

Manipulating Genealogies: Pheidon of Argos and the Stemmas of the Argive, Macedonian, Spartan and Median Kings

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Abstract. *The article focuses on the manipulations of the genealogy of a legendarily famous Argive king or tyrant Pheidon ruling during the Greek Archaic Age (eighth to sixth century BC). The ancients did not possess any precise knowledge about his dating, which caused variable attempts to locate him in time. On the other hand, he became a target of different synchronisations which led to the manipulation not only of the Argive data, but also the genealogies of the Macedonian, the Median and the Assyrian kings. The discussion will reveal how genealogical evidence, or pseudo-evidence, was forged and manipulated for arriving at ostensibly historical accounts which, although possibly based on genuine traditions, produced visions of the past which in many points clearly did not correspond to the truth.*

Rezumat. *Articolul se concentrează asupra manipulării genealogiei faimosului regale legendary Pheidon din Argos în epoca greacă arhaică (sec. VIII-VI a.Chr.). Cei din vechime nu posedau nicio cunoaștere precisă asupra datărilor, ceea ce determină încercări diferite de a-l localiza în timp. Pe de altă parte, regale a devenit ținta unor sincronizări diferite care a condus la manipulări nu numai a datelor din Argos, dar și a genealogiei regilor macedoneni, mezi sau asirieni.*

Keywords: Ancient Greece, ancient historiography, royal genealogies, ancient chronography.

When the ancient historians reconstructed the events of their earlier past they usually had to rely on the evidence from oral tradition. Very often these traditional stories, even if more or less reliable, contained no obvious clues for dating the events, which made the reconstruction of a reliable chronology a notoriously difficult task. Some help could have been received from lists of rulers, and in the case of Greece the highest officials of the poleis or the winners of the pan-Hellenic athletic games (although even these were usually later reconstructions and therefore not completely reliable), which could have given clues for dating events.² Such lists were however not available for every polis, and they usually did not reach back to a very

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² For the recent discussion of how early Greek chronology was reconstructed see HENDRICK 2002; BICHLER 2004; CHRISTENSEN 2007; KÕIV 2011. Note also HEIDRICH 1897 and SHAW 2003 who assume not only that this chronology was (re)constructed by the ancient scholars, but also, and erroneously in my opinion, that it is based on a set of fundamental misunderstandings.

distant past. The consequent lack of adequate evidence had to be compensated by speculative computations and guesswork. In some cases traditions provided genealogical data—stemmas of reputedly early rulers—which could have been mutually compared for establishing synchronisms of the crucial historical figures they included and the events connected to them. This was however elusive evidence, because the genealogies from different traditions did not match, the stemmas were modified during transmission, and the computations necessary for establishing the chronologies required additional rearrangement of the data for making different genealogies match. The manipulation of genealogies by ancient authors was therefore prone to produce diverging and sometimes frankly conflicting results.

The present article focuses on the manipulations of the genealogy of Pheidon of Argos — a famous ruler from southern Greece, who reigned during what we call the Greek Archaic Age (eighth to sixth century BC³). The ancients did not possess any precise knowledge about his dating, which caused variable attempts to locate him in time. His fame and reputed importance in early Greek history, however, made him a target of different synchronisations which led to the manipulation not only of the Argive data, but also the genealogies of the Macedonian, the Median and the Assyrian kings.⁴ The discussion will reveal how genealogical evidence, or pseudo-evidence, was created and manipulated for arriving at ostensibly historical accounts which, although possibly based on genuine traditions, produced visions of the past which in many points clearly did not correspond to the truth.

It was generally accepted by the ancients that the early Heroic Age of Greek history, the period when the epic heroes like Herakles, Theseus, Achilles and Odysseus performed their glorious deeds, was brought to the end three generations after the Trojan War, when the Dorians from the northern parts of Greece invaded the Peloponnese and overthrew the rulers of the ancient strongholds. The Dorians were led by three brothers, the descendants of Herakles, thus known as the Herakleidai, called Temenos, Aristodemos and Kresphontes. Before or during the conquest the brothers allotted the Peloponnesian kingdoms among themselves. Temenos, the oldest and the leader of the venture according to the tradition, received Argos, the reputed homeland of their ancestor Herakles. Aristodemos was allotted Sparta, but perished during the conquest which was accomplished by Theras his brother-in-law and the maternal uncle and ward of Aristodemos' infant sons, the twins Eurysthenes and Prokles who became the founders of the two royal houses of Sparta. The third brother Kresphontes received the land of Messenia. In this way the Dorian states were founded in the Peloponnese and the Herakleid dynasties were established.⁵

³ All the following dates are BC.

⁴ The article elaborates on and develops the research in KÖIV 2001 and 2003, 255–276.

