

“The Hellenistic Ruler Cult and Ptolemy I’s Quest for  
Legitimacy”

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## **Abstract**

Alexander III died suddenly in Babylon in 323 BC. With Philip III Arrhidaeus in a mentally deficient state and Alexander IV not being of age, Alexander died without a suitable heir. The task of succeeding one of the most storied legacies in the ancient world was left to the generals of Alexander III. On his deathbed, Alexander was asked who should lead the Macedonians, of which he allegedly replied “the strongest”.

Thus began the process of selecting the individual who would succeed Alexander the Great, which ended up becoming a contentious task due to Macedonian succession customs. Subsequently the ‘Successors’ quarrelled over who should succeed Alexander as the true successor. The wars of the Successors are founded on an issue of legitimacy that qualifies the notion of the strongest. Being deemed the true successor of Alexander the Great meant the opportunity to continue a period of Macedonian dominance following the reigns of Philip II and Alexander III. Alexander III is hailed as one of the most extraordinary individuals of the ancient world with his imperial campaigns being widely documented, political stability being pinpointed as one of the Macedonian strong points during the period of their dominance.

The ruler cult is a point of reference for the explaining the relative political stability throughout the reign of Alexander the Great. The ruler cult can be understood as a socio-political construct that hybridized the notion of the ruler with that of a religious leader. The oriental influence of Alexander’s campaigns in Asia would inform the customs and practices of the divine ruler. The Macedonians’ ability to establish a presence in foreign territories made such a social construct a necessity in the task of centralizing of minds for political stability. Alexander’s rendition of the cult informed the formalized Ptolemaic ruler cult. The similarities and differences of the renditions help us to understand this political tool that Ptolemy I required in order to be deemed the true successor of Alexander the Great.

The following will be an investigation into whether Ptolemy I is able to attain legitimacy, firstly as a successor to Alexander the Great, secondly as Pharaoh of Egypt.

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## **Abstract**

Alexander III died suddenly in Babylon in 323 BC. With Philip III Arrhidaeus in a mentally deficient state and Alexander IV not being of age, Alexander died without a suitable heir. The task of succeeding one of the most storied legacies in the ancient world was left to the generals of Alexander III. On his deathbed, Alexander was asked who should lead the Macedonians, of which he allegedly replied “the strongest”.

Thus began the process of selecting the individual who would succeed Alexander the Great, which ended up becoming a contentious task due to Macedonian succession customs. Subsequently the ‘Successors’ quarrelled over who should succeed Alexander as the true successor. The wars of the Successors are founded on an issue of legitimacy that qualifies the notion of the strongest. Being deemed the true successor of Alexander the Great meant the opportunity to continue a period of Macedonian dominance following the reigns of Philip II and Alexander III. Alexander III is hailed as one of the most extraordinary individuals of the ancient world with his imperial campaigns being widely documented, political stability being pinpointed as one of the Macedonian strong points during the period of their dominance.

The ruler cult is a point of reference for the explaining the relative political stability throughout the reign of Alexander the Great. The ruler cult can be understood as a socio-political construct that hybridized the notion of the ruler with that of a religious leader. The oriental influence of Alexander’s campaigns in Asia would inform the customs and practices of the divine ruler. The Macedonians’ ability to establish a presence in foreign territories made such a social construct a necessity in the task of centralizing of minds for political stability. Alexander’s rendition of the cult informed the formalized Ptolemaic ruler cult. The similarities and differences of the renditions help us to understand this political tool that Ptolemy I required in order to be deemed the true successor of Alexander the Great.

The following will be an investigation into whether Ptolemy I is able to attain legitimacy, firstly as a successor to Alexander the Great, secondly as Pharaoh of Egypt.

## Introduction

In this dissertation, I seek to understand why and how the ruler cult was used by Ptolemy I as a means to gain legitimacy as a successor to Alexander, and as king of Egypt. The dissertation focuses primarily on legitimacy and the utilising of the ruler cult. The chapters of the dissertation are designed to add layers to our understanding of how the ruler cult functions. Macedonian ideals of placing the aristocracy in high regard, adhering to custom and establishing cults in the foreign terrain inform our understanding of how Macedonian rulers would have acquired legitimacy. This will be the main method of measuring whether legitimacy (in the foreign context) is possible within the three tiers of legitimacy that I describe in chapter 1.

