



ARSES

ARSES, Greek rendering of an Old Persian name, used as a hypocoristic. The Iranian form is attested in Av. Aršan- (etymologically related to Greek *arsēn* “male, manly”), and in Old Persian compounds (Aršaka, Aršāma, Xšayaaršan; see Kent, *Old Persian*, p. 171; M. Mayrhofer, ed., *Iranisches Personennamenbuch* I/1, Vienna, 1977, p. 21 no. 26; I/2, Vienna, 1979, pp. 13 nos. 7-9, 30 no. 66). The Greek form is attested as the name of the youngest son of Artaxerxes III Ochus by *Atossa*. Ochus was poisoned on the order of the eunuch Bagoas at a moment when Philip was imposing his rule over Greece (battle of Charoneia, 338 B.C.). That murder, occurring in a difficult international situation, put Persia in a serious danger and may have contributed to the weakening of that country before Alexander’s conquest. Bagoas put Arses on the throne. At the same time a Greek league had been formed at Corinth. Philip seized the opportunity to demand compensations from Persia for the aid given by Ochus to Perinthus. Arses refused. A Greek crusade was launched and Philip chosen as general, sending ten thousand Macedonians over into Asia in 336 B.C. Meanwhile, Arses did not accept the tyrannical censure which Bagoas was imposing on him. After an unsuccessful attempt to poison the eunuch, he was himself poisoned, and all his children were put to death. Bagoas gave the Persian throne to Darius III Codomannus.



BIBLIOGRAPHY

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