⁵ For summary of the complex account of the Dorian invasion and its aftermath for Argos see PRINZ 1979, 229–313; KÖIV 2003, 36–38, 216–217; for a recent discussion of this tradition see ZINGG 2016, 26–60. The death of Temenos is

At the beginning Argos was reputedly the strongest of these kingdoms. Temenos conquered a relatively large territory, but was murdered by his sons who completed the conquest of the district allotted to their father — the ‘Lot of Temenos’ including most of the north-eastern Peloponnese.⁶ Temenos’ grandson Medon, however, was deprived of real power and was left with only the title of king.⁷ This powerless Temenid kingship continued for a number of generations until Pheidon resumed effective power. Pheidon was reputedly an extremely mighty ruler. He reunited the whole ‘Lot of Temenos’ which had dispersed during the reign of his predecessors, and wished to govern the whole of the Peloponnese. He compared himself to his ancestor Herakles and proceeded to celebrate the festivals which had been celebrated by the hero. He therefore invaded Olympia and presided over the holy games there, violating the custom according to which this was the privilege of the local Eleans. He established a system of measures known afterwards according to his name, and some authors even believed that he was among the first to coin silver money. However, his attack against Olympia appeared as sacrilege and he was therefore defeated by an alliance of the Eleans and the Spartans formed against him. Pheidon was allegedly killed in some skirmish in Corinth,⁸ but bequeathed the power to his son Leokedes. His grandson Meltas however was expelled by the people.⁹ After that, Argos was occasionally ruled by monarchs from other families, until a democratic republic was established during the first half of the fifth century.¹⁰

The question of the credibility of this tradition does not concern us here.¹¹ But it firmly identified Pheidon as a descendant of Temenos and Herakles, as demonstrated by the stories that he re-united the ‘Lot of Temenos’ and imitated Herakles by celebrating the festivals established by the hero. On the other hand, we will see that the later authors were uncertain

described in Nic. Dam. FGrHist 90 F 30; Diod. VII 13.1; the conquests of his sons listed in Ephoros FGrHist 70 F 18; Paus. II 29.5.

⁶ The conflict between Temenos and his sons was reputedly caused by Temenos’s too friendly relations with his son-in-law Deiphontes, which made the sons to fear that Deiphontes would inherit the state (Diod. VII 13.1; Nic. Dam. FGrHist 90 F 30; Paus. II 28.3–7; Ephoros FGrHist 79 F 18. See KÕIV 2003, 38, 216–217).

⁷ Paus. II 19.2.

⁸ The earliest notice in Herodotos 6.127.3, the most complete account in Ephoros FGrHist 70 F 115, 176. The Olympian outrage is mentioned also in Paus. VI 22.2; the attempt to conquer Corinth in Plut. Am. Narrat. 2 (*Mor.* 772d–773b), the death in Corinth in Nic. Dam. FGrHist 90 F 35; the establishment of measures is mentioned by Herodotos (loc.cit.), Ephoros (loc.cit.) and numerous other writers (Arist. fr. 480 Rose; Ath. Pol. 10.2; Schol. Pind. Ol. XIII 27d; Plin. NH 7.198; etc.); the measures and coins were first noted by Ephoros (loc.cit.), the coinage also in Orion Etym. 118.19.

⁹ Leokedes is noted in Hdt. VI 127. 3; Plut. *Mor.* 89e (spelled Lakydes), and Meltas son of Leokedes in Paus. II 19.2. The exposed Argive ruler in Diod. VII 13.2 may be Meltas (see ANDREWES 1951, 39–40; CARLIER 1984, 393; TUCI 2006, 210–211). The appointment of a new king after the Herakleid dynasty in Plut. *Mor.* 340c.

¹⁰ For the reputed monarchs of Argos during the Archaic period, apart from the Temenids, see KÕIV 2016a, 49–51; 2016b, 332–333; the events leading to the establishment of democracy are discussed by WÖRRLE 1964, 101–129; GEHRKE 1985, 361–363; ROBINSON 1997, 84–88; BEARZOT 2006, 112–113; TUCI 2006, 216–224.

¹¹ See the discussion in KÕIV 2003, 239–297; RAGONE 2006, HALL 2007, 145–154.

about the number of generations between Temenos and Pheidon, and inserted different names into the supposed stemma, which indicates that there was no real tradition concerning Pheidon's close predecessors. Nor do we have any evidence for any member of the Temenid family at Argos after the end of their rule, and have no reason to think that the descendants of their last ruler Meltas were known in the classical and later periods. The genealogical distance of Pheidon from Temenos the ancestor and from the later historical periods was thus not fixed in the tradition, which allowed to propose divergent datings for Pheidon, and to manipulate his supposed genealogy.

Herodotos, the first author to mention Pheidon, said nothing about his ancestry. He noted Pheidon in passing, as the father of Leokedes who was among the suitors of Agariste the daughter of the Sikyonian tyrant Kleisthenes.¹² Since the wedding of Agariste must have taken place at ca 570, the notice of Herodotos would date Pheidon the father of Leokedes into the late seventh and/or early sixth century (see Table 1 for the stemmas).

The earliest author to state something about Pheidon's genealogy is the fourth century historian Ephoros of Kyme, to whom we owe our most substantial account about the king. Ephoros stated that Pheidon was the 10th descendant of Temenos, which, according to how the Greeks imagined the genealogical chronology at Ephoros' time, would place Pheidon in the eighth century,¹³ thus more than a century earlier than what was implied by Herodotos. We do not know what led Ephoros to place the Argive ruler to the 10th generation and thus the eighth century. However, nothing suggests that Ephoros could consult a full list of the Temenid predecessors of Pheidon (which he almost certainly did not present). Since he could not calculate the generation according to the Temenid stemma, he must have followed some other evidence that suggested the date which he expressed in the terms of generations.