Bendix postulated charismatic leadership based on Weber's essay on politics entitled 'Politics as a Vocation'. The three tiers are informed by the theories on the charismatic leader as presented by Weber in this particular essay<sup>1</sup>. In his book entitled 'Max Weber: An Intellectual Portrait', Bendix made Weber's sociological work more accessible and accordingly revisits in his own right as sociologist.

The tiers are intended to show the three requirements by which the successors of Alexander the Great, otherwise known as the 'main Diadochi', attained legitimacy. They are firstly, legitimacy via connection or association with the Macedonian royal bloodline. Then secondly, legitimacy via adherence to custom. Then to thirdly, legitimacy via the ability to establish cults in a foreign terrain. Alexander III and to a lesser extent Philip II were embodiments of the model as it accurately reflects the methodology of their dominance. Adhering to the three tier model of legitimacy and thus their narratives will also be considered in this thesis, as models for Ptolemy I.

The dissertation begins in the **first** chapter by framing a concept of legitimacy of which is informed by sociological theories of the charismatic leader. This dissertation will utilise the concept of the recognition of legitimacy of the leader as a conceptual foundation throughout. The Bendix/Weber notion of the charismatic leader is appropriate to our study as it allows us to analyse legitimacy as a socio-political construct. There are important questions to be asked of social legitimacy. What is the source of legitimacy and how can one go about acquiring it in a foreign terrain? These questions are important in determining whether the acquisition of legitimacy in Egypt is possible.

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<sup>1</sup> Weber 1965

One of the dissertation's focuses is to explore the influences of Alexander's mythological and political narrative on that of Ptolemy I and to consider how these shape the Ptolemaic formalization of the ruler cult. It will be postulated that members of the Diadochi needed to express their 'charisma' in order to attain the legitimacy that would allow for their recognition as the true successor to Alexander. The Bendix/Weber understanding of dominance is similar to the Macedonian ideology that informs the power relations of the Macedonian aristocracy towards citizens. The concept of domination is relevant to the theme of imperialism and thus informs our understanding of Macedonian dominance in this era.

I hope to associate the narratives of Philip II and Alexander III with the first tier of legitimacy, which is concerned with the connection or association with the Macedonian royal bloodline. Within this tier, I hope to demonstrate that mythic elements of their cultural origins provided members of the Macedonian royal bloodline with their legitimacy. The first chapter seeks to demonstrate this tier. The introduction of the ruler cult by Alexander III will be considered, together with the three significant events of his reign, this would serve the purpose of demonstrating the oriental elements of the cult and furthermore provide the context for understanding his use of it as tool for achieving his imperial ends in the foreign terrain.

The **second** chapter of the dissertation begins by locating the period following Alexander's death in 323 BCE within Ehrenburg's three periods of the Hellenistic Age. It is important to note the three distinctions that he presents. Down to the death of Ptolemy I in 283 BCE, the period is described by Ehrenburg as, "*witnessing the disintegration of Alexander's empire and the establishment of a new society of states*"<sup>2</sup>. It is with this period that I am concerned, with a focus of the chapter being the War of the Successors.

The second tier of legitimacy is concerned with adherence to customs, both Macedonian and foreign. The second chapter of this dissertation will form part of the analysis of this second tier of legitimacy. The first chapter addresses how members of the Macedonian bloodline are legitimized by their mythological narrative and their origins as part of the Argead dynasty. The second chapter focuses on the Diadochi who are Macedonian generals and who are not part of the Macedonian royal bloodline, instead they form part of the Macedonian assembly

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<sup>2</sup> Ehrenburg 2012; 66

and work closely with the Macedonian royal bloodline in terms of their military exploits as generals.

