

Antigone, he makes it clear that Polyneices' corpse had started to stink (412). Yet by 'short time' he has only been dead for a night and some of the morning.

In this same scene Creon, king (I say again) for less than a day, talks as if Antigone and Ismene have long been plotting to oust him from his throne (531–3), and soon Haemon observes that dark talk against Creon and high praise for Antigone are spreading around the city in secret (692–700). Would 'short time' have allowed a sufficient opportunity for this to happen?

After Antigone has gone off to her death, Tiresias describes the defilement of the city's altars by birds and dogs which have brought to them carrion flesh from the corpse (1016–18). It is certainly far later in the day by now, but even so, 'short time' would call for unconvincingly speedy action from the birds and beasts of prey.³

By now, I submit, the audience has become accustomed – below the level of consciousness, no doubt – to the play's double time scheme and will feel little or no surprise when some words of Tiresias draw clear attention to it. While Creon is in fact to lose his son later that very day, the prophet foretells that he will not accomplish 'many rapid cycles of the sun' before he does so (1064–5). Tiresias insists on 'long time';⁴ but the 'short time' scheme proceeds without remission.

What is the effect of the double time scheme? One result may be that Creon is denied a possible line of defence. In 'short time', he makes his very first edict, having taken over the throne at a time of great national emergency. Surely he cannot afford to let that decree be violated? Political stability demands that the new ruler enforce it to the full. But the play's 'long time' makes it seem as if he has ruled for a significant period. One particularly striking example comes in 1164, where we are assured that this king for a day – 'short time' – governed (imperfect *ἡῶθυε*), the flourishing father of noble children – 'long time'. Sophocles does not, it appears, wish to claim for him the justification of a novice ruler asserting himself.

A decidedly more significant effect is that the play can maintain its unity of action and tragic intensity while at the same time giving its two protagonists room in which to breathe. In a single span, Sophocles is conveying the tragedies not only of Antigone but of Creon too. His juggling with clocks gives him time enough and space to allow both of these characters their due weight. As 'short time' works itself out relentlessly in a day, the dramatist's 'long time' allows full justice to the final destinies of not one, but two tragic figures. Viewed in this light, the debate over which of them the play is 'really about' may seem to stem from an inadequate response to the technical virtuosity with which Sophocles has composed his *Antigone*.

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³ If the puzzling lines 1080–3 are authentic, the news of Creon's impious behaviour, according to Tiresias, has by now reached all the cities which had sent forces against Thebes.

⁴ This prophecy of Tiresias may, as my colleague R. D. Rees suggests, mislead Creon into believing that he can take his time over his actions. In burying the corpse of Polyneices first when there is Antigone to be considered, Creon, like Othello, becomes the tragic victim of 'long time'.

CTESIAS' PARROT¹

Tall tales abound in Ctesias' *Indica*, as scholars have not hesitated to emphasize, heaping ridicule on the author's enthusiasm for the fantastic and on his apparent lack

¹ An earlier version of this article received a number of very helpful criticisms from Professor W. G. Arnott, who notes among other things, 'this is a group of birds I'm very fond of (I've

of regard for the truth.² However, by no means everything in the work is absurd or wrong, and marvels too are no surprise. After all, as a resident of the Persian court for a number of years at the end of the fifth century B.C., Ctesias had seen items from India which would have been truly remarkable to Greeks of his time. He had seen, for example, elephants, which few Greeks before Alexander's Asian campaigns had done, and, it should be added, much of what he says about these animals is quite correct.³ The following pages discuss what he relates of the bird which he calls the *βίττακος*, the parrot, or rather what Photius in a not entirely problem-free section of his summary of the work preserves of the original description.⁴ As with Ctesias' account of the elephant, this is the first Greek description, so far as we know.

