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Smoke and Mirrors:  
Persia's Aegean Policy and the  
Outbreak of the 'Cypriot War'

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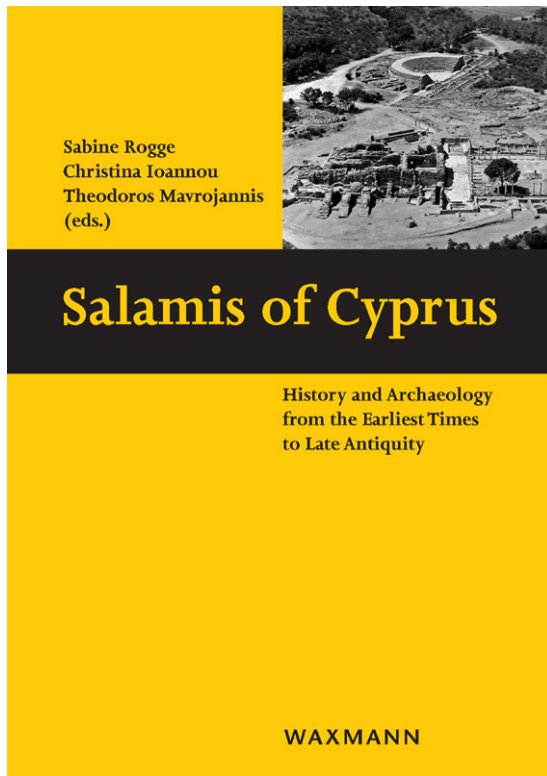
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## Smoke and Mirrors: Persia's Aegean Policy and the Outbreak of the 'Cypriot War'\*

In the early fourth century before our era,<sup>1</sup> the Persian monarch Artaxerxes II (404–358) resolved to make war upon the ruler of Cypriot Salamis, Evagoras I, sending against him imperial troops under the command, according to two different reports, of the Carian dynast Hecatomnus,<sup>2</sup> or Hecatomnus and the satrap of Lydia, Autophradates.<sup>3</sup> This was the opening act of a conflict between Evagoras and the Persian empire referred to in our sources as the 'Cypriot War' or 'War in/around/about Cyprus', which is said to have lasted, albeit with long periods of inactivity, approximately a decade, and which ended with the capitulation of Evagoras.<sup>4</sup>

A combination of chronological clues has led to a modern consensus of a date around 390 for the beginning of hostilities.<sup>5</sup> A fully satisfactory understanding of the historical circumstances that gave rise to this drawn-out conflict has been difficult to

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\* The author wishes to express her appreciation to the organizers of this conference celebrating the history of Cypriot Salamis for inviting her to participate and for their warm hospitality. The present contribution offers an outline of a thesis developed initially in the author's PhD dissertation (Zournatzi 1991). Michael Weiskopf has kindly made available a copy of his PhD dissertation (Weiskopf 1982). Unless otherwise indicated in the bibliography, references to ancient Greek and Latin texts are to the LOEB editions, whose translations are also cited.

1 All ancient dates mentioned in the text are BC.

2 Diodorus 14.98.3–4.

3 *FGrHist* 115 (Theopompus) F 103[4].

4 Our Greek sources for the war are Diodorus 14.98.1–4 (cf. *FGrHist* 70 [Ephoros] F 76), 110.5; 15.2.1–4.3, 8.1–9.2; *FGrHist* 115 (Theopompus) F 103; Isocrates 4.134 f., 140 f., 153, 160 f.; Isoc. 9. 58 f., 67. To these may be added a Phoenician victory trophy inscription from the first regnal year (392/391?) of the king of Citium Milkyathon, which has been plausibly connected with Evagoras' local wars of expansion that presumably caused Artaxerxes' attack (Yon – Sznycer 1991); and a Babylonian diary extract, which references an important event concerning, in all appearances, Cypriot Salamis, and which may date the end of the decade-long conflict of Evagoras with Artaxerxes specifically in 381 (Spek 1998, 240–251; followed by, e.g., Rhodes 2006, 224). The conflict is referred to as the 'Cypriot War' in Diod. 15.9.2 (ὁ [...] Κυπριακὸς πόλεμος) and as the 'War in/about/around Cyprus' in Isoc. 9.58 (τὸν ἐν Κύπρῳ πόλεμον) and 9.67 (τὸν πόλεμον τὸν περὶ Κύπρον). Isoc. 9.64 and Diod. 15.9.2 mention, respectively, its ten years or nearly ten years duration, the latter passage further specifying that most of this period was taken up by preparations, and that there were only two years of continuous fighting.

5 See Judeich 1892, 120–121; Beloch 1923, 226; Weiskopf 1982, 145–147; Tuplin 1983, 178, n. 46 with earlier bibliography; Spek 1998, 240–251; Stylianou 1998 143–145. This estimate is in basic agreement with Diodorus' earliest notice of the war under the year 391/390 (14.98.1–4).

obtain to date. Confusion clearly derives in part from the conflicting reports of our two main authorities on the causes of the war, Isocrates and Diodorus, concerning the circumstances that gave rise to the hostility of Artaxerxes against Evagoras. To an equally important extent, the lingering uncertainty about the causes of the feud may be attributed, as argued here, to the obscurity of the policy pursued by the Persians in the interconnected Aegean and Cypriot domains at the time.