This chapter will firstly address the implications of the Diadochi not being able to fulfil the first of the three tiers of legitimacy and consider how the wars between them are an outcome of the shared inability to adhere to the first tier. It will be argued that the inability to settle and fulfil the first tier of legitimacy is what ultimately led to the wars of the Diadochi, based on their need to adhere the custom of succession and to be seen as Alexander's legitimate successor. Members of the Diadochi and their attempts to fulfil the first tier will be observed and considered. The basis of the wars being the custom of succession is informed by the initial argument surrounding Alexander III and his succession.

The second chapter can be regarded as a demonstration of the second tier of legitimacy and how members of the Diadochi utilised this as the basis of their campaigns to be named as successors to Alexander. Significant events include the regency of Perdiccas, Antipater and the dynastic marriage, Polyperchon succeeding Antipater and the runaway regime of the renegade Antigonos. I will contextualise these events into describing the failure to adhere to the second tier of legitimacy.

The **third** chapter concludes the wars of the Diadochi. This chapter serves as a formal introduction to Ptolemy I and the Ptolemaic dynasty. The actions of Ptolemy are interconnected with most of the narratives of the other Diadochi. It will be argued that Ptolemy I is able to demonstrate his tactical awareness and skill, the highlight of which was during the funeral cortege, infamous for the seizing of the late ruler's tomb. The move itself had a very particular significance for the Ptolemaic dynasty. Following this event, it will be argued, the Ptolemaic regime appeared legitimate based on the second tier link connected with religious symbolism of a successor as a direct result of hosting the tomb of his predecessor.

The middle of the third chapter introduces Egypt and the founding of Alexandria in order to understand the foundations of Ptolemaic Egypt. I give descriptions of the land of Egypt, the significance of its geography being that the land itself made it naturally defensible, a fact that supplemented the Ptolemaic military in times of battle. Alexander was clearly highly religious but also knew how to use the various cults he encountered. It will be postulated that the religious awakening of Alexander in Egypt becomes the catalyst for his later policy of cultural assimilation.

The third chapter can be understood to be a continuation of the description of the second tier of legitimacy. I will illustrate that Ptolemy was able to adhere to both local and foreign customs. To do this, I will utilise significant events, including the episode in which Ptolemy stole the body of the former king and the war between Ptolemy and the renegade Antigonos. Within the third chapter I will illustrate the relatively positive fulfilment of the second tier of legitimacy through the actions of Ptolemy.

The **fourth** chapter begins by contextualising the word ‘Hellenistic’. The dissertation accepts that to some extent, Hellenistic can be understood as ‘imitative of the Greeks’. The third tier of legitimacy is based on the ability to establish cults in a foreign terrain. The matter is a very contentious topic for both Philip II and Alexander III. The model of consolidation for the Hellenic ruler cult will be analysed. Elements of Alexander and his rendition of the ruler will be described in order to illustrate the implementation of this socio-political tool.

The chapter touches on Alexander’s rendition of the ruler cult. To begin with, the fundamental elements of the ruler cult are addressed utilising Aristotle’s description of the individual with charismatic qualities. The point of lineage being relative to succession is made. The Macedonians would have set out to ensure that the foundations of their lineage and the mythical members of the Macedonian royal bloodline were venerated in the public domain. The usage of the arts, propaganda and public festivals are subjects that will be touched on as they are vital for understanding how mythical representation is expressed in various ways. The implementation of the ruler cult will thus be understood in the categories of art, propaganda and festival. A fourth category entitled ‘reception’ will be employed in order to address outcomes of implementation. The ruler cult as administered by Alexander will be distinguished from the ‘Hellenistic’ cults of the period following his death, and it will be used to illustrate the positive fulfilment of the formation of cults in foreign territories.

The fourth chapter can be understood as an illustration of the third tier of legitimacy. I will illustrate the positive fulfilment of this tier by Alexander in the context of Egypt. The ruler cult plays an important part in the fulfilment of this tier. As a centralizer of minds, the appearance of a deified ruler inspires belief in the ruler, and if properly implemented this can escalate into worship. Alexander was able to inspire belief in Hellenists and the order and thus it was quite vital for Ptolemy to occupy the vacancy left by Alexander. Failure to which, he would most likely rule with an iron fist rather than the assimilatory nature typical of Macedonian culture.