The parrot would have been seen very rarely, if at all, in mainland Greece before Alexander's Indian campaign.⁵ Representations of it are not found in Greek art until the Hellenistic period.⁶ Literary references before this time are very sparse. One, in which the form *βίττακος* is used, occurs in a fragment of the fourth-century comic poet, Eubulus.⁷ Here, the speaker calls for the purchase of a series of different birds as delicacies for a feast. That such a rare species as the parrot is included is surely a jest,⁸ although it must have been well enough known from the reports of visitors to Persia, or perhaps even from Ctesias' description, for a humorous allusion to be possible. However, we do not know the name of the play, or its date, which must be after about 380.⁹

A second reference to the bird, with an all too brief description, is provided by Aristotle (*H.A.* 8.12 597b27), whose principal source on the Indian animal world is without any doubt Ctesias.¹⁰ In this passage too it is evident that Ctesias has been consulted, although Aristotle may have had information from other sources as well. However, that this was not a familiar bird in the Greek world is clear from our next witness, Alexander's captain Nearchus (133 F 9 = Arrian, *Ind.* 15.8). To Nearchus, the parrot with its human speech was a source of amazement. Arrian, writing at a time when it was not such a rarity (he himself had seen many, he says), reports this with some scorn, and to the regret of the modern reader declines to reproduce Nearchus' description. Presumably Alexander's campaigns resulted in greater knowledge of the bird, which in the 270s was exhibited among other exotic birds in the famous procession of Ptolemy Philadelphus in Alexandria.¹¹ However, it seems not to have

spent long periods, especially in Australia, trying to identify them in the tops of trees'). I am very grateful to him for all his comments and suggestions, and for a considerable amount of bibliographical assistance. Any mistakes are, of course, my own.

² For twentieth-century assessments of the work, see J. M. Bigwood, 'Ctesias' *Indica* and Photius', *Phoenix* 43 (1989), 302–316, p. 302. K. Karttunen, *India in Early Greek Literature* (Helsinki, 1989), who gives a balanced view, should now be added.

³ See J. M. Bigwood, 'Aristotle and the Elephant Again', *AJP* 1993 (forthcoming).

⁴ *FGH* 688 F 45.8. For the form of the name see Bigwood (n. 3). On Photius' summary, our sole source for this part of the account, see Bigwood (n. 2), 302–16.

⁵ Cf. R. D. Pemberton and S. I. Rotroff, *Birds of the Athenian Agora* (Princeton, 1985), p. 14. P. Louis, 'La Domestication des animaux à l'époque d'Aristote', *RHS* 23 (1970), 189–201, p. 194, suggests differently.

⁶ For examples see Jereb, 'Papagei', *RE* 18 (1949), 932–4 and J. M. C. Toynbee, *Animals in Roman Life and Art* (Ithaca, 1973), pp. 247–9. For pre-Hellenistic representations on 'Graeco-Persian' or 'eastern' gems see below, n. 33.

⁷ *PCG* 5 F 120 (*CAF* 2 F 123).

⁸ Kock *CAF* 2 F 123 treats it as serious.

⁹ According to R. L. Hunter, *Eubulus: The Fragments* (Cambridge, 1983), p. 10, his plays belong to the period c. 380–c. 335.

¹⁰ On this reference and Aristotle's use of Ctesias, see Bigwood (n. 3).

¹¹ Callixeinus in Athenaeus 201b and 387d.

been common in the Mediterranean until the late Roman Republic. In this period it becomes a fashionable pet of the wealthy.¹²

But what did Ctesias say about the parrot? His description, like his descriptions of other unfamiliar birds and animals, was probably a detailed one.¹³ However, Photius, for whom the bird was not particularly unusual, had no reason to make extensive notes.¹⁴ His account, to give it as it appears in Jacoby's edition of the fragments of Ctesias, is as follows:

καὶ περὶ τοῦ ὀρνέου τοῦ βιττάκου, ὅτι γλώσσαν ἀνθρωπίνην ἔχει καὶ φωνήν, μέγεθος μὲν ὅσον ἰέραξ, πορφύρεον δὲ πρόσωπον· καὶ πώγωννα φέρει μέλανα, αὐτὸ δὲ κυάνεον ἐστὶν ὡς τὸν τράχηλον ὥσπερ κιννάβαρι· διαλέγεσθαι δὲ αὐτὸ ὥσπερ ἀνθρωπον Ἰνδιστί, ἀν δὲ Ἑλληνιστί μάθηι, καὶ Ἑλληνιστί.

