



DEMARATUS

DEMARATUS (Attic *Dēmárātos*, Ionic *Dēmá-rētos*, Laconian *Dāmárātos*, lit., “wished by the people”), king of Sparta (from at least as early as 510 B.C.E.) who took refuge with Darius I (q.v.). He was a son of King Ariston, of the ancient lineage of the Eurypontidae. Demaratus’ name is said to have reflected the Spartans’ desire that Ariston have a son. Demaratus married Percalum (*Pérkalon*, not *Pérkalos*), whom he had abducted from her intended bridegroom, Leotychidas (Herodotus, 5.75.1, 6.63.3, 6.65.2, 6.70.3).

As relevant hints in several sources (e.g., Plutarch, *Mulierum Virtutes* 245d-e; Polyænus, *Strategicon* 8.33) seem unreliable, there is little point in enumerating supposed events of his long reign, though in 510 B.C.E. he and his coruler, the other Spartan king, Cleomenes, were actively committed to freeing Athens from the Peisistratids (Pausanias, 3.7.8). Eventually Demaratus and Cleomenes became bitter enemies, though Herodotus’ legendary reports probably simply reflect *topoi*. For example, Cleomenes and his followers, including Leotychidas, supposedly claimed that Demaratus was not Ariston’s legitimate son and therefore not the legitimate king; through trickery they brought about his abdication before the battle of Marathon, in about 491 B.C.E. (Herodotus, 6.65-67, 6.74.1, 6.75.3; cf. Pausanias, 3.4.3-5, 3.7.7-9). The real reason for Demaratus’ abdication, however, was doubtless his friendly attitude toward the Persians (*mēdismós*) and his opposition to Cleomenes, who had attacked Aeginetan allies of the Persians (Herodotus, 6.50-51, 6.64).

Demaratus remained for a while in Sparta and even held office (Herodotus, 6.67.1), but after an affront by his successor, Leotychidas, he took refuge with



Darius, who “received him generously and gave him land and cities” (Herodotus, 6.70.1-3). Demaratus appears to have occupied an important position at the Persian court, but it is doubtful that the relevant reports reflect historical truth. For example, in the dispute among Darius’ sons over the succession, Demaratus is said to have argued in favor of Xerxes, the first son born after Darius’ own accession (Herodotus, 7.3.1-4; cf. Plutarch, *Artoxerxes* 2.4). Xerxes, during his invasion of Greece (Herodotus, 7.101.1) in 480 B.C.E., supposedly consulted Demaratus repeatedly; nevertheless, his warning about the fearless resistance of the Spartan army and his advice favoring a naval attack on Sparta and occupation of the island of Cythera went unheeded (Herodotus, 7.101-04, 7.209, 7.234-35; cf. Diogenes Laertius, 1.72; Diodorus, 11.6.1-2; cf., however, Ctesias, in Jacoby, *Fragmente* IIC, p. 463, fr. 13 par. 27).

According to Xenophon (*Hellenica* 3.1.6), in 401-399 B.C.E. Pergamum, Teuthrania, and Halisarna (Athenaeus, 1.29-30: also Gambreium) were ruled by two descendants of Demaratus, Eurysthenes and Procles (cf. Xenophon, *Anabasis* 2.1.3, 7.8.17), which suggests that Demaratus himself had been in feudal service to the great king and had held the hereditary rank of a vassal until his death. Xenophon (*Hellenica* 3.1.6) also remarked that Demaratus had received those cities as a reward for his participation in the campaign against Greece, presumably Xerxes’ expedition. Members of Demaratus’ family obviously were among the oral sources from which Herodotus drew much of his information and some specific stories. It has been supposed, too, that in the Hellenistic period some Demaratids returned to Sparta, perhaps while Lysimachus ruled Asia Minor (305-281 B.C.E.; Homolle; for anecdotal, sometimes fictitious accounts, see Plutarch, *Lycurgus* 20.5, *De Herodoti Malignitate*, pp. 864-65, *Themistocles* 29.7-8; Herodotus, 7.239.2-4; cf. Polyaeus, *Strategicon* 2.20; Justin, 2.10.13-14, 8.65; Seneca, *De Beneficiis* 6.31.4-12).

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