The **fifth** and final chapter examines the Ptolemaic ruler cult. The geographic descriptions of Egypt alongside the founding of Alexandria have a role in the origins of Ptolemaic Egypt and subsequently, the Ptolemaic ruler cult. Ptolemy I utilises elements of Alexander's model in order to ascertain his own level of political stability and to make gains on succeeding Alexander III. I will argue that the Ptolemaic model of the ruler cult can be understood to be a formal elaboration of Alexander's policy of cultural assimilation by means of syncretism.

The fifth chapter will address the establishing of cults in foreign territories. As in the fourth chapter, it will also be restated that the third tier of legitimacy is being addressed. The basis of this chapter will be understood in a similar context as the previous chapter on Alexander's model. As such, the implementation of the Ptolemaic ruler cult will be a matter of contention as we discuss whether Ptolemy is able to position himself as Alexander's true successor. It is here that I argue that the implementation of the Ptolemaic ruler cult can be viewed as Ptolemy's attempt to fulfil the third tier of legitimacy.

As in the fourth chapter, Ptolemy's implementation of the ruler cult will be analysed in three main categories. They are art, propaganda and public festival, with a fourth category, 'reception', used to address outcomes. The dissertation will conclude that Ptolemy did not fully attain legitimacy. Although he did have a generally successful tenure as ruler, he was unable to succeed Alexander as the legitimate successor and ruled with an iron fist rather than in the Macedonian way that culturally assimilates.

## **Chapter 1**

In this introductory chapter, I will begin by describing legitimacy as a focus of the dissertation. Ptolemy I will be the main subject, with a particular focus being on his usage of the ruler cult. The cult will be addressed and understood as a method of attaining legitimacy and ensuring relative political stability. Sociological theories on charismatic leadership will be utilised as a conceptual foundation throughout the dissertation and thus our understanding of legitimacy will be supplemented by elements of Weber's and Reinhard Bendix theories. The theories will be contextualised with Macedonian ideals in order to form the basis of our measure of legitimacy. The sociological theory are based on leadership principles known as the 'Three Types of Legitimate Rule' which inform our measure of Ptolemy's legitimacy in what will henceforth be termed the 'three tiers of legitimacy'.

To supplement this measure, the narratives of the Argead dynasty will be contextualised as a basis of legitimacy. The mythic origins of the Macedonian and Argead dynasty will lead into the explanation of how Philip II and Alexander III were able to fulfil the first tier of legitimacy. The second tier of legitimacy addresses the notion of adhering to custom; this would be vital in understanding the foreign imperialist campaigns of the Macedonians whose origins illustrate how they themselves were products of cultural assimilation. The third tier applies more explicitly to Alexander on his campaigns. Cultural assimilation was his method of dominance and based on the success of his campaigns.

### **1.1. Legitimacy: using Bendix/Weber's definition as a conceptual foundation**

Consolidation of power served as the bridge from instability to stability. This was achieved through attaining a sense of legitimacy on the military front but also through the mythic implications of a ruler's divinity. Cultic traditions utilised by Alexander are a source of interest in our attempts to understand Ptolemy I's version of the ruler cult. Ptolemy I and other members of the main Diadochi were tasked with attaining legitimacy in the various foreign lands in order to establish themselves as successors to Alexander not only in the eyes of the conquered but also to the other main members of the Diadochi. It is therefore quite vital that one considers how legitimacy and the ruler cult are connected. To do this we shall address the question of what legitimacy is. Reinhard Bendix and Max Weber's sociological theories on charismatic legitimacy will be utilised in order to form a definition. This in turn

will inform our understanding of how legitimacy applies to the ruler cult. To supplement the question of defining legitimacy I will consider the question of the way it is attained.

For there to be legitimacy there must be a source of legitimation. The Bendix/Weber sociological theory utilised the term ‘charisma’ to describe extraordinary qualities possessed by persons or objects, and goes on to describe how this ‘charisma’ gave the person or object a unique and or magical power<sup>3</sup>. Bendix/Weber also touched on the concept of power by defining it as “*the possibility of imposing one’s own will upon the behaviour of other persons*”<sup>4</sup>. He goes on to state that power in the general sense is a component of most social relationships.

