

INAROS' REBELLION AGAINST ARTAXERXES I AND THE ATHENIAN DISASTER IN EGYPT*

INTRODUCTION

Inaros, son of Psammetichus, an Egyptian ruler of Libyan descent, rebelled against his overlord Artaxerxes I. The purpose of this paper is to re-evaluate the conventionally accepted dates of this event. It is commonly held that Inaros rebelled on hearing about the death of Xerxes, King of Persia in 465/4 B.C. The ensuing struggle between Persia and Egypt, supported by Athenian allies, is commonly dated between 460/59 and 454 B.C. This reconstruction of dates and events is based on acceptance of the version given by Thucydides, his interpretation of the political situation in Greece and his chronological order of events. The reconstruction of the rebellion of Inaros here will be based on Diodorus Siculus, Thucydides and Ctesias, but also on Aramaic and Egyptian documents from Egypt written in demotic script.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Cambyses, King of Persia, conquered Egypt in the year 525 B.C. In 522, when Cambyses died and his successor Darius I ascended the throne of Persia, Egypt rebelled. It is not clear when and how this rebellion was quelled, but Persian control over Egypt was probably resumed by Darius I in his third regnal year at the latest, and in his fourth regnal year the burial of the Apis bull, which died, was dated according to the regnal years of Darius.¹ When Darius died in 486 B.C. and Xerxes ascended the throne, rebellion again broke out in Egypt. This rebellion was quelled by Xerxes, who 'reduced the country to a condition of worse servitude than it had ever been in the previous reign' (Hdt. 7.7). The misdeeds of Xerxes in Egypt may have been described in the Satrap stela.² It should come as no surprise that at the death of Xerxes Egypt revolted once more.

THE GREEK SOURCES

The information about the rebellion of Inaros and the Athenian intervention in Egypt against the Persians is mentioned briefly in the following Greek sources: Hdt. 3.12, 15, 160, 7.7; Thuc. 1.104, 109–10, 112; Ctesias *Persica* F 14 §§ 36–8;³ Diod. Sic. 11.71,

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¹ P. Briant, *From Cyrus to Alexander: A History of the Persian Empire*, (Winona Lake, 2002), 474, 479–80. D. Devauchelle, 'Un problème de chronologie sous Cambyse', *Transeuphratène* 15 (1998), 15. Devauchelle suggests that year 3 of Darius should be ascribed to Darius II.

² See however recently I.A. Ladynin, '“Adversary Ḥsryš3”: his name and deeds according to the satrap stela', *CdE* 80 (2005), 98–103.

³ F. Jacoby, *FGH* 688 F 14, 465, §§ 36 ff.; D. Lenfant, *Ctésias de Cnide. La Perse, l'Inde. Autres fragments* (Paris, 2004), 129–31.

74–5, 77. The reliability of the different sources varies. They will be surveyed briefly below.

Herodotus wrote his comments on the rebellion of Inaros the closest in time to the events. He wrote them as a digression from and as a comparison with his main theme, viz. Cambyses' madness and harsh treatment of Egypt. Unfortunately, his description of the events is brief, incomplete and out of historical and chronological context.⁴

Thucydides intended to write the history of the Peloponnesian war and he is also the main historical source for the period of c. 50 years (the Pentekontaetia) between the end of the Persian wars, which were covered by Herodotus, and the Peloponnesian war. Thucydides' purpose in recounting this period is to trace the ascendancy of Athens,⁵ and the antecedents of its decline. Thucydides claims that he follows a strict chronological scheme. Many scholars accept this.⁶ He describes the events in Egypt as part of the Athenian activities in Greece and the Eastern Mediterranean during these years: the battle of the Eurymedon River, the revolt of Naxos, the revolt of Thasos, the earthquake in Sparta, the Helot rebellion, the siege of Mount Ithome, the siege of Aegina and the campaign of Tanagra. The order of events is accepted at face value by most commentators and is only rarely disputed.

Some scholars maintain, however, that Thucydides organized his material thematically, not chronologically in the sense of recording events year by year. 'Thucydides simply jumped ahead chronologically in order to tell us the eventual outcome of the Helot revolt (464–454 B.C.) before returning to his sequential narrative....'⁷ The Egyptian events in Thuc. 1.109–10 were recorded *after* describing events in Greece, which were more important to record in their right order, concurrent with the Egyptian events.⁸ The chronological relationship between these events which lasted several years was described with the word 'δεῦ', which should perhaps be translated 'meanwhile'.⁹

Ctesias *Persica* F14 §§ 36–8 has an extensive account containing facts that do not appear in any other account. He mentions a naval battle fought by the Athenian admiral Charitimidēs, the wounding and eventual killing of Inaros and the Hellenes despite the promise not to harm them, and Megabyzus' rebellion against Artaxerxes on account of the killings. His account differs from the other sources in such facts as the name and family ties of the Persian satrap, the number of Athenian warships and the total size of the military forces involved.¹⁰ Ctesias' account is considered biased

⁴ K.G. Hoglund, *Achaemenid Imperial Administration in Syria–Palestine and the Missions of Ezra and Nehemiah* (Society of Biblical Literature, Diss. Series 125, Atlanta, 1992), 100–7.

⁵ Hoglund (n. 4), 111.

⁶ Hoglund (n. 4), 111; A.W. Gomme, *A Historical Commentary on Thucydides* I (Oxford, 1959), 391–3; J.M. Libourel, 'The Athenian Disaster in Egypt', *AJPh* 92 (1971), 605–15; A.B. Lloyd, *Herodotus Book II. Introduction* (Leiden, 1975), 38–43.

⁷ R.K. Unz, 'Chronology of the Pentekontaetia', *CQ* 36 (1986), 68–85; quotation from p. 75. Unz ascribes this phenomenon to the unfinished nature of Thucydides' work, which he would have put right later, and not to his historiographic method whereby he recorded first the whole development of events which were of importance to him without breaking them off, and mentioned other concurrent events afterwards, even though they occurred during the same period. Cf. P. Deane, *Thucydides' Dates: 465–431 B.C.* (Ontario, 1972), 43–4.

⁸ In the words of Gomme (n. 6), 307, 'The story of the Egyptian expedition is broken off (to be resumed in 109) for the relation of the next events which were in Greece'. On p. 320 Gomme states that Thuc. 1.109.4 'begins the chronological order again'.

⁹ Deane (n. 7), 33.

¹⁰ J.M. Bigwood, 'Ctesias' account of the revolt of Inaros', *Phoenix* 30.1 (1976), 1–25.

towards Megabyzus, while international conflict is reduced to a dispute between individuals.¹¹ No chronological information can be deduced from this account.

Diodorus' account was written in the second half of the first century B.C. It is far removed from the events and depends entirely on earlier sources – for the fifth century B.C. mainly Ephorus, a pupil of Isocrates.¹² Diodorus is the only author who gives a detailed chronology of the rebellion that can be translated into absolute dates. He dates the events in the relative passages according to the archons of Athens and the consuls of Rome between the years 463/2 and 460/59 B.C.¹³

THE ACCEPTED CHRONOLOGY OF THE REBELLION OF INAROS AND THE ATHENIAN INTERVENTION IN EGYPT

Lloyd is one of many scholars who accept the 'association of the beginning of the revolt with the accession of Artaxerxes (sometime in 465/4) made both by Diodorus and Ctesias...'. He continues: 'it is likely enough that Inaros did take up arms in 463/2'. Lloyd then dates the Athenian intervention in Egypt to 459/8–454/3 B.C. according to Thucydides' order of events, based on the following arguments:

- (1) The dates in Diodorus Siculus concerning the rebellion of Inaros are not reliable for the following reasons:
 - (a) It is contradicted by Diodorus 12.3 where the Athenians are said to have lost their ships a short time before 450/49 B.C.
 - (b) It reduces the Athenian expedition to half the length given by Thucydides.
 - (c) The siege of Prosopitis¹⁴ could not have lasted a year on this scheme, much less the 18 months allowed by Thucydides.
- (2) According to Thucydides the conflict lasted six years.
- (3) The events in Thucydides are discussed *as far as possible* (my italics) in chronological order.
- (4) The treasury of the Athenian alliance had been removed to Delos under threat of attack from non-Greek enemies (i.e. the Persians). This implies that the Athenian navy no longer threatened the Persian forces. Thus the Egyptian adventure must have come to an end by 454 B.C.
- (5) The Erechtheid tribe casualty list mentions the casualties from campaigns in Cyprus, Phoenicia, Halieus, Aegina and Megara, all in one year. According to Diodorus' dates (which Lloyd and others accept) these events belong to the

¹¹ Hoglund (n. 4), 119–27.