The method how Ephoros calculated the genealogical dates is reasonably clear. He almost certainly counted according to the stemmas of the Spartan kings (Sparta had two kings ruling together), which were relatively firmly established by his time and thus usable as the chronological framework for early Greek history.¹⁴ Ephoros consequently synchronised Pheidon with some Spartan kings. The exact dates of the Spartan kings before the fifth century were probably unknown to him (and were indeed probably never exactly recorded). He therefore had to count according to the generations, counting back from a certain event in his near history, almost certainly the end of the Spartan hegemony in Greece ca 370. He equalised a century with three generations, thus counting each generations as 33.3 years.

¹² Hdt. VI 127.3.

¹³ For the more exact dating of this generation in Ephoros' account see below, with note 15.

¹⁴ The earliest preserved record of the lists of the Spartan kings is given by Herodotos (VII 204; VIII 131.2). Pausanias (III 2.1–7, 3.1–8; 7.1–10) presented them as the chronological framework for early Spartan history, perhaps following the Hellenistic Spartan scholar Sosibios (Pausanias' dates for the first Messenian war probably derive from Sosibios, as has been demonstrated by SCHWARTZ 1899, 429–431; JACOBY 1902, 128–132; 1955, 641; MOSSHAMMER 1979, 204–209) whose chronology was probably based on the genealogical counting of Ephoros (KÖIV 2001, 339–340).

With such a method he arrived at the date 1069 for the Dorian invasion (21 generations = 700 years before the fall of the Spartan hegemony ca 370).¹⁵ The 10th generation from Temenos, which he assigned for Pheidon (counted inclusively as the Greeks usually did), meant slightly more than 300 years after the Dorian invasion, while counted from the other end of the stemma it was the 12th generation, slightly less than 400 years before the end of the Spartan hegemony. It falls thus roughly at the middle of the eighth century (ca 770–736). In the Spartan stemmas this position was occupied by the kings Alkamenes and Theopompos, whose contemporary Pheidon consequently must have been according to Ephoros. We do not know why he synchronised Pheidon with these kings. He might have known something, possibly some traditional account, which suggested that Pheidon was their contemporary, or he could have had some evidence not related to the Spartan history, which however led him to place Pheidon into the time that coincided in his counting with the generation of Alkamenes and Theopompos in the Spartan stemmas. In that case the synchronism with these Spartan kings was simply a coincidence.

There was a story connecting Pheidon with the foundation of Syracuse in Sicily, which suggested that Pheidon lived shortly before that event, thus around or before the middle of the eighth century.¹⁶ And we know that an early third century Greek Chronicle (Marmor Parium) counted Archias, the founder of Syracuse according to the generally accepted tradition, as the 10th descendant of Temenos, thus placing him into the generation where Ephoros had placed Pheidon.¹⁷ Ephoros may have followed the tradition connecting Pheidon with the foundation of Syracuse and thus arrived at his dating.¹⁸

Be this as it may, Ephoros did not give, and probably did not know, the names of Pheidon's ancestors. Soon after Ephoros, however, a precise Temenid genealogy including all the names from Temenos to Pheidon appears in the sources, but this placed Pheidon not into the 10th generation after Temenos, as Ephoros had done, but into the 6th or 7th generation, which would date the Argive ruler into the ninth century,¹⁹ at least a century earlier than

¹⁵ Ephoros FGrHist 70 F 223 = Clem. Strom. I 139.3. For the genealogical chronology of Ephoros see MEYER 1892, 178–179; BUSOLT 1893, 573 n. 8, 613 n. 1; JACOBY 1902, 89 n. 13, 115–116; 1926, 101–102; PRAKKEN 1943, 73–101; KIECHLE 1963, 169–172; KÕIV 2003, 367–372.

¹⁶ Pheidon allegedly plotted against Corinth, and the murder of a very young son or grandson of the man saving the Corinthians reputedly led to the foundation of Syracuse — see Plut. Am. Narrat. 2; Schol. Ap. Rhod. 1212; Diod. VIII 10; Strab. VI 2.4. The foundation was dated by Thukydides (VI 3.2) to 733, which seems to be roughly confirmed by the archaeological record (see recently HALL 2007, 39; OSBORNE 2009, 114; MIKOVICI 2014, 16–18).

¹⁷ Marm. Par. FGrHist 239.31.

¹⁸ This genealogical dating of Ephoros produced the exact dating of Pheidon into the 8th Olympiad in 748 as stated by Pausanias (VI 22.2). See KÕIV 2001, 329–343; 2003, 264–276.

¹⁹ Marmor Parium FGrHist 239.30 following this genealogy (see below with notes 33–36), consequently dated Pheidon ca 895.