Weber uses the term *Herrschaft*, ‘domination’, to supplement notions of authoritarian powers of command<sup>5</sup>. Weber goes on to state that the man who possesses a genuine sense of charisma would go on to exercise domination<sup>6</sup>. From this position, Bendix then goes on to outline a threefold division of domination as follows,

“(1) Domination on the basis of constellations of interest, especially on the market; (2) domination on the basis of established authority; (3) domination on the basis of leadership (the extraordinary power of a person and the identification of followers with that person).<sup>7</sup>

The Macedonian royal bloodline attained its prime importance as a legitimizer based on the sociological understanding of legitimacy and charismatic leaders. The closeness of dominance and power is a direct result of legitimacy. It is this notion that informs how the connection or association with the Macedonian royal bloodline can be understood as the first or primary tier legitimizer. Individuals who were eligible for kingship would have been full and or half members of the Macedonian royal family or affiliates through dynastic marriage. The sacred notion of the bloodline of the king and the divine implications are enforced as part of the legitimating of royalty.

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<sup>3</sup> Weber 1965.

<sup>4</sup> Bendix 1960: 294.

<sup>5</sup> Weber 1965

<sup>6</sup> Ibid 1965

<sup>7</sup> Bendix 1960: 302.

## **1.2. The three tiers of legitimacy**

As far as Ptolemy and the members of the Diadochi were concerned, there were several possible sources of legitimacy, each of which may fall within categories informed by the Bendix/Weber sociological theories on charismatic leadership. These parameters will be considered as a 'tier', and within the context of this dissertation, the tier will be understood as the methodology used to measure legitimacy. The point being made is that each tier must be fulfilled in order to ensure political stability. The narratives of the Macedonian royal bloodline are an example of adherence to the tiers. Failure to adhere had the potential to lead to an individual being delegitimized and thus being unable to attain legitimacy as a successor to Alexander and or not being able to lead a politically stable kingdom, this would be due to the constant revolt by natives of foreign land who deem their reign illegitimate. This in itself would have to be quelled by deploying military forces, which would otherwise, need not be utilised if the natives deemed the regime legitimate.

The narratives of the Macedonian royal bloodline and that of the members of the Diadochi will be contextualised with the tiers in mind throughout this dissertation and are thus fundamentally important in ascertaining whether Ptolemy is able to attain legitimacy. The three tiers will be revisited as a whole in the concluding chapter to answer the question of whether Ptolemy is able to attain legitimacy.

### **1.2.1. The Macedonian royal bloodline**

For the first part, one can speak of the importance of lineage to succession. Philip II and Alexander III were members of the Macedonian royal bloodline, and as such their respective successions caused relatively few problems concerning the protocols of succession. Direct lineage and succession were for are vital in the struggle to attain legitimacy. Longevity and sustainability would have been a desire commonly shared amongst the Diadochi as each tried to create a powerful regime that would rival that of Alexander III. Borza notes that the Macedonian royal family were able to sustain themselves through their special ethnic character and the reverence with which they were held by the people over whom they ruled. As a result, there was cohesion of the state<sup>8</sup>. Philip II and Alexander III were within lines of lineage that were informed by succession and thus were legitimized by lineage. It must be

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<sup>8</sup> Borza 1990: 236.

stated that the main members of the Diadochi were not legitimated by their lineage and thus had to utilise the two other sources of legitimacy in order to further strengthen their bid to be recognized as legitimate successors following Alexander the Great.

### 1.2.2. Adherence to local and foreign customs

Alexander and Philip II demonstrated this adherence to custom on both mythic and military levels. In his account of the customs of Philip entitled '*Philip II of Macedon: Greater than Alexander*', Gabriel notes how Philip II would act as the Macedonian chief priest and on rare occasions officiated over ceremonial rituals<sup>9</sup>. In a different title by the same author, Gabriel makes a similar point on militaristic ritual stating,

“A warrior culture requires values, rituals and ceremonies to define it, and the values of Alexander’s Macedonia were starkly similar to those of *the Iliad*, in particular the value placed on the cult of heroic personality. The highest social values were power, glory (*kydos*), and excellence (*arete*), and warriors were expected to demonstrate their bravery for the sake of honour (*time*) and reputation among fellow warriors.”<sup>10</sup>

The Macedonians rated adherence to customs very highly. The second tier of legitimacy would be in accordance with adherence to Macedonian and or Argead customs. The preservation of the divine face of Alexander’s monarchy was a direct source of legitimacy, as were the Argead customs and Homeric notions of rulers leading on the battlefield. As Lattey states:

“The only possible foundation for the study of Western ruler-worship is to be found in the divine claims of Alexander the Great; nevertheless, owing to his untimely end, it was left to his successors to develop divinity as a system.”<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Gabriel 2010: 7.

