

An Argive Dynasty in Malalas

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A FRAGMENT OF DIODOROS reporting a sum of reign-lengths of kings at Argos is given in Vogel's edition thus:

7.14. κατέσχευ οὖν ἡ βασιλεία ἦτοι τοπαρχία τῶν Ἀργείων ἔτη φμθ', καθὼς καὶ Διόδωρος ὁ σοφώτατος συνεγράψατο.¹

The fragment is found in the twelfth-century Oxford manuscript of the Greek version of Malalas (*Bodl. Barocc.* 182), and it is printed in the antiquated Bonn edition of Malalas (ed. L. Dindorf, 1831) at p.68.9–11. The words quoted stand near to the beginning of the fourth book of the *Chronographia* of Malalas.

The problem is to decide to what period of Argive history or myth-history the period of 549 years belongs. In numbering the fragment 7.14 Vogel placed it immediately after two fragments referring to events at Argos later than the Return of the Herakleidai. The first of the two (7.13.1) describes an attempt by sons of Temenos to murder him; the second (7.13.2) mentions the flight of an Argive king to Tegea after an uprising against him caused by a dispute over land. Thus Vogel placed the fragment 7.14 in a historical or post-heroic context. He did not relegate it to myth-history. In so placing the fragment Vogel has been followed by Robert Drews:² “The deposition of Meltas, whom Ephorus identified as the last king of Argos, was fixed by a chronographer (Diodorus 7.14) 549 years after the accession of Temenus.” However, Drews (n.59) noticed that the fragment does not name the Temenid dynasty. In the same note there is the statement, “A. Andrewes, ‘Ephoros Book I and the Kings of Argos’, *CQ* 45 (1951), arguing that Argive kingship lasted from the Dorian invasion to the middle of the seventh century, suggested that the 549 years referred not to the Temenid dynasty but to Inachus’ heroic dynasty.” Indeed in his article Andrewes insisted that Diodoros 7.14 “is not to be used for determining the total length of Temenid rule: as the context shows, it refers not to the Temenid but to the mythical kingdom of Inachos, Lynkeus, etc.” (44 n.3).

¹ F. Vogel, *Diodori Bibliotheca Historica* II³ (Leipzig 1890) 144.12–14.

² *Basileus: The Evidence for Kingship in Geometric Greece* (New Haven and London 1983) 65.

An examination of the context in Malalas shows that, as Andrewes insisted, Diodoros 7.14 has nothing to do with the Temenidai. The fragment was incorrectly placed by Vogel: it belongs to Book 6 rather than to Book 7 of Diodoros. At the beginning of his fourth book Malalas treats of heroic Argive dynasts. He states that Phoroneus was king until the reign of Lynkeus, who took as his wife Hyperm(n)estra from among the daughters Danaos; Malalas alleges, on the authority of Archilochos (?), that Lynkeus fought a war against Danaos and killed him before taking the kingship and his daughter.³ It is also asserted that the successor of Lynkeus was Triopas. Here the confusion is great, since Triopas was one of the predecessors of Lynkeus in the list of kings; the successor of Lynkeus at Argos in later Greek chronography was Abas.⁴ Despite the confusion and corruption at the beginning of Malalas Book 4 the context leaves no doubt that the heroic kings of Argos are being discussed. The account of them is summed up by the statement “the kingship or toparchy of the Argives lasted 549 years, as also the most wise Diodoros has written.”

The text of Malalas states incorrectly that after the overthrow of the kingship of the Argives the Sikyonians ruled: *καὶ κατέσχον τὴν βασιλείαν αὐτῶν οἱ Σικυώνιοι* (68.8–9 Dindorf). Here *Σικυώνιοι* is a corruption of *Μυκηναῖοι*, the allusion being to the transfer, well established in later Greek chronography from the time of Kastor onwards, of the kingship from Argos to Mycenae after the reign of Akrisios (Kastor F3 no. 14). Thus the total of 549 years refers in Diodoros to the total reign-lengths of kings from Inachos to Akrisios inclusively. The total 549 (*φμθ'*) did not originate with Diodoros, and it is slightly corrupt. Diodoros took the sum from his older contemporary Kastor, whose total for the reigns, according to the Armenian version of the *Chronicle* of Eusebius, was 544 years (F3 no. 14). 549 (*φμθ'*) is an easy corruption of 544 (*φμδ'*).⁵ Not only the total of years from Inachos to Akrisios has come down to Malalas from

³ Fr.dub. 305 West. Concerning the war see A. F. Garvie, *Aeschylus' Supplikes: Play and Trilogy* (Cambridge 1969) 179.

