



## PROTOTHYES

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**PROTOTHYES** (Gk. *Protothýēs*, not *Prōto*<sup>o</sup>, as it is often found in older editions, since this form is attested only in one late manuscript), according to Herodotus 1.103.3 the father of the Scythian king *Madyēs*, who is said to have gone into battle against the Medes; the otherwise unattested name without any doubt is of Iranian origin (see below) and must be equated with Assyr. *Bartatua* (written <sup>m</sup>*Bar-ta-tu-a*), the name of a “King of the Scythians” (LUGAL šá KUR.Iš-ku-za) at the time of Asarhaddon (680–669 BCE; see [ASSARHADDON](#)). *Bartatua*, through the good offices of emissaries, has asked for the hand of one of the Assyrian king’s daughters. He wished also to enter into an alliance with Asarhaddon, who therefore by an inquiry at the Sun-god’s oracle examined *Bartatua*’s reliability.

For etymologizing the underlying Iranian name, the Assyrian form seems to be more important than the Greek one, which underwent several adaptations. Most plausibly one has to start from OIran. *\*prθu-tavah-* (nom. *\*-tavā*) “with far-reaching strength” or *\*prθu-tuvant-* (nom. *\*-tuvā*) “widely powerful” (cf. Av. *pərəθu-* “wide, broad” and *-tauuah-* “strength, power” or part. *tuuant-* “able, capable,” respectively).



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