### Isocrates and Diodorus on the cause of the ‘Cypriot War’: earlier views

Dated around 390, the expedition launched by Artaxerxes against Evagoras occurred in more or less immediate sequel to the successful Persian-led effort of the 390s to efface the hegemony that the Spartans had established in the Aegean since the end of the Peloponnesian War. Evagoras, a subject of the Persian regime, reportedly significantly contributed to this Persian effort. He was involved in the negotiations that led to the hire of the expatriate Athenian general Conon in Persian service in 397/396,<sup>6</sup> and provided no less, perhaps, than 40 warships (and crews) for the Persian armament mobilized against the Spartans.<sup>7</sup> Following the dissolution of the Spartan hegemony, the ties of Evagoras with Athens were further strengthened: he was recognized by the Athenians as a benefactor of their city.<sup>8</sup>

This well-known intersection of Persian-Cypriot Salaminian-Aegean affairs sets the historical background to the conflict of Artaxerxes with Evagoras in Isocrates’ account of the causes of the Cypriot War. As the Athenian orator asserts in the *Evagoras*, the Persian king stood in terror of the glorious deeds that Evagoras had accomplished together with the Athenian general Conon, and of the inherent potential of Evagoras to rise to greatness.<sup>9</sup> He turned, therefore, against this Cypriot ruler ‘not in anger for the events of the past, but with forebodings for the future, nor yet fearing for Cyprus alone, but for reasons far weightier’,<sup>10</sup> although the actions of Evagoras supplied no material grounds for dissension, and even during a time when he [Artaxerxes] ‘was receiving benefits from him’.<sup>11</sup>

6 *FGrHist* 688 (Ctesias) F 30; Isocrates 9.56; Pausanias 1.3.2. Cf., e.g., *FGrHist* 328 (Philochorus) F 144–145; Diodorus 14.39.1–2, Plutarch *Artax.* 21.1–3. The testimony of Plutarch, and possibly that of Diodorus, would tend to imply a Persian initiative for the recruitment of Conon.

7 At least the 40 triremes, with which Conon sailed initially from Cyprus to Cilicia in 397/6 (Diodorus 14.39.4) could have been provided by Evagoras (e.g. Stylianou 1989, 469), and the same might be true of the Cypriot crews that mutinied at Caunus (*Hell. Oxy.* 20.1–7). The claim of Isocrates (9.56; cf. Pausanias 1.3.2) that Evagoras ‘furnished the greater part of the armament’ is obviously exaggerated. The commission of 100 triremes by Pharnabazus at Cyprus was addressed to the ‘Cypriot kings’ in general (Diod. 14.39. 2). The bulk of the Persian naval force, effectively under Pharnabazus’ command, consisted of Phoenician warships (e.g. Xenophon *Hell.* 4.3.11; Diod. 14.79.5–8, cf. *Hell. Oxy.* 9).

8 An Athenian decree issued after Cnidus in acknowledgment of Evagoras’ contributions to the defeat of the Spartans dictated, among other things, proclamation of the honors bestowed upon Evagoras at the Dionysia and the erection of a bronze statue of this ruler near the image of Zeus Soter. See *IG*, vol. II<sup>2</sup>, 20 (with the addition of two previously unpublished fragments and commentary by Lewis – Stroud 1979) and the supplementary testimony of Isocrates 9.56–57 and Pausanias 1.3.2.

9 Isocrates 9.54–60.

10 Isocrates 9.60.

11 Isocrates 9.58.

The potential of the actions of Evagoras to affect the larger scheme of Persian affairs also looms over Artaxerxes' decision to attack him in the account of the outbreak of the war offered by Diodorus. As Diodorus explains, the Persian king decided to make war upon Evagoras 'not only because he did not wish Evagoras to grow any stronger, but also because he appreciated the strategic position of Cyprus and its great naval strength whereby it would be able to protect Asia in front'.<sup>12</sup> In contrast to Isocrates, however, who emphatically denies Evagoras' responsibility for the feud, and takes pains to portray the Persian attack against him as an act of injustice,<sup>13</sup> Diodorus sets the conflict against a series of wrongdoings that were perpetrated by the Salaminian king in Cyprus.

In the relevant section of Diodorus' narrative,<sup>14</sup> the express characterization of Abdemon the Tyrian,<sup>15</sup> the former ruler of Salamis reportedly displaced by Evagoras, as a 'friend of the king of the Persians' evokes a disruption of the friendly relations, which existed previously between Salamis and Persia, upon Evagoras' enthronement. Evagoras' rapid acquisition of resources and an army – activities that may both be connected with military preparations – impresses upon us Evagoras' aggressive behavior since the beginning of his reign.<sup>16</sup> It also anticipates his endeavor, mentioned next in the text, to become master of the entire island. Evagoras' continuing efforts to sever Cyprus' ties with the Persian regime are suggested by his slaying of the otherwise unknown king Agyris,<sup>17</sup> who is referred to in Diodorus' account as 'an ally of the Persians'. Last, but not least, the mention of an appeal to Artaxerxes for help by the cities of Amathus, Soli and Citium, which resisted Evagoras' expansion, and these cities' proposition to join the Persian ruler 'in acquiring the island for him'<sup>18</sup> is an unambiguous accusation that the expansion of Evagoras had deprived Artaxerxes of his former control of Cyprus.

In the light of such reported specific 'misdeeds', Isocrates' insistence on the innocence of Evagoras for the feud with Artaxerxes would appear to be strictly dictated by the encomiastic purposes of Isocrates' oration. Modern scholars inquiring into the causes of the Cypriot War have long placed their trust in the seemingly more objective account of Diodorus, inferring from his report that the conflict must have been provoked by Evagoras'

12 Diodorus 14.98.3.

13 Isocrates 9.58.

14 Diodorus 14.98.1–2.

15 This is almost certainly the same individual referred to by Theopompus as 'Abdemon of Tyre' (*FGrHist* 105 F 103[2]), one of the (serial) usurpers who, according to Isocrates (9.19–21 and 26), had held Evagoras' ancestral throne at Salamis, until Evagoras was able to reclaim it. For earlier commentaries on this usurper, see, e.g., Costa 1974, 42, n. 9.

16 Eugene Costa (1974, 43–44) might be right in comparing the present reference to Evagoras' acquisition of resources and an army to Isocrates' description of the extensive project of Salamis' restoration undertaken by Evagoras upon his accession to the throne (9.47) – a project which might well have been, as this scholar suggests, primarily commercial in purpose. The overall subversive tenor imputed upon Evagoras' actions in Diodorus 14.98.1–2, would still warrant, as Einar Gjerstad also sensed, an interpretation of Evagoras' activities in this particular instance as 'preparations for the conflict to come' (Gjerstad 1948, 491).