The description, brief though it is, poses problems of translation and indeed of text.¹⁵ There is, first of all, *πρόσωπον*, which McCrindle in his much consulted translation renders as 'bill' (cf. Freese who writes 'beak').¹⁶ Ctesias uses this word of the face of the monster which he calls the 'martichoras'.¹⁷ Herodotus (2.76) had applied it to the face of the ibis.¹⁸ For 'beak' one would have expected *ρύγχος* (used in this sense by Aristophanes and by Aristotle),¹⁹ or *ράμφος* (as in Aristophanes, *Birds* 99), or *τὰ χεῖλη* (cf. Aristotle, *H.A.* 613b1). There is also *στόμα*, which occurs in Ctesias' account of the griffin as reproduced by Aelian (*N.A.* 4.27 = F 45h). Photius surely means that the bird's face, not its bill, is dark red.

McCrindle too, although he does not indicate that there are any difficulties in the manuscripts at this point, does not translate the passage in full. Ignoring *κυάνεον* and *ὡς*, he writes 'the neck is red like cinnabar'. In the version of R. Henry, who likewise mentions no textual problems, this becomes 'son corps même est du couleur sombre comme du cinabre jusqu'à sa gorge'.²⁰ However, as earlier editors saw, the text cannot be right.

Baehr suggested the deletion of *ὡς*, which he thought had been introduced erroneously in anticipation of the following *ὥσπερ*.²¹ But the real problem lies with the nonsensical *κυάνεον ὥσπερ κιννάβαρι*. *Κυάνεος*, both here and in the two other passages in the *Indica* in which it occurs, is one of a series of colour adjectives, and

¹² F. Wotke, 'Papagei', *RE* 18 (1949), 927.

¹³ Cf. his account of the martichoras (F 45.15 and F 45d), and of the wild ass (F 45.45 and F 45q).

¹⁴ Photius and the other excerptors focus on what they find marvellous: see Bigwood (n. 2), 302–16.

¹⁵ In the *apparatus criticus*, Jacoby notes the suggestions of Baehr and Bekker.

¹⁶ J. W. McCrindle, *Ancient India as Described by Ctesias the Knidian* (Calcutta, 1882), p. 8; J. H. Freese, *The Library of Photius* i (London, 1920), p. 111.

¹⁷ That the word occurred in the original is suggested by the fact that Photius (F 45.15), Aristotle (F 45d = *H.A.* 2.1 501a24) and Aelian (F 45d = *N.A.* 4.21) all use it here. On the use (sometimes extensive) of Ctesias' vocabulary by Photius and Aelian, see Bigwood (n. 2), pp. 306–8.

¹⁸ Cf. J. E. Powell, *A Lexicon to Herodotus* (Cambridge, 1938), s.v. *πρόσωπον*.

¹⁹ Alexander of Myndus in the 1st century A.D. distinguishes between *ρύγχος* and *πρόσωπον* (according to Athenaeus 391f).

²⁰ Photius, *Bibliothèque* i (Paris, 1959), p. 134.

²¹ J. Baehr, *Ctesiae Cnidii Operum Reliquiae* (Frankfurt, 1824), p. 270. The preposition *ὡς* in reference to a thing rather than to a person is not good Attic prose: Kühner-Gerth *GG*³ II 1 (Leipzig, 1898), pp. 471–2. But for examples in the MSS of Hippocrates, some of which are accepted by editors, see J. H. Kühn and U. Fleischer, *Index Hippocraticus* 4 (Göttingen, 1989), p. 883, s.v. *ὡς* A2.

is clearly distinct from μέλας, which also appears in each.²² It must mean, not 'dark', although this is its meaning in early verse, but 'blue' or 'dark blue', as it does in other fourth-century prose authors.²³ Moreover, it is obviously inappropriate when applied to cinnabar. Ctesias, who refers to cinnabar a number of times, correctly associates with it the adjective ἐρυθρός, writing 'red like cinnabar' (F 45.15 with F 45dβ = Ael. N.A. 4.21, and also F 45.39 with F 45γ = Ael. N.A. 4.46, where the reference is to a dye-producing insect).²⁴ Photius too must have known the colour. In both cases (the first occurs only a few lines after the passage under discussion) he has echoed Ctesias' words.

