



ARBACES

ARBACES, Greek form of an Old Iranian proper name.

1. Arbaku (Ar-ba-ku), ruler of the Median district Arnasia, one of the many Median chiefs who paid tribute to the Assyrian king Sargon II in 713 B.C. (See Justi, *Namenbuch*, pp. 20-21; H. Winckler, *Die Keilschrifttexte Sargons II II*, Leipzig, 1889, pl. 44 B, 1.32; I. M. D'yakonov, *Istoriya Midii*, Moscow and Leningrad, 1956, pp. 221-22; Grantovskiĭ, *Rannyaya istoriya iranskikh plemyon*, Moscow, 1970, pp. 267-69.)

2. Satrap of Media and one of the generals of Artaxerxes II in the battle of Cunaxa with Cyrus the Younger in 401 B.C. (Xenophon, *Anabasis* 1.7.11, 7.8.25).

3. Legendary founder of the Median kingdom. According to Ctesias (in Diodorus 2.24-28), Media was a province of the Assyrian empire and "Arbaces the Mede" was one of the generals of Sardanapalus, king of Assyria. He led a rebellion against Sardanapalus in alliance with Persians, Babylonians, and Arabians. In the first three battles Sardanapalus won victories over his enemies, but finally was defeated when the Bactrian contingent of his army deserted him, and he lost the empire to the Medes. After his victory Arbaces became the first king of Media and ruled for twenty-eight years. In all probability, this story was invented by Ctesias himself (R. Drews, *The Greek Accounts of Eastern History*, Cambridge, Mass., 1973, pp. 110-11). Bīrūnī calls him Arbāq and identifies him with Žaḥḥāk (*Chronology*, p. 100).

(M. A. Dandamayev)