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September 1998
THE TRANSFORMATION
OF
ALEXANDER’S
COURT:

THE KINGSHIP,
ROYAL INSIGNIA
AND EASTERN COURT PERSONNEL OF
ALEXANDER THE GREAT

ANDREW WILLIAM COLLINS

A thesis submitted for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy at
the University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.
26th February 2008
This thesis examines Alexander’s conception of kingship, his relationship with royal traditions in the three great kingdoms of the Near East, and the concomitant transformation of the king’s court by which Alexander created a distinctive royal insignia and introduced new court personnel and protocol. Section I (“Alexander and Near Eastern Kingship”) contains Chapters I, II, and III. Section II (“The Transformation”) comprises Chapters IV to VI. In Chapter I, I examine the Macedonian background of Alexander’s court and his native conception of kingship. Chapter II is a study of the kingship of Egypt. Chapter III deals with the kingship of Babylon and Persia. I then turn to an analysis of Alexander’s policies towards the Persians and the concept of the “kingship of Asia,” as this was understood by Alexander. This crucial concept is to be distinguished from the kingship of Persia, a position which Alexander supplanted and replaced with his personal kingship of Asia. In Section II, three chapters are devoted to an analysis of the transformation of Alexander’s court. Chapter IV covers the origin and significance of Alexander’s royal insignia. Chapter V examines the introduction of, and the role played by, Persians and easterners in the king’s court; and Chapter VI the significance of other Persian court offices.
PREFACE

I must acknowledge all the help that I have received during the writing of this thesis. First, I have a very great debt to Dr Pat Wheatley, my supervisor, for his invaluable criticisms and corrections of my work. His advice and insights—and above all friendship—have been very important to me. The connections that Pat has long had with eminent scholars in our field, and with the Alexander community in general, would be the envy of any postgraduate working on Alexander the Great. I am also indebted to Dr Jon Hall for his assistance in my queries about translations and the ancient languages.

I wish to express my gratitude to the Classics Department and to its staff, and to Professor William J. Dominik, for the considerable amount of support I have received, and for the excellent resources that the Department has provided for postgraduate study. I am indebted to the University of Otago for my scholarship, which has allowed me to write this thesis, and for other generous financial support that I have enjoyed during these past three years.
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## Introduction

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#### 2.5. Alexander and the Magi: the Attack on Iranian Religion

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### 3. Did Alexander wear the tiara?

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ABBREVIATIONS

The most frequently used abbreviations of important works are listed below. In other cases, references to ancient sources and general reference works follow the standard conventions of the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (rev. 3rd edn, 2003); citations of journal titles conform to *L'Année Philologique*; and all abbreviations of Old Persian inscriptions follow R. G. Kent, *Old Persian: Grammar, Texts, Lexicon* (2nd edn; 1953), pp. 107–115. I have also listed a number of abbreviations for some frequently used sources below, and for other works that are not normally found in general abbreviations in Classical Studies, particularly those pertaining to Egyptology and the Near East.

ANCIENT SOURCES

Arr. Anab.  Arrian, *Anabasis*

Ath.  Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*

Curt.  Curtius Rufus, *Historia Alexandri Magni*

Diod.  Diodorus Siculus

Hdt.  Herodotus, *Historiae*

Just.  Justin, *Epitome of Pompeius Trogus*

Metz Epit.  Metz Epitome

Plut. Alex.  Plutarch, *Alexander*

GENERAL AND REFERENCE WORKS


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<tr>
<td>Grundlage Vol. 2</td>
<td>Munich, 1926.</td>
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<tr>
<td>British Museum (museum number)</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. YarShater (ed.), <em>Encyclopaedia Iranica</em> (13 vols), London, 1973–.</td>
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<td>F. Jacoby, <em>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</em>, Berlin and Leiden, 1923–.</td>
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<td>W. Helck, E. Otto, W. Westendorf (eds), <em>Lexikon der Ägyptologie</em> (7 vols), Wiesbaden, 1972–.</td>
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<tr>
<td>W. Dittenberger (ed.), <em>Sylloge inscriptionum graecarum</em> (3rd edn), Leipzig.</td>
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<td>Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research</td>
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**JOURNALS**

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<td>AASOR</td>
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<tr>
<td>AfO</td>
<td>Archiv für Orientforschung</td>
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<tr>
<td>AJA</td>
<td>American Journal of Archaeology</td>
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<tr>
<td>AJPh</td>
<td>American Journal of Philology</td>
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<tr>
<td>AJSL</td>
<td>American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures</td>
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<td>AMiran</td>
<td>Archäologische Mitteilungen aus Iran</td>
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<td>AncSoc</td>
<td>Ancient Society (Louvain)</td>
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<td>ANES</td>
<td>Ancient Near Eastern Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>BACE</td>
<td>Bulletin of the Australian Centre for Egyptology</td>
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<td>BIFAO</td>
<td>Bulletin de l’Institut français d’archéologie orientale</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDAFI</td>
<td>Cahiers de la Délégation Archéologique Française en Iran</td>
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<td>GM</td>
<td>Göttinger Miscellen</td>
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<td>IA</td>
<td>Iranica Antiqua</td>
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<tr>
<td>JAOS</td>
<td>Journal of the American Oriental Society</td>
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<tr>
<td>JARCE</td>
<td>Journal of the American Research Center in Egypt</td>
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<td>JEA</td>
<td>Journal of Egyptian Archaeology</td>
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<td>JHS</td>
<td>Journal of Hellenic Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>JNES</td>
<td>Journal of Near Eastern Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>JSSEEA</td>
<td>Journal of the Society for the Study of Egyptian Antiquities</td>
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<tr>
<td>LIMC</td>
<td>Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae (Artemis, Zurich, 1981–)</td>
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<td>SAK</td>
<td>Studien zur Altägyptischen Kultur</td>
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<tr>
<td>TAPA</td>
<td>Transactions (and Proceedings) of the American Philological Association</td>
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<td>ZA</td>
<td>Zeitschrift für Assyriologie</td>
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NOTE ON CROSS REFERENCES

In cross references, I have preferred to use chapter and subsection numbers, instead of page numbers, e.g.,

Chapter II.3 = Chapter II – Kingship of Egypt, subsection 3. Alexander and Egyptian Coronation Rites;

Chapter VI.3.1 = Chapter VI – Persian Court Offices, subsection 3.1. The Origin of the edeatroς.
INTRODUCTION

Alexander’s conception of kingship and his development of a royal court suitable for a vast Asian empire—with visible royal insignia, court personnel and protocol—are the subject of this thesis. This is the first treatment of the topic as a single thematic study in English, although numerous authors have studied individual aspects of Alexander’s court and kingship.

I begin this introduction with a brief overview of the specialist literature on Alexander’s court and kingship, and how my own thesis fits into the considerable body of work already available in modern scholarship.

A great deal of early research on Alexander’s kingship focused on its relationship to the subject of his divinity. H. Berve’s magisterial study Das Alexanderreich auf Prosopographischer Grundlage (Munich, 1926) remains the classic treatment of the structure of, and personnel in, the king’s court, but in many respects its approaches and conclusions are out of date. An influential conclusion that Berve made was that Alexander aimed at a divine kingship from his time in India, in part to claim even greater authority than a mere mortal king.

In 1924, E. Meyer published his influential article “Alexander der Große und die absolute Monarchie.” Meyer contended that Alexander’s divinity was inspired mainly by Greek ideas, and was also fundamentally connected with his attempts to create an absolute monarchy. In part, his motive for divine honours was a political move to place

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1 I have sometimes used longer references in this introduction, where I wish to cite the date and title of influential works. In other cases, as in the rest of the thesis, I use the Harvard system for references.
2 E. Neuffer’s dissertation Das Kostüm Alexanders des Großen (Gießen, 1929), published soon after Berve, was an important study of Alexander’s royal costume.
3 Berve’s prosopographical entries are now largely superseded by W. Heckel’s Who’s Who in the Age of Alexander the Great (Malden, 2006).
himself above the law of the Greek city states, since a god was not bound by human law. These views have not stood the test of time. In contrast, modern scholarship has stressed the genuinely religious nature of Alexander’s demand for divine honours—a view which I certainly accept. There is, however, a case for the re-examination of how this religiously inspired belief in divinity influenced Alexander’s final plans for his empire and his conception of kingship, an area that I pursue in Chapter III.2.9 below.

Above all, a long held opinion in modern scholarship was the view that Alexander’s conquest of Persia resulted in his claim to the kingship of Persia itself, and that the king sought to directly sit on the throne of the Achaemenids as the genuine and proper successor to Darius III. For many years this was a scholarly orthodoxy. It led to many puzzling problems. Why did Alexander treat the inhabitants of Persis with such brutality? Why did Alexander burn the Persepolis palace? Was his title of “king of Asia” merely a claim to be the new Great King? If so, why did Alexander not use the Persian title “king of kings”? In 1986, N. G. L. Hammond published a paper called “The Kingdom of Asia and the Persian Throne.” Here he presented a bold new view. Alexander regarded himself as “king of Asia.” This was not simply a claim to be the new king of Persia or the new Great

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6 Stier (1939: 391–395) built on Meyer’s work, and argued that the deification of the king was essentially inspired by political reasons, so that Alexander, as a world sovereign, could free himself from the laws of his subjects. This view was also taken by Tarn 1948 (vol. 2): 370–373. On the unity of mankind thesis, which has been completely discredited, see Tarn 1933: 123–166; Badian 1958: 425–444; Baldry 1965; Thomas 1968: 258–260; Goukowsky 1978: 183–184; Bosworth 1980a: 1–21.

7 In the words of Wilcken (1932: 149), Alexander “regarded himself as … [the] heir and successor [sc. of Darius] on the Persian throne.” See also Bosworth 1980a: 5: “[sc. Alexander’s] claims to be the legitimate king of the Persian empire were absolute.”


9 See Chapter III.2.3 below.


11 See Plut. Demetr. 25.3.

King. Alexander did not seek to succeed Darius on the Achaemenid throne itself. Alexander's empire of Asia was a state above and beyond the local kingship of Persia. Alexander naturally thought of himself as the new foreign king of Persia, but regarded the local Persian kingship held by Darius III as extinguished and replaced by his own new autocracy.

Certainly, there were some problems with Hammond's presentation, not least of all his attempt to dismiss the Vulgate traditions about Alexander's court reforms in 330 BC, as reported by Diodorus (17.77.4–7). Moreover, this important and well known aspect of Alexander's reign—the king's "orientalising" policies—seemed to militate against the "revisionist" thesis. From 330, the king had transformed the Macedonian court in a manner that appeared to show him as the new "Great King": he adopted the diadem and the Persian royal costume, used Iranian court bodyguards and other personnel, and introduced various Persian court offices (Diod. 17.77.4–7).

Hammond's approach to this problem had been to simply deny that the historical traditions about Alexander's court reforms were true; he consigned them to the Vulgate, a source which—in his rather questionable approach to the sources—was a largely unreliable tradition. This was clearly an unacceptable thesis. The scholarly upshot of the emerging controversy was that the largely separate study of Alexander's court suddenly had a powerful new connection with the question of his conception of kingship. As a result, new studies of various aspects of Alexander's court soon appeared.

In 2000, E. A. Fredricksmeier took up Hammond's theory on the kingship of Asia, but accepted the historical evidence for the "orientalising" reforms. He then showed how Alexander's appropriation of Persian ceremony and court personnel could be reconciled with the view that Alexander rejected the merely local kingship of Persia and sought a supranational kingship over the Asian continent.15

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13 In much the same vein, S. M. Burstein ("Pharaoh Alexander: A Scholarly Myth," Ancient Society 22 [1991]: 139–145) later challenged the traditional interpretation of Alexander's kingship, by attacking the view that Alexander was ever crowned as pharaoh in Memphis, and arguing that he was never a "pharaoh" in the strict sense, but a foreign king of Egypt.


In an article called “The Office of Chiliarch under Alexander and the Successors” (Phoenix 55 [2001]: 259–283), I produced my own small contribution to this emerging field of “court” studies, inspired in part by the new “revisionist” school, but with a narrow and specific focus. I examined the three Persian court offices introduced by Alexander (viz., the chiliarch, eisangeleus, and edeatros), and in particular the chiliarchy. Relying on important earlier French work by P. Briant and P. Goukowsky, I concluded that the chiliarch was not a major administrative official in Alexander’s court, and that the office was connected with Alexander’s use of the Persian royal bodyguard (the melophoroi) and the introduction of proskynesis. It was thus a largely ceremonial office and did not play a fundamental role in the politics of the Successors.

Most recently, A. J. S. Spawforth has edited an important study on ancient courts (The Court and Court Society in Ancient Monarchies, Cambridge and New York, 2007). In this work, Spawforth contributes the first new general study of Alexander’s court in some time. His chapter is without doubt a fundamental starting point for all new work, and offers a lucid and insightful perspective on the major points. Although Spawforth does not deal with the chiliarchy per se—and does not cite my own work on the topic—I can, with some satisfaction, note that a number of his major conclusions were those which I also drew in print in my earlier Phoenix article of 2001. In particular, I emphasised the following:


16 This article, with considerable revision, forms the basis of Chapter VI.

(1) The *eisangeleus* (chief usher) and *edeatros* (chief taster or superintendent of meals) were clearly Persian court offices introduced by Alexander as part of his court ceremonial, c. 330.18

(2) The fundamental reforms in Alexander’s court—and the king’s adoption of Persian royal costume—began in 330 BC19 (and it was also at this approximate time when the chiliarchy was introduced, rather than in 324, the widely accepted alternative date20).

(3) The motive for Alexander’s reforms was not simply a response to Bessus’ revolt in Bactria, although this was no doubt a factor,21 but the changes began in Hyrcania and Parthia, *before* he received news of Bessus’ revolt.22 The court transformation was a direct attempt to express Alexander’s newly claimed “kingship of Asia,”23 a position not simply identical with the local kingship of the Achaemenids, but supplanting it.24

In my opinion, the new interpretations originally put forward in Hammond’s study of 1986, and modified by E. A. Fredricksmeyer—and now forming the tacit or explicit starting point of a number of other works—have led to the emergence of a “revisionist”25 school of thought on Alexander’s conception of kingship. The controversies in this school of thought—and the numerous important issues, minor details and larger problems that have been raised—have, I believe, justified a large-scale treatment of this entire subject.

This thesis is my attempt at such a study. I must also state quite clearly and frankly that I am a supporter of the main details of the “revisionist” school. I present here my own

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18 Collins 2001: 265–266; Spawforth 2007: 94; 100.
20 Badian (1985: 485) and Bosworth (1994: 840) accepted the date of 324 for the introduction of Hephaestion’s chiliarchy, a view which can be traced to Berve, *Alexanderreich*, vol. 2, 173.
25 I should immediately make clear that I do not use this term in a pejorative sense at all, but merely as a descriptive word.
“revisionist” interpretation of Alexander’s relationship to the native traditions of kingship that he encountered in Egypt, Babylon and Persia, and of the court reforms that resulted from his ideas on kingship.

In broad outline, the main tenets of the revisionists can be strongly confirmed, but also criticised and modified—and in considerably greater detail than has been attempted before. Moreover, there is also another fundamental and original aim: we can move from merely presenting the revisionist case to providing new explanations for Alexander’s court innovations from 330 BC. For to accept the revisionist thesis also forces us to reanalyse the entire subject of Alexander’s “orientalising,” in order to find convincing motives for these polices, as Alexander did not intend to formally claim the Achaemenid throne by such acts.

I have divided this study into two sections, as follows:

Section I: “Alexander and Near Eastern Kingship” contains Chapters I, II, and III.

Section II: “The Transformation” comprises Chapters IV to VI.

In Chapter I, I examine the Macedonian background of Alexander’s court and his local ethnic kingship, particularly the relative simplicity of the Macedonian monarchy and its relationship to the ideals of Homeric heroic kingship. I also examine the thesis of D. Kienast (1973), who argued that Macedonian kingship had already been changed by Persian influence on Philip’s court.

Chapter II is a study of Alexander’s kingship of Egypt. Alexander was regarded as the new foreign king of Egypt by the local priests, but was never formally crowned pharaoh. The influence of Egyptian royal ideology on Alexander has been greatly overstated. By far the most important event during the king’s time in Egypt was the revelation at Siwah, which I examine in detail, particularly with respect to the Egyptian conception of kingship and the question whether Alexander asked the oracle a direct question about his divine birth.26 I also conclude that the king was never sincerely regarded as divine by the Egyptian priesthood.27

26 See Chapter II.4.
Chapter III examines the kingships of Babylon and Persia. In Babylon, Alexander found a city which he appears to have considered a future capital, and, by showing respect for local political traditions, pursued close and largely amiable relations with the Babylonian priests. Alexander's treatment of the Persian homeland before 330 was in marked contrast to his later policies, and the extent of Alexander's initial brutality in Persepolis has been understated. In contrast to Egypt and Babylon, Alexander violated and rejected many Iranian royal traditions. His policies in Persis were a devastating blow to Iranian religion. Instead of the Achaemenid kingship, Alexander claimed the "kingship of Asia." He was not a lawful successor of Darius on the Persian throne. By 330, however, the king was ready to effect court reforms that were necessary for, and appropriate to, a vast new personal autocracy in Asia. Alexander inherited some Achaemenid court traditions, but this was an ad hoc process, often in ways that deeply offended the Iranians and violated Persian royal and religious traditions. I end with some observations on Alexander's divinity, with respect to the king's developing plans for world empire.

In section II, three chapters are devoted to each major aspect of the transformation of Alexander's court.

Chapter IV covers the origin and significance of Alexander's royal insignia. I conclude that the king used the diadem, *chiton mesoleukos* (royal tunic), and the *zona* (belt), but did not assume the *tiara*. I also take issue with one recent revisionist attempt to deny that Alexander's diadem was derived from the Persian court. In my opinion, the view that Alexander's diadem was taken from the iconography of Dionysus\(^{28}\) is simply not convincing.

Chapter V examines the introduction of, and the role played by, Persians and easterners in the king's court, and can be further subdivided into the following areas:

(1) Darius' Family (Chapter V.1);
(2) Persian *hetairoi* (Chapter V.2);
(3) Asian chamberlains (Chapter V.3);
(4) Persian spear-bearers and the *melophoroi* (Chapter V.4);

\(^{27}\) See Chapter II.1.

(5) the 360 Achaemenid concubines (see Chapter V.5), and
(6) Eunuchs (see Chapter VI.6).

Chapter VI deals with the significance of Alexander’s three known Persian court offices—the chiliarch, the εἰσαγγέλευς (chief usher), and the ἐδέατρος (taster). I conclude that Ptolemy and Hephaestion were given such offices in order to reward them for their loyalty to Alexander as his “new men” or boyhood friends. The chiliarch and eisangeleus both performed ceremonial roles in Alexander’s audiences, mainly for the benefit of easterners. The edeatros was in reality not a “taster,” but the master of the king’s luxurious banquets. Hephaestion acquired the chiliarchy in a manner that allowed him to perform the role of a “Homeric” second-in-command for his king.

I end with a synthesis of the two sections, and my general conclusions.
SECTION I–
ALEXANDER AND
NEAR EASTERN KINGSHIP

Alexander’s conquest of the three eastern kingdoms of Egypt, Babylon, and Persia\(^1\) left him as a potential heir to oriental traditions of monarchy—traditions which were alien to the Greek and Macedonian world. The revisionist thesis is directly concerned with Alexander’s attitude to these kingdoms, and the extent to which he was accepted as a legitimate king.\(^2\) The revisionists have attempted to overturn those views that predominated for much of the twentieth century. For instance, the notion that Alexander was crowned as pharaoh in Memphis—a tradition derived from the *Alexander Romance*—has been strongly contested, as has the idea that Alexander regarded himself as a Great King of the Persians in the strict sense.

In this first section, I intend to present my own revisionist interpretation of Alexander’s relationship to the native traditions of kingship that he encountered in the three great eastern kingdoms which he conquered. Chapter I is a brief overview of the Macedonian kingship, particularly as compared with Near Eastern monarchies. I then turn to the kingships of Egypt (Chapter II) and Babylon and Persia (Chapter III), by reviewing the evidence for Alexander’s appropriation of the titles and traditions of these monarchies. The fundamental issue is the distinction between the kingship of Persia and the kingship of Asia: it has now been shown, I will argue, that the two were not the same (see Chapter III.3 below). The evidence suggests that Alexander was regarded as the new foreign king of Egypt and Babylon by the priests of those countries, but that Alexander did not formally aim at supplanting Darius on the throne of the Achaemenids.

A review of Egyptian royal ideology in relation to Alexander demonstrates that the king was not influenced by it to any great extent. Rather, Egypt was to Alexander the home of an oracle long-renowned in the Greek world that confirmed the astonishing

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\(^1\) There is no evidence that the ancient kingdom of Lydia continued to have active traditions of kingship in this period, since the Lydian kingship was terminated by the Persian conquest. I have therefore not examined it here.

belief that Zeus was his father. Siwah was a profound event in Alexander’s personal life, one which has direct consequences for his conception of kingship (see Chapter III.2.9 below). In Babylon, Alexander found a city which he appears to have considered as a future capital. The brutal conquest of Persia terminated the Asian empire of the Achaemenids and, at the same time, smashed the Persian kingship. After 330, Alexander developed a new personal autocracy as “king of Asia.” This involved the construction of an original ideology of kingship which was increasingly bound up with notions of the king’s divine birth and superhuman status, and seems to have involved plans for many more ambitious conquests in Africa and Europe. When Alexander did use Persian royal traditions, it was an ad hoc process, often in ways that deeply offended the Iranians and violated Persian royal and religious traditions.
CHAPTER I – THE MACEDONIAN KINGSHIP
AND COURT

Introduction

Alexander’s native kingship of Macedonia must of necessity be the starting point for any discussion of his ideology of kingship. At Alexander’s accession, he inherited a newly-forged state, with a reformed army and court developed by Philip II.¹ In this chapter, I review the nature of Macedonian kingship, and compare it with the ancient traditions of kingship in Egypt, Babylon and Persia. I then examine the extent to which Macedonian kingship resembled Homeric kingship, and the thesis that Philip’s court had already been reformed along Persian lines. Finally, I briefly survey the personnel of Alexander’s own Macedonian court. It will be seen that Macedonian kingship was a surprising simple institution, as compared with other states. There is no convincing evidence that the kings had any formal royal costume or even an investiture ceremony. Consequently, Alexander’s later development of a far more exalted conception of kingship and the invention of royal insignia was a genuinely novel series of reforms.

1. Macedonian Kingship

Macedonia was ruled by a monarchy whose ruling dynastic was the Argead house. Herodotus (8.137–139) reports that the dynasty claimed descent from Temenus of Argos; this seems to have been royal propaganda of Alexander I to impress the Greeks.\(^3\) The usual title for the king was the simple noun \(\beta \alpha \sigma \iota \lambda \varepsilon \varsigma\), although the Greeks were naturally more explicit and referred to the king as the \(\beta \alpha \sigma \iota \lambda \varepsilon \varsigma \ \text{Makedónων}\).\(^4\) The title is also attested in the official inscriptions of Macedonian kings, but usually outside Macedonia itself.\(^5\) Kings could even refer to themselves without the royal title. Alexander, for instance, simply styled himself \(\'\text{Αλέξανδρος} \ \Phi \lambda \iota \pi \rho \omicron \omicron\) in the inscription sent to Athens with the Persian spoils captured at Granicus.\(^6\) There is no evidence whatsoever that there was an official and formal titulature used by the Macedonian kings before Alexander.\(^7\)

Unfortunately, there is a frustrating lack of evidence about how the Macedonian kings succeeded to the throne, and in particular whether this involved a ceremony or...

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\(^4\) Hdt. 9.44.7: \(\beta \alpha \sigma \iota \lambda \varepsilon \varsigma \ \text{Makedónων}\); Thuc. 1.57.2: \(\Gamma\epsilon \rho \dot{\iota }\kappa \kappa \alpha \varsigma\), \(\'\text{Αλέξανδρος} \ \text{Makedónων}\) \(\beta \alpha \sigma \iota \lambda \varepsilon \varsigma\); Isoc. Arch. 46.2: \(\text{Αμ\v{y}ntas}\) \(\dot{\alpha} \\text{Makedónων} \ \beta \alpha \sigma \iota \lambda \varepsilon \varsigma\).

\(^5\) The reading \(\text{A[μ]ϊ[ν][τα][ς]}\) \(\Pi\rho\delta[\iota][κ][κ]a\ M[α][κ]e\delta[ο][ν][ω][ν] \ \beta \alpha \sigma \iota \lambda \varepsilon [\varsigma]\) in IG 7.3055, ll.7–8 supposedly referring to Amyntas IV (Mooren 1983: 215) is questionável (Badian 1996: 12, n. 8). See also IG 11.4 1099; 1100; 1101; SEG 34:620 1.


\(^7\) See Errington 1974: 37: "there was no such thing as a single 'correct', 'official', Macedonian royal titulature. Where ambiguity was not a serious danger, the Macedonian king, like his Hellenistic royal contemporaries, was content to call himself simply \(\beta \alpha \sigma \iota \lambda \varepsilon \varsigma\) as the royal letters and several dedications from areas controlled or substantially influenced by the Macedonian kingdom show clearly. Outside these areas other styles occur, the more frequent being the suffix \(\text{Makedón}\) to the usual \(\beta \alpha \sigma \iota \lambda \varepsilon \varsigma\), with or without the king's patronymic."
investiture rite. Curiously, even royal primogeniture was not an established practice in Macedonia.⁸ The brothers, sons and nephews of the ruling king all appear to have had a right to claim the throne.⁹ The only real evidence for how a new king was chosen is provided by the events after Alexander’s death and the accession of Philip Arrhidaeus. The generals asked Alexander who was to inherit his kingdom (Arr. Anab. 7.26.3). This obviously suggests that the king himself was free to nominate his successor, even if his wishes were not always followed. In the absence of an heir designated by Alexander, Curtius reports that a new king was chosen by a meeting of the royal companions and leaders of the army (Curt. 10.6.1). Thus, at the very least, the new king required the support of the great royal companions and leaders of the aristocratic houses. Alexander, for instance, was first saluted as king by Alexander of Lyncestus (Curt. 7.1.6).

It appears that after a king died the religious ritual of lustration was performed.¹⁰ However, there is no convincing evidence for a formal Macedonian rite of coronation, enthronement, or investiture, on the accession of a king. Acclamation appears to have been the method by which an heir was hailed as the new ruler. The ceremonies that occurred after Alexander’s death are sometimes cited as evidence for a Macedonian succession ritual. But when Arrhidaeus was led to Alexander’s throne and given the royal robe and diadem (Curt. 10.7.13; 10.6.4) these were royal insignia that Alexander had himself adopted during the course of his reign (see Chapter IV); they were hardly the traditional insignia of the earlier Macedonian monarchy. That Alexander had to invent a royal costume and insignia speaks volumes about the lack of ostentation and ceremony in the native Macedonian kingship.¹¹

We can briefly review the history of modern scholarship on the nature of Macedonian kingship. There are two main schools of thought.¹² The first is associated

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⁹ Just. 11.2.3; Pl. Grg. 471. Greenwalt 1989: 35. This is demonstrated by the rivals who challenged Philip II after his accession. These included Pausanias and Argaeus, sons of Archelaus (Diod. 16.2.6), and the half-brothers of Philip II (Just. 7.4.5, 8.3.10). On the role of royal women in Macedonian kingship, see Carney 1995: 367–391 and Miron 2000: 35–52.
¹⁰ Just. 13.4.7; cf. Curt. 10.9.11–12.
with the work of F. Granier, A. Aymard and N. G. L. Hammond. It holds that Macedonia was actually a constitutional state ("Staatsrecht") with defined powers invested in a military assembly.\textsuperscript{13} This assembly of soldiers had the power to select the new king and certain judicial functions.\textsuperscript{14}

The second so-called "minimalist" school arose from the work of P. de Francisci and R. M. Errington.\textsuperscript{15} They argued that, far from having any type of constitutionalism, Macedonia was essentially an autocratic monarchy in which the king was unconstrained by any other institutions.\textsuperscript{16} Furthermore, there is no evidence that there was a constitutional Macedonian assembly, either of the army or people, which could formally and officially restrict the king’s power. The "minimalist" thesis is now widely accepted, and rightly so, although E. N. Borza and E. M. Anson have modified the thesis slightly, by arguing that there was an informal system of customs and aristocratic opinion—what

\textsuperscript{13} Granier 1931: 48–57. D. Kienast (1973: 248) also accepted the "constitutionalist" thesis, but argued that Philip II put an end to it: "Philip already destroyed the framework of the 'military kingship' and the patriarchal government [sc. of Macedonia]" ("... hat bereits Philipp den Rahmen des Heerkönigtums und der patriarchalischen Herrschaft gesprengt").

\textsuperscript{14} Hammond and Griffith 1979: 160–162. See Granier 1931: 50–51: "Like Alexander, Philip was acknowledged as the legitimate king by the acclamation of the army. In the case of Philip, the army assembly (Heeresversammlung) even had the power to reject the rightful custom of underage primogeniture in favour of a more powerful paternal relative" ("Philipp wie Alexander werden durch den Zuruf des Heeres als legitime Könige anerkannt. Bei Philipp hat die Heeresversammlung sogar die Macht, das Erbrecht der unmündigen Erstgeburt zugunsten eines kräftigeren Agnaten beiseite zu schieben. Aber die gewaltige Persönlichkeit der Herrscher drängte doch den Einfluß der Heeresversammlung zurück"). Cf. Anson 1985b: 308: "While the populace in some capacity probably was, in origin, the source of a monarch's authority, that authority had by historical times become a mere ritual. Consequently, while assemblies were called to acclaim kings, they did not actually select them."

\textsuperscript{15} Mooren 1983: 213.

the Romans would have called the *mos maiorum*—which could, under certain circumstances, check the king’s power.  

The ruler, then, held a personal kingship, and had very wide authority. This is confirmed by a passage in Demosthenes, who stated that Philip had an advantage over the Athenians in that

\[\tauο\gammaαρ\ vειναι\ παντων\ έκεινον\ έν'\ ουτα\ κυριον\ και\ βητον\ και\ απορρητων\ και\ \αια\ \στρατηγον\ και\ δεσποτην\ και\ ταμιαν,\ \και\ πανταχοι\ αυτον\ \παρειναι\ \το\ \στρατευματι.\]

he is the lord of his own affairs, open or secret, and at the same time is a general, a ruler and a treasurer, and always on campaign (Dem. *Olynthiac* 1 4.3–7).

In short, the Macedonian king was a clear autocrat, decided foreign policy, and made treaties with cities and other states. He alone declared war and peace, and was leader of the army. The king also directly appointed officials to carry out what could be called the administration of Macedonia, and exercised justice, but could appoint judges or request that an assembly pass judgement on a person (Curt. 6.8.25; Diod. 17.79).

Yet the monarch also had daily religious functions, as there was apparently no established class of state priests. Alexander is attested performing numerous sacrifices which appear to be the traditional Macedonian religious rites for the state and the

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17 Errington 1990: 246. See also Anson 1985: “the Macedonian kingship had a customary informality which, in effect, produced for the people a number of de facto rights.” For critics of the minimalist school who attempt to produce a compromise thesis, see Mooren 1983: 210–231 and Adams 1986: 43–52.
21 Justin (9.4.1) reports that after a victory Philip decided not to perform the usual sacrifices on that day (*non solita sacra Philippus illa die fecit*); Arrian (7.25.1–8), in his account of Alexander’s last days (supposedly from the royal journal), makes it clear that sacrifices were a daily duty of the king. See also Hammond and Griffith 1979: 155–156.
dynasty. There is also a letter preserved by Athenaeus, supposedly from Olympias to Alexander, which describes such rites. Here Olympias is quoted as follows:

Πελίγναν τὸν μάγειρον λαβὲ παρὰ τὴς μητρὸς. οὕτως γὰρ οἶδε τὰ ἱερὰ σου τὰ πατρῴα πάντα ὅν τρόπον θύεται καὶ τὰ ἄργαδιστικά καὶ τὰ Βακχικά ...

Buy the cook Pelignas from your mother. He knows how all the sacred rites of your ancestors are performed, both the Argadistic and Bacchic … (Ath. 259f).23

We can conclude that two important components of the “state” religion which the king presided over were the traditional “Argead” rites and the Bacchic ones; the former probably involved sacrifices to Zeus and Heracles, and the latter for Dionysus.24 In addition, Curtius (10.7.2) preserves a remarkable passage in which he states that Philip Arrhidaeus “shared [sc. with Alexander] the sacred ceremonies,” which may well refer to the rites described by Olympias.25 The king no doubt consulted soothsayers and diviners to obtain divine approval before major acts of policy.26 In a condescending dismissal of Alexander, for instance, Demosthenes had stated that the young king would merely remain in Pella inspecting the organs of sacrificial animals (σπλάγχνα φυλάττοντα).27

In conquering other peoples and annexing new territory, the Macedonian kings appear to have had a customary justification for their military ventures. This was the well known concept of acquiring “spear-won land” (δορίκτητος χώρα).28 On crossing to Asia, we have the following account in Diodorus Siculus of Alexander’s actions:

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22 Ap. Anab. 5.3.6: θείον Ἀλέξανδρος τόis θεοῖς δόσοις αὐτῷ νόμος; Anab. 5.29.2: θείον δή … ὡς νόμος; Anab. 7.11.8: Ἀλέξανδρος … ἐπὶ τούτοις θυσίαιν τε θείοι τοῖς θεοῖς οίς αὐτῷ νόμος.

23 The Greek text follows Kaibel 1887-1899. On the textual problems, see Fredricksmeier 1966. Fredricksmeier (1966: 181) concludes that “[there] is a very real possibility … that this letter of Olympias states the official composition, at least at that time, of the rites of the Macedonian state religion.”


25 *sacrorum caerimoniarum... consors*.

26 Plut. Alex. 31.9; Just. 7.2.9–12.


Having sailed with sixty war ships to the region of the Troad, [sc. Alexander] hurled his spear from the ship as the first of the Macedonians. Then jumping from the ship and fixing his spear in the ground, he indicated that he accepted Asia from the gods as won by the spear (Diod. 17.17.2–3).29

The gods to whom Alexander appealed were undoubtedly the traditional Hellenic gods, not Asian deities. To receive spear-won land meant in essence that a conqueror legitimately won the right to rule and control territory by military conquest. Scholarly study of this subject can be traced to W. Schmitthenner who contended that Alexander’s justification for territorial expansion was fundamentally based on the fact of successful conquest.30 When Alexander received “Asia” from the gods he was certainly not claiming the old Persian Empire in the sense of following Darius on the throne of the Achaemenids (see Chapter III.2.8). Alexander claimed Asia as a geographical area, and added this territory to that which was controlled in his own personal kingship.31

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29 See also Just. 11.5.10; Diod. 19.105.3–4.
30 Schmitthenner (1968: 32): “Hellenistic monarchy was based on two general principles of Greek law, the right of victory and the hereditary transfer of the right once acquired” (“hellenistische Monarchie auf zwei allgemeinen Grundsätzen des griechischen Rechts beruht habe, dem Recht des Sieges und der erblichen Uebertragung des einmal erworbenen Rechts”). It should also be noted that Schmitthenner (1968: 32) traced the idea to Bickermann (1938: 14). Cf. Walbank 1950: 79: “If ... [sc. Diod. 17.17.2] is also true ... at the outset of his campaign Alexander was laying claim to the Persian Empire (for this is the normal meaning of ‘Asia’ in such a context), and as in the ... letter to Darius is declaring himself Great King by right of conquest.”
Finally, the duties of the Macedonian kings seem broadly similar to those exercised by the other monarchies in the ancient Near Eastern kingdoms of Egypt, Babylon and Persia. But this similarity is deceptive. First, the Macedonian kingship actually had rather limited religious functions. In contrast, the Near Eastern kings—especially those of Babylon and Egypt—had a much greater role in the religious life of their societies than the Macedonian kings ever did. In Egyptian and Mesopotamian conceptions of kingship, a formally legitimate king was strictly required for the order of the universe itself (see Chapters II.1 and III.1.2 below). Without a proper king, the cosmos itself was felt to dissolve into chaos. Furthermore, in Egypt, Babylon and Persia, there were traditional ceremonies of investiture and succession, all with strong religious elements (see Chapter II.3 and III.2.6). In these kingdoms, the king was perceived as the direct representative of a supreme god on earth: the gods Amon-Re, Bel-Marduk and Ahura-Mazda were in Egypt, Babylon and Persian respectively the royal gods *par excellence*. The kingship was also justified as a sacred institution given to its office holder by the will of the gods. No such grandiose royal ideology can be found in Macedonia. Furthermore, in the developed Mesopotamian royal ideologies the ruler was perceived as something much greater than a mere master of a local ethnic kingship. In Babylon and Persia, there was an exalted idea of royal power which gave to the king a *universal* claim to rule over the world itself and its many peoples (see Chapter III.1.2 below). Although earlier Macedonian kings never used any such propaganda, in the last years of his life Alexander moved towards a universal claim to rule. In this respect, the transformation of Alexander’s kingship truly came to resemble those of the earlier Near Eastern monarchs. But Alexander’s ambitious kingship was most probably justified

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32 Herz 1996: 39. On the other differences between Greek and Near Eastern kingship, see the excellent study of Herz 1996.

33 Herz 1996: 38.

34 Herz 1996: 38.

35 Herz 1996: 38: “In the diverse eastern empires, the king possessed an indispensables function; one could even say that he was the person on whose presence and status as a mediator the working of the divine order of the world depended” (“Der König besaß in den unterschiedlichen orientalischen Reichen eine unverzichtbare Funktion – man könnte sogar sagen, er war die Person, von deren Präsenz und Mittlerstellung das Funktionieren der göttlichen Weltordnung abhing”).
partly by the demand for divine honours, which had arisen from the Greek religious
tradition (rather than an oriental one), and was also backed up by impressive and genuine
plans for the conquest of Arabia, Africa and possibly Europe (see Chapter III.2.9).

2. Macedonian and Heroic Kingship

Macedonian kingship has been compared with Homeric kingship very frequently
in modern studies. Some now argue that the similarities were not as great as is usually
thought. A short review of this subject therefore seems to be in order.

First, it should be noted that the idea of Homeric “kingship” in Greek literature
from the Iron age was not necessarily a reflection of historical reality in the late
Mycenaean period, but a literary construct, perhaps combining traditions about Bronze
age kings with the modern reality of archaic Greek kingship.

The general similarities between the kings of Homer and Macedonian monarchs
are undeniable. The Macedonian king leads the army and exhorts the troops before
battles, as in the Homeric myths. However, the Macedonian king also led the army
personally and fought regularly in front of his troops. In this respect, Macedonian kings
were far braver than their Homeric counterparts, who did not often engage in battle in
person. In addition, the Homeric elders had a greater role in the religious duties of
society; in contrast to this, the Macedonian king is normally found performing sacrifices
himself without senior members of the community. Both Homeric and Macedonian
kings have councils, but the Homeric council is made up of elders who also participate in
popular assemblies and represent the people. The “councils” of Macedonian kings,
however, include the royal friends and companions, and may even have foreigners.

40 Carlier 2000: 262.
Furthermore, Homeric councils appear a good deal more democratic than those of the Macedonian kings.\textsuperscript{43}

All this should give us pause. We ought not to press the similarities between Heroic kings and those of Macedonia too far. The Macedonian kingship did have its own local characteristics that made it distinct from the kings of Homer. The Macedonian king was a much more powerful ruler than a heroic \textit{βασιλεύς}, and presided over a country with political traditions not constrained by formal popular assemblies that can be seen in the \textit{Iliad}.\textsuperscript{44} Above all, the Macedonian king had a much greater role in war: he seems to have habitually fought himself much like a hero, rather than a Homeric king.\textsuperscript{45} In his attempts to emulate Homeric heroes, Alexander may well have introduced the Persian court office of chiliarch for his friend Hephaestion (see Chapter VI.1.4).

3. Was there Persian Influence on Philip II’s Court?

In a short treatise published in 1973, D. Kienast presented a provocative thesis arguing that the Persian influence on Philip’s own court was already considerable.\textsuperscript{46} Philip was king of a multi-ethnic state and, like the earlier tyrant Dionysius I in Sicily (Ath. 6251f),\textsuperscript{47} looked to the great Persian empire as a model,\textsuperscript{48} especially as he incorporated Thrace, which was once ruled by the Persians and was possibly reorganised

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\textsuperscript{43} Carlier 2000: 267.

\textsuperscript{44} Carlier 2000: 267.

\textsuperscript{45} Cohen 1995: 483–505.

\textsuperscript{46} Kienast 1973. See also Goukowsky 1978: 10–12.

\textsuperscript{47} Stroheker 1958: 159; Sanders 1991: 281.

\textsuperscript{48} Kienast 1973: 248–249. See in particular Kienast 1973: 249: “Thus Philip of Macedon had a model in the universal monarchy of the Persian king, which was also constructed (at least partially) on the principle of a personal union, to which Philip could relate himself in the creation of his own empire” (“Philipp von Makedonien hatte also in der Universalmonarchie des Perserkönigs, die wenigstens zum Teil auch auf dem Prinzip der Personalunion aufgebaut war, ein Vorbild, an dem er sich bei der Errichtung seines eigenen Reiches orientieren konnte”).
by Philip along Persian lines. In short, Philip had already made a deliberate attempt to model the Macedonian court and its organisation on that of the Great King. Kienast identified seven major elements which he thought were of Persian origin, as follows:

(1) a royal chancellery with a secretary,
(2) a royal seal,
(3) an expansion and reform of the institution of the *hetairoi*,
(4) the bodyguard of seven (*somatophylakes*),
(5) the hypaspists,
(6) the royal pages, and
(7) Philip’s polygamous marriages.

If Kienast is correct, and Philip indeed adopted such a wide variety of reforms taken from Persia, then Alexander had ample precedent for his “orientalising” policies adopted in his later years.

Unfortunately, it now seems that Kienast overstated his case in important ways. Plato (*Grg.* 471b) reports that Archelaus (413–399 BC) became king through murdering...
his relatives, and that he himself was the son of a slave woman. Yet it seems far more likely that Archelaus was the son of a legitimate wife of Perdiccas, and that Plato has falsely assumed her status was servile, owing to his unfamiliarity with Macedonian custom. Thus there is surely evidence of royal polygamy long before Philip II. Furthermore, Archelaus himself was assassinated in 399 BC in a conspiracy involving a number of youths, including Crataes, Hellanocrates of Larisa and Decamnichus, all of whom are very probably royal pages. This, along with the fact that Curtius (8.8.3) and Valerius Maximus (3.3 ext. 1) refer to the institution as an ancient one, indicates that royal pages existed in Macedonia long before Philip.

Attractive as Kienast's thesis is for providing precedents for Alexander's own use of Persian court personnel and traditions, the criticisms sketched above make it difficult to accept Kienast's thesis in full. There may have been some limited Persian influence on Philip's court organisation, and it is certainly possible that the Macedonian monarchy had been influenced by Persia long before Philip, probably during the period when Macedonia was a client state of the Great King (510–c. 479).

4. The Macedonian Court

The organisation of the Macedonian court before Alexander's accession is mostly known through evidence about Philip's reign. We can see three main groups of courtiers in the Argead monarchy: (1) the hetairai, (2) the somatophylakes and (3) the royal pages. We can briefly discuss each group.

58 See Arist. Pol. 1311b.9–16 on Archelaus' half brothers and sisters.
59 Greenwalt 1989: 23–43.
60 Arist. Pol. 1311b.8–35; cf. Ael. VH 8.9. Diod. 14.37.6 is a variant tradition.
61 Curtius (8.8.3): more patrio et ab antiquissimis Macedoniea regnum; Valerius Maximus (3.3 ext. 1): vetusto Macedoniae more.
63 See Griffith 1976: 618. See also Greenwalt (1989: 30), who postulates that polygamy had been introduced by Alexander I.
(1) Hetairoi

The companions (ἕταριες) were the king’s personal retinue, and were also called the “friends.” They were the body from which the king drew his counsellors, generals and senior courtiers. H. Berve was able to identify some sixty companions in the time of Alexander and Philip. Most probably, Theopompus’ statement that Philip had assigned land to around 800 hetairoi (FGrH 115 F 224 = Ath. 4.167b) refers to cavalrymen recruited from both Greeks and Macedonians, rather than to the smaller group who were king’s closest friends. Macedonian kings are attested consulting their companions to decide important questions (Plut. Alex. 11.2), and, while they sometimes deferred to the opinions of their friends, were not bound by the advice they received. Clearly, the king had the final decision, and the “council” was not a strictly formal institution. From 330, Alexander was willing to admit Iranians into the circle of his companions (see Chapter V.2).

(2) Somatophylakes

In the time of Alexander, the Macedonian king had an elite guard of seven bodyguards, the somatophylakes. It is possible that this institution existed in Philip’s time or earlier, but evidence concerning the bodyguard exists mainly from Alexander’s reign (Arr. Anab. 6.28.4). The seven were prominent companions who guarded the king in battle, although Griffith has argued that the rank of somatophylax was an ancient one and had become a largely honorific position by Alexander’s time. Unlike the companions, it is clear that no Iranian or easterner was ever appointed to the rank of the somatophylakes:

64 Hammond and Griffith 1979: 395-404.
65 Curt. 8.4.18; 9.10.26.
66 Berve, Alexanderreich, vol. 1, 31. See also Borza (1990: 241): “[b]etween 65 and 70 names can be identified as Alexander’s Companions.”
70 Heckel 1992: 257.
71 Hammond and Griffith 1979: 403.
it certainly remained an elite Macedonian institution, even when the king adopted other ceremonial Persian bodyguards (see Chapter V.4).

(3) Royal Pages

As we have seen above, there is some controversy about the date when the institution of the royal pages was first established. Arrian’s description of the pages under Philip (4.13.1) was taken by Kienast as proof that they were adopted in his time with the Persian court as a model. However, it is far more likely that the royal pages were part of the Macedonian court years before Philip, although this does not exclude the possibility that Philip reformed the institution. In essence, the sons of the Macedonian upper classes were brought into the king’s court at the age of fourteen until roughly the age of eighteen, and given duties related to the king’s person. Curtius reports that these tasks did not greatly differ from those of slaves, and that the pages guarded the king’s door at night, admitted his concubines, and would bring the royal horses for the king to mount. They were also educated at court and the whole institution was like “a school for the generals and governors of the Macedonians.” The duties Curtius assigned to the royal pages are confirmed by other sources. After the battle of Issus, the pages took possession of Darius’ tent and prepared a bath and dinner for Alexander. In Hyrcania, they are attested looking after the king’s horses (Diod. 17.76.5). In 331 at Susa, Alexander received fifty

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74 Kienast 1973: 264–266.
76 *seminarium ducum praefectorumque apud Macedonas* (Curt. 8.6.2–6).
77 Diod. 17.36.5. See also *Arr. Anab.* 2.12.3; Plut. *Alex.* 20.11–12. The attempt of Hammond (1990: 267) to deny the historicity of Diod. 17.36.5, because this passage was derived from Cleitarchus, is wholly unconvincing. The capture of the tent and Alexander’s use of it is specifically attributed to Ptolemy and Aristobulus by Arrian (*Anab.* 2.12.6: ταύτα μὲν Πτολεμαῖος καὶ Ἀριστόβουλος λέγουσι). There is also no reason to accept Hammond’s contention that the pages were not brought to Asia until 331 BC (Hammond 1990: 68).
additional pages into his court. In contrast to the companions, there is no evidence that Iranians were ever admitted into the circle of the royal pages.

Conclusion

The Macedonian kingship was a strong personal autocracy, which bore some resemblance to Homeric kingship, and may have been influenced to have limited extent by Persian traditions before Philip’s time. Unlike other Near Eastern states, in which the role of the king was linked much more strongly to religion and was strictly required for the maintenance of cosmic order, Macedonian kingship remained an institution of unusual simplicity. There was apparently no royal insignia or formal religious rite of succession before Alexander’s reign. There were three main groups in the Macedonian court: (1) the hetairoi, (2) the somatophylakes and (3) the royal pages. But of the three main court groups around the Macedonian kings, only the hetairoi/philoi were explicitly augmented by Iranians in the period after 330 BC.

78 Diod. 17.65.1; Curt. 5.1.42.
INTRODUCTION

Alexander first became master of an ancient Near Eastern kingdom with his conquest of Egypt. Egyptian traditions of kingship were very ancient and extremely well developed. Moreover, our evidence for Egyptian kingship and Alexander’s time in the country is considerably greater than that relating to other Near Eastern states, and this allows an unusually detailed discussion of the subject.

In this chapter, I examine Egyptian kingship and in particular the question of the divinity of the Egyptian pharaoh. In contrast to many scholars, I conclude that Alexander was not sincerely regarded as divine in the manner that earlier pharaohs were. I then turn to Alexander’s policies in Egypt and the complete lack of evidence for the view that the king participated in the native coronation ritual. Egyptian royal traditions had very little influence on Alexander, apart from one fundamental event. The revelation at Siwah has direct consequences for Alexander’s developing conception of kingship and world rule (see Chapter IV.2.9). There is strong evidence that Alexander’s belief in the miraculous nature of his birth predated the historic crossing from Europe to Asia, and that the king went to the oracle with the firm intention of asking a question about this very subject.

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2 I would stress that this chapter is rather longer than others in this thesis precisely because the evidence requires a fuller treatment.
1. The Motive for Alexander’s Advance to Egypt

A preliminary issue is why Alexander pressed on to Egypt after the siege of Tyre when he could easily have advanced directly into Mesopotamia. This has been debated endlessly. In Diodorus’ account (17.40.2), we are told that the king marched to Egypt after Issus, which implies that this was his intention had it not been for the obstinate provocation of the Tyrians. This is reinforced by Arrian’s opening statement in Book 3 of the Anabasis: “Alexander set out for Egypt, his original goal.”

Why had this been the king’s intention? One could hold that Alexander had a desire to see an exotic country that had long fascinated the Greeks. But a better view is that the conquest of Egypt was a strategically important and competent policy, an idea with respected modern defenders; indeed, this is the orthodox opinion. The few lonely dissenters contend that the conquest of Egypt was not of great military importance, and may even have been a strategic mistake. Alternatively, the possibility that Alexander intended to visit Egypt well before the beginning of the campaign has been mooted. On this view, it was Alexander’s desire to visit the oracle at Ammon and confirm the stories of his divine parentage that were foremost in his mind. This suggestion has a certain attraction, as we will see below (subsection 5).

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4 'Αλέξανδρος δὲ ἐπὶ Αἴγυπτον, ἐναπερ τὸ πρῶτον ὴμηθη, ἐςτέλλετο (3.1.1). Note too that, at one point during the siege of Tyre, Alexander almost decided to end his attack and proceed to Egypt: hic rex fatigatus statuerat soluta obsidione Aegyptum petere (Curt. 4.6.30); καὶ τὸ μὲν πρῶτον ἐκρίνε Ἀλρατ τὴν πολιορκίαν καὶ τῇ στρατείᾳ ἐπὶ τὴν Αἴγυπτον ποιεῖσθαι (Diod. 17.45.7).
5 Lauffer 1978: 86.
9 Bloedow 2004: 99: “[sc. Alexander’s] visit to the oracle of Ammon at Siwah … was his principal reason for going to Egypt …. Alexander’s actions were determined by, not rational and strategic military considerations … but by personal, subjective inclinations: religious, romantic heroism — preoccupations that predate his departure from Macedonia.”
2. Ancient Egyptian Kingship

Alexander, like his Persian predecessors, was in theory the inheritor of Egypt's traditions of kingship. What Alexander's attitude to these traditions was is our central question. Unfortunately, there is scant evidence that he had any great desire to drink deeply from the well of pharaonic ideology—with its complex religious, ideological and ceremonial elements. Nevertheless, the notion of Alexander as pharaoh and son of Re has exercised a romantic hold on the imaginations of many scholars.

When Alexander entered Egypt, the institution of kingship had existed for well over two thousand years; it was arguably the most long-lived and well-defined tradition of kingship in the ancient Near East.

In ancient Egyptian thought, the king (Egyptian nswt) was the son of Re and the divine mediator between the gods and humanity. In mythic times, the gods themselves established kingship on earth and the institution then passed to human bearers of the divine office. Both secular government and religious power were united in the office of kingship: the pharaoh was technically the chief priest, and presided over other priests who were only his deputies. The fundamental concept at the heart of this royal ideology was the notion of maat ("order" or "justice"). The king upheld "order" in a dual sense. His proper government of the state and maintenance of the temples with their cults to the gods ensured the ordering of the universe. Thus the rituals and ceremonies that the king performed, and his successful exercise of justice and defense, maintained the cosmic maat. In the language of Egyptian texts, the king offered maat to the gods. Without a

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14 Silverman 1991: 70.
king, it was not merely that the Egyptian state would have no ruler, but that the order in
the universe would break down and chaos would reign.15

At the king's coronation, he became a manifestation of the god Horus, and could
be called a ntr ("divine being"), a term which has a semantic range rather different from
the modern English word "god", since it was applied not only to the cosmic deities but
also to the dead.16 At the coronation, the king also took a formal throne name of five
elements: the Horus name; two ladies name; golden Horus name; praenomen; and
omen.17 Alexander himself was later given his own royal style partly in conformity with
this system (see subsection 3 below). These ideas formed the basis of the ideal
conception of kingship from the Old Kingdom onwards,18 but were not necessarily
monolithic.19

Modern scholarship has vigorously debated the question of how and to what
extent the pharaoh was believed to be divine—an issue often thought to have influenced
Alexander's own conception of his divinity.

We can briefly sketch the history of modern scholarship on this complex issue.
An early twentieth century generation of scholars contended that the ancient Egyptians
firmly believed in the genuinely divine nature of the pharaoh; they held that this was the
defining characteristic of pharaonic ideology, and was seen in the royal appellations "the
good god" or the "perfect god" (ntr nfr) and the belief, current from the 5th Dynasty, that
the king was the son of Re (s3 R').20 The most extreme form of this thesis was held by H.

16 Thus in the Building Inscription of Sesostris I (II.1) the pharaoh orders the construction of a temple for
Atum and the royal companions then speak "in answer to their god" (trans. Lichtheim 1973: 117). For
discussions of the meaning of ntr, see Lorton 1979: 464, n. 2; Hornung 1982: 33–60; Dunand and Zivie-
17 On these titles, see the standard work by von Beckerath 1984.
18 Pressl 1993: 234.
19 Recently Gundlach (2004: 73–91) has challenged the monolithic nature of Egyptian kingship; he
contends that royal ideology was modified and reinterpreted a number of times in the course of Egyptian
history, in response to political and social crises, most notably the Hyksos occupation of Egypt.
20 Baillet 1912–1913: 7; Jacobsohn 1939; Frankfort 1948; McEwan 1934: 6–7. For an outline of the debate,
see O'Connor and Silverman 1995: xxiii–xxv. Certain New Kingdom pharaohs even received divine cult
during their lifetimes, most notably Amenhotep III and Ramesses II. See Johnson (1998: 87–91) on the
Jacobsohn and H. Frankfort, who thought that the pharaoh was fully divine and the equal of the great gods.  

In reaction to the radical view that saw the pharaoh as fully divine, G. Posener contended that the king’s divinity was an exaggerated notion of modern scholarship. He pointed out that the pharaoh was not considered divine from birth or by nature; the king was often portrayed as the inferior of the gods, and was very rarely depicted as performing supernatural acts of the same type as the cosmic deities. Citing a wide range of secular, religious and literary texts, Posener concluded that it was the office of kingship that was divine: this divinity had been established in the mythic past by the gods themselves when they ruled Egypt as the first kings. Other scholars have similarly deified the king Amenhotep III as the sun god Re-Horakhty after his first sed festival (cf. Aldred 1988: 151–152; Bryan 2000: 261–263; Bickel 2002). Bell (1997: 140) argues that it was actually the royal ka, the divine manifestation of the king, rather than the king himself, that was the proper object of worship. Cf. Barta (1975: 133), who contends that the worship of the living king during the New Kingdom was largely restricted to cults established in foreign countries, such as Nubia, and was not transferred to accepted royal ideology in the homeland of Egypt itself.

21 Jacobsohn 1939; Frankfort 1948: 45 (“the king had been begotten by a god … a god was embodied in the physical frame of Pharaoh”).

22 See Posener 1960 for his critical review of earlier scholarship. Posener (1960: xiii) attacked an extreme view which he characterised as the idea that “the Egyptians saw in their king an authentic god, who treated the other gods on equal terms; belonging to the divine world, he lived on earth in a sacred solitude; he held a universal authority, by means of supernatural action; his role was to continue the creator’s work, to dispense life and to maintain the cosmic balance” (“les Egyptiens voyaient dans leur roi un dieu authentique, qui traitait les autres dieux d’égal à égal; appartenant au monde divin, il vivait sur terre dans une solitude sacrée; il détenait une autorité universelle, des moyens d’action surnaturels; son rôle était de poursuivre l’oeuvre du créateur, de dispenser la vie et de maintenir l’équilibre cosmique”). For a critical review of Posener’s thesis, see Griffiths 1963.

23 Posener (1960: 20–21): “There is thus a distinction to be made between the function [sc. of the royal office] which is permanent and the holder who is not. The Egyptians discerned this distinction well, which did not exist with respect to the gods. One notably sees it when they define the institution of monarchy not in the present, in relation to the contemporary ruler, but by reference to a distant past …. The monarchical system, represented in myth, receives in its alleged origins the divine character that makes it eternal” (“Il y a ainsi une distinction à faire entre la fonction [sc. de l’office royal] qui est permanente et le titulaire qui ne l’est pas. Cette distinction, qui n’existe pas pour les dieux, les Égyptiens l’ont bien discernée. On le voit notamment lorsqu’ils définissent l’institution monarchique, non pas dans le présent, par rapport au
thought that the Egyptian monarchy was regarded as divine and that this concept of divinity was transferred to the pharaoh as head of state. On this view, a distinction must be made between the king as a human being and as an office-holder of the divine kingship. This idea is attested in the difference between the Egyptian term "his majesty" (hm) to refer to the person of the ruler and the word "king" (nswt) to refer to him in his official capacity and duties; in short, hm signifies the current and human embodiment of the kingship, but nswt the divine office of king itself.

Furthermore, in Egyptian thought, the king was also imbued with a divine force at certain times, although he certainly was not imagined as an immortal being capable of performing great supernatural acts. Gods could manifest themselves in various forms, principally in sacred animals (e.g., the Apis, Mnevis and Buchis bulls), cult statues, and phenomena of nature (e.g., the sun, the moon or wind). This type of "incarnation" or "manifestation" was radically different from the incarnation of Christ as conceived in the Christian religion. No manifestation emptied an Egyptian god of his power or

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24 Goedicke (1960: 90): "The king is not divine, but the office exercised by him is, of which he is the bearer. Here is the crucial point for an understanding of the Egyptian kingship, namely the distinction between the person and office of the king" ("Nicht der König ist gottlich, sondern das von ihm ausgeübte Amt, dessen Träger er ist. Hierin liegt der Schlüsselpunkt für ein Verständnis des ägyptischen Königtums, nämlich in der Trennung zwischen Person und Amt des Königs").