¹² R. Drews, 'Diodorus and his sources', *AJPh* 83 (1962). See also: P.J. Stylianou, *A Historical Commentary on Diodorus Siculus Book 15* (Oxford, 1998), Introduction. Stylianou considers the possibility of an additional source, other than Ephorus, for the chronographic material in Diodorus; see pp. 25–48. P. Green, *Diodorus Siculus Books 11–12.37.1: Greek History, 480–431 BC, the Alternative Version* (Austin, 2006), 15, 27, 35–6.

¹³ On the reliability and credibility of Diodorus' composition, see Gomme (n. 6), 51–3, 383–92; cf. however, K.S. Sacks, 'Diodorus and his sources: conformity and creativity', in S. Hornblower (ed.), *Greek Historiography* (Oxford, 1994), 213–32; R. Meiggs, *The Athenian Empire* (Oxford, 1972), 452–8 and for a more positive assessment of Diodorus' work and chronology, see Unz (n. 7), 68–85; Green (n. 12), ix–xiv, 1–34.

¹⁴ For the possible location of Prosopitis in the fourth or fifth nome of Lower Egypt in the Western Delta, see W. Helck, *Die altägyptische Gauen* (Wiesbaden, 1974), 158–63; J.-Y. Carrez-Maratray, 'Les branches du Nil d'Hérodote et le désastre athénien de l'Île Prosopitis', *Comptes Rendus de l'Académie des Inscriptions & Belles-Lettres* (2003/2), 953–4; A.B. Lloyd, *Herodotus Book II. Commentary 1–98* (Leiden, 1976), 186–7.

archonship of Philocles (459/8 B.C.) and the archonship of Bion (*sic*; read Habron) in 458/7 B.C. According to Lloyd this list dates to the first year of Athenian involvement in Egypt.¹⁵

Lloyd concludes that the Athenian affair in Egypt lasted from 459/8 to 454/3 B.C. He suggests the following *tentative* reconstruction of the course of the events:¹⁶

- 459/8 The Athenians arrive, Battle of Papremis.
- c. 458/7 Mission of Megabazus to Sparta, which must have taken a considerable time in planning and execution. Artabazus and Megabyzus arrive. A year is spent in training while the Athenians besiege Memphis.
- c. 457/6 The Persians move against the allies.
- c. 456/5 1½ years spent in besieging Prosopitis.
- c. 455/4 Athenian reinforcements arrive and are wiped out, probably in 455 if we accept Thucydides' correlation with the expedition of Tolmides.
- c. 454/3 The treasury is transferred from Delos and the first payment of *phoros* is made at Athens.

The majority of scholars accepts these dates or dates the Athenian involvement one year earlier (460 B.C.).¹⁷ Lloyd then states that 'this chronology *violates no known fact* (my italics) and seems workable...'. The war between Inaros and his allies and the Persians is conventionally dated to 460–454 B.C. During most of the war the Persians were locked up in the citadel of Memphis called the 'White Wall', while the main Persian forces were preparing for the invasion in the Levant. No Persian presence in Egypt outside Memphis should be expected until 456 B.C., when the Persians finally moved against Egypt and besieged Prosopitis for one and a half years until the final defeat of the Egyptian and Greek allies in 455/4 B.C.

This treatment of the rebellion of Inaros and the Athenian intervention in Egypt ignores the tendency and purpose of the written sources and most importantly it violates facts in the narratives and contradicts the Greek evidence as well as that of Aramaic and demotic documents from Egypt. Dated documents are known from Egypt for *exactly* this period and the rest of the reign of Artaxerxes I even in Aswan and Elephantine (the island opposite Aswan) in the south of Egypt.

¹⁵ Meiggs (n. 13), 101; cf. H.D. Westlake, 'Thucydides and the Athenian Disaster in Egypt', *CPh* 45 (1950), 211; Deane (n. 7), 35–8.

¹⁶ Lloyd (n. 6), 38–43.

¹⁷ W. Wallace, 'The Egyptian expedition and chronology of the decade 460–450 B.C.', *TAPhA* 67 (1936), 252–60; F.K. Kienitz, *Die Politische Geschichte Ägyptens vom 7. bis zum 4. Jahrhundert vor der Zeitwende* (Berlin, 1953), 69–72; M.L.W. Laistner, *A History of the Greek World from 479 to 323 B.C.* (London, 1957), 15–18; P. Salmon, *La Politique égyptienne d'Athènes (VI^e et V^e siècles avant J.-C.)* (Bruxelles, 1965), 88–192; Libourel (n. 6), 605; A. French, *The Athenian Half-Century 478–431 BC* (Sydney, 1971), 58–60; Deane (n. 7), 30–45; Meiggs (n. 13), 92–3; P. Salmon, 'Les relations entre la Perse et l'Égypte du VI^e au IV^e siècle av. J.-C.', in E. Lipinski (ed.), *The Land of Israel. Cross-roads of Civilizations* (Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 19, Leuven, 1985), 152–3 (Salmon does not keep a strict chronological scheme based on the sources); E. Bresciani, 'The Persian Occupation of Egypt', *The Cambridge History of Iran II. The Median and Achaemenid Periods* (London and New York, 1985), 510–11; Unz (n. 7), 78–80, 83–4; J.D. Ray, 'Egypt 525–404 B.C.', *Cambridge Ancient History IV*² (1988), 266, 276–7; E. Robinson, 'Thucydidean sieges, Prosopitis, and the Hellenic disaster in Egypt', *ClAnt* 18/1 (1999), 132–52; J.W. Betlyon, 'Egypt and Phoenicia in the Persian period: partners in trade and rebellion', in G.N. Knoppers and A. Hirsch (edd.), *Egypt, Israel, and the Ancient Mediterranean world. Studies in Honor of Donald B. Redford* (Probleme der Ägyptologie 20, Leiden, 2004), 462–5; Briant (n. 1), 573–7.

THE EVIDENCE OF PERSIAN PRESENCE IN EGYPT BETWEEN 460 B.C.
AND 454 B.C. (THE ALLEGED DATES OF THE REBELLION OF INAROS)

According to a Babylonian astronomical text (BM 32234) Xerxes was murdered by his son on 4 August 465 (16 Abu, year 21 of Xerxes). The latest document (a lease of a palm grove for date cultivation) from the reign of Xerxes is dated six days later (10 August 465 B.C.).¹⁸ The earliest Babylonian date surviving from the reign of Artaxerxes I is a fragmentary lease from Uruk, dated in the month Simanu (III), day not preserved, regnal year 1 (11 June – 11 July 464). The earliest document from the reign of Artaxerxes I in Egypt (or elsewhere in the Persian Empire) is an Aramaic legal document concerning a land dispute between two mercenaries on the island of Elephantine. It is dated according to the double-dating system of the Babylonian/Persian and Egyptian calendar to the '18th of Kislev, d[ay 13+] 4 of Thoth, the year of the death of Xerxes, i.e. his 21st regnal year, at the beginning of the reign (ראש מלכותא) of Artaxerxes (2 January 464 B.C.)'.¹⁹ If the mercenary soldiers in Elephantine dated their document 2 January 464 B.C. according to the regnal years of Artaxerxes I, a massive rebellion did not commence five months after the death of Xerxes in Egypt.