<sup>10</sup> Gabriel 2015: 12.

<sup>11</sup> Lattey 1917: 321.

### **1.2.3. The ability to establish cults in foreign territories**

The third tier to legitimacy would have been the ability to establish cults in foreign territories. Alexander with his exploits in Asia, alongside Philip and his exploits in Greece, both speak to this third legitimizer. The division of the spoils amongst the main Diadochi meant that each member was tasked with preserving ties with Macedonia. Errington states:

“It is scarcely surprising that the basic attitudes and governmental techniques of the new dynasties were merely adaptations of what the leading men had grown up with in their Macedonian homeland and learned – positively and negatively – from the association with the Great Kings Philip II and Alexander III. The geographic basis of the so-called Hellenic world was formed by the territories conquered by the Macedonian army, in Europe under Philip and in Asia under Alexander.”<sup>12</sup>

The different members of the main Diadochi were faced with different circumstances upon reaching their individual satrapies. Part of the task of attaining legitimacy meant maintaining political stability of the land and fostering native compliance. The formation of cults was a possible method with which members of the main Diadochi could control the ideology of the natives and in most cases assimilate the conquered into a Hellenic world informed by physical Macedonian dominance. The ability to establish cults in foreign territories was important insofar as it represented the establishment of power and grandeur in the land of the other.

### **1.3.1. The basis of legitimacy: the Argead lineage**

The origins of the Argead dynasty could be considered as evidence of a people who themselves were culturally assimilated. As a result of this, the ethnicity of the Macedonians was at times made to be ambiguous on purpose in order to assimilate the Macedonians into the Hellenic world. As Green states,

“Despite the assertions of *parti pris* advocates, there is insufficient linguistic evidence to identify what the Macedonian language, and, hence, Macedonian ethnicity, really was. Macedonian formed, as it were, a buffer enclave between the Thessalians (whose Hellenism

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<sup>12</sup> Errington 2008: 63.

was never in doubt) and a range of variously hostile and dubiously civilized tribes such as Epirotes, the Illyrians, and the Paonians.”<sup>13</sup>

The very name ‘Argead’ is taken from the name of the city of Argos<sup>14</sup>. On the basis of ethnicity Herodotus illustrates how the Argeads claimed their Greek period fairly early on. In *The Histories*, Herodotus notes how the origins of the Argeads confused even the Greeks. The Argead descent of Alexander I, allowed him to compete in the Olympic Games as a Greek<sup>15</sup>. Green supplements this by stating,

“Alexander I, at the time of the Persian wars, was held eligible to compete in the Olympic Games on the basis of a family tree (almost certainly fictitious) deriving the Argeads from Argos.”<sup>16</sup>

Herodotus seems to claim that the Argead and the Macedonian royal bloodlines are one and the same and thus there is a mythological element within the Macedonian royal family tree. The connection can thus be made between the Argeads and the Macedonians, which would form part of the mythological narrative that informs the first tier of legitimacy. Green refers to Macedonian heritage stating, “*Macedonia had always been, and to a great extent remained, an ambiguous frontier element of the Balkans*”<sup>17</sup>.

As members of the Argead dynasty, Philip II of Macedon and his son Alexander III were both born in Pella, which was found within the borders of ancient Macedonia. Pella replaced Aigai as the imperial city of the Macedonian kings and was founded by King Archelaus in 399 BCE<sup>18</sup>. The origins of the Argeads represent a twist to the assertion of Macedonian heritage. Pausanias and Herodotus are both sources for the case of the Argeads being of Greek heritage due to lineage and bloodline rather than geographical location of birth. The tale of the origins of the Argeads has mythological and historic twists and turns that do not fully explain whether they were Greeks or Macedonian in a conclusive manner.