25 Delia 1993: 199; Herz 1996: 31; Bell 1997: 138. Gundlach (1988: 27) argues that "the king as an office­holder with the title of Horus appeared like a god, acted like a god, and performed the god's role, but remained a human being himself" ("[als] Amtsträger [sc. der König] mit dem Titel Horus trat ... wie ein Gott auf, und er handelte wie ein Gott, er spielte dessen Rolle, aber er war selber Mensch geblieben").

26 This word literally means "body" or "physical appearance" (Frankfort 1948: 45).
individuality. Nor was there an exact identity between the object manifesting the god and the deity involved. In Egyptian thought, each god had a divine aspect called the *ba* (the collective form of which is *bau*), a power or energy through which the divine nature manifested itself. Objects such as cult statues or sacred animals became divine through possession by a god’s *ba*. The king’s divinity also appears to have been conceived in this way: as in the case of sacred animals, he was born, was mortal and would experience death, but also had a divine *ba* in his human body which made him more than just an ordinary mortal. In recent work focusing on the New Kingdom, it is argued that the king was thought to have a dual nature: a divine manifestation of the god (*ba*) would fuse with his human aspect at certain times, but separate afterwards. Above all, it was in fact the pharaoh’s participation in the rituals of kingship that infused him with divinity. In this manner, he was the “image” of a god. The particular way in which divine power was transferred to the king involved a manifestation of Amun-Re (*ba*) called the royal *ka* (*k3*), which came upon the human pharaoh at the coronation. But this “*ka*” divinity by ritual also required renewal and rejuvenation, most notably at the annual *opet* festival at Thebes and the thirty-year *sed* festival (*heb sed*). The *ka* was conceived as the specific royal and immortal spirit from Amun-Re that was the king’s divine aspect. It was through the

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32 Ockinga 1995: 89–102: “the properties of Amun which the king ... received can be understood as ... the manifestations of his divine power, his *bau*, and it is the possession of this divine power which lifts the king out of the mass of other mortals and gives him a share of the god’s divinity”; O’Connor and Silverman 1995: xxv.
34 Bell 1985: 256 (“the *ka* ... may be described ... as the divine aspect of the king, linking him both with the gods and with all his royal predecessors”); Bell 1997: 140 (“[the] *ka* was the immortal creative spirit of divine kingship”). See also P. Kaplony, *Lf* 3 (1980), s.v. “*ka*,” 275–282.
35 Barta 1975: 134: “although the gods possessed divinity by nature, the king as a human being can acquire divinity only through rituals” (“Während also die Götter Göttlichkeit von Natur aus besitzen, kann sie der König als Mensch stets nur durch Rituale erwerben”).
36 On the *sed* festival, see Bleeker 1967: 96–123. For the Theban *opet* festival and its role in rejuvenating the king’s *ka*, see Bell 1985.
ka—and only through the ka—that the king could be worshipped as divine: cult honours were given to the living royal ka, not the human person of the king. In temple reliefs, the ka usually appears as a human figure behind the king marked with the symbol of upraised arms. The ka passed from the dead king to his living successor at the coronation, and as late as the fifth century BC an inscription of the Hibis temple constructed in the name of the Persian king Darius I refers specifically to the “living royal ka” (nswt k3 ḫnh) as one of the ten manifestations (bau) or hypostases of Amun-Re.

The latter conception of the king’s divinity—with its emphasis on the divine office of kingship and the ruler’s “ka” divinity by ritual—has become the standard

37 Bell 1997: 140. Thus before the entrance pylon of the Luxor temple the two colossal statues of the deified Ramesses II are ka-statues of the king, representing his divine aspect (Habachi 1969: 17–20). In the opinion of Bell (1985: 291–292), one aspect of the heresy of Akhenaten involved a radical attempt to push the divinity of the living king far beyond accepted beliefs by identifying the king directly with the living royal ka of the Aten, when he should merely have been a human being temporarily made divine by uniting with the ka in rituals. Cf. Silverman 1995: 72–79, who sees Akhenaten as the “living divine ka of the supreme power, the Aten.” On the distinction between the worship of the ka-statue of the king and the king himself, see Helck 1966: 41. Furthermore, the Ptolemaic ruler cult in the Egyptian temples appears to have gone well beyond accepted Egyptian traditions (Höbl 2001: 109–111), partly by shifting the Egyptian idea of the ruler’s divinity from the royal office to the person of the king (Hauben 1989: 465).

38 Ockinga 1995: 94.

39 Gundlach (1988: 28) argues that “at the coronation the ka-force, a divine force or power, which cannot be identified with the deity itself, entered into the king, but this force was transferred from each king to his successor” (“dem König ja bei der Krönung die … Ka-Kräfte, also göttlichen Kräfte, eingegeben wurden, die nicht mit der Gottheit selbst identifiziert werden können, sondern es sind Kräfte, heilige Kräfte, die von jedem König auf seinen Nachfolger übergehen”).

40 Lorton 1994: 184–185. See the hymn to awaken Amun in Hypostyle Hall M of the Hibis temple in the Kharga oasis: “Horus of the five bas, living one (who comes) from Nun […] in his name of [sc. the] living royal ka, god of the hnmmt-people” (line 10; trans. Lorton 1994: 168). The royal ka is also described as the sixth ba of Amun-Re in the chapel of the bas in the edifice of the pharaoh Taharqa (c. 690–664) at Karnak: “he takes possession of the sky for his ba-soul … royal living ka at the head of the living” (lines 9–10; trans. Parker et al. 1979: 76–77). See Quaegebeur (1989: 97) for the royal ka in Ptolemaic temple reliefs.
opinion.\textsuperscript{41} The preeminent temple in which honours were paid to the divine royal \textit{ka} of the living king was the Luxor temple at Thebes.\textsuperscript{42} Importantly, it was here that Alexander was later to receive a shrine converted from a barque chapel of Amen-Re built by Amenhotep III, which portrayed him as a pharaoh in the traditional manner (see section 1.3).

The fundamental ritual that conferred divine nature on the pharaoh was undoubtedly the royal coronation, although there were strict limits to this divinity.\textsuperscript{43} During the coronation ritual the king re-enacted the mythological assumption of the throne by the god Horus from his father Osiris; he thus became a manifestation of Horus,\textsuperscript{44} and the divine \textit{ka} entered into him, though he did not become a god in the

\textsuperscript{41} See Malek (1997: 227): “the currently prevalent view ... sees the Egyptian king as divine while performing the duties of kingship, and human at other times.” See also Wildung 1977: 3; Tobin 1989: 89–102; Silverman 1991: 64 (“[sc. the ancient Egyptians] may have conceived of the king as a being who partook of both [human and divine] realms. Such thinking may have paralleled their understanding of the implicit duality in their world .... A ruler envisioned as both human and divine was best suited to intercede between the human and divine worlds”); Koch 1993: 49–76. Ibrahim (1968: 297–300) argues that Egyptian texts show a distinction between the pharaoh acting “like a god” during religious rituals and acting as the head of state as king.

\textsuperscript{42} Bell 1985: 251.

\textsuperscript{43} Morenz 1973: 37–38; Gundlach 1988: 23; Silverman 1991: 70–72; Dunand and Zivie-Coche 2004: 12. The classic Egyptian text for this idea is the \textit{Instruction of King Amenemhet for his son Sesostris I} (I.1): “Risen as a god, hear what I tell you, that you may rule the land, [and] govern the shores” (trans. Lichtheim 1973: 136). Here the dead king refers to his son appearing as a god at his succession (Hornung 1982: 142). Admittedly, the text is not without interpretative difficulties. Barta (1975: 61) translates the passage as follows: “Erscheine in der Art wie ein Gott und höre auf das, was ich dir sage, dann wirst du das Land als König regieren, und du wirst die Ufer beherrschen” (“Appears in this way like a god and listen to what I tell you, then you will rule the country as king, and you will dominate the shores”). Barta (1975: 61) concludes that the expression \textit{m ntr} (“like a god”) demonstrates that the coronation did not change the king into a being with a divine nature equal to the gods, but into a god in a comparable or similar sense (“[die] Formulierung wie ein Gott mit dem \textit{m} der Äquivalenz zeigt deutlich, dass sich der König durch die Krönungszeremonie nicht zu einem göttlichen Wesen wandelt, sondern allenfalls als dem Gott vergleichbar oder ähnlich betrachtet wird”). Barta (1975: 50) concludes that even the kings of the first dynasties of the Old Kingdom were made divine through the coronation ceremony.

\textsuperscript{44} The typical way of referring to the king was the expression “Horus in the palace” (Silverman 1991: 69). The king did not, however, become Horus himself. See Baines 1995b: 123: “No god’s being is exhausted
absolute sense, or an equal of the great cosmic deities. Only after his death did the king become a truly divine being as the god Osiris. This datum has consequences for Alexander's claim to be king of Egypt and the issue of his own divinity, since it is unlikely that the king was ever formally crowned, and so he could not legitimately lay claim to this Egyptian ideology of divinity (see below subsection 3).

We should also take account of an important caveat. The ideas sketched above are largely based on sources from the Old, Middle and New Kingdoms. By the first millennium BC, the political instability after the Third Intermediate Period seems to have severely undermined certain traditional Egyptian beliefs about the pharaoh and his kingship. When Alexander arrived in Egypt, the living native tradition of kingship seems to have been somewhat different from its developed New Kingdom form.

The political history of the preceding centuries had not been conducive to strong ideas about kingship. By the eighth century BC, Egypt itself was politically divided, with the delta ruled by several potentates. Political power soon devolved to the major temples and the priestly classes which had previously been restrained by a strong central government. Moreover, the Egyptianised rulers of Nubia exploited this weakness and seized control of the country. This 25th Dynasty (c. 780–656) from Napata provoked three disastrous Assyrian invasions of Egypt (671, 667 and 664/663 BC), the last of which saw the siege and pillaging of the ancient capital of Thebes. Later Psammetichus I, by any manifestation, so that Horus exists apart from the king ... this combination of god and king does not state that the king is intrinsically a god, or a god from birth ... but that in his exercise of the office he may manifest the god.” On the concept of the manifestation of Egyptian gods, see Baines 1998: 21–22.

Schweitzer 1956: 58; Bell 1997: 140. Bell 1985: 258: (“[sc. the pharaoh] actually becomes divine only when he becomes one with the royal ka, when his human form is overtaken by this immortal element ... This happens at the climax of the coronation ceremony, when he assumes his rightful place on the ‘Horus-throne of the living’”). For the king made divine by the royal ka at the coronation, see the analysis by Bell (1985: 266–267 and 1997: 173) of the iconography in the “chamber of the divine king” (the so-called Roman vestibule) of the Luxor temple.


Koenen 1993: 38.
a man of Libyan ethnic origin and one of the more powerful Assyrian vassals at Sais, reunited Egypt under the 26th Dynasty (664–525). This period of independence was terminated by the invasion of Cambyses (525).\(^{49}\)

But the years of political fragmentation, civil war and foreign occupation shook the resolute earlier belief in pharaoh’s infallibility and his dependable maintenance of maat. One consequence of this, from the eighth century onwards, was the increasing use of oracles to confirm the king’s legitimacy, since a number of dynasties were descended from foreigners, particularly Libyans, rather than native Egyptians.\(^{50}\)

The period during which the Persian kings occupied the throne of Horus (525–404 and 343–332 BC) provoked a native backlash in some circles. Given that the new Achaemenid kings did not reside in Egypt, priestly biographical inscriptions in this time reveal a new emphasis on the priests as mediators between the gods and the pharaoh, an innovation which weakened the king’s previous claim to this role.\(^{51}\) Indeed, by Graeco-Roman times the priests even appear to have usurped the king’s role in some religious matters.\(^{52}\) More troubling still was the behaviour of collaborators amongst the Egyptian elite who did the bidding of foreign rulers; their very existence also revealed that the sacred kingship had been deprived of its previous power and force.\(^{53}\)

The upshot of all these developments was a schism in Egyptian thought about the nature of kingship.\(^{54}\) On the one hand, the temples with their reliefs and hieroglyphic

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\(^{50}\) Baines 1994: 35: “[by] the Third Intermediate Period, kingship and succession may have been more directly dependent on gods and oracles.”

\(^{51}\) Otto 1954: 115–118. It appears that the kings of the 26th Dynasty had still performed temple rituals personally (Pressl 1993: 233), but this obviously ceased from 525 BC.

\(^{52}\) Otto 1964: 67–74; Hölbl 2001: 89. This development is illustrated by the tomb biography of Petosiris, the chief priest of Thoth at the temple of Hermopolis. In his biography, Petosiris reports that he built a temple of Re and performed the foundation ceremony himself (“to stretch the cord” in the Egyptian idiom), a task normally undertaken by the pharaoh: “I stretched the cord, released the line, to found the temple of Re in the park. I built it of fine white limestone, and finished with all kinds of work” (Biography of Petosiris, lines 33–51; trans. Lichtheim 1980: 44–48).

\(^{53}\) Huss 1997: 131–143.

propaganda continued to express age-old ideas about royal ideology. On the other hand, there arose a nationalist literature in response to political events and the weakness of the native kings, which was also fuelled by the humiliation of the Egyptians under their Assyrian, Persian and later Macedonian conquerors. In this literature, which surely reflected the disillusion of the elite and priestly classes, we find a strong critique of kingship and a weakening of traditional beliefs about the functions and legitimacy of kings, particularly foreign rulers of Egypt.

Foremost amongst the tales and religious writings penned by Egyptian chauvinists were the *Sesostris Romance*, the *Dream of Nectanebo*, the *Demotic Chronicle*, the *Prophecy of the Lamb* and the *Oracle of the Potter*. It is also widely accepted that nationalist stories from Egyptian Demotic literature are sources of the *Alexander Romance*’s legend of Alexander’s birth involving Nectanebo.

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57 This legend is attested mainly in the Classical sources (Hdt. 2.102–110; Strabo 16.4.4–7), and unfortunately only rarely in the Demotic literature (Jasnow 1997: 96). On the Sesostris myth generally, see H. Kees, *RE* II.A.2 (1923), s.v. “Sesostris,” 1861–1876; Lange 1954; Malaise 1966: 244–272. Lloyd (1982: 37–40) analyses the Sesostris myth as propaganda developed by Egyptian priests.
58 See Perry 1966 and Koenen 1985. The text is preserved on a number of papyri, including Pap. d’Anastasi 67 and P. Leiden I 396.
However, it is the *Demotic Chronicle* which sheds light on native Egyptian attitudes to kingship in the period before Alexander's conquest. The chronicle is a text on the recto of Papyrus 215 in the Bibliothèque Nationale; it was written in the first half of the third century BC at Memphis, but with traditions strongly connected with Heracleopolis. The content is a series of oracles and their interpretation, with reference to the late kings from Amyrtaeus to Nectanebo II (dynasties 28–30). Although some have seen an anti-Greek bias in the chronicle, others think its animus was mainly directed against the Persians. Paradoxically, Darius I's codification of Egyptian law provided a standard by which kings were judged in the *Demotic Chronicle*. The chronicle emphasises that only those rulers who follow the law will rule successfully. This concern is strikingly confirmed by Diodorus Siculus, who provides a Classical account of how the Egyptian kings were bound by law (1.70–71).

But most notably the *Demotic Chronicle* preserves negative traditions about a number of the last native pharaohs, many of whom are depicted as usurpers. The chronicle lays the blame for foreign control of Egypt—and the military failures of native pharaohs—on their transgressions of Egyptian law, as well as their impiety or illegitimacy. The *Demotic Chronicle* looks forward to a future righteous king from Heracleopolis, and some see in it a political “messianism,” the fervent longing for a native king who would liberate the land and rule justly.

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63 For the text and its translation in German, see Spiegelberg 1914.
65 Johnson (1983: 69): “as ruling kings of the Late Period less and less approached the ideal of kingship, moral claims on the king became very strong.” See also Ott 1954: 115–118.
66 On the authenticity of these traditions, see Burton 1972: 209–211. Diodorus used Hecataeus of Abdera’s treatise *On Egypt* as a source for Book 1 (see Jacoby’s commentary to Hecataeus of Abdera, *FGrH* 264 F 25); Hecataeus wrote his work in Egypt under Ptolemy I and claimed knowledge of priestly records and informants (Murray 1970: 143–151). Murray (1970: 156–157) sees the emphasis on law as a theme which the Theban priesthood transmitted to Hecataeus (“this section was inspired by Theban priests, and represents a highly idealised version of a past whose closest approach to reality lay in the rule of the High priest over Upper Egypt from the Twenty-first Dynasty”).
The chronicle also emphasises that a proper coronation is necessary for the pharaoh to ensure his legitimacy. A typical statement illustrating this is made by Nectanebo I, who appears in the chronicle and makes the following statements:

“I have appeared in the golden crown; it will not be removed from my head.”
“My coronation robes are on me; they will not be removed.”

These ideas are unquestionably references to the regalia with which the pharaoh was enthroned at his coronation (Johnson 1983: 67). Clearly, royal legitimacy depended on the assumption of such regalia with the correct rituals and ceremonies. This Egyptian sentiment has implications for Alexander’s acceptance as king by the native priesthood (see subsection 3 below). Most importantly, the qualities that the chronicle lists as those necessary for a proper king include the curious idea that he should be a rm1-n1r (a “man of god,” “god-fearing”). That the pharaoh was described in such terms rather than as a god in the traditional sense suggests a weakening of the grandiose concept of the “divine” pharaoh so prominent in previous centuries (Baines 1995a: 42). Furthermore, priestly biographical inscriptions indicate that the power of the king was now felt to be merely “earthly” in relation to that of the gods. This reduction in pharaoh’s power in the religious realm led to the rise of the priesthood in sacred matters.

One can even postulate that this challenge to older pharaonic ideology partly inspired the “archaism” of the Saite Dynasty (26th Dynasty, 664–525 B.C.), a trend which saw the revival of Old and Middle Kingdom traditions in art, architecture, royal titulary, the language of inscriptions, and even orthography.

Although the pharaoh’s divinity was still a claim made in temple reliefs, the evidence indicates that late Egyptian kingship had become considerably more “secular”

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69 Otto 1954: 117: “there are some sources which clearly show that the power of the king is regarded as earthly when compared with the omnipotence of the gods” (“es gibt einige Stellen, die deutlich zeigen, dass gegenüber der Allmacht Gottes die Macht des Königs als irdisch empfunden wird”).
70 Onasch 1976: 139.
than in earlier periods. Some scholars have even taken a more radical view that contends that the late Egyptians no longer sincerely believed in the divine nature of the pharaoh. If we keep in mind the “schism” in Egyptian thought discussed above, this is not necessarily a contradictory conclusion. The timeless and formulaic claims made about the pharaoh in Egyptian temple propaganda could hardly be abandoned; but they perhaps became a fossilised relic of an earlier and more powerful Egyptian state. They existed alongside contemporary thought amongst Egyptian priests who took a much more prosaic view of the monarchy of their own era.

In light of these developments, it is perhaps not surprising that the idea of pharaoh’s divinity is infrequently attested in Classical sources. Most notably, Herodotus

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72 See Otto 1957: 193–207; Baines 1995a: 36–42; Delia 1993: 199. Kuhlmann 1988a: 152: “in the late period the identifiable conception of kingship was in no way based on the acknowledgment of the pharaoh as a god – which is especially relevant to the background of Alexander’s divinity – and accordingly in late Egyptian mammisi [i.e., shrines or “birth houses” dedicated to the birth or childhood of gods] [sc. the emphasis was] no longer on the celebration of the birth of a specified successor ... to the [sc. reigning] king, but on the worship of an actual divine child, whom the king on earth represented” (“basiert auch die spätzeitlich feststellbare – und damit für die Hintergründe von Alexanders Vergöttung besonders relevante – Vorstellung über das Königttum keineswegs auf einer Anerkennung Pharaos als Gott, und entsprechend wird in den spätägyptischen Mammisis denn auch nicht mehr die Geburt des ... zum Herrscher bestimmten Thronfolgers, sondern eines rein göttlichen Kindes gefeiert, welches der König auf Erden vertritt”).

73 Assmann 2002: 385: “The Egyptians [sc. of the late period] no longer viewed the king as the living embodiment of divine power, a living ‘token’ of the god Horus ... the priests had long since taken matters into their own hands. With their daily rituals, they ensured that the offering tables of the gods were never empty ... With the recitation of sayings against Seth and Apophis, they warded off any possibility of civil war or invasion by foreign foes .... The king’s sole responsibility was to provide the material basis for the priests’ service by means of temple construction and the provision of offerings.” Cf. Pressl (1993: 235): “the kings of the 26th Dynasty continued the relationship between the king and the gods, which had developed in the New Kingdom and was [sc. later] revived in the 25th Dynasty, through an emphasis on the divine sonship, divinity and ‘election’ [sc. of the king]. However, there is no evidence of the deification of the living king, as Wildung has established for the Ramessid rulers” (“[d]urch die Betonung der ‘Gottessoehnschaft,’ der ‘Gottahnlichkeit’ sowie der ‘Erwahlung’ führten die Konige der 26. Dynastie das Gott-König-Verhaltnis weiter, wie es sich im Neuen Re:ch herausgebildet hatte und auch in der 25. Dynastie wiederzufinden ist. Es liegt jedoch kein Beleg für eine Vergöttlichung des lebenden Königs vor, wie ihn Wildung für die Ramessiden konstatiert”).
knows nothing of the divine pharaoh in Book 2 of the *Histories*; he reports that the Egyptian priests insisted that no god had assumed human form in the three hundred and forty-one generations that had passed since the time of the first king of Egypt—a statement which some think directly contradicts the notion of pharaoh’s divinity. But even the ancient Egyptians recognised the difference between the cosmic gods and the pharaoh, who was thought of as a divine manifestation of Horus, rather than Horus himself. In fact, the clearest expression of pharaoh’s divinity in a Graeco-Roman source occurs in Diodorus Siculus. Writing as late as the first century BC, Diodorus has the following report:

καθόλου δέ φασι τοὺς Ἁγνυτίους ὑπὲρ τοὺς ἄλλους ἀνθρώπους εὐχαρίστως διακείσθαι πρὸς πᾶν τὸ εὐεργετοῦν, νομίζοντας μεγάλην ἐπικουρίαν εἶναι τῷ βίῳ τὴν ἁμοιβήν τῆς πρὸς τοὺς εὐεργέτας χάριτος· δὴν γὰρ εἶναι διότι πάντες πρὸς εὐεργεσίαν ὀρμήσουσι τούτων μάλιστα παρ’ οἷς ἂν ὅρωσι κάλλιστα θησαυρισθηκόμενας τὰς χάριτας. διὰ δὲ τὰς αὐτὰς αἰτίας δοκοῦσιν Ἁγνύττιοι τοὺς ἐναυτῶν βασιλεῖς προσκυνεῖν τε καὶ τιμᾶν ὡς πρὸς ἀλήθειαν ὄντας θεοὺς, ἁμα μὲν οὖν ἀνευ δαιμονίου τυφὸς προνοίας νομίζοντες αὐτοὺς τετευχέναι τῆς τῶν ὅλων ἔξοικας, ἁμα δὲ τοὺς βουλομένους τε καὶ δυναμένους τὰ μέγιστ' εὐεργετεῖν ἡγούμενοι θείας μετέχειν φύσεως (Diod. 1.90.2–3).

In general, they say that the Egyptians, above all other people, are inclined to be grateful for every benefaction, believing that the return of gratitude to benefactors is a great resource in life. For it is clear that all human beings will want to grant their benefactions mainly to those who they know will value the favours best. For these reasons the Egyptians appear to practise *proskynesis* before their kings, and honour them as being in truth gods, believing that they have not attained supreme power without the help of divine providence, and also that those who are willing to give the

74 Hdt 2.142. See the remarks of S. Burstein as quoted in Samuel 1993: 209.
75 Lloyd 1988b: 106; Baines 1995b: 123.
greatest benefactions and have to power to give such honours share in the divine nature.76

Curiously, Diodorus elsewhere contradicts himself, and asserts that the piety of Darius and his interest in Egyptian religion led to his being the first king to be honoured as a god by the Egyptians (1.95.5).77 There is another important observation to be made. The language of the passage (ἐὐεργέτας, ἐὐεργετεῖν) evokes Hellenistic ideas about deification. The motive given by Diodorus for divine honours seems remarkably Hellenistic, rather than Egyptian. The ruler cults of the Hellenistic age were very frequently inspired by the gratitude of cities and individuals in response to benefactions made by kings.78 We might legitimately wonder whether the passage has been inspired by the contemporary Hellenistic ruler cult. Above all, the passage was written in the first century BC, after centuries of Macedonian rule over Egypt. In the fifth and fourth centuries BC, it is unlikely that the ancient Greeks understood the notion of the ka divinity of the king, an idea which at any rate was mainly expressed in temple propaganda. It is also likely that Alexander was completely unaware of any tradition that the king of Egypt was held to be divine in some complex sense when he entered Egypt.

One can only conclude that in modern specialist studies in Egyptology the notion of the pure divinity of the pharaoh, particularly in the late period, is a somewhat outdated idea—but one which appears quite frequently in work on Alexander.79 Moreover, the relevance of pharaoh’s divinity, however it was understood, to that of Alexander is greatly overstated, and it was certainly to the Greek world that Alexander looked for inspiration in his later ideas about apotheosis.

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76 See Burton 1972: 261 for commentary.
77 Diod. 1.95.5: καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τηλικάκτης τυχεῖν τιμῆς ὁσθ’ ὕπο τῶν Αἰγυπτίων ἐμάντα μὲν θεον προσαγορεῦσθαι μόνον τῶν ἀπάντων βασιλέων, τελευτήσαντα δὲ τιμῶν τυχεῖν ἰσων τοῖς τό παλαιῶν νομιμότατα βασιλεύσαοι κατ’ Αἰγυπτον.
78 Chaniotis 2005: 442.
79 An important exception is Delia 1993: 199, with reference to the Ptolemaic kingship.
3. Alexander in Memphis

Alexander’s occupation of Egypt is traditionally thought to have been welcomed as a liberation by the native Egyptians. The Persian occupation of Egypt began in 525 with the conquest of Cambyses. The Achaemenids' rule had been intermittent, and it was broken, most notably, by a period of Egyptian independence from c. 405 to 343; this was terminated by the invasion of Artaxerxes III. Only some years before Alexander’s arrival, a revolt under the native prince Khabbash had been put down.80

After the siege of Gaza, Alexander could certainly pose as the liberator of Egypt from Persian despotism. The Macedonian occupation was made unusually easy by the withdrawal of Persian troops before Issus and the hostility of the Egyptians (Arr. Anab. 3.1.2). Alexander marched to Pelusium and, finding his fleet already at anchor in that city,81 was greeted by a multitude of assembled Egyptians hostile to the Persians; the last Persians were even faced with a native revolt (Cur., 4.7.1–4).

Alexander left Pelusium and went through the desert to Heliopolis (Arr. Anab. 3.1.3–4). The sources know of no significant acts during his brief visit to the city. From Heliopolis, it was but a short march to Memphis, the ancient Pharaonic capital.82 In the centuries before Alexander, Memphis had assumed preeminent status as a royal and priestly city—particularly with the presence of the Apis bull cult. Though the late kings resided at other sites (most notably Tanis and Sais), the Persian overlord of Egypt had his administrative seat at Memphis. The great treasury of Ptah at the city, for instance, was used by the Persians to store their gold payments.83 More importantly, it was also the site of the pharaoh’s coronation from the 25th Dynasty onwards; the priests at Memphis claimed the right to confer legitimate kingship on the new pharaoh.84

80 There is some dispute about the date of this revolt. Some prefer c. 342–338; others c. 338–336. See Briant 2002: 718 on this.
81 Arr. Anab. 3.1.1–2.
82 Strabo, Geog. 17.31: Μέμφις οὐτή, τὸ βασίλειον τῶν Ἁγνύπτων.
84 Redford 1986: 298.
Marching to Memphis, Alexander received the submission of the satrap Mazaces. In the city, Alexander sacrificed to Apis and other gods.\textsuperscript{85} This act was a strong attempt to win Egyptian support. The Greeks associated Apis with Epaphus,\textsuperscript{86} but to the Egyptians the Apis bull was considered an incarnation of the god Ptah.\textsuperscript{87} His cult was administered by the Memphite priests of Ptah’s great temple. Apis was also a royal god closely associated with the person of the pharaoh and the god Horus: his strength was likened to that of pharaoh and he was involved in the king’s sed festival, a ritual ceremony of rejuvenation. The bull even had its own ritual of succession.\textsuperscript{88} When it died, the bull was buried in a sacred necropolis and assimilated to Osiris.\textsuperscript{89} In the late period, Ptah came to usurp some aspects of the role that Amun-Re had played in earlier centuries as the royal god.\textsuperscript{90} Hence the tradition that Cambyses had killed the Apis bull was doubly repugnant to Egyptian thought, since the killing was an attack on both the god and the sacred position of the pharaoh.\textsuperscript{91}

U. Wilcken argued that Alexander’s respect for Apis was a royal sacrifice after the king’s coronation in the temple of Ptah.\textsuperscript{92} But, as we will see below, there are strong

\textsuperscript{85} \textit{Arr. Anab.} 3.1.4: ἀνεῖ ἐκεῖ τὸν τοῖς τε ἄλλοις θεοῖς καὶ τῷ Ἀπί. For commentary on this passage, see Bosworth 1980b: 262.
\textsuperscript{86} Hdt. 2.154.1: Ἅπις κατὰ τὴν Ἑλληνικὴν γλώσσαν ἐστὶ Ἐπαφός; 3.27.2: ὁ Ἅπις, τῶν Ἑλλήνων Ἐπαφὸς καλέοντος; 3.28.6.
\textsuperscript{87} Hornung 1982: 136.
\textsuperscript{88} See Diod. 1.85.4; Strabo 17.1.31. See also Kákosy 1990: 3; Mastrocinque 1987: 300; Burton 1972: 242–248.
\textsuperscript{89} See Strabo 17.31; Plut. \textit{De Is. et Os.} 362.b.12 = Phylarchus, \textit{FGrH} 81 F 78.5. On Apis in ancient literature and art, see \textit{LIMC} 2.1 (1984), 177–182, s.v. “Apis.”
\textsuperscript{90} Hölbl 2001: 80–81.
\textsuperscript{91} Mastrocinque 1987: 300–301: “Every dead Apis bull was assimilated to Osiris and every living Apis was considered an incarnation of Horus, the god of the royalty of the pharaoh .... Cambyses and Artaxerxes Ochus, in killing the Apis bull, destroyed an animal that, in the eyes of the Egyptians, was the incarnation of the god of Egypt’s sovereignty” (“Ogni Api defunto era assimilato ad Osiride e ogni Api vivente era considerate un’incarnazione di Horus, il dio della regalità del faraone .... Cambise ed Artaserse Oco, uccidendo il bue Api, stroncarono colui che, agli occhi degli Egiziani, era l’incarnazione del dio della sovranità sull’Egitto”).
\textsuperscript{92} Wilcken 1932: 115.
reasons for rejecting the view that Alexander was ever officially crowned as king of Egypt. A more credible view is that Alexander was aware of the traditions of Persian sacrilege and was quick to exploit this. The question of the veracity of Herodotus’ story about Cambyses’ sacrilege (Hist. 3.37) is a vexed one, since some argue that the alleged killing of the Apis bull is Egyptian propaganda. But even propaganda would have provided Alexander with ample justification for his actions. Moreover, Darius I did attempt to court Egyptian opinion by unusual respect for local religious traditions, perhaps in an effort to make amends for the offense caused by Cambyses; and Artaxerxes’ reconquest of Egypt in 343/2 BC involved further impieties and outrages to Egyptian national feeling. We are told that Artaxerxes also killed the Apis bull. In light of these traditions, Alexander drew attention to his public display of respect for the sacred animal that had become a symbol of Egyptian humiliation and subjection.

It may well be that Alexander had both the opportunity and interest to consult with the priests of the great temple of Ptah, and that they informed him of the actual royal ideology that was associated with the Apis bull. If the action allowed Alexander to pose as a legitimate king of Egypt as part of his ritual obligations, this was no doubt welcomed by him. But it is notable that the only other event in Memphis involving Alexander mentioned by the sources was an athletic and musical contest. It is surely correct that Alexander’s activities in Memphis were of an essentially Hellenic character, rather than inspired to any great degree by Egyptian rites or ceremonial.

Curtius (4.7.5) reports that Alexander took a journey to the interior of Egypt after his activities in Memphis:

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94 Polyainus, Strat. 7.11.7
95 Plut. Mor. 363c = Dinon, FGrH 690 F 21; Ael. VH 4.8; Nā 10.28.
96 Mastrocinque 1987: 293. The emperor Augustus later caused offense for failing to sacrifice to the Apis bull (Suet. Aug. 93), though later emperors were not so remiss (SHA Had. 12.1).
97 Cf. Goukowsky (1975: 267), who argued that, in sacrificing to Apis, Alexander intended to pose as pharaoh with the approval of the priests of Memphis.
98 Arr. Anab. 3.1.4. See Bloedow 1998, who argues that Alexander summoned the performers from Greece who attended these games in the aftermath of Issus.
99 Bosworth 1988a: 70.
a Memphi eodem flumine vectus ad interiora Aegypti penetrat compositisque rebus ita, ut nihil ex patrio Aegyptiorum more mutaret, adire Iovis Hammonis oraculum statuit.

He sailed by the same river from Memphis to the interior of Egypt, and after he settled matters accordingly so that he changed nothing from the ancestral customs of the Egyptians, he determined to go to the oracle of Jupiter Ammon.

This suggests an expedition via the Nile upstream to the region of Thebes, though no other source records the tradition, and its authenticity is hard to ascertain. 100

4. Alexander and Egyptian Coronation Rites

The question whether Alexander ever participated in an Egyptian succession ritual at Memphis is one directly addressed by revisionist scholarship. The fundamental attack on the orthodox view was a seminal article by S. M. Burstein (1991). Despite Burstein’s carefully argued critique, the notion of Alexander’s coronation at Memphis persists, even in specialist scholarship. 101 We are quite justified in another examination of this topic, in order to show how unconvincing is the standard view.

101 Wilcken 1932: 114 (“the Alexander Romance states that at Memphis Alexander was placed on a throne in the temple of Ptah and invested as king of Egypt. Suspicious as this authority is in itself, the idea at least might be accepted as historical”); Gyles 1959: 51; Parke 1967: 223; Milns 1968: 101; Hamilton 1969: 66–67; Green 1970: 269 (“So, on 14 November 332, the young Macedonian was solemnly instated as Pharaoh”); Lane Fox 1973: 196; Schachermeyr 1973: 236: “As ‘king of Upper and Lower Egypt,’ [sc. Alexander] ... was now called ‘the chosen one of Ra and beloved of Amun,’ .... It is thereby almost certain that Alexander was enthroned personally in ceremonial manner in the Ptah temple of Memphis” (“Als „König von Ober- und Unterägypten“ hieß [sc. Alexander] ... nun „der Erwählte des Ra und Geliebte des Amun,“ .... Es ist dabei fast gewiß, daß Alexander persönlich in feierlicher Weise im Ptahtempel von
In the centuries before Alexander’s conquest of Egypt, the pharaoh received his crown from the Memphite priests of Ptah in a formal ceremony.\textsuperscript{102} Strictly speaking, the coronation was distinct from the accession, the latter of which occurred on the day following the last king’s death.\textsuperscript{103}

Unfortunately, the coronation ceremony can only be reconstructed using sources from disparate periods, but mainly the New Kingdom.\textsuperscript{104} It should be stressed that what is known of the rite represents its “classical” form at the end of the second millennium. In view of the lengthy preparations involved, the coronation itself could occur sometime after the accession, usually at the beginning of the first winter month.\textsuperscript{105} The death of the king and his successor’s coronation were felt to break the cosmic $maat$, and even the unity of the two lands of Upper and Lower Egypt. On the day of the coronation, the king purified himself through a ritual of washing, with the priests representing the gods Horus and Thot. By means of this act, the king was infused with divine power from these gods. After this, the king was anointed with a number of sacred oils mixed with minerals such as red quartzite and olibanum, apparently to transfer ritually the power of the universe to...
him through such physical matter.\textsuperscript{106} There followed the rituals of clothing the king in royal garments. He then ascended the royal throne to receive his crowns, the most important of which were the white and red crowns (the crowns of Upper and Lower Egypt respectively, and combined as the double crown or the pschent). This was naturally the central element in the entire ceremony. In temple reliefs, the crowns were conferred on the king by the god Amun-Re, and this ritual effected a transformation of the king and imbued him with the royal ka, the force that was the divine element of his nature.\textsuperscript{107} The pharaoh also received other royal insignia, namely the crook (sceptre), flail, the atef, diadem, blue helmet, ibes (feather head-dress), and nemes (cope). Most importantly, the king’s official royal titulary was drawn up and proclaimed at the coronation.\textsuperscript{108}

Now the only source that refers to Alexander’s coronation is the 	extit{Alexander Romance}. A critical analysis of this source’s reliability does not inspire much confidence in its traditions. In the α and β recensions of the 	extit{Romance}, there are the following accounts:

(1) ἐπειδὴ δὲ εἰς τὴν Μέμφιν παρεγένετο, ἐνεθρόνιζον αὐτὸν εἰς τὸ τοῦ Ἡφαίστου ἱερὸν ἱεροστήριον καὶ ἐστόλιζον ὡς Ἁγύπτιον βασιλέα.

When [sc. Alexander] arrived at Memphis, they sat him in the sacred throne-room\textsuperscript{109} of Hephaestus (Ptah) and they dressed him in a robe, like an Egyptian king (1.34.2, α recension).\textsuperscript{110}

\textsuperscript{106} Bonheme and Forgeau 1988: 272.

\textsuperscript{107} Schweitzer 1956: 58; Barta 1975: 60–61; Hornung 1982: 142 (“[sc. Pharaoh] acquires his divinity only during the rituals of accession to the throne; from then on it is his ex officio”). The coronation rituals also included a ceremonial procession around the walls of Memphis (Montet 1964: 45). The coronation rituals were also repeated at the annual opet festival in Thebes in the temple of Luxor (Bell 1997: 173).

\textsuperscript{108} Montet 1964: 42.

\textsuperscript{109} This appears to be the meaning of ἱεροστήριον, rather than merely “throne” (LSJ, suppl. 153, s.v. ἱεροστήριον).

\textsuperscript{110} I quote the Greek text of the α recension from the critical edition of Kroll 1926: 37–38, which was based on MS A, as well as the Armenian version and the Latin translation of Julius Valerius. Unless otherwise stated, citations of the 	extit{Alexander Romance} below follow the edition of Kroll and his system of numbering for textual references. The textual and manuscript problems of the 	extit{Alexander Romance} are complex.
(2) καὶ ἐλθόντος αὐτοῦ εἰς Μέμφις τὴν πόλιν ἐνεδρονίσασαν αὐτὸν οἱ Ἀλγυπτιοῖ εἰς τὸ τοῦ Ἡφαίστου θρονιστήριον ὡς Ἀλγυπτιοῦ βασιλέα.

When [sc. Alexander] came to the city of Memphis, the Egyptians sat him in the throne-room of Hephaestus like an Egyptian king (1.34.2–3, β recension).\textsuperscript{111}

But no other source knows of this event. Arrian and the Vulgate are silent, and we can have but little faith in the Pseudo-Callisthenes’ Romance. As has been noted above, the Alexander Romance preserves nationalist Egyptian traditions about the Macedonian king.\textsuperscript{112} These stories presumably circulated amongst the Egyptian middle and lower classes, but were composed by Egyptian priests literate in both the Greek and Egyptian languages.\textsuperscript{113} The legend that the last native pharaoh Nectanebo fathered Alexander (1.1–14), for instance, is surely an example of this.\textsuperscript{114} A notably authentic element in the

\textsuperscript{111} The Greek text of the β recension follows Bergson 1965.

\textsuperscript{112} The earliest version of the Romance was composed in Egypt (Stoneman 1994: 122; Barns 1956: 29–36).

\textsuperscript{113} See Ruiz-Montero 1996: 72–73. For the use of Greek by Egyptian scribes, see Clarysse 1993: 186–201.

\textsuperscript{114} For the nature of the sources from which the Nectanebo story derives, see the basic studies of Merkelbach 1954: 57–60; Frazer 1972: 680–681; Merkelbach and Trumpf 1977: 77–83; Merkelbach 1978: 602–618; Pfister 1976: 35–51; Macuch 1989: 503–511; and Lloyd 1982: 47–50. Berg (1973: 381–387) postulated a Hellenistic “Alexandrian novel” behind the Nectanebo episode, whose purpose was to establish the legitimacy of both Ptolemy and Alexander as kings in Egypt (Berg 1973: 387; cf. Payne 1991: 154–181). If true, native Egyptian legends can easily have been an earlier source of this novel. See Lloyd 1982: 47–48: “[sc. the Nectanebo] episode looks very Egyptian indeed. Pharaoh was a master of rituals; Nectanebo is a master magician. Even more obvious is the fact that the details of Alexander’s conception closely reflect the Egyptian myth of the theogamy .... The most obvious explanation of this amalgam is that the starting point was a theogamy asserting that Alexander was the son of Nectanebo and that this ... was elaborated by a series of accretions, probably at various times, before being pressed into service by the author of the Romance.” Additional linguistic evidence for this thesis is adduced by Jasnow 1997: 95–103. See also
Nectanebo story is the use of certain types of magic, typical for Egyptian priests, sages and miracle-workers.\textsuperscript{115} Even a linguistic case can be made that the language of Demotic literature was translated into Greek in this section of the \textit{Alexander Romance}.\textsuperscript{116}

Now the relevant passage of the \textit{Romance} describing Alexander in Memphis (1.34) is arguably the denouement of the introductory story involving Nectanebo; at any rate, it is undoubtedly closely related to this earlier passage. I would suggest that Alexander’s coronation was yet another nationalist tradition that arose in a period after his conquests, at a time when Egyptians wished to claim the great Macedonian king as their own. The main theme present in this section of the \textit{Romance} supports this idea. Immediately after the coronation, the \textit{Romance} speaks of Alexander recognising his father in a black stone statue of Nectanebo (1.34.3–4); it emerges that the king’s arrival in Egypt was predicted by a native oracle, and that he is not just Nectanebo’s son, but in some sense a \textit{second} Nectanebo returned to his fatherland. Alexander’s conquest of Egypt is divine revenge on the Persians, Egypt’s bitter enemies (1.34.5). As their instrument of vengeance against foreigners, Egyptian tales gave to Alexander a royal father in Nectanebo and a fictitious coronation ceremony, in order to demonstrate that he was a legitimate pharaoh.\textsuperscript{117} But the \textit{Alexander Romance}’s traditions should not be regarded as serious history.

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\textsuperscript{115} Budge 1901: 91–97 and Ritner 1993: 219. These elements include the use of wax figures for divination and astrological elements.

\textsuperscript{116} Jasnow 1997: 95–103. Jasnow argues that a confused translation of the Demotic verb \textit{phr} (“to enchant, charm”) from a written text may explain the obscure Greek participle \textit{συγκλονήσας} present in the \textit{Romance}’s description of Alexander’s birth. Jasnow (1997: 101) concludes that “in the century after Alexander’s conquests, Egyptian scribes were circulating written tales about Nectanebo and his fathering of Alexander.” On Alexander’s connection with Sesostris in Egyptian stories, see Murray 1970: 163.

\textsuperscript{117} See Pfister (1976: 48), who implies that the coronation is fiction, but does not state it explicitly. Recently, G. Hölbl (1997: 26) has even argued that this passage refers to an accession rather than an actual coronation, even though the report has been taken as evidence for a coronation by numerous scholars (“[nach] dem vorhandenen Wortlaut ist bloß von einer Thronbesteigung die Rede und nicht von einer
What then should be made of the undeniable fact that Alexander had an official royal titulature used in Egyptian monuments, inscriptions and papyri? In these inscriptions and other documents, an abbreviated royal titulary is attested, with (1) a Horus name, (2) praenomen (throne name) and (3) a proper name. Variants occur in Alexander’s Horus name and his praenomen—and this is not insignificant. The following forms occur in the king’s royal style:

Horus name: (1) mk-Kmt (“the one who defends Egypt”); (2) ḫq3-qnj (“the one who offers”); (3) ḫq3-qnj-itn-h3swt (“the ruler who attacks foreign countries”);

Praenomen (throne name): (1) ‘lksndsrs (“Alexander”); (2) stp-n-R*mjr-Jmn (“the chosen one of Re, one beloved by Amun”).

Personal name: (1) ‘lksndsrs (“Alexander”).

As Burstein (1991: 140–141) has pointed out, these official throne names only demonstrate that Alexander was accepted as king by the Egyptian priesthood, not that he was formally crowned. The variation in Alexander’s Horus name is important, because other uncrowned pharaohs of the first millennium BC also had this variation in their titulary. The fact that Alexander’s titulature was irregular before a fixed style appeared strongly suggests that there was no carefully composed titulature after a formal coronation, since the titulary was drawn up as a precondition for the ceremony. The Kronung”). On the important distinction between the two rituals, see the discussion of the coronation above.


Burstein 1991: 142. See also Höbl 1997: 26, who notes that the formulation of an official titulature was a prerequisite for a coronation, and that Alexander had no time for a complete coronation ceremony (“[eine] im Winter 332/11 v. Chr. real durchgeführte Krönung hätte sicher die Abfassung einer pharaonischen Titulatur für Alexander zur Voraussetzung gehabt; vermutlich nahm sich der hektische Alexander für ein umfassendes Krönungsfest einfach keine Zeit”).
irregularities are no doubt explained by early local freedom, or confusion, in priestly circles as to the exact content of Alexander’s royal style. More importantly, Alexander’s personal name was originally used as his praenomen, a unique state of affairs (Burstein 1991: 143–144).

Alexander may possibly have given some thought to the initial composition and content of his royal names, no doubt in consultation with the Memphis priesthood. The extraordinary appearance of Amun in the praenomen of Alexander’s titles was something rarely seen in three centuries. But as this appeared in the developed form of his titles it was most probably the priests who decided to stress his connection with Amun, just as they may have attempted to connect Alexander with Nectanebo. One element of Nectanebo’s Horus name was mk-Kmt (“one who protects Egypt”), which also appears as the corresponding name of Alexander’s royal style. Yet another of Alexander’s Horus names (tkn-h3swt, “who attacks foreign countries”) appears in the two ladies name of Nectanebo. Most importantly, other foreign kings of Egypt also had their titulatures devised by Egyptian priests: Cambyses, for instance, used the services of Udjahorresne, a priest and courtier, to create his pharaonic titles. Furthermore, throughout the period of Persian rule, although the Great Kings were honoured by Egyptian natives with the customary titulature, no evidence exists that any Achaemenid king was formally crowned pharaoh. Foreign conquerors of Egypt did not necessarily desire such rituals.

Recently, B. Menu has argued that Petosiris, possibly the chief priest of Thot at Hermopolis under Alexander, together with other elite priests, persuaded Alexander to undergo a coronation and to exploit the traditional pharaonic ideology. But, although

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125 Briant 2002: 473.
126 Menu 1998: 262; “Petosiris, his colleagues at Thebes, and other priests ... very likely urged Alexander the Great to have himself crowned, in order to draw from the event the quintessential [sc justification] for his power [sc. which was] legitimised and actively represented in the main sanctuaries of the royal temples” (“Petosiris,
the reliefs of Alexander's Theban shrines do indeed show scenes of a ritual coronation, this can only have been temple propaganda, a fiction of the Theban priesthood, just as Roman emperors were later to receive similar temple scenes.\textsuperscript{127}

This is supported by the failure of the early Ptolemies to receive an official coronation. Although some have thought that the Ptolemies were crowned as pharaohs at Memphis, the evidence for this is not particularly strong.\textsuperscript{128} The early Ptolemies certainly took part in Egyptian religious rites in temples and received pharaonic titulature with increasingly elaborate epithets,\textsuperscript{129} but it was Ptolemy V (205/4–180) who was the first king known to have been crowned as pharaoh at Memphis. This event is explicitly mentioned in the Rosetta Stone, the decree of the priestly synod held in 196 at Memphis. The Rosetta Stone records the honours passed by the synod to the king, including statues


\textsuperscript{128} In the absence of hard evidence on this point, numerous conjectures have been made. Hölbl (1997: 27) assumes that Ptolemy I was the first to undergo a coronation, but Koenen (1993: 71) argues that both Alexander and the Ptolemies were formally crowned, and that the Ptolemies usually received the crown in January or the Egyptian month of Hathyr (Koenen 1993: 71–81). In contrast to this, W. Peremans (1987: 337–343) proposed that Ptolemy II Philadelphus first decided to participate in the native coronation rituals in order to win over the Memphite priesthood and the Egyptian elite, whose support was needed for the king’s expensive and ambitious foreign policy (see also Quaegebeur 1971: 245, n. 41; Koenen 1977: 58; Heinen 1978: 193, n. 34; Mooren 1983: 208, n. 10). In the opinion of Peremans (1987: 337–338), the expression \(\tau\alpha\nu\omicron\mu\iota\zeta\omicron\epsilon\nu\alpha\tau\iota\pi\alpha\rho\alpha\lambda\iota\phi\iota\epsilon\iota\varsigma\beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\epsilon\iota\alpha\varsigma\) (“the traditional rites for the succession to the kingdom”) in the Rosetta stone indicates that Ptolemy V was not the first of the dynasty to be crowned at Memphis. However, this expression probably referred to the age-old coronation rites, the records of which were preserved in the “house of life” in the temple of Ptah, without reference to any earlier Ptolemy (Crawford 1980: 18, n. 4). Furthermore, the five-fold official titulature borne by Philadelphus (Koenen 1977: 58) does not necessarily prove that the king had been crowned, as these titles can easily have been composed by the priests.

\textsuperscript{129} Hölbl 2001: 80.
and shrines in the major temples. On these shrines were to be placed ten golden royal crowns and

\[ \varepsilon\sigma\tau\alpha i \delta' \alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\omicron\upsilon \varepsilon \tau\omicron \mu\acute{e} \sigma\varphi \iota \kappa \alpha\lambda\omicron\omicron\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron \nu \Pi\chi\epsilon\nu\tau \beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\epsilon\alpha, \eta \pi\epsilon\rho\iota\beta\epsilon\mu\epsilon\nu\omicron\nu \varepsilon \iota\sigma\heta\lambda\theta\epsilon\nu \varepsilon \iota \upsilon \varepsilon \mu\epsilon\phi\epsilon \iota \iota \rho\omicron\nu, \omicron\rho\omicron\upsilon\sigma \varepsilon \alpha \iota \tau\omicron \sigma \omicron \tau\omicron \epsilon \lambda\omicron\omicron \sigma \nu \mu\iota\zeta \omicron\omicron\nu \eta \tau\omicron \pi\alpha\rho\alpha\lambda\iota\psi\epsilon\iota \tau\omicron \pi\alpha\lambda\iota \psi\epsilon \tau \eta \varsigma \beta\alpha\sigma\iota\lambda\epsilon\alpha. \]

in the middle of them shall be the crown called \textit{pschent}, wearing which [sc. Ptolemy] entered the temple in Memphis, in order to perform the rites for the succession to the kingdom.\(^{130}\)

Thus Ptolemy V had assumed the double-crown (\textit{pschent} crown) of Upper and Lower Egypt in the Memphite temple of Ptah, on 26 March 196.\(^{131}\) Some have thought that the Ptolemaic monarchy was increasingly “Egyptianised” after the military and political problems of the late third century. On this view, the adoption of Egyptian ceremonies was a sign of weakness rather than strength.\(^{132}\) At least one later king followed the example of Ptolemy V. Diodorus (33.13.1) reports that Ptolemy VIII was crowned according to Egyptian ritual, but there is no compelling evidence that the early Ptolemies ever were.\(^{133}\) There is, furthermore, no reason to suppose that Alexander had demanded the rite in 332.

Alexander no doubt won a degree of acceptance from the Egyptian clergy. A small but interesting number of Egyptian monumental works, as well as portraiture,\(^{134}\) survive from Alexander’s reign.

\(^{130}\) For the complete Greek text, see \textit{OGIS} 1.90. For English translations, see Quirke and Andrews 1988 and Bagnall and Derow 2004: 269–273.


\(^{134}\) A unique statue survives which portrays Alexander with the official costume and insignia of the pharaoh. The statue, which is nearly lifesize, was made of granite and is 1.62 metres high. It was very probably sculpted in Alexander’s own lifetime, or soon afterwards (Bol 2001: 66). Although the statue has the characteristics of the pharaoh, it was probably influenced by a Greek sculpture, in that it shows \textit{individual} traits of the king. Egyptian pharaonic portraiture tends to conform to an ancient and generic ideal
Most notably, the only Egyptian monument known to have been founded directly by Alexander was a temple to Isis, but in Alexandria, rather than in the ancient cities of Thebes or Memphis (Arr. *Anab.* 3.1.5). Of the buildings constructed or renovated in Alexander’s name, but probably not *directly* ordered by him, the most important are the two chapels from the Luxor and Karnak temples in Thebes.\(^{135}\)

At Luxor, in the great New Kingdom temple of Amun-Re and the royal *ka*, a sanctuary of the god Amun built by Amenhotep III was rebuilt in Alexander’s name.\(^{136}\) In the central shrine of the chamber, the restoration removed the four pillars enclosing the area where the barque and sacred statue of Amun-Re stood during the annual *opet* festival.\(^{137}\) In their place, an inner sanctuary was constructed, with reliefs on the inner and outer walls. Here Alexander is represented performing cult acts before Amun-Re, and is given the usual pharaonic epithets and titles. On the inner east wall of the Luxor shrine, Alexander appears in the two feathers crown and ram’s horns, before the gods Amun-Re

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\(^{135}\) Blyth 2006: 225–226. Construction in Alexander’s name is also attested at (1) the temple of Hermopolis Magna under the supervision of the priest Petosiris (Snape and Bailey 1988: 2–3; Menu 1998: 252); (2) the Karnak temple in inscriptions on the fourth pylon (Porter *et al.* 1972: 79; Barguet 1962: 90); and (3) Qasr el-Migysbah in the oasis of Bahariya (for a survey of the latter site and archaeological background, see Aufrère *et al.* 1994b: 136–137, with a reconstruction of the building). The Bahariya oasis was located to the southeast of Siwa on an ancient caravan route from the Mediterranean to the Nile valley (Fakhry 1974: 22–28; Giddy 1987: 161–163). The temple complex at the site is the only surviving structure in the western desert built in Alexander’s name. Most recently, the building has been identified as a caravanserai with an attached sanctuary, rather than a temple proper. Importantly, the building was dedicated to Ammon; it contained forty-five rooms (Colin 1997: 91–96), as well as an image of Alexander and his cartouches, and a representation of the governor of the oasis. According to Ptolemy, Alexander supposedly returned directly from Siwa to Memphis (Arr. *Anab.* 3.4.5), and the oasis of Bahariya would presumably have been part of his route. This has led some to suggest that Alexander may have ordered the construction of this curious serai, to facilitate trade from the coast of Cyrene to the interior (see Aufrère *et al.* 1994b: 136). However, the veracity of Ptolemy’s report has been called into question (Borza 1967; cf. Bosworth [1980b: 274], who thinks that Arrian simply misinterpreted Ptolemy). We cannot rule out local initiative on the part of the oasis’ governor to account for this building activity.

\(^{136}\) For the fundamental study of the Luxor shrine, see Abd El-Raziq 1984. See also Stewart 1993: 174–178.

\(^{137}\) On this barque sanctuary of Amun-Re, see Bell 1997: 156.
and Khonsu-Thot. He is addressed as "the king of Upper and Lower Egypt, the lord of both lands, the chosen one of Re, one beloved by Amun (stp-n-R₉'mrj-Jmnn), the son of Re, the lord of crowns, Alexander, given life." The king's divinity is naturally an aspect of this temple propaganda. Typical proclamations of Alexander's divine kingship include the following:

"the perfect god, the lord of both lands, Alexander" (outer east wall of the Alexander chapel, first register, first relief; Abd El-Raziq 1984: 11).

"he is the perfect god, the lord of ceremonies, Alexander, [who has] appeared as king of Upper and Lower Egypt on the [Horus] throne of the living" (outer east wall, second register, second relief; Abd El-Raziq 1984: 16).

"the perfect god, the lord of both lands, the chosen one of Re, one beloved by Amun (stp-n-R₉'mrj-Jmnn), the lord of crowns, Alexander, given life like Re" (outer east wall, third register, fifth relief; Abd El-Raziq 1984: 22).

"he lives as the perfect god, great in power, the lord of both lands, one beloved by Amun (stp-n-R₉'mrj-Jmnn), the lord of crowns, Alexander" (outer east wall, first register, fifth relief; Abd El-Raziq 1984: 14).

The expression "perfect god" (n₁ṛ nfr) can also be translated as the "good god" or "minor god," and appears to have contrasted the king's lesser divinity with that of the great cosmic deities. The priests who supervised the construction of the shrine obviously continued ancient traditions by expressing the king's divinity in terms familiar from the New Kingdom. Thus it was the king's royal ka that made him divine and "a perfect god,"

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138 Abd El-Raziq 1984: 45, with pl. 14a. I have given English translations of these temple texts from the German edition of Abd El-Raziq 1984. See also the speech of Amun-Re on the outer west wall: "Amun-Re Kamutef, the lord of heaven, the king of the gods, the great god, says: 'I have given you [sc. Alexander] my office and my throne'" (third register, sixth relief; Abd El-Raziq 1984: 35).

not his nature or birth. But these ideas were clearly an idealised statement of royal ideology from the Theban establishment, because Alexander was uncrowned and, strictly speaking, had not been imbued with the royal ka formally and legitimately by ritual. Moreover, that Alexander himself knew of the shrine or its pronouncements is rather unlikely.

The Luxor chapel is paralleled by a renovated sanctuary partly decorated in Alexander's name in the temple of Karnak. In this chapel, which contains reliefs reused from the time of Thutmose III, Alexander is depicted purifying the god Amun-Re with sacred water from a nemset vase; he also offers four jars of incense to the god and is shown with a Nile god in a list of offerings. But this chapel appears to have been part of a general restoration of the temple carried out in Alexander's time; it is highly doubtful whether the king himself ordered it or was informed about its content. Fundamentally, as in Luxor, Alexander's divinity is expressed in the traditional manner. It is not the

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136 This fact is overlooked by Stewart 1993: 178 (“[sc. Alexander] had evidently convinced [sc. the priests] that ... he had restored the traditional Egyptian system, [sc. and] was thoroughly imbued with the royal ka, and so had earned their recognition as pharaoh”).

141 Badian 1996: 14. Cf. Bell 1985: 270: “Alexander’s activities in Luxor undoubtedly reflect an awareness that his legitimacy as an Egyptian ruler depended on his formal acceptance there by Amun-Re during the Opet Festival.” On the contrary, the construction of the shrine and its content, which were of course designed to legitimise the king's rule, can be ascribed to the Theban priesthood.