In the following paragraphs a survey of the dated texts from Egypt will be given, with their significance for the reconstruction of the rebellion. During the regnal years 1 – 4 of Artaxerxes I (beginning 464 – December 461) not one single document dated to his reign was found in Egypt, as compared with the abundance of Persian dated documents from other periods.

An Aramaic papyrus (Cowley, no. 7) dated to the 18th day of the Egyptian month Phaophi, year 4 of Artaxerxes, deals with a case of complaint about a burglary and an obligation made by the alleged burglar that he will give a declaration before the god about these allegations. This date was attributed to Artaxerxes I by its first editor, Cowley, who dated the document to 461 B.C.²⁰ This attribution, however, has been proved wrong. The document belongs to the reign of Artaxerxes II and is dated to 401 B.C., and thus has no relevance to the period under discussion.²¹ No documents, therefore, from Egypt date to year 4 of Artaxerxes I.

A graffito from Wadi Hammamat (leading from Coptos in the Nile Valley in Upper Egypt to the Red Sea), written by a Persian eunuch named Ariyawrata, son of Artames, in year 5 of Artaxerxes I (16 December 461 – 16 December 460 according to the Egyptian calendar), indicates Persian control in Upper Egypt (c. 700 km south of Cairo) during this year. He was the brother of the Persian eunuch (Saris), Atiyawahi, who left his graffiti at the same site during the reigns of Cambyses, Darius and Xerxes.²² According to most scholars Persia held control over most of Egypt while

¹⁸ R.A. Parker and W.H. Dubberstein, *Babylonian Chronology: 626 B.C.–A.D. 75* (Providence, RI, 1956), 17; M.W. Stolper, 'Some ghost facts from Achaemenid Babylonian texts', *JHS* 108 (1988), 196–7; M.W. Stolper, 'Late Achaemenid Babylonian chronology', *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires* (1999), 6.

¹⁹ A. Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.* (Osnabrück, 1967), 16; B. Porten, *The Elephantine Papyri in English. Three Millennia of Cross-Cultural Continuity and Change* (Leiden, New York and Cologne, 1996), B24, 158–62; S.H. Horn and L.H. Wood, 'The fifth-century Jewish calendar at Elephantine', *JNES* 13/1 (1954), 7–9; L. Depuydt, 'Regnal years and civil calendar in Achaemenid Egypt', *JEA* 81 (1995), 162, 164. Note the chronological difficulties of this double date.

²⁰ A. Cowley, *Aramaic Papyri of the Fifth Century B.C.* (Osnabrück, 1967) 19.

²¹ Porten (n. 19), 262–3 correcting his earlier date in 'Cowley 7 reconsidered', *Orientalia* 56 (1987), 89–90.

²² G. Posener, *La première domination perse en Égypte* (Cairo, 1936), 117–26. See also

Inaros rebelled in the Delta.²³ As will be shown below, this is not the case. Inaros ruled in Upper Egypt as well, and thus the commonly accepted dating of the rebellion is difficult to reconcile with this inscription, as with the following papyri, building inscription and graffiti.

An Aramaic papyrus (Cowley, no. 8) from Elephantine, dated to the sixth regnal year of Artaxerxes I (1 December 1 459 B.C.),²⁴ records a deed relating to the bequest of a house by a certain Jew named Mahseiah to his daughter. Another Aramaic document (Cowley, no. 9), recording a grant of usufruct by this same person to his son-in-law, is dated to the same day.²⁵ A fragment of an Aramaic betrothal contract may be dated either to the end of 459 B.C. or to 449 B.C.²⁶ According to the conventional chronology the Persians were defeated in this year and took refuge in the fortress of Memphis. However, in Elephantine the reign of Artaxerxes I was acknowledged, and the Persian hold over the far south of Egypt seems firm.

A stela with a building inscription from Aswan is dated to Artaxerxes' seventh regnal year. Lemaire proposed to assign this building inscription to the reign of Artaxerxes II and claimed that Artaxerxes II lost control over Egypt only after his seventh regnal year in 398 B.C. However, the double date (year seven of Artaxerxes in the month of Sivan [Babylonian/Persian] which is the month of Mehyr [second month of the Egyptian Peret season]) on the stela does not fit the dates in the reign of Artaxerxes II. The stela should be assigned to *Artaxerxes I's* seventh regnal year (458) and proves that the Persian king's authority was acknowledged in the whole of Egypt in 458 B.C.²⁷ According to conventional dating of the rebellion of Inaros, the Persians would still have been locked up in Memphis at this stage, while the Egyptians and Athenians would have controlled the country (Thuc. 1.104, 109.2). This is clearly not the case.²⁸

An Aramaic papyrus from Elephantine recording a loan of silver (Cowley, no. 10) is double-dated according to the Babylonian/Persian and Egyptian dating systems and dates from the 7th of Kislev, that is day 4 of the month of Thoth, year 9 of Artaxerxes I (13 December 456).²⁹ Moreover, an erased customs account from year 11

E. Bresciani, *The Cambridge History of Iran* II, 510, 513; Ray (n. 17), 266, 272–3, 276; Briant (n. 1), 573–7. In most of these studies the outline of the history is thematically separated from the discussion of the Persian personnel and administration in Egypt. Thus the obvious clash between the dates is not recognized. An additional papyrus (Vienna D 10151) was dated to year 5 of Artaxerxes I. However, Artaxerxes III is more probably the correct king. See D. Devauchelle, 'Réflexions sur les documents égyptiens datés de la deuxième domination perse', *Transeuphratène* 10 (1995), 35–43.

²³ See, for instance, Kienitz (n. 17), 65, 69, who suggests that when Persia did not control the Delta, it could still control Upper Egypt through the Red Sea.

²⁴ Porten (n. 19), 163–71.

²⁵ Porten (n. 19), 172–5.

²⁶ Porten (n. 19), 176.

²⁷ A. Lemaire, 'Recherches d'épigraphie araméenne en Asie Mineure et en Égypte et le problème de l'acculturation', in H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg and A. Kuhrt (edd.), *Achaemenid History VI. Asia Minor and Egypt: Old Cultures in a New Empire. Proceedings of the Groningen 1988 Achaemenid History Workshop* (Leiden, 1991), 199–203. See B. Porten and A. Yardeni *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt IV. Ostraca and Assorted Inscriptions* (Jerusalem, 1999), 236.

²⁸ An additional Aramaic papyrus from Elephantine, which may be dated to 27 October 458, 2 November 445 or 14 October 449 B.C., is a document of marriage; Porten (n. 19), 177. Cf. earlier dates considered by B. Porten and A. Yardeni *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt II. Contracts* (Jerusalem, 1986), 30–3.

²⁹ Porten (n. 19), 202.

of an unnamed Persian king who is identified as Xerxes (475 B.C.) or Artaxerxes I (454 B.C.) was overwritten in the second half of the fifth century B.C. with the literary text 'The Words of Ahiqar'. This text may also be used as evidence for Persian dominance in Elephantine in 454 B.C.³⁰

These documents from Egypt, which are dated according to the regnal years of Artaxerxes I between 460 and 454, cover consecutively almost the entire six-year period of the alleged rebellion and Persian absence from Egypt, as accepted by most scholars. They clearly disprove the conventionally accepted dates for the revolt of Inaros. An alternative dating of events is needed.