Table 1. The variants of the Median, Spartan, Argive and Macedonian royal stemmas

Epochal event	Median	Spartan	Heracleid	Argive	Macedonian		
Trojan War			Heraclides Hyllos Kleodaios Aristomachos				
Dorian Invasion		Eurysthenes Agis Leobotes Doryssos	Prokles (Soos) Eurypon Prytanis	Temenos Keisos Medon	Temenos Kissos Thestios Merops Aristodamidas	Temenos Keisos Maron Thestios Akous	Temenos Lachares Deballos Eurybiades Kleodaios
	Sardanapallos Arbakes 28 Maudakes 50 Sosarmes 30 Artykas 50 Arbiames 22 Artaios 40 Artynes 22 Asitbaras 40 Astyages ²⁰ Kyros Kambysses Dareios	Archelaos Teleklos Alkamenes Polydoros Eurykrates Anaxandros Anaxandridas Leon Anaxandrides Kleomenes/ Leonidas	Charillos Nikandros Theopompos (Archidamos) Zeuxidamos Anaxidamos Archidamos Agasikles Ariston Demaratos/ Leotychides	– – – Pheidon ²³ Leokedes Melas	Pheidon ²⁴ Leokedes Koinos Tiryminas Perdikkas Argeios Philippos Aeropos Alketas Amyntas Alexandros ²⁷	Karanos ²⁵ Karanos ²⁶ Karanos ²⁸ Kroisos Poias Karanos ²⁸	Karanos ²⁸ Kroisos Poias Karanos ²⁸
c 550							
Persian War							

²⁰ The list of the Median kings (from Arbakes to Astyages) in Ktesias F 5 Lenfant.

²¹ The genealogical position of Lykurgos according to Simonides (fr. 628 PMG = Plut. Lyc. 1); Schol. Plat. Pol. X 599 e–d; Suda s.v. Lykurgos.

²² The usually accepted genealogical position of Lykurgos (Dieuchidas FGrHist 485 F 5; Ephoros FGrHist 70 F 149; Plut. Lyc. 1).

²³ The genealogical position of Pheidon according to Ephoros FGrHist 70 F 115.

what was suggested by Ephoros. The first author to present such a genealogy and the consequent dating was the historian Theopompos (second half of the fourth century) writing a history of the Macedonian kingdom which had become a great power by this time.³⁰

The Argead kings of Macedonia regarded themselves as the descendants of Temenos and Herakles. This was firmly established long before Theopompos. Our earliest evidence is given by Herodotos who told a story about the foundation of the Macedonian dynasty by Perdikkas, a descendant of Temenos, coming from Argos to Macedonia seven generations before the king Alexandros who ruled during the Persian Wars (reigning ca 498–454).³¹ Herodotos did not indicate how many generations after the ancestor Temenos this was, but if counting the seven generations between Perdikkas and Alexandros back from the time of the Persian invasion, this would date Perdikkas roughly to the seventh century. Herodotos thus dated the foundation of the dynasty by Perdikkas many generations after Temenos and the Dorian invasion. On the other hand, in the tragedy *Archelaos* by Euripides, composed in the Macedonian court during the late fifth century, the founder of the Macedonian dynasty was called Archelaos and described as the son of Temenos.³² Archelaos must, consequently, have arrived at Macedonia almost at the time of the Dorian invasion. The versions of Herodotos and Euripides thus clearly disagree concerning both the name of the dynasty founder—Perdikkas versus Archelaos—and the date of the foundation.

Theopompos, however, followed neither of these versions. In his account the founder of the Macedonian dynasty was called Karanos and was considered to be a son of Pheidon and the 7th descendant of Temenos. Pheidon thus appears as Temenos' 6th descendant. In the narrative account known from the still later sources Karanos however figured as Pheidon's brother,³³ and a similar genealogy was given by the Hellenistic writer Satyros who listed Karanos as a son of Aristodamidas who was the father of Pheidon according to Theopompos.³⁴

²⁴ The presumable genealogical position of Pheidon and Leokedes according to Hdt. VI 127.3.

²⁵ The genealogy of Pheidon and Karanos in Theopompos FGrHist 115 F 393.

²⁶ The genealogy of Karanos in Satyros fr. 21.

²⁷ The list of the Macedonian kings in Diod. VII 17 and in the Chronicle of Eusebios.

²⁸ An alternative version of Karanos' genealogy according to Synkellos 499.

²⁹ The Macedonian dynasty according to Hdt. VIII 137–139.

³⁰ Theopompos FGrHist 115 F 393 = Diod. VII 17. = Synkellos 499.

³¹ Hdt. VIII 137–139. The Argive and Temenid provenance of the Macedonia dynasty was noted also by Thukydides (II 99.2). For the history of the early Macedonian kings see SPRAWSKI 2010.

³² Besides this, Euripides might have composed the tragedies *Temenos* and *Temenidai* devoted to this subject — see DASCALAKIS 1965, 109 with n. 33. The plot of *Archelaos* is known from Hyginus. Fab. 119. According to this story Archelaos excelled in the conquest of the Peloponnese, but was expelled from Argos by his brothers and emigrated to Macedonia where he obtained the kingship (see also Dio Chrysost. IV 71; P.Mich. 1313; the discussion in HARDER 1979; RUSTER 1980). We cannot tell if the plot was invented by Euripides (see HARDER 1979, 12) or derives from the common heritage of the Greek tradition (see RUSTER 1980, 41–42).

³³ Synkellos 373, 499.

³⁴ Satyros fr. 21.