17 For Diodorus' erroneous use of the name Agyris, instead of Anaxagoras (mentioned in *FGrHist* 688 [Ctesias] F 30), in this instance, see Hill 1940, 129 n. 7.

18 An allusion to this appeal is probably also to be discerned in Photius' notes from Theopompus' treatment of the outbreak of the conflict between Artaxerxes and Evagoras (*FGrHist* 115 F 103[4]: ὄπως τε ὁ βασιλεὺς Εὐαγόρα συνεπίσθη πολεμῆσαι).

aggrandizement in Cyprus. To date, however, it has been difficult to reach agreement on the exact nature of the menace that Evagoras' activities posed to Artaxerxes in ca. 390.

Diodorus is not alone in implying a conflict between the activities of Evagoras in Cyprus and Persian interests. A similar impression emerges from Ctesias' report of a quarrel between Artaxerxes and Evagoras that was settled at the time of the negotiations for Conon's appointment to the Persian military in the early 390s. Photius' summary of the exchanges between Evagoras and the Persian court reported by Ctesias notes, among other things, a reconciliation, presumably on Persian demand, between Evagoras and a certain Anaxagoras, who is referred to as 'the king of the Cypriots', and Evagoras' parallel agreement to pay tribute to the (Persian) king.<sup>19</sup> The nature of the dispute between Evagoras and Anaxagoras is not specified. This incident was perhaps always liable, nonetheless, to being interpreted as an early manifestation of Evagoras' aim to conquer the island, as Diodorus implies, and as an instance of the latter ruler's parallel inclination to defy normative imperial requirements (tribute). Hence, the emergence of a notion, widely espoused until the 1970s, that Evagoras' expansionist activities would have carried, not least from a Persian viewpoint, implications of insubordination, and that his conflict with Amathus, Soli and Citium could have amounted to a 'revolt' or 'rebellion'.<sup>20</sup> At the backdrop of this insubordination may have stood, furthermore, as it was often supposed, a 'primordial' desire of the Salaminian ruler to free Cyprus from Persia – something that he would presumably have sought to accomplish by uniting the entire island under his control,<sup>21</sup> as well as through his well-attested collaboration with Conon and Athens. In the more expansive formulation of this hypothesis by Einar Gjerstad, Evagoras' cooperation with Persia in the operations that led to the Spartan defeat at Cnidus would have subscribed to the same plan. His contribution of a naval force to the Persian campaign against the Spartans in the Aegean, as well as his reported mediation on the same occasion for Conon's appointment as officer in the imperial Persian fleet, would have ultimately aimed 'to crush Sparta and to raise Athens with the help of Persia, and then to beat Persia with the help of Athens'.<sup>22</sup>

In this interpretative framework, the moment – nowhere specified in our sources – of Evagoras' supposed eventual adoption of an overtly anti-Persian stance also seemed to become intelligible with reference to developments in the Aegean. In 392, with their power and political influence curbed as a result of their crushing defeat at Cnidus and parallel Persian-subsidized opposition to their authority in Greece,<sup>23</sup> the Spartans had

19 *FGrHist* 688 (Ctesias) F 30.

20 According to, e.g., Max Cary (1969, 53 [initially published in 1927]; followed by Spyridakis, 1935, 55, and 1963, 43–44), the expansionist activities of Evagoras against Amathus, Soli and Citium would have 'roused the suspicions of his Persian overlord', even though they may not have been necessarily aimed against the Persian regime (e.g., Spyridakis 1963, 41). For express characterizations of these same activities as a 'revolt' or 'rebellion' and of Evagoras as a 'rebel', see, e.g., Olmstead 1948, 390; Osborne 1973, 522; Shrimpton 1991, 2.

21 Explicitly so, e.g., Gjerstad 1948, 492; Antoniadis 1980, 29 and 32; Stylianou 1989, 590.

22 Gjerstad 1948, 492, a reconstruction that largely echoes Isocrates' claim that the initiative for the Persian campaign against the Spartans in the 390s was suggested by Conon and Evagoras (9.53–56).

23 For generous distribution of Persian funding to Sparta's opponents on the eve of the Corinthian War, see Xenophon *Hell.* 3.5.1.

sent Antalcidas to the Persian king's general, Tiribazus, at Sardis.<sup>24</sup> Antalcidas' mission was to denounce Conon as using Persian support to revive the power of Athens, and negotiate a truce with Tiribazus on terms fully favorable to Persia: namely, the withdrawal of all Spartan claims to hegemony in Greece – in the form of an acceptance of the autonomy of all mainland and island Greek cities –, and withdrawal of Spartan claims from Asia Minor. In the meeting, which was also attended by ambassadors from Athens, Boeotia, Corinth and Argos, Sparta's proposals were opposed by these other Greeks. Tiribazus, however, who was pleased with them, funded the Spartans 'secretly', as we are told, to contend Athens' growing power, and arrested Conon on the grounds that he was 'doing harm to the Persian king and that the charges made by the Lacedaemonians were true'.<sup>25</sup> As it was widely thought earlier, these developments would have shown that common ground between Persia, on the one hand, and Evagoras and Athens, on the other hand, had disappeared. In one line of reasoning, estimating that the alignment of Tiribazus with Sparta against Athens, and, not least, the prospect of an imposition of 'autonomy' on the Greek states of the Aegean, were going to interfere with his long-term plans to free Cyprus, Evagoras would have applied himself with greater rigor to the conquest of the island, thus showing 'himself an open rebel' (wording Olmstead) and provoking Artaxerxes' wrath. This would have supposedly happened in the immediate wake of the Sardis conference, and no later than 391.<sup>26</sup>