In the following pages I shall argue that the chronology and, in some respects, the reconstruction of events as presented in the account of Diodorus Siculus is in fact more plausible than the usual account. Furthermore, I will consider the historiographical explanations for differences between Diodorus, Thucydides and Ctesias, and show how in several cases they can be reconciled.

THE PROPOSED CHRONOLOGY OF THE REBELLION OF INAROS³¹

Inaros' rebellion probably did not start before Xerxes' death in August 465. Ctesias noted that upon the death of Xerxes, Artaxerxes ascended the throne. He tried to quell a rebellion in Bactria and *then* Egypt rebelled (*Persica* §§ 34–6).

Diodorus asserts that in the same year when Tlepolemus was archon in Athens and the Romans elected as consuls Titus Quinctius and Quintus Servilius Structus (463/2 B.C.) Artaxerxes, the King of the Persians, recovered his throne and punished the murderers of his father. When the inhabitants of Egypt learned of the death of Xerxes, they decided to rebel (Diod. Sic. 11.71).³²

The dates given by Diodorus seem to be corroborated by the documents from Egypt. As can be deduced from the Aramaic text from Elephantine, on 2 January 464 there is still no sign of rebellion in the south of Egypt (see above n. 19). It is clear that some months have elapsed between the death of Xerxes and the start of the rebellion.³³ Inaros, based in the Delta, must have started his rebellion and reign after this date.

According to the Egyptian antedating system, the king's first regnal year started at his accession and lasted until the Egyptian New Year, not including the whole first regnal year. His second regnal year started on New Year's Day. In the case of Inaros, he was not acknowledged yet as king in January 464 and must have ascended the throne later. His second regnal year seems to have started on 17 December 464 or 463.³⁴ Diodorus also states that Inaros was already acknowledged as king in 463/2 B.C. (11.71.3).

Inaros' second regnal year, first month of the Peret season (15 April–15 May), is attested in an ostrakon from Ein Manawir in the Kharga Oasis (c. 200 km west of the

³⁰ B. Porten and A. Yardeni, *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt III. Literature, Accounts, Lists* (Jerusalem, 1993), 292. The text was dated by Porten and Yardeni to the 11th year of Xerxes. P. Briant and R. Descat, 'Un registre douanier de la Satrapie d'Égypte à l'époque Achéménide (*TAD* C3.7)', in N. Grimal and B. Menu (edd.), *Le commerce en Égypte ancienne* (BdE 121; Paris, 1998), 60–2, date the text to 454 B.C.

³¹ Cf. J. Scharf, 'Die erste ägyptische Expedition der Athener', *Historia* 3 (1954/5), 308–25.

³² For a precise chronological reconstruction of events, see Green (n. 12), 140–52.

³³ See also Green (n. 12), 141, n. 274.

³⁴ P.W. Pestman, *Les Papyrus démotiques de Tsenhor (P. Tsenhor). Les archives privées d'une femme égyptienne du temps de Darius I* (Leuven, 1994), 178.

Nile Valley city of Thebes in Upper Egypt) recording a contract concerning water concessions. Inaros is described as 'chief of the rebels' (*wr n n3 bk 's' w*) without a royal designation or cartouche.³⁵ Thus, in May 463 at the earliest, or more probably in May 462, the rebellion was already in an advanced stage.³⁶

The claim of scholars that the rebellion of Inaros was confined to the Delta can no longer hold.³⁷ From the occurrence of the ostrakon in Ein Manawir it becomes clear that the statements of Thuc. 1.104 that Inaros caused a revolt in almost the whole of Egypt was correct. He was recognized as ruler in Upper Egypt in his second year. His designation of 'King' in Diod. Sic. 11.71 and 'King of the Libyans' in Thuc. 1.104 cannot be corroborated by the Demotic ostrakon from Ein Manawir, where he is called 'chief of the rebels'.³⁸ This, however, cannot be taken as proof that he did not crown himself (or that his followers crowned him).³⁹ It may be that this designation was given by opponents of Inaros, who had to date according to his reign, but did not want to acknowledge him as king,⁴⁰ or that his control over Egypt was not yet totally assured.

Greek sources mention that Inaros sent to Athens a request for assistance.⁴¹ According to the dates given by Diodorus (11.71), an embassy to the Athenians was sent during the year 463/2. The following archon year (462/1) the Athenians abandoned a campaign against Cyprus,⁴² and arrived in Egypt.⁴³

According to Diodorus (11.74.1), Artaxerxes I sent an army to Egypt under the command of Achaemenes, son of Darius and his own uncle (Hdt. 7.7; 7.97),⁴⁴ who had been appointed as satrap of Egypt by Xerxes after the revolt of 486–484.⁴⁵

The Egyptians and their allies achieved victory at the battle of Papremis, a town in the Delta,⁴⁶ and Achaemenes was killed (Hdt. 3.12, 7.7; Diod. Sic. 11.74.1–4). Diodorus accentuates the crucial role of the Athenians in deciding the battle against the Persians. According to his narrative, Achaemenes, when he had entered Egypt, pitched his camp near the Nile, and when he had rested his army after the march, made ready for battle. The Egyptians and Libyans, according to Diodorus, awaited the auxiliary force of the Athenians. Only after the arrival of the Athenian forces with

³⁵ M. Chauveau, 'Inarôs, prince des rebelles', in: F. Hoffmann and H.-J. Thissen (edd.), *Res Severa Verum Gaudium. Festschrift für Karl-Theodor Zauzich zum 65. Geburtstag am 8. Juni 2004* (Studia Demotica 6, Leuven, 2004), 39–46.

³⁶ Cf. the general dating of Green (n. 12), 141, n. 274.

³⁷ Gomme (n. 6), 306; Briant (n. 1), 575; Ray (n. 17), 276; Salmon (n. 17), 152. Cf. Lloyd (n. 14), 44; Green (n. 12), 141, n. 274.

³⁸ Cf. the titles of Tefnakht, chief of the Meshwesh from the Western Delta, who conquered the entire Delta and Middle Egypt. See: N.-C. Grimal, *La stèle triomphale de Pi('ankh)y au musée du Caire* (MIFAO 105, Cairo, 1981), 12–15.

³⁹ Diod. Sic. 11.71.3; Thuc. 1.104. See discussion in Høglund (n. 4), 139–42.

⁴⁰ Cf. the title given to Shoshenq I in the Karnak priestly annals fragment no. 4. See K.A. Kitchen, *The Third Intermediate Period in Egypt (1100–650 B.C.)* (Warminster, 2nd rev. ed., 1996), 288, § 242.

⁴¹ Høglund (n. 4), 143.

⁴² Plut. *Cim.* 15 supposedly alludes to this campaign. See S. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides I* (Oxford, 1991), 163–4.

⁴³ Probably not before late autumn 462. See Green (n. 12), 141–2, n. 275, 145, n. 284.

⁴⁴ Ctesias has a certain Achaemenides, brother of Artaxerxes I. See Bigwood (n. 10), 7–9.

⁴⁵ Briant (n. 1), 574.

