



MANDANE

MANDANE (Gk. *Mandánē*), name of a daughter of the Median king [Astyages](#) (Herodotus 1.107.1; Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 1.2.1); in all probability the name goes back to OIran. **Mandanā*– “delighting, cheerful” (cf. Ved. *mandána*–; see Schmitt, 2002, p. 60 and 2011, pp. 234 f., but also Werba, 1982, pp. 253–56). According to one version of the various legendary stories about Cyrus II (see [CYRUS iii](#)) and his origin known to Herodotus (1.95.1), Astyages was warned in a dream that a son of his daughter would become dangerous for him (Herodotus 1.108.2); therefore he gave her in marriage to the Persian [Cambyzes I](#), whom he regarded as of lower social rank (cf. Herodotus 1.107.2). Mandane bore her husband a son with name Cyrus (cf. also Diodorus 9.22), whom Astyages later intended to eliminate (Herodotus 1.108.2-4). The heart of this story, viz. the marriage between Mandane and Cambyzes which produced Cyrus, has no other purpose but to construct a direct relation between Astyages and Cyrus, that is, between Media and Persia (see Brosius, p. 42), which is contradictory, however, to other historical traditions. Not least owing to the historical record of the battle between Astyages and Cyrus II and of Cyrus’s conquest of Media reported in the Nabonidus Chronicle, the story about the marriage between Cambyzes I and Mandane as well as about Cyrus’s birth from this couple is of rather doubtful historicity (see in detail Brosius, 1996, pp. 42–45). The author of the curiosity quoted by Aelian, *Varia historia* 12.42, that Cyrus was nursed by Mandane’s dog, is not known.

The same name is attested also for a daughter of Darius I and [Atossa](#) (and thus for a full sister of Xerxes I) who had lost three sons in the naval battle at



Salamis (Diodorus 11.57.1–2); she tried to wreak vengeance upon Themistocles after he had come to the Persian Empire, but without success, because in the trial held for him Themistocles was acquitted of the charges (Diodorus 11.57.3–6). At least since J. Marquart (1893, p. 637, fn. 504; see also Brosius, pp. 71 f., fn. 52), Mandane often has been identified with one *Sandákē* (or *Sandaúké?*), of whom a similar story is told in Plutarchus, *Themistocles* 13.2 (with reference to Phainias of Lesbos) and *Aristeides* 9.2: the sister of Xerxes and wife of a certain Artayktes lost three sons, who were captured before the battle at Salamis on a nearby island and sacrificed at a prophet's suggestion. Indeed one may consider the two stories as different versions of one single event, but one must leave it open how the different forms of the mother's name are to be explained.

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