (Venice 1581)
Work mentioned	Peloponnesiaka book 2
Source date	16th century AD
Source language	Greek
Source genre	mythology, Greek; religion, geography, ancient
Fragment subject	mythology, Greek; religion, geography, ancient
Textual base	Natalis Comes, <i>Mythologiae</i> book 7.1, p. 445 (Venetiis 1581)

Text

Memoriae prodidit Chrysermus libro secundo rerum Peloponnesiacarum, lunonem supplicium de Hercule sumere volentem Lunam in auxilio acciuisse carminibus magicis usam, quae cistam spuma implevit, e qua natus est hic leo. Hunc Iris in gremio stringens in montem Opheltam deportavit, a quo eodem die Apaesantus pastor fuit dilaniatus, ut ait Demodocus in rebus Heracleae.

Translation

Chrysermos consigns to memory, in the second book of his work *On Peloponnesian Affairs*, that Juno, desiring to take revenge on Herakles, called on Selene to help through the use of magical incantations. The latter filled a chest with foam, out of which this lion was born. Iris holding it in her bosom brought it to Mt. Opheltas, and on that same day the shepherd Apesantos was cut to pieces by it, as Demodocus narrates in his *Stories on Herakles*.

Critical Apparatus

Commentary on the text

This fragment is not in Jacoby; it is one of the passages added by Conti to the second edition of his *Mythologiae*, Venice 1581. The title corresponds to one of the titles ascribed to Chrysermos by Pseudo-Plutarch, and the story of how Hera asked the help of Selene to take revenge upon Herakles is indeed narrated in *On rivers* 18.4; however, the source reference there offered for that narrative is the first book of Demodokos's *Heracleid* (otherwise unknown).

Natalis Comes is thus here attributing to Chrysermos a passage that (probably) does not go back to him (see also J. Mulryan and S. Brown, *Natale Conti's Mythologiae* (Tempe 2006), 570 n. 9 and 10, although with some confusion). An error is certainly possible. It is slightly surprising, however, that Natale Conti goes on to narrate exactly the same succession of events as Pseudo-Plutarch, *On rivers* 18.4 (how Selene, to help Hera, created a lion out of foam, which was brought by Iris to Mount Opheltes, and how the lion devoured on that very day a shepherd named Apesantos, who then gave his name to the mountain), giving as source-reference exactly the same author mentioned in that context by Pseudo-Plutarch, Demodokos (behind whom may lurk Herodoros of Herakleia, as Müller suggested, or who may be an invention, built on the name of the blind aoidos of *Odyssey* 8: see A. De Lazzer, in E. Calderon Dorda, A. De Lazzer, E. Pellizer (ed.), *Plutarco. Fiumi e monti* (Naples 2003), 79, and C. Delattre, *Pseudo-Plutarque. Nommer le monde. Origine des noms de fleuves, de montagnes et de ce qui s'y trouve* (Villeneuve D'Asq 2011), 175). Thus, Natale Conti inserts an unnecessary and unsubstantiated reference to Chrysermos within a context which is, at least in terms of quoting earlier sources, entirely correct, including the other source-reference. It is important to note that both the part attributed to Chrysermos and that attributed to Demodokos were absent from the first edition and were inserted together in the second, enlarged edition of 1581.

Commentary on F 8

See above, Commentary on F 7.

Biographical Essay

Four works are attributed to Chrysermos: *Peloponnesiaka* in at least three books, mentioned in both *Parallela minora* and *On rivers* (F 1 and F 2; the further two fragments from this work mentioned by Natale Conti, F 7 and F 8, above, are bogus); *Indika* (in 80 books!), mentioned in the *On rivers* (F 3); *Persika* (or *Historika*) in at least two books, referred to in *Parallela minora* (F 4); and *On rivers*, in three or possibly thirteen books, mentioned in Pseudo-Plutarch's own *On rivers* (F 5 and 6). As Jacoby pointed out (*FGrH* 3A, 383), the titles are invented in a way that shows an understanding of the connections drawn in ancient ethnography. In particular, the link between *Persika* and *Indika* is to be seen in the work of Ktesias, who was still widely read in this period. From these two, the connection to a work on the Peloponnese is easy since the story recounted in F 4 from the *Persika* concerns the dealings between the Spartan general Pausanias and Xerxes, while F 1 from the *Peloponnesiaka* concerns Perseus (where the name leads, over *Perseis*, to *Persika*). Moreover, as Jacoby again stressed, it is a connection that finds a collocation in the larger frame of Herodotos's work (systematically not mentioned in Pseudo-Plutarch's two works, even though for some of the episodes he is the obvious, most important source: clearly, a deliberate exclusion). For other Peloponnesian histories, see [BNJ 503](#), [BNJ 504](#).