Bekker solved the problem by suggesting that a number of words have fallen out after ὥς and that the text should read ὥς <*** ἐρυθρόν δέ> τὸν τράχηλον.²⁵ But equally possible is an omission after τὸν τράχηλον. One could then supply τὸν δὲ ὦμον ἐρυθρόν, or something similar, before ὥσπερ κιννάβαρι. On this reading, Photius' description of the bird's appearance, to give it in translation, would have been as follows: 'it is the size of a hawk and its face is dark red [purple]. It has a black beard and is blue as far as its neck [i.e. the back of the head is blue].²⁶ But on its shoulder it is red like cinnabar.'

Can the bird be identified? One scholar, although he does not explain how his suggestion will fit the reading of the manuscripts, has proposed that Ctesias' parrot is a subspecies of *Psittacula alexandri* (Moustached Parakeet),²⁷ i.e. that he describes *Ps. alexandri fasciata*, sometimes called the Indian Red-breasted Parakeet. This is a bird common in north India, Nepal and areas to the east, and roughly 36 centimetres in total length. Its plumage is predominantly green, with some admixture of blue-green and of blue (green, with a variable amount of blue-green and blue, being the principal colours of all the species of parrot referred to in this article). But the male also has a red throat and breast, a grey head (strongly tinged with blue) and broad, black 'moustache' markings from below the cheeks to the sides of the neck.

More attractive, however, particularly in view of what Ctesias says about the bird's face, is its identification with *Psittacula cyanocephala* (Plum-headed Parakeet).²⁸ This

²² F 45.45 (Phot.) with F 45q = Ael. N.A. 4.52, and F 45h = Ael. N.A. 4.27 with F 45.26 (Phot.), although Photius has greatly abbreviated here.

²³ For the meanings 'dark' and 'blue', see M. E. Irwin, *Colour Terms in Greek Poetry* (Toronto, 1974), pp. 79ff. But 'blue-green' also seems possible. At any rate *kyanos* is used of materials such as Egyptian blue frit (cf. Thphr. *Lap.* 55), which can be blue-green as well as blue; for the colour, see R. Halleux, 'Lapis-lazuli, azurite ou pâte de verre? à propos de *kuwano* et *kuwanowoko* dans les tablettes mycéniennes', *SMEA* 9 (1969), 47–66, p. 52. We may also note that Latin *caeruleus*, which in many contexts is equivalent to the Greek adjective, sometimes means 'blue-green' or even 'green'; see J. André, *Études sur les termes de couleur dans la langue latine* (Paris, 1949), pp. 162–71.

²⁴ Cf. also *Persica* F 1 1α (Antigonos, *Hist. Mir.* 145), although not in the parallel excerpts.

²⁵ *Photii Bibliotheca* (Berlin, 1824); cf. C. Müller's edition of Ctesias (appendix to Didot edition of Herodotus, Paris, 1844), p. 89.

²⁶ The meaning could, of course, also be 'below the neck it is blue'.

²⁷ F. Wotke (n. 12), 928, whose identification is consistent with Bekker's text. For the species, see Sálím Ali and S. D. Ripley, *Handbook of the Birds of India and Pakistan* 3 (Bombay, 1969), pp. 172–4 and J. M. Forshaw, *Parrots of the World*² (Melbourne, 1978), pp. 351–4. Parrot nomenclature is confusing and inconsistent. I give throughout the Latin designation and, in brackets, the current British name, as given in R. Howard and A. Moore, *A Complete Checklist of the Birds of the World*² (London, 1991). I have occasionally also noted other common names for species or subspecies.

