

### 1.73 **Astyages**

How Croesus and Astyages became brothers-in-law

**{{we learn something about his method here; the backstory always seems to illuminate the events under discussion}}**

Some Scythians fled to Media, which was ruled by Cyaxares son of Phraortes son of Deioces  
**{{Herodotus interested in movements of peoples; also, another case in which an unrelated event, fleeing Scythians, winds up having significant political impact: here, a major treaty, bound by dynastic marriage, between Lydia and Media; “butterfly effect”}}**

Cyaxares befriended Scythians and treated them well since they came to him as suppliants  
**{{importance of suppliants / *xenia*; Greek institution seems to be a “human right”; Medes and Scythians are not Greek, but recognize the same convention}}**

One day they came home from hunting without game

**{{hunting an important elite activity}}**

Cyaxares mad; they chopped up kid and served him to Cyaxares; fled as suppliants to Alyattes  
**{{again suppliants / *xenia*, here recognized by Lydians; not the only time we’ve seen such cannibalism: Harpagus 1.119}}**

### 1.74

Alyattes would not give them up and war broke out between Sardians and Medes  
**{{suppliants / *xenia*; Sardis will go to war with major empire in order to avoid violating obligation to suppliant. Is this credible or just the historian’s rationalization?}}**

War was an even match and went on for a while

But there was an eclipse (28 May 585)

they were all scared and declared truce

**{{man’s relationship with the divine, mediated by such signs; sign interpreted as a call for cessation of war. Credible or just the historian’s rationalization?}}**

Truce moderated by Syennesis of Cilicia and Labynetus of Babylon

**{{Third parties called to mediate; relatively advanced legal / political gesture}}**

Alyattes gave his daughter Aryenis to Astyages son of Cyaxares.

Blood oath sworn by both parties. do it as the Greeks do, plus licking each other’s blood

**{{another religious institution shared by different ethnic groups; Herodotus’ focus, as usual, is on ritual; oath}}**