As for the identity of Chrysermos, J. Schlereth, *De Plutarchi quae feruntur Parallelis minoribus* (Freiburg 1931), 110 simply stated: 'Quis sit hic Chrysermos, ignoratur'. The identification with Chryseros (*FGrH* 96) is mentioned only to be dismissed by Jacoby, for chronological reasons among others (Chryseros's Roman chronicle went until 180 AD, which makes him too late to have served as inspiration for Pseudo-Plutarch). Most likely Chrysermos is one of Pseudo-Plutarch's fictional authors (but see Dowden in [BNJ 56](#) for the argument that some of his authors were real); in this case, the source of his inspiration may be sought, as Jacoby, *FGrH* 3a, 384 and before him F. Atenstädt, 'Zwei Quellen des sogenannten Plutarch de fluviis', *Hermes* 57 (1922), 244-6 suggested, in the Herophilean doctor Chrysermos, active around 50 BC and mentioned in one of the sources of Pseudo-Plutarch, the doctor Xenokrates, a contemporary of Pliny who wrote *On stones* (Λιθογνώμων). But another possibility is worth mentioning, first advanced by R. Hercher, *Plutarchi Libellus de Fluviis* (Leipzig 1851), 22 and recently taken up by A. Cameron, *Greek mythology in the Roman world* (Oxford 2004), 129-30, namely that the name may have been invented on the basis of the names of characters or natural elements playing in the stories: F 5, from the chapter on the Paktolos, concerns a plant Chrysopolis; in what precedes (*On rivers* 7. 1-2) Pseudo-Plutarch narrates, without giving any source-reference, how the river first took the name Chrysorrhoas, and how from Chrysorrhoas it changed in Paktolos; similarly F 3 comes from the chapter on the Hydaspes (*On rivers* 1); the chapter opens with the story of Chrysippe, a story that finds a reflection in what is narrated of the habits of the locals in *On rivers* 1.3, explicitly attributed to Chrysermos (and see commentary to F 3 for the possibility that the entire chapter may have been conceived as depending on Chrysermos).

The Corinthian origin, mentioned in F 1 and F 6, is more delicate. Jacoby, *FGrH* 3A, 385, argued that it was one of Theseus's works, the *Corinthian Stories*, which, in a context in which Theseus's (authentic) version (not necessarily from the *Corinthian Stories*: Theseus wrote also *Illustrious Lives*) was being contrasted with the fictional *Peloponnesian Stories* by the fictional Chrysermos, gave Pseudo-Plutarch the inspiration. This raises the issue of the date of Theseus (dealt with above, commentary to F 2), and of his connection with the two texts. If Theseus is later than the *On rivers* and *Parallela minora*, then we must look elsewhere for inspiration.

As for the content and the provenance of the stories attributed to Chrysermos, it is difficult to say much: Pseudo-Plutarch's method seems to have been to take a transmitted story, and to twist it slightly. Atenstädt, 'Zwei Quellen des sogenannten Plutarch de fluviis', has suggested that a certain Xenokrates, a doctor whose work seems to have included a number of extraordinary and magical remedies (hence no doubt its attractiveness for Pseudo-Plutarch), is one of Pseudo-Plutarch's main sources for the part on stones and plants. On the whole Atenstädt's argument is convincing (and has been fully endorsed by Jacoby), but some details need to be worked out. Atenstädt (and with him Jacoby) assumed that this Xenokrates was Xenokrates of Aphrodisias, a doctor active in the first century AD who wrote on pharmacology (thus, he would have written on stones, but also *On Useful Things from Living Beings* (Περὶ τῆς ἀπὸ τῶν Ζώων Ὀφελείας)), and who is mentioned by Galen, *On the mixture and properties of simple medicines* vol.11 p. 793 Kühn, and Artemidoros, *Interpretation of dreams* 4.22 (on him, see F. Kudlien, Xenokrates 8, in *RE* 9A (Stuttgart 1967), 1529-31, and C.J. Classen, Xenokrates 4, in *Der kleine Pauly* (München 1975), 1416). Some however prefer to see the source of Pliny on stones in the works of another doctor active at the time of Pliny, Xenokrates son of Zenon, of Ephesos, who wrote a book on stones (see K. Ziegler, Xenokrates 7, in *RE* 9A (Stuttgart 1967), 1529; J. Kollesch, Xenokrates 5, in *Der kleine Pauly* (Munich 1975), 1416; and M. Ullmann, 'Das Steinbuch des Xenokrates von Ephesos', *Medizinhistorisches Journal* (1972), 49-64; M. Ullmann, 'Neues zum Steinbuch des Xenokrates', *medizinhistorisches Journal* (1973), 59-76; and M. Ullmann, Xenokrates 7, in *RE* Suppl. 14 (Stuttgart 1974), 974-7). Even after Ullmann's detailed discussion, it is not clear to me whether a decision is possible: the Arab sources who cite the work of Xenokrates on stones do not state his origin, so that on this matter arguments still rely on the interpretation of Pliny. What seems certain is that a Xenokrates author of a work on stones and active in the first century AD was the source of Pliny, and was also probably used by Pseudo-Plutarch.

Moreover, Atenstädt himself had argued that the fragments containing the information on the two herbs *chrysopolis* (F 5) and *axalla* (F 6) had come to Pseudo-Plutarch through Alexander Polyhistor. But in F 6, the *axalla* (from Polyhistor?) follows closely the *aetites*, which is amply discussed in Pliny (from Xenokrates? as we saw in the commentary to F 6 Pseudo-Plutarch seems to offer an inverted mirror of the picture offered by Pliny): thus here Pseudo-Plutarch would be attributing to Chrysermos materials coming from both Alexander Polyhistor and Xenokrates.

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