

The Dynastic History of the Hellenistic Monarchies of Asia Minor According to the *Chronography* of George Synkellos

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The purpose of this paper is not only an examination of the ethnic character of the Pontic royal dynasty, but also the elucidation of the kingdom's role as a state of the "second rank" comparable to the other monarchies of Asia Minor – Bithynia, Kappadokia and their relationship with the great Hellenistic power, the Seleukid Kingdom. It will be shown that the *Chronography* written by the 9th century Byzantine author George Synkellos can in fact be used to elucidate questions concerning the dynastic history of the states of Asia Minor, although the work has generally been considered unreliable regarding both factual data and chronology.¹

Synkellos writes (593): Τῷ εὐπ' ἔτει τοῦ κόσμου ἢ τῶν Βιθυνῶν ἡ βασιλείων ἀρχὴ ἐπαύσατο ὑπὸ Αὐγούστον χρηματίσασα ἀπὸ τοῦ εσξῆ' κοσμικοῦ ἔτους ἀρξαμένη ὧν τὰ ὀνόματα δηλωθήσεται. Ὁμοίως δὲ καὶ ἡ τῶν Ποντικῶν ἰ' βασιλείων – "In the year 5480 from the creation of the World (=22/14 BC),² by decision of Augustus, the rule of the eight kings of Bithynia, whose names will be given, ceased; their rule started in the year 5268 (=234/226 BC); likewise with the rule of the ten Pontic kings". A second passage (525) expands on the first: Οἱ Βιθυνῶν βασιλεῖς ἡ' κατὰ Διονύσιον ἔνθεν ἤρξαντο διαρκέσαντες ἔτη σιγ' (FGrH 251, F 5b) – "According to Dionysios, eight kings of Bithynia ruled at that time, and that lasted 213 years".³ A third passage (523) describes the Pontic royal dynasty: Οἱ βασιλεῖς Ποντίων ἰ' κατὰ τούτους ἤρξαν τοὺς χρόνους διαρκέσαντες ἔτη σιγ'. Περὶ ὧν Ἀπολλόδωρος (FGrH 244, F 82) καὶ Διονύσιος (FGrH 251, F 5a) ἱστοροῦσι – "Ten kings of Pontos ruled at that time, and that lasted 218 years. Apollodoros and Dionysios tell about this".

The scholarly verdict concerning the first two fragments has been clear. According to Perl, the dates given for the beginning and the end of the Bithynian Kingdom are incorrect as is the date for the end of the Pontic Kingdom, and there is no explanation for the incorrect dating of these events to the age of Augustus.⁴ Subsequently it has become customary to change the figure 213 to 223 in the text of the *Chronography*,⁵ as this gives consistency with the Bithynian royal era starting in 297/96 BC by counting 223 years backwards from the death of the last Bithynian king Nikomedes IV in 74 BC.⁶

In spite of the weakness of this solution, no alternative to the alteration of the text has been proposed. The problem is not just that the latest numismatic studies date the death of Nikomedes IV to 75 rather than 74 BC:⁷ this is, to my mind, still debatable.⁸ There are more important issues. Not only does it necessitate a change in the text, but the solution also uses a different fixed point than that mentioned by Synkellos. Furthermore, it doesn't explain why both the Bithynian and the Pontic dynasties are said to end simultaneously (by decision of Augustus), or why Synkellos counts ten kings of Pontos, when Appianos (*Mith.* 112) and Plutarch (*Dem.* 4) only mention eight.

The third passage mentioned above is treated in a similar way. The 218 years are contrary to Synkellos counted from the death of Mithridates VI in 63 BC and thus arrive at the date 281/80 BC for the beginning of the dynasty.⁹ This is obviously an artificial construction, and the problem of the ten kings is not satisfactorily explained.¹⁰ For these reasons most scholars disregard the work of Synkellos as worthless with regard to the Pontic and Bithynian royal dynasties.¹¹

Evidently, the information of the *Chronography* needs to be corrected carefully. I will try to substantiate one further interpretation that does not necessitate any changes of the text and at the same time solves all of the problems raised above.

In calculating the duration of the Mithridatid dynasty, Synkellos (523) probably combined the information of his sources, having obtained the number of kings from Dionysios of Halikarnassos and the duration of their rule from Apollodoros.¹² Thus, according to Synkellos, the Bithynian and Pontic kingdoms ceased to exist simultaneously in 22 or 14 BC, and the duration of the rule of the eight¹³ Bithynian kings was 213 years and that of the ten Pontic kings 218 years.