The genealogies given by both Theopompos and Satyros thus connected Karanos with Pheidon, diverging at the point of whether he was Pheidon's brother or son. In both these variants Karanos was the 7th descendant from Temenos, while Pheidon was either the 6th, when listed as Karanos' father, or the 7th, when listed as his brother. Pheidon was also counted as the 7th descendant of Temenos in Marmor Parium.³⁵ Still another list of the Temenid ancestors of Karanos, completely different from the previous two, counted Karanos as the 8th descendant of Temenos.³⁶

The account that the Macedonian dynasty descended from Temenos and Herakles was probably promoted traditionally by the Macedonian kings, but as made clear by the gravely divergent versions, the exact pedigree was far from certain. Even the name of the putative ancestor varied, and the approximate time when he came to Macedonia diverged largely in different versions, ranging from immediately after the Dorian invasion indicated by Archelaos in Euripides to the seventh century suggested by the stemma of Perdikkas in Herodotos.

The reason for these different versions can be guessed. We cannot tell what led Herodotos to posit the particular generation for Perdikkas, but we can assume that the historian followed a Macedonian tradition and can perhaps believe that the rulers between Perdikkas and Alexandros that Herodotos counted were given by a genuine oral account.³⁷ The reason for positing a direct connection of the dynasty founder with either Temenos or Pheidon seems however obvious. For the Macedonians it was clearly reasonable to claim that their dynasty founder was a son of Temenos the famous Herakleid leader, exactly as Euripides presented Archelaos. In the case of Karanos the underlying assumption seems equally clear: the founder of the dynasty was connected to Pheidon the legendarily mighty Argive king.

What is however not so obvious, is the reason why Theopompos and his followers picked on this particular generation, the 6th and/or 7th from Temenos. Ephoros had indeed placed Pheidon as the 10th descendant of Temenos, dating him thus around the middle of the eighth century, while Herodotos had introduced Pheidon's son Leokedes among the suitors of Agariste the daughter of the Sikyonian tyrant Kleisthens, thus in a wedding that took place ca 570, which would place Pheidon into the late seventh or early sixth century. When Theopompos synchronised Karanos and Pheidon, he however placed the Argive ruler into the

³⁵ Marm. Par. FGrHist 239.30 where Pheidon is counted as the 11th descendant of Herakles. According to the standard genealogy, Temenos was the son of Aristomachos, the grandson of Kleodaios, the grand-grandson of Hyllos and the grand-grand-grandson of Herakles (Hdt. VI 52.1; VII 204; VIII 131.2, counting the stemma of Temenos' brother Aristodemos; Paus. I 35.8; II 7.6, 18.7; III 15.10), thus the 4th descendant (counted inclusively) of Herakles. The 11th descendant of Herakles is thus inevitably the 7th from Temenos, which indicates that Pheidon was considered to be Karanos' brother.

³⁶ Synkellos 499.

³⁷ SPRAWSKI 2010, 129.

generation which suggests a ninth century dating, a much earlier date than any previous author had proposed.

For explaining this we must look in two directions: towards Asia and towards Sparta. Sparta had been the mightiest Greek state before the rise of the Macedonian hegemony while the Empires of Asia were viewed by the Greeks as the paradigmatic ‘other’ whose power was replaced by the Greco-Macedonian domination through the conquest of Alexander the Great. Consequently, the Macedonian empire could have been seen as the successor of the Spartan hegemony in Greece and of the Persian rule over Asia. This made it natural to seek a synchronism between the foundation of the Macedonian dynasty and some epochal event in either the Asian or Spartan history, or in both of them.

This was demonstrably the case. We know that Velleius Paterculus, a historian from the early Roman Empire, explicitly synchronised four epochal events in world history:³⁸

- the defeat of the last Assyrian king Sardanapallos by the Medes and the beginning of the Median hegemony in Asia;
- the legislation of Lykurgos at Sparta;
- the foundation of Carthage;
- the foundation of the Macedonian dynasty by Karanos who was, according to him, the 11th descendant of Herakles, which means the 7th from Temenos.³⁹

The significance of these events for the Romans, the Greeks and the Macedonians is obvious. Macedonia and Carthage had been the main opponents for the Romans; the Medes were known as the close relatives and direct predecessors of the Persians, from whom the latter had almost inherited their rule; and the Lykurgan legislation at Sparta was generally considered as the pledge, and sometimes as the starting point, of the Spartan hegemony in Greece.⁴⁰

The synchronisation of these events was by no means an invention of Velleius. Already during the Hellenistic period the historian and grammarian Kastor of Rhodos had synchronised the last Assyrian king Sardanapallos with the legislation of Lykurgos at Sparta.⁴¹ And we find the traces of the synchronisation of these events in still later sources.⁴² As Karanos was since the time of Theopompos connected to Pheidon, we obviously must add Pheidon to this synchronism, which gives us the following set: Sardanapallos–Lykurgos–Pheidon–Karanos (leaving aside Carthage which was important for the Romans and thus for Velleius, but not necessarily for the Greeks).

³⁸ Velleius I 6.

³⁹ See note 35 above.

⁴⁰ Hdt. 1.65; Nic. Dam. FGrHist 90 F 56; Plut. Lyc. 30.

⁴¹ Kastor FGrHist 250 F 1d no. 37.

⁴² Velleius I 6 seems to have dated the synchronism to 65 years before the foundation of Rome, thus to 818, which appears as the date of the end of Sardanapallos / the beginning of the Median dynasty founded by Arbakos, and of the Lykurgan legislation in the chronicle of Eusebios (Eus. Chron. II 75 Abr. 1198 Schoene; Helm 83–84 = the year 819).