²⁸ Cf. D'Arcy W. Thompson, *A Glossary of Greek Birds*² (London, 1936), p. 336 and E. H. Warmington, *The Commerce between the Roman Empire and India* (Cambridge, 1928), p. 153. It

is a bird of similar size, common throughout the Indian subcontinent from the Himalayas southward. Again the plumage is mostly green, with some blue-green and blue, but this species has a red patch on each wing-shoulder (cf. Photius' words 'like cinnabar'), a narrow black neck-collar, a black stripe across the lower cheeks, and a black patch under the chin. The last-mentioned characteristic is presumably what Ctesias means by the beard (cf. τὰ περὶ τὸν πώγωνα μέλανα in Aristotle *H.A.* 9.7 613a31, describing the black throat of the male sparrow).²⁹ However, the most striking features of the bird are its face and head which are a deep red, strongly tinged with purple-blue on the lower cheeks, back of the head and nape (cf. πορφύρεον and κυάνεον in Photius).³⁰

The deep red colour certainly suggests that Ctesias' bird is *cynocephala*, or rather the male of the species. The female, which is much duller, has a bluish-grey head, yellow collar and lacks the black markings and red shoulder-patch. However, we cannot be absolutely sure of the identification, particularly since we have only a summary of the original, and a summary whose text is defective. It is obvious too that Ctesias' account is inconsistent with the well-known descriptions of the parrot given by Roman authors. They write of a green bird with red neck-collar and make no allusion to any particularly striking facial colour.³¹ Most probably they describe *Psittacula krameri manillensis*, a subspecies of *Ps. krameri* (formerly *Palaeornis torquatus*; Rose-ringed Parakeet), although *Ps. eupatria nipalensis*, a very similar bird, cannot be wholly ruled out.³² However, we have no reason to believe that Ctesias is attempting to describe the same kind of parrot, or of course that his bird is not a real bird.

Parrots are not native to Iran and do not appear frequently in Achaemenid art. However, there are one or two representations, which suggests that they were well

is sometimes confusingly called the Blossom-headed Parakeet. Identification with *Psittacula roseata* (Blossom-headed Parakeet), which closely resembles *cynocephala*, can be ruled out, since this bird belongs to territories too far to the east (Assam to Indo-China); see Forshaw (n. 27), p. 346.

²⁹ Cf. also πώγων of the black spot under the gullet of the fish *tragos* according to Clearchus (in Athenaeus 332c).

³⁰ Given the uncertainties about the text, we cannot, of course, exclude the possibility that κυάνεον refers to some other blue or bluish part, e.g. to the blue-green band on the neck, the blue-green rump or the blue central tail-feathers. The bird is described by Ali and Ripley (n. 27), pp. 178–81 and by Forshaw (n. 27), pp. 344–6. V. Ball, 'On the Identification of the Animals and Plants of India Which were Known to Early Greek Authors', *The Indian Antiquary* 14 (1885), 303–11, p. 304, suggested that Ctesias' bird is *Psittacula eupatria nipalensis*, sometimes called the Large Indian Parakeet, and a subspecies of *Ps. eupatria* (Alexandrine Parakeet). This is another mainly green bird, but larger, with a pink collar and red patch on the wing (see Ali and Ripley, pp. 164–6 and Forshaw, pp. 335–6). However, Ball's comments are based on the unacceptable translation of McCrindle (above, p. 323).

³¹ e.g. Pliny, *N.H.* 10.117; Apul. *Flor.* 12; Solin. 52.43–5. Others (e.g. Ovid, *Amor.* 2.6 and Statius, *Silv.* 2.4) make no mention of the red collar, which is in fact lacking in the females of the two species mentioned in the text. The Roman sources are discussed by F. Capponi, *Ornithologia Latina* (Genoa, 1979), pp. 458–61.

³² Cf. W. G. Arnott, 'Notes on *GAVIA* and *MERGV*S in Latin Authors', *CQ* 14 (1964), 249–62, p. 261 n. 1 and *CR* 36 (1986), 178. *Manillensis* has a green face, the sides of the head being bluish; see Ali and Ripley (n. 27), pp. 169–72 and Forshaw (n. 27), pp. 338–44. For *Ps. krameri*, see also M. G. Wilson and C. S. Roselaar in S. Cramp *et al.* (eds.), *The Birds of the Western Palaearctic* 4 (Oxford, 1985), pp. 378–89. (This species is native to parts of North Africa as well as India, and now breeds in Europe and indeed in England as far north as Lancashire, as Professor Arnott has drawn to my attention.) For *Ps. eup. nipalensis*, which resembles *manillensis*, but which has a red shoulder-patch, see above n. 30.

