

## On the road with Xerxes

### 1. Persian Empire c.500 BC



### 2. Herodotos 7.26.1

While these worked at their appointed task, all the land force had been mustered and was marching with Xerxes to Sardis, setting forth from Kritalla in Cappadocia, which was the place appointed for gathering all the army that was to march with Xerxes himself by land.

### 3. Herodotos 7.26.3

When they had crossed the river Halys and entered Phrygia, they marched through that country to Kelainai, where rises the source of the river Meander and of another river no smaller, which is called Katarraktes; it rises right in the market-place of Kelaenai and issues into the Meander.

### Strabo 12.8.15

Apameia is a great emporium of Asia, I mean Asia in the special sense of that term, and ranks second only to Ephesus; for it is a common entrepôt for the merchandise from both Italy and Greece. Apameia is situated near the outlets of the Marsyas River,

which flows through the middle of the city and has its sources in the city; it flows down to the suburbs, and then with violent and precipitate current joins the Meander.

**Xen. *Anabasis* 1.2.9**

There is likewise a palace of the Great King in Kelaenai, strongly fortified and situated at the foot of the Acropolis over the sources of the Marsyas river; the Marsyas also flows through the city, and empties into the Meander, and its width is twenty-five feet.

**4. Herodotos 7.30.1-2**

Passing by the Phrygian town called Anaua, and the lake from which salt is obtained, he came to Kolossai . . . From Kolossai the army held its course for the borders of Phrygia and Lydia, and came to the city of Kydrara, where there stands a pillar set up by Kroisos which marks the boundary with an inscription.

**5. Herodotos 7.43.1**

When the army had come to the river Scamander, which was the first river after the beginning of their march from Sardis that fell short of their needs and was not sufficient for the army and the cattle to drink—arriving at this river, Xerxes ascended to the citadel of Priam, having a desire to see it.

**6. Herodotos 7.33**

After this he prepared to march to Abydos; meanwhile his men were bridging the Hellespont from Asia to Europe. On the Chersonese, which is on the Hellespont, between the city of Sestos and Madytos there is a rough coastal strip running down to the sea opposite Abydos.

**7. Herodotos 7.34/7.35.3/8.117.1**

But no sooner had the strait been bridged than a great storm swept down, breaking and scattering everything.

... He commanded that the sea receive these punishments and that the overseers of the bridge over the Hellespont be beheaded.

... Now the Persians, journeying through Thrace to the passage, made haste to cross to Abydos in their ships, for they found the bridges no longer made fast but broken by a storm.

**8a. Herodotos 7.44**

When they were at Abydos, Xerxes wanted to see the whole of his army. A lofty seat of white stone had been set up for him on a hill there for this very purpose, built by the people of Abydos at the king's command. There he sat and looked down on the seashore, viewing his army and his fleet; as he viewed them he desired to see the ships contend in a race. They did so, and the Phoenicians of Sidon won; Xerxes was pleased with the race and with his expedition.

**8b. Herodotos 8.90.4**

Whenever Xerxes, as he sat beneath the mountain opposite Salamis which is called Aegaleos, saw one of his own men achieve some feat in the battle, he inquired who did it, and his scribes wrote down the captain's name with his father and city of residence.

**8c. Aischylos *Persians* 465-7**

Xerxes groaned aloud when he beheld the extent of the disaster, for he occupied a seat commanding a clear view of the entire army—a lofty headland by the open sea.

**9. Thracian Chersonese (Gallipoli peninsula)**



**10. Herodotos 7.44**

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## 11. The coast of Thrace

### Thracian coast



## 12. Herodotos 7.22.1-2

Since those who had earlier attempted to sail around Athos had suffered shipwreck, for about three years preparations had been underway there. Triremes were anchored off Elaios in the Chersonese; with these for their headquarters, all sorts of men in the army were compelled by whippings to dig a canal, coming by turns to the work; the inhabitants about Athos also dug. Boubares son of Megabazos and Artachaies son of Artaeus, both Persians, were the overseers of the workmen. Athos is a great and famous mountain, running out into the sea and inhabited by men. At the mountain's landward end it is in the form of a peninsula, and there is an isthmus about twelve stadia wide; here is a place of level ground or little hills, from the sea by Akanthos to the sea opposite Torone.

## 13. Mount Athos





#### 14. Herodotos 7.117.1-2

While Xerxes was at Akanthos, it happened that Artachaies, overseer of the digging of the canal, died of an illness. He was high in Xerxes' favour, an Achaemenid by lineage, and the tallest man in Persia, lacking four finger-breadths of five royal cubits in stature, and his voice was the loudest on earth. For this reason Xerxes mourned him greatly and gave him a funeral and burial of great pomp, and the whole army poured libations on his tomb. The Akanthians hold Artachaies a hero, and sacrifice to him, calling upon his name. This they do at the command of an oracle.

#### 15. Herodotos 7.176.2-3

The pass through Trachis into Hellas is fifty feet wide at its narrowest point. It is not here, however, but elsewhere that the way is narrowest, namely, in front of Thermopylai and behind it; at Alpenoi, which lies behind, it is only the breadth of a cart-way, and it is the same at the Phoenix stream, near the town of Anthele. To the west of Thermopylai rises a high mountain, inaccessible and precipitous, a spur of Oita; to the east of the road there is nothing but marshes and sea. In this pass are warm springs for bathing, called the Basins by the people of the country, and an altar of Herakles stands nearby. Across this entry a wall had been built, and formerly there was a gate in it.