During the 1970s further reviews of the evidence were instrumental in solidifying a markedly different perspective on Evagoras' relations with the Persian empire until about 390 and on the causes of the Cypriot War. Studies by Eugene Costa, on the one hand, and David Lewis and Ronald Stroud, on the other hand, variously emphasized the uncertainties that are inherent in the hypothesis of Evagoras' 'primordial' anti-Persian stance.<sup>27</sup> Simultaneously, reconsideration of the meagre evidence available about Evagoras' allegedly subversive expansionist activities in Cyprus illustrated the lack of any conclusive evidence that his assaults against Amathus, Soli and Citium were necessarily undertaken after 392 and were meant to be hostile to Persia. Earlier considered at times a direct consequence of Conon's arrest in the preceding year, Evagoras' allegedly subversive campaigns of conquest and operations against the cities of Amathus, Soli and Citium might equally possibly (albeit just as conjecturally) have been initiated instead, as Costa observed, even as early as 393, or a year before the demise of

24 Xenophon *Hell.* 4.8.12–16. For the date of the conference, see, e.g., Cawkwell 1976, 271–272, n. 13.

25 Xenophon *Hell.* 4.8.16: τὸν Κόνωνα ὡς ἀδικοῦντά τε βασιλέα καὶ ἀληθοῦ λεγόντων Λακεδαιμονίων εἶρξε; cf. Diodorus 14.85.4.

26 E.g. Judeich 1892, 117–118; Cary 1969, 53, followed by Spyridakis 1935, 54–55; Gjerstad 1948, 493. But see, e.g., Hill 1940, 129 and 132, for a more judicious approach to the 'haziness' that surrounds the chronology of Evagoras' acts of expansion.

27 Costa 1974, 40–50, endorsed by Weiskopf 1982, 150–154, Maier 1985, 39, and *idem* 1994, 314–315, Wiesehöfer 1990, 248, Petit 1991, 177, and others; Lewis – Stroud 1979. Elements of this approach are not altogether absent from earlier writings: see, e.g., Spyridakis 1935, 55, and 1963, 41. For subsequent contrary arguments that Evagoras must have been an enemy of Persia since 412, and must have only become a Persian vassal in 398 in order to promote Conon's participation in the Persian military effort against Sparta, see Stylianou 1989, 458–469, 471, 481.

Conon.<sup>28</sup> In this reconstruction, and given Evagoras' cooperative attitude toward Persia in the war against Sparta, it would be difficult to rule out that Evagoras' own view on his campaigns of expansion was that of a loyal subject of the Persian regime who, in Costa's words, 'expected that, having done great services to Artaxerxes [...], he would be given a more or less free hand in Cyprus'.<sup>29</sup>

In the lack of any incontrovertible indications about Evagoras' disloyalty to Persia around 390, continuing scrutiny of the account of Diodorus seemed to allow that Evagoras' conflict with Artaxerxes could have been 'brought on' instead 'more by the actions of the Persian king'<sup>30</sup> – something that led the way to additional speculation, this time, about Artaxerxes' motives for provoking the conflict.

According to Costa, Diodorus' express evocation of Artaxerxes' concern for the strategic defense of the (western) Asiatic seaboard of his empire, could imply that the resolution of the Persian king to attack Evagoras was dictated by a strict standard Persian policy regarding Cyprus. This is to say that, although Evagoras may have been 'more or less loyal' (wording Costa) to the Persian crown – and taking an exception to the customary Achaemenid tolerance toward the expansionist ventures of vassal dynasts –, Artaxerxes would have been compelled to attack the Salaminian ruler owing to an all-time Persian 'consideration that a united Cyprus, even if ostensibly friendly, was too great a threat to the western seaboard of the Empire to be tolerated'.<sup>31</sup>

Or, as Diodorus' mention of the appeal of Evagoras' Cypriot adversaries was alternatively taken to imply, Artaxerxes' initiative for the conflict could ultimately derive from the 'interpretative nature of rebellion' in the Persian regime. In other words, it could be motivated by a slanderous, but nonetheless effective, case presented by Evagoras' Cypriot opponents that he was acting in opposition to the interests of the Persian king. As Michael Weiskopf argued in this regard, 'key to the shift in Susa's perception was [...] first-hand local information [...] representing] Evagoras' activities as being directed ultimately against the crown itself rather than the mere extension of Evagoras' own sphere'.<sup>32</sup>

28 Costa 1974, 53, estimating that Evagoras' aggression against the three Cypriot cities that appealed to Artaxerxes for help must have started 'well before 391, certainly by 392, and perhaps as early as 393' (followed by e.g. Ruzicka 2012, 68). See also this same scholar's estimate (p. 50) that Evagoras' attempt to conquer the island, temporarily kept at bay during the period of his (and Conon's) collaboration with Persia against the Spartans in the Aegean, may have been resumed '[i]n 394, and perhaps a short time before' (cf., e.g., Balandier 2011, 20). The difficulty that stands in the way of deriving any reliable chronological guidelines for the various expansionist activities of Evagoras is underlined by Diodorus' synoptic description of these activities as a seemingly uninterrupted progress that began 'soon' after Evagoras came to power (14.98.1–2). In general, however, any estimate allowing for a lengthier than one year interval between the beginning of Evagoras' conflict with Amathus, Soli and Citium and Artaxerxes' attack against him would appear to be more readily compatible with the testimony of Ephorus (the source abridged in this instance by Diodorus), which indicates that the war of Evagoras against the latter Cypriot cities had been going on for some time before these cities appealed to the Persian king for help: see *FGrHist* 70 (Ephorus) F 76, with the emendation and commentary of Reid 1974, esp. 135.

29 Costa 1974, 50. Consonant formulations in, e.g., Maier 1985, 39, and *idem* 1994, 315; Wiesehöfer 1990, 249; Yon – Sznycer 1991, 820 [Sznycer]; Briant 1996, 666.