143 Martinez 1989: 114: “However, it now seems correct that Alexander the Great's sanctuary situated in the very heart of the Akhmenou of Thutmose III cannot really be considered as a complete creation of the Macedonian sovereign. It is in fact part of a total restoration of the monument, a renovation ... as the dedication text clearly indicates; ... Only the pharaoh's name and the style of the sculpture itself underwent notable changes, but that did not change anything in the liturgical function of the building” (“Il semble cependant maintenant acquis que le sanctuaire d'Alexandre le Grand situé au coeur même de l'Akhmenou de Thoutmosis III ne peut réellement être considéré comme une création complète du souverain macédonien. Il s'agit en fait d'une réfection totale du monument, une rénovation ... comme l'indique clairement le texte de dédicace; ... Seuls le nom du pharaon et le style même de la sculpture ont subi des altérations marquantes, mais cela ne changeait en rien le rôle liturgique même de cet édifice”).
human person of the king who is divine, but the royal *ka* (*nswt k3 ʾnḥ*), a living manifestation or hypostasis (*ba*) of Amun-Re.  

But we should be careful not to exaggerate the extent to which the priestly classes embraced their new foreign rulers. We should firstly note that Egyptian royal ideology strictly required a new king to maintain the cosmic *maat*. Priestly opinion about Alexander's kingship may well have been divided.

The evidence of the royal titulature given to Macedonian rulers can be read in different ways. Philip Arrhidæus had the expression *ḥq3-h3swt* ("ruler of foreign lands") in his two ladies name; this was a title given to the despised Asiatic Hyksos kings of Egypt, and could also be used to describe the Persian kings. Hölbl argues that the priests who devised this title secretly meant to associate Philip with the notorious Hyksos usurpers and foreigners who once ruled Egypt. Moreover, priestly tradition known to Diodorus Siculus held that many institutions of Egypt were changed by the conquest of the Macedonians who finally destroyed the kingship of the native line. Above all, the

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144 Martinez 1989: 116: "In Karnak, the lintel of Alexander's sanctuary clearly shows that the royal *ka*, the *nswt k3 ʾnḥ*, is an integral part, by its presence in the Enead, of the theological components of Amun. The theological program that found its origins in the complex religious thought that took place under Hatshepsut and Thutmose III is clear: the *nswt k3 ʾnḥ* is a direct emanation of Amun that infuses the terrestrial king with his right to govern. The representations of the temple of Taharqa ... and the temple of Opet in Karnak even show it as the sixth of the ten *bas cʾ* Amun" ("A Karnak, le linteau du sanctuaire d'Alexandre montre clairement que le Ka royal, *nswt k3 ʾnḥ*, est partie intégrante, par sa présence dans l'Ennéade, des composantes théologiques d'Amon. Le programme théologique qui doit trouver ses origines dans les réflexions religieuses complexes qui prirent place sous les règnes d'Hatshepsout et de Thoutmosis III, est clair: le *nswt k3 ʾnḥ* est une émanation directe d'Amon qui insuffle au roi terrestre son droit à gouverner. Les représentations du temple de Taharqa ... et du temple d'Opet à Karnak le montrent même comme le sixième des dix Ba d'Amon").

145 On the Hyksos rule over Egypt, and the vehemently hostile Egyptian traditions concerning them, see Redford 1991: 98–129.


147 Diod. 1.95.6: ἐν δὲ τοῖς ὑστερον χρόνοις πολλὰ τῶν καλῶς ἔχειν δοκοῦτων νομέων φασὶ κινηθήναι, Μακεδόνων ἐπικρατησάτων καὶ καταλαυσάτων εἰς τέλος τὴν βασιλείαν τῶν
later Ptolemies always thought of themselves as Macedonians (Paus. 10.7.8). That there
was any rapport between the new Macedonian kings and the Egyptian elite is not very
credible.

Later Egyptian nationalist literature evinces a strong hostility to foreign rulers. However grateful the Egyptians were to be liberated from Persian occupation, to many
priests and Egyptian elites, Alexander was, I would suggest, merely the latest in a long
line of foreign usurpers, with little claim to the age-old royal titles and formal beliefs
about the divine nature of pharaoh. We have, furthermore, seen that these very ideas
about pharaoh’s divinity were weakened in the Saite and Persian periods. The existence
of such claims in temple reliefs and inscriptions does not necessarily prove that there was
a strong and sincere belief in Alexander’s divinity from the Egyptian elite. Given that the
Demotic Chronicle insists that a formal and proper coronation is necessary for a
legitimate king of Egypt, and that this very ritual is what had effected the transformation
of the king from mortal to divine being, Alexander’s failure to undergo such a ritual
surely undermined his position as king in priestly circles. He may well have attracted the
same contempt from Egyptian nationalists that other foreign kings suffered.

The precise significance of Egyptian notions of kingship for the young
Macedonian is hard to gauge. It is not inconceivable that the priests did proskynesis to
Alexander as matter of course, since Diodorus (1.90.2–3) informs us that this was their
custom. But even in Egyptian thought it appears that a divine birth did not by itself make
one a god or divine being; rather, the coronation ceremony had conferred divine power
on the king.148 It was years before Alexander made any attempt at demanding divine
honours, and this was not derived from the Egyptian notion of the god king.

However, the idea that Alexander was the son of Zeus-Ammon must have had
immediate appeal. It is to this momentous subject that we now turn.

148 Hornung 1982: 142. One could also observe that, for Alexander, acceptance of Egyptian ideology might
have led to the absurd idea that the Persian kings who ruled Egypt before him could also have claimed
divinity as pharaohs. I doubt whether Alexander ever imagined that Darius III was divine, merely because
he had been king of Egypt.
5. The Visit to Siwah and the Return to Memphis

In the Egyptian theory of kingship, the pharaoh was understood to be the son of the god Re. By the New Kingdom period, however, religious syncretism had allowed the identification of Re with the local Theban god Amun. The composite deity Amun-Re had then developed into the national god of Egypt, and even to the position of “king of the gods.”

A new element in royal ideology from the New Kingdom stressed that Amun-Re was the physical father of the pharaoh, and that the god took human form to father him on the royal wife of his predecessor—a myth which was fostered by Hatshepsut, Amenophis III, Ramesses II and an unidentified pharaoh of the 21st or 22nd Dynasty.


151 The most famous example of this myth occurs in the so-called “divine birth-cycle” in the north portico reliefs of Hatshepsut’s mortuary temple at Deir el-Bahri (for text, translation, and commentary, see Brunner 1986). On the divine birth myth in general, see Brunner 1986; Bonheme and Forgeau 1988: 80–85; Silverman 1995: 71–72. The divine birth of the pharaoh appears to have arisen in times of crisis to bolster
This conception of a divine birth is obviously similar to the Greek idea of the divine origin of heroes. Though it is not unreasonable to assume that it continued as part of royal propaganda in the late period, the evidence for this is frustratingly scant. That Alexander was informed that the pharaoh was thought to be the son of Amun-Re can be easily accepted, but to what extent he was informed, if at all, of the divine birth idea is unknown, although it may well have appealed to him if he knew of it.

In the eighth or seventh century BC, an oracle of Ammon-Re was established at the oasis of Siwah. The temple at Siwah had come into prominence in the late period. Herodotus (2.54–57) knew the tradition that the oracle had been established from the great temple of Amun-Re at Thebes, and it is known that the Siwah oracle was patronised by the Egyptian state from the 26th Dynasty (c. 672–525). The pre-eminent temple at Aghurmi visited by Alexander was dedicated under Amasis (569–526).

The Greeks had no difficulty in equating Ammon-Re with Zeus, and knew the god as Zeus Ammon or Ammon (Ἀμώμοιος). The god Ammon appears in Greek coinage from Cyrene in the late sixth century. Pindar equates Ammon with Zeus. Herodotus, the legitimacy of the king (Frankfort 1948: 44–45; Berlev 1981: 367–370). See also Brunner (1986: 194–206), who concludes that the idea of the pharaoh’s divine conception arose before the New Kingdom (cf. Schweitzer 1956: 65). The Westcar Papyrus narrates the divine origin of the first three kings of the 5th Dynasty, but the papyrus itself was only written in the Hyksos period (Lorton 1979: 460). Kuhlmann (1988a: 149–151) argues that the divine birth motif was not understood in a literal sense: the “birth cycle” events, during which Amun-Re took the form of the pharaoh and visited the queen, were thought of as “an epiphany, an oracular dream or vision” of the god (“einer Epiphanie ... eines orakularen Traumgesichts” [Kuhlmann 1988a: 150]). Thus the human king, the earthly pharaoh and son of god, was still understood to be the physical father of the queen’s child. As noted above, divine birth did not make one a god in Egyptian thought.

154 Hdt. 4.181.3; Diod. 1.13.2; Arr. Ind. 35.8 = Nearchus, FGrH 133 F 1. See also Parke 1967: 203. On Alexander’s worship of Ammon as Zeus / Zeus Basileus, see Bosworth 1977: 52–56.
156 Head 1911: 865.
157 Pyth. 4.16; fr. 36 (Snell 1953).
in a myth concerning Croesus, attests to Greek familiarity with the oracle in the late fifth century.\footnote{Hdt. 2.57.3.} Cimon (Plut. *Cim.* 18.6–7) and Lysander (Plut. *Lys.* 25.3; Diod. 14.13.5) supposedly sought oracles at Siwah, as did Alcibiades before the Sicilian expedition (Plut. *Nic.* 13.1). Ammon’s cult also spread to the Greek mainland: a cult is attested at Thebes (Paus. 9.16.1) and in Sparta (Paus. 3.21.8). More importantly, a cult to Zeus Ammon was instituted in Aphytis in the Chalcidice after 405/4 BC.\footnote{On the site and the temple, see Hansen and Nielsen 2004: 825–826.} Lysander attacked the city, but broke off his siege after a dream from Zeus Ammon, an event which also caused the population of Aphytis to worship the Libyan god (Paus. 3.18.3). Their devotion to the god was said to be second only to that in Siwah itself,\footnote{Aπυταν δὲ τιμῶσιν Ἄμμωνα οὐδὲν ἥσσων ἢ οἱ 'Ἄμμωνιοι Αἰβών (Paus. 3.18.3; Plut. *Lys.* 20.5). See also Favorinus, fr. 96.8.24–28; Steph. Byz., *Eth.* 151.1–5, s.v. 'Ἀφύτη ἢ Ἀφύτες: “a city of Chalcidice of Thrace ... the city had a oracle of Ammon” (πόλις πρὸς τῇ Παλλήνη Ἐρώτης, ... ἐσχὲ δὲ ἢ πόλις μαντέτου Ἄμμωνος).} and they certainly struck coins to Ammon in the early fourth century BC.\footnote{E.g., a bronze coin with a three-quarter facing head of Zeus Ammon with horns, struck c. 360 BC (*SNG*, Part 7, Macedonia I [1987], no. 211; Sear 1978: 143, no. 1399; Mushmov 1912, no. 6142); a bronze coin struck c. 400–350 BC, with the head of Apollo and a horn of Ammon (*SNG*, Part 7, Macedonia I [1987], no. 214). Further examples include *SNG*, Part 7, Macedonia I (1987), nos 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220; Plant 1979, nos 1488, 1544, 2105. See also Gaebler 1906–1935: 44–46; Head 1911: 209–210; Head 1963: 61.} Alexander himself may have been familiar with the cult to Ammon at Aphytis, given its proximity to Macedonia.\footnote{Daskalakis 1967: 97; Bosworth 1988a: 71.} In fact, it is quite possible that the oracle of Ammon at Siwah was more highly regarded in Greece than in Egypt, since the city states of Athens and Sparta had consulted the oracle on political matters (Pl. *Aloc.* 2.148.d–e). Plato’s *Laws* (738.b–c) even notes that the Siwah oracle was considered as highly as those at Delphi and Dodona.\footnote{Parke 1967: 222. Cf. Daskalakis 1967: 94–96: “We can conclude from the accounts of Pausanias and Plutarch ... that, if not in the whole of Greece, at least in Sparta the oracle of Ammon had a place more or less equal to that of the most famous oracles of Greece, those of Dodona and Delphi” (“De ces récits de Pausanias et de Plutarque nous pouvons conclure ... que, sinon dans l’ensemble de la Grèce, du moins à Sparte, l’oracle d’Ammon avait une place à peu près égale à celle des oracles les plus renommés de Grèce, ceux de Dodone et de Delphes”).}
Alexander’s visit to Memphis surely led to some understanding of the ideological basis of Egyptian kingship. Hence the view that he journeyed to Siwah to obtain recognition as pharaoh has recently been suggested.\footnote{See Kuhlmann 1988: 154–156; Aufrère et al. 1994b: 149; Hölbl 2001: 10 (“the trip to Siwah was undertaken to have Alexander declared the son of Ammon and thereby legitimize the Egyptian regal titles soon to be conferred on him”).} But this thesis is not particularly convincing. The oracle of Siwah was famous in the Greek world through the Hellenic colonies in Cyrene, but in Egypt was probably a Libyan oracle of secondary importance—especially when compared with the native oracles in the Nile valley.\footnote{This is conceded by Kuhlmann 1988a: 154: “From the Egyptian point of view, Siwah was merely a friendly foreign country and its Amun temple at best a sanctuary of secondary rank, whose god also delivered oracles, which corresponded to practice at numerous other temples” (“Aus ägyptischer Sicht war Siwa lediglich befreundetes Ausland und sein Amuntempel bestenfalls ein Heiligtum zweiten Ranges, dessen Gott, wie es der Praxis an zahlreichen anderen Tempeln entsprach, auch Orakel verkündete”).} Indeed, in the late period, the oracle at Buto was probably far more respected in Egypt than that at Siwah.\footnote{The town’s oracle was of the goddess Wadjet/Buto, the tutelary goddess of lower Egypt, who was identified as Leto in Greek thought (K. Sethe, RE III.1 (1897), s.v. “Buto, 1,” 1086–1087. See Steph. Byz. Ethnica, s.v. Βούτω: ἄφ’ ἩΣ καὶ Ἡ Αἰτῶ Βούτω). For the oracle, see Hdt. 2.133; Strabo 17.1.18; Ael. VH 2.41. Kuhlmann 1988a: 154: “In the Nile valley itself in the late period, the oracle of the delta city of Buto seems to have enjoyed the best reputation, and was therefore visited by Cambyses” (“im Niltal selbst spätestens das Orakel der Deliustadt Buto den besten Ruf genossen zu haben scheint und daher auch von Cambyses besucht wurde”). On the site, see Aufrère et al. 1997: 287–288.} We do not need to posit that Alexander’s visit was an attempt to win over Egyptian sentiment by legitimizing his kingship in the Nile valley.

It is well known that the primary sources on Siwah have variant traditions. Arrian derived his information from Ptolemy and Aristobulus, and Strabo preserves an abbreviated account from Callisthenes of Olynthus.\footnote{See Pearson 1960: 33–36 on Strabo’s preservation of the fragment of Callisthenes’ history.} On the other hand, the Vulgate accounts of Curtius, Diodorus and Justin derive from Cleitarchus, but Plutarch’s account
makes use of composite sources. Notably, no source reports that Alexander’s journey was intended to justify his position as king of Egypt. We are explicitly told by Arrian that Alexander was inspired by a desire (πόθος) to visit Siwah (Arr. Anab. 3.3.1–2), and wished to consult the god on an unspecified matter, since the oracle was considered to be infallible. Secondly, he wished to emulate his ancestors Heracles and Perseus, a detail which was certainly reported by Callisthenes and which was possibly the official and public motive given for the journey. In addition, Alexander wanted to emulate his ancestors because he traced a part of his birth (τι ... γενέσεως) to Ammon. The traditions in Plutarch’s life of Alexander (Alex. 2–3) strongly suggest that this idea was not derived from the local Egyptian belief in the pharaoh as son of Amun-Re.

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168 'Επί τούτους δὲ πόθος λαμβάνει αὐτὸν ἐλέγειν παρ' Ἀρμωνα ἐς Διμύνην, τὸ μὲν τι τῷ θεῷ χρησάμενον, διὶ ἀτρέκες ἐλέγετο εἰναι τὸ μαντεῖον τῶν Ἀρμωνος (Anab. 3.3.1). Bosworth (1980b: 270) argues that Anab. 3.3.1–2 was derived from Ptolemy and Aristobulus; Strasburger (1934: 32–33) derived the passage from Ptolemy, and also took the view that the motive was historically accurate (Strasburger 1934: 60–61). The desire to consult the oracle is also mentioned by Diodorus (17.49.2).

169 Mederer 1936: 57; Langer 1981: 126. Callisthenes, FGrH 124 F 14a = Strabo 17.1.43: “at any rate Callisthenes says that Alexander conceived a very great ambition to go inland to the oracle, since he had heard that Perseus and Heracles had done so in earlier times” (ὅ γενὸς Καλλισθένης φησὶ τὸν Ἀλέξανδρον φιλοδοξήσας μάλιστα ἀνέλειν ἐπὶ τὸ χρυστήριον, ἐπειδὴ καὶ Περσέα ἥκουσε πρότερον ἀναβήναι καὶ Ἡρακλέα). According to a fragment of Ctesias (FGrH 688 F 1b.388 = Diod. 2.14.3), the mythic queen Semiramis had also visited Siwah.

170 Ἀλέξανδρῳ δὲ φιλοτιμία ἦν πρὸς Περσέα καὶ Ἡρακλέα, ἀπὸ γενέσεως τὲ δυντὶ τοῦ ἄμφοτὲ καὶ τι καὶ αὐτὸς τῆς γενέσεως τῆς ἐαυτοῦ ἐς Ἀρμωνα ἐνέφερε, καθάπερ οἱ μὲν τὴν Ἡρακλέους τε καὶ Περσέως ἐς Δία (Anab. 3.3.2). On the interpretative and linguistic problems of this passage, see Bosworth 1980b: 270–271. Mederer (1936: 43 and 60) contends that Cleitarchus did not report Alexander’s divine sonship as a motive for the journey to Siwah, despite the references to this in Curt. 4.7.8 and Just. 11.11.2 (which, he contends, derive from Ptolemy or Aristobulus). Kraft (1971: 43–67) denies that Alexander ever believed he was son of Ammon. In what sense the king traced “part of his birth” (τι ... γενέσεως) to Ammon has been disputed, but Bosworth (1980b: 271) concluded from Arrian that Alexander thought of himself as the physical son of Zeus, just as Perseus and Heracles. Cf. Fredricksmeyer (2003: 274): “Alexander considered himself the son of both Philip and Zeus ... Perhaps after changing his mind about the earlier notion of his conception from a god in the form of a serpent, Alexander came to think that in fathering him, Zeus assumed the form of Philip, or that he was the product of the seed of both.”

but should be traced back to Alexander’s mother Olympias, who appears to have believed that Alexander’s father was a divine being (Alex. 2.6–7; 3.2). Plutarch reproduces three stories: (1) Olympias dreamed that a thunderbolt struck her womb before her wedding night (Alex. 2.3–4); (2) Philip dreamt that he sealed up his wife’s womb (Alex. 2.4–5); and (3) Philip saw a serpent (δράκων) stretched out beside his wife as she slept, which he thought was a god (Alex. 2.5–7).

In addition, Plutarch cites a tradition from Eratosthenes of Cyrene: before his departure Olympias had told Alexander that there was something miraculous about his birth.172 Importantly, Arrian states that Callisthenes of Olynthus actually derided Olympias’ story about Alexander’s conception.173 Though the authenticity of the remark has been challenged,174 the reasons for rejecting its historicity seem remarkably weak. Callisthenes was notorious for his outspokenness, poor judgement and offences to the king (Diog. Laert. 5.4–5; Arr. Anab. 4.10.1); he died by crucifixion for his opposition to Alexander’s attempt at proskynesis, so it is quite possible that he made such a remark, the context of which is unknown to us.175 If the report is accurate, this proves that the tradition of Olympias’ story was current at least by 328 BC during the king’s own lifetime.176

172 Eratosthenes of Cyrene, FGrH 241 F 28 = Alex. 3.3–4.
173 καὶ οὖν καὶ τοῦ θεοῦ τῆν μετουσάν Ἀλέξανδρῳ ὁὐκ ἔξ ὀλυμπίας ὑπὲρ τῆς γενέσεως αὐτοῦ φεύγεται ἀνιπτήρα, ἀλλὰ ἔξ ὀλυμπίας ὑπὲρ Ἀλέξανδρου ξυγγράφες ἑξενέγκη ἐς ἀνθρώπους (Arr. Anab. 4.10.2; see also Hamilton 1969: 5).
174 Bosworth (1995: 76): “[it] is grossly implausible that the historical Callisthenes could have mentioned [sc. Olympias’] views on Alexander’s birth; still less could he have branded them as lies.” See also Jacoby (commentary to FGrH 124 T 8): “The remark cannot be authentic. Callisthenes would hardly have mentioned Olympias at that time, rather Alexander himself” (“die Aussersung kann nicht wohl authentisch sein; K[allisthenes] hätte damals schwerlich Olympias, eher Alexander selbst genannt”); Carney 2006: 102.
175 Was it perhaps a drunken boast made by the historian in private, and later reported to Alexander? Was it made in the context of the strong opposition to Alexander during the proskynesis experiment? In the absence of a proper context, it seems rash to reject the historicity of the remark merely because it was impolitic.
176 If it was a remark falsely attributed to Callisthenes at that time, then this would still suggest that the tradition about Olympias was contemporary. See also Gitti 1950–1951: 174–177. Cf. Carney (2006: 102), who argues that Olympias was not the originator of the story.
Given that the idea of a divine conception can in all probability be traced to Alexander’s mother, what was the original identity of the god involved? The story that a god in the form of a snake fathered Alexander appears to be the most plausible original tradition about his birth (Alex. 2.5–7). W. Vollgraff long ago argued that Dionysus was originally regarded as Alexander’s father, on the basis of Plutarch’s story of the snake. Plutarch associates the snake with the Dionysian rites that Macedonian women were said to have performed from ancient times (Alex. 2.5), and that Olympias, above all, was an enthusiastic participant in those ceremonies. Thus Dionysus is the most plausible deity

177 Gitti (1950–1951: 174) was an early advocate of this view.
178 Hamilton 1969: 5; Badian 1981: 44. See now Ogden 2008, who argues that the story of Alexander’s conception from a divine being in the form of a snake “must have existed separately and in its own right before being merged with the tradition of Alexander’s visit to Siwah.”
179 Vollgraff 1927: 427: “We learn now, moreover, that the young king claimed a divine filiation, as the son of Bacchus, from the beginning of his reign” (“Nous apprenons maintenant en outre que le jeune roi a prétendu à la filiation divine, à titre de fils de Bacchus, dès les débuts de son règne”). Vollgraff used this theory to explicate his questionable textual restoration of lines 132–133 of Philodamus’ Delphic Paean to Dionysus (written c. 340 BC, but engraved in 329/8), in which he argued that the “son of Dionysus” mentioned in the paean was Alexander himself. The lines in question are as follows:

Πιθανέων δὲ πειθετὴν
ροιοὶ τρυπταῖς ἐταξε Βάκχοιν θυσίαν χορὼν τε πο[λέ]]

Vollgraff (1927: 425) restored line 132 as -ροις [δ]π’ ὁ παῖς ἐταξε Βάκχου (but cf. the generally accepted reading in Kappel 1991: 378, ll. 132–133: -ροις [π]ροπο[λαίς] ἐταξε Βάκχου). See also Vollgraff (1927: 435) who concludes “that we must see Orphism as the religious substratum capable of explaining Alexander’s aspiration to a divine origin ... according to the Orphic religion, man was originally of divine nature and could again become a son of god, if he aspired to it” (“que nous devons voir dans l’orphisme le substratum religieux propre à expliquer les visées d’Alexandre à une origine céleste ... d’après la religion orphique, l’homme était originellement de nature divine et pouvait redevenir fils de Dieu, s’il y aspirait”). That the theocracy, or religious syncretism, of Orphism explains Alexander’s claim to divine sonship is completely unconvincing.

180 Plut. Alex. 2.7–9; Duris of Samos, FGrH 76 F 2 = Ath. 15.560f. See Carney 2006: 97–102.
for the identity of the divine being.\textsuperscript{181} The story of Alexander’s divine birth presumably circulated privately while his father lived, but may have been more publicly known by the early years of the king’s reign.

The recent information, no doubt ascertained from the priests of Memphis, that the king of Egypt was thought to be son of Ammon-Re/Zeus, perhaps even in the physical sense,\textsuperscript{182} may have piqued Alexander’s interest in a subject that he had been thinking about for some time. Was his father Dicynysus or Zeus Ammon? Alexander no doubt wanted to believe that his father had been the great god Zeus (Curt. 4.7.8),\textsuperscript{183} and not simply Dionysus. Perhaps this was the unspecified question known to have inspired the journey.\textsuperscript{184} Above all, a neglected motive for Alexander’s consultation of Ammon was that the oracle was said to be reliable (\textit{ἀρτέκες} ... \textit{μαντεῖον}).\textsuperscript{185} Hence Alexander could be certain that at Siwah he would ascertain the truth about his birth.\textsuperscript{186}

The details of the march to Siwah need not detain us. The journey involved a march to Paraetonium and then inland travel through the desert, during which time Alexander’s party experienced hardship through lack of water. According to later propaganda, a conveniently-timed rainstorm was seen as divine providence.\textsuperscript{187}

\textsuperscript{181} On Dionysus as the original deity thought to be Alexander’s father, see Hamilton 1969: 5; Vollgraff 1927: 423–436; Fredricksmeyer 1997: 104; Fredricksmeyer 2003: 272.

\textsuperscript{182} The letter cited by Plutarch from Alexander to Olympias (\textit{Alex.} 27.8), which supposedly spoke of secret oracular responses (\textit{μαντεῖας ἀπορρήτους}) given to the king, has been thought by some to refer to the priest’s explanation of the Egyptian theory of the king’s divine birth (i.e., in what sense and how he was son of god; Hamilton 1973: 76; Fredricksmeyer 2003: 274). But this thesis founders on the likelihood that the letter is pseudonymous (Kaerst 1892: 612; Pearson 1955: 443–450; Brunt 1976: 472; cf. Hamilton 1969: 72; Langer 1981: 122).

\textsuperscript{183} See also Bosworth 1980b: 270–271.

\textsuperscript{184} Fredricksmeyer 2003: 272.

\textsuperscript{185} \textit{Arr. Anab.} 3.3.1.

\textsuperscript{186} Bloedow (2004: 96, with n. 85) rightly stresses the infallibility of the oracle as a motive for Alexander. Bloedow (2004: 98–99) concludes that Alexander had planned to visit Siwah for some time before his arrival in Egypt.

\textsuperscript{187} \textit{Arr. Anab.} 3.3–4; Curt. 4.7.5–32; Diod. 17.49.2–51.4. The ravens that guided the party (\textit{Arr. Anab.} 3.3.6; Curt. 4.7.15; Diod. 49.5) were changed to snakes in Ptolemy’s account (\textit{Arr. Anab.} 3.3.5), most probably because snakes were associated with the cult of Ammon (Ehrenberg 1926: 33; Mederer 1936: 49;
On arrival at Aghurmi, Alexander was conducted into the temple (εἰς τὸν νεῖω) without changing his clothes, and heard the oracle’s responses to his questions inside the temple, while his companions had to remain outside. The manner by which the oracle gave the responses is controversial. The account of the oracle in Diodorus (17.50.6) and Curtius (4.7.24) describes a typically Egyptian portable barque shrine bearing an omphalos, which could deliver oracles by means of movement, with an interpretation then given by a priest. This was a type of “processional” or “barque” oracle. But the Vulgate tradition’s description of barque oracles cannot be reconciled with Callisthenes’ corresponding account of the manner by which the oracle provided responses, preserved in Strabo (17.1.43).

There is evidence that a barque oracle did not actually occur during Alexander’s private consultation of Ammon, despite the Vulgate tradition. In Diodorus, it is specifically stated that in order to answer Alexander’s questions the priest entered the sacred enclosure of the temple (τῷ σηκω) and observed the movement of the god’s barque. This requires that the oracle was given inside the temple, not outside. But here...
we are faced with an insuperable difficulty: the evidence of the Aghurmi temple’s archaeological remains seems to preclude the performance of Diodorus’ rite. The temple’s courtyard, two halls, cella, and additional chamber are all too small to accommodate barque oracles with the procession of the size described in the Vulgate sources.193 One possible explanation is that Cleitarchus, the source of the Vulgate, has given us an account of contemporary oracular practice in Ptolemaic Egypt, and that this did not actually reflect the methods used at the Siwah oracle in Alexander’s interview, as reported by Callisthenes.194 Alternatively, barque processions may have been performed at Siwah, but outside on the route between Aghurmi and the other temple at Umm Ubayda.195

These observations confirm that another traditional oracular method was used at Siwah for Alexander. There was in fact a long-standing alternative procedure by which gods could announce oracles: this involved a private interview of a king in a temple’s sanctum and the promulgation of a “god’s decree” (wd npr), probably in written form.196

193 Langer 1981: 120. Kuhlmann 1988b: 78: “from an archaeological point of view it appears quite impossible to imagine that ... [sc. barque] oracles could have been performed either in the temple of Aghurmi or anywhere else on the acropolis.” This difficulty is also noted by Parke 1967: 225.

194 Langer 1981: 119–120. See also Mederer 1936: 59: “Perhaps Cleitarchus described a rite in use in other sanctuaries of Ammon, which he connected with the oracle of Siwah: but in no way does it have anything to do with the rite described by Callisthenes” (“Vielleicht schilderte Kleitarch einen in anderen Ammons Heiligtümern gebrauchlichen Ritus, den er mit dem Orakel von Siwa verband: auf keinen Fall aber hat er mit dem von Kallisthenes beschriebenen Ritus etwas zu tun”). Jouguet (1943–1944: 91–107) contended that the Vulgate sources describe barque processions of the great temples in Egypt, and that the one at Siwah was held on a much smaller scale. See also Parker and Černy (1962: 47, n. 5), who argue that the procession at Siwah had only eight priests. Neither view resolves that contradiction with Callisthenes.

195 Kuhlmann 1988b: 82.

196 Kuhlmann 1988b: 78; Frankfurter 1998: 148–149. Such an oracle is described by Hdt 2.133.1; 152.3. Frankfurter (1998: 157) contends that both the processional barque oracle and a “voice” oracle were used in the Siwah temple. A papyrus from the first or second century AD which describes the journey of one Nearchus to Siwah might support the idea of “voice” oracles at Siwah. Nearchus states that Siwah was the place “where Amun delivers oracles for all men; and I sought auspicious words” (P. Lond. III.854 = W. Chr. 117). However, statements about oracles “speaking” could just as easily refer to traditional methods. Frankfurter (1998: 157)
Perhaps a type of “god’s decree” occurred in Alexander’s interview.\textsuperscript{197} This was probably a special type of oracular response as described by Callisthenes, who reports that oracles were given by a priest playing the role of Zeus,\textsuperscript{198} although not in words, but mostly by nods and signs (ἄλλα νεύματα καὶ συμβόλοις τὸ πλέον). The reference to “nods”, as well as Callisthenes’ quotation of Homer,\textsuperscript{199} leads to the conclusion that a human prophet in the role of Zeus was the source of oracular responses during Alexander’s consultation of the god.\textsuperscript{200}

K. P. Kuhlmann has provided a major new reconstruction of Alexander’s consultation of the Siwah oracle, which should be the starting point for critical discussion.\textsuperscript{201} On his view, the king entered the sanctum\textsuperscript{202} and regarded the image of the god while the priests withdrew. This inner sanctum of the temple had a secret room constructed above the main chamber where a priest could hear the questions posed to the god’s image by any visitor.\textsuperscript{203} Alexander, then, asked his questions of the god which were carefully noted by the priest hidden overhead. Afterwards, the king was led into a nearby hall\textsuperscript{204} and received the replies from the chief priest who brought written answers.\textsuperscript{205} The also suggests that an “incubation” oracle had been established at Siwah by Roman times. Cf. Larsen 1932: 74 (“it is possible that the ceremonial procession may have been employed at special festivals, while at other times the oracle was consulted in some other manner”) and Lane Fox 1973: 209–210.

\textsuperscript{197} Kuhlmann 1988b: 79: “everything points towards the fact that Alexander never attended an oracular procession inside the temple but was accorded the ceremony of a ‘king’s oracle’ which was reserved for visitors of royal blood.”

\textsuperscript{198} I take this to be the meaning of ὑποκριναμένος rather than the alternative translation of “interpreting” (see Larsen 1932: 72; Mederer 1936: 57; Pearson 1960: 34, n. 67; cf. Bosworth 1988a: 73, n. 151).

\textsuperscript{199} Strabo 17.1.43: ὢς καὶ παρ’ Ὀμήρῳ, ἣ καὶ κανανέσσειν ἐπὶ ὅφροι νεῖσε Κρονίων.

\textsuperscript{200} Larsen 1932: 72; Mederer 1936: 57. Mediums who delivered spoken oracles through possession by a god are also known in Egypt (Dunand and Zivie-Coche 2004: 311).


\textsuperscript{202} See the plan of the Siwah temple in Kuhlmann 1988a: 16 (fig. 2); the sanctum was room D in Kuhlmann’s reconstruction.

\textsuperscript{203} Kuhlmann 1988b: 75.

\textsuperscript{204} This is room E in Kuhlmann 1988a: 16 (fig. 2).

\textsuperscript{205} There are numerous other interpretations of the events in the temple. In a very influential study published in 1928, Wilcken argued that Alexander was met by the god’s barque in the temple court of
only serious criticism of Kuhlmann’s reconstruction is that it fails to do justice to the
evidence of Callisthenes. Hence we can posit that the method by which Alexander
received the god’s answers was more in accord with the account preserved in Strabo:
most probably a priest performing the role of Zeus Ammon gave his responses “not in
words but mostly by nods and signs.”

Since Alexander’s interview was private, the precise questions he asked cannot be
known with certainty. But he most probably asked a direct question about the identity
of his father, and Callisthenes strongly suggests that, at least in response to one of

Aghurmi; he was publicly greeted there as “son of Ammon” by the chief priest (Wilcken 1928: 576–603;
Wilcken 1932: 124–127). Alexander was then conducted to the inner shrine and asked the god unspecified
questions, probably relating to his future struggle with Darius and his dominion over Asia; the barque
procession then gave answers to his questions which Alexander heard in the sanctum (Wilcken 1932: 125–
126). In the opinion of Wilcken (1932: 128–129), Alexander did not journey to Siwah to obtain recognition
as Ammon’s son (a view also held by Balsdon 1950: 371), and the priest’s greeting was a genuine surprise
to him; thus the legend of Alexander’s birth from Zeus arose as a consequence of the Siwah experience. For
a critique of Wilcken’s interpretation, see Kuhlmann 1988a: 141–143. In the view of Schachermeyr (1973:
249–253), Alexander was acknowledged as pharaoh through the priest’s greeting before he entered the temple:
“When Alexander now climbed upwards to the sanctuary, the greeting already decided his fate. With formal
solemnity, the god greeted the king through the mouth of his priest as his divine son” (“Als Alexander nun zum
Heiligtum hinanstieg, entschied bereits die Begrüßung sein Schicksal. Mit feierlichem Ernst empfang der Gott
durch den Mund des Priesters den König als göttlichen Sohn” [Schachermeyr 1973: 251]). Cf. Lane Fox

206 This raises the question whether other priests were in attendance to interpret the non-verbal signs given
by the prophet.

207 The more plausible possibilities are as follows: (1) Alexander asked the oracle to name the gods to
whom he should sacrifice (Arr. Anab. 6.19.4; but see Bosworth [1988: 73], who questions whether this
occurred at Siwah); and (2) the king inquired about his future and whether he would defeat Darius

208 Callisthenes’ account suggests that the acclamation as Ammon’s son had come in response to a specific
question (Mederer 1936: 54; Brunt 1976: 471–472). Arrian’s account (Anab. 3.4.5) strongly suggests that
when Alexander received the answer he desired this related to his divine birth, one issue which had inspired his
journey (3.3.2).
Alexander's questions, the priest broke with regular procedure by giving a *spoken* reply (*δητῶς*), and told the king that he was indeed the son of Zeus Ammon.²⁰⁹

Strabo also reports that "all listened to the oracular responses from outside except Alexander, but he inside."²¹⁰ That this meant that Alexander's companions heard one of his private oracles from outside the temple²¹¹ is quite unlikely. Strabo probably means that the king's companions were allowed to consult the oracle themselves,²¹² but *outside* the temple, where they heard responses to their own questions posed to the god.²¹³

There is also one other controversial point: According to the Vulgate sources,²¹⁴ when Alexander was conducted into the temple he was hailed as Ammon’s son by the chief priest before he asked his actual questions, a tradition which Plutarch also reproduces.²¹⁵ This evidence has led many scholars to postulate that the proclamation as Ammon’s son merely took the form of a greeting, rather than a response to a special oracular question asked by Alexander.²¹⁶

However, a closer analysis of the Vulgate sources reveals that there are problems with the "greeting" thesis. It is widely accepted that Diodorus, Curtius and Justin depend on Cleitarchus. In Curtius, we are told that "when Alexander came near, the oldest of the

²⁰⁹ See Strabo’s citation of Callisthenes: τοῦτο μὲν των ἐπει ἐπὶ τῶν διερωτῶν πρὸς τὸν βασιλέα ὅτι εἶναί Δίως υἱός (*FGrH* 124 F 14a = Strabo 17.1.43). On the reasons why Ptolemy and Aristobulus may have glossed over Alexander’s divine sonship in their accounts of Siwah, see Brunt 1976: 479–480.

²¹⁰ Ἐξῆθεν τῇ θεμιστείᾳ ἀκρόασσαν πάντας πλὴν Ἄλεξάνδρου, τούτων δὲ ἐνδοθεν (Callisthenes, *FGrH* 124 F 14a = Strabo 17.1.43). On the meaning of θεμιστείᾳ, I follow LSJ (s.v. θεμιστείᾳ), which translates the term as the “giving of oracles.” See also Larsen 1932a: 73; Larsen 1932b.

²¹¹ Larsen 1932a: 71; Lane Fox 1973: 208; Langer 1981: 121.

²¹² See also Curt. 4.7.28.

²¹³ Wilcken 1930: 165; Mederer 1936: 55; Bosworth 1988a: 73; Kuhlmann 1988a: 136–137; Kuhlmann 1988b: 79. Kuhlmann (1988a: 158–159) contends that a barque procession was held for Alexander’s companions on the dromos between Aghurmi and Umm Ubayda *after* the main consultation by the king.

²¹⁴ Diod. 17.51.1–2; Curt. 4.7.25; Just. 11.11.7. See also Plut. *Alex.* 27.5.

²¹⁵ ἔπει δὲ διεξελθὼν τὴν ἑρμοῦ ἱκεν εἰς τῶν τόπων, ὦ μὲν προφῆτης αὐτῶν ὁ Ἀμμωνὸς ἀπὸ τοῦ θεοῦ χαιρεῖν ὡς ἀπὸ ταῖρός προσέπειν (Plut. *Alex.* 27.5). For commentary, see Hamilton 1969: 71–72.

priests called him ‘son,’ affirming that his father Jupiter give him this title.” Justin states that “when Alexander was entering the temple the priests immediately hailed him as the son of Ammon.” However, both Curtius and Justin provide accounts far more abbreviated than that of Diodorus, who has a much better claim to have preserved Cleitarchus’ original narrative. According to Diodorus, “when Alexander was conducted by the priests into the temple (εἰς τὸν ναὸν τεμπλὸν) and had observed the god, the eldest man

217 tum quidem regem proprius adeuntem maximus natu e sacerdotibus filium appellat, hoc nomen illi parentem lovetem reddere adfirmans (Curt. 4.7.25).
218 ingredientem templum statim antistites ut Hammonis filium salutant (Just. 11.11.7). Larsen (1932a: 74) argues that Justin contradicts himself by stating that “in answer to his third question Alexander was informed that he was granted victory in all of his wars and possession of the earth” (tertia interrogeratione poscenti victoriam omnium bello possessionemque terrarum dari respondetur [Just. 11.11.10]). Since the only previous question Justin refers to concerned the punishment of Philip’s murderers, the statement suggests that Alexander’s first question was about his divine birth. However, Mederer (1936: 60, n. 59) argues that there is no actual contradiction: “a comparison [sc. of Just. 11.11.7–10] with Plutarch (Alex. 27), which narrates the decrees of the oracle in the same order as Justin, leads to the conclusion ... that Alexander’s question about the murderers of his father, also in Justin, represents the first oracular question, whereas the second question, whether he had punished all the murderers of Philip, which Justin in his brevity simply skips over, was [sc. the second question phrased] with an alteration in expression. Therefore Justin’s tertia interrogeracione (the question about his invincible nature and world domination) occurs in [sc. correct] order” (“Ein Vergleich [sc. of Just. 11.11.7–10] mit Plutarch [Alex. 27], der die Orakelsprüche in der nämlichen Reihenfolge erzählte wie Justin, ergibt ..., dass Alexanders Frage nach den Mördern seines Vaters auch bei Justin die erste Orakelfrage darstellt, während die 2. Frage, die Justin in seiner Kürze nur übergeht, mit Aenderung des Ausdrucks lautete, ob er alle Mörder Philipps bestraft habe. Demnach geht Justin’s tertia interrogeratione [Frage nach der Unbesiegbarkeit u. der Weltherrschaft] in Ordnung”). Cf. Langer 1981: 121.
219 Mederer 1936: 61. Diodorus uses the accusative Attic form νεὸς for ναὸς, which of course can mean simply “temple” or the “inner shrine” of a temple. Since Alexander is said to have “observed the god” this would require that he was taken into the temple before the god’s image (perhaps even to the sanctum [Berve 1929: 372]), although in Diodorus’ account this might mean the image of the god on the portable barque shrine (Mederer 1936: 63). However, later in the narrative Diodorus speaks of the priest leaving Alexander to consult the god in the “sacred enclosure” (τὸ ἱερὸν) where the barque procession was located (cf. Mederer [1936: 63], who argues that this occurred in the pronaos of the temple). Mederer (1936: 61) concludes that Cleitarchus and Diodorus used νεὸς in the general sense of “temple” and σηκῶς for the inner shrine (cf. Kuhlmann 1988a: 136–137).
of the prophets came to him and said, 'greetings, son; take this form of address as from the god also.'\(^{220}\) Clearly, in Diodorus, Alexander had not only entered the temple but also been brought to the room in which the god's image was located. Since Alexander's interview was private—and these transactions cannot have been observed by the king's companions—most probably in Cleitarchus the so-called greeting was not, as is commonly thought, a public event, nor did it occur immediately after Alexander entered the temple, as in Justin.\(^{221}\) Consequently, the idea that Alexander was saluted as "son of Ammon" publicly outside the temple or in the courtyard seems to be largely based on the imprecise and questionable traditions in Curtius and Justin, which are heavily abbreviated and an inaccurate reflection of Cleitarchus' original account.\(^{222}\) This raises doubts about the historicity of the "greeting" thesis, at least in the form so frequently asserted in modern scholarship. There is, furthermore, no compelling reason to accept Cleitarchus' account over that of Callisthenes, which strongly favours the view that Alexander's divine sonship was announced as an oracular response.\(^{223}\) The most plausible solution to

\(^{220}\) τοῦ δ' Ἀλεξάνδρου διὰ τῶν λειπών εἰσαχθέντος εἰς τὸν νεόν καὶ τὸν θεόν κατανοήσαντος ὁ μὲν προφητεύων ἀνήρ προσάθερος τῷ ἡλικίᾳ προσέλθων αὐτῷ, Χαίρε, εἶπεν, ὦ παῖ· καὶ ταύτην παρὰ τοῦ θεοῦ ἔχε τὴν πρόσφρασιν (Diod. 17. 51.1-2).

\(^{221}\) Cf. Berve (1929: 370-376), who, in his criticism of Wilcken (1928), located the greeting of the priest in the sanctum of the temple.

\(^{222}\) Mederer 1936: 60. There were numerous other possible greetings the priests could have given, apart from "son of Ammon," including Greek translations of standard Egyptian titles such as "king of upper and lower Egypt," "lord," "lord of both lands," "your majesty," or simply "king."

\(^{223}\) Mederer 1936: 53-55. See in particular Mederer 1936: 54, who rightly notes that, if Callisthenes' statement that Alexander was son of Zeus was understood by him as a greeting, the specific emphasis on the fact that it was spoken (ῥητῶς) is both unnecessary and peculiar. Cf. Kuhlmann (1988: 144), who contends that the alleged greeting as son of Ammon known in the Vulgate sources was merely an initial summary by the chief priest of the oracle's answers to Alexander's questions: "it is clear from this reconstruction of events that the greeting as 'son of god' really just occurred in the framework of the oracle's pronouncements, i.e., in direct connection with the visit and question in the sanctum. Under these circumstances, one cannot resist the idea that the address of the oldest of the oracle's priests was anything other than the proclamation of the oracle's response, a summary, as it were, of Amun's answer, which was immediately communicated to the king through the greeting, in order to free him of his tense expectation and his not inconsiderable confusion in the face of the continuing mute [sc. nature] of the image of the god."("wird aus der Rekonstruktion der Ereignisse deutlich, daß die Begrüßung als Gottessohn eben doch im
the discrepancy, long ago proposed by E. Mederer, is that Cleitarchus invented the priest’s greeting in the temple for dramatic effect.\(^{224}\) The upshot of all this is clearly that Alexander did ask the oracle a direct and explicit question about his divine birth, a view which has largely disappeared from modern scholarly discussion of the Siwah events.\(^{225}\)

From Arrian, it appears that Alexander did not make public the content of the questions or answers he received when he emerged from the temple.\(^{226}\) This is significant, because if the point of the journey had been to justify his kingship in Egypt the absence of a public proclamation of Ammon’s endorsement seems extraordinary.\(^{227}\)

\(^{224}\) Mederer 1936: 60: “Why Cleitarchus at this point altered the better tradition (present in Aristobulus-Arrian and Callisthenes) is an open question. Perhaps he considered it more effective, if in this way the main outcome of the expedition, the divine sonship of the king, was placed at the beginning of the visit to the temple” (“Warum Kleitarch in diesem Punkte die bessere Ueberlieferung [vorliegend bei Aristobulus-Arrian und Callisthenes] geändert hat, lässt sich natürlich nicht beantworten. Vielleicht hielt er es für wirkungsvoller, wenn auf diese Weise das Hauptergebnis der Expedition, die Gottessohnschaft des Königs, an die Spitzem des Tempelbesuchs gestellt wurde”).

\(^{225}\) See n. 216 above.

\(^{226}\) Arr. Anab. 3.4.5 (see also Bosworth 1980b: 274). The authenticity of the two other questions said to have been put to the oracle by Alexander is frequently denied; one view is that they were invented by Cleitarchus (Mederer 1936: 64; Nilsson 1950: 139; Hamilton 1973: 76; Langer 1981: 127; Kienast 1987: 314; Cartledge 2004: 293), who had presented the divine sonship of Alexander as a mere greeting of the priest, so that he may have invented further questions in place of the only historically attested query (Mederer 1936: 65). The historicity of the two questions is maintained by Schachermeyr 1973: 249–250.

\(^{227}\) The view of Kuhlmann (1988: 144) is that Alexander was not yet legitimised as pharaoh at the time of his visit to Siwah. The proclamation as “son of Ammon-Re” was a carefully planned act in agreement with
The revelation of Alexander’s divine paternity was at first apparently revealed only to a small court circle, and this is consistent with the view that Alexander had journeyed to the oracle to clarify the mystery of his conception. That the recognition that Zeus was Alexander’s father could not come from established and conservative Greek oracles like Dodona and Delphi has much in its favour. But the priests in Memphis or Thebes probably already acclaimed Alexander as the son of Amun-Re before Siwah. Herein lies the significance of Egypt for Alexander: it was only at an oracle influenced by the Egyptian ideology of kingship, in a culture with centuries of belief in the pharaoh’s position as son of Amun-Re, that Alexander could easily secure recognition of what he believed about his conception.

The significance of this pronouncement was profound. Callisthenes made the divine sonship public in his history, no doubt with Alexander’s approval, in the years after 330, when it was politic. Callisthenes’ report of Alexander’s prayer before Gaugamela, for instance, must be seen as a flattering proclamation of what the king sincerely believed, and attests to the deep and continuing effect of the Siwah experience. Ephippus of Olynthus, in an admittedly hostile work, even reports that Alexander dressed as his divine father towards the end of his life, and put on the “purple the priesthood in Egypt. The oracle’s proclamation was thus a pre-condition for Alexander’s acceptance as pharaoh in Egypt (Kuhlmann 1988a: 154). But, contra Kuhlmann (1988: 156), there is no evidence that the Memphis priesthood publicly announced that Alexander was chosen as the legitimate ruler of Egypt at Siwah.

230 Goukowsky 1978: 24: “if the pilgrimage [sc. to Siwah] took place in a climate of uncertainty which preceded the decisive confrontation [sc. at Gaugamela], Callisthenes only related [sc. the events at the oracle] once the victory had been won, and the facts had already confirmed the oracle’s veracity, when he divulged their content. As master of Asia, Alexander probably judged that the moment had come to reveal the secret that only his friends shared” (“si le pèlerinage prit place dans le climat d’incertitude qui précéda la confrontation décisive, Callisthène ne le relata qu’une fois la victoire acquise, et les faits avaient déjà confirmé la véracité de l’oracle quand il en divulga la teneur. Maître de l’Asie, Alexandre avait probablement jugé le moment venu de révéler un secret que ses intimes étaient seuls à partager”).
231 Plut. Alex. 33.1–2. See Bosworth 1977: 57–60 on the derivation of this passage from Callisthenes. Hamilton (1969: 87) contends the prayer was historical.
robe of Ammon, the thin slippers and horns, just like the god.\footnote{Ath. 12.527e: \textit{τήν τοῦ Ἀμμοῦνος πορφυρίδα καὶ περισχίδεις καὶ κέρατα καθάπερ ὁ θεός.}} Alexander was hailed as son of Ammon at Ecbatana by the Greek flatterer Gorgos.\footnote{Ephippus of Olynthus, \textit{FGrH} 126 F 5.} The king supposedly even wished to be buried at Siwah.\footnote{Diod. 18.3.5; Curt. 10.5.4.} The Egyptian iconography of Ammon was used by the Successors in their coinage: here Alexander appears with the divine ram’s horns.\footnote{See Smith 1988a: 40. By an interesting coincidence, such horns were sometimes a feature of the \textit{atef} crown, the ancient headdress of the pharaoh (Heerma van Voss 1993: 71). From the New Kingdom, the ram’s horns were also associated with \textit{ka}-statues and \textit{ka}-representations of the king that represented his divine aspect (Bell 1985: 268–270).} No doubt the pronouncement at Siwah was the first step on the road to apotheosis,\footnote{Meyer (1924: 284–295) argued that Alexander journeyed to Siwah to obtain recognition of his \textit{divinity}, an utterly unsupportable hypothesis. Cf. Grimm 1978: 108: “After the coronation in Memphis and his endorsement as the son of god at Siwah, the portraiture of Alexander is adorned with the horns of Ammon, just like his divine father … For the Egyptians, the new pharaoh was naturally the son of Amun, whereas the father–son relationship in this concrete form represented a revolutionary innovation for the Greeks. On the other hand, … the acceptance of the Macedonian king by the god first really created the prerequisite for his many-layered apotheosis” (“Das Bild Alexanders wird nach der Krönung in Memphis und der Bestätigung als Gottessohn in Siwa wie das seines göttlichen Vaters mit Ammonshörnern geschmückt … Für die Ägypter war der neue Pharao naturgemäß der Sohn des Amun, während für die Griechen das Vater-Sohn-Verhältnis in dieser konkreten Form eine bahnbrechende Neuerung darstellte. Die Anerkennung des Makedonen durch den Gott schuf auf der anderen Seite … überhaupt erst die Voraussetzung für dessen vielschichtige Apotheose”).} but it was not necessarily the fundamental reason for Alexander’s later demand for divine honours.

After Alexander’s return from Siwah to Memphis, he sacrificed to Zeus, the king (τὸ Δίὸ τὸ βασιλεῖ).\footnote{Arr. \textit{Anab.} 3.5.2.} More importantly, Alexander received additional oracles at Memphis in the winter of 332/1, one from the Branchidae near Miletus, which proclaimed that Zeus was his father, and a second from Athenais of Erythrae, which also confirmed his noble birth.\footnote{Strabo 17.1.43. On the historicity of these oracles, see Brunt 1976: 469.} Either this occurred in reaction to the proclamation at
Siwah or Alexander possibly even contacted these oracles in the summer or autumn of 332 to inform them that he intended to visit Siwah and that he wished to be proclaimed the son of Zeus. He again held athletic and musical games, which were preceded by a procession of soldiers under arms.²⁴¹ Heerma van Voss (1993: 71–72) postulates that the procession mentioned by Arrian was connected with an Egyptian festival for the god Sokar or Osiris.²⁴² Though Sokar had originally been a local deity of Memphis associated with the dead,²⁴³ and also involved with the succession and transfer of royal power, he increasingly became assimilated to Osiris by late times. His festival occurred from about the 25th to the 30th of the fourth Egyptian month of Choiak, and involved a procession of the god’s barque around the walls of Memphis.²⁴⁴ That Alexander’s games were celebrated at the same time as the Sokar festival must remain speculation, but, as an event in which the pharaoh himself was expected to take part, it is not unreasonable to assume that Alexander was willing to respect local tradition.²⁴⁵

²⁴¹ Anab. 3.5.2: πολιτικὸν εἶν τῇ στρατιᾷ ἐν τοῖς ὄλωσ.
²⁴³ Morenz 1973: 142.
²⁴⁴ Hodel-Hoenes 2000: 236.
²⁴⁵ Heerma van Voss (1993: 71–72) argues that the festival “was marked by a procession around the walls of the city; in the parade, the god was carried and dragged. The pharaoh actively takes part in this ritual, which is particularly important to the dead. The Sokar festival was celebrated on the 26th of the month of Choiak, on the day which coincided in the Alexandrine calendar with the winter solstice. One can think that the agonès were occasionally interpreted as games for the dead and that the second report of Arrian is an account of [sc. such] a procession” (“wurde gekennzeichnet durch eine Prozession um die Mauern der Stadt; im Umzug wird der Gott getragen und gezogen. Der Pharaoh beteiligt sich aktiv an diesem Ritual, das besonders für die Verstorbenen wichtig ist. Das Sokarisfest wurde am 26. des Monats Choiak gefeiert, am Tag, der im alexandrinischen Kalender mit der Wintersolstanzwende zusammenfiel. Man bedenke nun, dass Agones bisweilen als Totenspiele gedeutet werden können und dass in der zweiten Meldung Arrians von einer Prozession die Rede ist”). However, we should note that Alexander regularly held games of this type, e.g., Arr. Anab. 1.11.1 (at Aegae); Anab. 2.5.8 (at Soli); Anab. 2.24.6 (at Tyre); Anab. 3.16.9 (at Susa).
6. Alexander's Administration of Egypt: A New Macedonian Occupation

The traditional view is that the Persians were deeply unpopular in Egypt and that Alexander’s conquest was welcomed as a liberation, as Diodorus and Curtius report. Nevertheless, the extent to which the Egyptians regarded Alexander as a liberator is no longer a straightforward question. Whether Alexander’s administrative arrangements demonstrated a fundamental continuity with the previous Persian administration or essentially transformed it is disputed. First, Alexander is said to have arranged matters “so that nothing was changed from the paternal custom of the Egyptians.” But he seems also to have continued some Persian administrative arrangements.

According to Arrian, two Egyptians, Doloaspis and Petisis, were appointed as nomarchs of the country (Anab. 3.5.2), who presumably exercised the civilian aspects of the government. Arrian’s term “nomarchs” (νομάρχας) does not refer to the local leaders of the nomes, but most probably means that Alexander divided the country into two satrapies of Upper and Lower Egypt. Furthermore, Alexander’s appointee Doloaspis had an Iranian name, not an Egyptian one; he was perhaps an official under Mazaces, the last Persian governor. It is also notable that the Egyptian administrator

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247 Curt. 4.7.1–2; Diod. 17.49.1–2: “the Egyptians welcomed the Macedonians, since they hated the Persians’ impieties towards the temples and their harsh rule” (οἱ γὰρ Αἰγύπτιοι τῶν Περσῶν ἁρεβηκότων εἰς τὰ θεία καὶ βασίλειαν ἀφέναι καὶ προσεδέξαντο τῶν Μακεδόνας).
248 See Burstein 1994.
249 Curt. 4.7.5: ita ut nihil ex patro Aegyptiorum more mutaret.
251 Bosworth 1980b: 274.
253 Arrian’s reference to Doloaspis as an Egyptian (Anab. 3.4.2) is no doubt wrong. See Harmatta 1963: 208: “... it is perhaps not too speculative to think that Doloaspis was already subordinate governor either of Upper or Lower Egypt under Mazaces, the last Persian satrap” (“... ist es vielleicht nicht zu gewagt, daran zu denken, dass Doloaspis bereits unter Mazakes, dem letzten persischen Satrapen, Unterstatthalter entweder von Oder- oder von Unterägypten war”). See also Huss 2001: 72, n. 10.
Petesis resigned from his position, which presumably left the Iranian Doloaspis as the only administrator.\textsuperscript{255}

Cleomenes\textsuperscript{256} was originally appointed to govern the region of Arabia around Heroonpolis (Arr. \textit{Anab.} 3.5.4), the Saite Pithom and the modern Tell el-Maskhuta.\textsuperscript{257} As in the case of Libya, the area around Heroonpolis was separated from the general administration of Lower Egypt.\textsuperscript{258} The city was a foundation of Necho II (610–595) in the Wadi Tumilat, and was a fort and entrepôt connected with the lucrative trade via the Saite canal from the Nile to the Red sea.\textsuperscript{259} Though the region was important as a military zone,\textsuperscript{260} Alexander’s interest in Heroonpolis was probably of an economic nature as well, given the vigorous commercial activity that was centred on the city.\textsuperscript{261} It was also no coincidence that Cleomenes was left with overall control of finances in Egypt, and instructions to exact tribute from the nomarchs and take personal charge of the money (\textit{Anab.} 3.54–5). He was eventually appointed satrap by Alexander.\textsuperscript{262}

\textsuperscript{254} The translation of Arrian’s \textit{ἄπειταπαιμένου} (\textit{Anab.} 3.5.2–3) is disputed: Berve (\textit{Alexanderreich} vol. 2, 317–318) and Burstein (1994: 386. n. 10) understand it as “resign”; Brunt (1976: 235) prefers the translation “decline.”


\textsuperscript{257} Collins 2008; Calderini 1975: 228–229. The city was the capital of the local 8th nome of Lower Egypt, the eastern Harpoon nome (Redford 1963: 404; Plin. \textit{HN} 5.50.6; 5.65.7).