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<sup>13</sup> Green 1990: 3-4.

<sup>14</sup> Pausanias XVIII. 4.

<sup>15</sup> Herodotus V. 22.

<sup>16</sup> Green 1990: 4.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid 1990: 3.

<sup>18</sup> Saunders 2007: 240 – 241.

The modern understanding of country of birth as country of origin is put into question by the mythological narrative of the Argeads and as such this was used to the cultural advantage of Alexander as a means of infiltration into Greek society. In his *Descriptions of Greece* Pausanias refers to the Argeads as being the solitary example of Greeks who divided themselves into separate kingdoms<sup>19</sup>. Mythological narratives were an essential part of Argead identity. One could argue that these mythological narratives instilled a sense of legitimacy to members.

Pausanias refers to the strange occurrence of a Greek kingdom being split into three by three kings, Melampus, Bias and Anaxagoras<sup>20</sup>. Pausanias refers to the reasoning behind this as he states,

“For in the reign of Anaxagoras son of Argus, son of Megapenthes, [sic], the women were smitten with madness, and quitting their house roamed up and down the land till Melampus, son of Amythaon, cured them on condition that he and his brother Bias should share the kingdom equally with Anaxagoras.”<sup>21</sup>

Pausanias goes on to state that the kingdom of Anaxagoras managed to outlast that of Melampus and Bias and that there were subsequent kings until eventually we reach Temenus<sup>22</sup>.

In Book VIII of *The Histories*, three brothers, Gauanes, Aeropus, and Perdiccas (who are descendants of Temenus) are expelled from Argos. They then take refuge in Illyria, eventually crossing into Macedonia and ending up in Lebaea where each did work for the king. Tending of horses and oxen was done by Gauanes and Aeropus whilst Perdiccas tended to the sheep and goats. The lifestyle in Lebaea according to Herodotus was modest even for the king to the extent that the wife of the king cooked the food. When she would bake loaves for the brothers, those intended for Perdiccas would swell to double their size. This would happen often and she eventually told the king<sup>23</sup>. The king was under the impression that this was a divine sign from the heavens of some significance and he subsequently called the three

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<sup>19</sup> Pausanias XVIII. 4.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid XVIII. 4.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid XVIII. 4.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid XVIII. 4.

<sup>23</sup> Herodotus VIII. 137.