But why does Synkellos mention ten kings of Pontos? The number of kings of Pontos could be increased either by counting ancestors of Mithridates Ktistes, whose status could perhaps be considered royal,¹⁴ or by counting some descendants of Mithridates VI,¹⁵ who had the title of king.¹⁶ The first possibility seems unlikely, since this would move the beginning of the dynasty into the 4th century BC contrary to the information in Synkellos. As to the descendants of Mithridates the most famous are Pharnakes II and his daughter Dynamis.¹⁷ They should be considered especially because her rule, according to one tradition, ended in 12 BC,¹⁸ which approximates the date found in Synkellos. However, the fact that Pharnakes II and Dynamis reigned in Bosporos and not in the Pontic Kingdom is an obstacle.¹⁹ The sons of Pharnakes II, Dareios (App. *B Civ.* 5.74) and Arsakes (Strab. 13.3.8) cannot be considered the ninth and tenth Pontos kings either, despite the fact that they actually ruled in Pontos, since Dareios died in 39-37 BC²⁰ and Arsakes in 37-36 BC. This does not correspond to the dates given by Synkellos, and in particular his reference to the decision by Augustus. Thus it is necessary to search for other candidates, who could be considered the final representatives of the Pontic dynasty.

The little-known characters “Queen Mousa Orsobaris” (βασιλίσσης Μούσης Ὀρσοβάριος) and “Orodaltis, the daughter of the king Lykomedes” (Ὀροδάλτιδος βασιλέως Λυκομήδους θυγατρὸς), whose names appear in genitive on coins minted in Prusias-ad-Mare,²¹ are another possibility. As far as we know, Orsobaris was the daughter of Mithridates VI (App. *Mith.* 117),²² and as for Orodaltis, Reinach thought that she was the daughter of Orsobaris from her marriage with Lykomedes, the high priest of Komana.²³ Unfortunately, nothing else is known about these two women, but it is probably not coincidental that they ruled in Prusias-ad-Mare, since this city, formerly known as Kios, was if not the centre of the early Mithridatid dynasty,²⁴ then at least part of the hereditary domain of the family. Thus Orsobaris and Orodaltis could be considered the successors of Mithridates VI on the Pontic throne, although strictly speaking the kingdom had ceased to exist.²⁵ Evidently the Romans approved their status (as in the case of Lykomedes, the father of Orodaltis), and they ruled for a substantial period, so their existence could be reflected in the historical tradition.

Studying the genealogy of the two queens reveals that the competing Bithynian and Pontic dynasties are joined in them once again,²⁶ only to cease immediately after. Supposedly Lykomedes, the father of Orodaltis, was the notorious “pretender”, who unsuccessfully claimed the throne after the death of Nikomedes IV (Sall. *Hist.* 2.71).²⁷ He and his daughter could be considered the direct representatives of the Bithynian royal family, although he was related to the Mithridatids only through his grandmother Laodike.²⁸ If he actually married Orsobaris, the daughter of Mithridates, then their daughter Orodaltis could be considered a Bithynian-Pontic queen, who reigned in a city that had direct connections to both dynasties.

Lykomedes was probably about 50 years old when Caesar appointed him high priest of the sanctuary in Komana in 47 BC, as he was described as rather old when Augustus deprived him of his power in 31 BC (ἀφείλετο ... καὶ Λυκομήδην ἐν μέρει τοῦ Καππαδοκιοῦ Πόντου βασιλεύοντα) (Dio. Cass. 51.2). He is known to have held the royal title, at least at the time he dethroned Arsakes (Strab. 12.3.38).²⁹

As to the marriage between Nikomedes and Orsobaris, two occasions are possible: around 74 BC, when Lykomedes strove for the Bithynian throne,³⁰ and after 63 BC, when Orsobaris was brought back to Asia Minor. The last possibility seems more likely, as it would otherwise be very difficult to explain her presence in the triumph of Pompeius. In 63 BC she was probably with her father and was captured by the Romans.³¹ Consequently Orodaltis, the daughter of Lykomedes and Orsobaris would still have been young in 22 BC (her portrait on the coins seems to confirm this), and it is unlikely that she would have died before this date. Thus it is quite possible that she could have been dethroned in Kios “by decision of Augustus” during his administrative reforms in Asia Minor. It is notable that the terminus of the Bithynian and Pontic dynasties according to Synkellos in 22 BC corresponds exactly to

the date of the eastern mission of Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa.³² It is no coincidence either, that Scribonius, styling himself the grandson of Mithridates VI Eupator (Dio Cass. 54.24.4), appeared in Bosphoros backed by Augustus and Agrippa, just after the true descendants of Mithridates in Asia Minor had been removed.³³ Thus, the well-known passage in Strabon (12.3.1): “But later the Roman prefects made different divisions from time to time, not only establishing kings and potentates, but also, in the case of cities, liberating some and putting others in the hands of potentates and leaving others subjects to the Roman people”, applied to Bithynia as well.