\textsuperscript{258} \textit{Arr. Anab.} 3.5.4. Huss 2001: 73. Apollonius was left as commander of Libya, with both administrative and military duties (\textit{Anab.} 3.5.4; Bosworth 1980b: 277).

\textsuperscript{259} Holladay 1982: 19–25. On the canal, see Hdt. 2.158, with Lloyd 1988b: 150–155; and Redmount 1995.

\textsuperscript{260} Huss 2001: 76. The visit of Ptolemy II Philadelphus and Arsinoe II to Pithom/Heroonpolis (274/3) to inspect the area’s defences is described in the \textit{Pithom stela} (2.15–16 [Sethe 1904: 81–105]; see Mueller 2006: 192–195 for a recent English translation of the stela).


\textsuperscript{262} Arist. \textit{Oec.} 1352a.16: Κλεομένης Ἀλεξάνδρεως Αἰγύπτου σατραπεῖος; Arrian, \textit{FGH} 156 F 1.25: Κλεομένης δὲ ὁ ἐξ Ἀλεξάνδρου τῆς σατραπείας ταύτης ἀρχεῖν τεταγμένος; Decippus, \textit{FGH} 100 F 8.2: ο ὁ τῷ βασιλείῳ Ἀλεξάνδρῳ ἐπὶ τῇ σατραπείᾳ ταύτῃ τεταγμένος Κλεομένης; Paus. 1.6.3. A Memphite ostracon mentions a satrap of Egypt (Smith 1988b: 184–186), whom some see as Cleomenes (Hölbl 2001: 30, n. 12). The Peteisis also mentioned may well be the Petesis of Arrian (\textit{Anab.} 3.5.2; cf.
Most importantly, military power was handed over to Macedonians and Greeks: Balacrus and Peucetas were the supreme military commanders in Egypt (Anab. 3.5.5); Memphis and Pelusium received garrisons under Pantaleon of Pydna and Polemon of Pella respectively; and the mercenaries left in the country were commanded by one Lycidas the Aetolian, with Eugnostos his secretary (Arr. Anab. 3.5.3–4; Curt. 4.8.4–5). None of these appointments suggests any great attempt by Alexander to win over Egyptian sentiment.

Overall, Alexander’s measures seem to have decentralised power by splitting the civilian, military, and the financial administrations (Anab. 3.5.7). But in the years that followed administrative and financial power was once again concentrated in the hands of Cleomenes of Naucratis, who had already taken over the pre-existing fiscal system. Although Alexander did modify the Persian system to some extent, there was probably more continuity with the Achaemenid system in his administration of Egypt than discontinuity.

B. Menu has recently postulated that Alexander’s concern with fulfilling the role of a traditional pharaoh led him to implement a number of economic policies for the

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263 Persian garrisons had also existed in these cities (Huss 2001: 75).
264 Huss 2001: 72.
benefit of native Egyptians. But there is scant evidence for this. The Egyptians appear to have lodged complaints against Alexander’s administrator Cleomenes of Naucratis, though the king failed to take action against him (Anab. 7.23.6–8). This militates strongly against any paternal concern for Egypt on Alexander’s part.

The flood of Macedonian and Greek colonists which followed in Alexander’s wake was the beginning of a foreign imperial domination surely more oppressive and offensive to Egyptian national feeling than the administration of the Persians. That the king also founded a new Hellenic city at Alexandria, which quickly became the capital of Ptolemaic Egypt, may well have caused additional distress to the Egyptian elite.

Conclusion

We can conclude that when Alexander arrived in Egypt he was hailed by the priests as the new foreign king of Egypt, as the Persian kings had been. He certainly attempted to gain the support of the Egyptian priesthood and respected local religious traditions. He also won a degree of acceptance from the elite. But Alexander did not take part in the native coronation ceremony. Nor did Philip Arrhidaeus or Alexander IV, though both were given pharaonic titulature. Thus the Macedonian control of Egypt in which the priests recognised a foreigner as their de facto king did not entail the presence

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267 Menu 1999: 353–356. Menu (1999: 356) also posits somewhat implausible economic motives for Alexander’s interest in Siwah: “the journey to Siwah of Alexander the Great could have … a significance other than the [sc. merely] oracular: [sc. Alexander had an] interest in the oases of the north and in the point of commercial contact that they constituted at that time between Libya and the Nile valley, probably as far as the regions of the Upper Nile” (“[le] voyage à Siwa d’Alexandre le Grand pourrait avoir … une signification autre qu’oraculaire: l’intérêt du conquérant pour les oasis du Nord et pour le point de contact commercial qu’elles constituent à la fois avec la Libye et avec la Vallée, probablement jusque dans les régions du haut Nil”).

268 On Greek colonisation of Egypt, see Lewis 1986: 8–36.

of that king in Egypt or his personal participation in the Egyptian temple rituals.\textsuperscript{270} We have already seen that a schism had developed in Egyptian thinking about kingship in the late period (see subsection 2 above). The traditional beliefs about the king were still expressed in temple propaganda. For want of a better expression, we can call these ideas the “strong” royal ideology that was a legacy of the New Kingdom period, which still stressed the divine nature of the pharaoh and his grandiose religious role as the one who maintained \textit{maat}. But alongside this there existed a more mundane view of the kingship; this had emerged in the centuries after the Third Intermediate period. This can be called the “weak” royal ideology of Alexander’s time. In this conception of the kingship, the pharaoh’s divinity was not so prominent and his religious role had been usurped by the priests. The king’s function was reduced to the administration and defence of Egypt; he was also required to build temples and supply the priests with resources for the cults to the gods. But, even in this “weak” conception of kingship, the coronation ritual was demanded by native tradition, and foreigners still apparently attracted contempt from Egyptian nationalists, as can be seen in the \textit{Demotic Chronicle}. It can be readily seen that in the “weak” sense Alexander was no doubt an adequate king by contemporary standards, certainly no worse than the Persian kings. But in the “strong” sense he was hardly a traditional pharaoh at all. Apart from Alexander’s sacrifice to the Apis bull, there were no other major rituals he personally performed: he was absent from Egypt for the rest of his life. Alexander was perhaps even less of a pharaoh in priestly eyes than Ptolemy I, who at least lived in Egypt during his reign.\textsuperscript{271}

\textsuperscript{270} Burstein 1994: 144–145. The later Ptolemies naturally went well beyond Alexander when they gradually involved themselves much more deeply in the traditions of native Egyptian kingship.

\textsuperscript{271} A stela dating from year 4 of Alexander’s reign mentions the death of the Buchis bull at Hermonthis and the installation of a new sacred animal (Menu 1998: 260–261). On the stela, Alexander is depicted making an offering of wine to the new Buchis bull. However, the stela dates from 329 BC, when Alexander was in Bactria, and clearly depicts his supervision of the event by convention only (Tarn 1936: 188). Furthermore, Ptolemy’s initial position was considerably weaker than that of Alexander; he was forced to use native troops at the battle of Gaza in 312 BC, and to curry favour with the elite Egyptian priesthood. On Ptolemy’s policies toward Egypt, see Murray 1970: 141–142; Welles 1970: 505–510. On the Memphis priesthood’s support for the Ptolemies, see Höbl 1997b: 47–60. For the native revolts under later Ptolemies, see McGing 1997: 273–314 and Noshy 1992. Ptolemaic royal ideology and its relationship to Egyptian
This conclusion leads to another important observation. The orthodox view is that Alexander’s conquest of Egypt suddenly made him divine in Egypt, a new god-king to his Egyptian subjects.\(^{272}\) This was no doubt asserted of him in temple inscriptions and reliefs. Some scholars have thought that the idea was the foundation of Alexander’s later demand for divine honours.\(^{273}\) But what has been sadly missed in generations of discussion of this topic is that the Egyptian theory of kingship held that the pharaoh had a dual nature, both divine and human; the pharaoh’s participation in the religious and ceremonial rituals of office, and above all his coronation, infused him with the divine \textit{ka}. Alexander, however, had never been crowned. In the orthodox royal theology of the New Kingdom, he was never transformed from a human being into a semi-divine being.

\(^{272}\) Gyles 1959: 51 (“Coupled with the proclamation of Alexander’s divinity as ‘Son of Re’ at his coronation at Memphis … [sc. was] his recognition as ‘Son of Amen’ at Siwa”); Daskalakis 1967: 94 (“Il était le Pharaon authentique et légitime, l’incarnation de la divinité égyptienne”); Hamilton 1973: 74 (“At Memphis … [Alexander] became, in Egypt, a god and son of the sun-god, Amon-Ra”); Schachermeyr 1973: 236: “Of course, the Egyptian kingship had for Alexander only a local importance. What impressed him the most in the new dignity also remained restricted to Egypt: the divine character of his present position. The pharaoh was after all considered an incarnation of Horus as the son of Re” (“Nächtlich hatte das ägyptische Königstum für Alexander nur eine lokale Bedeutung. Auf Ägypten beschränkt blieb daher auch, was ihn an der neuen Würde am meisten beeindruckte: der göttliche Charakter seiner nunmehrigen Stellung. Galt der Pharao doch als Inkarnation des Horus wie als Sohn des Ra”); Green 1974: 269 (“[Alexander] became simultaneously god and king, incarnation and son of Ra and Osiris”); Hammond 1980: 122 (“Thus Alexander was regarded by Egyptians as the incarnation of their greatest god”); Bosworth 1988a: 70 (“Alexander … was god manifest”); O’Brien 1992: 86 (“Alexander was now king of both Upper and Lower Egypt; Horus, the protector of the land and divine son of the sun-god Ra … He was also, at least in Egyptian eyes, the son of a god and a living god himself”); Worthington 2004: 85 (“Alexander received the formal titles of the Pharaohs: King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Son of Ra … and as Horus he was a god on earth”).

\(^{273}\) Daskalakis 1967: 93–105; Gyles 1959: 51 (“The policies of Alexander in his attempts to unify his empire bear every mark of Egyptian influence. If a god could unify Egypt why not an empire? And as Alexander was already the Horus of Egypt, he sought to become the divine ruler over all his subject peoples”).
infused with the living royal \textit{ka} of Amun-Re. He celebrated no \textit{opet} or \textit{sed} festivals, the rituals through which the king’s \textit{ka} was rejuvenated. Furthermore, to be the son of a god did \textit{not} make one divine in Greek and Macedonian eyes, and most probably even in Egyptian thought a divine birth did not make the child divine by nature either.\footnote{Hornung 1982: 142; Silverman 1991: 71 ("the concept of an individual’s divine birth had validity only after he had become ‘King of Upper and Lower Egypt.’ He could not claim divine birth until his coronation had taken place. Only then did he possess divine nature"). For the Greeks, a man fathered by a god with a human mother was at most a hero, a demigod of Homeric myth. If the Egyptian priests communicated to Alexander the belief that the king of Egypt was divine by means of the divine \textit{ka}, one must ask why the king, at this early stage of his career, would have suddenly rejected the beliefs of his culture and upbringing to accept a notion so at variance with the Greek religious tradition.}

We can draw a major conclusion from this analysis: in contrast to the almost universally held modern opinion that Alexander suddenly became a god in Egypt, it is far more likely that, in the absence of a formal coronation, he was \textit{not} truly regarded as divine by the priests and Egyptian elite, and was never \textit{sincerely} hailed as a god in Egypt.\footnote{On the possibility that the “divinity” of the Ptolemies was a fiction maintained by the priests, see Fairman 1974: 33. Cf. Dunand and Zivie-Coche 2004: 206–210, who conclude that the Egyptian priesthood benefited from Ptolemaic state patronage, and that there was a class of “Hellenised” Egyptian priests who strongly supported the new dynasty.}

The king went to the oracle at Siwah with the firm intention of asking a question about his divine birth. He was not disappointed, and the notion that Amun-Re was his father led to important developments in his kingship and possibly ideas of world empire (see Chapter IV.2.9 below).

But what did Alexander take with him from Egypt, apart from the revelation at Siwah? Curiously, the one other notable item the ancient sources record was that the king now believed that Egyptian seers were most skilled in interpreting signs in the heavens and stars (Curt. 4.10.4).
CHAPTER III – KINGSHIP OF BABYLON AND PERSIA:
ALEXANDER AS KING OF ASIA

Introduction

In this chapter, I will deal with the kingships of Babylon and Persia. In Babylon, Alexander once again had reasonably close relations with the local elite, and did his best to conciliate the priestly class and legitimise his kingship through native traditions. Above all, he appears to have considered Babylon as the future capital of his Asian empire.

In contrast to this, Alexander’s treatment of the Persian homeland before 330 was in marked contrast to his later policies, and the extent of his initial brutality in Persepolis has been understated. The king’s actions in Persia were in effect an attack on Persian religion, although not by explicit policy. Much scholarly debate has surrounded the question of why Alexander burned the Persepolis palace, and the difficulties stem from the mistaken belief that he claimed to be the new Great King. The controversy is largely resolved if we accept that Alexander never thought of himself in this way (see subsection 2.4 below). Alexander rejected the titles “king of kings” (Old Persian, xšāyaṭiya xšāyaṭiyānām) and “Great King” (Old Persian, xšāyaṭiya vazraka), and did not take part in any Achaemenid succession ritual (subsection 2.6). The king’s treatment of the Persian sacred fires was sacrilegious, and even the meaning he attached to proskynesis may well have offended the Iranians.

There is a fundamental distinction between the kingship of Persia and the kingship of Asia. After the death of Darius III, Alexander began to give substance to his exalted position as king of Asia. This was not an attempt to suddenly proclaim himself the new Great King. Rather, he attempted, after 330, to develop a new personal autocracy that inherited some Achaemenid court traditions. Alexander certainly looked to the former Great Kings for the royal dress, ceremonial style and regalia that he developed in his attempts to give expression to his new kingship. But this was an ad hoc process, often in ways that deeply offended the Iranians and violated Persian royal and religious
traditions. I end with some observations on Alexander’s plans for world empire, and how this was increasingly bound up with the idea of his divine birth.

1. Babylon

After the overwhelming victory at Gaugamela, the ancient city states of Mesopotamia came under Alexander’s control. This was the second region in which an ancient Near Eastern state with living traditions of kingship fell under Alexander’s sway. The Macedonian army marched directly to Babylon after the battle, and Alexander was met before the city by the populace, the priests and rulers, who surrendered the city to him.¹

1.1. Babylonian Kingship²

As in Egypt, Babylon had very ancient traditions of kingship, but had considerably greater experience with foreign dynasties and conquerors than the Egyptians did. By origin, Babylon was a Mesopotamian city state that rose to prominence after the Amorites, a Semitic speaking people, conquered the region c. 2000 BC. The great Third Dynasty of Babylon (c. 1570 BC–1153 BC) was a family of Kassite foreigners from the Zagros mountains; and later rulers included Aramaeans or families from the city of Isin, as well as native Babylonians.³ These alien dynasties had ruled Babylon long before the later Assyrian and Persian conquerors, and all of them were heavily influenced by Babylonian cultural and political traditions. It was, however, the Neo-Babylonian empire

¹ Arr. Anab. 3.16.3-4.


(609–539 BC) and the later Persian rule over Mesopotamia that is directly relevant to Alexander’s interaction with the Babylonian conception of kingship.

The Babylonians had of course inherited ancient traditions of kingship from the Sumerians and Akkadians. The Sumerian King List recorded that the kingship had descended from heaven after the mythical flood, but had passed to a succession of cities by the divine will of Enlil, the great god of the Sumerian pantheon. The king (Sumerian, *lugal*) combined the roles of war leader, judge, and chief priest. The Mesopotamian tradition of kingship—of which Babylon was naturally a part—had an extraordinary range of royal titles, including “king of Sumer and Akkad” (Sumerian, LUGAL KUR *šu-me-ri ú ak-ka-di-i*), “great/mighty king” (Sumerian, LUGAL GAL), “king of the four quarters” (Sumerian, LUGAL *ki-b-ra-a-ti er-bê-et-ti*), and the rather pompous “king of the universe” (Sumerian, LUGAL *kiš-šar*).

In the centuries that preceded Alexander’s conquest, the king participated in an official succession ritual, which is known from a fragmentary poem commemorating Nabopolassar’s defeat of the Assyrians. Here we have the following account:

The princes of the land being assembled, Nab[opolassar they bless],
Opening their fists [they ...] the sovereignty.
Bel [Marduk], in the assembly of the gods, [gave] the ruling-power to
[Nabopolassar].
The king, the reliable command [...]“With the standard I shall constantly conquer [your] enemies,
I shall place [your] throne in Babylon.”
The chair-bearer, taking his hand, ... [...]
They kept putting the standard on his head.
They had him sit on the royal throne [...]
They took the royal seal [...]
The eunuchs, the staff-bearers [...]  
The officers of Akkad approached the cella.  
When they had drawn near, they sat down before him [(and)]  
The officers in their joy [exclaimed]:  
"O lord, O king, may you live forever! [May you conquer] the  
land of [your] enemies!  
May the king of the gods, Marduk, rejoice in you ..."\textsuperscript{8} 

Although the account is not completely clear, we can see that there were important  
elements to the ceremony: the presence of the great nobles; the formal proclamation of  
the king's rule by the god Marduk; the divine blessing; the giving of royal symbols (the  
standard and royal seal); and the installment of the king on the throne, surrounded by his  
courtiers. As in Egypt, royal legitimacy depended on the favour of the national god who  
selected the king to be the intermediator between the divine and human worlds.  

The Babylonian king was elected by Marduk.\textsuperscript{9} By the first millennium BC, Bel  
Marduk had risen to the position of supreme god in the local pantheon, by replacing  
Enlil, the earlier Sumerian deity.\textsuperscript{10} In Babylon, the main centres of the worship of  
Marduk were Etemenanki ziggurat and its attached Esagila temple.\textsuperscript{11} Esagila, as in all  
Mesopotamian temples, was also a place where the priests engaged in religious,  
economic and scientific activities. Every temple had a "house of learning" where the  
Babylonian priests engaged in their famous astrological and astronomical research. It was  
no surprise that Alexander showed great concern for Marduk's temple and his priesthood  
(see subsection 1.2 below).  

\textsuperscript{8} Grayson 1975b: 84–85.  
\textsuperscript{9} Herz 1996: 32.  
\textsuperscript{10} Lambert 1984: 1–9.  
\textsuperscript{11} Hdt. 1.181–183; Strabo 16.1.5; Diod. 17.112.3.
In the Neo-Babylonian period, the king was not regarded as divine. Divine kingship had in fact briefly existed in the Mesopotamian conception of kingship, but thousands of years before Alexander's time. The Akkadian king Naram-Sin (2254–2218 BC) is described as a god in a contemporary inscription, and had his own temple in Akkad. His son Shar-kali-sharri occasionally had the divine determinative attached to his name. The Third Dynasty of Ur also followed this form of divine cult: in the period from the reign of Shulgi (2095–2049 BCE) to Shu-Sin, the kings were described as gods and given religious offerings. With the Amorite conquest of Mesopotamia, however, these earlier ideas of divine kingship were extinguished, apparently because the tribal Amorites did not approve of such an exalted view of their earthly king.

In religious matters the king had a very great role as the main priest. He personally participated in major cult acts. One major ceremonial role of the king was his participation in the *akitu*, the New Year festival of the city in honour of Marduk. In Babylon, the New Year began at the time of the spring equinox (c. 21 March), and the *akitu* occurred for the first twelve days of the Babylonian month of Nisan (although it should be noted that the use of a lunar calendar, with the intercalary months, sometimes caused the date to vary by as many as two months by modern reckoning). The festival consisted of twelve days of religious, ritual and social ceremonies. The initial five days involved mere cult and temple preparations. The great ritual acts in which the king was present took place from the eighth to eleventh days of Nisan. We can summarise some of

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12 Jones 2005: 331. A number of papers directly relevant to the concept of divinity in Mesopotamian kingship were delivered at an international symposium called *Religion and Power: Divine Kingship in the Ancient World and Beyond*, held at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago on February 23–24, 2007. Unfortunately, the proceedings of this conference are to be published in 2008 (as Oriental Institute Seminars, vol. 4), and are thus unavailable for use in this thesis.


17 Bidmead 2002: 163.


19 Black 1981: 41. Thus the date could fall somewhere between the 16 March and 31 April.
the more important events of the *akitum*, with significance to the Babylonian conception of kingship, as follows:

(1) Day 4:
The king would journey to Borsippa, ten miles from Babylon, to bring the cult statue of the god Nabu, the first-born child of Marduk.\(^{20}\)

(2) Day 5:
The king and the statue of Nabu arrived at the Esagila temple, and the high priest (*šešgallu*) took away the king’s royal insignia (staff, ring, mace and crown). In a remarkably humiliating aspect of the ritual, the king was struck in the face by the high priest, who then led him to the sanctuary of Marduk and pulled the king’s ears to force him to kneel before the god. At this point, the king recited an oath before Marduk, assuring the god of his sinlessness, piety and blamelessness. Receiving his royal insignia back, the king was once again struck across the face by the high priest. If the violence of the blow produced tears, this was actually considered a sign of Marduk’s favour.\(^{21}\)

(3) Day 8:
The high priest offered Marduk holy water and then sprinkled this water on the king. The king then performed a libation for Marduk, and, taking “Bel by the hand,” brought the deity to the courtyard. In the shrine of the destinies, the god was believed to be present when omens were delivered about the course of the New Year. There followed the great procession through Babylon in which the king naturally showed off the splendour of his armies and court. The god was then taken to the separate *akitum* building for a series of religious rituals.\(^{22}\)

That the *akitum* festival was closely connected with legitimising the king’s rule is certain, and his correct participation ensured the prosperity of the land and the favour of the


\(^{22}\) Bidmead 2002: 88–93.
Some scholars have argued that the ritual of the *akitum* involving the king "taking Bel by the hand" was in itself a rite of royal investiture. But it is now clear that this phrase was a general expression used to describe the entire *akitum* itself, and the act of "taking Bel by the hand" was only one ceremonial part of the procession of Marduk from his temple of Esagila. It was not a succession ritual per se. Although the last known celebration of the *akitum* was the occasion in 538 when Cambyses, as crown prince of Cyrus, took part in the festival, there is a text from Seleucid times which describes events on the second, third, forth and fifth days of the *akitum* copied from an earlier document. It is not impossible that a version of the festival survived into Seleucid times.

1.2. Alexander at Babylon (331 BC)

New light on Alexander's march on Babylon is shed by a fragment of the *Astronomical Diaries*, as follows:

/U4\ 11-KÁM ina "uru UD.KIB.NUN. ki ša 'A-l[ek-sa-an-dar-ri-is .... ]
/x/ a-na E'mes-ku-ub er-ru-ub U₄13.KÁ[M .... ].

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24 Schachermeyer 1973: 282: "[sc. Alexander] became Babylonian prince, exceptionally even before the New Year's festival in the spring. Hitherto it was at this [sc. festival that] the native kings first 'grasped the hands of Marduk' in order to legitimise their throne" ("wurde [sc Alexander] babylonischer Fürst, ausnahmsweise noch vor dem Neujahrssfest im Frühling. Zu diesem erst hatten bisher die heimischen Herrscher ja stets „die Hände des Marduk ergriffen“, um ihren Thron zu legitimieren"); Lane Fox 1973: 248: "At the priests' suggestion, [sc. Alexander] paid sacrifice to the city's god Bel-Marduk, presumably clasping the hand of his statue to show that he had received his power like the old Babylonian kings, from a personal encounter with the god"; Bosworth 1988a: 87. See Fredricksmeyer (2000: 146) for a more balanced view.
26 Black 1981: 42.
On the 11th [18 October 331], in Sippar an order of Al[exander, ....] 
[....] “I shall not enter into your temples.”28 On the 13th [20 October 331].29

By 18 October, then, Alexander had advanced to the neighbourhood of the city of Sippar, and he then sent word to Babylon most probably announcing that he would not allow the looting of the Babylonian temples. He received Mazaeus’ surrender, but nevertheless marched into Babylon under arms (Curt. 5.1.19), probably around the 21 October or slightly later.30 As he approached Babylon, Curtius reports that a great part of the population gathered on the walls of the city “eager to identify the new king” (avida cognoscendi novum regem).31 Curtius provides a detailed account of the king’s entry in battle order into the city, which is worth quoting at length:

> Magi deinde suo more carmen canentes, post hos Chaldaei Babyloniorumque non vates modo, sed etiam artifices cum fidibus sui generis ibant; laudes hi regum canere soliti, Chaldaei siderum motus et statas vices temporum ostendere. Equites deinde babylonii ... ultimi ibant. Rex armatis stipatus ... ipse cum curru urbem ac deinde regiam intravit. Postero die supellectilem Darei et omnem pecuniam recognovit.

Then the Magi came, who were chanting hymns in their way, and after them the Chaldaeans, not only the prophets of the Babylonians, but also musicians with their own kinds of instruments, who were accustomed to sing the praises of the kings. The Chaldaeans used to explain the movements of the stars and the appointed changes of the seasons. The Babylonian cavalry ... were last to follow. Alexander accompanied

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31 Curt. 5.1.19.
by armed guards ... himself entered the city in a chariot and the palace. On the following day he inspected Darius' furniture and all his wealth (Curt. 5.1.22–23).

Curtius' description lists the three great religious classes in Babylon, all of whom were associated with the institutions and rites of Babylonian kingship. The procession which greeted Alexander on arrival in Babylon was presumably the official reception accorded to the legitimate king. A reading of Curtius (5.1.20), however, reveals that the lavishness of the welcome was orchestrated by Bagophanes, the Persian official in charge of the city's citadel and treasury. The same type of greeting had also been accorded to the Assyrian conqueror Sargon II in 710 and to Cyrus the Great himself in 529. Alexander's decisive victory at Gaugamela and the hopelessness of any serious Persian defence were very probably the main cause of the city's surrender, rather than significant Babylonian disaffection with Achaemenid rule. Curtius (5.1.39) notes that the king stayed in the city for thirty-four days, and the Macedonians were billeted in the city, though the people were friendly.

According to the ancient sources, relations between the new king and the Babylonian priesthood were cordial. Arrian has the following account:

'Αλέξανδρος δὲ παρελθὼν εἰς τὴν Βαβυλῶνα τὰ ἱερά, ἀνοικοδομεῖν προσέταξε Βαβυλωνίοις, τὰ τε ἄλλα καὶ τοῦ βῆλου τὸ ἱερόν, ὅν μάλιστα θεῶν τιμῶσι Βαβυλώνιοι.

Arriving at Babylon, Alexander gave orders to the Babylonians to rebuild the temples that Xerxes razed to the ground, especially the temple of Bel (Marduk),

33 Kuhrt 1990: 122–123. For Cyrus' entry, see Grayson, Babylonian Chronicles, 110. The Babylonians also offered Sargon the "remnants" of the divine offerings, an act only granted to the king (Oppenheim 1977: 189).
34 See Kuhrt 1990: 126; Boiy 2004: 104.
35 See also Diod. 17.64.4.
36 Diod. 17.64.3–4.
whom of the gods the Babylonians honour most of all (Anab. 3.16.4; see also 7.17.2).

That Xerxes destroyed the temples or seriously neglected them is a view which many scholars have accepted. However, the tradition seems quite unfounded.

If the Classical tradition about Xerxes is incorrect, then there was obviously another reason for Alexander's concern with the temples. In Babylon, the political instability and succession of rulers from different families in much of the first millennium BC had led to a special emphasis on the divine election of the king by the god Marduk. Even if no evidence exists to show that Alexander was involved in the celebration of the akitu festival, there are strong indications that Alexander participated in the royal ritual of sacrifice to Bel at Babylon, in order to gain the god's support. A detailed account of this exists in Arrian, who reports that "the king met the Chaldaeans, and carried out all their recommendations on the Babylonian temples, and in particular sacrificed to Bel"

40 See van der Spek 2003: 52: "The Babylonian New Year Festival (I–11 Nisan) took place 14 – 24 April 323 BC. There is not a single hint in our sources that Alexander took part in the ceremonies. If Alexander had fulfilled his duties, it would certainly have been mentioned. How should we interpret this? A variety of solutions to the problem are possible. The first is that Alexander arrived only after 24 April 323. This would mean that Alexander’s stay in Babylon lasted only a maximum of seven weeks. Alexander might have waited until 28 April, as suggested above. Another solution may be that the substitute king, who was ritually the real king, did the honours. Finally, one might consider the possibility that the physical participation of the king in the ritual had fallen into abeyance."
41 Herodotus (1.181) had equated Bel with Zeus, and it is not difficult to think that Alexander regarded Marduk as the local name for the Greek god.
(Marduk), according to their instructions.\textsuperscript{42} One method by which a Babylonian king could legitimise his rule was the initiation of public works, restoration of temples, and attention to the performance of the temple cults.\textsuperscript{43} Thus Alexander’s concern with the temples was not simply a royal benefaction: it was a fundamental part of his duties as the new king, and a way to obtain further divine blessing for his rule from the native priesthood, since all building work required favourable omens from the gods.\textsuperscript{44} Thus we can conclude that these measures were sincere attempts by Alexander to conform to the local traditions of kingship.\textsuperscript{45} At this stage, however, he probably made a promise of future, rather than immediate, action,\textsuperscript{46} as it is clear that little work had been done when Alexander returned to the city in 323 (\textit{Anab.} 7.17.2–3).\textsuperscript{47} In 323, Alexander fulfilled his promise by ordering 10 000 troops to commence work on the repairs.\textsuperscript{48}

Although there is no evidence that Alexander ever participated in the succession ritual known from Neo-Babylonian times, he did receive standard Babylonian royal titulature. The \textit{Astronomical Diaries} preserve the title “Alexander, the king who is from the land of Hani [Greece]” (\textit{A-lek-sa-a\textsuperscript{n}-dar-ri-is} \textit{LUGAL šá TA mat Ḥa-ni-i}\textsuperscript{49})—an obvious expression of his position as a foreign king. But we also find the following traditional Babylonian titles: “Alexander, king of the world” (\textit{A-lek-sa-an-dar-ri-is

\begin{thebibliography}{1}
\bibitem{Anab.} \textit{Anab.} 3.16.5: ἐνθά δὴ καὶ τῶς Χαλδαίως ἐνέτυχεν, καὶ ὅσα ἑδόκει Χαλδαίως ἄμφω τὰ ἱερὰ τὰ ἐν Βαβυλῶν ἐπιράξε, τὰ τε ἄλλα καὶ τῷ Βῆλῳ καθ’ ἀ ἐκεῖνοι ἐξηγούντο ἐθυσεν. For commentary, see Bosworth 1980b: 316.
\bibitem{Kuhrt} Kuhrt 1987b: 46.
\bibitem{Kuhrt2} Kuhrt 1990: 127. Antiochus I made the very same promise in 269 (Pritchard, \textit{ANET}\textsuperscript{4}, 317).
\bibitem{One} One serious problem for Alexander, however, was that he was clean shaven: see van der Spek 2003: 53: “it must have been very awkward [sc. for the Babylonians] to have a beardless king. Babylonian kings always had beards and beardless persons were normally servants, eunuchs. Alexander must have seemed very effeminate to the eyes of the Babylonians.”
\bibitem{Bosworth} Bosworth 1980b: 314.
\bibitem{Arrian} Arrian (\textit{Anab.} 7.17.2–3) states that Alexander had ordered the removal of the earth around the temple in order to rebuild it. There are in fact four cuneiform texts that document the payment of tithes to clear the debris around Esagila (Boiy 2004: 110); however, the chronology of these documents is intensely disputed (Boiy 2004: 110–111).
\bibitem{Strabo} Strabo 16.1.5.
\bibitem{Astronomical} \textit{Astronomical Diaries}, vol. 1, 191 (no. -324, left edge, line 1).
\end{thebibliography}
The reception Alexander received in Babylon was favourable, but he nevertheless continued the type of administrative arrangements he had made in Egypt. This involved the separation of the civilian, military, and the financial administrations of the satrapy. Notably, the Persian Mazaeus was allowed to remain as the satrap of Babylonia, but military power was delegated to Apollodorus of Amphipolis and Menes of Pella. The new satrap was apparently allowed to mint coins, both the famous lion staters with Mazaeus’ name in Aramaic and a second series without the name added. The fact that Mazaeus briefly continued the Persian tradition of coin types which, after his death, become the standard currency in Babylon attests to the special status that Babylonia was allowed under Alexander. Mazaeus died c. 328 and was replaced by Stamenes (Anab. 4.18.3). Babylon itself received a garrison commander in Agathon of Pydna with 700 troops. The power of the purse was given to Asclepiodorus, son of Philon.

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50 *Astronomical Diaries*, vol. 1, 179 (no. -330, rev. line 11).
51 *Astronomical Diaries*, vol. 1, 181 (no. -329 B, obv. line 1).
52 For Egypt, see Anab. 3.5.7.
54 Arr. *Anab.* 3.16.4; Curt. 5.1.43; Diod. 17.64.5. See also Lue Fox 1973: 249; Brandes 1979: 91; Bosworth 1988a: 87; Boiy 2004: 107–108.
56 Le Rider (2003: 276–277) concludes that the minting of the lion staters was a privilege Alexander accorded to Mazaeus before the surrender of Babylon through negotiation, and that this mint at Babylon was continuously active during the years of Mazaeus’ rule. Mazaeus also issued darics and double darics, gold coins in the Achaemenid tradition (Le Rider 2003: 279–284).
57 In Curtius’ account (8.3.17), the new satrap is called Ditamenes, which appears to be a corruption of Stamenes (Bosworth 1995: 123). The Macedonian Archon appears as the satrap shortly before Alexander’s death (Heckel 2006: 43), and perhaps his appointment was connected with Harpalus’ flight (Badian 1961: 17–18).
58 Arr. *Anab.* 6.16.5–6; Diod. 17.64.5; Curt. 5.1.43.
59 Arr. *Anab.* 3.16.4. See also Arist. *Oec.* 2.2.34 on Antimenes of Rhodes, who may have later replaced Asclepiodorus.
1.3. Alexander’s Return to Babylon (323 BC)

Alexander’s second visit to Babylon did not occur until the final year of his life. During the king’s journey to the city he was met by the Chaldaeans. They warned him not to enter Babylon, owing to an unfavourable omen from the god Marduk. According to Aristobulus, the king did attempt to heed their advice, but was prevented by the difficulty of the approach from the direction which the priests had suggested. Arrian reports that Alexander had personal suspicions that the Chaldaeans’ warning was given to make him avoid the city, because the priests did not want to divert the revenue from Marduk’s temple to the restoration work (Anab. 7.17.1–4). However, the Chaldaeans were long accustomed to advise the king on unfavourable omens and the methods by which he could forestall any threat to himself or the kingdom; it is thus far more likely that their warning had been given in good faith.

Diodorus (17.116.4) provides us with an account of another curious incident that was most probably directly related to the Chaldaeans’ warning. He relates that a man was found sitting on Alexander’s throne, wearing his royal robe and diadem. The king consulted his seers for interpretation and put the man to death, since they advised that the execution would prevent the danger that the omen forecast. Arrian states that the eunuch chamberlains around the throne did not remove the man because of a Persian custom (Anab. 7.24.3). But when properly related to Babylonian royal traditions there is a very strong case that the Classical sources were describing a *Mesopotamian* substitute king ritual, rather than any Persian custom. This was an ancient Babylonian apotropaic rite that protected the king by transferring whatever danger he faced onto another man who

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60 Arr. Anab. 7.16.5–18.6; Curt. 10.4.6; Diod. 17.112; Plut. Alex. 73; Just. 12.13.3; App. B Civ. 2.153.

61 Arr. Anab. 7.17.5–6. Plutarch (Alex. 73.1–2) and Diodorus (17.112) preserve a variant tradition in which the Chaldaeans gave this omen to Nearchus who communicated it to the king.

62 Smelik 1978–1979: 96; van der Spek 2003: 55–51; Boiy 2004: 112. Diodorus (112.3) records that the Babylonian priests also urged Alexander to rebuild the “tomb of Bel” (the Etemenanki temple) in order to avoid the unfavourable omen. See van der Spek 2003: 48–52 for the astronomical signs that may have been interpreted by the priests as bad omens.

63 See also Diod. 17.116.2–4; Plut. Alex. 73.7–9.
was briefly made king. The Chaldaeans had presumably effected this rite in order to divert the danger faced by Alexander after he ignored their advice and entered the city.

A. B. Bosworth has argued that Alexander’s concern for Babylon and its political traditions led him to install his brother Philip Arrhidaeus as the official local king of Babylonia (šar Bābili) from 324/3 BC. This interesting theory was derived from the discrepancies between the figures given for the length of Philip’s reign in various sources: both the Saros Canon and the king list of Uruk give a period of six years for Philip’s rule, but other documents refer to the eighth year of his reign. Bosworth solved this problem by rejecting the view that the eighth year mentioned in these documents was merely posthumous dating, and instead argued that Philip’s first year was 324/3 BC as a local Babylonian king. Attractive as this theory is as a way of demonstrating Alexander’s genuine respect for Babylonian political institutions, it must be rejected on two grounds. First, the astronomical diaries all place Philip’s first regal year in 323/2 BC, the same year he was chosen Macedonian king after Alexander’s death. Secondly, no cuneiform document can be found which provides evidence of any kingship in Babylon for Philip in the year 324/323.

Despite this, there is no doubt that Alexander regarded Babylon as a future capital, at least of his Asian empire. Strabo reports that the king transferred the wealth of Persis to Susa, but “did not regard Susa as a royal residence, but rather Babylon, which he tended to build up still further.” Later, after the capture of Ecbatana, Alexander transferred his imperial treasury—and all the wealth of the Achaemenids stored in Susa, Persepolis, and Pasargadae—to the city of Babylon. Unfortunately, he made a disastrous choice in the appointment of Harpalus, as supervisor of the money. Furthermore,

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64 Spek 2003: 51; Panaino 2000: 43–43.
68 Boiy 2004: 115.
70 οὐδὲ τοιοῦτο ίπτει τὸ βασίλειον, ἀλλὰ τὴν Βαβυλῶνα, καὶ διενοεῖτο ταύτην προσκατασκευάζειν (Strabo 15.3.9).
71 Diod. 17.108.4; Ath. 13.595a–f.
Alexander explicitly preferred Babylon, since it surpassed other cities in terms of size (Strabo 15.3.10).

A final sign of Alexander’s regard for Babylon was his use of Babylonian priests. Plutarch records that the sight of an omen that particularly revolted Alexander caused him to have himself purified by the Babylonians who were present on his campaigns for this purpose. Alexander’s regard for the abilities of Babylonian priests was rather similar to his use of Egyptian seers, whom he highly respected for their skill in astrology (Curt. 4.10.4).

2. Kingship of Persia

The Persian king (Old Persian, xšāyādiya) held as his pre-eminent titles the expression “king of kings” (Old Persian, xšāyādiya xšāyādiyānām; Akkadian, šar šarrānī) and “Great King” (Old Persian, xšāyādiya vāzraka; Akkadian, šar rabū). The Achaemenids also inherited a grandiose repertoire of titles from the Babylonians. In the well-known Cyrus cylinder from Babylon, for instance, the king gave himself the following Mesopotamian royal titulary:

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74 Kent 1953: 181 (with complete citations of the word as found in Old Persian texts); Brandenstein and Mayrhofer 1964: 126 (s.v. “hšašēpiya”). The title shāh (“king”) and shāhān shāh (“king of kings”) are from Middle Persian, and first occur in Arsacid and Sassanian inscriptions.
75 On the Great King’s titulature, see Ahn 1992: 217–220.
Cyrus, king of the world, great king, mighty king, king of Babylon, king of Sumer and Akkad, king of the four quarters, son of Cambyses, great king, king of Anshan, grandson of Cyrus (fr. a, 20–21).

The topic of ancient Iranian kingship (xšaca- in Old Persian) has produced a vast literature, with notable schools of thought. At issue is the fundamental nature of Achaemenid royal ideology itself. There is dispute over the question whether Achaemenid kingship was essentially Indo-European in character or, alternatively, heavily influenced by Mesopotamian traditions.

The older school of thought—associated with Scandinavian scholars and dependent on the work of G. Widengren—stresses the Indo-European character of Persian kingship. It places great emphasis on the ancient Iranian myths of Yima, the legendary first man, who was chosen by Ahura Mazda to be king over the whole earth. Yima ruled during a mythic golden age, when there was no death, hunger, cold or disease. He established the civilised conditions for humanity's life on earth, and fulfilled the tripartite function of an ideal priest, warrior and herdsmen—the three great classes of Indo-Iranian society. His rule was ended by a severe winter, which Ahura Mazda had

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76 For the text of BM90920, see Schaudig 2001: 552–553. Translation follows Hallo and Younger 2002: 315.
77 Kent 1953: 181; Brandenstein and Mayrhofer 1964: 126.
78 On this school, see Ries 1986: 81–82.
79 Widengren 1968: 70–75; Widengren 1959: 249. The legend occurs in the second fargard of the Vendidad in the Avesta (an accessible translation can be found in Boyce 1984: 94–96). For the date and composition of the Avesta, see the excellent general overview of J. Kellens, “Avesta,” EncIran 3 (1983), 35–44.
80 This “tripartite” ideology—the idea that a division into warriors, priests and agriculturalists was fundamental to all early Indo-European societies—was argued at length in an influential study by Dumézil 1958. See also Belier 1991. This thesis was later criticised by Gnoli 1974b.
predicted to him. Yima, however, saved humankind by building an underground shelter on the orders of Ahura Mazda, in which huran beings and animals survived the destruction wrought by the winter. This, in essence, was the myth of Yima, who became the model king for later Iranian rulers.

According to Widengren, the royal Achaemenid title “king of kings” was an ancient Iranian expression that stressed the role of the king as *primus inter pares*, a king over the other feudal princes. This, supposedly, was an important sign of the fundamental Indo-Iranian ideas that were the foundation of Achaemenid kingship. Iranian heritage was symbolised by the white and red colours of the royal robes worn by the king: white was the colour of the priesthood, and red the colour of Iranian warriors.

The king thus unified the two fundamental classes of society in his person, and was inviolable, as he had received his position from the gods. He also possessed the *khvarnah*, a divine fire that consecrated him. Widengren argued that the Iranian king was thought to have a divine nature; the chief evidence for this was the ceremony of *proskynesis*, which, in this view, was an actual type of royal worship, perhaps an Assyrian royal tradition inherited by the Achaemenids. The king’s rule had a cosmic significance: the pre-eminent royal festival was the New Year celebrations (*Now Ruz*), where the king ritually took the role of an ancient Iranian hero and killed the evil dragon Azhi Dahaka, an act which restored fertility to nature. The king was also the chief priest who presided over ancient Persian customs, such as the ancestral horse sacrifice and the fire temples (*Xen. Cyr. 8.5.26*).

The main opposition to the thesis of Widengren came from G. Gnoli and his mainly Italian followers, who countered that Indo-European traditions were not as important as their opponents contended. Rather, it was the influence of the ancient and venerable civilisations of Mesopotamia that were the formative source of Achaemenid royal thought. Gnoli contended that Achaemenid kingship emerged from a synthesis of

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81 Widengren 1959: 244–245.
82 Widengren 1959: 254.
85 Ries 1986: 81. Gnoli (1974) was his seminal study of this topic.
both Indo-Iranian and Mesopotamian elements that occurred in the middle of the first millennium BC, perhaps initially via the Median kings. In particular, he concluded that the New Year’s festival at Persepolis had been derived from the royal *akitu* festival in Babylon, since the day on which it was celebrated coincided with the Babylonian *zagmukku* (the beginning of the month of Nisan). The Great Kings even allowed their princes to celebrate the native *akitu* festival in Babylon, and the idea of a coregency between the Great King and the principal Achaemenid prince who occupied the throne of Babylon during his father’s reign has clear Assyrian precedents. Furthermore, the Persian divine triad of Ahura Mazda, Anahita and Mithra appears to have been assimilated to that of their Babylonian counterparts by the Great Kings. Ahura Mazda was equated with the Babylonian god Marduk, Mithra with Shamash, and Anahita with Ishtar. The titulature of the Great Kings was heavily influenced by Mesopotamian traditions: when Cyrus had conquered Babylon in 537, as we have seen, he proclaimed himself “king of all, the Great King, powerful king, king of Babylon, king of Sumer and Akkad and of the four parts of the world,” an appropriation of the traditional Babylonian royal titles. Even the title “king of kings (*xisiya* *xisiya* *xisiya* *xisiya*) probably did not denote a feudal monarch’s superiority over lesser kings, but was a superlative expression modelled on Mesopotamian royal titulature and equivalent to the notion of the “highest” or “greatest” king.

According to Gnoli’s thesis, there were two main ways in which the Achaemenid kings claimed their legitimate right to rule:

86 Gnoli 1974b: 168. I have used the French translation of Gnoli’s work here and below. For the original Italian article, see Gnoli 1974a.
88 The Achaemenid calendar used a composite lunar and solar method of calculating months, just as its Babylonian equivalent (Langdon 1928: 98; Poebel 1938; Panaino 2000: 45).
89 Cambyses had acted for his father at the *akitu* festival in 538 (Gnoli 1974b: 123).
90 Frankfort 1955: 243–244; Gnoli 1974b: 169–170; Panaino 2000: 43. Cambyses, the son of Cyrus, was appointed king of Babylon by his father, and held the office for at least a year (Briant 1996: 82).
92 See also Ahn 1992: 218.
(1) a proper descent from Achaemenes, the royal progenitor of the Achaemenid house. This was something more than a mere dynastic principle: it was connected with the hereditary Iranian clan institutions and the idea of a charismatic power that passed along a particular family line, the divine *khvarnah* or royal “fire” (Avestan, *x'aranah*; Old Persian and Median *farnah*).93

(2) the will of the great deity Ahura Mazda. The Persian king ruled “by the favor of Ahura Mazda” (*vašnā Auramazdāha*), the royal god par excellence. This also required an ideological affirmation of Ahura Mazda’s will and a ritual ceremony of investiture. The former was proclaimed in inscriptions and royal propaganda, and the later in the actual rite of succession, with the participation of the Magi (Plut. *Artax.* 3.1–2). The goddess Anahita had an important role in this ceremony; she was the royal goddess who secured the king’s victory in war.94

The first criterion for royal legitimacy was often stressed by the Great Kings in their propaganda. Darius, for instance, in his Naqs-i-Rustam inscription proudly declared that he was “son of Hystaspes, an Achaemenid, a Persian, son of a Persian, [sc. and] an Aryan of Aryan descent” (*Vištāspahyā puça Haxāmanišṭya Pārsa Pārsahyā puça Aria Ariyaciça*).95 It is likely that Darius’ emphasis on his descent was meant to suggest the royal *khvarnah*, though this is admittedly left unstated. The second element of the ideology—the idea of the king’s investiture by a supreme god—was derived directly

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93 On this unquestionably ancient Iranian idea, see Gnoli 1974b: 172–173: “The concept of the *x'aranah* was actually intimately linked to the old tribal society, which we see reflected again in the Avesta, where it represents a charismatic principle. The *x'aranah*, which is a “lustre”, a luminous and radiate power, a fluid fire and a vital seed, appears to be profoundly linked to a dynastic principle” (“La conception du *x'aranah*, en réalité, était intimement liée à la vieille société tribale, que nous voyons encore reflétée dans l’Avesta, où elle représentait un principe charismatique. Le *x'aranah*, qui est une «splendeur», une force lumineuse et rayonnante, un fluide igné et une semence vitale, paraît profondément lié à un principe dynastique”). See also Ahn 1992: 199–215.


95 See *DNA* 12–15 (the Old Persian text follows Kent 1953: 137, with translation based on Kent 1953: 138). See also *DB* 1 1–8; *XPa* 6–11; *A'Pa* 9–16; *A'He* 7–15.
from Mesopotamian royal traditions, according to Gnoli.96 Moreover, the “cosmic” elements of Achaemenid kingship, the belief that the king had divine functions and was caretaker of the world, must also be traced to previous Mesopotamian ideas. That the Great King was Ahura Mazda’s regent on earth could be understood as the Iranian version of the corresponding Assyrian or Babylonian ideology.

Today most scholars tend to lean towards Gnoli’s thesis, as opposed to that of Widengren.97 It is clear that the Achaemenid kingship was a complex amalgam of both the Iranian and Mesopotamian traditions. When the Persians became the new rulers of the Middle East, the Great Kings had transformed their merely local traditions of kingship with suitable Mesopotamian royal protocol, such as the isolation of the king, the court ceremonial of proskynesis,98 and the royal throne, in much the same way as Alexander was later to appropriate some aspects of the Persian court.99 In this respect, Alexander merely took from the Great King a mixture of royal traditions with nearly a millennium of history behind them in the great civilisations of Mesopotamia.

Finally, when we examine the two main criteria for the legitimacy of a Persian king described above, it can be readily seen that Alexander could not possibly fulfil the first one: he was no Iranian or Achaemenid, and had no claim to the royal khvarnah passed along the dynasty’s bloodlines. We shall see below that Alexander never attempted to justify his kingship over the Persians by appeal to the will of Ahura Mazda either, and, indeed, pursued policies that were in effect a savage attack on Persian religion (see subsections 2.3 and 2.4 below). It follows that no patriotic Iranian would ever have regarded Alexander as a legitimate king.

96 Gnoli 1974b: 163. Of course, in practice, the king himself chose his successor, usually his first born son (Hdt. 7.2.1).
2.1. The Divinity of the Great King?

The view that the Persian king was thought to be divine is associated with G. Widengren, but is of course best known from the Classical tradition in Aeschylus' *Persae* (157). Despite the Greek traditions, the evidence indicates that the Great King was not a god in Iranian culture or society. The Great King is never referred to as a *baga-* ("god") in Old Persian inscriptions. In the foundation inscription of Darius I at Susa, the king specifically makes the following proclamation:

\[\text{Auramazdām аватā kāmā āha haruvahāyā BUyā martiyam mām avarnavatā mām XŠyam akunauš haruvahāyā BUyā.}\]

Ahura Mazda had this desire: he chose me as (his) man [martiyam] in all the earth; he made me king in all the earth (DSf 15–18; my emphasis).

That Darius referred to himself merely as a *man* is surely good evidence against the modern idea that the Great King was divine in any sense. The Iranians did have a specific cultural gesture to indicate worship of a god or cult object: this consisted of the upraised hand with the palm pointing either outward towards the object being worshipped or sideways. However, this gesture was never used towards the Great King by his

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100 Widengren 1959: 245: "The king is holy, because his descent is from the gods. His person is of a divine character. He is the Brother of Sun and Moon and has his real home among the stars .... His real nature is fire, for he has descended from heaven as lightning in a column of fire. His fire-nature is symbolised by the nimbus of fire surrounding his head, the royal xvarnah, denoting also the king's luck."

101 Here Queen Atossa, Darius' spouse, is famously referred to as "a god's wife."

102 Panaino 2000: 44. See Kent (1953: 199) for instances of the word in Old Persian inscriptions.

103 The Old Persian text follows Kent 1953: 142, with my translation based on Kent 1953: 144.

104 For representations of this gesture, see the cylinder seal from the time of Darius I in which a priest uses the upraised hand before an altar (Collon 1988: 90–92); the inscription of Darius I at Behistun in which the king performs the same gesture to the winged figure above him, usually seen as Ahura Mazda (Root 1979: pl. 4); and the relief at Naqš-i-Rustam where the king raises his hand facing a fire altar below Ahura Mazda (Root 1979: pl. 13a and 13b).
subjects. It follows from all this that the king cannot have been regarded as a divine being.

The king did, however, have a connection with a divine power emanating from Ahura Mazda. As we have seen above, the king’s legitimacy depended on his continued possession of the royal khvarnah (“royal glory”). The khvarnah had originally been an essence associated with divine fire and water, but a royal khvarnah, a power conceived as a liquid fire, was the dynasty’s hereditary possession and an entity deriving from Ahura Mazda which gave the king his fortune and right to rule. During the Achaemenid succession ritual, Ahura Mazda gave the new king the khvarnah, so that he obtained the power to rule and to be successful in war. Yet another type of divine khvarnah was probably thought to dwell in the king’s royal fire. Although the khvarnah is not attested in Achaemenid inscriptions, the king’s possession of it was directly related to his

105 Frye 1972a: 103–104. See in particular Frye 1972a: 104: “the upraised hand was used by the ruler to show reverence before the deity, and there is no evidence to show that this gesture was employed by subjects towards their ruler.” Choksy 1990: 31–32: “the available evidence indicates that the raised hand with the palm held outward or sideward was reserved for worship by rulers and other devotees in the presence of symbols, altars, and icons of the gods during the Achaemenian era. There is no indication that it served as a sign of submission to the will of kings.”

106 See also Calmeyer (1981: 55): “that the Achaemenid Great King was no god quite clearly follows from two facts: his name in Babylonian versions of inscriptions is not written with the divine determinative, which was employed for the sovereigns of the dynasty of Akkad, Ur III and Eshnunna in the 3rd and 2nd millennia; and his headdress does not include horns [a divine symbol], like those of Naram-Sin of Akkad ...” (“[d]aß der achaimenidische Großkönig kein Gott war, geht ganz simpel aus zwei Tatsachen hervor: sein Name wird in den babylonischen Versionen der Inschriften nicht mit Gottes-Determinativ geschrieben, wie dies bei Herrschern der Dynastie von Akkad, Ur III und Ešnunna im 3. und 2. Jahrtausend geschah; seine Kopfbedeckung enthält keine Hörner, wie die des Naramsin von Akkad ...”). See also Humbach 1988: 93.


108 Herz 1996: 34.

109 Herz (1996: 34–35) compares the khvarnah to the Roman ideas of the numen imperatoris or genius imperatoris. Plutarch (Alex. 30.3), in an invented speech o’ Darius, appears to refer to the concept of the khvarnah.

110 Boyce 1982: 224–225. It was probably also associated with the golden eagle which decorated the divine and royal chariots (Curt. 3.3.16; Boyce 1982: 287–288).
sacred fire: the fire was ignited at the beginning of the king’s reign when he was given the khvarnah, and extinguished at his death to indicate that the khvarnah had left him. The khvarnah possibly appears in Achaemenid art as a winged sun disk around a bearded man, a symbol which is usually placed above the king, but which was taken from Assyrian and Egyptian iconography.

Although some have argued that the king’s possession of the khvarnah was an additional reason why his subjects performed proskynesis before him, we must conclude that the Great King was not regarded as divine in Iranian thought, and the primary meaning of the proskynesis was a social mark of respect.

2.2. Alexander in Susa

When Alexander proceeded from Babylon he quickly overran the heartland of the Persian empire in Susa and Persis. At Susa, the king took control of the city after the satrap Abulites surrendered. Alexander now captured fifty thousand talents of silver and all of Darius’ royal belongings. The most notable incident at the Susa palace—recounted in several sources—was the occasion when Alexander seated himself in the throne of the Great King. We are told that the throne was rather too large in its proportions for the king, and his feet comically dangled down, without reaching the

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111 Herz 1996: 35.
112 Shahbazi 1980: 181–185. This is not, however, the orthodox view. Most scholars see the symbol as Ahura Mazda (Lecoq 1984: 301–326; Root 1979: 169; Tuplin 1996: 158; Soudovar 2003: 90–91).
113 Herz 1996: 35–36: “Proskynesis was carried out before [sc. the king], not because the ruler had a divine nature – for here the Greeks thoroughly misunderstood the Iranian concept – but because he had been marked with his power [i.e., the khvarnah] by Ahura Mazda” (“Man vollzog vor ihm die Proskynese, nicht etwa weil der Herrscher ein göttliches Wesen war – hier haben die Griechen die iranische Konzeption grundlich mißverstanden – sondern weil er von Ahuramazda mit seiner Macht ausgezeichnet worden war”).
115 Diod. 17.65.5.
116 Arr. Anab. 3.16.6–7.
footstool on the ground. A royal page proceeded to use a table as an improvised
footstool, but a former eunuch of Darius who stood by was overcome with grief at the
sight of the use of Darius’ furniture in this manner. Although it is said that Alexander was
moved by the eunuch’s grief, he was not persuaded to stop his disrespectful use of the
table.

We do not need to see this strange event as a “coronation” or succession ritual for
Alexander as the new Great King, as some have thought. The Achaemenid succession
ritual was simply not a matter of the new king formally sitting on his predecessor’s
throne: it involved a complex rite in Pasargadae with the presence of the Magi (Plut.
Artax. 3.1–2). The so-called “enthronement” of Alexander was nothing but a colourful
anecdote that found its way into the tradition, mainly for its amusing content. Above all,
it showed Alexander was the rightful owner of Darius’ possessions as his conqueror, and
was completely in conformity with the Macedonian and Greek concept of “spear-won
land” (see above Chapter 1.1), which included the right to ownership of the belongings of
the defeated.

There is, indeed, one other significant act that is recorded before Alexander
moved from Susa to Persepolis: he now left Darius’ mother, daughters and son in the
city, and advanced on Persis itself (Curt. 5.2.17; Diod. 17.67.1). Their absence was
perhaps desired by Alexander: his subsequent treatment of the heartland of Persia would
have shocked and horrified any Persian patriot, not least of all the royal family.

2.3. Alexander in Persis: Brutality and Repression

During the march to Persis, Alexander continued to demand absolute submission
to his rule. This is illustrated well in the king’s treatment of the Uxian mountain
tribesmen. When Alexander wished to cross their territory, they demanded that he
provide them with what even the Persian king was accustomed to give on such occasions.
If Alexander had wished to pose as a simple successor of the Great King, he could easily

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117 Diod. 17.65.5; Curt. 5.2.13–17.
118 Bosworth 1980a: 5.
have respected this custom. Instead, the Uxii were treated with unusual brutality: Alexander killed many in their villages, attacked the pass they were defending, and then Craterus conducted a massacre of those who had fled from this attack. It is even said that the mother of Darius implored Alexander to let the Uxii keep their territory.\(^{119}\) Alexander’s new lordship of Asia, then, entailed complete submission by all: any attempt to maintain a tradition of semi-independence granted by the Persian kings was an act of rebellion.\(^{120}\)

After routing the last defending force at the Persian gates, Alexander was now in Persis itself. What followed can only be described as exceptional brutality, actions which were in marked contrast to his treatment of other subject peoples. The justification for this is not easy to fathom, since there had been no resistance from the cities of Persepolis and Pasargadae. When Alexander came to Persepolis in January 330, he ordered his men to plunder the city (Diod. 17.70.1–2). The Vulgate gives us what may well be a rare glimpse into the savagery of the Macedonian troops. Curtius (5.6.1–11) reports that Alexander told his men that no city had been the origin of more aggression against the Greeks than Persepolis, and that its destruction would be a sacrifice to their ancestors. Thus his men sacked the city and looted its fabulous wealth, including gold, silver, clothing, and furniture. The troops slaughtered prisoners and conducted a massacre, and eventually Alexander ordered his men to spare the women of the city.

There is no serious reason to doubt the historicity of this orgy of destruction. Curtius, however, was presumably mistaken in believing that the palaces were looted at the same time as the city, for Diodorus makes this distinction clear. According to him, Alexander gave Persepolis over to the soldiers to plunder, “all but the palaces.”\(^{121}\) The Persian settlement below the terrace was also sacked, since Diodorus refers to the private houses of the common people, and that the violence and looting lasted for a whole day.\(^{122}\)

The women of the city were subjected to slavery (Diod. 17.70.6). According to Diodorus,

\(^{119}\) Arr. Anab. 3.17. See also Curt 5.3.6–16, who reports that Medates sent envoys to Darius’ mother begging her to intercede on his behalf.