#### 16. Thermopylai and Artemision

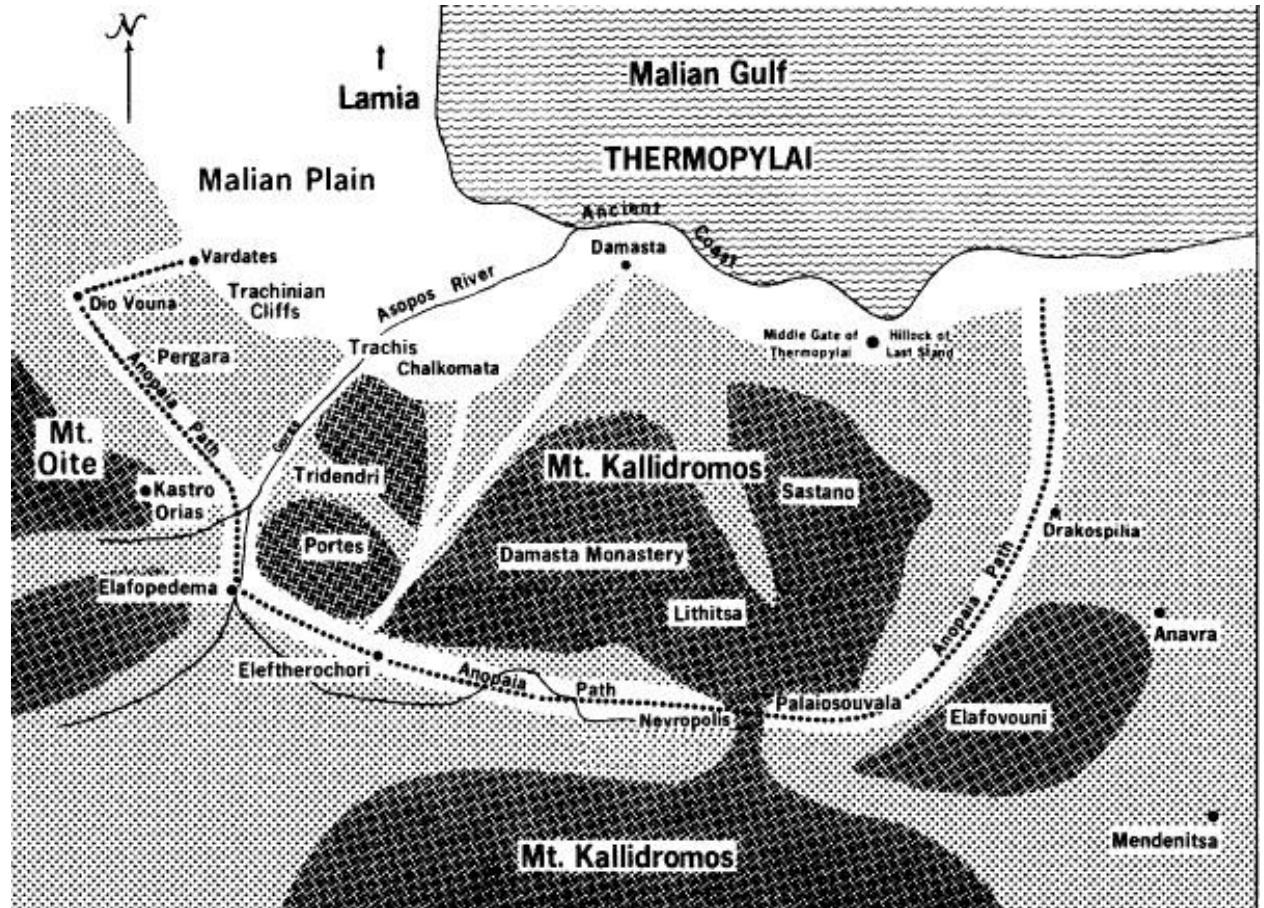


#### 17. Herodotos 7.215.1-217.1

Xerxes was pleased by what Epialtes promised to accomplish. He immediately became overjoyed and sent out Hydarnes and the men under Hydarnes command, who set forth from the camp at about lamp-lighting time. The course of the path is as follows: it begins at the river Asopus as it flows through the ravine, and this mountain and the path have the same name, Anopaea. This Anopaea stretches along the ridge of the mountain and ends at Alpenus, the Locrian city nearest to Malis, near the rock

called Blackbuttock and the seats of the Cercopes, where it is narrowest. This, then, was the nature of the pass. The Persians crossed the Asopus and travelled all night along this path, with the Oetaean mountains on their right and the Trachinian on their left. At dawn they came to the summit of the pass.

**18. Thermopylai – Anopaia after Wallace**



**19. Herodotos 7.225.2**

When the Hellenes saw that they had come, the contest turned, for they retired to the narrow part of the way, passed behind the wall, and took their position crowded together on the hill, all except the Thebans. This hill is at the mouth of the pass, where the stone lion in honoθr of Leonidas now stands.