Of course, it is still not clear how the sources of Synkellos (Dionysios and Apollodoros?) could have gotten hold of the information concerning such little-known persons as Orsobaris and Orodaltis, but it seems that exactly this information is the so-called “good tradition” used by the Byzantine author, as Perl relates.³⁴ This proposition solves “the problem of the ten kings of Pontos” and can partially explain why Synkellos mentions only eight Bithynian kings, although *de facto* two more members of the royal line existed (the king Lykomedes and the queen Orodaltis). The kingdom of Bithynia, contrary to Pontos, was abolished after the death of Nikomedes IV, and the Romans were not interested in its resurrection. Besides, as has already been mentioned, Lykomedes was not the lawful son of the last Bithynian king. This could have caused the discrepancy in Synkellos’ information between the number of “indisputable” kings and the actual total duration of power of these kings and their “doubtful” descendants. Maybe this distinction impelled Synkellos to make the following note concerning the Bithynian kings: ὡν τὰ ὀνόματα δηλωθήσεται.³⁵

The “beginning” of the Pontic and Bithynian dynasties, according to Synkellos, can also be determined. Counting 218 and 213 years backwards from 14 BC, we do not find a connection with any important events in the history of the two states. But by counting from 22 BC, we arrive at 240 BC for the beginning of the Pontic dynasty and 235 BC for the Bithynian. These dates are highly significant and hardly coincidental. It is very probable that in 240/239 BC Mithridates II and Laodike, the sister of Seleukos II, were married (Porphyr. *FGrH* 260, F 32.6 = Euseb., *Chron.* I. p. 251 Schoene),³⁶ and this marriage strengthened the pro-Seleukid orientation in the foreign policy of Pontos, and also brought the kingdom to the same level as the other great Hellenistic powers.³⁷ Regarding Bithynia there is similar information about a marriage of the daughter of the third king Ziailas with Antiochos Hierax, the brother of Seleukos II (Porphyr., *FGrH* 260 F 32.8 = Euseb., *Chron.* I. p. 251 Schoene). The exact date for this dynastic alliance is unknown, but it could be connected with the so-called “War of the Brothers” between Seleukos II and Antiochos Hierax – just as the marriage between Mithridates II and Laodike. The chronology of these events is obscure. Usually the end of the conflict is dated to 237 or 236 BC,³⁸ and Chr. Habicht suggests that the daughter of the Bithynian king probably married Hierax before the end of the conflict, but

definitely after the battle at Ankyra in 238 BC, as stated by Porphyrios/Eusebios.³⁹ Considering the evidence, 235 BC seems an even more likely date for the marriage, as it was not necessary for Hierax to obtain the support of the Bithynian king before making peace with his brother.⁴⁰ But afterwards Antiochos prepared for a struggle with Attalos I, in which Ziailas would have been a very valuable ally, as he had already come into conflict with the king of Pergamon.⁴¹ In fact, the Bithynian king interfered in the conflict between Antiochos Hierax and Attalos and died from the hands of Galatian mercenaries, who betrayed him (Trog., *Proleg.* 17; Phylarch. ap. Athen. II.51.7 = *FGrH* 51 F 50).⁴²

Is this sufficient reason to suggest that the sources used by Synkellos used the dynastic alliances with the Seleukids for determining the beginning of the Pontic and Bithynian dynasties? In my opinion, this is quite likely, not least because a similar situation is found in his section on Kappadokia. Synkellos writes (523): Καππαδοκῶν βασιλεῖς ζ' χρόνους ρξ' διαρκέσαντες κατὰ τούτους ἤρξαντο τοὺς χρόνους ὡς Διόδωρος γράφει – “Seven⁴³ kings of Kappadokia, whose rule lasted 160 years, reigned at this time, as Diodoros writes”. If the dynasty of the Ariarathids ceased to exist with the death of Ariarathes VIII (ca. 100-98 BC),⁴⁴ then the starting point must be around 260 BC. It is quite possible that the marriage of the son of Ariaramnes (ca. 280-ca. 230 BC), the future king Ariarathes III (ca. 230-220 BC), and Stratonike, the sister⁴⁵ of Antiochos II Theos (Diod. 31.19.6; Euseb. *Chron.* 1. p. 251 Schoene),⁴⁶ was used as the starting point of the dynasty. Although Ariaramnes ruled in Kappadokia independently, the royal title appeared only on the coins of Ariarathes III, evidently as a result of recognition from the Seleukid king. It seems therefore that intermarriage with the Seleukid dynasty played an important role in determining the beginning of dynasties in the sources used by Synkellos.