known in Achaemenid times.³³ Moreover, although the summary of Ctesias does not state this specifically, it is reasonable to suppose that he is describing a bird which he himself had seen, one perhaps sent as a gift to the Persian king and kept in one of the royal *paradeisoi*.³⁴ Certainly the colours which he ascribes to it are by no means ridiculous, nor, for that matter, is his comment on how large it is. He compares its size to that of a *hierax*, a term especially used for the smaller hawks and falcons,³⁵ and one which suits *Psittacula cyanocephala*, or indeed any of the other species of parrot referred to above. Possibly the parrot's strongly curved beak and hooked claws suggested to him the hawk. Possibly too, he compared the two birds in other respects as well as size.³⁶

Ctesias was clearly impressed by the bird's appearance. He was also very impressed by its ability to speak – by its 'human tongue and voice', and by the fact that 'it speaks Indian like a human being and Greek if it is taught Greek'. One may wonder, of course, whether he could accurately recognize a language as being Indian, and it seems unlikely that he heard a parrot speaking Greek, although the assertions are no doubt something that he was told. They are also somewhat extravagant.³⁷ However, the essential claim is quite correct. Many of the Indian species of parrot readily learn in captivity to reproduce a few words – *Psittacula eupatria nipalensis* and *Ps. krameri manillensis*, for example, and also *Ps. cyanocephala*, as well as other types.³⁸ Moreover, it is not at all surprising that Ctesias was impressed. As noted above (p. 322), Nearchus marvelled at these birds and their human speech. Their remarkable

³³ Fragments of Achaemenid stoneware found in the Treasury at Persepolis include the handle of a tray (or plate) embellished by a parrot head and four additional handle fragments representing parrots: see E. Schmidt, *Persepolis*, ii (Chicago, 1957), p. 88 with plates 53.4 and 54.4. Inscribed stoneware fragments found in this location bear the name of no king later than Xerxes. For a 'Graeco-Persian' gem depicting a parrot, see G. M. A. Richter, *Catalogue of Engraved Gems, Greek, Etruscan and Roman, Metropolitan Museum* (New York, 1956), no. 139 (dated to the second half of the fifth century). Two parrots appear on a gem labelled 'eastern' and dated to the early fourth century: see J. Boardman and M.-L. Vollenweider, *Catalogue of the Engraved Gems and Finger Rings, Ashmolean Museum*, i (Oxford, 1978), no. 118.

³⁴ That exotic birds might have been found in the *paradeisoi* of the king or of his nobles is suggested by M. C. Miller, 'Peacocks and *Tryphe* in Classical Athens', *Arch. News* xv, 1–4 (1989), 1–10, p. 1. H. Diener, 'Die "Camera Papagalli" im Palast des Pöpstes: Papageien als Hausgenossen der Pöpsten, Könige und Fürsten des Mittelalters und der Renaissance', *Archiv für Kulturgeschichte* 49 (1967), 43–97 (I owe the reference to M. Miller), discusses the keeping of parrots by leading men from antiquity to the renaissance. For exotic birds as gifts, cf. the peacocks of the Athenian Pyrilampes (Antiphon F 57 [Blass] = Athenaeus 397c–d), which were perhaps a gift of the Great King: see Miller, loc. cit., p. 2, and P. Cartledge, 'Fowl Play: A Curious Lawsuit in Classical Athens,' in P. Cartledge, P. Millett and S. Todd (eds.), *Nomos: Essays in Athenian Law, Politics and Society* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 41–61. Much later a 'partridge larger than a vulture' was one of the presents sent by an Indian king to Augustus, according to Nicolaus of Damascus (90 F 100 = Strabo 15.1.73). Cf. also Ael. N.A. 15.14, on birds brought as gifts to the Indian king, and Ps.-Callisth. 3.18.7 – the parrots sent by Queen Candace to Alexander.

³⁵ D'Arcy Thompson (n. 28), p. 114.

³⁶ The fact that Aristotle H.A. 8.12 597b27 includes the parrot among the birds of prey may be due to the influence of Ctesias.

³⁷ For some much more recent exaggerations of the talking abilities of *Psittacula columboides* (Malabar Parakeet), see Ali and Ripley (n. 27), pp. 186–7.