\(^{120}\) See Bosworth 1988a: 88–89.

\(^{121}\) Diod. 17.71.1: τὴν δὲ Περσέπολιν ... τοῖς στρατιώταις ἐδοκεῖν ἐλές διαρπαγὴν χωρίς τῶν βασιλείων.

\(^{122}\) Diod. 17.70.2–6.
Alexander then "ascended to the citadel terrace and took possession of the treasure there."\(^{123}\) The king "felt bitter enmity towards the inhabitants. He did not trust them, and he wished to destroy Persepolis utterly."\(^{124}\) In the letter of Alexander quoted by Plutarch, the king supposedly wrote that he ordered the Persian prisoners to be killed, and thought this was to his advantage (Plut. Alex. 37.2). Diodorus also refers to Alexander's hatred of Persians and his desire to destroy the city completely, even before the initial occupation (17.71.3). If these traditions are true, they provide strong evidence that Alexander, at this stage of the campaign, felt nothing but hostility to the Persians, and did not have the slightest intention to pose as the local king of Persia by respecting native traditions in the way he certainly had in Egypt and Babylon.

Curtius reports that Pasargadae was soon surrendered to Alexander by its governor Gobares, and that another 6000 talents were captured.\(^{125}\) Pasargadae was in fact an ancient settlement, and an important residence of Cyrus the Great. Located in the Murgab valley and surrounded by mountains, the settlement was approximately 80 km to the northeast of Persepolis.\(^{126}\) The Achaemenid settlement extended over an area of three by two kilometres, including two palaces, a large gatehouse, royal gardens and a stone tower. The most important monument was the tomb of Cyrus, the dynastic founder and creator of the Persian empire. Alexander must have been familiar with the tomb, since he certainly visited it in 324 after his return from India, and may have visited it in 330.\(^{127}\) If

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\(^{123}\) Diod. 17.71.1.

\(^{124}\) Diod. 17.71: οὐκ ὁρᾶ ἀλλοτρίως ἔχων πρὸς τοὺς ἐγχωρίους ἡπίστει τε αὐτῶς καὶ τὴν Περσέπολιν εἰς τέλος ἔσευσε καταφθεῖραι.

\(^{125}\) Curt. 5.6.10; Arr. 3.18.10. It is unknown whether Alexander personally journeyed to Pasargadae to capture this treasure; curiously, Curtius' account of Alexander's campaign into the interior of Persis does not even mention Pasargadae.

\(^{126}\) The city's name appears to have been taken from the Persian tribe that lived in the area, and Strabo states that the city was built by Cyrus the Great at the location of his victory over Astyages (15.3.8). With the first major conquest of Cyrus in Media, the king carried off his booty to Pasargadae (Treidler 1962: 777–799). Major construction occurred at the site from c. 550–530 BC, and later Persian kings added to the city.

\(^{127}\) Aristobulus (FGřH 139 F 51 = Strabo 15.3.7) stated that he entered Cyrus' tomb during his first visit (κατὰ ... τὴν πρώτην ἐπιδημίαν) to Pasargadae, which might suggest that Alexander had inspected the
so, the act can hardly have been well received by the Iranians, for the site would have been desecrated.128

But the fundamental significance of Pasargadae was its role in the Achaemenid royal ritual of succession. This rite is described by Plutarch in his life of Artaxerxes (Plut. Artax. 3.1–2). Badian has argued that Alexander participated in such a ritual,129 but this is little more than speculation (see below subsection 3.7). The sources describing Alexander’s occupation of Persis report that the king spent most of his time in Persepolis. It was his actions in this city that require detailed study.

2.4. The Burning of the Persepolis Palace

The role that Persepolis played in the Achaemenid empire is elucidated by archaeology and the Classical sources.130 We can briefly review the evidence. The city was built on the spur of Mount Kuh-i Rahmat, and the artificial terrace on which the royal palaces were built stood above the city which was a home to Persian nobles, as well as ordinary people. In the Persian language, Persepolis was known as Pārsa,131 a name which was also used for the surrounding region (roughly the modern Iranian province of Fars). Founded by Darius I (c. 520 BC), the city was completed and developed by his successors, whose major building activities seem to have continued until at least 450 BC. However, the Persian kings appear to have been itinerant, and spent their time in Babylon, Ecbatana, Susa and Persepolis. Athenaeus reports that the Great Kings were present at Persepolis in the autumn.132 Later Achaemenids came to spend less time in the

tomb in 330. For the view that there was only one inspection of Cyrus’ tomb in 324, see Bosworth 1988b: 53–55. Cf. Seibert 2004: 13–30.
131 XPa 14 (Kent 1953: 148).
city than their predecessors. But the city remained an important place for royal burials. Most studies have concluded that Persepolis was not a major administrative centre of the Achaemenid empire or an imperial capital. Rather, it was the fundamental ritual and dynastic centre for the Achaemenids in their Persian homeland, and the location of awe-inspiring imperial and religious ceremonies attended by their subjects. The foremost ceremony was undoubtedly the New Year festival (the Now Ruz), the Spring celebration at which oriental subjects would present themselves and their tribute before the Great King.

In view of Persepolis' importance, the burning of the palaces needs to be put into perspective. Alexander stayed in Persis for four months. The date for his arrival could have fallen in mid-January or February 330. Explanations for the delay have ranged from Badian's view that Alexander was waiting for news of Agis' revolt to Borza's suggestion that the king was carefully waiting to obtain accurate information on Darius' location and his new army. At any rate, it was towards the end of the four-month period that the palace complexes of Persepolis were burned.

First, the attempt of N. G. L. Hammond to date the burning of the palace to the initial month of Alexander's presence in the city is not convincing. Arrian's extraordinarily short account of the events in Persis does not even mention Alexander's campaign into the interior; it can hardly be pressed into service to produce a secure chronology, as Hammond attempts to do. The transportation of the enormous amounts

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134 Schmidt 1953: 82–84; Pope 1957: 123–130; Dandamaev and Lukonin 1989: 255.
135 Plut. Alex. 37.3.
136 Beloch 3.2: 318 (early February); Borza 1972: 237 (mid-January 330); Brunt 1976: 493 (not before early January); Hamilton 1999: 98 (early February);
137 See Borza 1972: 242, who suggests that Darius may have liberated Mesopotamia in an attempt to cut Alexander off in Persis. Plutarch (Alex. 42) reports that, when Alexander left Persis for Media, he expected to fight another battle (τότε δὲ ἐξῆλθαν ἐπὶ Δαρείου ὡς πάλιν μαχαίρι 
138 See Arr. Anab. 3.18.11–12; Curt. 5.7.2–7; Diod. 17.72.1–5; Plut. Alex. 38.1–8.
140 Cf. Hammond (1992: 361–364), who, partly on the basis of Arrian's account, argued that, when "the Macedonian force ... approached Persepolis, Alexander consulted a meeting of his Commanders, at which Parmenio opposed the idea of burning the Palace and Alexander supported it as a symbol of revenge for the
of money and treasure will have taken at least a month.\textsuperscript{141} Although the confused account of Diodorus does indeed refer to the destruction of palace before Alexander's campaign, this is contradicted by Curtius' statement about the arrangements that Alexander made before leaving for a brief journey into Persis. The fundamental evidence is that Nicarchides was left in charge of the palaces: "the king ordered Nicarchides to guard the citadel of Persepolis, with three thousand Macedonians remaining as a garrison."\textsuperscript{142} Clearly, Alexander ensured that the palaces and their treasuries were heavily defended during the preparations to transport the money to Susa. Alexander also left a large section of the army and its baggage under Parmenio and Craterus in the city, and then, with a thousand cavalry and a detachment of light-armoured infantry, began his occupation of the interior of Persis. This, according to Curtius, occurred "at the time of the Pleiades"—which ought to be approximately late March or April of 330.\textsuperscript{143} At that time, the palaces cannot have been burnt.

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\textsuperscript{141} See Bloedow and Loube 1997: 347-348: "[sc. the treasure amounted] to 120,000 talents, or approximately three million kg, for which up to 10,000 mules and 3000 / 5000 pack camels were required. This has rightly been construed as posing an extraordinary problem of logistics .... Moreover, given the labyrinthine character of the plan of the Treasury ... it would have taken much time simply to move three million kg of bullion out of the building. Apart from the sheer time required to remove the bullion, one has also to bear in mind that only so many men could enter and exit the building at one time." Hammond's view is completely discredited in light of these considerations.

\textsuperscript{142} Curt. 5.6.11: \textit{rex arcem Persepolis, tribus milibus Macedonum praesidio relixit, Nicarchiden tueri iubet.}

\textsuperscript{143} Curt. 5.6.12. For the chronology, see Brunt 1976: 493 and Borza 1972: 237, n. 29.

The vigorous modern debate about the burning of Persepolis has been provoked by the two conflicting traditions in the ancient sources. There is no doubt that the official propaganda disseminated by Alexander stressed that the act was revenge for Xerxes’ destruction of Greek temples.\footnote{See Arr. Anab. 3.18.12: ὁ δὲ τιμωρήσασθαι έθέλειν Πέρσας ἔφασκεν ἀνθ᾽ ὠν ἔπι τὴν Ἑλλάδα ἡλάσαντες τὰς τῇ Ἀθήναις κατέσκαψαν καὶ τὰ ἱερὰ ἐνέπρησαν, καὶ ὀσα ἄλλα κακὰ τοῖς Ἑλλήνας εἰργάσασθαι, ὑπὲρ τούτων δίκαις λαβεῖν (“Alexander said that he wished to punish the Persians for sacking Athens and burning the temples when they invaded Greece, and to exact retribution for all the other injuries they had done to the Greeks”); Strabo 15.3.6: ἐνέπρησε δὲ ὁ Ἀλέξανδρος τὰ ἐν Περσεπόλει βασιλεία τιμωρῶν τοῖς Ἑλληνοῖς, διὶ κάκεινων ἱερὰ καὶ πόλεις οἱ Πέρσαι πυρὶ καὶ σιδήρῳ διεπόρθησαν (“Alexander burnt up the palace at Persepolis, to avenge the Greeks, because the Persians had destroyed temples and cities of the Greeks by fire and sword”). It is difficult to know what source Strabo relied on for his account, given its brevity (Bosworth 1980b: 331).} This account is preserved in Arrian and Strabo. We know that Cleitarchus wrote that Thais had been responsible for the burning of the palaces; this is the colourful alternative account of the incident that appears in the Vulgate sources.\footnote{Ath. 13.576d–e: περὶ ἡς φησι Κλείταρχος ὡς αἰτίας γενομένης τοῦ ἐμπροσθήκησαι τὰ ἐν Περσεπόλει βασιλεία. See Pearson 1960: 218–220.}

Unfortunately, even the archaeological evidence relating to the Persepolis palaces cannot provide a definitive solution to the contradictions in the ancient sources, but admits of different interpretations. In essence, three separate buildings bore the brunt of...
the conflagration, viz., the Apadana, the hall of 200 columns and the treasury building. The archaeological evidence shows that intense fires were lit in the Apadana (the audience hall completed by Xerxes) and Throne Hall of Xerxes. The Treasury, a large and complex building, also suffered numerous fires. In contrast to this, the harem was only affected by minor and separate fires, as in the case of four rooms in its western wing.

Now one could argue that the three separate fires required some planning—which strongly suggests that the act was deliberate and premeditated. According to this view, Arrian is no doubt correct when he reports that Alexander deliberately set the royal palace on fire; Parmenio had tried to dissuade him from his plan, by arguing that it was now his property and that his Asian subjects would think that his conquests were not to be permanent. But it is difficult to know if this advice is historical: it may be a literary

147 Nawotka 2003: 73; Atkinson 1993: 5.
148 See Schmidt 1953: 122, who notes that the western part of the Tripylon was destroyed by fire. See also Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1993: 181 and Schmidt (1957: 3): “the most imposing public structures of ... [Persepolis] perished in one great conflagration or, conceivably, in several fires set within a short span of time.” That the Throne Hall was a foundation of Xerxes, though it was later completed by Artaxerxes I, is demonstrated by the Babylonian inscription found during Herzfeld’s excavations (Schmidt 1953: 129).
149 Schmidt 1953: 262–263: “The western portion of the west wing was largely destroyed by fire ... only the main rooms (2, 4, 6) of the northern tier were burned .... In the southern tier heavy scorching was observed in Room 8 only .... At any rate it appears that there was no general conflagration; but the combustible contents of the main rooms – furniture, fabrics and like – apparently were methodically destroyed by separate fires.”
150 See Shahbazi (2003: 19–20), who was Director of Persepolis Antiquities from 1973 until 1980. He notes that there “was a moat and a deep, wide well, both full of water, next to the platform of Persepolis. An accidental fire, or one which was regretted after igniting, could easily have been contained. Burned floors and debris are found in areas which were isolated by thick mud brick walls indicating no accidental spreading of blazes but fires deliberately started at several places simultaneously. All jewellery insets adorning ... the sculpted royal figures were carefully and systematically removed before the fire. And stone slabs ... were taken from the Treasury and arranged on the eastern platform wall to be used as seats by spectators who were watching the fire” (Shahbazi 2003: 19, n. 71).
151 Arr. Anab. 3.18.11–12.
topos or even coloured by the later embellishment of stories about Parmenio. It is, furthermore, a rather unconvincing argument, for the non-Iranian subjects of Alexander in Asia can hardly have been hostile to Alexander’s treatment of Persepolis. Only his Persian and Iranian subjects will have been horrified and shocked by the destruction wrought on their ritual capital. As for the historical Parmenio, we are justified in doubting that he had any qualms about the arson.

In contrast to this line of thought, dissenters from the “official” version of Arrian point out that the palaces were not completely empty of their artefacts and furniture, and—so it is argued—this shows that the arson was not premeditated. Furthermore, the fact that a large number of precious objects appear to have been dropped in haste on the floors of the palace and then covered in debris might suggest that the palaces were looted in a hurry shortly before the fire.

What is most notable from the destruction of the palace is that the three main buildings burnt were all associated with Xerxes. Indeed, the Apadana contained a large statue of Xerxes, to which Plutarch refers in an apocryphal tale. This certainly supports

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152 If Ptolemy is Arrian’s source here, it may be an attempt to rehabilitate Parmenio’s reputation, by presenting him as a wise counsellor ignored by the rash Alexander (Atkinson 1995: 6). Sancisi-Weerdenburg (1993: 177-188) argues that the roles of Thais in the Vulgate and Parmenio in Arrian are literary topoi: Parmenio functions as a “tragic figure,” who warns the king against unwise action; and Thais as a “temptress” who incites the king to evil acts. Alternatively, but less plausibly, it may be hostile to Parmenio and derive from Callisthenes (e.g., Plut. Alex. 33 [where Plutarch alleges incompetence by Parmenio at Gaugamela]). But see Pearson (1960: 47), who questions the view that Callisthenes was responsible for bias against Parmenio.


154 See Baynham 1998: 98, who argues that Parmenio probably did not support the continued and permanent conquests that Alexander was planning.

155 Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1993: 183: “That the emptying of the store-houses probably went on while the flames were already raging is, it seems, strongly suggested by the pieces that were left behind .... The conclusion, often repeated in the literature, and frequently used as an argument in favor of a premeditated act by Alexander, is therefore ill-founded.”


157 Plut. Alex. 37.3: Alexander gazed on a great statue of Xerxes (Ξέρξου ... ἀνδρόντα μέγαν), which had been thrown down by his soldiers on entering the palace, and engaged in a monologue about its fate.
the view that the Persian invader of Greece was the target of the vandalism, as in the official propaganda of Alexander.\textsuperscript{158} Admittedly, it could also be reconciled with the Vulgate version, as the same theme of revenge forms the core of Thais’ alleged role.

As we have seen, we are left with the depressing conclusion that even archaeology cannot resolve the problem completely.

There has, however, been recent work on Cleitarchus and the historicity of his account of the fire.\textsuperscript{159} Here the role of Thais and the Vulgate account deserve closer scrutiny. It is often argued that Ptolemy’s history may have suppressed the role of his mistress and later wife, if the Vulgate version preserves historical truth.\textsuperscript{160} But it is rather questionable whether the original account of Cleitarchus included an episode about Thais embarrassing to Ptolemy. Both Diodorus and Curtius relied on Cleitarchus, but a strong case can be made that Diodorus is closer to Cleitarchus’ original account, whereas Curtius has diverged from his source and inserted a rhetorical and moralising condemnation of Alexander and the whole incident.\textsuperscript{161} Diodorus states that Alexander

\textsuperscript{158} Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1993: 182: “The map of burnt buildings corresponds closely to the motive so unanimously given by the ancient authors. The Apadana, the Throne Hall and the Hadis had all originally been identifiable as constructions of Xerxes by means of various inscriptions on walls, window-sills and columns. It is not unlikely that the skill of reading Old Persian had vanished by the time of Alexander, but the Akkadian must have been still readable. It may be that the Apadana was also recognisable as a palace of Xerxes by a large statue of the king …. it was mainly the palaces of Xerxes and therefore the symbols of Xerxes’ royal power which formed the target of a pyrotechnic damnatio memoriae.” The role of Agis’ war in the burning of palaces is certainly relevant. On one view, it was precisely during his stay in Persis or shortly afterwards that Alexander received news of Antipater’s victory at Megalopolis. If we accept the revisionist chronology of Cawkwell (1969: 163–180), then the death of Agis would have occurred in early 330 (this chronology is now accepted by Badian 1994: 274–277), and the course of the war will no doubt have been on Alexander’s mind during his months in Persis. Cf. Borza 1972: 242: “the news of the rebel collapse could have greeted Alexander almost any time after mid-December (perhaps even as early as late October) 331.” See also Lock 1972: 22–23; Badian 1994: 275–276.).

\textsuperscript{159} Dreyer 2008.

\textsuperscript{160} E.g., Cartledge 2004: 280 (“Ptolemy’s self-interested suppression of the alleged role of Thais would have been wholly understandable”).

\textsuperscript{161} Mederer 1936: 73: “Curtius skips over the panegyrical element” (“Curtius das panegyrische Moment … übergeht”). See Jacoby’s commentary to \textit{FGrH} 137 F 11: “[sc. Cleitarchus]’ report is only available in a pure form in Diodorus 17.72” (“[sc. Cleitarchus]’ bericht liegt rein nur Diod. XVII 72 vor”). There is no
and his guests were inspired by religious frenzy (λυσσα), not simply "madness."\textsuperscript{162} The act of torching the palace was part of a victory \textit{komos} for Dionysus.\textsuperscript{163} There is thus a religious element to the whole event, in which Alexander, Thais and the Macedonians could be regarded as instruments of the god. A plausible interpretation is that Cleitarchus fabricated the incident to flatter Ptolemy and his later wife.\textsuperscript{164} The link with Dionysus is understandable given the emphasis that Ptolemaic propaganda placed on this god and his connection to Alexander, particularly in the grand procession of Philadelphus II.\textsuperscript{165} If we accept the role of Cleitarchus in creating the Thais episode, it follows that the Vulgate account, derived from his history, is fiction.\textsuperscript{166}

Other arguments that have been deployed to explain the vexing events in Persepolis are of much greater interest. Peter Green has argued that Alexander delayed in Persis in order to participate in the Persian New Year festival (the \textit{Now Ruz}), which...
occurred in late March. When his negotiations with the Persian priests collapsed, his revenge was to burn down the Persepolis palaces.\footnote{Green 1974: 318–319: “the New Year Festival could still be held .... And he, Alexander, [sc. would] be acclaimed, with all due ceremonial, as Ahura Mazda’s representative on earth. The psychological effect produced by such an act of recognition would be incalculable. Its impact would reach the remotest corners of the empire .... If negotiations were ever opened on this tricky subject, they soon broke down .... About 20 April Alexander gave up hope.” On this, see Lauffer 1981: 103.}

We have already seen that Persepolis and Pasargadae had great significance in the Persian ideology of kingship, and the New Year’s festival was celebrated in Persepolis: the archaeological evidence identifies the Apadana—the audience hall of Darius I—as a crucial location in this colourful pageant. The northern and eastern stairways of the Apadana depicted the great procession of subject peoples bringing tribute and gifts to the Great King, one important aspect of this festival. It was very probably celebrated at the same time as the Babylonian \textit{akitu} festival, which some scholars believe heavily influenced it.\footnote{Gnoli 1974b: 123.} Hence a date \textit{c.} 21 March, in the Persian month of Adukanaisha (which corresponds to the Babylonian month of Nisannu), seems most plausible.\footnote{W. Hinz, \textit{RE Suppl.} 12 (1970), s.v. “Persis,” 1031; Fennelly 1980: 148; Dandamaev and Lukonin 1989: 255.}

But how credible is Green’s argument? First, we should note that no ancient source can be used to support it. The idea would have plausibility only if we assume that Alexander actually did wish to be regarded as the new king of Persia. But, as we have seen, there are strong reasons for rejecting this very idea. The initial occupation of the city and the massacre of its inhabitants hardly suggested that Alexander wished to cultivate local sentiment. Furthermore, Alexander had already posed as a liberator of Egypt and Babylonia from Persian despotism. He had courted the elite by righting the wrongs—whether real or imagined—that the Persians had done to their subjects. What purpose would be served by undermining this work, with its reliance on anti-Persian propaganda, by proclaiming himself the new, direct successor of the hated Great King? Far from consolidating his conquests in Asia, it would undo much of the work he had accomplished. Crucially, Alexander had \textit{already} decided to plunder the wealth of the palace and transport the money to Ecbatana and Susa—a decision taken before the firing
of the palace complex. This strongly militates against the view that Persepolis had any appeal for Alexander, either in his conception of kingship or as a political or administrative centre for his new Asian empire.

Far from being an irrational or inexplicable act, I would argue that Alexander's burning of the Persepolis palace—as well as the earlier sacking of the city—was the logical culmination of his campaign. The long-standing mystery that modern scholarship sees in the destruction of the palaces stems fundamentally from the belief that Alexander thought of himself as the new Great King. For instance, Sancisi-Weerdenburg insists that Alexander's aspiration to the "Achaemenid kingship" is the puzzle that complicates any discussion of this episode. But the puzzle simply disappears on the view that Alexander aspired to no such thing in 331. That Alexander did not aim at sitting on the throne of Darius III as a direct heir of the Achaemenid kings, ruling by the grace of Ahura Mazda, is the inescapable conclusion. At this point, Alexander will have conceived the destruction and replacement of the Achaemenid kingship as the prerequisite for his own kingship of Asia. It follows that the wholesale destruction and looting of the Persian capital displayed in stark terms that Alexander's rule had now replaced that of the Great King. His Asian subjects in Anatolia, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and Babylonia—whom he supposedly liberated—now had earth-shattering proof that the old era had passed away and that a new era had commenced. Whether Alexander

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170 See Bloedow (1995: 40): "When one looks at Persepolis ... one finds oneself driven towards the conclusion that it is even more difficult to find a rational explanation for Alexander's treatment of the city."

171 See Briant 1982: 357–403; Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1993: 180 ("[sc. the destruction] was quite contrary to Alexander's usual policy ... It stands, above all, in remarkable opposition to his contemporary posture as the legitimate successor of the Achaemenid kings"); Badian 1994: 284 ("To 'Asia' ... Persepolis was at most a symbol of royal rule, of domination by the Achaemenids ... The destruction of [sc. Alexander's] own symbol of legitimacy made no political or historical sense. One can only repeat that the man who sat on the throne of the Achaemenids had no business destroying their revered palaces").

172 Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1993: 182. See also Brunt 1976: 515: "the arson was inconsistent with the role ... [sc. Alexander] was about to assume as the rightful successor of Darius."

173 Those who have taken this view include Lauffer 1981: 104 (the conflagration was intended to symbolise the end of the Achaemenid rule); Hamilton 1973: 89; Tarn 1948: 47; Borza 1972: 243 ("Persepolis was the symbol of the ancien régime in Asia .... [The] Old Order was gone. The full impact of this needed to be
ordered the firing of Persepolis as an official act of policy or as the consequence of a high-spirited symposium, the act meant just as much to his eastern subjects as it did to the Greeks.\textsuperscript{174}

### 2.5. Alexander and the Magi: the Attack on Iranian Religion

Alexander’s destruction of Persepolis was not the only blow that the Persian homeland was to receive. Iranian religion had a very important role in the Achaemenid conception of kingship. Whether the first Achaemenid kings subscribed to some form of Zoroastrianism is disputed, but it is certain that the Great Kings regarded Ahura Mazda as the supreme deity.\textsuperscript{175} The consequences of Alexander’s policy of brutality in Persis were predictable enough. There is considerable evidence of intense Persian hatred of Alexander in later tradition, for in Iranian literature he was known as “the Accursed

\textsuperscript{174} See Wirth 1971: 150: “The other peoples—the Egyptians, Babylonians, and those in Asia Minor—must have also waited for a gesture. Alexander also came to them as a liberator and terminated Persian rule. The fact that the Babylonians saw revenge for Xerxes’ injustice in the fire of Persepolis is obvious. The fire must have meant more to all these [sc. eastern] peoples than to the Greeks, being an event which affected them more powerfully, because it was closer to them” (“Auf eine Geste gewartet haben müssen auch die anderen Völker, Ägypter, Babylonier, Kleinasien. Auch zu ihnen war Alexander als Befreier gekommen und hatte die persische Herrschaft beendet. Daß die Babylonier im Brande von Persepolis die Rache für das ihnen von Xerxes Angetane sahen, liegt auf der Hand. Für all diese Völker nun, dem Ereignis räumlich näher und schon deshalb stärker von ihm betroffen, muß der Brand mehr bedeutet haben als für die Griechen”). Wirth also argues that had Alexander not taken such a decisive action he would have appeared as a betrayer of his role as “liberator” of the east.

one."\textsuperscript{176} In the \textit{Book of Arda Viraf}, a middle Persian Zoroastrian text written in Pahlavi, there is the following important account of the king:

But, afterward, the accursed Evil Spirit, the Wicked One, in order to make men doubtful of this religion [i.e., Zoroastrianism], instigated the accursed Alexander, the Roman [= Greek], who was dwelling in Egypt, so that he came to the country of Iran, and destroyed the metropolis and empire, and made them desolate. And this religion, namely, all the \textit{Avesta} and \textit{Zand}, written upon prepared cow-skins, and with gold ink, was deposited in the archives, in [Persepolis], and the hostility of the evil-destined, wicked Ashemok, the evil-doer, brought onward Alexander, the Roman [= Greek], who was dwelling in Egypt, and he burned them up. And he killed several \textit{Desturs} [= high priests] and judges and \textit{Herbads} [= priests] and \textit{Mobads} [= the masters of the Magi] and upholders of the religion, and the competent and wise of the country of Iran. And he cast hatred and strife, one with the other, amongst the nobles and householders of the country of Iran; and self-destroyed, he fled to hell (\textit{Book of Arda Viraf} 1.3–11).\textsuperscript{177}

This hostility of Persian feeling towards Alexander—which no doubt had strong contemporary antecedents—makes it doubtful whether the Macedonian conqueror was accepted as a legitimate foreign king in Persis in the way that he certainly \textit{was} in Egypt and Babylon.

First, there is strong evidence that the Great King had a ritual and religious role in the Persian theory of kingship, which was violated and desecrated by Alexander numerous times.\textsuperscript{178} The god Ahura Mazda was fundamentally connected with Achaemenid royal power. The king ruled by the grace of Ahura Mazda, and the god was intimately connected with the person of the king. Yet Alexander is never attested performing sacrifices or giving any honours to this deity. Such conduct was in marked contrast with his behaviour in Babylon and Egypt, where both Marduk and Apis were

\textsuperscript{176} Shahbazi 2003: 19–29.

\textsuperscript{177} Translation follows Horne 1997: 185–186.

\textsuperscript{178} Widengren 1959: 251.
shown the greatest respect. P. Briant has argued that Alexander did in fact pay homage to Ahura Mazda, in his initial prayer to the gods at the beginning of the Asian campaign (Diod. 17.17.2). On this view, the Greeks and Macedonians will have equated Ahura Mazda with Zeus, and Briant drew attention to an inscription which, he believed, demonstrated such a syncretism. However, it is now acknowledged that the Badates of the inscription is the personal name of an Iranian who had dedicated it to Zeus, and cannot possibly be the syncretistic term to describe Ahura Mazda.

Alexander’s dealings with the Magi reinforce such a view. The Greek word Μάγος was derived from the Old Persian magu-. Some argue that the magi were originally a Median tribe, but this has been contested. Certainly, the magi were by profession the class of Persian priests who were fundamental for many Iranian religious and ritual activities. The precise relationship between the Zoroastrian religion and the magi has been debated by modern specialists, but as priests the magi are well attested in the ancient Greek sources. The Persians required the services of the magi for all sacrifices, for only they could recite the necessary prayers (Hdt. 1.132). Great Kings

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180 The point is conceded by Briant 1996: 235.
182 See Herodotus (1.101) for the Median origin. It should be noted that the word corresponding to magu- in the Avesta is generally translated as “member of the tribe,” and it does not seem to mean “priest”, the meaning it certainly has in the Western Iranian sources, such as Old Persian inscriptions and Elamite documents from Persepolis. Analysis of the Classical literature is complicated by the fact the word μάγος and its Latin derivative became a general term for “magician,” “sorcerer”, and “wizard”. The Median origin for the magi is denied by De Jong (2005: 90–91).
183 Diog. Laert. 1.1.
consulted them to interpret their dreams and to predict the future, and the priests even accompanied the Persian army on military campaigns.\textsuperscript{185}

The question of how Alexander treated these Persians priests immediately arises. Later Iranian literature remembered Alexander as the murderer of priests.\textsuperscript{186} A perusal of the Graeco-Roman sources suggests that this later tradition was very probably correct. Curtius reports that the Magi were present in the army of Darius III before the disastrous battle of Issus: they followed the sacred and eternal fire carried in front of Darius' army as it left Babylon and chanted hymns.\textsuperscript{187} As we have seen, the Persian magi regularly accompanied the Great King's armies, and many may well have been captured or slaughtered in the aftermath of Issus and Gaugamela.\textsuperscript{188} Of course, such killing during military engagements does not prove that Alexander had any specific hostility towards the Persian priesthood, because the Magi in fact welcomed Alexander at Babylon. Here they greeted him along with the Chaldaeans and other Babylonians.\textsuperscript{189} Presumably, the

\textsuperscript{185} Hdt. 7.37; 7.43; 7.113. Ostanes, Xerxes' chief \textit{magus}, was with the Persian expedition during the invasion of Greece. Xenophon refers on numerous occasions to the magi who followed Cyrus (Cyr. 4.5.14; 7.1.23; 7.5.57; 8.3.11; 8.1.23).

\textsuperscript{186} Henning 1944: 138–144. \textit{Book of Arda Viraf} 1.9 (trans. Horne 1997: 186). It must be conceded that the Zoroastrian literature was not written down until after the fifth century AD. Before this time, Zoroastrian priests had merely transmitted oral traditions. This does raise the question of the reliability of these traditions. For instance, the story that Alexander destroyed a gilded copy of the \textit{Avesta} (\textit{Book of Arda Viraf} 1.7–8 (trans. Horne 1997: 185) is fiction, given that this work was not composed until centuries after his death (Nyberg 1966: 423). However, the unrelenting hostility of later Iranian sources towards Alexander cannot be dismissed lightly. The Zoroastrian literature included three important categories: (1) the \textit{Avesta}, the ritual texts; (2) the \textit{Zand}, exegetical translations and commentaries on the \textit{Avesta}; and (3) theological and historical texts based on the \textit{Zand} (see De Jong 2005: 93–94).

\textsuperscript{187} \textit{Ordo autem agminis erat talis. Ignis, quem ipsi sacrum et aeternum vocabant, argenteis altaribus praeferebatur. Magi proximi patrium carmen canebant} (Curt. 3.3.9–10).

\textsuperscript{188} Boyce 1982: 289. After Issus, Darius' camp was captured (Arr. \textit{Anab.} 2.11.9), and the troops plundered it (Diod. 17.35.1–2; Plut. \textit{Alex.} 20.6). The Great King's wife, mother and daughters were present in the camp, and it is by no means unlikely that Persian priests were also in attendance.

\textsuperscript{189} Curt. 5.1.19.
favour shown by Alexander to the Babylonians was also accorded to the magi who lived in the city.  

But such amicable relations were not to be repeated at the conquest of Persis. There the magi would have suffered the same fate as the general population, and the heartland of the Persian empire was also the religious capital. Very many priests had been present in Persepolis and Pasargadae. Their duties included tending the royal tombs and the sacred fire, and performing religious, administrative, and perhaps even legal functions in the palace. In fact, the Persian scribes probably formed part of the lowest level of the Magian priesthood. It appears that they also educated the Persian crown princes. Administrative documents from the capital elucidate their sacrificial tasks. Persepolis was, in short, a "leading centre of Persian Zoroastrianism." Hence one cannot underestimate the effect that the destruction of the Persepolis palace had on the Magi. The life blood of Iranian national religion had flowed from its heart at Persepolis. The cruel brutality that destroyed the ancient Achaemenid capital must have left the Persian priests reeling.

It is by no means surprising that the primary sources carry no explicit report detailing any acts of benefaction towards the Iranian priests or gestures of piety toward the Persian temples on Alexander's part. Indeed, the blow dealt to the Achaemenids' state-sponsorship of Iranian religion through the destruction of Persepolis no doubt explains the later reputation of Alexander in Iranian tradition as "the Accursed." This sobriquet was also given to Angra Mainyu, the great evil spirit who opposed Ahura Mazda in the dualistic world view of Zoroastrian thought. One can posit that Alexander

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190 See Bidez-Cumont 1938: 34–35; Boyce 1982: 289. It is likely that the magi had a significant presence at Babylon so that they could learn to read, write and speak the Aramaic language, the Persian language of administration.


192 In the time of Artaxerxes I, it appears that documents were no longer written in Elamite at the Persepolis treasury. All documents were written in Aramaic and soon the Persian priests came to fulfill this function. A Persian scribe was known as a *dipivara. On this, see Boyce 1982: 178–179.


was viewed in precisely these terms by contemporary Zoroastrian priests: they had, after all, been driven from their homes in the capital and had witnessed the shattering of the “cosmic order” by a foreign invader of the Iranian fatherland.

One can even speculate that Iranian resistance to the Macedonian conquest was incited and encouraged by patriotic magi. We know that the Brahmans in India did precisely this—and were treated with brutality that verged on their extermination. The Bactrian revolt that broke out in 329 was put down with similar cruelty. The location of the rebellion is all the more significant because Bactria had been the legendary birthplace of Zoroaster, and was surely a stronghold of Zoroastrian faith. Although Alexander certainly had no religious motive for attacking the magi, any Iranian priests who had supported the political rebel Spitamenes would surely have been treated harshly.

In light of this, it is curious that magi would have associated themselves with their conqueror. But Arrian does provide evidence for the presence of magi in Alexander’s court. After the mutiny at Opis, the king held a great banquet of reconciliation. The scene is described at length by Arrian, who notes that Greek seers and magi began the ceremony. However, it is quite possible that these magi were actually attached to the

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196 Boyce 1991: 15: “it is very possible that ... [the magi] felt it their duty to resist, and to influence their people to resist, the Macedonian, to them a petyarag, a calamity sent by Angra Mainyu to destroy what was good.”
197 See Arr. Anab. 6.16.5; Plut. Alex. 59.4; 64; Diod. 17.102.
198 Nigosian 1993: 3–24. Porphyrius (De Abstinentia 4.21) relates the curious tale that Stasanor the hipparch was nearly driven out by the Bactrians because he tried to stop them killing their elderly relatives by exposing them to dogs. This appears to be a garbled reflection of the Zoroastrian practice of exposing corpses to be eaten by animals. Perhaps the Stasanor named by Porphyrius aroused local hostility by attempting to curb that practice (Boyce and Grenet 1991: 8; cf. Holt 1999: 122).
199 Lendering 2004: 249. See also Lendering (2004: 247), or the possibility that Spitamenes may have been a descendant of the prophet Zoroaster, who bore Spitama as his family name. The pretender Baryaxes in Media was later killed together with all his associates, and we may legitimately wonder whether the magi were part of such a rebellion (Arr. Anab. 6.29.3). On this, see Boyce and Grenet (1991: 15), who speculate that “the fame of the magi among learned Hellenes made it desirable to pass over in silence both their obduracy and their slaughter, as redounding little to Alexander’s credit.”
200 Anab. 7.11.8: καὶ ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτοῦ κρατῆρος αὐτὸς (sc. Ἀλέξανδρος ὁ τε καὶ οἱ ἄρμοι αὐτῶν ἁρφαμένοι ἔσπευδον τὰς αὐτῶς σπουδὰς καταρχομένων τῶν τε Ἑλλήνων μάντεων καὶ τῶν Μάγων.
entourages of the great Persian nobles in Alexander’s court and to the Iranian troops, rather than to the king himself. The increased use of Iranian soldiers by Alexander in his later years required respect for Persian religious convictions: a new and larger presence of Persian priests must have occurred as a matter of course.\textsuperscript{201}

But none of these events allows us to gauge the attitude of the Iranian magi themselves. Quite simply, their presence in the Macedonian court did not necessarily suggest that they—or their fellows scattered throughout the Iranian homelands—approved of the foreign king or his blasphemies against their religion.\textsuperscript{202}

2.6. Alexander and the Titulature of the Great King

The two fundamental titles of the Achaemenid monarchs were “king of kings” (Old Persian, \textit{xsayaBiya xsayaBiyanam}) and “Great King” (Old Persian, \textit{xsayaBiya vazraka}).\textsuperscript{203} There is no evidence whatsoever that Alexander ever used either of these titles. We are specifically told by Plutarch that the king rejected the first of these:

\begin{quote}
'\textit{Alexander did not deprive other kings of the royal title, and did not proclaim himself the king of kings (Plut. \textit{Demetr.} 25.3).}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{201} Boyce and Grenet 1991: 10–11.

\textsuperscript{202} Peucetas, the satrap of Persis, is known to have adopted Iranian customs (\textit{Arr. Anab.} 7.6.3), and perhaps this included respect for Persian religion. But the sequel to the story of Peucetas is told by Diodorus. After Alexander’s death, Antipater gained control of the Asian empire. During his reorganisation of the east he replaced Peucetas with a Macedonian. A Persian noble protested strongly against this act and contended that the Persians would only obey Peucetas. Antipater had the Persian put to death for his insolence (Diod. 19.48.2). It was an unhappy sequel to the harmony that existed between the Iranians and Peucetas.

\textsuperscript{203} On the Great King’s titulature, see Ahn 1992: 217–220.
Curiously, in contrast to Alexander, later Seleucid kings were prepared to use such pompous titulature. Antiochus III, in his official titles, often adopted the form βασιλεὺς μέγας Ἄντιόχος (“Great King Antiochus”). Antiochus’ achievements, particularly his own anabasis and restoration of the Seleucid empire, no doubt inspired him to adopt a more grandiloquent title associated with the Persian king. But Alexander’s rejection of the customary Persian titulature confirms that his kingship was not simply a restoration of the Persian empire.

2.7. Achaemenid Succession Rituals and Alexander

A review of what is known of the Persian accession ritual is necessary. The Persians had a set of ancestral customs which marked the death of the old king and succession of a new one. This began with a period of public mourning, at the beginning of which the sacred fires were extinguished. The designated successor was then required to escort the dead king’s remains to the Persian royal tombs, and it was after this that an ancient ceremony was performed. Plutarch describes this rite in his Life of Artaxerxes:

... [sc. 'Αρταξέρξης] ἔξηλασεν εἰς Πασαργάδας ὁ βασιλεὺς, ὅπως τελεσθείη τὴν βασιλικὴν τελετὴν ὑπὸ τῶν ἐν Πέρσαις ἱερέων. ἔστι δὲ ἐκεῖ θεάς πολεμικὴς ιερῶν, ἢν 'Αθηνᾶ τις ἀν ἐκάσειεν. εἰς τὸ τούτο δεῖ τὸν τελευμένον παρελθόντα τὴν μὲν ἰδίαν ἀποθέσθαι στολῆν, ἀναλαβεῖν δὲ ἢν Κῦρος ὁ παλαίως ἔφορει, πρὶν ἢ βασιλεὺς γενέσθαι, καὶ σύκων παλάθης ἐμφαγόντα τερμίθου κατατραγεῖν, καὶ ποτήριον ἐκπείειν ὄξυγάλακτος· εἰ δὲ πρὸς τούτοις ἔτερ' ἄττα δρόσων, ἄδηλον ἔστι.

... the king [sc. Artaxerxes] journeyed to Pasargadæ, so that he would undergo the royal initiation from the Persian priests. In that place there was a temple of a warrior goddess, whom we might conjecture to be Athena. It is necessary that the one

Bevan 1902b: 241–242. Bevan (1902b: 242) argues that in “cases where Seleucid kings have the title βασιλεὺς μέγας it is where there is a special reason for emphasizing the Eastern dominion.”
completing the ritual enter into the temple and set aside his own clothes. Then he assumes the costume that the ancient Cyrus wore before he became king, and eats a cake of figs and chews some turpentine wood. Then he drinks a cup of sour milk. It is unknown whether other things occur in addition to these rites (Plut. Artax. 3.1–2).

These peculiar rituals, which may be garbled by Greek writers, no doubt had religious and political significance, the most significant of which was the emphasis on the continuity of Persian kingship via the connection with Cyrus, the founder of the dynasty. But there was probably also an official ceremony where the king was handed the insignia of his power: the kandys, the shield, the bow, and possibly a royal chariot. This will have symbolised that royal power had now been delivered into the hands of the new king by Ahura-Mazda, the main god of the Persian state. After this, the candidate may even have been acclaimed by the people as the new Great King, with a court ceremony at which the leading nobles, satraps and officials would have appeared.

E. Badian has recently argued that Alexander participated in a traditional Achaemenid rite of succession on his return to Persis in 324 BC. In an ingenious attempt to explain the mysterious sacrilege at Cyrus’ tomb by the Magi (Arr. Anab. 6.29; Strabo 15.3.7), Badian postulated that the “temple” described by Plutarch was in fact the tomb of Cyrus and the real site of the ceremony. One alleged reason for this was that Plutarch’s Iranian warrior goddess was supposedly not known in Achaemenid religion (Badian 1996: 23). The Magi had thus deliberatively desecrated the site to prevent Alexander from taking part in the traditional Achaemenid rite of accession.

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205 Brosius (2003: 179) interprets these curious acts as “a reminder of the humble beginnings of the empire as well as the humbleness and mortality of the king in power.”

206 For the bow as a symbol of prowess and military virtue, see Root 1979: 166–169.


210 Badian 1996: 24: “We have seen that Alexander could not have risked a formal coronation at Pasargadae on his first visit. The care devoted to Cyrus’ tomb (and not to any other building, or to the tomb of any other king) suggests that he considered it a possibility for the future. On his return, visiting the sacred site and holding court there, he certainly had the power to enforce it. We are within a few weeks of
One serious problem with Badian’s thesis is that the goddess equated with Athena by Plutarch is certainly Anahita, a Persian deity associated with fertility and war. There is consequently no need to believe that Plutarch’s information on the rite’s location is mistaken. There are additional reasons why Badian’s argument is unconvincing. First, according to a tradition preserved by Plutarch, the perpetrator of the crime was none other than a Macedonian called Polymachus, not the Magi (Alex. 69.3). Secondly, Alexander had not personally escorted Darius’ cortège to the tombs of Pasargadae, as was required by Persian custom. Arrian does report that Alexander “sent Darius’ body to Persepolis, and ordered it to be buried in the royal tomb, like the other kings who ruled before him.” But this action was surely to be ascribed to the king’s magnanimity as a gracious victor; it was not an attempt to participate in the ancient Persian traditions of succession. In fact, the complete silence of the ancient sources—which are so sensitive to Alexander’s adoption of oriental customs—militates strongly against the view that any Persian succession rituals were ever performed for Alexander, in either 330 or 324. No source records that Alexander ordered public mourning at the death of Darius, or that he had the sacred fires quenched, although these had been long-standing Persian traditions, essential for the continuity of the Persian kingship (see subsection 2 above). Finally, the idea that the tomb of Cyrus was the location of the rite must remain conjecture.

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211 Briant 1991: 7: “Il [sc. the rite] takes place in the temple of a war goddess: in Athena we can easily recognise Anahita, at that time goddess of water and fertility, but also a goddess of war” (“Il se déroule dans le temple d’une déesse guerrière: sous Athéna on reconnaît aisément Anahita, à la fois déesse des eaux, de la fertilité mais aussi déesse guerrière”).


213 Αλέξανδρος δὲ τὸ μὲν σῶμα τοῦ Δαρείου ἐς Πέρσαις ἀπέπεμψε, θάψας κελεύσας ἐν ταῖς βασιλικαῖς θήκαις, καθάπερ καὶ οἱ άλλοι οἱ πρὸ Δαρείου βασιλεῖς (Anab. 3.22.1). Diodorus (17.73.3–4) simply reports that Alexander, “finding Darius dead, thought him worthy of a royal funeral” (τὸν Δαρείου τετελευτηκότα καταλαβὼν τῆς βασιλικῆς ταφῆς ἥξὼν).

214 See also Brosius 2003: 179.
Moreover, Alexander’s treatment of the sacred fires was nothing less than blasphemous in Iranian thought. The religious and cultic significance attached to fire altars in Iranian religion can be seen from Achaemenid art. The reliefs in royal tombs often depict pillar fire altars before which the king himself stands with a gesture of deference.\(^{215}\) There is some evidence that this may depict an actual type of religious rite that the king performed while he was in Persis.\(^{216}\) The sacred fire, furthermore, symbolised the power of the Persian king and his relationship to the gods who had bestowed the kingship on him.\(^{217}\) Portable fire altars are even attested in Classical sources, which were carried on campaign for Persian kings.\(^{218}\) Hence, if Alexander allowed the sacred fires to continue burning, as seems likely, the Persians would have regarded this as a grave insult.\(^{219}\)

On the one occasion when Alexander did order the extinguishing of the sacred fire, it was after the death of Hephaestion. Alexander first ordered public mourning “all over the barbarian lands” (κατὰ πᾶσαν τὴν χώραν τὴν βαρβαροῦν),\(^{220}\) but then went further than this and ordered that the sacred fires be extinguished.\(^{221}\) Such an action was a

\(^{215}\) A male figure usually appears above the fire altar in these reliefs, which is probably Ahura Mazda. Herzfeld (1941: 263) and Schmidt (1970: 81) argued that these reliefs show the deceased king with mourners, but cf. Root 1979: 178–179. Iranian fire altars are to be distinguished from the “tower-altars” also depicted in Achaemenid art. The latter were possibly shrines connected with royal power. See Houtkamp 1991: 24–33.

\(^{216}\) Xen. Cyro. 8.5.26


\(^{218}\) Xen. Cyro. 8.3.12; Curt. 3.3.9–13.

\(^{219}\) Diod. 17.114.4–5. Shahbazi 2003: 26: “That he allowed the sacred fire of all fire temples to be kept burning was not a mark of his respect for Iranian religion. It was nothing less than utter sacrilege, for Iranian ceremonies and religious rites allowed the extinguishing of the sacred fires only when a Persian king died.”

\(^{220}\) Arr. Anab. 7.14.9. Cf. Schachermeyr (1972: 46–48), who argued that Alexander had his own portable sacred fire, attended by the magi, and that this was extinguished at the death of Hephaestion. However, there is little evidence for this. In fact, the proclamation may not have been directed specifically at the sacred fire of Iranian temples, but at ordinary hearth fires of the populace in Asia (see Boyce and Grenet 1991: 17).

\(^{221}\) Diod. 17.114.4: πᾶσι δὲ τοῖς κατὰ τὴν ἀσίαν ὀκονδότας προσέταξεν τὸ παρὰ Πέρσαις ἱερὸν πῦρ καλούμενον ἐπιμελῶς σβέσαι.
sacrilegious act, for, as we have seen, the fires were only quenched when the Great King himself died. Public mourning did occur in Asia when Alexander died (Curt. 10.5.18), but the king had not shown respect for Persian religious traditions either at the death of Darius or in the excessive grief that he displayed at the death of Hephaestion.

2.8. Proskynesis

Alexander’s attempt to introduce proskynesis occurred in 327. Here I wish to examine the question of its relationship to Iranian traditions. The general subject of proskynesis itself has produced an enormous literature, and I will not enter into the technical scholarly aspects in detail. The question whether there was both a public and private attempt at the ritual was once controversial, and some scholars have argued that only one episode was historical. However, there is no compelling reason to doubt the historicity of both events. First, the incident described by Chares appears to have been

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223 On the events at the private symposium involving Callisthenes, see Arr. 4.12.3–5 = Chares of Mytilene, FGrH 125 F 14; Plut. Alex. 54.5–6. For the public event and debate, see Plut. Alex. 54.3; Arr. Anab. 4.10; Curt. 8.5. For commentary on the sources, see Bosworth 1995: 77–90 (Arrian); Baynham 1998: 192–195 (Curtius); Hamilton 1969: 150–153 (Plutarch); see also Jacoby’s commentary on FGrH 125 F 14 (Chares).

a reasonably successful private event that preceded the main and public debate on proskynesis. In the Persian court, the official called the chiliarch appears to have introduced visitors and supervised the act of proskynesis, and it was surely no coincidence that this very office was given to Hephaestion c. 330 (see Chapter VI below). However, after the relative success of the private symposium, the public debate provoked heated opposition and ended in failure (Curt. 8.5). Some have doubted that there was any religious motive for the introduction of proskynesis. One alternative reason suggested is that the king introduced the measure to standardise court ceremonial for all subjects, whether oriental or Greek. This, however, is not convincing, and two main schools of thought have emerged in modern scholarship which are widely accepted explanations of Alexander's motive. These are as follows:

(1) Alexander believed that he had a divine nature and demanded divine honours through proskynesis (Bosworth 1988a: 287).  

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226 The official depicted on the audience reliefs in the Treasury of the Persepolis palace (Tilia 1977: 70 [fig. 1]) is now usually identified as the chiliarch (Schmidt 1939: 25; Junge 1940: 13; Gabelmann 1984: 12–13; cf. Hinz 1969: 63–64, who identified this figure as a court-marshal ["Hofmarshall"]). In this relief, the official covers his mouth with the palm of his hand, a gesture normally interpreted as proskynesis (Altheim 1953: 83; Frye 1972a: 106–107; Bosworth 1988a: 284). What is not generally well known is that some dispute this, and interpret the act as the covering of the mouth before the king, in order not to defile his divine khvarnah (Gabelmann 1984: 12; Walser 1965: 12; Herz 1996: 36). The same gesture seems to be made by Median nobles in the stairway reliefs of both the Apadana and the Tripylon, even though the king is not present in these scenes, evidence which might confirm that the gesture is not proskynesis (Gabelmann 1984: 16). Gabelmann (1984: 16) concludes that proskynesis is not depicted in the Persepolis reliefs.
227 E.g., Kornemann (1902: 56–59) contended that the proskynesis debacle was merely a concession to the oriental peoples of Alexander's empire.
229 Bosworth 1988a: 287: "It is a much deeper mystery why Alexander attempted to introduce a ceremony [viz., proskynesis] which he must have known would be hated and resented. I can only assume that he now believed firmly in his godhead, and that the continuous and insidious flattery which elevated him above Heracles and Dionysus had taken firm root."
(2) Alexander believed that he was worthy to receive divine honours (σοφεοι τιμαὶ = honours equal to those given to the gods), but understood that he was not divine himself (Badian 1996).

On either view, Alexander construed the act of proskynesis as one due to a god, rather than a human being. One significant point, I feel, has been missed in the numerous discussions of the topic. The Great King was, as we have seen, not thought to be divine in Iranian thought (see above subsection 2.1). Although the Persian king possessed the royal khvārnah ("royal glory"), this certainly did not make him worthy of divine worship. The primary meaning of proskynesis in Persian society was a social mark of respect. If the Iranians who were forced to perform proskynesis were informed of the significance that Alexander attached to it, they can hardly have approved of what was in essence yet another blasphemous abuse of Persian royal traditions by the Macedonian conqueror. The Great King had been no god, but the Iranians now had a foreign king who interpreted their secular custom as an act of cult. In short, the proskynesis episode reveals Alexander's ad hoc exploitation of Persian traditions for his own purposes, and in ways that can hardly be regarded as a continuation of Achaemenid traditions.

2.9. The Kingship of Asia

What, then, did Alexander's kingship involve, if not the traditional Persian empire? Alexander's proclamation as "king of Asia" (βασιλεὺς τῆς Ἀσίας) occurred after the victory at Gaugamela in 331 BC (Plut. Alex. 34.1). This of course was frequently thought to mean the kingship of Persia. But that view was challenged by N. G. L. Hammond and E. A. Fredricksmeyer. First, Plutarch specifically reports that after

Gaugamela "the empire of the Persians was thought to be utterly dissolved."\(^{233}\) Thus the Persian rule over the continent of Asia had been replaced by a new Macedonian hegemony. Hammond was surely correct to draw an important distinction between (a) the local kingdom of the Persians (in the satrapy of Persis) and (b) the kingdom of Asia (i.e., the empire of the Achaemenid kings in the rest of Asia).\(^{234}\) Although the primary sources show that Alexander certainly claimed to be "king of Asia", he apparently never claimed to be "Great King" or "king of the Medes and Persians." Rather, he was the new foreign king of the Persians, a kingship which replaced that of the Achaemenids, and which also inherited from them hegemony over their former empire. Alexander was thus the new "lord of Asia."\(^{235}\) In the letter of Alexander cited by Arrian, for instance, which may well be propaganda composed by Callisthenes,\(^{236}\) the king refers to himself as the "lord of all Asia" (Anab. 2.14.8: τῆς Ἀσίας ἀπάσης κυρίου).

The Greeks were well aware that hegemony over Asia had been held by other peoples before the Persians: first the Assyrians (Diod. 2.22.2; 2.32.2) and then the Medes were kings of Asia (Diod. 2.28.1). Moreover, the title was held by figures in Greek myth. The Assyrian Semiramis had been queen of all Asia except India (βασιλεύσασα τῆς Ἀσίας ἀπάσης πλὴν Ἰνδῶν),\(^{237}\) just as her later successor Teutamus (Diod. 2.22.2). This rule over the "empire of Asia" (τῆν ἄρχην τῆς Ἀσίας) passed to Cyrus from the Medes (Strabo 15.3.8), and the Greeks consequently regarded the Great Kings as new kings of Asia,\(^{238}\) just as Alexander’s successors.\(^{239}\) But that title had never been used by the Persians

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233 Alex. 34.1: Ἑ... ἄρχην παυτάσασαν ἤ Περσῶν ἐδὸκε Καταλελύσθαι.
234 Hammond 1986: 79–81. See also the comments of Hammond in Green (1993 35–36): "[sc. the] Persian kings could claim the title 'King of Asia.' But so could the kings of, say, Phrygia and Macedonia. To be King of Asia does not mean to be king of the Medes and Persians. Alexander claimed to be king of all of Asia. He thought of India as being the end of Asia. Asia to him was a geographical concept. He didn’t know the limits of it, but it was a clear concept.”
235 Hammond 1989: 79–81. A much more questionable idea is that, had Darius surrendered to Alexander before Gaugamela or afterwards, Alexander may well have allowed to him to continue as a lesser king of the Medes and Persians; and perhaps, after the Great King’s death, Alexander even planned to install Darius’ son as a local Persian king when he came of age in around 321 (Hammond 1986: 80–82).
237 Diod. 2.20.2.
238 Xen. Hell. 3.5.13; Diod. 12.71.1; 13.108.1; 14.35.2; Arr. Ind. 9.10.
or in the Great King’s titulature (see subsection 2 above), and the geographical concept of “Asia” itself was not a Near Eastern idea. Alexander’s claim to be “king of Asia” was thus a position that transcended any local kingship in the ancient Near East. Moreover, he specifically derided the claim of the Persian and Median rulers to be “Great Kings,” because they had not even ruled a fraction of Asia.

We have seen that there is no evidence that Alexander ever officially assumed the Persian kingship or used the title “king of kings.” His behaviour in Persis and Persepolis severely alienated Persian opinion. No doubt Alexander felt himself to be the new foreign king of the Persia, just as he was a foreign king of Asia Minor, Phoenicia, Syria, and Babylon. But, unlike his policies in Egypt and Babylon, he rejected Persian royal traditions before 330 BC, and showed uncharacteristic brutality in Persis.

Even though we can accept the central tenet of Hammond’s revisionist argument, the fundamental flaw in his thesis was the rejection of the strongly attested tradition of Alexander’s “orientalising,” as reported in Diodorus 17.77.4–7. Hammond rejected the historicity of the Vulgate traditions by means of his highly questionable methodology with

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239 Diod. 21.1.4b; App. Syr. 314.2; Polyænus, Strat. 4.6.13.

240 See Schachermeyr 1973: 277; Høegemann 1985: 123–124. Citing Aristobulus (FGrH 139 F 51b = Strabo 15. 3. 7), Strabo states that Cyrus’ tomb had an inscription in Greek referring to Cyrus as “king of Asia” (\(\Lambda \tau \rho \alpha \iota \alpha \varsigma \ \beta \alpha \sigma \iota \lambda \epsilon \varsigma \)), but this can hardly be correct (Fredricksmeyer 2000: 141). Moreover, it is contradicted by Onesiōritus (FGrH 134 F 34 = Strabo 15.3.7).

241 τοὺς γάρ τοι Περσῶν καὶ Μῆδων βασιλέας οὓς τοὺ πολλοστοὺ μέρους τῆς Ἀσίας ἐπάρχοντας οὔ σὺν δίκη καλέαν σφάς μεγάλους βασιλέας (Anab. 7.1.3).

242 See Hammond 1986: 82–83: “We have three ... accounts (Diod. 17.77.4; Justin 12.3.8; Curt. 6.6.4) which are derived from a common source, most probably Cleitarchus. In them Alexander wore the dress of a Persian king, stamped letters he wrote ‘for Asia’ with Darius’ signet-ring, enjoyed the favours of Darius’ three hundred and sixty concubines, indulged himself with herds of eunuch-prostitutes and forced the leading Macedonians to dress up as Persians. These excesses were attributed to the moral deterioration of Alexander, and his purpose was said to be to humiliate his own Macedonians .... Our distrust of the three accounts from a common source is heightened by the fact that in each case they were immediately preceded by the absurd story of the Amazon queen bedding with Alexander for thirteen days to satisfy her desire and become pregnant ... This story, which was expressly denied by Ptolemy and Aristobulus, probably came from Cleitarchus, a notorious romancer, and it and the items which followed it are worthless for historical reconstruction.”
respect to the sources, particularly his tendency to dismiss virtually every tradition he disagreed with in the Vulgate, by attributing such passages to Cleitarchus and rejecting them as fictions. But a careful reading of primary sources shows clearly that we cannot reject these traditions (see the introductory remarks to Section II below). That Alexander did not see himself as a Great King in the strict sense did not prevent him from appropriating elements from the Persian court. So we must look for different motives for the transformation of Alexander’s court after 330 (see Section II).