Contrary to the situation in Kappadokia, the rulers of Pontos and Bithynia already held the royal title prior to the establishment of political and dynastic relations with the Seleukids. Accordingly, the sources of Synkellos do not ignore the earlier rulers of Pontos and Bithynia, but included them in their lists of kings. Besides, there is no evidence concerning changes in the titles, attributes of power etc. of Mithridates II or Ziailas of Bithynia (although we do not have much information about these kings). From a juridical point of view, however, these marriages were of great importance, and the conduct of Ariaramnes and Ariarathes III set a precedent for the rival dynasty of the Mithridatids;⁴⁷ and the example of the king of Pontos was, in turn, followed by Ziailas. Similarly Mithridates Ktistes took the royal title in 297 BC on the example of Zipoites. This does not mean that the marriage alliances were used for the reckoning of time internally. Bithynia and Pontos used another eras, and neither inscriptions nor coins dated according to Synkellos' chronological scheme are known in any of the three states. Nevertheless, the hypothesis offered emphasizes how important it was for the kings of Asia Minor to establish dynastic connections with the representatives of the Seleukid dynasty.

It is necessary to consider whether the origin of Synkellos' data was Seleukid or local Anatolian. It would be natural to expect that the counting of years in the three dynasties in Asia Minor from the marriage alliances with the representatives of the Seleukid house was initiated by court historians of the Seleukid kings. In this case the marriages could be interpreted as distribution of Syrian royal largesse to these "barbarian" elite. This practice was not introduced *ad hoc* but drew on old Macedonian traditions, which had gained importance during the era of the successors of Alexander. According to this tradition, marriages with women of a royal family gave their husbands the right to full royal power.⁴⁸ This seems especially significant because of the background of the dynastic policy of the previous representatives of the Seleukid dynasty. Antiochos II and Seleukos II both married relatives called Laodike, the daughters of Achaëus the Elder and Achaëus the Younger respectively. It is curious to note that the establishment of the Bithynian-Seleukid alliance differed from those with the Mithridatids and the Ariarathids, as in this case a Bithynian princess married the Seleukid ruler, and not the other way round. But this can be explained by the mutual interest of Ziailas and Antiochos Hierax in finding a strong ally,⁴⁹ and the wish of Ziailas not to be second to the rulers of Pontos and Kappadokia who were already related to the Seleukid house.⁵⁰ Evidently, this alliance had the same status as the marriages of the Seleukid princesses with the representatives of the Ariarathids and the Mithridatids dynasties, and it indicates that the original concept of such marriages had changed and become less valuable.

Thus the initiative for conferring royal status on the elite of Asia Minor may have come from the Seleukid kings, but the rulers of Asia Minor accepted it gladly. Diodoros' information concerning the genealogy of the kings of Kappadokia, however, is headed by the unambiguous reference to its source (31.19.1): "The kings of Kappadokia say ..." (λέγουσιν ... οί τῆς Καππαδοκίας βασιλεῖς). If we suppose that this phrase refers not just to the relationship between the Ariarathid and Achaemenid dynasties, then it could indicate a local origin for the propaganda, or at least underline its great importance for the rulers of Asia Minor. The change of style and the legend on the tetradrachms of Ariarathes III also speak in favor of this.

Conclusion

The term "the language of power" understood as a means of communication between the Seleukid rulers and the Greek cities is one of the key notions in a recent monograph by John Ma.⁵¹ The analysis of Synkellos suggests that the same instruments established and maintained the relationships between the Seleukid dynasty and the representatives of the "minor" kingdoms in Asia Minor, at least in 3rd century BC before the irreversible weakening of the Seleukid Kingdom after the defeat in the war with Rome. Evidently, the notion of royalty was not an absolute, and rulers of non-Macedonian origin