⁴ Kastor *FGrHist* 250F3 no. 12. The confusion may be due to a misreading of the order of names in parallel columns, as happened with the names of Argive dynasts in Tatian *Orat.* 31.1 (app.crit. 70 Whittaker). See also H. Gelzer, *Sextus Julius Africanus und die byzantinische Chronographie* I (Leipzig 1890) 21.

⁵ The total 544 in the Armenian text of Kastor is the sum of 382 years for the nine kings from Inachos to Sthenelos inclusive and of 162 years from Danaos to Akrisios (F3, pp.1137.23, 1138.17 and 26). Kedrenos following Malalas gives 549 (I 143.8 Bekker). The sum 544 is confirmed by the individual reign-lengths in St Jerome's version of the Eusebian list (p.31.10ff Fotheringham). See also, for the sum, E. Schwartz, *AbhGöttingen* 40.2 (1894/5) 11–12. [I discovered after this was in press that the Old Slavonic text of Malalas Book 4 has the sum 544: ed. V. M. Istrin (Odessa 1905) p.1.8.]

Kastor's Argive kinglist. There are Argive reign-lengths in Malalas identical with those given by Kastor according to the Armenian version of Eusebius' *Chronicle* (F3 nos. 12–14): as in Kastor, Malalas gives to Abas 23 years (p.83.10), to Proitos 17 (83.11), and to Akrisios 31 (84.19). It is not likely that any of these numbers came to Malalas directly from Diodoros; the immediate source of Malalas for the chronographic relics is almost certainly Sextus Julius Africanus, whom Malalas mentions in connexion with kings of Kadmeian Thebes (p.53.13–14), with the heroic kinglist of Sikyon (69.2–3),⁶ with the list of the Athenian rulers (72.14),⁷ and with the Eurysthenidai in Lakedaimon (90.7–8).⁸ The stages of transmission from Kastor to Malalas are not known, and Africanus may not be the only intermediary; but we can nonetheless conclude that Diodoros fr.7.14 refers to the regnal period of the heroic line of Argive kings from Inachos to Akrisios, not to the Temenidai.

In accepting a period fixed to a precise number of years in an age earlier than the fall of Troy, Diodoros was breaking away from the system of Eratosthenes and Apollodoros, who gave no dates earlier than the fall. Diodoros took over Apollodoros' dates for the fall of Troy, the return of the Herakleidai, and the first Olympiad (1.5.1),⁹ but, unlike Eratosthenes and Apollodoros, he supposed that events earlier than 1184/3 in Greek history could be dated, at least in Argos. Thus with Kastor's help Diodoros sought a delusory accuracy at the cost of scientific rigour; he also neglected his own statement that events before the *Troika* could not be reliably dated.¹⁰

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⁶ The *Excerpta Latina Barbari* show that Africanus presented a version of Kastor's Sikyonian kinglist: see Africanus *Chronicon* fr. xxix Routh (*Reliquiae Sacrae* II² 282–83).

⁷ Compare, for use of an Attic list of rulers, Africanus *Chron.* fr. xxxvi Routh (*Chron.Pasch.* p.193.8–12 Dindorf). These and other borrowings from the *Chronicon* of Africanus by Malalas suggest that the amount of purely Greek chronographic matter in the work of Africanus may have been greater than is supposed by A. A. Mosshammer, *The Chronicle of Eusebius and Greek Chronographic Tradition* (Lewisburg/London 1979) 139 and 146–57, at least for the period of myth-history (compare R. Drews in his review of Mosshammer's book, *CP* 77 [1982] 178–83); but the problem of the scope of Africanus' chronographic work cannot be investigated here. For students of Greek chronography a fresh study of the fragments of Africanus, including those in Malalas, is a desideratum.

⁸ Compare Diod. fr.7.8 Vogel (Apollod. *FGrHist* 244F62b).

⁹ See *FGrHist* 244F61a.

¹⁰ τῶν δὲ χρόνων . . . τοὺς μὲν πρὸ τῶν Τρωικῶν οὐ διοριζόμεθα βεβαίως διὰ τὸ μηδὲν παράπηγμα παρεληφέναι περὶ τούτων (1.5.1).