3. Alexander’s World Empire

Although the kingship of Asia was certainly different from the Achaemenid kingship, it is possible that Alexander was influenced by the universal pretensions of Persian monarchy, which the Great Kings had in turn inherited from Mesopotamian royal traditions. The Assyrians, Babylonians, and Persians ascribed to the king a grandiose “world dominion,” which is evident in the titulature of the Achaemenids, particularly the titles “king of the lands” (Old Persian, xšāyaθiya dahiynām; Sumerian, LUGAL KUR.KUR) and “king of the universe” (Sumerian, LUGAL kiš-šat).

Alexander’s final plans were recorded by Diodorus (18.4.4–6). They included the construction of one thousand warships in Syria, Cilicia, Phoenicia and Cyprus for a campaign against Carthage, North Africa, and Iberia; a road from Libya to the Pillars of Hercules and ports and shipyards; six large temples at Delos, Delphi, Dodona, Dium,
Amphipolis, and Cynmus; and new cities for the transferring of populations from Asia to Europe and vice versa.

The drive towards a universal empire must be judged by the geographical ideas of Alexander's time. The Greek world (oikumene) was divided into the continents of Europe, Asia, and Africa. With the exception of those areas in India which his troops refused to conquer, Alexander considered himself the king of the Asian continent. At his death, he had clear plans to conquer Arabia and northern Africa. After this, it appears that even Europe was not to escape his attention. One motive for Alexander's continuing conquest was certainly emulation of the ancient gods and heroes such as Heracles, the Dioscuri, and Dionysus. The Indian campaign had brought legends about Dionysus' conquests to the fore, and the king's plans for the conquest of Arabia may also have been inspired by competition with Dionysus.

At the beginning of the campaign Alexander had prayed that he would receive Asia from the gods (Diod. 17.17.2). The Vulgate tradition held that the oracle at Siwah promised him rule over the world, a tradition whose authenticity is widely dismissed as an invention of Cleitarchus. But, even if the tradition is not authentic, there is a strong possibility that the king did ask whether he was destined to rule over Asia, since he seems to have been told the names of the deities to whom he should sacrifice when he had done this. When Alexander reached the Indian ocean, he performed numerous sacrifices to the gods on the instructions of Ammon. Thus would suggest that his

249 Bosworth 1996b: 140–166.
250 Högemann 1985: 125.
254 See Högemann 1985: 124, who accepts the historicity of Ammon's promise to Alexander of universal rule: "Rule over Asia must almost have been equivalent to the 'dominion over the world' ... which was announced to Alexander in Siwa. This is based on the following consideration: when Alexander sacrificed to the ocean gods at the Indus delta, he did this in reference to Ammon. Alexander saw the promise of world domination fulfilled in the moment when he had reached the ocean, and thus the border of the oikumene" ("Die Herrschaft über Asien muß beinahe gleichbedeutend gewesen sein mit der "Herrschaft...)
conquest of Asia was related to the questions he had asked at Siwah, and that his personal kingship and continued military success patently depended on divine blessing. Thus Alexander’s Asian kingship was legitimised by Zeus, and he can hardly have doubted that further campaigns would succeed without his father’s assistance. In one respect, his kingship was now based on his pretensions to divinity. This is certainly not an attempt to revive the moribund thesis of E. Meyer, who thought that Alexander had mere political motives in the claim to be son of Zeus and his demands for divine honours. Rather, the king undoubtedly had personal religious reasons for his belief in the future success of his planned conquests. He was the son of Zeus Ammon and this is why the journey to Siwah, where he had asked the oracle a direct question about his divine sonship, had been so important to him (see Chapter II.5).

Conclusion

Unlike the Persians, who had little experience with foreign kings, the Babylonians had a long history of non-native dynasties. This, along with Alexander’s generosity and concern for the Babylonian temples (which was a fundamental part of the native ideology of kingship), allowed him to win over the priests and fulfil the local criteria for a legitimate king with reasonable success. In the final year of Alexander’s reign, the Babylonian priests were concerned enough about their new king to institute a substitute king ritual. Alexander in turn had planned to make Babylon one of his royal capitals.

The Persian ideology of kingship necessitated that the king be an Iranian and an Achaemenid who possessed the royal khvarnah. Alexander failed these criteria on all counts. After the battle of Gaugamela, the Macedonians had declared the empire of the Persians to be destroyed (Plut. Alex. 34.1), and the violence and destruction of the initial Macedonian conquest reinforced that sentiment with shocking force. Whether the act was

über die Welt" ... die Alexander in Siwa verkündigt wurde. Dies gründet sich auf folgende Überlegung: Als Alexander an der Indus-Mündung den Meergöttern opferte, tat er dies unter Berufung auf Ammon. Alexander sah in jenem Moment, als er den Ozean, und damit die Grenze der Oikumene erreicht hatte, die Verheißung der Weltherrschaft als erfüllt an").
deliberate or unplanned, the burning of Persepolis was hardly the act of a ruler intent on winning over Persian sentiment, or one anxious to assume the traditions of Persian kingship. Unlike his careful respect for Apis and Bel Marduk in Egypt and Babylon respectively, there is no evidence whatsoever that Alexander ever sacrificed to Ahura Mazda or justified his kingship over the Persians by appealing to the god's authority. Rather, Alexander was remembered as the murderer of Iranian priests and a national disaster for the Zoroastrian religion (*Book of Arda Viraf* 1.3–11).

Alexander's position as the "king of Asia" was undoubtedly distinct from the kingship of the Medes and Persians; it was not a claim to be the lawful successor of Darius on the Persian throne. Alexander substituted his new personal kingship ("the kingship of Asia") for that of the Achaemenids, and even scoffed at the pretensions of the Great Kings (*Anab.* 7.1.3). The ambitious last plans of the king for further conquests and "world empire" were justified by the interview with the oracle at Siwah and Alexander's belief in his divine sonship and divinity.

The revisionist thesis also demands new explanations for the king's appropriation of Persian court traditions after 330. N. G. L. Hammond's attempt to deny the historicity of the traditions in Diodorus 17.77.4–7 is completely unacceptable, and a thorough analysis of Alexander's "orientalising" and its motives is thus required. It is to this subject that we turn in Section II of this thesis.
SECTION II—
THE TRANSFORMATION

We now come to the second major aspect of this thesis. In the years from 330 to 323, Alexander’s court was transformed by an influx of Iranians and Persian court traditions. To some extent, the process was merely Alexander’s acquisition of the spoils of a defeated enemy, and completely consistent with the doctrine of “spear-won” land (see Chapter 1.1). When he acquired Persian clothing, for instance, Alexander himself apparently justified the act by appealing to this specific notion (Curt. 6.6.5). Moreover, as early as the battle of Issus, Alexander had captured and used Darius’ huge tent, and made prisoners of the Great King’s attendants (Plut. Alex. 20.11–12). Later, after Gaugamela, Alexander occupied Babylon, Susa and Persepolis, the capitals of the Achaemenid empire, and took possession of the Persian palaces, treasuries, attendants and slaves attached to them. According to the Vulgate tradition, Alexander supposedly sat on the throne of the Great King at Susa (Diod. 17.66.23), but, as we have seen, this was no Achaemenid succession ritual or official enthronement (see Chapter III.2.2 above).

A fundamentally new policy was implemented after the murder of Darius, attested mainly in the Vulgate sources, although even Arrian (Anab. 4.9.9) speaks of the new arrangement of Alexander’s retinue (καὶ τῆς ἄλλης θεραπείας τῆς μετακοσμησέως) around this time. Although there are no specifics about these changes in the Anabasis, the Vulgate traditions are clearly supported by general references in Arrian that may well be derived from Ptolemy and Aristobulus.

This “transformation” of Alexander’s court is the subject of the second section of this thesis (Chapters IV, V, VI below). Ancient writers saw the policy as Alexander’s adoption of Persian “customs” (νόμιμα), and modern German scholarship has called it the

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1 Arr. Anab. 3.16.6–7; Diod. 17.65.5; Curt. 5.2.8.
2 Diod. 17.77.4–7; Curt. 6.6.1–8; Just. 12.3.8–11.
3 E.g., by 324, according to Arrian (7.8.3), Alexander was more quick-tempered because of his barbarian retinue, and no longer as kind towards the Macedonians as he had been in the past (ὑν γὰρ δὴ ἡ ἐξέπερος τε ἐν τῷ τότε καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς βαρβαρίκης θεραπείας οὐκέτι ὦς πάλαι ἐπεικής ἐσ τούς Μακεδόνας).
4 Diod. 18.48.5; Arr. Anab. 4.7.4.
introduction of Persian Hofzeremoniell. The court transformation’s most obvious aspects were Alexander’s partial use of the Persian royal costume and the unsuccessful attempt at proskynesis. But these were merely aspects of the wider policy initiated during Alexander’s progress through Hyrcania and Parthia in the summer of 330, when the king’s court was augmented by many Persian prisoners (Curt. 6.2.9–10) and the surrender of Iranian noblemen (Diod. 17.76.1), some of whom Alexander was prepared to welcome into the court (see Chapter V.2 below).

The chronology of this policy reveals valuable information about its meaning and inspiration. Between Alexander’s return to Zadracarta in Hyrcania (he left the city ca August) and his move against the rebellious satrap of Aria later in the year (ca September), we can glean the first expressions of his so-called “orientalising” policies, actions which came to alienate many Macedonians. Diodorus, for instance, places the beginning of Alexander’s emulation of the luxury and extravagance of the Persian kings within this period (Diod. 17.77.4). Plutarch has Alexander’s assumption of oriental dress during his march through Parthia (Plut. Alex. 45.1–4). For Quintus Curtius, the king’s adoption of the splendour of the Persian court agrees in its chronology with that of Diodorus, and similar statements are made by Justin and the Metz Epitome with consistent dating (Just. 12.3.8–12; Metz Epit. 1). Admittedly, Arrian has no precise reference to these events in his description of Alexander in Hyrcania and Parthia, but he refers to some details of the changes at other points in his narrative (e.g., Anab. 4.8.4; 4.9.9; 7.29.4).

If the conventional explanation of Alexander’s “orientalising”—that he now regarded himself as the new Great King—is incorrect, what then were his motives?

A brief review of the literature is in order. The Vulgate ascribed the changes to Alexander’s descent into eastern luxury and his moral degeneration, but the tradition should be rejected as a moralising literary topos. The first influential modern explanation of

5 Beloch 1925: 19; Berue, Alexanderreich, vol. 1, 19–20 and vol. 2, 405; de Blois and van der Spek 1994: 100.
6 See now Spawforth 2007: 102. See also Collins 2001: 260.
7 For the chronology, see Brunt 1976: 497–499.
8 Curt. 6.6.1–9: Persicae regiae par deorum potestiae fastigium aemulabatur.
9 See Badian 1958b: 154–157; Bosworth 1988b: 144–145 and 1995: 49; the rhetorical and encomiastic tradition in Plutarch’s Moralia saw the changes as a political gesture (see Plut. Mor. De Alex. fort. 330a, which refers to Alexander’s adoption of Persian dress).
Alexander's court reforms was that he wished to promote the “racial fusion” of the Macedonians and Iranians, and the “universal brotherhood of mankind.”

Thus C. A. Robinson contended that Alexander by his actions wanted to make the Macedonians and Persian equal. Although J. R. Hamilton attempted a partial revival of the “fusion” thesis, it was decisively refuted by Badian and cannot be seriously entertained today.

In contrast, Bosworth argued that the sudden change was a response to the proclamation of Bessus as king in Bactria; this was announced to Alexander in Susia, after he received the submission of the satrap of Aria. According to this view, the military threat from Bessus and the need to justify his legitimate claim to the Persian throne were Alexander's motive. In particular, Bosworth contended that the “introduction of Persian

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10 For a bibliographical overview of this subject, see Seibert 1972a: 186–192.
11 Robinson 1936: 298–305. See Robinson 1936: 304–305 for his modified version of the thesis: “Alexander's adoption of Median dress and the custom of proscynesis were part of a plan to convince the races within the empire of their equality. He was not trying, however, to put the Greeks in an inferior position and as a matter of fact did not insist on proscynesis with them. But by permitting the barbarians to perform proscynesis he did show them that the old traditions were still alive; and his adoption of barbarian dress proved to all that the new king was more than a Macedonian .... It is worth emphasizing that Alexander had in mind neither a mixture of blood on a large scale nor a deliberate Hellenization of the East, but rather was trying to bring into being an empire in which various peoples could move about freely and on an equal footing. Far from fostering the dominance of one race within his empire, Alexander's problem was to convince the Greeks and Macedonians that they did not occupy a privileged position.”
12 Hamilton 1987: 485: "Why did Alexander persist in [sc. orientalising] policies that were unpopular with many of the leading Macedonians? His prayer after the mutiny at Opis gives an indication. It is essentially a prayer for the co-operation of Macedonians and Iranians in ruling the empire. Ideally this should have meant putting the two peoples on an equality, but Alexander knew that he could go only so far in this direction."
13 For the classic and devastating refutation of the thesis, see Badian 1958a: 425–444.
15 Bosworth 1980a: 6: "... Alexander did not adopt Achaemenid court protocol until at least six weeks after the death of Darius. What was the importance of the period in Parthia? The answer is that Alexander now had a rival. It was precisely at the time that he returned to Parthia that Alexander learned that Bessus had declared himself Darius' successor, assuming the jealously guarded royal prerogative, the kitaris or upright tiara .... Now the threat from Bessus should not be underestimated. He was related by blood to Darius and could be seen by some as his legitimate successor. He also commanded the resources of Bactria and
ceremonial was a limited gesture, designed to capture the allegiance of his barbarian subjects at a time of crisis.”

It was certainly true that Alexander faced military crises in the years after 330, and the “orientalising” policies may have bolstered his legitimacy with the Iranians. The king certainly had much greater direct contact with eastern and Iranian subjects as the years passed, and no doubt Alexander may have felt that he needed to play the part of a Near Eastern monarch. But this can hardly be the only explanation, for the king had shown marked hostility to Iranian traditions in Persis itself. Alexander’s policies were surely something more permanent and important: their genesis and significance were intimately linked to his position as the new king of Asia, a claim which he had made since 332. The position that Alexander had attained by 330 was unprecedented. No Greek or Greek city-state had ever achieved so much in war or had won an empire as large through imperial aggression. The king required new royal insignia and trappings of power appropriate to his status.

In section II of my thesis, I contend that Alexander’s selective use of Persian court traditions was his attempt to create a new royal court and personal autocracy that was suitable for his position as king of Asia. As has been shown above, the “kingship of Asia” was not a claim to the Persian empire in the strict sense, but a kingdom over and above any earlier local kingship. Just as the Achaemenid kings had themselves transformed a relatively simple Indo-European ethnic kingship by adopting grandiose Mesopotamian royal traditions, so too Alexander transformed his Macedonian kingship when he came to rule the Near East. The isolation of the king from his subjects, the use of chamberlains, proskynesis, and the royal sceptre and throne had been features of Mesopotamian kingship for centuries before Alexander. In this respect, the king continued much more ancient traditions.

Sogdiana, whose cavalry had retired practically undefeated from the field of Gaugamela. It was also a period at which Alexander’s military resources were at a low ebb .... The adoption of court protocol had an obvious propaganda value in these circumstances. Alexander demonstrated that he was genuinely King of Kings, not a mere foreign usurper ...”

17 Plut. Alex. 34.1.
When Alexander looked for a role model in developing royal insignia and court ceremonial, the Achaemenid court was a natural choice, particularly since the Great Kings had long been known as semi-divine in the Greek world, an idea that would certainly have appealed to Alexander.

An overview of the three major elements of the transformation of Alexander’s court treated at length in the next three chapters is listed below:

(1) Alexander’s Persian royal costume and insignia (Chapter IV), including
   (a) The diadem (see Chapter IV.1.1);
   (b) The Persian belt (see Chapter IV.1.2);
   (c) Persian royal chiton (see Chapter IV.1.3);
   (d) The sceptre and throne (see Chapter IV.4);

(2) Persians and Iranians in Alexander’s court (Chapter V), including
   (a) Darius’ family (Chapter V.1);
   (b) Persian hetairoi (Chapter V.2);
   (c) Asian chamberlains (Chapter V.3);
   (d) Persian spear-bearers and the melophoroi (Chapter V.4);
   (e) The 360 Achaemenid concubines (see Chapter V.5);
   (f) Eunuchs (see Chapter VI.6).

(3) Persian court offices and protocol (Chapter VI), including
   (a) Hephaestion as chiliarch (see Chapter VI.1–1.5);
   (b) Chares of Mytilene as chief usher (see Chapter VI.2);
   (c) Ptolemy as chief taster/superintendent of the royal table (see Chapter VI.3–3.2);
   (d) the Great King’s tent and audience style (Chapter VI.1.4)
   (e) banquets in the tradition of the Great King (Chapter VI.3.2).

In the next three chapters, I show how we can explain the origin and use of these traditions without appealing to the discredited notion that Alexander adopted them.

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18 Eddy 1961: 43–44.
because he regarded himself as the strict and formal successor of Darius on the throne of the Great Kings.
CHAPTER IV – ROYAL INSIGNIA

Introduction

Alexander’s royal costume and insignia are treated in this chapter. There is in fact a rich crop of ancient evidence, although not without its own problems and contradictions. I will first deal with the ancient sources relating to Alexander’s royal costume and the elements of that costume (viz., the diadem, chiton mesoleukos, and the zona). I then turn to the question whether Alexander’s diadem was derived from the Persian court. The king rejected the upright tiara, the most well known symbol of the Achaemenids, and this is surely significant. In acquiring an impressive royal costume, throne and sceptre, Alexander expressed the exalted nature of his newly-won kingship of Asia, and for the first time devised a impressive set of royal insignia, which had previously been lacking in the native Macedonian kingship (see Chapter 1.1 above).

1. Alexander’s Royal Dress and the Ancient Evidence

The beginning of Alexander’s use of Persian dress can be dated to 330 BC. Plutarch (Alex. 45.3–4) reported that the king adopted barbarian costume in that year, and noted that this was only in the presence of easterners or his companions at first, but later when he was riding and giving audiences.

Ephippus of Olynthus, a contemporary of Alexander, reported that almost every day Alexander wore a purple chlamys (χλαμύδα πορφύραν), a chiton with a middle white (χιτώνα μεσόλευκον), and the kausia on which he had a diadem (τὴν καυσίαν ἔξουσαν
Though the context of the fragment concerns the last years of Alexander, it appears that this was the regular form of costume that he had worn since 330.

We have supplementary evidence for this. Diodorus (17.77.5) reported that Alexander wore the diadem, the partly-white tunic (διάλευκον χιτώνα) and the Persian belt (ζώνη). Eratosthenes of Cyrene described Alexander’s dress as a mixture of Persian and Macedonian elements, and reported that Alexander preferred the Persian rather than the Median dress, since he rejected the tiara, the kandys (full-sleeved jacket), and the anaxyrides (baggy trousers). This agrees with Plutarch (Alex. 45.2) and Diodorus (17.77.5).

The other Vulgate sources confirm this, though often without details. The Metz Epitome (1.2) lists the diadem, a tunicam mesoleucum, a caduceum and the Persian belt (zona) as part of Alexander’s dress. But Duris of Samos merely says that Alexander, when he had become lord of Asia, furnished himself with Persian dress. Curtius (6.6.4) and Justin (12.3.8) do not give specific references to the form of Alexander’s costume: they merely note his adoption of barbarian customs, and their dating of this is consistent with Diodorus. Arrian also fails to give details of Alexander’s dress, but does refer explicitly to the report that, around the time of the murder of Cleitus, Alexander was expressing his admiration for the ways of the Persians and Medes, both in his change of dress and by the altered arrangements for his attendance.

That a specific royal costume existed by 326 BC is confirmed by an incidental story in Curtius. Shortly before Alexander’s battle with Porus, he erected his tent on the river bank.

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2 FGrH 241 F 30 = Plut. Mor. 329f–330a.

3 See Strabo 11.13.9 = 526e for the Median origin of the tiara and anaxyrides.

4 Cf. Ephippus, FGrH 126 F 5.29 = Ath. 537f.

5 See also Metz Epit. 113.

6 Ἀλέξανδρος δ’ ὤς τής Ἀσίας ἐκφεύγεις Περσικάς ἔχρητο στόλας (Duris of Samos, FGrH 76 F 14 = Ath. 12.535f).

7 Hecke 1997: 203–204.

8 Anab. 4.9.9; see also Anab. 7.29.4.
in view of the enemy and dressed his companion Attalus in the “royal robe” as a ruse.\(^9\) Finally, we should note that Alexander himself apparently explained his actions by declaring that he was wearing the Persian spoils,\(^{10}\) an idea which can be related to the notion of spear-won land (see Chapter I.1 above).

### 1.1. The Diadem

The diadem was a fundamental part of Alexander’s royal dress, and became the exclusive royal insignia of Hellenistic kings. Diadems are poorly attested before Alexander’s time, and the only literary reference consists of a passage in Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia* (8.3.13). The Vulgate preserves the tradition that the diadem was Persian (Diod. 17.77.5), and this view was the widely accepted view until recently.

Ephippus of Olynthus, the contemporary of Alexander, is quoted by Athenaeus in a fascinating passage about the king’s dress:

\[\text{Ἐφιππός δὲ φησιν ὡς Ἀλέξανδρος καὶ τὰς ἱερὰς ἐσθήτας ἐφόρει ἐν τοῖς δείπνοις, ὅτε μὲν τὴν τοῦ Ἀμμωνός πορφυρίδα καὶ περισσίδεις καὶ κέρατα καθάπερ ὁ θεός, ὅτε δὲ τὴν τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος, ἢν καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ ἄρματος ἐφόρει πολλάκις, ἔχων τὴν Περσηκήν στολήν, ὑποσκίνων ἀνώθεν τῶν ὑμῶν τὸ τε τόξον καὶ τὴν συβύνην, ἐνόστε δὲ καὶ τὴν τοῦ Ἐρμοῦ τὰ μὲν ἄλλα σχεδὸν καὶ καθ’ ἐκάστην ἰμέραν χλαμύδα τε πορφυρᾶν καὶ χιτῶνα μεσόλευκον καὶ τὴν καυσίαν ἔχουσαν τὸ διάδημα τὸ βασιλικόν, ἐν δὲ τῇ συνουσίᾳ τὰ τε πέδιλα καὶ τὸν πέτασον ἐπὶ τῇ κεφαλῇ καὶ τὸ κηρύκειον ἐν τῇ χειρί, πολλάκις δὲ καὶ λεοτήν καὶ ὄψαλον ὄσπερ ὁ Ἡρακλῆς.}\n
Ephippus says that Alexander used to wear sacred clothing during his dinners, sometimes the purple robe of Ammon, the shoes and horns, like the god; and at other times the costume of Artemis, which he also frequently assumed in his chariot, wearing

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\(^9\) Curt. 8.13.21: *Attalum etiam, aequalem sibi et haud disparem habitu oris et corporis, utique cum procul viseretur, veste regia exornat praebiturum speciem ipsum regem illi ripae praesidere nec agitare de transitu.*

\(^{10}\) Curt. 6.6.5: *ille sequidem spolia Persarum gestare dicebat.*
the Persian clothing, and displaying above his shoulders the bow and the hunting-spear; and on other occasions he took the costume of Hermes. But nearly everyday day he wore a purple cloak, a purple tunic with a white middle, and the Macedonian kausia with the royal diadem. On social occasions, he put on the sandals and the petasos on his head, and took the caduceus in his hand. Often he also wore the lion's skin and club just like Heracles (FGrH 126 F 5.26–28 = Ath. 12.537e–538b [my emphasis]).

In contrast to the king's extravagant imitation of the gods, which some regard as a fiction of Ephippus,11 Alexander is said to have worn the diadem as part of his normal dress, which included the Macedonian chlamys and kausia. If the expression "the royal diadem" (τὸ διάδημα τὸ βασιλικὸν) was used by Ephippus,12 then by the end of Alexander's reign the diadem was regarded as a symbol of his kingship.

A fragment of Aristobulus supports this. In 323, Alexander was sailing in the marsh lands near Babylon, and Arrian (Anab. 7.22.2–3) reports the following story: the king's kausia with its attached diadem was blown off. The diadem was carried onto some reeds. A sailor who swam to fetch the diadem bound it around his head, so as to avoid soaking the headband in the water. According to Arrian, many historians of Alexander said that the king gave the sailor a talent, but ordered his decapitation, since his prophets felt that the head that had worn the royal diadem should be cut off (Anab. 7.22.4). But Arrian then provides Aristobulus' version of the incident, in which the sailor had received the talent and was only flogged for fastening the diadem about his head.13 Aristobulus' version obviously made the punishment less severe for apologetic reasons. If so, then the incident itself was no late fable of the Vulgate, for Aristobulus felt bound to rewrite the event to defend Alexander. We should see in the story strong evidence that the diadem was the main royal insignia of Alexander by 323.

12 I concede that Athenaeus may have paraphrased Ephippus and inserted the expression "royal diadem" himself. On the difficulties of ancient fragments, see Brunt 1980: 477–494.
13 Anab. 7.22.4–5 = Aristobulus, FGrH 159 F 55. That this was an event seized upon by later propagandists seems clear: Arrian immediately records the tradition that it was Seleucus who brought the diadem back to Alexander (Anab. 7.22.5).
Regrettably, Arrian does not explicitly explain the origin of the diadem. For this question, we must look to the Vulgate tradition. Curtius relates that in 330 Alexander adopted a “purple diadem variegated with white, like the one Darius had worn.” Furthermore, Diodorus has the following account of Alexander’s court reforms in 330:

[sc. Αλέξανδρος] ἔρζετο ζηλοῦν τὴν Περσακὴν τρυφὴν καὶ τὴν πολυτέλειαν τῶν Ἀσιανῶν βασιλέων .... εἴτε τὸ τε Περσικόν διάδημα περιέθετο καὶ τὸν διάλευκον ἑνεδύσατο χιτῶνα καὶ τὴν Περσικὴν ζώνην καὶ τάλλα πλῆν τῶν ἀναξυρίδων καὶ τοῦ κάνδυος.

[sc. Alexander] began to imitate the Persian luxury and the extravagance of the Asian kings .... Then he put on the Persian diadem and dressed himself in the partly-white robe and the Persian belt, and all the other things except the anaxyrides and the kandys (Diod. 17.77.4–5).

Clearly, Diodorus held that it was a Persian diadem that Alexander wore. His general account of Alexander’s royal costume matches that of Ephippus of Olynthus (who wrote shortly after the king’s death). The Metz Epitome speaks of Alexander taking a “diadem, a tunic with a white middle, and sceptre and a belt, and all other Persian ornaments that Darius had possessed.”

This ancient evidence was, until recently, widely accepted, and it was held that Alexander’s diadem was derived from the Great King’s costume. Today, however, the Persian origin of Alexander’s diadem has been challenged by A. Alfoldi (1985: 105–125), R. R. R. Smith (1988: 34–38), and E. A. Fredricksmeyer (2000). In particular, E. A. Fredricksmeyer, in a bold argument strongly influenced by the revisionist school of thought

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14 Curt. 6.6.4: itaque purpureum diademum distinctum albo, quae Dareus habuerat.
15 deditque et diadema et tunicam mesoleucum et caduceum zonam<que> Persiarum ceteraque ornamenta regia omnia, quae Darius habuerat (Metz Epit. 2).
on Alexander's kingship, held that the diadem was taken from the iconography of Dionysus. A review of the work of these three scholars is required.

In a posthumous work, Andreas Alfoldi argued that the diadem had a Greek origin, and was derived from the types of crowns, fillets, or headbands awarded in Greek athletic victories. In his view, the diadem was an adaption of a Hellenic agonistic crown ("Siegerbinde"), and Alexander adopted such a crown (ταινία) to mark his conquest of Asia. Alfoldi also contended that Alexander's diadem was connected with Dionysus, whose mitra was supposed to have led to the use of the diadem by kings. Furthermore, Dionysus is sometimes depicted wearing a tainia with an agonistic function, perhaps to mark his victory over the Giants and his exploits in the east, and his role of "conqueror of the east" may have inspired Alexander to emulate him by adopting a headband of a similar type.

R. R. R. Smith also rejected the Achaemenid origin for Alexander's diadem, and pointed out that the archaeological and iconographic evidence does not show that the Persian kings wore diadems. Even though Cyrus and his attendants are made to wear them in Xenophon's Cyropaedia (8.3.13), the diadem was not an exclusive and important part of the Achaemenid royal costume. Smith sees Alexander's diadem as a general headband taken or adapted from Greek headbands, with no particular origin.

Finally, Fredricksmeyer started from the revisionist premise that Alexander did not regard himself as a king of Persia, or as a direct and legitimate successor of the Great

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20 Alfoldi 1985: 120. See below for a discussion of Diod. 4.4.4.
21 Alfoldi 1985: 121.
23 Cf. Ritter 1987: 290-301. See also Polyænus, Strat. 11.8.
24 Smith 1988: 36-37: "There already existed in Greek culture a rich stock of headbands used by gods and mortals, and it is much more likely that Alexander took his new royal symbol from here, rather than the east. He adapted, selected, or 'invented' a particular headband—plain white, knotted with free-hanging ends—not one which would be of a generic form familiar to Greeks and Macedonians. In 'origin' it probably meant precisely nothing .... Originally empty of meaning, it could take on whatever significance Alexander gave it." See also Smith 1993: 207.
According to this view, it is unlikely that Alexander adopted the diadem from the Persian court, since he did not think of himself as a Persian king. For Fredricksmeyer, the evidence of Diodorus, Curtius and Justin is questionable since it probably came from Cleitarchus. Instead, Alexander adopted the diadem in 331 BC after Gaugamela. At this time, when Alexander was proclaimed “king of Asia” by the army, Fredricksmeyer (1997: 101) suggests that the diadem was assumed as the new insignia of Alexander’s kingship of Asia. Like Alföldi, Fredricksmeyer argues that the iconography of the god Dionysus was also connected with Alexander’s diadem, and that the king was emulating the god when he adopted this new royal symbol.

The theses of Alföldi and Fredricksmeyer were like a breath of fresh air. They certainly forced a reexamination of the problematic ideas on the diadem widely accepted until recently. The challenge to the diadem’s Persian origin is now a central issue in any discussion of the topic. Moreover, a Dionysian origin for Alexander’s diadem would strongly support the revisionist view of his kingship. Nevertheless, there are serious problems which all these theories must face, and it is unfortunate that they must be rejected. In what follows, I critique each of the new theories, and provide my own alternative revisionist interpretation of Alexander’s diadem.

First, Alföldi’s idea that Greek agonistic headbands (ταυιαία) played a part in the origin of Alexander’s diadem falters on the absence of any association between such victory-crowns and kingship. These crowns were awarded for individual victories, and were worn only briefly to symbolise the achievement and honour that had accrued to one individual. Alexander’s diadem, on the other hand, was a mark of his kingship, and passed to his half-brother Philip Arrhidaeus after he died (Curt. 10.6.4; 10.6.11; Diod. 18.60.5–

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26 Fredricksmeyer 1997: 100.
27 Fredricksmeyer 1997: 101: “[in] light of the importance of symbols of royalty in the Near East it is quite unlikely that Alexander would have failed on this occasion to adopt some concrete symbol, or insignia, of his new kingship.” See Alföldi 1985: 107–108.
29 Ritter 1987: 293.
The diadem was also adopted by the Successors who founded their own kingdoms in the Asian empire. Nor can headbands worn by Dionysus be associated plausibly with victory ταυτία.

Secondly, Dionysus' connection with the diadem is not as well-founded as some believe. It is true that the myth of Dionysus' travels in the east was known by Alexander's time, and that, in later tradition, Dionysus was the conqueror of the east. But the literary sources that name Dionysus as the inventor of the diadem are all much later than Alexander's time. Diodorus Siculus has the following important account:

πρὸς δὲ τὰς ἐκ τοῦ πλευνάζωντος οἴνου κεφαλαγίας τοῖς πίνουσι γυνομένας διαδεδεσθαί λέγονσιν αὐτῶν μῖτρα τὴν κεφαλὴν. αφ' ἡς αἰτίας καὶ μιτρηφόροις ὑπομάζεοσθαί. ἀπὸ δὲ ταύτης τῆς μίτρας ὑστερον παρὰ τοῖς βασιλεύσι καταδειχθῆναι τὸ διάδημα φασί.

They say that [sc. Dionysus] bound his head with the mitra in order to avoid the headaches that happen to men who drink too much wine, for which reason he was called mitrephorus. They also say that because of this mitra the diadem was later introduced for kings (Diod. 4.4.4).

Diodorus attributes this information to unnamed sources. But no evidence exists for the tradition before Alexander's time, and it may have arisen in the Hellenistic era. The idea that Dionysus' mitra led to the adoption of the diadem also appears in Pliny the Elder, who wrote towards the end of the first century AD. He simply reports that "father Liber invented the diadem, the royal insignia."

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30 The claim of Alfoldi (1985: 126) that the diadem was worn by the Sicilian tyrant Dionysius (Baton of Sinope, FGrH 268 F 4 = Ath. 6.251e–f) before Alexander as a victor's headband is implausible (Ritter 1987: 299).
33 Dionysus was equated with Liber by the Romans: Tac. Hist. 5.5 (Liberum patrem ... domitorem orientis).
35 Plin. HN 7.191: emere ac vendere instituit Liber pater, idem diadema, regium insigne.
One important observation emerges: neither of the passages links Dionysus’ eastern campaigns or conquests to his adoption of the *mitra*, nor can this headband be identified with kingship, because in Diodorus the *mitra* Dionysus wore was to prevent headaches after excessive consumption of wine. This can hardly support the view that a *mitra* or diadem was a symbol of Dionysus’ eastern conquests by Alexander’s time.³⁶

Numismatic evidence linking Dionysus with a headband worn by Alexander is particularly interesting, but occurs after Alexander’s death. Coins minted c. 314–312 by Ptolemy I show Alexander wearing an elephant scalp, ram’s horns and a flat headband worn under the hairline, in a manner which matches headbands worn by Dionysus in other coins.³⁷ But the way in which Dionysus and Alexander wear this headband is different from the usual way in which the diadem is worn.³⁸ The diadem is generally worn above the hairline, not below it, so this headband is probably a *mitra* of Dionysus,³⁹ a divine attribute

³⁶ For this erroneous thesis, see Alfoldi 1985: 125; Fredricksmeyer 1997: 105; Smith 1988: 37: “[two] later writers ... state that the god Dionysos ‘discovered’ the diadem, that he wore it to symbolise his conquests [in the East], and that kings took it over from him.”
³⁷ Smith 1988: 37; Fredricksmeyer 1997: 102. See also the terracotta head of Alexander in the Allard Pierson Museum in Amsterdam (Grimm 1978: 105 [see pl. 74 for Grimm’s reproduction]). In this statue, Alexander wears a headband which Grimm (1978: 105) sees as a diadem worn like a Dionysian headband.
³⁸ Ritter 1987: 298. Cf. Smith 1998: 37: “[the] form of the royal diadem, however, is not directly copied from that of Dionysos. The god always wears his headband low down on his forehead, while the kings wear it further back in the hair ... Whether or not the diadem in origin was consciously adapted from Dionysus’ headband does not really matter, for its association with Dionysos, given explicitly in the source used by Diodorus and Pliny, is starkly confirmed ...”
alongside the ram’s horns of Ammon. The *mitra* was certainly associated with Dionysus long before Alexander’s time, but was distinct from the diadem.

An alternative view of the literary sources is that Diodorus preserves a Hellenistic aetiology that explained the origin of the diadem by means of a mythic connection with Dionysus. Such aetiologies were constantly invented by ancient scholars, and it most probably arose after Alexander’s death, given his strong association with Dionysus in Ptolemaic propaganda. We should also note that, although the myths about Dionysus’ travels in Arabia, Media and Bactria were current before Alexander’s time, many of the stories of Dionysus’ exploits in India seem to have been invented as a result of Alexander’s own conquests. We cannot simply assume that in 330 Alexander knew a tradition linking Dionysus with the diadem.

The Dionysian origin of Alexander’s diadem is clearly problematic. A second difficulty is the explicit contradiction of this idea by the primary sources. The wearing of apparel associated with the Olympians was an unusual and arrogant practice. When Ephippus of Olynthus, Alexander’s contemporary, described the king’s use of sacred dress meant to evoke the gods Hermes, Ammon, Artemis and the hero Hercules, this divine costume was opposed to the ordinary dress that Alexander regularly wore: viz., the purple *chlamys* (a Macedonian cloak), a chiton with white middle (a Persian garment), and a *kausia* (a Macedonian hat) with the diadem worn around it. The diadem does not appear to evoke the costume of Dionysus or any other Olympian, although that is precisely what one would expect if its adoption was yet another arrogant use of divine costume by Alexander.

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40 Soph. *OT* 209–210 (Bacchus called *χρυσομίτρα*). See also Krug 1967: 115–117. For later sources see Ath. 5.198d (Dionysus associated with *μίτρα* in Ptolemy’s procession); Prop. 4.31 (*cinge caput mitra, speciem furabor Iacchi*).

41 This important point is discussed in detail by Goukowsky 1981: 79–83.


43 *FGrH* 126 F 5.26–28 = Ath. 12.537e–538b.

44 See also Herodian (1.3.3–4), which contrasts the symbols of Dionysus with the diadem and *kausia*. Speaking of the concern of the emperor Marcus Aurelius for his son Commodus, Herodian makes the following statement: “Antigonus modelled himself completely on Dionysus, wearing an ivy wreath on his head instead of a royal Macedonian *kausia* with a diadem, and carrying an ivy wand instead of a sceptre”
We are left with the question of why no other source mentions Alexander’s adoption of the diadem in 331, if it was a brazen attempt, at that time, to imitate Dionysus, as Alfoldi and Fredricksmeyer have argued. Instead, there is a uniform tradition that the diadem was adopted in 330, along with other Persian garments, as part of Alexander’s mixed Macedonian and Persian costume. As seen above, the Persian garments were the *chiton mesoleukos*, the *zona*, and the diadem, and the manner in which Alexander wore the diadem around his *kausia* certainly evokes the wearing of a diadem around the royal tiara.

Given that the diadem became a symbol of monarchy after Alexander, it is possible that later writers mistakenly attributed diadems to Persian kings as a royal insignia, and that such references are anachronistic. But such an objection would not apply to literary sources *before* Alexander’s time. Xenophon presents a scene in which Cyrus, when he appeared in a procession as a pretender to the Persian throne, wore an ivy wreath, which is contrasted with the *kausia* and diadem, as if the latter were not associated with Dionysus.

46 Xen. *Cyr.* 8.3.13; Aristobulus, *FGrH* 139 F 55 (= Arr. *Anab.* 7.22.2). Neuffer 1929: 35; Ritter 1965: 55: “as the Persian kings had worn the diadem around the upright tiara, so Alexander wore it around the Macedonian *kausia*” (“[wie] die Perserkönige das Diadem um die aufrechte Tiara getragen hatten, so trug Alexander es um die makedonische Kausia”). I concede that Alexander may have taken the diadem from Persian dress, and then given it a new Dionysian interpretation.

47 Smith 1988: 36: “The later sources which ascribe ... the diadem to Persian or Oriental kings in general have no weight against contemporary archaeology. They simply reflect the fact that all Oriental kings of the Hellenistic period (and later) wore the diadem.” See Plutarch’s *Moralia* (488d). Here Plutarch reports a story about Xerxes: after Darius died, the succession was between Ariamenes and Xerxes, and the latter, before he was formally appointed Great King, performed the functions of a king and wore a diadem and tiara, which he removed when his brother approached him: ‘Ἀριαμένης μὲν οὖν κατέβαινεν ἐκ Μῆδων οὐ πολεμικὸς ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ δίκην ἰσυχαίος, Ξέρξης δὲ παρὼν ἐπραττεν ἀπερ ἦν βασίλει προσήκοντα. ἐλθὼν δὲ τοῦ ἀδέλφου θεὸς τὸ διάδημα καὶ καταβαλὼν τὴν τιάραν, ἦν φοροῦσιν ὁρθῶν οἱ βασιλεύοντες). See also Polyaeus (7.12.1), who refers to the diadem of Darius.
upright tiara and a diadem around it, as did his kinsmen. A diadem appears here as part of Cyrus’ regal dress and, even if it was not an exclusive insignia of the Great King, this is evidence which, contrary to the later myths about Dionysus, was written some sixty years before Alexander’s time. Moreover, there is ample iconographic evidence for the use of diadems by the Assyrians, Babylonians and the Medes. The diadem appears to have passed from the Median costume to that of the Persians, and even the Great Kings, although it was also worn by Achaemenid courtiers and attendants. Although the absence of iconographic evidence for the Great King’s diadem in Persian art is puzzling, this is, in the end, an argument from silence, and we should not regard it as decisive.

We can now present an alternative revisionist explanation of Alexander’s diadem. Two texts—the Metz Epitome and Curtius—explicitly refer to a diadem of Darius, although it was not an exclusive insignia of the Great King. That Alexander did not see himself as the new Great King has been the major conclusion of the first section of this thesis. The fact that the diadem is rarely attested as a head-dress of Achaemenid kings is no real argument against the view that it was Persian in origin. Alexander, after all, is also said to have worn a Persian belt, and such belts were worn by ordinary Iranian people, not just by the Great King. We should remember that Alexander’s costume, according to one tradition, was a mixture of Persian and Macedonian elements, and that the king rejected the Median clothing because it was exotic and outlandish. This would mean that Alexander examined the Persian costume—both that of the Great King and other Persian courtiers—and selected those articles of clothing he wanted to combine with his normal Macedonian apparel. That the diadem was not an exclusive insignia of Persian kingship did not concern him, since he did not regard himself as a Persian king. He will have selected a headband that was

48 Xen. Cyr. 8.3.13.
52 It should be noted that no pictorial representation of the kausia survives from the period before Philip II, but this can hardly be proof that the kausia was not Macedonian, since literary evidence shows that it was (Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1993: 141–142).
53 Eratosthenes of Cyrene, FGrH 241 F 30 = Plut. Mor. 329f–330d.
associated with the Great King, and then adopted it as a symbol of the kingship of Asia.\textsuperscript{54} Being similar to Hellenic headbands and inoffensive to the Greeks and Macedonians, the diadem was thus the perfect symbol for his Asian conquests.

1.2. The Zona

The Persian belt or \textit{zona} was another Persian item of dress that Alexander assumed.\textsuperscript{55} The outlandishness of certain types of oriental clothing was a concern to Alexander, so it was no doubt alarming for him to learn that, to the Greeks, the way the belt was worn—probably with the tunic partly covering it and drawn up in baggy folds—was considered effeminate (Curt. 3.3.18) and an object for derision (Plut. \textit{Alex.} 51.5).

1.3. The Chlamys, Kausia and Persian Chiton

It is evident that the chiton with the central white (\textit{XI\upiota\upsilon\upsigma\upsigma\omicron\upsigma\upsilon\nu} \textit{me\alpha\omicron\sigma\sigma\omicron\upsilon\epsilon\upsilon\kappa\omicron\upsilon}) was Persian in origin, but the \textit{chlamys} and \textit{kausia} were Macedonian items of clothing.\textsuperscript{57} The \textit{chlamys} was certainly the Macedonian cloak, with a characteristic semi-circular shape.\textsuperscript{58} The \textit{kausia} was the traditional head-dress of Macedonians, and may have been part of their military equipment, though it was perhaps a general cap rather than a type of helmet.\textsuperscript{59}

\textsuperscript{54} For the manner by which the diadem changed from a symbol of the kingship of Asia to a mere symbol of Hellenistic kingship, see Ritter 1965: 126–127.
\textsuperscript{55} Diod. 17.77.5; \textit{Metz Epit.} 1.2; Plut. \textit{Alex.} 51.5. See Alföldi 1955: 48–49; Widengren 1956: 241.
\textsuperscript{56} Widengren 1956: 241.
\textsuperscript{57} Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1993: 122–149.
\textsuperscript{58} Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1993: 143–145.
\textsuperscript{59} Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1993: 123; “although basically an item of defensive armour, the \textit{kausia} could also be used in other circumstances .... [the] \textit{kausia} should be included in the equipment of a Macedonian soldier; yet its rarity in monuments showing Macedonians in martial action ... suggests that it was a substitute rather than a true helmet ... [sc. one which was] used occasionally as defensive armour ... ” See Fredricksmeyer 1994: 140–158 for an exhaustive list of the ancient sources relating to the \textit{kausia}. On its shape, see Dintsis 1986: 183–195.
Many argue that the cap was made of felt, but a case can be made for the use of leather. Kausiai of the Macedonian king and nobility were later dyed purple, and were the gift of the king. In the literary and iconographic evidence, the kausia appears to be worn most notably by kings, Macedonian generals, companions, and royal pages.

Alexander apparently used a purple chiton in imitation of the colour of the Persian royal costume, and also distributed the purple robes of Achaemenid courtiers and Persian harnesses to his own companions (Diod. 17.77.5–5). Plutarch (Alex. 51.5) refers to the διάλευκον χιτώνα. The latter is the same expression used by Diodorus. Since the prefix dia- ought, in this context, to be understood as "partly," the translation should be "partly-white tunic," which is perfectly consistent with the χιτώνα μεσόλευκον of Ephippus.

The mesoleukos tunic was a purple robe with a white strip down the middle, and it appears in Persian monumental art. This type of Persian royal robe is described by Curtius as worn by Darius III: purpureae tunicae medium album intextum erat (3.3.17). Xenophon distinguishes the χιτών μεσολευκός from the kandys, and the following scene in his Cyropaedia provides fundamental information about the Persian royal chiton:


For felt, see Dintsis 1986: 183. For the view that the kausia was made of leather, see Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1993: 123–126.

Plut. Eum. 8 (for commentary, see Ryan 1995: 87). Eumenes bestowed purple kausiai and chlamydes on his officers, and this was a gift of the king.


See Curt. 6.6.7; Metz Epit. 1.2: itemque equites stipatores, quos habebat, Persico ornatu [et] sequi iussit. See Bosworth (1980a: 1–4) for the significance of this gesture. See Athenaeus (12.540a) and Plutarch (Mor. 11a) for anecdotes about the king’s acquisition of purple dye. The use of purple for courtiers and royal officials became one of Alexander’s great legacies to the Hellenistic world and Rome (see Reinhold 1970: 29–31).

See LSJ, s.v. ἱερὰ D.6.

The simple translation “white tunic” (as in Welles 1963: [Plut. Alex. 51.5]) is misleading.

See Gow 1928: 143 (fig. 3, costume type II); Alfoldi 1955: 48. In the Alexander Mosaic, Darius appears to wear such a garment (for a reproduction, see Cohen 1997: pl. 3). See also Jacoby’s commentary to FGrH 126 F 5. Cf. Pliny, HN 27.102 for the sense of the Latin adjective mesoleucion (but not applied to costume).
After these men Cyrus himself appeared on a chariot near the gates, wearing an upright tiara, a purple tunic with a white middle (for it is not permitted for another to wear the mesoleukos), and trousers (anaxyrvides) of dyed scarlet around his legs, and a completely purple mantle (kandys).67

In Xenophon’s novel, a *chiton* with a white middle—the same type described by Ephippus and Diodorus—was worn by Cyrus, and, according to Xenophon, it was the exclusive prerogative of a Persian king (ἄλλω δ’ οὖκ ἔξεστι μεσόλευκον ἔχειν), a datum which we shall examine below. Xenophon was acquainted with Persian customs in the 390s, only some sixty years before Alexander adopted the same type of *chiton*.

Evidence from later lexicographers, though slightly confused, even provides us with a Persian name for this garment. It seems that the general Persian term for “tunic” was taken into Greek and transliterated as *sarapis* (*σαράπις*).68 This word is glossed by Julius Pollux, Hesychius, and Photius.

Julius Pollux, the lexicographer of the late second century AD, calls the *sarapis* a “garment of the Medes, a purple tunic with a white middle.”69 Photius, in his *Lexicon*, also defines *sarapis* as “a Persian chiton with a white middle.”70 Hesychius provides the following gloss on the word:

Σάραπις: Ἑρασικὸς χιτῶν μεσόλευκος, ὡς Κτισίας: “καὶ διαφημιζόμενη τὸν σάραπιν καὶ τὰς τρίχας καθεμένη ἐτήλλετό τε καὶ βοήν ἐποίει.”

67 Xen. Cyr. 8.3.13.
68 Widengren 1956: 238.
69 ὤ δὲ σάραπις. Μήδεν τὸ φόρημα, πορφυρός μεσόλευκος χιτῶν (Julius Pollux, Onomasticon 7.61).
70 Photius, Lexicon, s.v. sarapis (σάραπις: χιτῶν Περσικὸς μεσόλευκος).
Sarapis: a Persian chiton with a white middle, as Ctesias says: "and she tore her hair and cried out, having ripped the sarapis and having let her hair fall down."\(^7^1\)

Hesychius quotes a fragment of Ctesias here in which the sarapis appears as a garment of a woman, who tears this tunic, apparently in mourning.\(^7^2\) Since this fragment may be identical with another surviving fragment of Ctesias (FGrH 688 F 25), it probably refers to the queen-mother Parysatis, when she learned that the younger Cyrus had been killed (Hinz 1969: 72–74).

There is of course a contradiction here with Xenophon, who regarded the use of a chiton mesoleukos as a prerogative of the king, but perhaps members of the royal family were occasionally permitted to wear these garments. Alternatively, the word sarapis may have merely been a general Persian name for any type of Persian chiton, and the sarapis with the central white strip was the specifically royal garment. Hence in Hesychius’ quotation of Ctesias the torn sarapis was a non-royal chiton, rather than the μεσόδευκος. On this view, the Greeks later came to associate the word sarapis with the specifically royal garment, and its generic meaning in Persian (simply as a word for “tunic”) may have been forgotten.\(^7^3\) It should also be noted that the chiton mesoleukos did not become part of the

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\(^7^1\) *Lexicon*, s.v. σαράπις, sigma.193 = Ctesias, *FGrH* 688 F 41.

\(^7^2\) Berve, *Alexanderreich*, vol. 1, 17. See also Hinz 1969: 72–74: "it would therefore seem that the sarapis is the undergarment of the kandys ... the sources do not allow a certain conclusion, but I hold it likely in view of all the evidence, above all the archaeological evidence, that the kandys was the Persian frock-coat originally from Elam, [sc. and] the sarapis the mantle or cloak of the Medes. The main difference between the two garments may be that the kandys was open behind, and the sarapis in the front" ("es könnte demnach scheinen, als sei der Sarapis das Untergewand zum Kandys ... Eine sichere Entscheidung lassen die Quellen nicht zu, doch halte ich in Abwägung aller Zeugnisse, vor allem auch der archäologischen, für wahrscheinlich, daß der Kandys der aus Elam entlehnte persische Überrock war, der Sarapis hingegen der Mantel bzw. Umhang der Meder. Der Hauptunterschied zwischen den beiden Kleidungsstücken dürfte darin bestanden haben, daß der Kandys hinten offen war, der Sarapis dagegen vorne").

\(^7^3\) It should also be noted that the words σαλητών and σάρητον may be variant readings of sarapis. Hesychius has the following curious entry:

σαλητών: Σοφόκλης Ἀινδρομέδα. Ἀντίπατρος ἱππεύσε των βαρβαρίκων χιτῶνα. οί δὲ καὶ μεσόδευκοι αὐτὸν εἶναι φασί.
Hellenistic royal insignia, as the diadem did, since by Hellenistic times *sarapeis* were used by the Greeks of Asia Minor.\(^7^4\)

The later lexicographers, then, knew of a kind of Persian tunic called the *sarapis*, which has the same characteristics as Xenophon's χιτώνα πορφυροῦν μεσόλευκον (Cyr. 8.3.13), as worn by Cyrus. If Xenophon is correct and this garment continued to be a royal insignia of the Great King, then Alexander’s use of it certainly requires some explanation, since it might suggest that he *did* wish to identify himself as the new Great King. However, the obscurity of the *chiton mesoleukos* should give us pause. Xenophon is the only writer to inform us of its significance. In the Greek world, the most well known symbol of the Great King was the upright tiara, which Alexander did not adopt (see subsection 3 below).


The traditions in Ephippus of Olynthus, Diodorus, the *Metz Epitome*, and Eratosthenes of Cyrene provide consistent evidence concerning Alexander’s Persian clothing. This consistency is marred by two contradictory traditions, both of which relate to Alexander’s alleged use of Median clothing. These will be examined here and in subsection 3 below.

First, we must deal with a troublesome issue of textual criticism that relates to Plutarch’s life of Alexander. The surviving texts of Plutarch have this statement:

"Saleton: [sc. this occurs] in the *Andromeda* of Sophocles. Antipater [or] the barbarian chiton. People also say that it has a white middle" (Hesychius, Lexicon, s.v. σαλήτου, sigma.110).

Hesychius ascribes the primary characteristic of the *sarapis* (i.e., *mesoleukos*) to the *saleton*. The second variant of the word (σάρητον) is defined by Hesychius (Lexicon, s.v. σάρητον, sigma.208) as a "*sarapis*, a kind of chiton" (ὅ σαραπίς. [καὶ] έλθος χιτώνος). Photius (Lexicon, s.v. σάρητον) simply glosses σάρητον as a "barbarian chiton" (σάρητον· βαρβαρικός χιτών).\(^7^4\) See Democritus of Ephesus, *FGH* 267 F 1 = Ath. 12.525d. The fragment also refers to Persian garments called *kalasireis* and *aktaiai*, both of which were used by the Ephesians.
Indeed [sc. Alexander] did not approve of the Median dress, which was wholly barbaric and strange, and he did not wear the anaxyrides, or kandys, or tiara, but a mixed style which was midway between the Persian and Median, more modest than the one and more impressive than the other (Alex. 45.2).\textsuperscript{75}

The editors Coraes and Schmieder felt that the expression “Persian and Median” was an error. They emended it to “Persian and Macedonian” (Μακεδονικῆς), in agreement with Plutarch’s Moralia (330a). Although Hamilton (1969: 123–24) criticised this emendation, even if Plutarch did in fact write “Persian and the Median,” it seems that this was a mistake on his part, since in the very same passage (Alex. 45.2) he reports that Alexander did not wear the Median costume. He again flatly contradicts himself in the De Fortuna Alexandri:

'Αλέξανδρος οὖ ἐσθήτα προσήκατο τὴν Μηδικῆν, ἀλλὰ τὴν Περσικὴν πολλὰ τῆς Μηδικῆς εὑτελεστέραν ὦσαν. τὰ γὰρ ἐξαλλα καὶ τραγικὰ τοῦ βαρβαρικοῦ κόσμου παρατηρήσαμεν, οὗν τιάραν καὶ κάνδυν καὶ ἀναξυρίδας, ἐκ τοῦ Περσικοῦ καὶ Μακεδονικοῦ τρόπου μεμιμημένην τινά στολὴν ἐφόρει, καθάπερ Ἐρατοσθένης ἰστόρηκεν.

Alexander did not approve of the Median dress, but accepted the Persian one, since it was simpler. Disapproving of the unusual and theatrical clothing of the barbarian world, such as the tiara, the kandys, and the anaxyrides,\textsuperscript{76} he wore a mixed dress from the Persian and Macedonian fashions, as Eratosthenes records (Plut. Mor. 329f–330a).

\textsuperscript{75} The Greek text follows Ziegler 1968. See Hamilton 1969: 121–122 for the textual and linguistic problems.

\textsuperscript{76} The evidence of Strabo (11.13.9 = 526c) confirms that these were of Median origin.
The statement at Alex. 45.2, then, is contradicted by Plutarch’s own statements in his writings about Alexander. Moreover, the notion that Alexander mixed “Persian and Median” dress is inconsistent with Diodorus, and presumably the original account of Cleitarchus.\(^77\) This provides strong evidence that the phrase “Persian and Median” in Plutarch’s life should be rejected, perhaps as a mistake by Plutarch\(^78\) or a corruption of the text. The conclusion that Alexander’s dress was a compromise between “Persian and Macedonian” elements follows directly.

The “strange and theatrical” (ἐξαλλὰ καὶ τραγικά) nature of barbarian dress appears to have been a fundamental concern for Alexander. Most probably, he rejected the Median dress because it evoked the most pompous types of garments used in the Greek theatre for orientals, Great Kings and other mythical kings. This type of costume, the dress of the “theatre king” (“Theaterkönig”), was examined in the seminal study of A. Alfoldi.\(^79\) In particular, garments like the kandys were notorious on the Greek stage as oriental and theatrical, and it is no surprise that Alexander rejected even more barbarous clothing like the Persian trousers (anaxyrides).\(^80\)

However, there were precedents in the Greek world for the use of luxurious long-sleeved tunics like the Persian chiton mesoleukos sometimes found in the theatre. Duris of Samos noted that the Spartan king Pausanias (409–395 BC) “used to wear the Persian dress” (τὴν Περσικὴν ἐνεδύων στολὴν),\(^81\) and the tyrant Dionysius I of Sicily wore the long robe (ξυστὶς), golden crown, and buckled mantle,\(^82\) a royal costume remarkably similar to that of Alexander. These garments were regarded as luxurious eastern clothes evoking the costume of the Great King, but also marking the wearer as a person of great

77 Diod. 17.77.5.
78 It may also have been a deliberate phrase used by Plutarch for rhetorical effect.
79 Alfoldi 1955: 15–55. The chief items in this costume were the long-sleeved tunic, himation, the Persian mantle (kandys), the belt and bracelet (Alfoldi 1955: 41–50).
80 Alfoldi 1955: 41–44.
81 Duris of Samos, FGrH 76 F 14 = Ath. 12.535e.
82 See Ath. 12.535e–f: ὁ δὲ Σικελίας τύραννος Διονύσιος ξυστίδα καὶ χρυσῶν στέφανον ἐπὶ δ' ἐπιπόρπημα μετελάμβανε τραγικόν.
power. Alexander's adoption of such clothing was thus an attempt to express his authority and sovereignty, and no doubt his newly won position as king of Asia. They elevated him above his subjects through luxury and display. We simply do not need to assume that the king wanted to present himself as a true Great King by this act, because he explicitly rejected the tiara, the symbol of the Persian kings in the Greek world.

