

Projekttitel: eManual Alte Geschichte
Modul [optional]:
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Text Übersetzung:

(A. D. Godley / W. R. M. Lamb)

Hdt. 7.34-36

[1] The men who had been given this assignment made bridges starting from Abydos across to that headland; the Phoenicians one of flaxen cables, and the Egyptians a papyrus one. From Abydos to the opposite shore it is a distance of seven stadia. But no sooner had the strait been bridged than a great storm swept down, breaking and scattering everything. [1] When Xerxes heard of this, he was very angry and commanded that the Hellespont be whipped with three hundred lashes, and a pair of fetters be thrown into the sea. I have even heard that he sent branders with them to brand the Hellespont. [2] He commanded them while they whipped to utter words outlandish and presumptuous, “Bitter water, our master thus punishes you, because you did him wrong though he had done you none. Xerxes the king will pass over you, whether you want it or not; in accordance with justice no one offers you sacrifice, for you are a turbid and briny river.” [3] He commanded that the sea receive these punishments and that the overseers of the bridge over the Hellespont be beheaded. [1] So this was done by those who were appointed to the thankless honor, and new engineers set about making the bridges. They made the bridges as follows: in order to lighten the strain of the cables, they placed fifty-oared ships and triremes alongside each other, three hundred and sixty to bear the bridge nearest the Euxine sea, and three hundred and fourteen to bear the other; all lay obliquely to the line of the Pontus and parallel with the current of the Hellespont. [2] After putting the ships together they let down very great anchors, both from the end of the ships on the Pontus side to hold fast against the winds blowing from within that sea, and from the other end, towards the west and the Aegean, to hold against the west and south winds. They left a narrow opening to sail through in the line of fifty-oared ships and triremes, that so whoever wanted to could sail by small craft to the Pontus or out of it. [3] After doing this, they stretched the cables from the land, twisting them taut with wooden windlasses; they did not as before keep the two kinds apart, but assigned for each bridge two cables of flax and four of papyrus. [4] All these had the same thickness and fine appearance, but the flaxen were heavier in proportion, for a cubit of them weighed a talent. [5] When the strait was thus bridged, they sawed logs of wood to a length equal to the breadth of the floating supports, and laid them in order on the taut cables; after placing them together they then made them fast. After doing this, they carried brushwood onto the bridge; when this was all laid in order they heaped earth on it and stamped it down; then they made a fence on either side, so that the beasts of burden and horses not be frightened by the sight of the sea below them.

Lys. 2.28-29

[...] although he had a thousand ships to spare for transporting his land army over the most narrow part of the Hellespont, he decided against it, for he judged that it would cause him a great waste of time: [29] despising alike the effects of nature, the dispositions of Heaven and the purposes of men, he made him a road across the sea, and forced a passage for ships through the land, by spanning the Hellespont and trenching Athos [...].