had propagandistic methods, that were not open to the representatives of the Seleukid house; the fact that Mithridates VI Eupator assumed the Achaemenid title “king of kings” is the best evidence for this.⁵² However, if the Achaemenid legacy with all its significance was focused on the past, the contacts with the great Hellenistic empires became the most important element in the new political reality, which preoccupied the monarchies in Asia Minor. Relationships with the Seleukid Kingdom that could be considered the successor of both the Achaemenid Empire and of Alexander the Great had to play a leading role. The establishment of dynastic relations with the Seleukid kings turned out to be promising for the rulers of Asia Minor. Bikerman reasonably noted that the representatives of the Seleukid dynasty “did not have the notion of misalliance”,⁵³ but it is necessary to stress that “misalliances” could only be entered into when the legal position of the dynasty as a whole and its potential successors had already been guaranteed.⁵⁴ The Seleukid kings set down legal conditions offering mutual benefits with the aim of ensuring that the marriages of the representatives of the Seleukid dynasty with people, who belonged to the local elites, would not be considered morganatic and could not damage the prestige of the Seleukid kings. One of these conditions provided that the dynasties that became interrelated to the Seleukid dynasty took on an equal rank. The striving for real political independence combined with the wish to establish equitable relations with the Seleukid dynasty became in many ways a uniting factor for the four Anatolian kingdoms Pontos, Pergamon, Bithynia, and Kappadokia. A detailed analysis of their connections with the representatives of the Seleukid dynasty reveals some differences in the formal legal status of these kingdoms as well. This complex of legal conceptions could somehow be reflected in the historical tradition, although we can only speculate about its transmission. The *Chronography* by Synkellos probably reproduced some elements of it. These long-term effects of the Seleukid propaganda should not surprise us, when we bear in mind that the reckoning of time according to the Seleukid era has been in use in some regions of the Middle East until the present time.

Notes

- 1 The edition of Mosshammer 1984 is used throughout this article. For the works of Synkellos, see Laquer 1932, 1388-1410, although not all problems are considered here. Concerning the validity and the difficulties connected with using Synkellos, see Perl 1968, 323-330; 1969, 62-67. He states (1968, 323): “Die Notizen bei Synkellos sind in ihrer Anordnung reichlich verwirrt, gehen aber in ihrer Substanz auf gute Überlieferung zurück, wie ein Vergleich mit den gleichartigen [he is discussing the Bithynian Kingdom O.G.] Nachrichten über die anderen hellenistische Königreiche ergibt. Die Erklärung der sekundären Verwirrungen bei Synkellos ist recht schwierig und muß einer speziellen Untersuchung vorbehalten bleiben”. To my knowledge such a study has unfortunately never been made.

- 2 The double date is mentioned because Synkellos in the lists of the Hellenistic kings after the death of Alexander the Great counts the years starting from 5493 BC (the last year of Alexander is 5170=324/323 BC), while for the age of Augustus the starting point is 5501 BC (the last year of Augustus is 5514=13/14 AD), see Perl 1968, 324, n. 102; 1969, 62-63, n. 102. It will be shown that for the matters treated here it is necessary to use the first system of reckoning.
- 3 Evidently the difference of one year is caused by the different starting points of the year in the Christian and the Macedonian calendars.
- 4 Perl 1968, 324-325; 1969, 63 (cf. Saprykin 1996, 43).
- 5 Perl points out that Synkellos makes the mistake of using tens in other lists of kings as well, giving numerous examples (Perl 1968, 324, n. 105; 1969, 65, n. 105).
- 6 Reinach 1888, 135; 1902, 171; Meyer 1898, 522; Perl 1968, 324, n. 104; 1969, 63, n. 104. The last of the known Bithynian royal tetradrachms dates to the year 224, but this is not considered since the last Bithynian king died in the very beginning of this year, and as usual he was only entered into the lists of kings with the full years of his reign (Perl 1968, 324; 1969, 63). I have previously been of the same opinion (Gabelko 1997, 209, n. 1).
- 7 Callataj 1986, 25-27; 1997, 68-83, 341-344; Mastrocinque 1999, 113. I will emphasize that this opinion is not a return to the old point of view that the Third Mithridatic War, begun the year after the death of Nikomedes IV, must be dated to 74 BC. In my opinion both authors are right in placing the invasion of Mithridates into Bithynia in the spring of 73 BC.
- 8 Gabelko 2005, 400-404.
- 9 Reinach 1888, 95, 131-133; 1890, 32; Magie 1950, 1087; Müller 1973, 126-127; Olshausen 1978, 403; McGing 1986, 19; Perl 1968, 328-330; 1969, 65-67. For a critique of this point of view, see Saprykin 1996, 43. Gabelko & Zavojkin (2004, 74-81) attempts to prove that Mithridates I (and possibly the Bosphoran king Spartokos III) could have assumed the royal title immediately after Zipoites of Bithynia had done so in 297 BC.
- 10 Perl (1968, 328, n. 126; 1969, 63, n. 126) does not see any other solution than to change the number ten to eight, and despite the fact that it occurs twice, he considers it not to be a great problem.
- 11 Meyer 1879, 39; Leper 1902, 159; Lomouri 1979, 28-31; Saprykin 1996, 43.
- 12 It was probably not Apollodoros of Artemita, the author of a history of Parthia, but some other unknown historian of the same name, who lived not earlier than the 1st century BC (compare Perl 1968, 328, n. 124; 1969, 67, n. 124). See the reference to the work by some Apollodoros "Pontika" in the Scholias to Apollonios Rhodios (II. 160 b).
- 13 This number corresponds to the canonical number of the Bithynian kings: Zipoites, Nikomedes I, Ziailas, Prusias I, Prusias II, Nikomedes II, Nikomedes III, and Nikomedes IV.
- 14 Diodoros, for example, calls the realm of Mithridates, the father of Mithridates Ktistes, *δυναστεία* (20.111.4) or *βασιλεία* (15.90.3). Concerning these terms, see Kobes, 1996, 7-24; Bosworth & Wheatley 1998, 155-156. For a critical point of view, see Perl 1968, 326; 1969, 65.
- 15 For the immediate descendants of Mithridates VI, see Gulenkov 2001, 79-82. For the dynastic history of Asia Minor after Mithridates VI Eupator, see Sullivan