30 Wording Costa 1974, 40.

31 Costa 1974, 55. Cf., e.g., Watkin 1988, 23.

32 Weiskopf 1982, 155–156.

In yet another interpretation of Diodorus' implications in this instance by Stephen Ruzicka, Artaxerxes' decision to join Evagoras' Cypriot adversaries would best make sense as a preliminary to a planned Persian campaign against Egypt in 390/389. In this view, 'Artaxerxes could see entirely on his own that ongoing conflicts on Cyprus between Evagoras of Salamis and other cities meant instability, and he evidently decided that the best way to secure the island was to establish direct control – to "acquire the island for himself".'<sup>33</sup>

Given the state of our evidence, current skepticism concerning the once common, connected assumptions of the anti-Persian tenor of Evagoras' expansion and this expansion's causal connection with Conon's arrest might be justified. One may equally note, however, the incongruity of the more recent interpretations of the incentives of Artaxerxes for initiating the conflict with attested patterns of Persian political behavior.

If there were, as Costa proposed, an Achaemenid policy of always preventing any Cypriot dynast from gaining ascendancy in Cyprus, even though this dynast was not hostile to Persia, then, it must be noted that the attack launched by Artaxerxes against Evagoras around 390 would be the only manifestation of that policy that is known to us. To judge by other attestations of a Persian military intervention in the Cypriot domain, the only standard pattern of Persian policy concerning Cyprus that may be seen to emerge is that of Persian responses to immediate threats: such as when Persian control of the island was actually challenged by an external enemy,<sup>34</sup> or when Cypriot foreign policy actually endangered the security of Persia's domain.<sup>35</sup>

On such grounds, and since Evagoras was not yet aligned, as far as we know, with Persia's Egyptian adversaries, Ruzicka's understanding of the Persian attack against Evagoras as a means of securing full control of the island by resolving internal conflict in view of an imminent Persian offensive against Egypt, ought to also be approached with caution. In preparing for the war against the Spartans, Artaxerxes was evidently able to find a diplomatic solution to the conflict between Anaxagoras and Evagoras. A similar diplomatic approach to resolving internal Cypriot disputes may have been equally feasible in the late 390s.

Weiskopf's suggestion that Artaxerxes could have been persuaded to attack Evagoras on the strength of accusations made by his Cypriot adversaries that were not founded in reality sounds equally problematic. Our sources tend to suggest an overall judicious royal Persian approach to slander.<sup>36</sup> Known examples of individuals, who fell perma-

33 Ruzicka 2012, 68.

34 E.g., in the mid-5<sup>th</sup> century, when the Athenians under Cimon were attempting to gain control of the island (Thucydides 1.112; Diodorus 12.3–4; Plutarch *Cim.* 18–19).

35 E.g. in the 490s, when Onesilus and his allies collaborated with the Ionians, who were then in revolt from Persia (Herodotus 5.105–115), and during the 380s, when Evagoras I was in alliance with the king of Egypt, Acoris, who was at war with Persia (Diodorus 15.2.3; *FGrHist* 115 [Theopompus] F 103[1]). The circumstances of the Persian intervention in support of the city of Citium against the city of Idalium referred to in the Idalion tablet (Masson 1983, no. 217) remain difficult to ascertain.

36 On the Achaemenid imperative of just political behavior, see, e.g., Darius I's proclamation in his funerary inscription at Naqsh-e Rostam: '[w]hat a man says against a man, that does not convince me, until I hear the account of both' (Kent 1953, DNb ll. 21–24, with the translation of Schmitt 2009, DNb §5).



nently or temporarily from the Persian king's favor due to accusations that they were acting against Persian interests, indicate that for such accusations to be effective there had to be some factual basis.<sup>37</sup>

In short, known patterns of Persian behavior lead us back to the question of an actual, rather than anticipated, threat that Evagoras' actions posed to Persian interests around 390. Such a real threat is arguably possible to discern with reference to Evagoras' continuing involvement in Aegean affairs in the years immediately following the battle at Cnidus.

### The alleged friendship of Artaxerxes II with Athens, 392–388 BC

Earlier discussions of the outbreak of the Cypriot War paid attention to Evagoras' friendship with Conon and Athens only in as much as this friendship, and in particular the circumstances surrounding Conon's arrest in 392, might have spurred Evagoras into an overtly anti-Persian stance. Despite the *a priori* menacing aspects of Evagoras' continuing collaboration with Athens after Cnidus, the possibility of an actual Persian motivation for attacking him in the late 390s on account of his philo-Athenian leanings would appear all along to deserve little, if any, consideration.

One reason for this neglect is that our two ancient authorities on the causes of the war have made it very difficult to find any valid connections between Evagoras' involvement in Aegean affairs in general and the decision of the Persian king to attack him. A second, and more serious, reason for the degree to which earlier scholars overlooked the threat that was posed to Persia in this instance by Evagoras' ties to Athens derives from a long-traditional, skewed perspective on Persia's Aegean policy around the time when the Cypriot War broke out.

Crucial in the immediately preceding years for the success of Artaxerxes' efforts to put an end to Sparta's maritime hegemony and Spartan encroachments on Asia Minor, military cooperation with Conon and Athens would have exhausted its usefulness for Persia by 392. As Tiribazus recognized on the occasion of the Sardis conference, the star of Athens was then once again on the rise,<sup>38</sup> and continuing Persian military support to the Athenians would only serve to replace Persia's Spartan problem with an Athenian one. At this point, one would expect Persian collaboration with Athens to come to an end – a circumstance that would also place, inevitably, Evagoras' ongoing friendly dealings with Athens on the wrong side of Persian policy. And yet, to judge by the extant testimony, the dissolution of the Athenian-Persian friendship, which seemed imminent on the occasion of the Sardis conference and Conon's arrest, was avoided.