The acknowledgement of this synchronisation does not, however, resolve the question of why this particular generation—the 6th or 7th from Temenos (the 10th or 11th from Herakles)—was picked for Karanos and Pheidon. This could not have been calculated according to the Macedonian genealogy. The stemma that Herodotos gave for the Macedonian founder Perdikkas was clearly too short to produce this position. When counted back from the king Alexandros ruling during the Persian Wars, the stemma would have placed Perdikkas to the 12th generations after Temenos. The later chronographers added two names to the Herodotean stemma, inserted between Perdikkas and Karanos, which pushed Karanos two generations earlier into the past, but even this extended version was too short to reach to the 7th generation from Temenos. Nor could this position have been counted according to the stemma of Pheidon, because, as stated above, there is no indication that the ancients had any traditionally inherited list of the Temenid kings to count upon, and Ephoros had indeed dated Pheidon four to three generations later. This leaves us with the evidence concerning Media/Assyria and Sparta as the possible basis for the calculation.

For the Median kings we know the diverging stemmas given by Herodotos and Diodoros, the latter following the *Persika* ('Persian History') of the early fourth century historian Ktesias.⁴³ The list of Herodotos contains only four median rulers (Deiokes–Phraortes–Kyaxares–Astyages)⁴⁴ who, when added to the two or three generations of the following Persian kings Kyros, Kambyses and Dareios, would make Deiokes the founder of the Median dynasty an approximate contemporary of Perdikkas whom Herodotos indeed counted as the founder of the Macedonian dynasty. However, we have no indication that Herodotos intended this synchronisation. In any case, he certainly did not equate the beginning of Deiokes' rule with the fall of Assyria, and thus with the beginning of the Median hegemony in Asia, because he ascribed the conquest of Ninus (Niniveh) by the Medians to Kyaxares the grandson of Deiokes.⁴⁵

Ktesias, followed by Diodoros, on the other hand, gives a completely different list of nine Median kings beginning with Arbakes and ending with Astyages (Astyigas in Ktesias) the last Median king according to Herodotos.⁴⁶ And he let Arbakes defeat Sardanapallos, thus equalising the establishment of the Median dynasty with the fall of the Assyrian empire.⁴⁷ We do not know which source or sources Ktesias used, but if he was the physician of the

⁴³ On Ktesias and his work see especially LENFANT 2004, VII–LXXXI; LLEWELLYN-JONES 2012; WATERS 2016.

⁴⁴ Hdt. I 96–107.

⁴⁵ Hdt. I 106.

⁴⁶ Ktesias F 5 Lenfant = Diod. II 32.4–34.

⁴⁷ Ktesias F 1b (= Diod. II 27–28); F 1q (= Athen. XII 38); F 5 (= Diod. II 32.4); see also F 1oβ (= Agathias Hist. II 25.4–6) Lenfant.

Persian king Artaxerxes II as the ancient tradition claims,⁴⁸ we could assume that he relied on some traditions current in the Persian court. However, the list of the Median kings he presented is clearly unrealistic, demonstrated by the very number, seven, of the kings inserted between Arbakes the supposed destroyer of the Assyrian empire with its capital Niniveh, an event which took place in 612, and the last king Astyages overthrown by Kyros of Persia ca 550, thus only about 60 years later. Ktesias could hardly have received this list from the Persian tradition, but had to compose it himself, perhaps relying on some traditions which he creatively embellished and developed.⁴⁹ When his list of the Median rulers would be added to the Persian kings Kyros, Kambyses and Dareios, it would place the founder Arbakes to the generation corresponding to the 6th generation after the Dorian invasion, thus synchronising Arbakes with Pheidon according to the stemma in Theopompos.⁵⁰ Theopompos surely knew the work of Ktesias.⁵¹ It is therefore possible that when he connected Karanos the Temenid founder of the Macedonian dynasty with Pheidon, he intentionally synchronised the latter with Arbakes, for stating the synchronism of the foundations of the Median and Macedonian dynasties, and dated Pheidon and Karanos according to the genealogy of the Persian and Median kings given in the *Persika* of Ktesias.

This assumption, however, will still leave open the question why did Ktesias include this particular number of Median kings when composing the list. He certainly could not have arrived at this by calculating according to the Argive or Macedonian genealogies, because the genealogical position of Pheidon and Karanos comparable to that of the Median founder Arbakes in Ktesias was calculated only by Theopompos, thus after the time when Ktesias wrote.

⁴⁸ Ktesias' position in the Persian court was accepted as a fact in antiquity (see the testimony in LENFANT 2014; ALMAGOR 2012, 13–14; LLEWELLYN-JONES 2012, 7–18 who see no reason to doubt this), but has been recently questioned: see DORATI 1995; 2011; ROLLINGER 2011, 343; see also WIESEHÖFER 2011; WATERS 2017, 10–11.

⁴⁹ On the sources and methods of Ktesias see LENFANT 2004, XXXIX–LIV; BICHLER 2011; ROLLINGER 2011, 335–343; LLEWELLYN-JONES 2012, 55–80; WATERS 2017, 16–19, 78–94; for the obviously fictional dates that Ktesias assigned to the Assyrian kings see BONCQUET 1990; on the understanding of history in Achaemenid Persia see ROLLINGER 2014. Even if Ktesias could have used Persian traditions for the early past, he almost certainly accommodated this with the Greek view of history.

⁵⁰ Ktesias (F 5 Lenfant = Diod. II 32.4–34) assigned 282 year for the Median kings before the last king Astyages. We do not know how long Astyages reigned in his account. If, however, assuming that he assigned Astyages 35 years as Herodotos did (I 130.1) this would give a total of 317 years which, if counted back from ca 550 as the supposed date of Astyages' fall, would produce the date 867 for the beginning of the Median dynasty. This corresponds almost exactly to where Ephoros dated the beginning of the reign of Charillos (who as an orphan according to the tradition became the king at his birth and must thus have ruled for two generations — those of his father and of his own, which fell to the years ca 870–805 according to the genealogical chronology of Ephoros — see KÕIV 2003, 367–372). This would suggest that Ktesias counted the date of the Lykurgan legislation at the beginning of Charillos' reign similar to how Ephoros did this slightly afterwards.

⁵¹ According to Strabo (I 2.35 = Theopompos FGrHist 115 F 381) Theopompos compared his method to that of Ktesias among others.

This would bring us to the evidence concerning Sparta. The Spartan dual kingship continued during the whole historical period and, as has been said above, the sequence of the kings was relatively firmly established, the lists reaching from the Classical period back to the time of the Dorian invasion.⁵² They provided thus a firm genealogical framework for calculating the dates for the events in Spartan history, which, given the importance of Sparta for Greece, would have provided a good comparative basis for calculating the genealogical dates for the other states as well.

The famously crucial event in Spartan history was, according to the ancients, the beginning of the good order—*eunomia*—which made the state invincible for the following centuries. This establishment was generally ascribed to the famous lawgiver Lykurgos who was, at least from the fourth century, regarded as the brother or a son of King Eunomos and the tutor of King Charillos, Eunomos' son or grandson and a nephew of Lykurgos, under whose reign Lykurgos supposedly passed the legislation.⁵³ This genealogy placed Lykurgos to the 6th or 7th generation after the Dorian invasion, which marked thus an epochal event for Sparta and indirectly for the whole of Greece.

It would have been therefore natural for Ktesias, writing for the Greek audience, to seek a synchronisation of the foundation of the Median dynasty by Arbakes, and the establishment of the Median hegemony in Asia, with the legislation of Lykurgos producing the Spartan hegemony in Greece.⁵⁴ It is therefore likely that when Ktesias constructed his list of the Median kings he intentionally synchronised the beginning of the Median dynasty with the Lykurgan legislation, placing him thus to the generation which was counted as the 6th after the Dorian invasion, and filled the space between Arbakes the founder and Astyages the last Median king with the necessary number of kings.

⁵² See note 14 above.

⁵³ The connection between Lykurgos and Charillos was established by the time of the poet Simonides (fr. 628 PMG = Plut. Lyc. 1) and was widely accepted by the ancients: Dieuchidas FGrHist 485 F 5; Ephoros FGrHist 70 F 149 and Arist. Pol. 1271b 20ff; fr. 611.10 Rose; etc. Herodotos (I 65) and Xenophon (Lac. Pol. 10.8) placed Lykurgos into an even earlier past. The fullest ancient summary of the ancient views is given in Plut. Lyc. 1.

⁵⁴ At the time when Ktesias wrote, Lykurgos was probably dated to the 6th generation after the Dorian invasion. King Soos, the son of Prokles in the Eurypontid stemma, was not yet inserted into the list at that time, while later his insertion pushed Lykurgos one generation later, to the 7th generation where he was generally placed by the later writers. Soos is absent from the stemma in Herodotos VII 204. Ephoros, when calling Prokles the son of Eurypon (FGrHist 70 F 117), did not include Soos between them, but when he counted Lykourgos as the 6th descendant of Prokles (F 149) and the 11th descendant of Herakles (F 173) then Soos must have been inserted. This demonstrates that Ephoros' genealogical framework was built on the stemma which already included Soos (BUSOLT 1893, 613 n. 1; JACOBY 1902, 115; PRAKKEN 1943, 92). KIECHLE 1959, 21–22; 1963, 169–172 has suggested that Soos was inserted during the time when Ephoros was writing, that he was absent at the beginning, but present in later parts of Ephoros' work. On the other hand, there was a variant of Lykurgos' genealogy which made Lykurgos the brother not the son of Eunomos (Simonides fr. 628 PMG = Plut. Lyc. 1; Schol. Plat. Pol. X 599 e–d; Suda s.v. Lykurgos) and made him the 6th descendant of the invaders even if Soos was included. Either way Ktesias must have assumed that Lykurgos was the 6th descendant of Aristodemos the brother of Temenos.

On the other hand, the Greeks used to compare the divergent histories of the three Dorian states in the Peloponnese ruled by the Herakleid dynasties: Argos, Sparta and Messenia. The comparison was explicitly made in the ‘Laws’ of Plato, and Ephoros in all likelihood presented the matter in the same way.⁵⁵ It was a usual assumption that at the beginning the three Dorian states were comparable to each other and Argos was prominent among them, but when Lykurgos passed his laws in Sparta and instituted the perfect order the Spartans exceeded, overshadowing the previously powerful Argos and conquering Messenia. Plato states that the kings of Argos and Messenia violated the holy agreements made between the rulers and the people when the kingdoms were founded, and began to rule despotically, which proved disastrous for those states, while in Sparta Lykurgos (human wisdom mingled with divine power, as put by Plato) tempered the still feverish government by instituting the council of elders (*gerousia*) and thus saved the state from the fate of Argos and Messenia.⁵⁶ Aristotle, on the other hand, makes clear that the Argive ruler overstepping the traditional limits of kingly power and making himself a tyrant was Pheidon.⁵⁷ Moreover, he tells about the nascent tyranny of Charillos put down by Lykurgos at Sparta,⁵⁸ thus obviously following a similar conception as Plato.

The tyranny of Pheidon and the legislation of Lykurgos were thus viewed as comparable though divergent phenomena in the histories of the principal Dorian states of the Peloponnese, directing these states to different paths of development. It was therefore highly natural to assume a synchronism between Pheidon and Lykurgos. Since the exact genealogical position of Pheidon was not established by the tradition, it was natural to date him according to Lykurgos whose genealogical position was relatively firmly fixed by the Spartan royal stemma. Such a synchronism between these figures was not yet made by Ephoros, who placed Pheidon three generations after Lykurgos.⁵⁹ But when Theopompos in his Macedonian history stated the connection between Pheidon the famous Argive king and the foundation of the Macedonian kingship by Karanos, making Karanos the son of Pheidon, he made Pheidon the contemporary of Lykurgos in Sparta. In all likelihood he followed the

⁵⁵ This appears from the comparison of the fragments of Ephoros (FGrHist 70), of Nikolaos of Damascus (FGrHist 90) and of Diodoros, the last two following Ephoros’ account. Argos: Nic. Dam. F 30; Ephoros F 115 (in the context of the Elean and Olympian events); Diod. VII 13. Sparta: Ephoros F 117, 118, 149, 173–175; Nic. Dam. F 29; Diod. VII 12. Messenia: Ephoros F 116; Nic. Dam. F 31.

⁵⁶ Plat. Nom. 691–692.

⁵⁷ Arist. Pol. 1310b17–20, 26–27.

⁵⁸ Arist. Pol. 1316a 33–34; fr. 611.10 Rose.

⁵⁹ According to Ephoros (FGrHist 70 F 115, 149, 173), Lykurgos was the 7th and Pheidon the 10th descendant of the invading Herakleid brothers. See above with note 13 and 15 and the evidence in note 54.

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comparison of the Spartan and Argive histories, and the logical juxtaposition of Lykurgos and Pheidon as divergent determiners of the fate of their dynasties and states.⁶⁰

However, when synchronising Pheidon, and thus Karanos, with the establishment of the Spartan good order, he could have been inspired by Ktesias who had already established the synchronism between the foundation of the *eunomia* in Spartan and of the Median hegemony in Asia. What Theopompos did was simply to add Pheidon and the foundation of the Macedonian dynasty to this already established synchronism. The beginnings of the Median and Macedonian dynasties, the legislation of Lykurgos at Sparta and the reign of Pheidon in Argos became thus regarded as contemporary events.⁶¹

This synchronism resulted from a fanciful computation, inspired by the wish to state parallelism between the histories of Sparta which had dominated Greece, Media and Persia ruling Asia, and Macedonia taking over the hegemony in both these realms. The synchronisation had no basis in factual history, and it led to an impossibly early dating of all the crucial events, both of Median and Argive history. The foundation of the dynasty by Arbakes on the one hand and the reign of Pheidon on the other were dated to the ninth century, much earlier than the previously accepted traditions suggested. The traditions concerning these historical figures and events might have had some factual basis, the possibility which seems considerable in the case of Pheidon, but the manipulation of the evidence for establishing genealogical chronology produced obviously unreliable results.

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⁶⁰ For a more detailed presentation of this argument see KÖIV 2001, 343–346; 2003, 261–264. When placing Pheidon as the 6th descendant of Temenos, Theopompos might have assumed that this was the generation of Lykurgos (as it was assumed by Ktesias), or he might have placed Lykurgos into the 7th generation (as it was generally done after Ephoros — see note 54), and assumed that Pheidon the father of Karanos preceded Lykurgos by one generation. The later writers, making Pheidon and Karanos brothers, however brought Pheidon to the same generation as Lykurgos — the 7th after the Dorian invasion.

⁶¹ The synchronism of Lykurgos, Pheidon, Karanos and the death of Sardanapallos could also have been placed to the year of the first Olympic Games at 776, following the tradition that Lykurgos established the Olympian truce—*ekeheiria*—supposedly at the time of the first Olympic Games (Arist. fr. 533 Rose; Hieron. ap. Athen. XIV 37; Phlegon FGrHist 257 F1; Paus. V 4.5–6). Consequently, the first Olympic Games appear as a date for the beginning of the reign of Karanos and of the fall of Sardanapallos (Diod. VII 15; for Karanos also Eus. Ser. Reg. Chron. II 13 Schoene), and for Pheidon and Sardanapallos' death (Isid. Chron. 34). This synchronisation, however, led to no detectable manipulation of the genealogical stemmas.

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