- 1980a, 913-930; 1980b, 1125-1168. Not enough attention, however, is paid to the individuals we are interested in here.
- 16 Perl 1968, 327; 1969, 66. Perl maintains that the Mithridatid dynasty ended with Mithridates VI Eupator, and he rejects a connection between the date 22/14 BC and the elevation of Polemon I to the Pontic throne by the Romans (Perl 1968, 326, n. 109; 1969, 64, n. 109).
 - 17 Concerning Pharnakes II, see Saprykin 2002, 14-54. For Dynamis, see Saprykin 2002, 90-124; compare Saprykin 1995, 183-193.
 - 18 Saprykin 2002, 106.
 - 19 Compare Perl 1968, 327; 1969, 66. Ballesteros-Pastor's (2000-2001, 64) attempt to see in Justinus' statement concerning Bosporos (37.1.9) that it was the ancestral domain of Mithridates VI seems unconvincing. Probably Justinus made an error in the abbreviation of the work by Pompeius Trogus. In any case, the legal status of Pontos and Bosporos within the Pontic Kingdom may not have been the same.
 - 20 Saprykin 1996, 300-304. Besides, Arsakes could not be considered the legal king, since according to Strabon: "he played the role of the sovereign and excited rebellion *without the permission of a Roman prefect*".
 - 21 See Reinach 1888, 135-139; Head 1911, 513; Macurdy 1937, 27-29; Marek 1993, 49-50; Gabelko 1997, 218-219.
 - 22 Appianos gives another form of the name – Ὀρσοβάρης. It seems that he was not right when he stated that Pompeius, after his triumph in Rome, sent the noble captives to their motherland, except "those belonging to the royal family" (χωρὶς τῶν βασιλικῶν) (*Mith.* 117). Orsobaris was evidently brought back to Asia Minor. Syme (1995, 174) thought that this was brought about by the enemies of Pompeius. Unfortunately, the appearance of her second name, Muse, is not clear on the coins.
 - 23 This supposition seems rather certain as both queens ruled in the same city and had similar Iranian names. The point of view of Kahrstedt (see Macurdy 1937, 29, n. 14) that Orodaltis was not the queen but rather the daughter of the king is very doubtful from a numismatic point of view.
 - 24 Bosworth & Wheatley 1998, 156.
 - 25 Probably Synkellos took into consideration not only kings but also queens who ruled independently as well. At least twice he indicates the year of reign of Kleopatra VII (573), and he includes her reign in the total duration of the Ptolemaic dynasty in Egypt (584). Nevertheless, the reconstruction of the dynastic history of Pontos offered here excludes from the list of Pontic kings Laodike, the widow of Mithridates V Euergetes and the mother of Mithridates VI, who was the sole regent after the murder of her husband. The possibility that a sister of Pharnakes I and Mithridates IV by the name of Laodike reigned sometime in the 150's BC has been discussed by some historians, for example Saprykin (1996, 90). In my opinion this seems unlikely, see Gabelko 2005b, 144-145.
 - 26 Perl is not absolutely right when he supposes that the dynastic connections between the two kingdoms existed even during the reign of Mithridates V Euergetes and Nikomedes II Epiphanes on account of the name Nysa which occurred in both royal dynasties (Perl 1968, 329-330, n. 134; 1969, 68, n. 134). In reality the Bithynian Nysa was the daughter of the Kappadokian king Ariarathes VI and Laodike, the sister of Mithridates VI. She married Nikomedes III and the relationship between the Bithynian and Pontic dynasties was in this case (compare