Xenophon, our main source on Greco-Persian affairs in the early fourth century, affirms Artaxerxes' friendly attitude to Athens on four separate occasions following

37 Conon's downfall, for instance, from Persian favor was evidently not based on mere slander. Said to have been temporarily banished toward the end of the Cypriot War, owing to charges that he was acting against Persian interests, the Persian satrap Tiribazus was eventually acquitted when his conduct was put to scrutiny by Persian judges (Diodorus 15.8.3–5, 15.10–11; see further Osborne 1973, 528, and Briant 1996, 333).

38 For this revival of Athenian aspirations in the Aegean, see, e.g., Perlman 1968 and Cawkwell 1976.

the conference at Sardis, all of them datable within the interval 391–389.<sup>39</sup> In the first instance, he reports that, when Tiribazus traveled to the interior to consult with his king on the matter of Conon's arrest and on the course of action regarding the Athenians and the Spartans, the king sent down to the coast (that is, the Aegean coast of Asia Minor) his officer, Struthas, who 'was behaving like an enemy to the Spartans and like a friend to the Athenians'.<sup>40</sup> In a second instance, which provides a synchronism with the hostilities of Artaxerxes against Cypriot Salamis, a similar description of Persian policy, as being pro-Athenian, is expressed with reference to the interception by the Spartan navarch, Teleutias, off the island of Rhodes of an Athenian naval squadron which 'was sailing [...] from Athens to Cyprus in order to bring help to Evagoras'. Artaxerxes' friendship with Athens (and opposition to Sparta) is here evoked in order to emphasize the paradoxical behavior of both the Spartans and the Athenians on the occasion: '[b]oth parties', says Xenophon, 'were acting [...] in a manner [...] opposed to their [...] interests: [...] the Athenians, although they had the King for a friend, were sending aid to Evagoras who was making war upon the King [...] Teleutias, although the Lacedaemonians were at war with the King, was destroying people who were sailing to make war upon him'.<sup>41</sup> Xenophon comments on the friendship of the Persian king and his satrap Pharnabazus, respectively, with the Athenians on two further occasions, in order to account for Athenian successes against the Spartans at Byzantium, Chalcedon and along the Asiatic side of the Straits.<sup>42</sup> To judge always by Xenophon's account, Artaxerxes only began to consider leaving the side of Athens in favor of Sparta in 388/387.<sup>43</sup>

As Xenophon, then, would have us believe, despite Tiribazus' assessment of a growing Athenian danger in 392, Artaxerxes continued to be a friend of Athens for some three or four more years – even while he was making war upon Evagoras, and during a time when Athens supported Evagoras with men and ships.<sup>44</sup> Seen in this light, the possibility that the Persian king could have derived a motive for his contemporary hostility against Evagoras from this Cypriot ruler's friendship with Athens would also appear to be extremely remote, since this friendship would have been in line with Persian policy.

39 For the difficulty in ascribing precise dates to these events, see, among others, Cawkwell 1976, 273–274, and Stylianou 1988, 466–468.

40 Xenophon *Hell.* 4.8.17. The possibility that Struthas was acting in this instance on his own initiative, as Costa (1974, 52) and others surmised, is negated by Diodorus 14.99.1.

41 Xenophon *Hell.* 4.8.24. Variouslly dated in 391/390 (Cawkwell 1976, 273–274), 391/390 (Seager 1967, 109), 390/389 (e.g., Tuplin 1983, 171–172, 176–177), summer 389 (Stylianou 1988, esp. 469).

42 Xenophon *Hell.* 4.8.27 and 4.8.31.

43 Xenophon *Hell.* 5.1.25. Reported under the navarchy of Antalcidas (*Hell.* 5.1.6). For the date, see, e.g., Sealey 1976, 354.

44 The dispatch of two separate Athenian squadrons, each consisting of 10 triremes, to Evagoras' aid between the Sardis conference and the King's Peace of 387/386 is attested by Xenophon *Hell.* 4.8.24 (see above, n. 41) and 5.1.10 (cf. Demosthenes 20.76, Nepos *Chabrias* 2.2; squadron sent under Chabrias in 388/387). The ten-trireme squadron sent to Evagoras, mentioned in Lysias 19.21–24, is traditionally identified with one of the two instances mentioned by Xenophon (see, e.g., Tuplin 1983, 171–178, and, more recently, Howan 2011), but could represent instead, as argued by Stylianou (1988; followed by, e.g., Ruzicka 2012, 69–70, 251 n. 12), a distinct third instance of Athenian aid to Evagoras during this period, datable to 391/390.

Appearances may be deceiving. The striking divergence between the anti-Athenian tenor of the measures initiated by Tiribazus in 392 and the reported continuing friendship of Artaxerxes with the Athenians in the few ensuing years – a continuing friendship that may be readily understood to have been in conflict with Persian interests – has long puzzled modern scholars. In attempting to explain it, it has been generally assumed that Tiribazus – who is expressly said, after all, to have acted on his own initiative at Sardis<sup>45</sup> – did not ultimately succeed in convincing Artaxerxes about the expediency of withdrawing his support from Athens and her allies.<sup>46</sup> It has been further postulated that Artaxerxes' judgment in this instance must have been clouded by his intense hatred for the Spartans on account, not least, of their earlier military cooperation with his rebel brother, Cyrus the Younger.<sup>47</sup> Or, it has been supposed that Artaxerxes' priority at the time may have been to fight Evagoras.<sup>48</sup> When one tries, however, to substantiate the presumed opposition of Artaxerxes to Tiribazus' anti-Athenian plan with facts, none are in evidence.