3. Did Alexander wear the tiara?

The second discrepant tradition we are faced with is found in Arrian. He reports that Alexander exchanged his traditional Macedonian head-dress (the kausia) for the tiara of the Persians (Ana. 4.7.4). This is a tradition also found in the Itinerarium Alexandri (89) and Lucian (Dial. mort. 12.4). The view that Alexander wore the tiara has been supported by Berve and Neuffer, but was questioned by Ritter, whose views have been followed by many later scholars. Ritter argues that the Itinerarium Alexandri and Lucian are late and derivative, and that they carry little weight. Hence the question whether Alexander ever used the tiara is largely dependent on the veracity of the Anabasis 4.7.4. Some have been reluctant to dismiss the evidence of Arrian, but there are good reasons for doing so here, since his statement is at variance with Plutarch (Alex. 45.2) and Eratosthenes of Cyrene (FGrH 241 F 30 = Plut. Mor. 329f-330d). Arrian is not infallible, and, in this passage, he

83 Alföldi 1955: 44: "... the ξυρτίς was used not only in the theatre but also by real sovereigns, such as Dionysius of Syracuse" ("... wurde die ξυρτίς nicht nur im Theater, sondern auch von wirklichen Herrschern, wie Dionysios von Syrakus, gebraucht"). See also Stroheker 1958: 160: "The splendid clothing of the king which was customary in [sc. Greek] tragedy consciously imitated the official Persian dress, and for the Greeks was associated with the idea of the luxury and omnipotence of eastern absolutism" ("Die in der Tragödie übliche Prunkkleidung des Königs ahmte bewußt die persische Tracht nach, und mit ihr verbanden sich für die Griechen die Vorstellungen von der Üppigkeit und der Allmacht des östlichen Absolutismus").

84 Alexanderreich, vol. 1, 15–18.
85 Neuffer 1928: 35.
87 Ritter's views on this question are certainly to be preferred to those of Berve and Neuffer. See Hamilton 1969: 120–121; Hammond 1989: 181.
seems to contradict himself, since Alexander continued to wear the *kausia* (*Ana. 7.29.4*). Arrian’s statement occurs in the context of moralising about Alexander’s descent into barbarian customs. Like Plutarch, he may have relied on an inaccurate tradition from the Vulgate sources, or may have deliberately composed this statement for the purposes of his narrative, since the traditional Macedonian *kausia* juxtaposed with the outlandish Persian *tiara* is an effective rhetorical device, one which drives home the theme of Alexander’s abandonment of his native customs. The view that Alexander never wore the tiara is thus confirmed.

Moreover, the tiara or *kidaris* was very well known to the Greeks as the Great King’s distinctive head-dress. In 324, for instance, Bessus wore it to declare his assumption of the Persian kingship, and later a Median usurper called Baryaxes was executed because he had worn the tiara upright (*Arr. Anab. 6.29.3*). If Alexander ever wished to explicitly claim the Persian throne as a strict Great King, he merely had to assume the tiara. That he did not do so is our best evidence that Alexander never intended any such thing.

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90 The idea that Alexander is depicted wearing a tiara in the Porus medallions (Hill 1922: 191; Alfoldi 1955: 42, n. 212) is now completely discredited (Price 1982: 76; Fredricksmeyer 2000: 153–154; Holt 2003: 120, n. 8). Cf. Badian (1996: 21, n. 48), who argues that “[sc. Alexander] may have changed his style over the years, or he reserved the wearing of the tiara for formal and ritual (Persian) occasions, as indeed the King himself may have done.”
91 Ar. *Av.* 487; Hdt. 3.12.17; 7.61.3; Ctesias, *FGrH* 688 F 20.31–32; Xen. *An.* 2.5.23; Cyr. 3.1.13; 8.3.13; Strabo 11.13.9; Julius Pollux, *Onomasticon* 7.58.5–59.2. See also the Scholia in *Aves* 487.1–7: “this [word *kurbasia*] is found in historical works. Every Persian was allowed to wear the tiara, but not the upright tiara, as Cleitarchus [says] in the tenth book [of his history] For only the Persian kings themselves used to wear the upright tiara (as I have said, the tiara is the *kidaris* [worn] on the head. It is the custom for others to wear it by placing it before themselves and wrapping it around the forehead, but the kings wear the upright *kidaris*” (τούτῳ ἐξ ἱστοριάς ἐλληφε. πᾶσι γὰρ Ἑρσοις ἔχειν τὴν τιάραν φορεῖν, ἀλλ’ οὐκ ὀρθὴν, ὡς Κλεῖταρχος ἔν τῇ δεκάτῃ, μόνον δὲ ὅι τῶν Περσῶν βασιλείας ὀρθαίς ἔχοντο [τὴν δὲ ἐπὶ κεφαλῆς κίδαριν. ἐστὶ δὲ αὕτη, καθὰ προείπομεν, τιάρα. τοῖς μὲν ἄλλοις ἔθος καὶ ἐπτυγμένην καὶ προβάλλουσαν εἰς τὸ μέτωπον ἔχειν, τοῖς δὲ βασιλεύσων ὀρθήν]. For the *kidaris* in Greek art, see Miller 1991: 59–82.
92 *Arr. Anab.* 3.25.3.
4. The Throne and Sceptre

Both the throne and sceptre were important insignia of the Great King. In Persepolis, the king is usually depicted enthroned with a royal footstool and sceptre. The king’s throne was golden (Ath. 12.514c), and it was a capital offense for anyone other than the king to sit on it. Alexander is made to deride this very tradition in an anecdote in Curtius (8.4.15), although the speech may be nothing more than a Vulgate fiction. The throne had not been a significant symbol of royalty in the Greek tradition, but the sceptre was associated with kings even in the Homeric myths.

At some date Alexander adopted a Persian-style throne and used it for audiences. In a fragment of Ephippus of Olynthus, we learn that a golden throne was set up for Alexander in a Persian paradesisos where he used to hold court. The most prominent incident, however, was the occasion in Babylon when a man was found sitting on the royal throne. The eunuch attendants refused to remove the man because of a Persian custom (Anab. 7.24.3). The event, which was most probably a Mesopotamian substitute king ritual pre-arranged by the Babylonian priests (see Chapter III.1.3 above), demonstrates that Alexander had moved towards an Eastern style of enthronement by the final year of his life. But the throne had been an important symbol of kingship, not just

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95 Lenz 1993: 62–72; A. Hug, RE VI.A.1 (1936), s.v. ὁρόνος, 613: “in Homeric times, the throne was not yet the insignia of kingship, but only the sceptre. It was not only the kings but also the noble lords who sat on thrones, which existed in large numbers in the king’s palace” (“in homerischer Zeit ist der Thron noch nicht das Abzeichen des Königtums, sondern nur das Szepter. Nicht nur die Könige, sondern auch die adeligren Herren sitzen auf Thronesseln, die im Königspalast in großer Menge vorhanden sind”).
96 Arr. Anab. 7.24.1–3; Diod. 17.116.2–4.
97 Ephippus, FGrH 126 = Ath. 12.537d. See also Alfoldi 1950: 556.
98 Diod. 17.116.2–4; Plut. Alex. 73.7–9.
in Persia, but throughout the Near East.\textsuperscript{99} The king’s throne may well have been influenced just as much by Babylonian traditions as by those in Persia.\textsuperscript{100}

The \textit{Metz Epitome} (1.2) lists the sceptre (\textit{caduceum}) as part of Alexander’s normal royal costume. It was included amongst the king’s insignia after his death by Diodorus (18.61.1), and Alexander’s funerary carriage even had a representation of the king holding his sceptre (Diod. 18.27.1). It was during official audiences that the most important use of this item was made, as Polyaeus reports that Alexander would sit enthroned in his tent with the sceptre in his hand.\textsuperscript{101} In Athenaeus, Alexander’s use of the sceptre was meant to evoke the gods,\textsuperscript{102} and this receives striking confirmation in recent interpretations of the commemorative Porus medallions.\textsuperscript{103} These decadrachms were struck during the king’s lifetime to celebrate his victory over Porus; they showed him in a divinised form, holding a thunderbolt and most probably a sceptre.\textsuperscript{104} In Alexander’s coinage, Zeus is frequently depicted holding a sceptre,\textsuperscript{105} and Alexander, in the Porus medallions, is obviously portrayed as a hero-god assimilated to Zeus.\textsuperscript{106} The sceptre that Alexander used in his royal costume was probably modelled on that of the Great King, but it appears to have been interpreted by the king as a symbol of his relationship to his divine father Zeus. In short, the sceptre was in no sense an insignia showing his claim to the Persian throne.

\textsuperscript{99} Grayson, \textit{Babylonian Chronicles}, 100; Grayson 1975b: 84.
\textsuperscript{100} See Chapter III.2.2 on the occasion when Alexander sat on the throne of Darius at Susa.
\textsuperscript{101} \textit{Strat.} 4.8.2: ἢν δὲ Ἄλεξανδρος ὁ βασιλεὺς ἐν μέσῳ στρατοπέδῳ προκαθήμενος ἐν σκηνῇ, σκηπτρὸν ἔχων.
\textsuperscript{102} Ephippus, \textit{FGrH} 126 F 5.29 = Ath. 537f.
\textsuperscript{103} For reproductions of the medallion, see Davis and Kraay 1973: nos. 10–12 and Holt 2003: pls. 2–8. For the possibility that Alexander’s sceptre was eventually buried in Tomb II at Vergina, see Borza 1990: 264–265.
\textsuperscript{105} See Price (1991 [vol. 2]: 553–554, s.v. caduceus) for a full listing of such coins.
\textsuperscript{106} Holt 2003: 121–122.
Conclusion

There is strong evidence in Ephippus of Olynthus, Diodorus and Eratosthenes of Cyrene that Alexander mixed Persian and Macedonian costume, but that the king rejected the Median dress, which included the tiara, the full-sleeved jacket (*kanēds*), and the baggy trousers (*anāxyrides*). These were “strange and theatrical” (*ẹ̄ḳαλ̣λα καὶ τραγικα*) items of barbarian dress, and evoked the more exotic types of garments of the Greek “theatre kings.”

But there seems to be no compelling evidence for the view that the diadem was derived from the iconography of Dionysus. There is even less evidence for Alföldi’s thesis that it was a Greek victor’s headband (“Siegerbinde”), assumed by Alexander to mark his victory over Darius at Gaugamela. The violence done to the ancient sources must be regarded as a serious problem for all those who question the diadem’s Persian origin. The diadem was unquestionably a symbol of Alexander’s assumption of the kingship of Asia. Another point that does command respect is that it was adopted as an inoffensive symbol, and became a royal prerogative in the Hellenistic world and beyond.\(^{107}\) Nevertheless, it was also Persian in origin.

Although the *chiton* with the white middle (*χιτών μεσόλευκον*) was an insignia of the Persian king according to Xenophon, this was also an extremely obscure fact, and it was the upright tiara that was known to the Greeks as the exclusive head-dress of the Great King.\(^{108}\) Alexander’s rejection of the tiara adds weight to the thesis that he did not wish to assume the Persian kingship or present himself as a Persian king. Alexander’s mixed royal costume included eastern garments that indicated his sovereignty over Asia and elevated him above his subjects through luxury and display.


CHAPTER V -
PERSIANS AND EASTERNERS
IN ALEXANDER'S COURT

Introduction

The second major category of Alexander’s court reforms was the introduction of Persians and other orientals. We can discern two broad categories of such personnel. The first group of Iranians were merely those whom Alexander captured after Issus, when the royal camp and its attendants were seized (Plut. Alex. 20.11–12), including Darius’ family (subsection 1 below). That the slaves, eunuchs and attendants who were captured here, and later in Babylon, Susa and Persis, were Alexander’s by right of military conquest was entirely in accordance with the concept of spear-won land (see Introduction, subsection 1).

After 330, however, the king introduced, or allegedly introduced, a number of other personnel as part of his court reforms. Amongst the new courtiers were (1) Persian ἑταῖροι, (2) Asian chamberlains, (3) Persian spear-bearers (δορυφόροι) and the “apple-bearers,” (4) the 360 concubines of the Great King, and (5) court eunuchs.

I examine each in turn below. Most of these court personnel were connected with the increasing isolation of the king and his development of a magnificent audience style after 330, which also involved the introduction of Persian court offices (see Chapter VI below). In other cases, the inclusion of Iranians in the king’s court served political ends and provided a foil to his own Macedonians, and a means by which he could assert his increasing authoritarianism (see subsection 2 below).
1. Darius’ Family

The Great Kings reserved a privileged position in the court for their mothers, wives and other royal women. The vast Achaemenid court was mobile, and the royal women followed their king, even on military campaigns. Thus Darius’ family was present during the march from Babylon to Issus (3.3.23). In the aftermath of the battle, Darius’ mother, wife and two daughters were captured (Plut. Alex. 21.1). According to Arrian’s citation of Aristobulus and Ptolemy, Alexander sent Leonnatus to Darius’ women to inform them that they would continue to have their royal retinue and the title of queens (Anab. 2.12.5). There is general consensus that Alexander treated them with great respect. Sisygambis, for instance, was treated like Alexander’s mother (Diod. 17.37.6). But at the same time Alexander undoubtedly used them as hostages and bargaining chips in his brief negotiations with Darius (Arr. Anab. 2.25.3). The royal queens formed part of the king’s entourage until 330 (Diod. 17.67.1). When the king arrived at Susa, he left Darius’ mother, daughters and son in the city, and made arrangements for the family to learn Greek.

In 324 Alexander returned to Susa, and he married Stateira, Darius’ elder daughter, and Parysatis, the daughter of Artaxerxes Ochus. Although the ceremony was conducted according to Iranian custom (Anab. 7.4.6–7), Alexander’s marriages to Stateira and Parysatis were hardly an attempt to present himself as the new Great King. The marriage of the Macedonian king to foreigners was in no sense an innovation. Philip had taken at least seven wives, including the non-Macedonian women Audata of Illyria and Olympias of Epirus (Ath. 13.557d). There was an exact parallel to Alexander’s marriage to the Achaemenid princesses in Philip’s union with Meda, the daughter of the Thracian king, after

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4 For Alexander and Darius’ mother see Diod. 17.37.6; Curt. 3.12.17; on Darius’ daughters see Diod. 17.38.1; Curt. 3.12.21 and 4.11.3; for Darius’ wife, see Plut. Alex. 22.3; Just. 11.12.5–7.
5 Curt. 5.2.17; Diod. 17.67.1.
6 Diod. 17.67.1; Arr. 3.22.6.
7 Arr. Anab. 7.4.4; Plut. Alex. 70.3; Diod. 17.107.6; Curt. 10.3.12; Just. 12.10.9.
Philip had annexed that region. That Alexander himself, as the son of a princess from Epirus, faced prejudice from the Macedonian elite is borne out by the famous symposium at which Attalus proclaimed that legitimate heirs would be born through his niece Cleopatra, and not bastards (υδέθοι). Perhaps for this reason, the king felt no shame in marrying non-Macedonian women, and readily approved of the soldiers’ unions with eastern spouses (Anab. 7.4.8). The mass marriages between Alexander’s nobles and Iranian women have rightly been seen as evidence of the new Macedonian hegemony over Asia. No Iranian aristocrat had married a Greek or Macedonian woman. If the sexual possession of the Persian wives by their new husbands was understood in the traditional Greek way as the right of the conqueror over the conquered, then Alexander’s own marriages demonstrated just that with even stronger force. He was now the new lord of Asia, but was principled enough to take the women of his defeated foe as legitimate wives. In short, Alexander’s dealings with the Achaemenid women provide no evidence that he saw himself as the Persian king.

2. Persian ἐταῖροι

When Alexander arrived in Hyrcania in the summer of 330, a great many Iranians and Asians surrendered, including the Babylonian Bagistanes, Antibelus (Arr. Anab. 3.21.1), the chiliarch Nabarzanes, Phrataphernes and other Persian officers (Anab.

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10 See Bosworth 1980a: 12: “[sc. the] effect was to mark out Alexander’s Companions as the new rulers of the Persian Empire. They already had the scarlet robes of Persian courtiers; now they were married into the most prominent satrapal families. Nothing could have made it clearer that Alexander intended his Macedonians to rule with him as the new lords of the conquered empire.”
At Zadracarta, numerous other satraps and Persians also gave themselves up (Arr. *Anab.* 3.23.7; Diod. 17.76.1). Some of these Iranians were undoubtedly welcomed into Alexander’s friendship and service. Moreover, before Alexander moved into Hyrcania, Curtius reports that a number of Persian nobles were found amongst the king’s captives:

[sc. Alexander] praecepit Hephaestioni, ut omnes captivos in regiam iuberet adduci. *Ibi singulorum nobilitate spectata secrevit a vulgo, quorum eminebat genus. M hi fuerunt; inter quos repertus est Oxathres, Darei frater, non illius fortuna quam indole animi sui clarior .... Oxydates erat nobilis Perses, qui a Dareo capitali supplicio destinatus cohibebatur in vinculis; huic liberato satrapeam Mediae attribuit, fratremque Darei recepit in cohortem amicorum omni vetustae claritatis honore servato* (Curt. 6.2.9–10).

[Alexander] gave orders to Hephaestion to command all the captives to be brought to the royal headquarters. There, with the nobles identified, he separated them from the common people. There were a thousand such nobles, amongst whom was discovered Oxathres, the brother of Darius, who was not more distinguished by the good fortune of his royal brother than by the nature of his mind .... There was also the Persian noble Oxydates, who was kept in chains because he had been condemned to death by Darius. Alexander liberated him and gave him Media, and received the brother of Darius into the circle of his friends, with all the honour of his earlier rank preserved.

Thus Oxyathres, the brother of Darius, was made one of Alexander’s companions in the aftermath of the murder of the Great King. The *hetairoi* of Philip had already come to include Greeks, and Alexander’s willingness to accept Persians into his court circle had ample precedent.

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But we may doubt whether the Iranians ever had the same influence that the traditional Macedonian and Hellenic *hetairai* did. Their status as companions was probably honorary in many ways. For instance, amongst the Iranians Alexander received was Artabazus and his sons, whom the king kept "in a position of honour." Soon afterwards, however, Alexander simply dismissed Artabazus and sent him home (Curt. 6.5.22), and there were presumably other Iranians who were "honoured" in this way. Yet another group of Iranian *hetairai* were most probably formed into a special guard for Alexander called the "apple-bearers," but even in this case their role appears to have been largely ceremonial (see subsection 4 below).

In the case of Oxyathres and other Persians close to the royal family, the rebellion of Bessus had proved how the members of the Achaemenid house were a threat. The inclusion of Oxyathres in the king's court was possibly a careful strategy to ensure that he would not engage in rebellion. Thus his position was close to that of a very privileged hostage.16

No doubt a considerable number of Iranians who continued to hold administrative and military positions in the empire had greater access to the king and found a place at court. But, as Bosworth showed long ago, Alexander's general policy was to keep such groups separate from his Macedonian and Greek companions.17 The division between the two ethnic groups is demonstrated starkly by the mutiny at Opis. Here Alexander opposed the rebellion by appointing Persians as military commanders over the Macedonians, and restricting the right to kiss him to them alone as his "kinsmen" (Arr. *Anab.* 7.11.1). One motive for the use of Persian *hetairai* was Alexander's desire for court personnel who could be used to overcome opposition from his Macedonians. But at the same time he had reduced the number of Iranian satraps to three by the end of the reign.18

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15 Curt. 6.5.1-2; Arr. *Anab.* 3.23.7-8: Ἀρτάβαζον δὲ καὶ τῶν παίδας ἦμα οἱ ἐν τιμῇ ἦγε, τά τε ἄλλα ἐν τῶν πρῶτων Περσῶν δυτας καὶ τῆς ἐς Δαρείου πίστευς ἔνεκα.
16 Brosius 2003: 171. Cf. Bosworth 1980a: 6: "At his court in a position of high honour was none other than Oxyathres, brother of the late king. Not only was Alexander the self-proclaimed successor to Darius, but Darius' brother recognised the claim and supported Alexander's court ceremonial. This had been one of Alexander's assertions as early as 332, when he boasted that the Persians in his entourage followed him out of free choice."
17 See Bosworth 1980a: 8.
Above all, he had in 330 given his own cavalry companions purple robes in the Achaemenid tradition, a gesture which surely indicated that they were the class who had replaced the Great King’s kinsmen. Those Iranians who entered the court as genuine supporters of Alexander may have been regarded as traitors by their fellows. Here we can cite the later tradition about Alexander in the *Book of Arda Viraf*:

[Alexander] cast hatred and strife, one with the other, amongst the nobles and householders of the country of Iran.

Every occupation had its collaborators, and Alexander’s proved to be no exception.

3. Asian Chamberlains

One of the many changes mentioned by Diodorus (17.77.4) is the introduction of Asian staff-bearers (ῥαβδούχοις Ἀσιαγενεῖς). F. Justi was surely correct to argue that the Persian ῥαβδούχοι were the same officials as the σκηπτούχοι. Evidence on the duties of the staff-bearers can be found in Xenophon’s writings. When Cyrus appeared in public he was escorted by his spear-bearers and staff-bearers. The latter received and carried petitions (Cyr. 8.3.19), sent messages for him and performed other menial tasks (Cyr.

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19 Diod. 17.77.5–6; Curt. 6.6.7; Metz Epit. 1.2. See Bosworth 1980a: 5. Cf Fredricksmeier 2000: 155.
22 Justi 1896: 660: “[sc. the chiliarch] still had other chiliarchs … next to him, as he also had a retinue of staff-bearers, σκηπτούχοι or ῥαβδούχοι, under a palace overseer” (“Er hatte noch andre Chiliarchen oder persisch Hazarapats neben sich, wie auch eine Schar von Stabträgern, σκηπτούχοι oder ῥαβδούχοι, unter einem Palastvogt”). See also Lewis 1977: 16.
23 ἔπει δὲ προφετεύει τὸ τοῦ Κόρου ἀρμα, προηγούντο μὲν οἱ τετρακισίλιοι δορυφόροι, παρείποντο δὲ οἱ δασελικοὶ έκατέρωθεν τοῦ ἄρματος· ἐφείποντο δὲ οἱ περὶ αὐτῶν σκηπτούχοι ἐφ᾽ ἑπτὼν κεκοσμημένου (Cyr. 8.3.15).
8.3.22; 8.3.23), Cyrus’ staff-bearers even accompanied him when he went hunting (Cyr. 8.1.38).

The first reference to Alexander’s use of staff-bearers occurs in the speech Plutarch places in the mouth of Cleitus the Black during the famous incident at Maracanda. The substance of the speech consists of the grievances many Macedonians had against their king in 328 BC. Cleitus exclaims that those Macedonians who had died were fortunate not to see their fellows beaten with Median rods, and forced to beg Persians in order to see their king. Plutarch’s sources here are not certain. If there was substance to the traditions he used to construct the speech, then the Persians mentioned were probably Diodorus’ βασιλικοί. As in the case of Cyrus’ staff-bearers, these officials would have acted as ushers, controlling access to the king. Unfortunately, Arrian has no direct references to them, but does speak of the new organisation of the king’s court that he believed was linked to the attempt to introduce proskynesis. Plutarch, however, does later explicitly refer to the introduction of ραβδοφόροι (a simple variant of βασιλικοί). According to him, during the king’s reaction to the mutiny at Opis, he excluded the Macedonians, entrusted his guard­watches to Persians and selected from them his spear-bearers and staff-bearers. Prima facie this appears to be a discrepant tradition, but the implication of this passage is probably not that Alexander’s staff-bearers had all been Macedonians before this date, but that the king excluded the Macedonians completely, and that previously both Macedonians and

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24 See Ath. 14.633d on Cyrus the Great’s command of the βασιλικοί in the court of the Median king Astyages.
25 See also Xen. An. 1.6.11 and 1.8.28 on Artapates (“the most loyal of Cyrus’ staff-bearers” [Ἀρταπάτου... τοῦ πιστοτάτου τῶν Κύρου σκηνούχων]).
27 Pearson (1983: 60) and Kornemann (1935: 249–250) thought that Plutarch’s account of the affair was derived from Charis of Mytilene, but see Hamilton (1969: 142).
28 Anab. 4.9.9.
29 TLG 7 2317, s.v. ραβδοφόρος.
30 Alex. 71.4–5: ἀπελάσας δὲ τὰς φυλακὰς παρέδωκε Πέρσαις καὶ κατέστησεν ἐκ τῶν ὁποίων δορυφόρους καὶ ραβδοφόρους. See also Arr. Anab. 7.11.3 who reveals that Alexander also planned to introduce a Persian ἀγμα and a τάξις ἀργυραστίδων, and Persian πεζέταιροι and ἄσθετεροι, as well as a new ἀγμα βασιλικῶν for the companion cavalry.
orientals had acted as court ushers. There is no necessary contradiction here and nothing to suggest that Diodorus is incorrect. The use of Asian ἡφασφαλικοί was earlier and more significant than the brief occasion in 324, and one can speculate that they were employed in the public audiences that Alexander is known to have held in a Persian-style tent after 330 BC (see Chapter VI.1.4 below). Most significantly, as in the case of the Iranian companions, Alexander used them as leverage against his rebellious Macedonians (Alex. 71.4–5).

4. Persian Spear-bearers and the melophoroi

The Great Kings traditionally had a bodyguard of one thousand spear-bearers called the “apple-bearers.” Herodotus (7.41), for instance, lists them amongst the infantry guards of Xerxes, and Athenaeus (12.514b–c), citing Heracleides of Cyme, describes them as a special group of spear-bearers selected from the ten thousand Immortals. There is, however, little evidence to support the view that the chiliarch was commander of the ten thousand Immortals.


32 Hesychius (mu 1200) defines the μηλοφόροι as a θεραπεύει Περσίκη τοῦ βασιλέως. For the μηλοφόροι under Darius III, see Arr. Anab. 3.11.5, 3.13.1, 3.16.2; Diod. 17.59.3. The term doryphoroe in Curtius (3.3.15) is probably a later scribal miscorrection of an original dorophorae (a Latin transcription of the Greek δοροφόροι) that referred to the Persian “gift-bearers” (see Ael. VH 1.22; Xen. An. 1.8.28–29), rather than to the Royal bodyguards (Heckel 1992a: 191–192). This is confirmed by the unusual function Curtius assigns them (doryphoroe ... soliti vestem excipere regelem), which is otherwise unattested for the μηλοφόροι.

33 See also Ath. 12.414d.

34 Cf. Schachermeyr 1970: 32. See also Cook (1983: 144), who contends that Hydarnes, the commander of the ten thousand during the Persian war, was also Xerxes’ chiliarch. But there is no reason to think that the
Diodorus relates that Alexander ordered the most distinguished Persian nobles to act as his δορυφόροι (literally “spear-bearers”). These included Oxyathres, Darius’ brother. Curtius (7.5.40) describes Oxyathres as “amongst [the king’s] bodyguards” (inter corporis custodes) when Bessus was captured in 329. It is thus likely that Oxyathres and the other high-ranking Persian hetairoi were members of the μηλοφόροι, who appear in a number of sources. Athenaeus described the troops present inside Alexander’s large tent, and states that the five hundred Persians called the “apples-bearers” were part of his bodyguard. Athenaeus’ account, however, makes it perfectly clear that the Iranians were subordinate to the Macedonian bodyguards and essentially a ceremonial corps (Ath. 12.539e); Alexander continued to rely on his Macedonians as the main somatophyakes.

After Alexander’s death, the μηλοφόροι were represented on the king’s sarcophagus next to the Macedonian troops (Diod. 18.27.1). Arrian (Anab. 7.29.4) attributed the king’s use of the apple-bearers to his desire to conciliate the Persians; he also relates that the μηλοφόροι were introduced into the Macedonian batallions (τάξεως). Perhaps this is to be related to the evidence of Diodorus, who reveals that one thousand Persians were admitted into the hypaspists attached to the court, after the discharge of Macedonian veterans in 324. This detail is confirmed by Justin: atque ita mille ex his iuvenes [i.e., the Persians] in numerum satellitum legit (12.12.4). Conveniently, there were one thousand μηλοφόροι under the Persian kings, and the evidence for their presence in Alexander’s court is impressive, even if the king used only half as Athenaeus commanded of the Immortals was a regular function of the chiliarch, and there is no supporting evidence relating to the later Achaemenid period.

35 For the appointment of Persian bodyguards, see Diod. 17.77.4 (ἐπείτα τοὺς ἐπιφανεστάτους τῶν ἀνδρῶν δορυφορεῖν ἔταξεν, ἐν οἷς ἦν καὶ ὁ Δαρεῖος ἄδελφος Οξάθρης) and the Metz Epit. 1.2 (deinde corporis sui custodes multos instituit, itemque Darii fratrems Oxyathrem instituit).
37 Ath. 12.539e = Phylarchus, FGrH 81 F 41.20.
38 For the complete passage, see Chapter VI, subsection 1.4 below.
reports. Significantly, Alexander’s introduction of the μηλοφόροι may be related to his appointment of a chiliarch, since this official was their commander under the Achaemenids (see Chapter VI.1.3 below).

5. The 360 Concubines

The Greek sources make it clear that the Great King had legitimate wives and concubines, just as the Greeks had their legal spouses and pallakai (Dem. Or. 59.122). Athenaeus reports that the chief queen of the Persian king tolerated her husband’s concubines because they paid respect to her by performing proskynesis. The royal concubines appear to have been former slaves, prisoners of war, or women specially selected by the king’s satraps or officials. Most importantly, they were hardly ever from Iranian families of high social standing. However, not all Persian concubines were part of the special group of 360. Many others appear to have been women who entertained the Great King during his meals: Athenaeus reports that these pallakai sang and played the lyre, with others singing in chorus.

The privileged harem of 360 royal concubines formed a select group from the larger mass of captive women in the palace. The specific number of 300 or 360 is attested by a number of Greek sources. The latter figure had a symbolic significance in Persian thought,

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41 Hdt. 7.83.2; Plut. Mor. 140b; Ath. 13.560d; 13.609; Ctesias, FGrH 688 F 13.62.
42 Herodotus (1.135) reports that this was also the custom amongst Persian men.
43 Ath. 13.556b.
44 Hdt. 6.32; 6.19; 9.76. See, in particular, Grayson, Babylonian Chronicles, 114 (no. 9.6–8): “On the sixteenth day ... women, prisoners from Sidon, which the king [i.e, Artaxerxes] sent to Babylon – on that day they entered the palace of the king.” See also Briant 2002: 278–279 and Brosius 1996: 32–33.
46 Ath. 4.145c: καὶ παρὰ τὸ δεῖπνον ἄδουσι τε καὶ φᾶλλουσιν αἱ παλλακαὶ αὐτῷ, καὶ μὲν ἔξαρχει, αἱ δὲ ἄλλαι ἀθρόος ἄδουσι. See also Ath.12.514b (for the textual problems, see Briant 2002: 283).
47 For the figure of 360, see Ath. 13.557b; Curt. 3.3.24; Plut. Artax. 27.1–2; Deinon, FGrH 690 F 27; for the alternative number of 300, see Heracleides, FGrH 689 F 1 = Ath. 12.514b.
as it corresponded to the solar calendar of 360 regular days. Thus some satrapies of the empire paid their tribute to the Great King by providing 360 talents of silver or gold dust (Hdt. 3.90; 3.94). That same number is also attested in Iranian sources in religious and ritual contexts.

The Vulgate sources preserve the tradition that Alexander had royal concubines in the manner of the Persian kings. In essence, the problem is whether Alexander created his own group as Diodorus states (Diod. 17.77.6) or whether the concubines of Darius III simply found a place in his entourage as other members of the royal family had after Issus. Diodorus provides us with the fullest account, which, we can assume, probably reflects Cleitarchus:

... τὰς παλακίδας ὁμοίως τῷ Δαρείῳ περιήγητο, τὸν μὲν ἀριθμὸν οὕσας οὐκ ἐλάττωσιν πλῆθει τῶν κατὰ τὸν ἐνιαυτὸν ἡμέρων, κάλλει δὲ διαπρεπεῖσι ώς ἂν ἐξ ἀπασῶν τῶν κατὰ τὴν Ἄσιαν γυναικῶν ἐπιλεγμένας, αὕτη δὲ ἐκάστης νυκτὸς περιήγατα τὴν κλίνην τοῦ βασιλέως, ἵνα τὴν ἐκλογὴν αὐτὸς ποιήσηται τῆς μελλούσης αὐτῷ συνεῖναι (17.77.6–7).

... in the same manner as Darius Alexander took concubines around with him, who, in terms of number, were not less than the days of the year; they were also outstanding in beauty, as they had been selected from all the women in Asia. Every night these women walked around the king’s couch in turn, so that he could make a selection of one for that night.

In short, Diodorus reports that Alexander established his own group of concubines, who accompanied him on campaign. We should note that the verb περιήγητο (“he took about

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50 For the evidence, see Briant 2002: 280–281.
51 Diod. 17.77.6; Curt. 6.6.8; Justin 12.3.10.
with him") is used by Dicaearchus in the same sense, but to refer to Darius III’s practice of having *pallakai* follow him on military expeditions.\(^{52}\)

This details of the tradition, however, are strangely contradicted by Diodorus’ final remark in the passage: “Alexander, in fact, seldom made use of these customs, and continued for the most part his previous habits, fearing that offence would be given to the Macedonians.”\(^{53}\) Alexander can hardly have chosen a different *pallakis* on every night of the year, but also employed such a custom infrequently (σπανίως). Unlike the other well attested traditions in Diodorus 17.77.6, including the use of (1) Asian chamberlains, (2) Persian dress,\(^{54}\) (3) Persian bodyguards, and (4) Persian apparel for the companions, all of which were clearly used occasionally rather than continuously (and most probably in the official receptions for easterners), the tradition concerning the concubines stands out as contradictory.

There may well be a solution to this problem. It is explicitly stated in the ancient sources that the Achaemenid concubines were present in Darius’ entourage during the war against Alexander (Diod. 17.35.3).\(^{55}\) It is likely that Alexander had captured Darius’ royal concubines as early as 333 BC. According to Quintus Curtius, they were in the retinue of the Persian king when he left Babylon before the Issus campaign (3.3.24). Importantly, Athenaeus (13.608a) records a tradition that Parmenio found “329 singing concubines of the king”\(^{56}\) at Damascus with Darius’ other household goods. This detail is mentioned in a letter of Parmenio to Alexander that Athenaeus cites, but it must be admitted that such correspondence is often of very doubtful authenticity.\(^{57}\) However, there is no reason to reject the historicity of the underlying tradition (probably taken by the letter-writer from

\(^{52}\) Φίλιππος δ' ὁ Μακεδών οὐκ ἐπήγετο μὲν εἰς τοὺς πολέμους γυναῖκας, ὡσπερ Δαρείος ὁ ὑπ’ Ἀλεξάνδρου καταλείπει, δὲ περὶ τῶν δὰκρυον πολέμου τριακοσίας ἐξήκοντα περιήγη αὐτὸ παλλακάς, ὡς ἱστορεῖ Δικαιαρχος ἐν τρίτῳ περὶ τοῦ τῆς Ἑλλάδος βίου (Ath. 13.557b = Dicaearchus, fr. 64 [Wehrli 1944: 27]).

\(^{53}\) τούτοις μὲν οὖν τοῖς ἐθισμῶις Ἀλεξάνδρους σπανίως ἔχρητο, τοῖς δὲ προφάρκουσι κατὰ τὸ πλείστον ἐνδιέτριβε, φοβοῦμενος τὸ προσκόπτειν τοῖς Μακεδῶσιν (Diod. 17.77.7).

\(^{54}\) See Chapter IV above.

\(^{55}\) Athenaeus (12.514c) also states that they were present during the Persian king’s hunting expeditions.

\(^{56}\) παλλακίδες ... μοισουργοῖς τοῦ βασιλέως τριακοσίας εἰκοσι ἑνεά (Ath. 13.608a)

\(^{57}\) Hamilton 1969: lix–lx.
an earlier source), for the Persians are known to have left most of their possessions in Damascus before Issus (Plut. Alex. 20.11). Thus the non-combatants (Diod. 17.32.3) and the treasure, baggage and families of the Iranians fell into Alexander’s hands soon afterwards.\(^{58}\)

As we have seen above, the family of Darius III was part of Alexander’s retinue until 330. Although the value of the royal family was admittedly much higher than that of the Achaemenid concubines, there is nothing implausible about the latter remaining in the king’s court as well. As to the ultimate fate of the concubines, two possibilities exist. They might have been left in Susa while Alexander conquered the east, just as the members of Darius’ family were (Curt. 5.2.17; Diod. 17.67.1). Alternatively, they may have been added to the king’s retinue of eastern slaves that followed him after 330. Clearly the entire court did not always accompany Alexander on military campaigns. In 328, for instance, the royal court (θεραπευτής) was left at Zariaspa in the charge of Pithon while the king was advancing into Sogdiana (Arr. Anab. 4.16.6), so we need not believe that the former pallakai and court followers were present during Alexander’s arduous campaigns in Bactria and India.

Finally, Diodorus’ idea that Alexander slept with a separate concubine on every night of the year may be nothing more than a Greek author’s inventive deduction from the number 360, which, we know, had a symbolic importance to the Persians, rather than a literal one.\(^{59}\) Diodorus or his source probably continued this romantic but erroneous tradition in an attempt to exaggerate Alexander’s descent into eastern decadence and luxury. The theme of the sexual excesses of the Great King was a Greek literary topos (e.g., Ael. NA 1.14), and one that was easily transferred to Alexander for rhetorical and moralising historians. Although we have moved far from the naïveté of W. W. Tarn with respect to Alexander’s personal life,\(^{60}\) there is still good reason to reject the Vulgate idea that he formed his own harem of 360 concubines in 330 BC. But the truth behind the Vulgate

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\(^{58}\) Plut. Alex. 24.1–2: [sc. Alexander] ἔλαβε τὰ χρήματα καὶ τὰς ἀποσκευὰς καὶ τὰ τέκνα καὶ τὰς γυναῖκας τῶν Περσῶν.

\(^{59}\) Briant 2002: 283.

\(^{60}\) Tarn is, most notably, remembered for his attempts to depict Alexander as a Victorian gentleman, who “never had a mistress” and was “neither homosexual nor promiscuous” (Tarn 1948 [vol. 1]: 323). On Alexander’s relationships with women, see Ath. 10.435a; Plut. Alex. 21.8; Eum. 1.7. See also Chugg 2006.
tradition may very well be that a number of Achaemenid court women came into Alexander’s possession after Issus as slaves, singers, entertainers or *pallakai*.

6. **Eunuchs**

In some later Hellenistic kingdoms, eunuchs and slaves had a much greater role in court life and even politics. Under Alexander, their role was not so pronounced. Eunuchs were a standard feature of the Achaemenid court. Herodotus (8.105) notes that easterners thought that eunuchs were unusually trustworthy servants, and Xenophon records that the Persians used eunuchs in their household staffs because they had no family relationships and were entirely dependent on the goodwill of their masters (Xen. *Cyr.* 7.5.60). Eunuchs were generally slaves from the subject countries and their duties included supervision of the king’s private chambers and those of his family. They also attended the king’s meals and audiences when he was enthroned. According to Curtius (3.3.23), the eunuchs of Darius III were in the king’s retinue when he left Babylon and were attached to his wife and children.

The use of eunuchs by Alexander was his right as a conqueror as they became his property. Thus the eunuchs of Darius were no doubt captured at Issus and Damascus. According to Plutarch (*Alex.* 20.11), Alexander took possession of Darius’ royal tent and servants, and allowed Darius’ family to maintain their own attendants, some of whom were eunuchs (*Alex.* 21.4; Curt. 3.12.5). One of these servants later made a report to the king on the final illness of Darius’ wife (Curt. 4.10.18), and a loyal eunuch called Tireus escaped from the camp and reported his mistress’ death to Darius. The eunuch Bagoas was given to Alexander as a gift by the chiliarch Narbazanes (Curt. 6.523). That he

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63 See Diod. 11.69.1; 17.5.3; Ael. *VH* 12.1; Curt. 5.12.9–13; Plut. *Artax.* 17.6.
65 The idea is attested in the speech invented for the eunuch who converses with Alexander at Susa. Here he refers to himself as Alexander’s slave, but formerly that of Darius (Diod. 17.66.5).
66 See Plut. *Alex.* 30.2. The speeches were clearly invented by Plutarch’s sources. See also Curt. 4.10.25.
became a favourite of the king is widely accepted,⁶⁷ but Curtius' statement that groups of eunuchs attached to the 360 concubines were also part of the court may be exaggerated.⁶⁸

When Alexander captured Susa and sat in the throne of Darius, a eunuch was on hand to protest against Alexander's inappropriate use of the Great King's footstool (Diod. 17.66; Curt. 5.2.13). Here we appear to have one important task of court eunuchs continued by Alexander. During the king's last years he sat on a throne above a tribunal, and was surrounded by his companions and eunuchs (Anab. 7.24.2–3), whose most prominent role was clearly ceremonial.⁶⁹

Conclusion

The Achaemenid queens were kept in Alexander's entourage from Issus until 330, and the king treated them with unusual kindness. But their presence also had sound political justification, and by 324 Alexander took two as wives in a manner that was quite consistent with Macedonian royal polygamy. Iranian hetairoi are attested from 330 BC. Some held honorary positions and others proved useful in overcoming the stubborn resistance of the Macedonian troops. Moreover, the Asian chamberlains, eunuchs and melophoroi must be seen as court personnel who added to the splendour of Alexander's receptions and audiences, and must have increased the isolation of the king from his subjects.

Although the Vulgate traditions which see Alexander creating his own harem of 360 concubines in the Persian manner and consorting with them as part of his descent into barbarian τρυφή (Diod. 17.77.6–7) probably belong to the realm of myth, they may echo the possibility that the king had retained the concubines of Darius for some time after the victory at Issus.

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⁶⁷ Ath. 13.603a–b; Plut. Alex. 67.7–8; Curt. 10.1.26.
⁶⁸ Paelices CCC et LX, totidem quot Darei fuerant, regiam implebant; quas spadonum greges, et ipsi muliebria pati adsueti, sequabantur (Curt. 6.6.8).
⁶⁹ Scholl (1987: 113) argues that Alexander came to use eastern slaves and eunuchs for tasks previously entrusted to royal pages and Macedonians.
CHAPTER VI -
PERSIAN COURT OFFICES

Introduction

The Persian royal costume and the Iranian court personnel that Alexander employed have been studied in the previous two chapters. An additional and important aspect of the transformation of Alexander’s court was the use of Persian court offices, which the king did not confer on Iranians, but on Greeks and Macedonians. Incidental references in the main sources and the fragmentary historians reveal that at least three new court offices were introduced as part of Alexander’s Persian Hofzeremoniell. In this final chapter, which completes my survey of the broad changes in the king’s court, I wish to examine in detail Hephaestion’s role as “chiliarch” (hazarapatis); Chares of Mytilene’s position as “chief-usher” (eisangeleus); and Ptolemy Lagus’ appointment as “taster” (edeatros).

There is no doubt that the chiliarchy was introduced from the Persian court, and it is highly probable that the eisangeleus and edeatros were also derived from functionaries of the Great King. The Persian origin of Ptolemy’s position as “taster” was challenged by J. N. Kalléris (1988: 162–169), who contended that the edeatros was an original and traditional office of the Macedonian court. But an examination of this thesis forces its rejection (see section 3.1 below). In the following discussion, I examine the functions and significance of each court office, and conclude that the chiliarch and the eisangeleus were important positions connected with the introduction of proskynesis, and the increasingly grandiose ceremonial on display to Alexander’s oriental and Greek subjects, particularly in the huge Persian-style tent that the king is known to have used after 330 BC.

1 An early version of this chapter was published as “The Office of Chiliarch under Alexander and the Successors,” Phoenix 55 (2001): 259–283.
1. The Chiliarchy

The subject of the Persian court office of chiliarch has been discussed endlessly. A controversial point is the question of what functions the office had, both under the Achaemenids and Alexander. Photius' epitome of Arrian's ta meta Alexandron demonstrates that Alexander's friend and courtier Hephaestion was appointed to the Persian position of chiliarch at some point during the reign (Arrian FGrH 156 F 1.3). The Greek term χιλιάρχος or χιλιάρχης referred to a Persian court official known in Old Persian as the *hazarapatis. Both words carry the meaning "commander of a thousand". The Persian term was transliterated by Greek writers: Hesychius' Lexicon (1441) defines the ἀταραπατεῖς as Persian messengers (ἐπιτραγελεῖς); and a fragment of Ctesias describes the appointment of a Persian called Menostanes as ἄταραπινης to the usurper Secundianus (FGrH 688 F 46). The official referred to here was clearly the type of court chiliarch described by later Greek and Roman writers. The generic term χιλιάρχος was also used to describe various military commanders. The reformed hipparchies of Alexander's


3 A related issue is the political significance of the office under the Successors.

4 Brandenstein and Mayrhofer 1964: 125.


6 On the loss of the aspirate, see Sekunda 1988: 73.

7 See Plut. Them. 27.2 and 29.2; Nepos, Conon 3.2; Ael. VH 121; Diod. 17.3.3. See also Lewis 1977: 18.
Companion cavalry after 329, for instance, were commanded by chiliarchs, and many other kinds of Greek or Persian military commander carried the same title. The widespread use of the term sometimes causes confusion, particularly in relation to those who held the court chiliarchy under the Achaemenid kings. However, in the period from 330 to 319, only three Macedonians were explicitly named as court chiliarchs by the ancient sources, viz., Hephaestion, Perdiccas, and Cassander. All of them, however, were also commanders of the Macedonian cavalry. Many scholars have thought that this “equestrian chiliarchy” was a part of the court chiliarch’s responsibilities, but it is far more likely that the two were separate offices.

1.1 The Chronology of Hephaestion’s Appointment

The absence of an explicit statement about Hephaestion’s appointment to the chiliarchy complicates the question of when the office was introduced. Diodorus, however, has the following report concerning the chiliarchy of Cassander:

[ὃ Ἀντιπατρος ἀπέδειξεν ... τὸν δ’ ύπων Κάσσανδρον χιλιάρχου καὶ δευτερεύοντα κατὰ τὴν ἐξουσίαν. ἢ δὲ τοῦ χιλιάρχου τάξις καὶ προαγωγὴ τὸ μὲν πρῶτον ὑπὸ τῶν Περσικῶν βασιλέων εἰς ὅνομα καὶ δόξαν προῆκεν, μετὰ δὲ ταῦτα πάλιν ὑπ’ Ἀλεξάνδρου μεγάλης ἔτυχεν ἐξουσίας καὶ τιμῆς, ὅτε καὶ τῶν ἄλλων Περσικῶν νομίμων ζηλωτῆς ἐγένετο (Diod. 18.48.4–5).]


9 Heckel 1992: 367. For examples of Persian military chiliarchs, see Xen. Cyr. 2.1.23, 3.3.11, 4.1.4, 7.5.17, 8.1.14, 8.6.1, and 8.6.9 (see also Sekunda 1988: 70–71). For military chiliarchs or chiliarchies in Alexander’s army, see Curt. 5.2.3; Arr. Anab. 1.22.7; 3.29.7; 4.24.10; 4.30.5–6; 5.23.7; 7.14.10; and 7.25.6. In Roman times, chiliarchos became a synonym for the Latin term tribunus militum (Mason 1974: 99–100). See C. G. Brandis, RE III.2 (1899), s.v. “Chiliarchos,” 2275–2276.

10 For instance, in Aeschylus’ Persae (302–305) we have a reference to a chiliarch of Xerxes, but is he merely a military official or the court chiliarch? Ultimately, scholars can only speculate (cf. Heckel 1992: 367 with Briant 1994: 295) when confronted with such ambiguous passages (see also Lewis 1977: 17–18); for a complete and critical list of those who were court chiliarchs under the Achaemenids, see Briant 1994: 295–296.
[Antipater] appointed ... his son Cassander chiliarch and second in authority. The post and rank of chiliarch had been brought to fame and glory under the Persian kings. Afterwards, under Alexander, it again gained great power and honour when he became an admirer of all other Persian customs.

Although the standard view is that the appointment occurred late in Hephaestion’s career in 324 at Susa, Diodorus states that Alexander introduced the chiliarchy “when he became an admirer of all other Persian customs.” We should note that this is perfectly consistent with the summer of 330 for the date when the office was conferred on Alexander’s friend, as we shall see below (section 1.4).11

1.2. The Court Chiliarch and Equestrian Chiliarch

A notorious problem in modern literature has been the relationship between the court chiliarchy and the equestrian chiliarchy, the latter of which involved the command of the first hipparchy of the Companion cavalry. This command was without question also held by Hephaestion. According to Arrian, after the execution of Philotas, Hephaestion and Cleitus the Black were appointed hipparchs (Arr. Anab. 3.27.4); the murder of Cleitus at Maracanda in 328 left Hephaestion as the sole hipparch, but a reorganisation of the cavalry seems to have occurred before this date, in which new units called hipparchies or chiliarchies replaced the old squadrons (ιλαρία).12 Hephaestion was appointed commander of the first hipparchy (later known as Hephaestion’s chiliarchy)13 and this give him an authority over the rest of the Companion cavalry. This is confirmed by the evidence of Arrian:

13 As Griffith (1963: 74, n. 17) has pointed out, the name “Hephaestion’s chiliarchy” must have been used to “distinguish it from the other chiliarchies”: the expression is not evidence that this military command was identical with the court office; cf. Berve, *Alexanderreich*, vol. 1, 112 and Heckel 1992: 368.
So that the name of Hephaestion would not be lost to the unit, Alexander did not appoint anyone in place of him as chiliarch over the Companion cavalry; it used to be called the “Chiliarchy of Hephaestion,” and the standard that he had made still went before it (Anab. 7.14.10).

Appian also reports that Hephaestion was commander of the cavalry for Alexander (Syr. 57: ἀφεύνηει ηῆς ἵππου ηῆς ἐταιρικής). Many scholars have simply followed the weighty authority of Berve and assumed that the court office and this equestrian chiliarchy were identical, and that the command of the first hipparchy was a fundamental part of the court chiliarch’s functions.14

14 See Berve, Alexanderreich, vol. 2, 173 (no. 357): “if the name chiliarchy was also apparently attached to the first hipparchy of the companion cavalry, Hephaestion in this title should have been given similar responsibilities as the former Persian chiliarch” (“wenn die Bezeichnung Chiliarchie anscheinend auch an der ersten Hipparchie der Hetairenreiterei hing, so sollten Hephaestion doch mit diesem Titel ähnliche Kompetenzen verliehen werden, wie sie ehemals der persische Chiliarch”); see also Berve, Alexanderreich, vol. 1, 112); Schur 1934: 130: “The chiliarch was nothing less than a Grand Vizierate, which Alexander had created for his best friend Hephaestion, through contact with the Persian administrative tradition. The chiliarch united political functions with the command of the first hipparchy of the companion cavalry” (“[Der Chiliarch war] nichts anderes als ein Grosswesirat, das Alexander in Anlehnung an persische Regierungstradition für seinen Seelenfreund Hephaiston geschaffen hatte. Der Chiliarch verband mit dem Kommando über die erste Hipparchie der Hetairenreiterei politische Funktionen”); Bengtson 1937: 66: “The chiliarchy, which Perdiccas was confirmed in at Babylon, in itself admittedly only involved the command over the first hipparchy of the companion cavalry, [sc. and was] therefore a military position; however, Alexander had merged the Persian office of Grand Vizier with it” (“Die Chiliarchie, die Perdikkas in Babylon bestätigt wurde, bedeutet zwar an sich nur das Kommando über die erste Hipparchie der Hetairenkavallerie, also an sich einen militärischen Rang; mit ihm hatte jedoch Alexander das persische Amt des Großwesirs ... verschmolzen”); Bosworth 1971: 132–133; Lane Fox 1973: 318; and Heckel 1992: 366–369; but cf. Junge 1940: 38, n. 8; and Rosen 1967: 107: “Alexander had taken over the chiliarchy from the imperial administration
But a review of the history of the chiliarchy after Alexander’s death demonstrates that the two positions were different. After Hephaestion’s death, his position as commander of the first hipparchy of the Companion cavalry (the Chiliarchy of Hephaestion) was taken by Perdiccas. This view is, of course, at variance with Arrian’s statement that Alexander did not appoint anyone to replace Hephaestion as chiliarch of the cavalry (Arr. Anab. 7.14.10); but Arrian has probably used an example of the anti-Perdiccan bias of Ptolemy’s history, and, in any case, it is certainly a falsehood. This passage in Arrian, however, clearly refers to the equestrian chiliarchy and does not necessarily prove that Perdiccas also succeeded Hephaestion as court chiliarch. The alternative view is that the court chiliarchy was left vacant until Perdiccas was appointed to this position in 323 at the compromise settlement in Babylon. The evidence for this is found in Photius’ epitome of Arrian’s ta meta Alexandron: “Perdiccas was to be chiliarch of the chiliarchy which Hephaestion had held, and this was an epitrope of the entire kingdom.” Photius’ summary of Dexippus also reports this, but in less specific terms (Περδίκκας δὲ τὴν Ἡφαιστίωνος χιλιαρχίαν). The purpose of Photius’ explanatory gloss (τὸ δὲ ἵν ἐπιτροπὴ τῆς ξυμπάσιν βασιλείας) was obviously to note that Perdiccas was not given a simple cavalry command, but the court title of chiliarch. If he had already held this since 324, it seems unlikely that he would have been reappointed to it a year later.

Now Perdiccas, as commander of the first hipparchy, was already leader of the Macedonian cavalry at the time of Alexander’s death. Perdiccas’ appointment as chiliarch of Achaemenids, and in fact in its fully developed form, without changing it in any manner (“Alexander hatte die Chiliarchie von der Reichsverwaltung der Achaimeniden übernommen, und zwar in ihrer vollentwickelten Form, ohne sie in irgendeiner Weise zu verändern”).

18 Περδίκκας δὲ χιλιαρχεῖν χιλιαρχίας ἦς ἦρξεν Ἡφαιστίων (τὸ δὲ ἵν ἐπιτροπὴ τῆς ξυμπάσιν βασιλείας [Arrian, FGrH 156 F 1.3]).
19 FGrH 100 F 8.4.
21 See Arrian, FGrH 156 F 1.2 and Curt. 10.7.20; 10.8.11; and 10.8.23.
was made as part of the compromise settlement, which was separate from the final political agreement when the satrapies were distributed.\(^{22}\) The compromise settlement made Craterus *prostates* of the kingdom of Arrhidaeus (or gave him the *prostasia* of the kingdom)\(^{23}\) and Meleager was to be Perdiccas’ *hyparchos* (Arrian *FGrH* 156 F 1). This agreement made with the infantry and Meleager proved to be very brief. Perdiccas moved quickly to assert his authority. He purged the army of the soldiers who had led the insurrection after Alexander’s death, executed Meleager, and distributed the satrapies; he then had himself declared commander of the royal army\(^{24}\) and *epimeletes* of the kingdom.\(^{25}\)

At this point, when Perdiccas became commander of the army and *epimeletes*, it is certain that his onerous command of the Companion cavalry would have been delegated to another officer. That this did occur is proved by Diodorus’ statement at 18.3.4–5: “[Perdiccas] appointed Seleucus to the command of the Companion cavalry, a most distinguished appointment; for Hephaestion commanded them first, then Perdiccas, and

\(^{22}\) On the need to distinguish the compromise from the definitive agreement, see Errington 1970: 53–59.

\(^{23}\) Arrian, *FGrH* 156 F 1.3: Κρατερὸν δὲ προστάτην τῆς Ἀρριδαῖος βασιλείας; Dexippus, *FGrH* 100 F 8.4: τὴν δὲ κηδεμονίαν καὶ διὴ προστασία τῆς βασιλείας Κρατερὸς ἐπετράπη, δὴ δὴ πρώτησεν τιμής τέλος παρὰ Μακεδόνι.


\(^{25}\) Diodorus (18.2.4) has incorrectly placed this during the compromise agreement, rather than during the final settlement (Errington 1970: 54, n. 42). Justin also does this (13.3.1; 13.4.1). The Heidelberg Epitome (*FGrH* 155 F 1.2) places it correctly after the distribution of satrapies: ἡρέθη ἐπιτροπος καὶ ἐπιμελητὴς τῶν βασιλικῶν πραγμάτων ὁ Περδίκκας. The evidence of Diodorus shows that the *epimeleia* was undoubtedly the supreme position in the early period of the Successors: Pithon and Arrhidaeus became *epimeletai* after Perdiccas’ death (18.39.1); Antipater was made *epimeletes autocrator* at Triparadeisus (Diod. 18.39.2–3) and had supreme command over the army (Diod. 18.39.6); Polyperchon was appointed *epimeletes* and *strategos autocrator* by Antipater (18.48.4; cf. 18.55.1); and Antigonus assumed the *epimeleia* of the kings in 315 (Diod. 19.61.3).
third ... Seleucus.”26 This is confirmed by Appian.27 Perdiccas, therefore, transferred his equestrian chiliarchy to Seleucus during the definitive settlement, but he retained the court title of chiliarch (Goukowsky 1978: 177).

The subsequent history of the chiliarchies strongly reinforces the view that they were distinct. On the death of Perdiccas, Pithon and Arrhidaeus assumed the ἐπιμέλεια of the empire, but this was soon relinquished to Antipater at the conference of Triparadeisus (Diod. 18.39.2–3). Diodorus (18.39.7) relates the following about Antipater’s appointments at this time: “[Antipater] set his son Cassander beside Antigonus as chiliarch, so that it would not escape his notice if Antigonus acted independently.”28 Photius’ epitome of Arrian records that Antipater’s son, Cassander, became a χιλιάρχης τῆς ἵππου.29 This expression (chiliarches tes hippou) surely refers to the commander of the Companion cavalry known to Diodorus (18.3.4–5) and Appian (Syr. 57).30 Cassander’s appointment at Triparadeisus was therefore a mere equestrian chiliarchy: most probably he assumed the command of the cavalry forces under Seleucus that had been with Perdiccas but were then given to Antigonus,31 since Seleucus received the satrapy of Babylonia in 320, and this left the command of the Companion cavalry and the first hipparchy vacant. The Heidelberg epitome adds weight to this interpretation.32 Here Cassander is also described as “chiliarch of the horse” and this immediately follows Seleucus’ appointment as satrap of Babylonia.33 The vacancy left by Seleucus was undoubtedly filled by Cassander, and it was a position distinct from the court office of chiliarch that Hephaestion and Perdiccas had held. Diodorus explicitly states that it was later in 319, shortly before the death of Antipater, that Cassander

26 [Περδίκκας] Σέλευκον δ’ ἔταξεν ἐπὶ τὴν ἱππαρχίαν τῶν ἐταύρων, οὕσαν ἐπιφανεστάτην ταύτης γὰρ Ἦφαιστων πρώτος μὲν ἡγησατο, μετὰ δὲ τούτον Περδίκκας, τρίτος δ’ ὁ ... Σέλευκος. Justin describes the appointment as the summus castrorum tribunatus Seleuco (Epit. 13.4.17).
27 App. Syr. 57: γίγνεται δ’ εὐθὺς Ἀλεξάνδρου μεταστάντος ἥγειμὼν τῆς ἱπποῦ τῆς ἔταιρικῆς.
28 [ὁ Ἀντίπατρος] παρέχευε δὲ τῷ Ἀντιγόνῳ χιλιάρχην τὸν ἕων Κάσσισαῦρον, ὅπως μὴ δύνηται διαλαθεῖν ἱδιοπραγιῶν.
29 FGrH 156 F 9.38.
31 See Arrian, FGrH 156 F 9.38. Diodorus (18.40.7) reports that Antigonus had two thousand cavalry in the army he commanded after Triparadeisus. See also Goukowsky 1978: 93, n. 84.
33 FGrH 155 F 1.38.5–6; App. Syr. 57.
obtained the court chiliarchy that was modelled on the Persian office (Diod. 18.48.4–5; Plut. Phoc. 31.1). From this evidence, the view that the court and equestrian chiliarchies were identical in the early years of the Diadochi is untenable. This foregoing analysis allows us to conclude that the equestrian and court chiliarchies were actually separate offices, and most probably even under Alexander. The distinct functionaries have been conflated by modern scholars because of the identical names.