- with the supposed marriage between Lykomedes and Orsobaris) mediated by the Ariarathid dynasty (Gabelko 1997, 218).
- 27 For Lykomedes, see Reinach 1887, 359-362; Syme 1995, 166-174 (who suggested two rulers with the same name. The Lykomedes of interest here would be a generation younger); Gabelko 1997, 217-218; Ballesteros Pastor 2000, 147-149.
- 28 It is necessary to pay attention to the curious characterization that the author of the *Alexandrian War* gives of him (61.2.2): “the most noble Bithynian ... from the Kappadokian royal dynasty (*nobilissimi Lycomedi Bithyno ... qui regio Capadocum genere ortus*)”. This indicates a system of double lineage, both parental and maternal, for certain rulers of that time, which is very important for the determination of the origin and status of Orodaltis. Compare also with the real and imaginary genealogy of Mithridates of Pergamon (Strab. 13.4.3; *Bell. Alex.* 26, 78; *IGR IV*, 1682), see Heinen 1994, 63-79; Saprykin 2002, 63). In my opinion, Lykomedes was not the son of Nikomedes IV, but Nysa was his mother (Sall. *Hist.* 4.69.9), see Gabelko 1997, 217-218; 2005a, 407-410. Questions concerning the genealogy of the royal dynasties were of prime importance in Asia Minor and the Black Sea region in the second half of the 1st century BC, when the Romans settled “the dynastic network” (the term used by Sullivan). For Asia Minor, see Frézouls 1987, 176-192. In this situation any information concerning the origin or relation between rulers could attract the attention of historians. It is significant that the real or fictitious relationship with the Hellenistic kings (for example, with the representatives of the Attalid dynasty) was still of great value among representatives of the aristocracy in Asia Minor even in the 1st century AD (*IGR III*, 173; 192).
- 29 See Saprykin 1996, 300-303.
- 30 Some scholars have assumed contacts between the Bithynian “pretender” and Mithridates VI (Reinach 1890, 322; Geyer 1932, 2181; Braund 1984, 158, n. 31; Molev 1995, 93). Marriage between a candidate for the Bithynian throne and the daughter of the Pontic king was certainly to the interest of both sides.
- 31 It is possible that Mithridates meant her to be the wife of one of the Scythian governors (App. *Mith.* 108) (Gulenkov 2001, 82). The fact that one of the daughters of Mithridates, whose name is still unknown, could actually be considered royal in the barbarian nomadic society of the northern Black Sea region in the 50’s-40’s BC, has recently received interesting backing from archeological finds, see Zajcev & Mordvinceva 2003, 61-99; 2004, 90-97.
- 32 For the mission of Agrippa, see Reinhold 1933, 79-80; 167-168; Daniel 1933, 25, 57-58. There is no definite information concerning the reforms of governing in the provinces of Asia Minor that Agrippa implemented, but such changes seem very probable, especially taking into account the changes made later in the East under Augustus.
- 33 The chronology of the activities of Scribonius are still not clear, see latest Parfyonov 2001, 96-115, especially 108-112; Saprykin 2002, 90-97; Braund 2004, 81-87.
- 34 See n. 1.
- 35 A similar note is made concerning the kings of Pergamon (578) – perhaps, because it was necessary to elucidate the status of “Eumenes III” (i.e. Aristonikos). This fact is important as it shows that Synkellos according to his sources considered not merely the “formal” rulers.