Placed under arrest by Tiribazus, Conon perhaps escaped or was deliberately released.<sup>49</sup> Despite modern assumptions that Artaxerxes disagreed with Tiribazus' measures, Conon was never restored by the Persian king to his former post as general in the Persian fleet. There is no evidence, either, that he was allowed to return to Athens. Funded by Tiribazus in 392 as a counterweight to the growing naval influence of Athens in the Aegean, the Spartans are also seen a year or so later to engage in naval activity as far as Rhodes, Cnidus and Samos, in contexts that indicated, according to both Xenophon and Diodorus, a renewed Spartan bid for thalassocracy.<sup>50</sup> Of the four instances illustrating Artaxerxes' allegedly philo-Athenian stance between 392 and 388/387 in the text of Xenophon, an actual Persian military opposition to Sparta is evidenced only once. This is the case of the Persian officer Struthas, who acted, as we are told, 'as an enemy of the Spartans' in Asia Minor. Considering the geographical scope of Struthas' operations, however, even this single instance might not be in conflict with Tiribazus' plan, since Tiribazus' support of the Spartans in 392 was conditional, among others, on the withdrawal of their claims from Asia Minor.<sup>51</sup>

The conclusion to be drawn from these observations is that, far from disagreeing with Tiribazus' policy, the Persian king in all probability allowed this policy to take its course and may have even predetermined it. Xenophon's repeated affirmations of Artaxerxes'

45 Xenophon *Hell.* 4.8.16.

46 See, e.g., Olmstead 1948, 389; Perlman 1968: 263; Lewis 1977, 58 and 146 with n. 70; Osborne 1973, 524–525; Stylianou 1989, 472, 474 (following Osborne); Briant 1996, 665; Debord 1999, 129; Ruzicka 2012, 63.

47 E.g., Lewis 1977, 146.

48 Debord 1999, 129.

49 There is no definitive evidence about Conon's fate following his arrest by Tiribazus (Diodorus 14.85.4). Diodorus 15.43.5 indicates that he was 'punished', but the nature of the punishment is not specified. According to different reports cited in Nepos *Conon* 5.3–4, he was put to death by the Persian king or, most plausibly (in the opinion of Nepos), made his escape. In modern conjectures as well, Conon may have been deliberately released (upon the arrival of the presumably pro-Athenian Struthas) and escaped to Cyprus, where he soon died (e.g., Hill 1940, 132 with n. 1; Olmstead 1948, 390; Costa 1974, 52; Cook 1983, 216; Stylianou 1988, 470); or he may have been killed or escaped (e.g., Ruzicka 2012, 64, n. 27).

50 Xenophon *Hell.* 4.8.24–25; Diodorus 14.97.4.

51 Xenophon *Hell.* 4.8.14–15.

philo-Athenian leanings down to 388 may then be said to merely reflect the Persian 'word', while under the cover of official friendship the Persian king would have been trying to curb the growth of Athenian power. Such underhanded diplomacy would be fully warranted, from a Persian perspective, by the state of Aegean affairs in the late 390s.

As pleasing as they may have sounded to Persian ears, Antalcidas' concessions to Tiribazus in 392 would have been devoid of reality. Sparta was conceding what to a large extent she had already lost. Subject to Pharnabazus and Conon's operations in the Aegean in the two preceding years, she no longer had control over the islands and influence in Asia Minor. Persian-subsidized opposition had reduced, simultaneously, her position to dire straits in mainland Greece. For as long as Sparta was unable to deliver on her offers, and her Greek adversaries were opposed to them, an official about-face of Persian policy would have been disastrous for Persia. To say the least, such an about-face in Persian policy would have provoked the cynicism and mistrust of all those Greeks who had been given by Pharnabazus official promises of continuing Persian support in their struggles against the Spartans as recently as a year before the conference at Sardis.<sup>52</sup> More significantly, it would have offered the Athenians an opportunity to consolidate Greek support in their favor, a circumstance that the Persians would have naturally tried to avoid. Persia could still reverse the odds by 'secretly' funding Sparta and by using diplomatic maneuvers: namely, by justifying Conon's arrest – the only openly hostile action of Persia against Athens at the time, but also the one that inflicted the greatest damage on the Athenian position – on charges that focused exclusively on Conon's personal responsibility for 'doing harm to the (Persian) king'.<sup>53</sup>

Should it be accepted as valid, the interpretation of Persia's Aegean policy in the three or four years following the conference at Sardis just outlined also has implications for the contemporary conflict between Evagoras and Artaxerxes.

## The cause of the Cypriot War reconsidered

If between 392 and 388 Artaxerxes was engaging in a covert effort to undermine Athens' growing influence in the Aegean, this Persian monarch's attack upon Evagoras, which falls within the same period, could subscribe to the same plan.

Next to Conon's military and political competence, the friendship of the powerful naval state of Cypriot Salamis was perhaps the most important asset that the Athenians could have had at their disposal to overcome the Persian-initiated Spartan naval revival. Subject to his active contributions to the fleet that defeated the Spartans at Cnidus, Evagoras had become inextricably linked, like Conon, with the 'Hellenic' policy then promoted by the Athenians in order to summon wider Greek support in their favor against Sparta.<sup>54</sup> Evagoras' continuing eagerness to support the Athenian cause after

52 See esp. Xenophon *Hell.* 4.8.8–10; Diodorus 14.84.5.

53 Xenophon *Hell.* 4.8.16, cf. 4.8.12.

54 A close association of Evagoras with the then current 'Hellenic' policy of Conon and Athens would best explain, in the opinion of the present writer, the express praise of this Cypriot ruler as having acted *ὑπὲρ τῆς Ἑλλάδος Ἑλλην* in the Athenian decree issued in his honor after Cnidus (*JG*, vol. II<sup>2</sup>, line 17, restoration Lewis – Stroud 1979, 182). In different earlier opinions, this phrase could be intended to address doubts about Evagoras' Greekness (Lewis – Stroud

Cnidus could be further readily presumed from Conon's initiative in 393 to bring about a marriage alliance between the Salaminian ruler and Dionysius of Syracuse – an alliance that was seemingly directly linked with an Athenian effort to undermine the friendship between Dionysius and the Spartans, and which aimed to induce the Syracusan tyrant to 'become [an enemy of the Lacedaemonians and] a friend and ally of Athens'.<sup>55</sup>

As long as Persian policy at that time remained officially pro-Athenian, political expediency would have precluded an open declaration of Persia's concern over Evagoras' philo-Athenian policies. If Athens were to be deprived of his assistance, Persia must have seen the necessity for indirect tactics. And the circumstances surrounding Conon's arrest suggest that such tactics were not beyond the invention of Persian policy makers. On the latter occasion, Persia was evidently able to deprive the Athenians of their effective leader, and she was also able to preserve, simultaneously, an official image of continuing friendship with Athens and her allies, by carefully separating her positions toward Conon and those states, respectively. Persia would have also been able, in the event, to deprive Athens of Evagoras' support, without compromising her alleged friendship with this city, by citing grounds for her attack against Evagoras that did not implicate the Athenians.