³⁸ For the speech of the first two, see Ali and Ripley (n. 27), pp. 165–6 and 172 and Duke of Bedford, *Parrots and Parrot-like Birds in Aviculture* (London, 1954), pp. 174 and 169–170. J. André and J. Filliozat, *L'Inde vue de Rome* (Paris, 1986), p. 379 n. 275, wrongly deny this. For the speech of the third, see Duke of Bedford, p. 181.

ability to speak is in fact commented on by almost all ancient authors who mention them.³⁹

The account of the parrot in Ctesias' *Indica* is worth noting, for here he introduces the Greek world to something unfamiliar, as he does elsewhere in the work in the case of other Indian products and animals. Moreover, whatever his failings in later passages, this description, in so far as we know the details, is certainly far from being absurd. Although a little exaggerated, the claims made about the bird's speaking abilities are, it is clear, no fantasy. Likewise the comments on its appearance, which suit a real parrot, can scarcely be deemed fictional. Ctesias, of course, strives to impress the reader by relating something which will astound. Still, he describes what was in reality a remarkable bird. His *Indica* does not entirely merit the ridicule that it has received.

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³⁹ See the passages listed above (n. 31). Other references are supplied by D'Arcy Thompson (n. 28), pp. 236ff.

RESTORING A MANUSCRIPT READING AT PAUS. 9.3.7

Pausanias preserves what we know about the Little and the Great Daidala, religious celebrations which took place in Plataia from the classical into the Roman period (Paus. 9.3.1–9). To his account can be added a fragment from Plutarch's work (Eusebius, *Praeparatio Evangelii* 3.1.6 = Plutarch fr. 157), and a brief mention in Menander Rhetor (*Peri Epideiktikon*, ed. L. Spengel, *Rhetores Graeci* iii, p. 367.7).¹ At the celebration of the Little Daidala, which occurred about every six years or so (Paus. 9.3.3), the Plataians made an image from the trunk of an oak tree (Paus. 9.3.4); they called the image a daidalon, because 'the men of old' called the wooden images, the xoana, daidala (Paus. 9.3.2). Every sixty years, the Plataians celebrated the Great Daidala, to which other Boiotian states sent representations (Paus. 9.3.5–6, Men. Rhet. iii, p. 367.7). At this Great Daidala, all the images which had been made at the Little Daidala were gathered together and burnt (Paus. 9.3.8). The process by which this was done was to allocate by lot to each of the important Boiotian towns one of the daidala, and to distribute the rest amongst the lesser Boiotian states, who would pool their resources so as to be able to participate in the ceremony (Paus. 9.3.6). Each large city, or a group of smaller cities, was thus responsible for one daidalon.

The manuscripts of Pausanias state that once the daidala had been allotted to the various cities and towns, τὸ δὲ ἄγαλμα κοσμήσαντες παρὰ τὸν Ἄσωπὸν καὶ ἀναθέντες ἐπὶ ἄμαξαν, γυναῖκα ἐφιστάσι νυμφεύτριαν (Paus. 9.3.7).² This would mean that there was one main image (daidalon), more important than the other daidala, which was to form the focal point of the burning ritual; it would represent the archetypal wooden daidalon which Zeus had used in his ruse to win back Hera (this aetiological myth is discussed below). The image was 'adorned at the river

¹ Modern bibliography on the Daidala is collected by A. Schachter *Cults of Boiotia*, i (University of London: Institute of Classical Studies, Bulletin Supplement 38.1, 1981), p. 245 n. 3; to which add in particular C. Kerényi, *Zeus and Hera* (London, 1975), pp. 141–7; I have found M. P. Nilsson, *Griechische Feste* (Leipzig, 1906), pp. 50–6 the most useful account.

² All the manuscripts of Pausanias derive from a copy made by Niccolò Niccoli of Florence (1364–1437); this is now lost, but all the manuscripts read κοσμήσαντες, so this must have been the reading in the manuscript which Niccolò copied. For the manuscript tree and the derivation of surviving manuscripts of Pausanias from Niccolò's text, see M. H. Rocha-Pereira, *Pausaniae Graeciae Descriptio* i (Leipzig, 1973), pp. vi–viii.