1.3. The Functions of the Chiliarchy under the Achaemenids

The primary function of chiliarchy was—as its name in Greek and Persian (literally "commander of a thousand") suggests—the command of the one thousand Royal bodyguards selected from the Immortals and called the "apple-bearers" (μηλοφόροι). Diodorus, for instance, described Artabanus, a chiliarch of Xerxes (Plut. Them. 27.2), as δυνάμενος δὲ πλείστον παρὰ τῷ βασιλεῖ Ξέρξη καὶ τῶν δορυφόρων ἀφηγούμενος.

34 Bengtson (1937: 65–67) and Hammond (1985: 157) restrict the authority of the court chiliarchy to the old Persian Empire, but this is unacceptable. Antipater would not have appointed his son chiliarch in Macedonia for Polyperchon if the position had no power there. The return of the kings to Macedonia before Antipater’s death (Arrian, FGrH 156 F 11.44) implies strongly that the chiliarch had some function in the court. Goukowsky (1978: 94) argues that Cassander became court chiliarch earlier when the kings returned to Europe; this is possible, but there is no evidence for it, and Diodorus (18.48.4–5) implies that the chiliarchy had lapsed after the death of Perdiccas until its revival in 319.

35 For the confusion caused by an inability to see this, cf. Bevan 1900: 396–398 (see also Bevan 1902a: 322) with Bosworth 1971: 132–133.

36 See Goukowsky (1978: 32 and 176–178) and Briant 1994: 297. Bevan (1900: 396–398 and 1902: 322) was among the first to argue for distinctness of the chiliarchies. Tarn (1921: 6–7) correctly saw that the positions were different, and Bengtson (1937: 66–67)—although he argued that the court chiliarchy included the command of the first hipparchy under Hephaestion—also realised that the evidence of the early period of the Successors showed the existence of separate equestrian and court chiliarchies: his solution was that the functions of the office were split after the death of Hephaestion.

37 Diod. 11.69.1; cf. Ctesias, FGrH 688 F 14.30 and Just. Epit. 3.1. See also Lewis 1977: 19, n. 96. Artabanus’ power as chiliarch is illustrated well by his assassination of Xerxes and his selection of Artaxerxes as the
Since the μηλοφόροι were, of course, spear-bearers (δορυφόροι), this must refer to the Royal bodyguards. The evidence of Athenaeus suggests that the μηλοφόροι had their own court, through which visitors would pass, and perhaps it was this that contributed to the development of the chiliarch’s role as usher at the Persian court. As noted above (Chapter V.4), Alexander inherited and used the μηλοφόροι. If Hephaestion continued to perform any of the functions of his Achaemenid predecessor, then this would be the most important. One passage which might support this interpretation is Justin’s troublesome description of the position Cassander attained in 323 at Babylon: *stipatoribus regis satellitisusque ... praeficitur* (Just. *Epit.* 13.4.18). One interpretation is that this refers to the command of the royal hypaspists. Goukowsky (1978: 308), however, has questioned this and convincingly argued that Justin has erroneously described, in his sections on the settlement at Babylon, the functions that Cassander later performed as court chiliarch.

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38 Ath. 12.514b–c = Heracleides of Cyme, *FGH* 689 F 1. In Athenaeus’ description, there is a small lacuna at the beginning of the relevant sentence, but, from the context and the remaining words of the sentence, it probably referred to the admission of the royal *pallakai* described earlier in the passage (514b) by the μηλοφόροι (Briant 2002: 283 [= Briant 1996: 294]): ... διὰ τῆς τῶν μηλοφόρων αύλης, ἡςαν δὲ οὕτω [sc. οἱ μηλοφόροι] τῶν δορυφόρων, καὶ τῷ γεγειν πάντες Πέρσαι, ἐπὶ τῶν στυράκων μῆλα χρυσὰ ἔχοντες, χίλιοι τὸν ἀριθμὸν, ἀριστίνην ἐκλεγόμενα ἐκ τῶν μυρίων Περσῶν τῶν Ἀθανάτων καλομενῶν.


41 Goukowsky 1978: 308: “it seems more probable that Justin (who ignores the settlement of Triparadeisus) assigns to Cassander in 323 the functions which he exercised only in 319, when the kings were entrusted temporarily to Antigonus” (“il semble plus probable que Justin [qui ignore le partage de Triparadeisos] attribue
This, then, would provide important evidence for one function of the chiliarch as commander of the μηλοφόροι, who could easily be described as Justin’s stipatores or satellites.

The second major function of the Persian chiliarch was the introduction of those whom the king wished to see. This involved the supervision of admission and its concomitant act of proskynesis. The official depicted on the audience reliefs in the Treasury of the Persepolis palace\(^{42}\) is now usually identified as a Persian chiliarch.\(^{43}\) In this relief, the official covers his mouth with the palm of his hand—a gesture that appears to show the chiliarch himself performing proskynesis to his master.\(^{44}\) This court ceremony is also described in two notable passages in the ancient sources, in the context of prominent Greeks and their interviews with Persian monarchs. First, there is the evidence of Cornelius Nepos:

\[Conon \textit{a Pharnabazo ad regem missus, posteaquam venit, primum ex more Persarum ad chiliarchum, qui secundum gradum imperii tenebat, Tithrausten accessit seque ostendit cum rege conloqui velle. Nemo enim sine hoc admissitur.}\]

Conon, sent by Pharnazus to the king, went first of all, according the custom of the Persians, to the chiliarch Tithraustes, who held a position of second rank in the empire. After approaching him, Conon informed the chiliarch that he wished to speak with the king, for nobody is admitted without this protocol (Conon 3.2–3).

Secondly, Aelian, in his description of Ismenias the Theban’s interview with the Persian king, relates that the chiliarch was the official who took messages to the king and presented petitioners.\(^{45}\) The late lexicographer Hesychius defines the ἀκαρπατέης as ὁι ἀκαρπατέης ἐν εἰσοχμίζων τῷ βασιλέω καὶ τῶν δεσμέων.
eiσαγγελεῖς παρὰ Πέρσας (Lexicon 1441), although the term azarapateis is a Greek transcription of the Persian name of the χιλιαρχος, not the eiσαγγελεῖς. This discrepancy has not gone unnoticed, and Junge (1940: 18–19) went so far as to identify the Persian chiliarchs with the eisangeleis, although it is clear that they were different officials.\footnote{See Lewis 1977: 18–19, n. 95; Olbrycht 2004: 337. A further problem is Hesychius’ use of the plural, which implies that there was more than one chiliarch in the Persian court, if it is to be interpreted in a concurrent and not a sequential sense (see Lewis 1977: 17, n. 84 and Briant 1994: 296, n. 34). Note that the chiliarchs mentioned by Plutarch in his description of Themistocles’ visit to the Persian court (Them. 27.2 and 29.2) are probably the result of Plutarch’s use of different traditions about the identity of the king Themistocles saw (Cook 1983: 143), rather than evidence for two court chiliarchs under one king.}

The difficulty is resolved if Hesychius used the word eiσαγγελεῖς literally, without specific reference to the officials of the same name, since Aelian records that the chiliarch did in fact deliver messages to the king (VH 1.21).\footnote{See also Herodotus’ (3.34) description of an official of Cambyses called Prexaspes, who brought messages to the king; some have thought that Prexaspes was a court chiliarch (Junge 1940: 27, n. 1; Cook 1983: 144), but see Briant (1994: 296, n. 33) for the problems with this identification.} That the chiliarch performed much the same function as other courtiers should not be a problem, because there were often a number of functionaries in the Persian court who were used for similar tasks.\footnote{Briant 1994: 296.}

Under the Achaemenids, the chiliarch accompanied the king on military campaigns: Nabarzanes was in the field with Darius III in the time of Alexander (Curt. 3.9.1), and, if the chiliarchs described by Polyaeus and Clement of Alexandria are not simply military commanders, we also have Rhanosbates (Polyaeus Strat. 7.12) and Orontopatas (Clem. Al. FGrH 3 F 174), both court chiliarchs of Darius I during his Scythian expedition.\footnote{It must be admitted that the evidence of Clement of Alexander is problematic, since he cites Pherecydes of Syros for his information: this is an impossibility chronologically (see Jacoby’s commentary to FGrH 3 F 174). Justi (1896: 664) argued that Rhanosbates and Orontopatas were only military chiliarchs.} Persian chiliarchs were also entrusted with ad hoc responsibilities: Tithraustes, for instance, was sent by his king to execute Tissaphernes in Caria (Plut. Ages. 10.4) and also provided money for the fleet commanded by Conon (Hell. Oxy. 19.3).\footnote{See Bosworth 1971: 132–133.} Bagoas, the chiliarch of Artaxerxes III (Diod. 16.47.4), commanded a division of the Persian army during the king’s
attempt to reconquer Egypt (Diod. 16.47.3); later he administered the king's affairs in the upper satrapies of the empire (Diod. 16.50.8).

A final function is suggested from evidence concerning Nabarzanes, whom Arrian refers to as ὁ Δαρείου χιλιάρχης (Arr. Anab. 3.23.4). But Arrian also describes him as χιλιάρχης τῶν Ἰουν Δαρείῳ φευγόντων ἱππέων (i.e., after the battle of Gaugamela: Anab. 3.21) and Quintus Curtius names him as the commander of the Persian cavalry on the right wing at the battle of Issus (3.9.1). Lewis (1977: 17) has argued that, by the later Achaemenid period, the chiliarch had become the commander of the one thousand elite Persian cavalry known as the "kinsmen" of the king. Although Nabarzanes is described as a cavalry commander, there is no evidence that he or any other chiliarch regularly commanded the royal "kinsmen" (indeed Darius himself is said to have commanded them at Gaugamela: Diod. 17.59.2; Arr. Anab. 3.11.5); however, we need not doubt that the chiliarch could sometimes hold military positions in times of war as Nabarzanes did.

This constitutes the ancient evidence for the role of the Achaemenid chiliarch, who consequently appears as a high officer of the court, commander of the king's bodyguard, and chief usher; he was also a special functionary who could perform important political or military duties when the need arose. When these functions are compared with those exercised by Hephaestion in the court of Alexander, it is striking to

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52 Curtius calls him a praetor Darei (3.7.12).

53 See Arr. Anab. 3.11.5 (where they are called the συγγενείς τοῦ βασιλέως) and Diod. 17.59.2–3 (there termed the συγγενείς ἱππείς). See also Hdt. 7.41.1. The kinsmen are probably identical with the Persian еўака mentioned by Arrian, whom Alexander introduced into his Companion cavalry (Anab. 7.6.3). Their enigmatic name is probably a Greek transliteration of the Old Persian word *huvaka* (meaning "kinsmen"; see Sekunda 1988: 76 for the linguistic evidence).


55 See also Sekunda (1988: 71), who argues that the chiliarch was the "premier officier" of the Achaemenid army.
find that they have an undeniable similarity: Hephaestion was Alexander's closest and most trusted friend; he acted as commander of the royal hypaspists, the elite Macedonian infantry corps that also provided a bodyguard for the king; he was also one of the seven highest σωματοφυλάκες who protected the king and acted as royal ushers; and, after 330, he was used by Alexander for many special military and political tasks. Moreover, as we have seen, the chiliarch Nabazanes had held cavalry commands for his king, and so too did Hephaestion, who became the joint-commander of the Companion cavalry in 330 and sole commander after the death of his colleague Cleitus. The analogous positions held by Hephaestion and Nabazanes in their respective courts make Alexander's conferral of the chiliarchy on his friend an understandable part of his introduction of Persian court offices. Nabazanes surrendered to Alexander in 330 in Hyrcania and was pardoned (Arr. Anab. 3.23.4; Curt. 6.5.22–23). When the evidence of Diodorus (18.48.4–5) is considered, it was very probably in the summer of 330 that Hephaestion became the new chiliarch.

1.4. The Chiliarchy under Alexander

A glimpse of the ceremonial significance of the chiliarchy occurs in Athenaeus' description of the audience style of Alexander in his Persian tent. The account is most probably derived from the lost history of Chares through Phylarchus, and deserves to be quoted in full:

56 According to Diodorus (17.61.3), Hephaestion was “commander of the bodyguards” (τῶν σωματοφυλάκων ἵγούμενος) at Gaugamela; as Heckel (1992: 70–71) has argued, this must mean “commander of the aegma of the royal hypaspists.” Hephaestion probably replaced Ptolemy to become one of the seven highest bodyguards of Alexander (Heckel 1992: 71; see Arr. Anab. 7.5.6); for the role of these bodyguards as ushers of the king, see Berve, Alexanderreich, vol. 1, 19. For the military commands and other duties Hephaestion had after 330, see Heckel 1992: 74–86.


58 Chares described the same tent in the context of the banquet following the mass marriages at Susa (FGH 125 F 4 = Ath. 12.539d–f), and he may be the source of Phylarchus' description (see Jacoby's commentary to FGH 125 F 4; see also Hammond 1996: 48).
The tent of Alexander had one hundred couches and was supported by fifty golden pillars; gilded canopies, stretched out and wrought with very costly embroidery, covered the upper area of the tent. Inside, around it, stood, first of all, the five hundred Persians called the ‘apples-bearers,’ adorned with purple and quince-yellow costumes. After them, there were archers to the number of a thousand: some wore flame-coloured garments, others ones of scarlet, and many also had dark-blue mantles. At the head of these were five hundred Macedonians, the Silvershields. A golden throne was placed in the middle of the tent, upon which Alexander used to seat himself and hold court, with his bodyguards standing close on all sides.

Both Aelian and Polyaenus also provide descriptions of Alexander’s tent, and the latter adds the detail that this was the way Alexander held his court of justice whilst he was amongst the Bactrians, Hyrcanians, and Indians—i.e., in the period after 330.59 But Alexander had already captured Darius’ tent in 333 in the aftermath of the battle at

59 Polyaenus, Strat. 4.3.24: Ἄλεξανδρος ἐν μέν τοῖς Μακεδόνισιν ἤ ἐν τοῖς Ἑλλησ δικάζων μέτριοι καὶ δημοτικῶν ἔχει τὸ δικαστήριον ἐδοκίμαζεν. ἐν δὲ τοῖς βαρβάροις λαμπρῶν καὶ στρατηγικῶν, ἐκπλήσσων τοὺς βαρβάρους καὶ τῷ τοῦ δικαστηρίου σχήματι. ἐν γοῦν Βάκτροις καὶ Ὑρκαιοῖς καὶ Ἰνδῶις δικαίων εἶχε τὴν σκηνὴν ὅπε πεποιημένην. ... Πέρσαι μὲν πρῶτοι πεντακόλουθοι μηλοφόροι περὶ τὴν σκηνὴν ἐντὸς ἑσταυτὸ πορφυράς καὶ μηλίνας ἐσθήσαιν ἐξηκομένοι. Cf. Ael. VH 9.3.
Issus.\textsuperscript{60} The Great King had traditionally employed an awe-inspiring tent while on the road, which included private and public areas.\textsuperscript{61} The tent used by Xerxes in Greece, for instance, was eventually captured by the Spartans.\textsuperscript{62} H. von Gall has shown that the Persian royal tent was explicitly designed to recreate the audience style of the \textit{apadana} in the Persepolis palace. The one hundred columns in that hall corresponded to the golden pillars of Alexander’s tent, which was of a smaller size than the tent used by Xerxes.\textsuperscript{63}

Our evidence suggests that Alexander began to routinely use the great tent captured from Darius—or at the very least a type of tent clearly modelled on it—\textsuperscript{64} for his audiences from some point after the Great King’s death. In Bactria, for instance, an officer called Proxenus was in charge of pitching the king’s tent.\textsuperscript{65} While in India, Alexander attempted to impress Porus by erecting his tent on the river bank in view of the enemy, with “all the magnificent royal apparatus.”\textsuperscript{66} A similar but far less impressive tent was erected on the decks of two ships after Alexander was injured at the Malli town (Curt. 9.6.1). According to Herodotus (1.99), the Persian royal tradition, as taken from the Medes, was to isolate the king from ordinary people: business was generally conducted through messengers, so that the king would not be visible to his subjects. This increasing isolation of the king from his subjects was most probably also a characteristic of Alexander’s evolving royal protocol, and no doubt explains why he now required an army of staff-bearers, chamberlains and ushers (see Chapter V), whose presence was soon to become a cause of bitter resentment by the Macedonians (Plut. \textit{Alex.} 51.1–2).

\textsuperscript{60} See \textit{Arr. Anab.} 2.12.3 and Bosworth 1980a: 220. See also Plut. \textit{Alex.} 20.11–12; Curt. 3.11.23; Diod. 17.36.5; Just. \textit{Epit.} 11.10.1–5.
\textsuperscript{62} Hdt. 9.70; 9.82.
\textsuperscript{64} Diodorus mentions a tent erected at Dium that held a hundred couches (Diod. 17.16.4), but the tent later described by Chares seems to be explicitly modelled on that of the Great King (Spawforth 2007: 96).
\textsuperscript{65} \textit{ο... ἐπὶ τῶν στρατατηφυλάκων} (Plut. \textit{Alex.} 57.5).
\textsuperscript{66} \textit{Alexander in diversa parte ripae statui suum tabernaculum iussit adsetamique comitari ipsum cohortem ante id tabernaculum stare et omnem apparatum regiae magnificentiae hostium oculis de industria ostendi} (Curt. 8.13.20).
Hephaestion was no doubt present at the regular receptions held in the royal tent, as one of the king’s somatophylakes, and the pomp and ceremony of the king’s audiences very probably included Hephaestion’s presence as chiliarch to supervise eastern visitors and their performance of proskynesis.67 This, after all, was the primary responsibility of the chiliarch, and it is quite likely that Hephaestion performed this role during Alexander’s famous private proskynesis symposium (Plut. Alex. 54.5–6).68

We can conclude that Alexander’s plans to introduce obeisance was an important reason for his appointment of a chiliarch, since Arrian explicitly links the changes in the king’s court to the proskynesis experiment (Anab. 4.9.9). Although this failed with the Greeks and Macedonians, it no doubt continued for his barbarian subjects, and Plutarch reports that Hephaestion approved of and imitated Alexander’s adoption of Persian customs, and was used by the king in his business with barbarians.69 Such a role was performed in his capacity as chiliarch and included the command of a ceremonal Persian court guard, supervision of proskynesis, and the admission of barbarian visitors.

One final point should also be made. We have seen that Alexander adopted and changed Persian customs for his own purposes, and did not shrink from interpreting Iranian traditions in different ways.70 Alexander came to promote a group of close supporters and companions, whom Heckel usefully labels the “new men.”71 Hephaestion was a prominent member of this circle, and, although the group had differing opinions of Alexander’s eastern Hofseremoniell, Hephaestion was the strongest supporter of these policies, as we have just

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67 See Plut. Alex. 74.2 for evidence of barbarians performing proskynesis to Alexander in the last year of his life. Arrian (Anab. 4.12.1) reports that it was only the Macedonians who were excused from the performance of proskynesis, not the orientals who did in fact offer it to Alexander (Arr. Anab. 4.12.2; Curt. 8.5.22). See also Curt. 8.5.21: igitur [sc. Alexander] ad Agin et Cleonem misit, ut, sermone finito, barbaros tantum, cum intrasset, procumbere suo more paterentur. It is likely that orientals had been performing proskynesis before 328, see Badian 1996: 21–22, Bosworth 1988a: 286 and 1996: 111.


69 Alex. 47.5: ἐπεὶ δὲ καὶ τῶν φίλων ἑώρα τῶν μεγίστων Ἱθασίων μὲν ἐπανοθήτω καὶ συμμετακομισθέων αὐτῷ, Κρατεροῦ δὲ τῶν πατρίων ἐμμένωτα, δὲ ἐκείνου μὲν ἐχρημάτιζε τοῖς βαρβάροις, διὰ τούτου δὲ τοῖς Ἑλλήσι καὶ τοῖς Μακεδοσι.

70 See Chapter III above.

seen (Alex. 47.5). Furthermore, Alexander’s well-known mimesis of Homeric heroic traditions was probably the secondary factor that explains Hephaestion’s political prominence, of which his new chiliarchy was a fundamental part, since the Homeric hero generally had an unofficial second-in-command, e.g., Diomedes and Sthenelus (Hom. II. 2.563–564), Idomeneus and Meriones (II. 2.650–651), Sarpedon and Glaucus (II. 2.876–877), and, above all, Achilles and Patroclus. Alexander undoubtedly had himself and Hephaestion portrayed as this latter heroic pair. With strong Homeric undertones, the chiliarchy was thus an attempt to create a formal position to recognise the fundamental role Hephaestion had come to play in Alexander’s court and army, as the most important of the “new men.” As a title of great honour, the chiliarchy accentuated the power of Alexander’s friend as a heroic second-in-command, who also embraced the new policies of his monarch.

1.5. The Chiliarch as a Grand Vizier?

Did Hephaestion have well-defined administrative responsibilities as chiliarch as some scholars have thought?

There are three passages in the ancient sources that indicate that the Persian chiliarch was an important and powerful courtier. Cornelius Nepos speaks of the chiliarch Tithraustes as one who secundum gradum imperii tenebat (Conon 3.2–3), and this is almost identical with Diodorus’ description of Cassander’s chiliarchy (Diod. 18.48.4–5). Finally, there is the gloss concerning Perdiccas’ chiliarchy that appears in Photius’ epitome of Arrian’s ta meta Alexandron: τὸ δὲ ἤν ἐπιτροπῆ τῆς ξυμπάσης βασιλείας. These three sources—particularly the problematic and late gloss of Arrian (which may be the work of Photius)—

73 Ael. VH 7.8; 9.38; 12.3; Plut. Alex. 15.4–5; 72.2–3; Arr. Anab. 7.14.1–7; Diod. 17.97.3. See also Stewart 1993: 80–86.
74 See Diodorus’ report that Cassander’s court chiliarchy of 319 made him “second in authority” (δευτερεύοντα κατὰ τὴν ἐξουσίαν; Diod. 18.48.4–5); this seems the perfect description of the position Hephaestion attained in the court of Alexander.
75 FGrH 156 F 1.3 = Phot. Bibl. 92.
have provided the evidence for all manner of remarkably contradictory speculations about the functions of the chiliarch under the Achaemenids and Alexander.76 This embarrassing lack of consensus has manifested itself most recently in studies of the Successors.77 It is the view of traditional scholarship that the chiliarchy was a kind of Grand Vizierate comparable to those of medieval Islamic states, with wide-ranging military, administrative, and even financial duties.78 This interpretation was first presented in detail by Junge (1940: 13–38), but is perhaps best represented by the sweeping view of Schachermeyr:

Was die Befugnisse der persischen Hofbeamten [i.e., the chiliarchy] betrifft, so war er sonder Zweifel zuerst einmal der Kommandant der tausend Mann, welche die Palastgarde darstellten, darüber hinaus aber auch der Befehlshaber der persischen Präsenzarmee in der Stärke von zehntausend Mann, ferner nach Junge der Generalstabschef des Reichsheeres und damit der Reichsexekutive, sicher auch der Chef der Königlichen Kanzlei, vor allem aber bekleidete er den wichtigen Posten des ἐλασσαγγελεύς was soviel bedeutete wie den Chef der Audienzen. Anscheinend war er aber auch der oberste Verwalter der königlichen Einkünfte, vermutlich der Kommandant der königlichen Pagen und wahrscheinlich auch der Einberufer des Adelsrates (Schachermeyr 1970: 32).

In regard to the responsibilities of the Persian court official, he was without doubt originally the commander of the thousand men who constituted the palace-guard; but, in addition, he was also the commander of the Persian field army of ten thousand men; furthermore, according to Junge, he was the general chief-of-staff of the imperial army

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and, with that, the imperial executive, and certainly the head of the royal chancellery; and, above all, he occupied the important post of \( \epsilon l \sigma a \gamma \gamma e \lambda e i s \) who was, in effect, a chief of audiences. But he was also apparently the highest administrator of royal revenue, and presumably the commander of the royal pages; he was probably also the convener of the council of nobles.

Such interpretations have been rightly criticised by Bosworth (1971: 132, n. 3), Lewis (1977: 17–18), Goukowsky (1978: 32), and Brian: (1994: 293–297). The views of Junge and Schachermeyr are founded on an excessively modern view of the administration and institutions of ancient Persia. There is little reason to think that the chiliarch had any great administrative role or that he was the regular commander of the ten thousand immortals; that he was a “general chief of staff of the imperial army,” “imperial-executive,” “chief of the royal chancellery,” or “commander of the royal pages” is also unlikely.\(^79\) Although it may be that the chiliarch commanded the \( \epsilon l \sigma a \gamma \gamma e \lambda e i s \) in his capacity as chief usher (or that he became the chief \( \epsilon l \sigma a \gamma \gamma e \lambda e i s \) in the course of Achaemenid history), the attested responsibilities of the post hardly justify the facile “vizier” designation so frequently employed in modern studies.\(^80\) The Persian office probably developed over the course of Achaemenid history: apart from its attested functions, the office’s other responsibilities were not precise and institutionalised, but malleable and likely to change with the preferences of each king and the personality of each incumbent; the latter may have usurped or lost functions with changing political circumstances (Goukowsky 1978: 32–33). For example, one might well believe that the Persian chiliarch Tithraustes was the most powerful person

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\(^79\) Although there is some evidence that the Sassanid \textit{hazarbadh} (a word derived from the Old Persian *\textit{hazarapatis}*) had administrative functions (Christensen 1944: 113–116), it is unwise to base reconstructions of the Persian chiliarch’s functions on an office that existed hundreds of years later in the Sassanid court.

\(^80\) Briant 2002: 258–259. See also Frye 1972: 88 and Brian 1994: 270 and 291. The use of the term “vizier” to describe the chiliarch started early and has persisted, e.g., Tarn 1921: 5; Berve, \textit{Alexanderreich}, vol. 1, 112; Schur 1934: 130; Hamilton 1973: 145–146; Green 1974: 446; Bosworth 1980a: 5; O’Brien 1992: 112; Stewart 1993: 215. Scholars who have not followed this tread include Lane Fox 1973: 318 (“Hephaestion ... became Alexander’s official second-in-command. His title was Chiliarch, his job had military responsibilities. But both job and title had been created by the Persian kings”); Lewis 1977: 17–18; Frye 1964: 145; and Heckel 1992: 366–368.
in the state after his king (Nepos *Conon* 3.2–3), but this notional position as second in authority was probably dependent upon the favour of the king and his political success in the court (Briant 1994: 293).

A similar contention can be made about Diodorus’ description of the chiliarchy under Alexander (18.48.4–5): it was no doubt correct with respect to Hephaestion, but the latter’s great power was primarily the result of his success at court, relationship to his king, and tenure of other court and military positions, rather than merely the court chiliarchy. The Macedonian chiliarchy was, by itself, probably not much more than a title of honour.81 Far from being a vital functionary of Alexander’s new Asian empire, the chiliarch was surely unnecessary from an administrative point of view: his *raison d’être* was essentially political. Hephaestion as chiliarch was an agent of Alexander’s unpopular policy of imitating Persian customs—a fact that probably accounts for why the office quickly disappeared in the early years of the Successors.

2. Chares of Mytilene as *eisangeleus*82

Chares of Mytilene, the author of a lost history of Alexander, is referred to by Plutarch as the king’s *εἰσαγγελεύς* (Plut. *Alex.* 46.2).83 The term means literally “one who announces,”84 and referred to the functionary who introduced visitors to the Great King. The office’s Old Persian name was plausibly reconstructed by W. Hinz as the *viθαπατίς*.85 Herodotus, for instance, records that, after the assassination of the Magi, one of the privileges accorded to the Persian nobleman who conspired with Darius was to be able to see the king without an *εἰσαγγελεύς* (Hdt. 3.84). Diodorus’ description of Artaxerxes’ expedition to Egypt in 351 BC describes a general called Aristazanes who is

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82 For bibliography on the *εἰσαγγελεύς*, see Berve, *Alexanderreich*, vol. 1, 19–20; Collins 2001: 265; Spawforth 2007: 94.
84 *Εἰσαγγελεύς* is a rare Ionic form: *TLG* 4, 299, s.v. *εἰσαγγελεύς*.
presented as the εἰσαγγελεὺς τοῦ βασιλέως καὶ πιστότατος τῶν φίλων μετὰ Βαγγάν (Diod. 16.47.3).\textsuperscript{86} The \textit{eisangeleus} of Cyrus the Younger appears to have been one Gadatas.\textsuperscript{87}

Before the introduction of the \textit{eisangeleus}, it appears that Alexander’s seven \textit{somatophylakes} performed the function of introducing visitors.\textsuperscript{88} Since the bodyguards still fulfilled this role in late 330 during the conspiracy of Philotas,\textsuperscript{89} it is not implausible to think that Chares’ services were mainly used during Alexander’s formal audiences with foreigners to impress them with his new court ceremonial, rather than during the ordinary contact he had with Macedonians and Greeks while on campaign. On the basis of the Persepolis reliefs, P. J. Junge argued that the \textit{eisangeleus} was the official who supervised the staff-bearing attendants (σκηπτούχοι) who served the Great King by following him when he left the palace, and passing messages to petitioners (Xen. \textit{Cyr.} 8.3.19).\textsuperscript{90} The \textit{σκηπτούχοι} may in fact be identical with the ραβδούχοι,\textsuperscript{91} and Alexander had recently employed these very officials (ραβδούχοις Ασιαγενεῖς).\textsuperscript{92} Our evidence, then, suggests that Chares was a “chief usher” who directed the Asian staff-bearers in Alexander’s court, perhaps in the official receptions.

Both Jacoby and Berve dated Chares’ appointment as \textit{eisangeleus} to the time at which Persian \textit{Hofzeremoniell} was introduced (c. 330/29), and there seems no good reason to reject this conjecture.\textsuperscript{93} The fragments of the history that Chares wrote—no doubt written

\textsuperscript{86} Such officials are attested in the Ptolemaic court (the evidence is epigraphic: see Mooren 1975: 177–178), and Greek sources of the Roman empire speak of εἰσαγγελεῖς in the Roman imperial court (presumably a Greek translation of the Latin expressions for the officials known as \textit{a officio admissionis} and \textit{cubicularii}).

\textsuperscript{87} Γαδάτας δὲ τῶν σκηπτούχων ἠρέχεν (Cyr 8.4.2).

\textsuperscript{88} See also Berve, \textit{Alexanderreich}, vol. 1, 19.

\textsuperscript{89} Curt. 6.7.17; Arr. \textit{Anab.} 4.13.7.


\textsuperscript{92} Diod. 17.77.4.

\textsuperscript{93} See Jacoby’s introductory remarks and commentary on \textit{FGrH} 125 F 1; Berve, \textit{Alexanderreich}, vol. 2, 405. See also Olbrycht 2004: 339.
with the benefit of the privileged access that he had to the king—preserve vivid stories of court life under Alexander.94

3. Ptolemy as edeatros95

A third Persian court office was given to Ptolemy, the royal bodyguard and the future king of Egypt. He was appointed taster (ἐδέατρος) to Alexander. The evidence for this is in fact derived from a fragment of Book 3 of the lost Alexander history of Chares, preserved in Athenaeus:

εἰλέατροι δὲ καλοῦνται, ὡς φησὶ Πάμφιλος. οἱ ἐπὶ τὴν βασιλικὴν καλοῦντες τράπεζαν παρὰ τὸ ἐλεόν. Ἀρτεμιδώρος δὲ αὐτοὺς δειπνοκλήτορας ὁνομάζει. ἐκάλουν δὲ, φησι, καὶ τοὺς προγεῦστας ἐδεάτρους, ὅτι προήθιον τῶν βασιλέων πρὸς ἀσφάλειαν. νῦν δὲ ὁ ἐδέατρος ἐπιστάτης γέγονε τῆς ὀλης διακονίας. ἦν δὲ ἐπιφανής καὶ ἐντιμὸς ἕχεια. Χάρης γοῦν ἐν τῇ 7 τῶν Ἱστοριῶν Πτολεμαῖον φησι τὸν Σωτῆρα ἐδέατρον ἀποδειχθῆναι Ἀλεξάνδρου.

As Pamphilis says, those who summon people to the royal table are called the eileatroi. Artemidorus [of Tarsus] calls them deipnokletores. He also says that they called the tasters (progeustas) edeatroi, because they used to taste food before the kings for their protection. Now the edeatros, whose office is distinguished and honoured, has become the superintendent of the whole service. Chares, at any rate, in the third book of his Histories reports that Ptolemy Soter was appointed edeatros of Alexander (Chares FGrH 125 F 1 = Ath. 4.171b–c).

94 For Chares’ history, see the fragments concerning Bucephalae (FGrH 125 F 18); the marriage celebrations at Susa (FGrH 125 F 4); the death of Calanus, the Indian philosopher (FGrH 125 F 19a); and the story of the private symposium at which Callisthenes refused to perform proskynesis (FGrH 125 F 14; a story used by Plutarch and held to be an apologetic fiction by Badian 1981: 48–51).

With regard to the date of the appointment, it should be observed that Chares’ history dealt with the marriages at Susa (in 324) in Book 10, and an earlier date c. 330 for Ptolemy’s appointment is perfectly consistent with the meagre data known about the chronological narrative of his work.96

3.1. The Origin of the edeatros

The later lexicographers report that the edeatros was a Persian office,97 but J. N. Kalléris98 denied that the position was derived from the Great King’s court, and argued that the “taster” was merely a traditional Macedonian functionary.99

Kalléris presented a threefold argument against the Persian origin of the edeatros, as follows:

(1) Ptolemy was a Macedonian noble and those who held the position in the Ptolemaic court were also courtiers of high rank. However, eunuchs held the position in the Persian court, and this made it inconceivable that the post would have been given to a noble like Ptolemy.100

96 See Jacoby’s commentary to Chares FGrH 125 F 1. Here Jacoby argued cogently against Berve’s (Alexanderreich, vol. 2, 333) suggestion that Ptolemy’s appointment as edeatros occurred in 324 at Susa. This is now accepted by Spawforth 2007: 100.
97 Aelius Dionysius apud Eust. Od. 1403.40 (καὶ ὁ παρὰ Αἰλίῳ Διονυσίῳ ἐδεάτρος. περὶ οὗ λέγει ἢκέινος τῇ τὸ μὲν ὄνομα ἑλληνικόν, ἢ δὲ χρηία Πεπουκή, ἢν δὲ φησὶ προγεώσῃς. προεσθίων τοῦ βασιλέως, οἷς ἀσφάλειαν. ὀστερον δὲ ἐνυεμίσθη, ἐδεάτρον καλεῖν τὸν ἑπιστάτην τῆς ἀλης διακονίας καὶ παρασκευής; the Etymologicum Magnum, s.v. ἐδεάτρος; Suda, s.v. ἐδεάτρος.
100 Kalléris 1988: 162–164: “the corresponding official [i.e., the edeatros] in the Persian royal court was certainly an officer of high rank, but a eunuch, like all his colleagues. It is inconceivable that Alexander would have appropriated a Persian court title held by a eunuch, in order to grant it to an individual [sc. who had the type] of social status that his general Ptolemy had” (“le titulaire correspondant dans la maison royale perse était certainement un officier de haut rang, mais un eunuque, comme tous ses collègues. Il est
(2) There was, furthermore, a position in the Spartan court called the κρεοδαίτης, a taster to the kings, which in a later time was referred to as an edeatos. From this, Kalléris suggests that a “taster” may well have been a standard office in ancient Greek royal courts, perhaps from heroic times.

(3) The sources that report that the office was of Persian origin are all late, and not contemporary with Alexander.

Against (1), it can be argued that a prominent holder of the Persian chiliarchy was one Bagoas, a eunuch under Artaxerxes III Ochus (Diod. 17.5.3), but this did not prevent Alexander from conferring that same Persian office on his friend Hephaestion. Furthermore, Macedonian nobles had traditionally performed servile tasks for the king, according to the explicit information of Curtius (8.6.2). In response to (2), it can be noted that the position of “taster” is one very widely attested in royal courts, and its existence in Sparta does not force us to reject the idea that Alexander introduced a similar official from the Achaemenid court hierarchy. Finally, it is certainly true that the ancient lexicographers who report that the edeatos was chreia Persike are not contemporary evidence. But the Suda, the Etymologicum Magnum and Eustathius are also clearly dependent on an earlier source. The late lexicographers very frequently had access to sources that are lost to modern historians, and without the force of arguments (1) and (2), point (3) is not a compelling objection to the traditional view.

In short, none of Kalléris’ arguments force us to reject the possibility that a Persian office was assigned to Ptolemy, just as the chiliarchy was given to Hephaestion.

101 Plut. Lys. 23.7.8; 23.7.10; Ages. 8.1.4; 8.2.1.
102 Phylarchus, FGrH 81 F 44.31.
3.2. The Functions of the edeатros

The word ἐδέατρος has a Greek or Macedonian etymology, and there is some dispute as to what duties the office actually involved. Pausanias Atticus, who wrote in the second century AD, provides a brief description of the term:

ἐδέατρος ὁ ἐπὶ τῶν ἐδωδίμων καὶ τῆς τοιαύτης παρασκευῆς.

Edeatros: [the one] in charge of cooked food and the preparation of such food.103

But Hesychius defines the word ἐδέατρος as a “taster of the king, a superintendent of the meals” (προγεύστης βασιλεῶς. ἐπιμελητής δεῖπνου).104 This description of the edeatros as a “taster” is also found in the Etymologicum Magnum,105 and the Suda preserves the same tradition.106 The term ἐδέατρος should not be confused with ἐλέατρος, although some modern scholars have conflated the two words.107 It is certain, however, that the terms are not synonyms, but referred to two different functionaries.108 Philo of Byblos, who wrote in the first century AD, clearly distinguished the two offices:

ἐλεάτρος καὶ ἐδέατρος διαφέρει. ἐλεάτρος μὲν γὰρ ἐστιν ὁ μάγειρος παρὰ τοὺς ἐλεούς. ἐλεόι εἰσιν αἱ μαγειρικαὶ τράπεζαι. ἐδέατρος δὲ ὁ προγεύστης παρὰ τὰ ἐδέσματα.
The *eleatros* and *edeatros* are different: the *eleatros* is a cook who works beside kitchen tables (*eleoi*), the latter are four-legged tables used for cooking. The *edeatros* is, on the other hand, one who tastes food.\(^{109}\)

At first sight, it seems strange that the menial function of a "taster" would have been assigned to a general and companion of Alexander. But Curtius specifically reports that "it was custom ... for the nobles of the Macedonians to hand over their adult sons to the kings for duties not greatly different from the tasks of slaves."\(^{110}\) The king's companions, for instance, occasionally still performed such humble tasks even when they had ceased to be royal pages. Furthermore, it is clear that the office of *edeatros*, at least in the later period, involved the supervision of the king's meals, and not only the tasting of food as a menial task. The king, after all, had royal pages to taste and mix his drinks,\(^{111}\) and possibly pages to perform the more mundane task of tasting his food at table.

Ptolemy's position is best seen as a court dignitary placed in charge of the royal meals: thus his office was well on the way to becoming a "superintendent of the royal table" (ἐπιμελητὴς δείπνου),\(^{112}\) as known in Athenaeus and later lexicographers. The extravagance of the Great King's banquets was well known in the Greek world,\(^{113}\) and it is not unlikely that Alexander's meals and table service came to be just as lavish as he adopted Persian court ceremonial (Just. 12.3.11).\(^{114}\) Polyaeus preserves an anecdote in which Alexander came to the palace of the Great King, and saw a column on which was inscribed an extraordinary list of foodstuffs used to prepare the Great King's lunch and

\(^{109}\) Philo of Byblos, *De diversis verborum significationibus*, epsilon 54.1–3 (text follows Palmieri 1988).

\(^{110}\) Curt. 8.6.2: *Mos erat ... principibus Macedonum adultos liberos regibus tradere ad munia haud multum servilibus ministeriis abhorrentia*.

\(^{111}\) Just. 12.14.9: *Philippus et Iollas praegustare ac temperare potum regis soliti*. I would distinguish the duties performed by the royal pages Philip and Iollas mentioned in this passage from the position of *edeatros* (cf. Heckel 1997: 288).

\(^{112}\) Hesychius, s. v. ἐδεατρὸς. See also Berve, *Alexanderreich*, vol. 1, 40.


\(^{114}\) Plut. *Alex.* 23. See now Spawforth 2007: 100. Extravagant dining may well be implied in Diod. 17.77.4 (Περσικὴν τρυφὴν καὶ τὴν πολυτέλειαν τῶν Ἀσιανῶν βασιλέων), and was certainly true during the marriage ceremonies at Susa (Plut. *Alex.* 70).
dinner. In Polyaenus' version of the story, Alexander ridicules the extravagance of the Great King and then orders the column to be demolished, but this assertion was in all likelihood a literary topos, perhaps influenced by a similar story about the Spartan king Pausanias' capture of Xerxes' tent and the luxurious meal that Pausanias was served.

In contrast to Polyaenus' moralising rhetorical tradition, we are told by Plutarch that the king's spending on his evening meal is said to have reached the grand sum of ten thousand drachmae (approximately 1.66 talents). Ephippus of Olynthus reported that one hundred minas were spent on Alexander's dinners which involved the entertainment of sixty or seventy people, the very same sum as in Polyaenus (100 drachmae = 1 mina). Since the Great King is said to have spent the sum of four hundred talents on 15 000 men when dining, the figure spent per head on guests was much the same expenditure as that spent per guest by Alexander, a fact which was noted by

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115 Polyaenus, Strat. 4.3.32: 'Αλέξανδρος ἐν τοῖς Περσῶν βασιλείοις ἀνέγνω τὸ βασιλέως ἀριστον καὶ δέσπον ἐν κίοις χαλκῷ γε γραμμένον, ὅπως καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι νόμοι, οὗς ἔγραψε Κύρος. Αμοιρὰ καὶ τὰ πετρελάκια, τὰ σκόρπες, ταῦτα γεννησμένα, ἀμα συναφείμενα, τέλος εἰς μικρὰς δραχμὰς προσλήκειν (Alex. 23.10).

116 Hdt. 9.82. Briant (2002: 286–293) contends that the list in Polyaenus (Strat. 4.3.32) was never written on a column, but was derived from an author such as Ctesias, who wrote a work on the Great King's meals (Ath. 2.67a).

117 τὸ μέντοι δὲντον ἢ ἀεὶ μεγαλοπρεπές, καὶ τοὺς εὐτυχήσι τῆς δαπάνης ἀμα συναφείμενα, τέλος εἰς μικρὰς δραχμὰς προσλήκειν (Alex. 23.10).

118 Ephippus of Olynthus, FGrH 126 F 2 = Ath. 4.146c.

119 Athenaeus cites Ctesias and Dinon for this figure of four hundred talents (Ctesias, FGrH 688 F 39 = Ath. 4.146c; Dinon, FGrH 690 F 24). The figure no doubt includes soldiers who were fed by the king (Briant 2002: 289).

120 Alexander's spending on a dinner was 100 minas for 60 or 70 people (Ath. 4.146c) or 10 000 drachmae (Polyaenus, Strat. 4.3.32). The figure of 10 000 divided by 60 gives us 166.6 drachmae per head spent on a banquet with 60 guests. The number 10 000 divided by 70 gives 142.8 drachmae per head for 70 guests. The Great King's spending on one dinner was 400 talents (= 24 000 minas = 2 400 000 drachmae), which when divided by 15 000 guests (Ath. 4.146c) gives 160 drachmae per head. It is clear that Alexander's spending was sometimes higher than that of the Great King, though not his number of guests.
Athenaeus.\textsuperscript{121} Clearly, Alexander’s entertainments did not normally provide for the huge number of guests fed by the Great King, but his expenditure per person was comparable, if not slightly higher when his regular banquets had about sixty guests. This strongly suggests that Alexander had come to dine in much the same style as the Great King—and that he required a new court post to supervise these dinners.

Perhaps Ptolemy’s appointment was also connected with his promotion to the ranks of Alexander’s seven highest noble bodyguards (somatophylakes) in 330.\textsuperscript{122} The title of “taster” or “superintendent of the royal table” was no doubt explicitly modelled on a position in the grandiose Persian court. Alexander was now probably intent on elevating the men from his closest circle over and above the older Macedonian nobles: thus Ptolemy had been a boyhood friend of the king, and had recently risen to be a senior bodyguard worthy of a position alongside Alexander’s new chiliarch, Hephaestion.\textsuperscript{123}

Conclusion

The introduction of the chiliarch, the εἰσαγγελέως, and the ἐδέατρος proved to be a significant element of the transformation of Alexander’s court.

\textsuperscript{121} Ath. 4.146d: ὅστ’ εἰς ἴσον καθίστασθαι τῷ τοῦ Ἀλεξάνδρου ἀναλόμουτε ἕκατον γὰρ μνᾶς ἀνόηοικεν, ὅς ὃ Ἐφιππός Ἰστόρηος.

\textsuperscript{122} Heckel 1992: 223. Ptolemy was often absent from Alexander on military duties after 330 (e.g., his capture of Bessus [Arr. Anab. 3.29.6–30.5] and his command of one column in Sogdiana in 328 [Arr. 4.16.2–3]), and his position as edeatros may well have come to be more of a ceremonial honour than a day-to-day duty.

\textsuperscript{123} I would concede that another possibility is that Ptolemy’s appointment may have added some Persian elements to an earlier Macedonian office. See Berve, *Alexanderreich*, vol. 1, 40: the edeatros was an “old Macedonian office of the [king’s] table ... which was now transformed according to Persian custom into a mere office title” (“eines altmakedonischen Tafelamtes, welches ... nun nach einer persischen Sitte zum reinen Titelamt umgewandelt wurde”); and Berve, *Alexanderreich*, vol. 1, 39–40: “the edeatros, a Macedonian honorary office in the court of Alexander, developed from its Persian form” (“ἐδέατρος, einem nach persischem Muster ausgestalteten, makedonischen Ehrenamte am Hofe Alexanders”). Cf. Briant 1994: 284, n. 2.
Both Ptolemy and Hephaestion were advanced to Persian court positions in an effort to elevate and reward Alexander's close companions, men amongst the "new men" or boyhood friends of the king.\(^{124}\) The chiliarch and eisangeleus were the direct result of Alexander's development of the Great King's audience style, with its pomp and ceremony, as well as Alexander's demand for proskynesis. The edeatos was appointed to supervise the luxurious banquets and table service that the king now enjoyed. Although the chiliarch was most probably not an administrative official of any great importance to the empire, it was a title of honour created for Alexander's closest friend Hephaestion, who thereby acquired a position not dissimilar to the Homeric second-in-command of heroic legend. The essential unpopularity of the Persian Hofzeremoniell amongst the Macedonians is also revealed in the later history of the chiliarchy. After the death of Hephaestion, Alexander may not have bothered to appoint a direct successor to his friend, and the reappearance of the chiliarchy after 323 was the result of exceptional circumstances.\(^{125}\) Although Perdiccas acquired the chiliarchy at Babylon, his authority was actually derived from other positions. When Antipater revived the chiliarchy for his son in 319, Cassander certainly despised the office.\(^{126}\) But the eisaγγελεύς and έδεατρός continued to be officials in Hellenistic royal courts, the former controlling the audiences of the kings, and the latter performing the much more agreeable task of preparing the king's banquets.

\(^{124}\) Heckel (1992: 205-208) concludes that the "boyhood friends" of the king were not his coevals, but advisors appointed by Philip.

\(^{125}\) Briant 1994: 298.

\(^{126}\) The Seleucid court had a high official called the ἐπὶ τῶν πραγμάτων, which was clearly an administrative office, but I do not think this position was based on Alexander's chiliarchy. Cf. Ehling 1998: 97: "The office of the [sc. Seleucid] chancellor probably developed from that of the chiliarch or is derived from it .... After the division of Alexander's empire, the office of chiliarch became obsolete in the satrapies; however, it was ... brought back to life amongst the other titles in the Seleucid empire" (“Das Amt des Reichskanzlers entwickelte sich wahrscheinlich aus dem des Chiliarchen bzw. ist von diesem abgeleitet .... Nach der Aufteilung des Alexanderreiches in Satrapien wurde die Chiliarchen-Würde obsolet; sie ist aber ... unter anderem Titel im Seleukidenreich wieder ins Leben gerufen worden”).
CONCLUSION

We now come to the general conclusions of this thesis. The kingship of Macedonia had been a personal autocracy, similar to the kingship of the Homeric myths, but with its own particular characteristics. In the Near East, kingship had a much greater role for the king in religious affairs, and there were "cosmic" aspects of kingship unknown in Macedonia, in that a legitimate king was needed to maintain the order of the universe. The kingship of the Macedonians had been an institution of relative simplicity, as compared with kingship in older eastern states. The thesis of D. Kienast, that Philip reformed his court along Persian lines, is overstated, since both royal polygamy and royal pages existed long before his reign. The Macedonians had no important royal insignia before Alexander's invention of a royal costume, and, of the three main groups in the Macedonian court, two (somatophylakes and the royal pages) remained Macedonian throughout Alexander's reign, and only one (the hetairoi) was changed by the admission of Iranians after 330 BC.

In Egypt, Alexander was certainly recognised by the priests as the new foreign king. He did attempt to gain the support of the local elite through respect for their religious traditions, but there were limits to this policy. There is overwhelming evidence that the king did not participate in the native coronation ceremony, although he did receive a formal but irregular pharaonic titulature. In the "strong" theory of Egyptian kingship, the king had a complex divinity from his coronation through possession of the royal "ka." But a schism had developed in native Egyptian thought concerning kingship by the late period. Traditional beliefs had been challenged, and there appeared a "weak" theory of kingship in which royal divinity was questioned and the king's religious role was usurped by the priests. In the "weak" royal tradition, Alexander was a reasonably adequate foreign king, but in the "strong" sense he could not be regarded as a legitimate pharaoh. In the timeless and formulaic propaganda of temple inscriptions, Alexander was certainly hailed as a divine being. However, the king was uncrowned, and consequently it is highly likely that he was not regarded as truly divine by the priests, nor was he sincerely hailed as a god in Egypt. The overwhelmingly important event in Egypt was the
journey to Ammon’s oracle at Siwah. The Egyptian idea of the pharaoh as son of Ammon may have partly inspired Alexander’s developing notion of his divine sonship. When he consulted the oracle, he asked a direct question about his birth. The further questions that the oracle answered appear to have concerned his campaign in Asia. Thus they were connected with his kingship and the notion of world empire.

The Babylonian conception of kingship was rather more receptive to the idea of a foreign king. In Mesopotamia, Alexander again courted the elite and attempted to pose as a local king. His promise to renovate the Babylonian temples, and above all the temple of Bel Marduk, was in fact a fundamental duty of the legitimate Babylonian king. Babylon was to become a future capital of Alexander, in contrast to Susa and Persepolis.

In Persis, there occurred a volte face in Alexander’s policy. He was hostile to the Persians and ordered a violent and destructive sack of Persepolis. The later destruction of the Persepolis palaces was the perfectly logical culmination of the campaign. In Egypt and Babylon, Apis and Bel Marduk, the national gods, were respected and honoured. It is hardly surprising that no such honour was ever paid to Ahura Mazda, the great Persian god. Indeed, Alexander was later vilified in Iranian tradition for killing magi and attacking the Zoroastrian religion.

Moreover, apart from the Medes, the Persians had not been subject to foreign kings. The Persian ideology of kingship required an Achaemenid infused with the clan’s royal khvarnah and divine appointment by Ahura Mazda. These were hardly criteria Alexander could fulfil.

At Gaugamela, the Macedonians had declared the empire of the Persians to be destroyed and acclaimed Alexander “king of Asia.” This “kingship of Asia” was distinct from the local kingship of the Medes and Persians. Alexander did not claim to be the legitimate successor of Darius III as a Great King. The assumption of the title “king of Asia” indicated that Alexander’s new personal kingship over the Asian continent had replaced that of the Achaemenids, whose pretensions the king derided. The justification for Alexander’s conquest and kingship was the continuing support of Zeus, whose will had been revealed to the king at Siwah. The divine sonship of Alexander was thus connected with the last plans of the king and his more extravagant dreams of “world empire.”
Although N. G. L. Hammond was the first advocate of the revisionist theory of Alexander’s kingship, his thesis was fundamentally flawed by the rejection of the traditions in Diodorus 17.77.4–7. Alexander’s “orientalising” began after 330 and the revisionist thesis required new explanations of the king’s appropriation of Persian court traditions. First, Alexander’s court reforms were similar to those of the Achaemenids themselves, who had transformed their local Iranian kingship through contact with the ancient civilisations of Mesopotamia, when they won a great multiethnic empire. Secondly, Alexander’s “orientalising” was selective and opportunistic. In many ways, it was offensive and sacrilegious to the Iranians.

In 330, Alexander invented a set of royal insignia. This included a mixed Persian and Macedonian royal costume, but the king rejected the tiara, the full-sleeved jacket (kandys), and the baggy trousers (anaxyrides). The fact that he rejected the upright tiara, which was long known in the Greek world as the exclusive head-dress of the Great King, is fundamental confirmation of the thesis that Alexander did not wish to assume the Persian kingship.

In one respect, the work of the revisionists has become too extreme. The new attempts to explain the origin of the diadem in the iconography of Dionysus or as a Greek victor’s headband (“Siegerbinde”) are not convincing. Alexander’s diadem was taken from Persian dress, but was adopted as a symbol of his kingship of Asia. The diadem had no such significance in the Persian royal costume, which did not concern Alexander in the least. It was adopted precisely because a Persian headband was an inoffensive item that could be reinterpreted by Alexander as his main royal insignia. Other aspects of Alexander’s costume, such as the chiton with the white middle (χιτών μεσόλευκος), were adopted as luxurious eastern garments that symbolised his power, wealth and sovereignty.

A number of oriental personnel entered Alexander’s court as the second major aspect of his court transformation. The Great King’s family were part of Alexander’s entourage from Issus until 330. They were pawns in Alexander’s political strategy, and in 324 Alexander took two princesses as wives. This had ample justification through the long-standing practice of Macedonian royal polygamy. Some Persians became “companions”
(hetairoi) of the king from 330 BC. They were useful in a political sense, in that Alexander turned to them in times of crisis when he was opposed by his Macedonians.

After 330, Alexander developed a grandiose audience style. As part of this, he introduced Asian chamberlains, eunuchs and the "apple-bearers" (melophoroi). They were court personnel appropriate to the splendour of Alexander's receptions and increased his isolation from his subjects. The Vulgate tradition that alleges that Alexander created a harem of 360 concubines in the Persian manner was probably a myth inspired by the king's capture of at least 300 Persian court women at Damascus.

The introduction of the chiliarch, chief usher (eisangeleus), and "taster" (edeatros) was the third aspect of Alexander's "orientalising." The most telling fact is that all were given to Macedonians or Greeks. Ptolemy and Hephaestion were appointed to Persian court positions to elevate them as the king's loyal companions, either as "new men" or boyhood friends. The edeatros was developed to oversee the sumptuous banquets Alexander now regularly held. Hephaestion seems to have been promoted to a quasi-Heroic position of second-in-command to Alexander via his chiliarchy. Like the Persian chamberlains, the chiliarch and chief usher Chares were related to the grand audience style of Alexander and his demand for proskynesis, particularly in the Persian-style tent used after 330.

This thesis has surveyed Alexander's policies in Egypt, Babylon and Persia. The overwhelming conclusion is that oriental traditions of kingship were not as important as many scholars in the past have believed. The two central ideas of the revisionist school of thought—that Alexander was never crowned as pharaoh in Memphis and did not intend to rule as the legitimate Great King—have been strongly confirmed. In the years after 330, Alexander's "orientalising" was his attempt to create a new royal court and personal conception of kingship by selective use of certain Persian court traditions. Many of the chief characteristics of these reforms, such as the isolation of the king and grand royal insignia, were standard features of monarchies from many ages. In one important respect, as we have seen throughout this thesis, they could be justified by the concept of "spear-won" land (see Chapter 1.1). Indeed Alexander himself apparently justified his use of Persian garments in precisely this way (Curt. 6.6.5). That the changes were unpopular amongst the traditionally-minded Macedonians is also patently clear from our sources. Many of
Alexander’s reforms, such as the chiliarch, Asian chamberlains, and the more exotic aspects of his royal costume, were abandoned by the Diadochi.

But the early Successors of Alexander appear to have emulated his ideas on kingship.\(^1\) When Antigonus arrived in Persis in 316 BC, he was treated as the “king of Asia” by the Persians (Diod. 19.48.1); later, after the death of the last Argead, he assumed the title of king (Plut. Demetr. 17.2–18.2), and very probably regarded himself as the successor to Alexander’s Asian kingdom, even with “universal” ambitions.\(^2\) This is now confirmed in a striking way by a fragment of Zeno of Rhodes, who explicitly refers to Antigonus’ pretensions to Alexander’s empire.\(^3\)

Curiously, the thesis of E. S. Gruen (1988)—that Antigonus did not wish to claim the kingdom of Asia—is now a widely cited theory of Hellenistic kingship. In particular, Gruen argued that

Antigonus did not define his rule by the empire of Alexander, nor did his competitors define theirs by the boundaries of what were to become Hellenistic states. Abandonment of the territorial idea clears the ground for better understanding. A different perspective governed these monarchies. Antigonus the One-Eyed created a new form of kingship when he exorcised the ghosts of the Argeads and claimed legitimacy on the basis of personal achievement and dynastic promise. His rivals could do no less. The coronation of the Diadochoi held a meaning that surpassed control of lands, cities, and even populations. It signified an exalted prestige, an aura of power and distinction associated with royalty ... A monarchy undefined by territorial or institutional limits allowed for both mutual recognition and intense rivalry. The Hellenistic kingdoms had their origins in the authority of the kings—not the other way round (Gruen 1985: 262 [my emphasis]).

\(^2\) Bosworth 2002: 246. For the older view, see Granier 1931: 98–103; Will 1979: 64–65; Ritter 1965: 93–94; Walbank 1984: 63. One does not need to accept the “constitutionalist” theory of kingship that these scholars held.
\(^3\) Lehmann 1988: 1–17.
But the central idea in Gruen's thesis—that Hellenistic monarchy was essentially a personal kingship based on military victory and recognising no limits to expansion—seems to be the essence of Alexander's final conception of kingship (see Chapter III.3 above). Both Antigonus and Seleucus came very close to restoring the "kingdom of Asia" as a state ruled by one man and a base for further conquest. That the Successors ultimately failed in their attempts to emulate Alexander does not discredit the idea that his conception of kingship was the ideal and fundamental role model in their creation of personal kingdoms.
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