Returning to Diodorus' putatively objective description of the background to the Cypriot War, we have noted the difficulty in finding any fully satisfactory explanation for Artaxerxes' hostility against Evagoras on account alone of this Salaminian ruler's expansionist ambitions in Cyprus. Diodorus' utterances in this instance may still make sense, however, if they are viewed as reflections of a well-crafted Persian pretext for the attack upon Evagoras rather than a factual statement of the true cause of the war.

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1979, 190), or convey a literary *topos* that stressed 'the significance of being Greek' (Stylianou 1989, 470), or be aimed to disguise the fact that Evagoras' contributions to Hellas were performed in Persian service (Rhodes – Osborne 2003, 54), or even constitute a topical allusion to the ongoing ethnocultural confrontation between Greek-barbarian and Greek-Phoenician elements (Cannavò 2015, 243–244).

55 Lysias 19.19–20, indicating that Conon's envoys 'prevailed on Dionysius not to send some warships which he had then prepared for the Lacedaemonians', although the marriage proposal was seemingly not successful.

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## Abbreviations

AA	Archäologischer Anzeiger
AE	L'année épigraphique
AJA	American Journal of Archaeology
AM	Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Athenische Abteilung
ANRW	Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt
AntCL	L'antiquité classique
AntJ	The Antiquaries Journal
AP	Archaeological Reports
ArchCl	Archeologia classica
ASAtene	Annuario della Scuola archeologica di Atene e delle missioni italiane in Oriente
BAAL	Bulletin d'archéologie et d'architecture libanaises
BABesch	Bulletin antieke beschaving. Annual Papers on Classical Archaeology
BAR	British Archaeological Reports. International Series
BASOR	Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research
BCH	Bulletin de correspondance hellénique
BCom	Bullettino della Commissione archeologica comunale di Roma
BE	Bulletin épigraphique
BHG	Bibliotheca Hagiographica Graeca
BICS	Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies of the University of London
BSA	The Annual of the British School at Athens
BSR	Papers of the British School at Rome
CCEC	Cahiers du Centre d'Études chypriotes
CIG	Corpus inscriptionum Graecarum
CIL	Corpus inscriptionum Latinarum
CIPhil	Classical Philology
CMS	Corpus der minoischen und mykenischen Siegel
CPJ	Corpus papyrorum Judaicarum
CRAI	Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres
CVA	Corpus vasorum antiquorum
DNP	Der Neue Pauly. Enzyklopädie der Antike
DOP	Dumbarton Oaks Papers
EGF	Epicorum Graecorum fragmenta
FHG	Fragmenta historicorum Graecorum
FGrHist	F. Jacoby, Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker
HEROM	Journal on Hellenistic and Roman Material Culture
Historia	Historia. Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte
ICS	O. Masson, Les inscriptions chypriotes syllabiques. Recueil critique et commenté (Paris 1961; Paris 1983 [réimpr. augm.]
IEJ	Israel Exploration Journal



IG	Inscriptiones Graecae
IGR	Inscriptiones Graecae ad res Romanas pertinentes
IJO	Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis
ILS	H. Dessau, Inscriptiones Latinae selectae (Berlin 1892–1916)
IstMitt	Istanbuler Mitteilungen
JASc	Journal of Archaeological Science
JdI	Jahrbuch des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts
JHS	The Journal of Hellenic Studies
JMedA	Journal of Mediterranean Archaeology
JNES	Journal of Near Eastern Studies
JRA	Journal of Roman Archaeology
JRS	The Journal of Roman Studies
ΚυρSp	Κυπριακάί Σπουδαί
LIMC	Lexicon iconographicum mythologiae classicae
LTUR	Lexicon topographicum urbis Romae
MEFRA	Mélanges de l'École française de Rome. Antiquité
MemLinc	Atti della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei. Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche. Memorie
ÖJh	Jahreshefte des Österreichischen Archäologischen Institutes in Wien
OGIS	W. Dittenberger, Orientis Graeci inscriptiones selectae (Leipzig 1903–1905)
OpArch	Opuscula archaeologica (Skrifter utgivna av Svenska institutet i Rom)
OpAth	Opuscula Atheniensi
PBF	Prähistorische Bronzefunde
PG	Patrologia Graeca
PIR	Prosopographia Imperii Romani
PraktArchEt	Πρακτικά της εν Αθήναις Αρχαιολογικής Εταιρείας
RA	Revue archéologique
RDAC	Report of the Department of Antiquities, Cyprus
RE	Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft
REG	Revue des études grecques
RendLinc	Atti della Accademia Nazionale dei Lincei. Classe di scienze morali, storiche e filologiche. Rendiconti
RendPontAc	Atti della Pontificia Accademia Romana di Archeologia. Rendiconti
RivStFen	Rivista di studi fenici
RM	Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts, Römische Abteilung
RNum	Revue numismatique
RPC	Roman Provincial Coinage
SCE	The Swedish Cyprus Expedition
SEG	Supplementum epigraphicum Graecum
SIMA	Studies in Mediterranean Archaeology
TAM	Tituli Asiae Minoris
ZPE	Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik