



## DINON

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**DINON** (fl. approximately 360-30 B.C.E., based upon a reference in his work to the reconquest of Egypt by [Artaxerxes III](#) in 343-42 B.C.E.; Jacoby, *Fragmente* IIC, no. 690, fragm. 30), author of a historical work on the Ancient Orient. He was a citizen of Colophon in Asia Minor and father of the historian [Cleitarachus](#). His work was divided into at least three sections, which seem to have corresponded to the three sections of his predecessor [Ctesias](#), *Assyriaká*, *Mēdiká*, and *Persiká* (Jacoby, *Fragmente* 1, 2, 3; Müller, *Fragmenta* II, 21, 4, 8). The thirty surviving fragments seem to prove that Dinon adapted and continued Ctesias' work, which ended in 398-97 B.C.E.

Starting with legendary times (queen Semiramis) and coming to an end with the Persian reconquest of Egypt, the following themes of major interest were treated: the name of Zoroaster, the prophecy on Cyrus' future glory as foretold to the Median king [Astyages](#), the genealogy of Cambyses, description of a custom at Xerxes' table, the supposed guarantee of protection that Themistocles received from Xerxes—Artaxerxes I according to the authentic tradition—when Themistocles left Greece for Asia Minor, a very corrupted genealogy of a sister of Artaxerxes I, the life of Artaxerxes II as preserved in Plutarch's biography from 398-97 B.C.E. onward (where Ctesias ended), and Persian manners (Jacoby, *Fragmente* 5, 9, 11-27; Müller, *Fragmenta* 5, 7, 11, 12, 15, 19-29).

The surviving fragments show that Dinon composed his work for readers with a taste for fabulous, strange, and erotic elements. Nevertheless the Roman biographer Cornelius Nepos thought of him as the most credible source on



Persian history (Conon 5.4), and Antheaeus as well as Plutarch have repeatedly made use of his work along with and against Ctesias; his name is also found a few times in the work of Pliny the Elder.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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