- 36 Saprykin (1996, 60-61 with literature) on the basis of earlier research (foremost Reinach 1890, 38) dates this marriage to 240/239 BC, which exactly matches the information by Synkellos.
- 37 Concerning the importance of these marriages for both sides, see Seibert 1967, 58-60, 118; McGing 1998, 105-106.
- 38 See the review of the different opinions by Will 1979, 265-266. The assumption that peace had already been made in 236 BC seems the most well-founded. Judging by the evidence of a Mesopotamian inscription, Seleukos II and Antiochos Hierax were already co-rulers in this year (Magie 1950, 737, n. 23).
- 39 Habicht 1972, 394. The implicit date of 237 BC for this marriage (for example Rizzo 1974, 134), is criticized by Will (1978, 77-78).
- 40 To judge from the sources, Ziailas did not take part in the war (Habicht 1972, 394).
- 41 There is reason to suppose that Ziailas took the region Abrette to the southwest of the Mysian Olympos under his control (Schwertheim 1987, n. 132), thus coming very close to the borders of Pergamon.
- 42 The death of Ziailas is usually dated to 230/229 BC (Vitucci 1953, 35; Habicht 1972, 394).
- 43 The question concerning the "seven kings" is rather complicated. Starting from Ariarathes III, who as the first took the title of king, until the accession to the throne of Ariobarzanes I, the representative of a new dynasty, *eight* kings are known to have sat on the Kappadokian throne (the dates given are approximate): Ariarathes III (ca. 230-220 BC), Ariarathes IV Eusebes (220-163 BC), Ariarathes V Eusebes Philopator (163-130 BC), Orophernes (161-159 BC), Ariarathes VI Epiphanes Philopator (ca. 130-116 BC), Ariarathes VII Philometor (ca. 116-101 BC); Ariarathes IX Eusebes Philopator (101-87 BC or ca. 100-85 BC), Ariarathes VIII (100-98 BC). The queen Nysa (Laodike by Justinus, *Epit.* 38.1.4), who was the regent for her juvenile son Ariarathes VI and who even minted coins together with him (Simonetta 1977, 29-30, pl. III, 11), has to be added as well. However, judging by the example of Pontos (see above, note 25), the queen regents were probably not taken into account in the dynastic lists. Evidently, Synkellos does not take into account one of the above-mentioned kings. But which? There are three reasonable suggestions: 1) Orophernes, since he usurped the power from the lawful king, his brother Ariarathes V; 2) Ariarathes IX, since he was the son of Mithridates VI Eupator and did not belong to the Kappadokian dynasty at all (Just. *Epit.* 38.2.5); 3) Ariarathes VIII, who ruled for a very short period (or even failed to ascend the throne, so Simonetta (1977, 36), although Callataj (1997, 195-200) attributes the minting of some coins to him). Probably, it is better to choose the first or the second alternative, although none of them manages to eliminate all problems.
- 44 As to the date of his death, see Simonetta 1977, 36; Callataj 1997, 194-200. We can suppose that Lykomedes, being "of the Kappadokian royal family", nevertheless was not considered the lawful successor to the throne, since after the death of Ariarathes VIII, Ariobarzanes founded a new dynasty. Note "the change of dynasty" (*mutationemque generis*) as an obstacle for the claims of Lykomedes (*Bell. Alex.* 66).
- 45 It has been shown (Gabelko & Kuz'min 2005) that the sources err in calling Stratonike, the wife of Ariarathes III, the daughter of Antiochos II.

- 46 Reinach 1886, 317-318; Niese 1895, 816; Seibert 1967, 56 & 114; Müller 1973, 127; Simonetta 1977, 16; Will 1979, 292; Saprykin 1996, 41-42. Perl, being extremely critically disposed to this passage, offers to change the number of years to 164 (Ϟξδ) (Perl 1968, 326, n. 111; 1969, 65, n. 111), synchronizing the beginning of the rule of the Kappadokian dynasty according to Synkellos with the date of the foundation of Nikomedia (523). However, there is no reliable basis for this. In that case, the passage (and consequently the establishment of the Seleukid-Kappadokian dynastic alliance) must be dated not to the reign of Antiochos II, but rather to the final years of the reign of Antiochos I, who was killed in 261 BC. This definitely contradicts the information of Diodoros: "He (Ariamnes), made a marriage alliance with Antiochos, called Theos, marrying the daughter of Antiochos to his son Ariarathes".
- 47 Concerning the propagandistic struggle between the representatives of the Ariarathid and the Mithridatid dynasties, see Panitschek 1987-1988, 73-95.
- 48 Hammond 1989, 31; Miron 2000, 49-51; Ladynin 2005, 37. Special attention is paid to the sacred dimension royalty received as a result of a marriage with a woman of the Macedonian royal dynasty. For the representatives of the eastern elite, the formal legal aspect of the establishment of such dynastic connections was much more important.
- 49 Concerning the importance of this marriage for Hierax some scholars are of the opinion that after Attalos defeated him near Aphrodisias, he found shelter in Bithynia where he stayed until the death of his father-in-law (Magie 1950, 738-739, n. 24; Balachvancev 2000, 212).
- 50 Note that Ziailas started his political career as a usurper, when he deprived his stepbrothers of power despite the will of Nikomedes I (Memnon, *FGrH* 434 F 1, 14.1-2). The atypical title βασιλεὺς Βιθυνῶν (*Syll.*³ 456) used in the letter to the Council and the People of Kos, was used to legitimize the status of Ziailas obtained after the civil war (Errington 1974, 20-37, 21, n. 7; Gabelko 2005, 210-217).
- 51 Ma 1999, esp. 235-242.
- 52 Karyškovskij 1985, 572-581; Vinogradov, Molev & Tolstikov 1985, 595-600; Ballesteros-Pastor 1995.
- 53 Bikerman 1985, 26. See also Seibert 1967, 4.
- 54 Antiochos III, who already had children with his wife Laodike, the representative of the royal family of the Mithridatids, could thus marry for a second time with a girl of non-royal descent during his stay on Euboia (Polyb. 20.8; Liv. 36.17.7).

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