⁴⁶ Letopolis or Sakhebu, see J. Cerný, 'The name of the town Papremis', *Archiv Orientalni* 20 (1952) 86–9; H. Altenmüller, 'Letopolis und der Bericht des Herodot über Papremis', *Ex Oriente Lux* 18 (1964), 271–9; E. Bresciani, 'Ancora su Papremi: proposte per una nuova etimologia e una nuova localizzazione', *Studi Classici e Orientali* (1972), 299–303; J.D. Ray, 'Thoughts on Djeme and Papremis', *Göttinger Miszellen* 45 (1981), 57–61.

two hundred ships, and after they had been drawn up with the Egyptians in battle order (for a pitched battle), a mighty struggle took place. Accepting the description of Diodorus, one must conclude that the arrival of Achaemenes' forces and those of the Athenians occurred almost simultaneously, for there would have been no reason for the Persians to wait for their opponents to get stronger in order to defeat them. According to Diodorus the Athenian presence decided the outcome of the battle. When compared with Thucydides, or even Ctesias, this description is clearly the most favourable to the Athenians⁴⁷ and is possibly based on the narrative of the pro-Athenian Ephorus.⁴⁸

Ctesias § 36 connects the pitched battle of Papremis, conducted by Inaros and his Egyptian forces, with a naval battle fought on the sea (*θάλατταν / θάλασσαν*) by the Greek general Charitimides (the siege of Memphis is not mentioned). This battle was conducted between the forces of Achemen(id)es, alleged brother of Artaxerxes, and Inaros with his Greek allies. Thus, Greek (naval) forces arrived in Egypt as well and fought the Persian navy, which arrived with Achaemenes in Egypt. This battle must have occurred in chronological proximity to the battle of Papremis, because after this battle the Persian forces were besieged in Memphis (no other Persian concentration of forces in Egypt outside Memphis is mentioned).

The whole episode of the battle against Achaemenes is not mentioned in Thucydides' account (1.104). The Athenians, he says, arrived when the Persians were already under siege in Memphis (and thus he implies that their involvement was totally unnecessary). The description of the Athenians sailing from the sea into the Nile, making themselves masters of the river and two thirds of Memphis, may mean that they could enter the Nile mouths without fear of Persian resistance. They may have been engaged with the final gaining of control over the Nile and Delta branches (a short time after the Persian defeat).

While Diodorus describes the Athenian involvement in the initial battle against the Persians in Egypt as paramount and decisive and Ctesias highlights the naval victory of the Athenians, Thucydides omits the participation of the Athenians at the beginning of the conflict altogether. According to him, Inaros controlled Egypt almost entirely at the beginning of the rebellion, which suggests that Athenian participation was totally unnecessary. After the main battle, the Egyptians and Athenians besieged the remainder of the Persian army which retreated to Memphis. The Athenians were clearly involved in the siege of Memphis, without managing to conquer the 'White Wall' citadel for a year. According to Thuc. 1.109 the Athenians were masters of Egypt. This is not a mere exaggeration if the Athenians were allies of Inaros, who controlled almost the entire country. It describes a Greek view of the political situation in Egypt during Inaros' rebellion.

Following the Persian defeat in Egypt in late 462 or early 461 B.C.⁴⁹ Artaxerxes tried to bribe the Lacedaemonians to open a second front against the Athenians so that

⁴⁷ Cf. the prominent role of the Athenians in the initial pitched battle against Achaemenes, the shortening of the length of the siege on Prosopitis, the Athenian decision not to let their enemy capture their ships. Diodorus compares the besieged Athenians with the men who perished at Thermopylae. In Diodorus' account the Persians made a truce with the Athenians in order to save myriads of their soldiers. According to Thucydides the same affair is described as a total disaster. Their return to Greece is portrayed as a *miracle*, in contrast to Thuc. 1.110 where the Athenian force has almost entirely perished.

⁴⁸ Cf. other cases, where Ephorus, the probable source of Diodorus for this period, describes Athens in a favourable light, e.g. Diod. 11.70.3–4. See Sacks (n. 13), 219. See also Stylianou (n. 12), 115–17 and on the probable pro-Athenian sources of Ephorus, p. 106.

⁴⁹ Green (n. 12), 145, n. 285.

they would need to leave Egypt (Thuc. 1.109; Diod. Sic. 11.74.5–6).⁵⁰ These attempts must have taken a few months.

In the following Athenian archon year of Euthippus (461/60 B.C.), the Persian troops under Artabazus and Megabyzus set out from Persia and gathered in Cilicia and Phoenicia for training. Cyprian, Phoenician and Cilician navies for transport and fighting against the Athenian navy in Egypt were recruited. These preparations took almost the entire year as did the siege of the Persian troops in Memphis.

During the next archon year (of Phrasicleides 460/59 B.C.) the Persian army invaded Egypt and arrived at Memphis with a fleet and an immense force of infantry. The Persians broke the siege. The Egyptians and Athenians retreated to the island of Prosopitis (Diod. Sic. 11.77.2; Thuc. 1.109.4), called Byblos by Ctesias (§ 37), where they were besieged.⁵¹

As noted above, a graffito from Wadi Hammamat indicates that Persian control in Upper Egypt was again asserted by 460 B.C., and most of the rebellion was quelled. The Persians controlled most of Egypt (cf. Ctesias §§ 37–8). It comes as no surprise to find Persian inscriptions in Egypt from 460 onwards, after a hiatus of almost five years. Only the Egyptian and Greek forces at Prosopitis were not yet defeated.

These events were described differently by the various sources: the size of the Athenian forces in Egypt differs,⁵² as does the number of casualties at the end of the siege on Prosopitis. In order to assess the magnitude of the Athenian disaster in Egypt, scholars consider the reliability of the sources,⁵³ the political and military engagement of the Athenians and their allies in the first Peloponnesian War and elsewhere,⁵⁴ linguistic considerations⁵⁵ and logistical constraints of the Athenians besieged on Prosopitis.⁵⁶

Ctesias mentions the participation of 40 Athenian ships (c. 8,000 warriors if we accept the calculation of 200 warriors per trireme).⁵⁷ According to Ctesias, more than 6,000 Athenians were allowed to leave the besieged Prosopitis and return home. Diod. Sic. 11.71.5 states that the Athenians agreed to send 300 triremes. The force which arrived in Egypt numbered 200 vessels (Diod. Sic. 11.72.3; c. 40,000 warriors). No mention of casualties is made in Diodorus.⁵⁸ Most of the Athenians, he says, returned home safely (11.77). Thucydides mentions that the Athenians sent 200 warships. He does not mention if the whole squadron remained in Egypt during the whole

⁵⁰ Hornblower (n. 42), 175.

⁵¹ Green (n. 12), 150 postulates that 'it is not necessary to assume ... that Inaros joined the Athenians at Prosopitis'. However, it is clearly stated in Ctesias § 37 that the surviving Greeks did accompany Inaros. On the nature of the siege, see Robinson (n. 17), 138–52.

⁵² Isoc. *Peace* 86 mentions that two hundred ships set sail for Egypt and perished with their crews. See W.K. Pritchett, *Thucydides' Penekontaetia and Other Essays* (Amsterdam, 1995), 98–9. For the size of the Athenian fleet see the differing views in Wallace (n. 17), 252–60; Scharf (n. 31), 318–23; Westlake (n. 15), 209–16; Libourel (n. 6), 605–15; A.J. Holladay, 'The Hellenic Disaster in Egypt', *JHS* 109 (1989), 176–82; Green (n. 12), 242–3; W.K. Pritchett, *Greek Archives, Cults, and Topography* (Amsterdam, 1996), 59–62.

⁵³ Westlake (n. 15), 209–16; Bigwood (n. 10), 1–21.

⁵⁴ Wallace (n. 17), 252–60; Holladay (n. 52), 178–9 *contra* Libourel (n. 6), 605–9.

⁵⁵ Holladay (n. 52), 179–80; Robinson (n. 17), 138–44.

⁵⁶ Libourel (n. 6), 610–11; Robinson (n. 17), 145–7.

⁵⁷ Robinson (n. 17), 136 *contra* J.S. Morrison and J.F. Coates, *The Athenian Trireme. The History and Reconstruction of an Ancient Greek Warship* (Cambridge, 1986), 11, 225–6. For other numbers of warriors on triremes, see Diod. Sic. 16.48.

⁵⁸ Cf. Diod. Sic. 13.25. 300 triremes were allegedly lost with their crews in Egypt. See Robinson (n. 17), 134.

Athenian involvement in Egypt or if a part of the force returned home. Allegedly almost the whole squadron was annihilated by the Persian forces, only a few surviving. The total number of estimated casualties would have reached about 50,000 dead.

Based on the newly proposed dating for the rebellion of Inaros, the Erechtheid tribe casualty list,⁵⁹ which was introduced into the discussion of the Athenian involvement in Egypt, could add an additional argument in favour of a relatively small Athenian force in Egypt and consequently in downplaying the magnitude of the Athenian catastrophe. The casualty list mentions the casualties from campaigns in Cyprus, Phoenicia, Halieus, Aegina and Megara, all in one year. If the Erechtheid tribe casualty list is dated to 459/8 B.C., as is commonly accepted, Athens was engaged on many fronts during the *final* stages of the war in Egypt and not during the *first* year of the Athenian involvement in Egypt, as is generally assumed. In this case, it must be concluded that the number of Athenian warships besieged on Prosopitis was, at this stage of the war, relatively small, as Ctesias §§ 37–8 claims. *The Athenian disaster in Egypt was probably not therefore as great as it is portrayed in Thucydides.*

Another difference between the accounts at this point is the length of the siege. According to Thuc. 1.109, Megabyzus besieged the Athenians for one and a half years. Diodorus does not elaborate on the time span. He does not continue the description of the siege into the next archon year and gives the impression that things happened suddenly and quickly. Diod. Sic. 11.77.3 states that the Persians avoided direct encounters and strove to bring the war to an end through stratagems. They diverted the course of the river around Prosopitis by means of canals and connected the island to the mainland. The ships *all of a sudden* rested on dry land. However, diverting a channel of the Nile does not occur in a day and must have taken a considerable time. Diodorus wanted to give the impression that the Athenians were not besieged for long, and that the siege ended honourably for the Athenians. But Diodorus' description should be seen as biased and as less reliable than Thucydides on this point.

Diodorus (as so often) has concluded under one archon year a narrative that should more properly have been continued in the next.⁶⁰ Furthermore, Diodorus (11.78–9) claims that the Athenians were engaged in war against the Corinthians and Epidaurians with a large fleet the following year (459 B.C.) and at the battle at Megara in 458, in almost perfect accordance with the Erechtheid tribe casualty list. Clearly Diodorus tried to describe Athenian involvement on every front in a synoptic perspective of the larger Greek world,⁶¹ as can also be seen in the insertion of Athenian involvement in Sicily in Diodorus 11.72–3, 76.

Thus it may be assumed that the siege on Prosopitis indeed lasted a year and a half and ended probably in 458/7 B.C. Thucydides was correct in assessing the length of the Athenian involvement as six years: from the appeal by Inaros for assistance in 463/2 B.C. till their surrender on Prosopitis in 458/7 B.C. almost six years passed. When the relief force was destroyed in 457, six years had passed from the beginning of Athenian involvement in Egypt.

⁵⁹ For the text see R. Meiggs and D. Lewis, *A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions to the End of the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford, 1969), 73–6; C.W. Fornara, *Archaic Times to the End of the Peloponnesian War* (Baltimore, 1977), 77–8; Scharf (n. 31), 316–17; Hornblower (n. 42), 163.

⁶⁰ Cf. the same phenomenon in Diodorus' description of events in the year 458 (11.78). See Green (n. 12), 153, n. 310.

⁶¹ Green (n. 12), 39.

A further interesting difference between the sources is the relations between the Egyptians and their Athenian allies at the end of the siege. In Diodorus 11.77 the *Egyptians abandoned the Athenians* and came to terms with the Persians. The Athenians bravely decided to oppose the Persians. Diodorus' account stresses Athenian heroism, exceeding the heroism at Thermopylae, but the Persians did not want to fight and concluded a truce with the Athenians, who were allowed to depart from Egypt. They returned home via Libya and Cyrene. By a miracle (*παράδοξως*) they returned safely to Athens.

Why would the Persians not want to fight the Athenians after all the efforts they had made and the success in changing the battlefield to their advantage, as Diodorus maintains? Probably the Persians did start to fight the Athenians and at some point both sides decided to spare the additional bloodshed and come to honourable terms. The final outcome could indeed be perceived as a miracle. The Athenians survived against all odds against a powerful Persian force, Egyptian betrayal and the hardships of nature and returned home.

According to Ctesias §§ 38–9, Megabyzus came to terms with *Inaros (= the Egyptians) and the Greeks*. The Greeks were allowed to return home whenever they pleased. Inaros, king of the Egyptians, was part of the agreement, so we might deduce that the Egyptians did not betray their allies. Megabyzus took Inaros and some Greeks to Artaxerxes. Inaros was eventually impaled on three stakes. Ctesias is not interested in the fortune of the majority of the Athenians.

Thucydides describes how Megabyzus defeated the Egyptians and their allies in a battle, and drove the Athenians out of Memphis, and *shut (only) the Athenians up in the island of Prosopitis*. Megabyzus drained the canal of its waters and diverted it into another canal. He left the Athenian ships high and dry and joined the island to the mainland (as told by Diodorus as well). According to Thucydides, the Persians marched over on foot and captured Prosopitis. Neither opposition nor battle during the final stages of the siege is described. He notes that the Athenian enterprise ended in failure after six years. Thucydides clearly compresses the ensuing events of the battle and the circumstances in which the Athenians left the besieged island of Prosopitis and found themselves in the Libyan desert. He states that only a few Athenians travelled through Libya and reached Cyrene in safety; most of them perished. Where and how they perished is not said, and most of them may have died because of a sandstorm,⁶² heat,⁶³ or lack of provisions and water during their long retreat through the Libyan desert, possibly during the summer,⁶⁴ and not as a direct result of the fighting.

While Diodorus describes the end of the siege at Prosopitis as a miracle, Thucydides describes the same event as a colossal disaster. Scholars ascribe the difference between the versions to the questionable reliability of Diodorus and his sources, or else the ignorance of Thucydides.⁶⁵ However, the differences arise from historiographic motives. Both authors describe the Athenian involvement in a light which will convey their message best. Diodorus praises Athenian valour, while Thucydides criticizes their irresponsible and adventurous nature. Diodorus describes the glass of wine as half full, Thucydides as half empty.

⁶² Cambyses 525 B.C. (Hdt. 3.26) and his campaign against the 'long-lived Ethiopians'.

⁶³ Cf. Alexander's march to the temple of Amun, probably in the Siwa Oasis, to receive an oracle from Zeus (=Amun): Quintus Curtius, *History of Alexander* 4.7.6–8.

⁶⁴ Green (n. 12), 150, n. 302.

⁶⁵ Westlake (n. 15), 214.

The notion of disaster in Egypt – where ‘a few survivors of their great army found their way through Libya to Cyrene; by far the greater number perished’ (Thuc. 1.110.1) – was probably achieved by phrasing similar to the description of the disaster in Sicily (7.87.6), perhaps intended to create a resemblance and compare the two defeats.⁶⁶ The reckless and irresponsible adventures led, according to Thucydides, to the unnecessary deaths of thousands of Athenians. However, other than this sentence pointing out that few out of many survived the disasters in Sicily and in Egypt, the circumstances, details and even the severity of the defeat differ widely.

Another episode, which only Thucydides mentions (1.110) in his critical attitude towards Athens, is the sending of an Athenian relief squadron (διαδόχοι) of 50 Athenian warships,⁶⁷ which entered Egypt through the Mendesian Nile mouth, unaware that the Athenians had lost the battle at Prosopitis, and was annihilated by Persian infantry and a Phoenician navy.

Why was Thucydides' attitude toward Athens so unfavourable? Thucydides, of aristocratic origin, related to the ostracized Cimon, was himself exiled from Athens because of military inadequacy, and looked at the democracy of Athens in a critical light.⁶⁸ He wrote during a long period of Athenian imperial decline, motivated by the intent ‘to explain where the city went wrong...’.⁶⁹ In his descriptions of Athens' policy, the Athenians were depicted as restless, ambitious adventurers who engaged in war on many fronts in contrast to the cautious Periclean strategy.⁷⁰ It was conceived by him as a dangerous behaviour pattern, and consequently one of the crucial reasons for the decline of Athenian hegemony in the following years.

Ctesias was not interested in following the stages that evolved into the agreement between the Persians and the Athenians. No battle is mentioned at Byblos (Prosopitis). He noted that the Athenians were allowed to leave peacefully. What interested Ctesias was that Megabyzus concluded the agreement on the Persian side. Megabyzus was a man of honour, and when the agreement was broken, Megabyzus revolted.⁷¹ Ctesias was mainly interested in Megabyzus' achievements and Inaros' final fate. Ctesias was also interested more than the other sources in the Persian administration of Egypt after the revolt. He listed the appointment of a certain Sarsamas as satrap in Egypt and his role in breaking the agreement with Inaros (§ 38). This Sarsamas might be the same person as Arsham, the satrap who is known from the Elephantine papyri and from Babylonian economic documents.⁷² The identification is, however, not certain.

⁶⁶ Hornblower (n. 42), 176–7.

⁶⁷ Hornblower (n. 42), 177. On the nature of this force, see also Libourel (n. 6), 612–13; Holladay (n. 52), 179–80; Robinson (n. 17), 137.

⁶⁸ Cf. the words of Dion. Hal. *Pomp.* 3 and in other instances on the unfavourable attitude of Thucydides to Athens in his war descriptions.

⁶⁹ M.F. Williams, *Ethics in Thucydides. The Ancient Simplicity* (New York, 1998), 299. Cf. G. Cane, *Thucydides and the Ancient Simplicity. The Limits of Political Realism* (Berkeley, 1998), 68, 71.

⁷⁰ T. Rood, *Thucydides. Narrative and Explanation* (Oxford, 1998), 247, 289.

⁷¹ Hoglund (n. 14), 119–27.

⁷² G.R. Driver, *Aramaic Documents of the Fifth Century B.C.* (Oxford, 1965), 88–96. Most of his documents date from the end of the reign of Artaxerxes I and the reign of Darius II between 428 and 403 B.C. However, one document (Driver, 90) dating to 435 mentions Arsham, who could be identified as the Satrap in Egypt. See H.S. Smith, ‘Foreigners in the documents from the Sacred Animal Necropolis, Saqqara’, in J.H. Johnson, (ed.), *Life in a Multi-Cultural Society. Egypt from Cambyse to Constantine and Beyond. Fourth International Congress of Demotists, Chicago, September 4–8, 1990* (Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilization 51, Chicago, 1992), 297

AFTERMATH OF THE REBELLION OF INAROS AND THE REBELLION OF AMYRTAIOS (458/7–450)

After quelling the rebellion, the Persians controlled Egypt up to Elephantine. Aramaic papyri are known from Egypt from Artaxerxes I's regnal years 14 (451), 16 (449), 19 (446),⁷³ 25 (440), 28–31 (437–434), 38 (427).⁷⁴ Graffiti from Wadi Hammamat in the Eastern Desert of Upper Egypt are dated to his years 16 (449) and 17 (448).⁷⁵ The Persians may even have expanded their authority southward at least as far as the second cataract.⁷⁶

According to Ctesias § 36, Inaros and another Egyptian rebelled against the Persians. Nowhere is it stated that this is Amyrtaios as is generally assumed. Amyrtaios' fate is also not mentioned in the story. Hdt. 3.15, in a digression from telling about the fate of Psamenitus (Psammetichus III), says: 'The Persians are inclined to honour kings' sons; even though kings revolt from them, they give back to their sons the sovereign power. There are many instances showing that it is their custom so to do, and notably the giving back of his father's sovereign power to Thannyras son of Inaros, and also to Pausiris son of Amyrtaios; yet none ever did the Persians more harm than Inaros and Amyrtaios ...'. The proximity of Inaros and Amyrtaios in this passage is misleading. They are related *by subject* – their sons were accepted by the Persian King as their successors. These events did not necessarily happen at the same time.

Thuc. 1.110 mentions that after the Athenian defeat at Prosopitis 'Egypt returned to its subjugation to the king (of Persia), except Amyrtaios, the king in the marshes, whom they were unable to capture from the extent of the marsh'. Thucydides then goes on: 'Inaros, *the sole author of the Egyptian revolt* (emphasis mine), was betrayed, taken, and crucified'. From this it can be deduced that Amyrtaios was ruler in the Delta marshes at the time of the rebellion of Inaros. At least his district was not pacified at the end of the rebellion. Thucydides, however, is clear enough in stating that Inaros was the only leader of the revolt. Thuc. 1.112 recounts an Athenian campaign to aid the Egyptians *several years later*: 'Released from Hellenic war, the Athenians made an expedition to Cyprus with two hundred vessels of their own and their allies, under the command of Cimon. Sixty of these were detached to Egypt at the instance of Amyrtaios, the king in the marshes; the rest laid siege to Citium, from which they were compelled to retire by the death of Cimon and by scarcity of provisions. Sailing off Salamis in Cyprus, they fought with the Phoenicians, Cyprians and Cilicians by land and sea, and being victorious on both elements departed home, and with them the squadron returned from Egypt.'⁷⁷

for a possible mention of Arsham in the second year of Artaxerxes. If the king is identified as Artaxerxes I, this would date to 463 B.C. and be the first mention of the Satrap. He would by then have been quite old.

⁷³ The possible dating of two papyri mentioned above to 449 B.C. may also be used (if their earlier date is discarded) as evidence for continuing Persian domination over Egypt. See above nn. 26 and 28.

⁷⁴ Horn and Wood (n. 19), 1–20. B. Porten and A. Yardeni *Textbook of Aramaic Documents from Ancient Egypt* IV. *Ostraca and Assorted Inscriptions* (Jerusalem, 1999), 113, 176, 177, 184, 188.

⁷⁵ Posener (n. 22), 127.

⁷⁶ L.A. Heidorn, 'The Saite and Persian Period Forts at Dorginarti', in W.V. Davies (ed.), *Egypt and Africa. Nubia from Prehistory to Islam* (London, 1993), 205–19.

⁷⁷ These events are dated after an unsuccessful Athenian campaign against Thessaly, a successful battle against Sicyon and an unsuccessful siege against Oeniadae in Acarnania (Thuc.

Diod. Sic. 12.3 dates these events to the year 'when Euthydemus was archon at Athens [450 B.C.]'⁷⁸ ... In this year the Athenians, who had been at war with the Persians on behalf of the Egyptians and had lost all their ships at the island which is known as Prosopitis, *after a short time* (my emphasis) resolved to make war again upon the Persians on behalf of the Greeks in Asia Minor. And fitting out a fleet of two hundred triremes, they chose Cimon, the son of Miltiades, to be general and commanded him to sail to Cyprus to make war on the Persians ... The rest were victorious in the battle and after slaying many returned to the ships. After this the Athenians sailed back again to Cyprus.' Diodorus notes that the Athenians, who lost the battle at Prosopitis, after a short time elapsed, went to make war again upon the Persians. It is clear that this engagement occurred at some undefined time after the defeat at Prosopitis and is not another description of the Athenian intervention in Inaros' rebellion. For somebody who wrote centuries after the events, a period of about eight years does not seem such a long time.

The Athenians concluded a peace treaty with Sparta (in 454 or more probably 451)⁷⁹ and neutralized one front. The Athenian strategy now was to weaken Persian control in Asia Minor and in the Eastern Mediterranean realm by occupying Cyprus, take control of the Cypriot fleet from the Persian forces and use the harbours of Cyprus as a base for military and commercial activity in the Eastern Mediterranean.⁸⁰ According to Diodorus 12.3–4, the Athenians went on campaign against Cyprus, defeating the Persians and their Cilician and Phoenician allies. It seems that Amyrtaios intended to profit from the Persian preoccupation elsewhere and free himself from their yoke. He sent Athens a request for military aid. The Athenians were more than happy to meddle again in Egypt and weaken the Persians further.⁸¹ During the Athenian campaign against Cyprus Cimon died, and Pericles led a change in strategy, avoiding major expeditions against the Persians.⁸² This change in Athenian strategy was met by a Persian eagerness to reach a settlement. The Athenians signed a peace treaty with Persia, known as the peace of Callias. Persia agreed not to intervene in the Greek cities allied to Athens. Athens and her allies agreed not to send troops into the territories over which Artaxerxes I ruled (including Cyprus and Egypt).⁸³ Without further Athenian involvement in Egypt, Persia remained in firm control of the country.

SUMMARY

As mentioned above (pp. 426–7), Lloyd based his chronology on five points, which I now summarize:

1.111). Three years later a truce was made between the Peloponnesians and the Athenians, which lasted for five years. During this period the expedition against Cyprus was carried out. It is clear that several years had passed since the Athenian defeat in Egypt and their renewed engagement in favour of Amyrtaios.

⁷⁸ Green (n. 12), 179, nn. 7 and 9.

⁷⁹ Briant (n. 1), 579, *contra* Unz (n. 7), 80–2.

⁸⁰ See the list of motives for this campaign in S.T. Parker, 'The Objectives and Strategy of Cimon's Expedition to Cyprus', *AJPh* 97/1 (1976), 30–8; Green (n. 12), 142, n. 275, 179–80, n. 10.

⁸¹ Cf. the reason given by Diod. Sic. 11.71.5 to humble the Persians as far as they could and to attach the Egyptians closely to their side against the Persians.

⁸² Briant (n. 1), 579.

⁸³ Briant (n. 1), 579–80.

- (1) The dates in Diodorus Siculus concerning the rebellion of Inaros are reliable. They are not contradicted by Diod. 12.3 where the Athenians are said to have lost their ships a short time before 450/49. Four years and eight years are both relatively a 'short time' for an historian who wrote in the mid first century B.C., about 400 years after the events.
- (2) According to Thucydides the conflict lasted six years. It seems that Thucydides provided the right information on the length of the events. The time span of the Athenian expedition does not have to be shortened, even if we think that Diodorus' story is most probably biased in order to show the Athenians in a favourable light. The events that are described as happening suddenly must have happened over a period of some months at least, while the last two years are telescoped, giving an impression of suddenness.
- (3) The events in Thucydides are discussed, *as far as possible*, in chronological order. However, the revolt of the Helots lasted ten years but was written down in consecutive order. Thucydides stressed continuity in his *main fields of interest* more than in the tangential information about Egypt.
- (4) There is no apparent direct chronological connection between the removal of the treasury of the Athenian alliance to Delos and the disaster in Egypt. Lloyd's assumption that the Egyptian adventure must have come to an end by 454 B.C. is not contradicted by the chronology suggested above.⁸⁴ If there is a connection between the Persian victory in Egypt and the removal of the treasury to Delos, it points to a gradual accumulation of Persian power in the Aegean Sea.
- (5) The Erechtheid tribe casualty list does not belong to the *first* year of the Athenian involvement in Egypt, as Lloyd and others maintain.

The main results of my investigation are the following:

- (1) The Aramaic and Egyptian sources support a five–six year revolt several months after the accession of Artaxerxes in 464 until the Persian victory at Prosopitis at 458/7 B.C.
- (2) Thucydides did not follow a strict order of events. The order of his relevant chapters was determined thematically.
- (3) The sources which Diodorus used were reliable, chronologically and factually. The divergence at the end of his account was to emphasize the heroic character of the Athenians.⁸⁵ Diodorus saw the Athenian participation in Egypt in a favourable light.
- (4) Ctesias was interested in Megabyzus and his deeds more than in the role of the Athenians in the Egyptian revolt.
- (5) The Erechtheid tribe casualty list, dated to 459/8 B.C. supports the conclusion that Athens was engaged on many fronts during the final stages of the war in Egypt.
- (6) Thucydides criticized the Athenian involvement in Egypt. He diminished the importance of the Athenian participation and initial success. He intentionally exaggerated the defeat of the Athenians, making it one of the colossal disasters which marked the beginning of the end of Athenian power.

⁸⁴ Scharf (n. 31), 312–13; cf. Green (n. 12), 150–1, n. 302. On the Athenian tribute lists, see also Green, *ibid.*

⁸⁵ But cf. Pritchett (1996) (n. 52), 63.

CHRONOLOGICAL TIMETABLE

The timetable of the rebellion of Inaros can be reconstructed based on the account of Diodorus as follows:

- 465 B.C. (August) Death of Xerxes
- 463/2 B.C. Egypt decided to rebel
Request for assistance from the Athenians
- 462/1 B.C. Athenian campaign against Cyprus abandoned and diverted to Egypt.
Battle of Papremis. Death of Achaemenes. Arrival of Athenians in Egypt. Naval battle won by Charatimides. Siege of Memphis. Artaxerxes tried to bribe the Lacedaemonians to open a second front against the Athenians.
- 461/60 B.C. Persian troops under Artabazus and Megabyzus set out from Persia make preparations to invade Egypt.
- 460/59 B.C. Persian army invaded Egypt and arrived at Memphis. The Persians broke the siege. Egyptians and Athenians besieged on the island of Prosopitis. Persians in control of Upper Egypt.
- 459/8–458/7 Siege of Prosopitis. Destruction of the Athenian fleet. Surrender of the remaining Athenians and their return to Greece after a year and a half.⁸⁶
- 457 B.C. Destruction of the relief force.
- 450 B.C. Athenian campaign against Cyprus. Rebellion of Amyrtaios.

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POSTSCRIPT

After submitting my article for publication Dr. Payraudeau brought to my attention an article by J.K. Winnicki, 'Der libysche Stamm der Bakaler im pharaonischen, persischen und ptolemäischen Ägypten', *Ancient Society* 36, (2006), 135–42. Winnicki corrects the reading of the Ein Manawar Ostraca from *wr n n3 bkʿlʿw* 'chief of the rebels' to *wr n n3 bkʿlʿw* 'Chief of the Bakalu tribe' (an attested tribe from Libya), thus identifying him as being of Libyan descent. Thus, the paragraph on p. 431 with notes 38–40 should be adjusted in accordance. Inaros' crowning as king of Egypt can still not be corroborated.

⁸⁶ Green (n. 12), 150, n. 302 calculates the end of the siege in June 457.