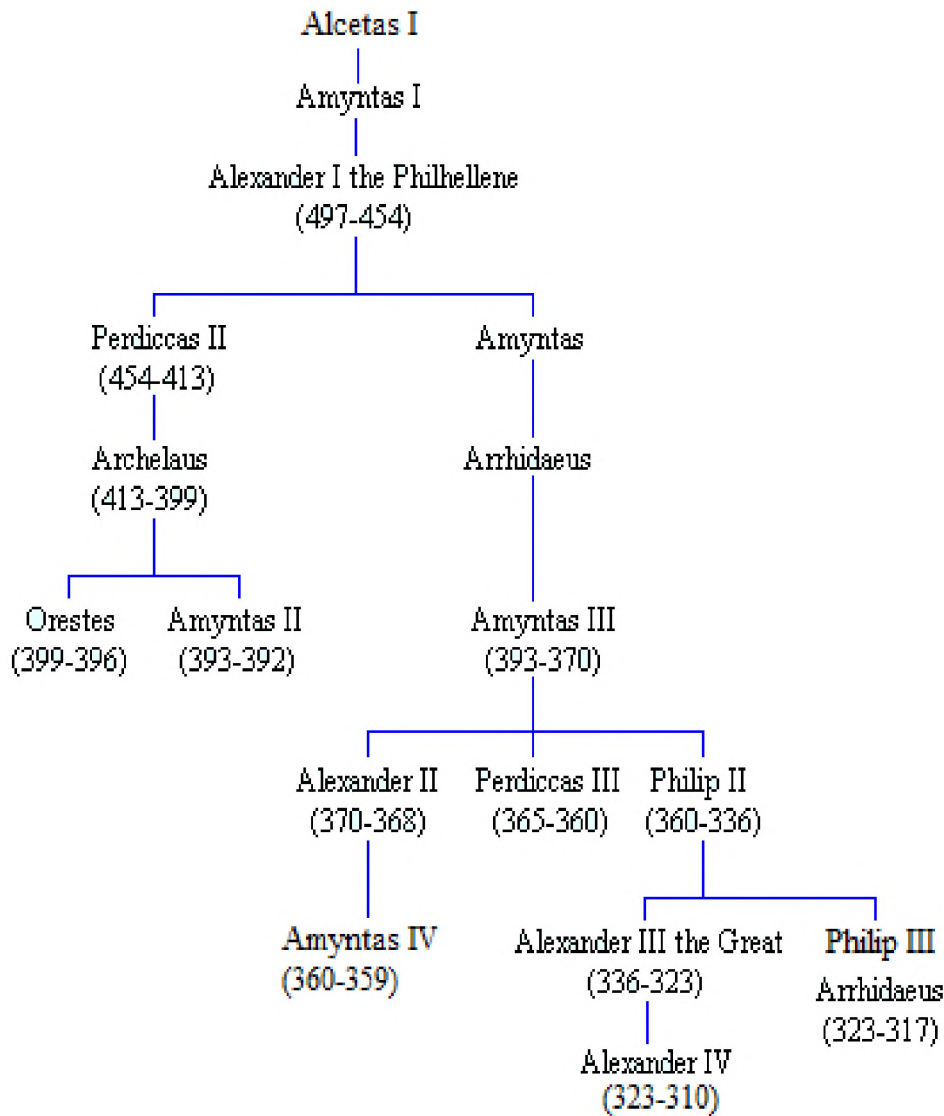
brothers to dismiss them. The young men protested for their wages and stated they would go as soon as they were paid for their work. As the sun was shining through the smoke hole of the royal house, the king pointed to the sun and cried out that there were the wages that they deserved<sup>24</sup>. Gauanes and Aeropus were confused however Perdiccas used the knife in his hand to scratch a line with the point of the knife round the patch of sunlight on the floor and accepted. Three times he gathered the sunlight into the folds of his tunic and subsequently left the town along with his brothers. Someone in attendance saw the gesture and suggested that Perdiccas knew what he was doing in accepting the wages. This enraged the king to the point that he ordered men to pursue and kill the brothers. The three brothers had got to the part of the country in which their descendants offered sacrifices. When the brothers had crossed the river, the river suddenly rose so high that the pursuers could not reach the brothers. The three brothers would subsequently move on to the Gardens of Midas and from this point it is implied that they came from outside to conquer the Macedonians<sup>25</sup>. It is also implied that these actions of Perdiccas won him the kingship of Macedonia.

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid VIII. 137.

<sup>25</sup> Rhodes 2010: 24.

## The Argead dynasty

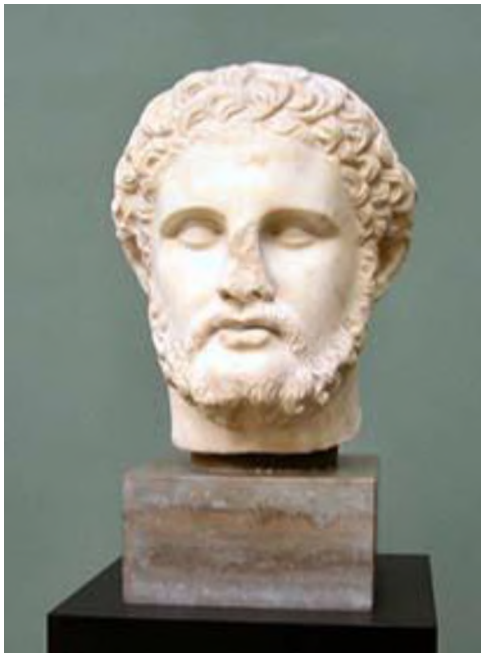


from the *Erzählende genealogische Stammtafeln zur europäischen Geschichte*, Volume III, *Europäische Kaiser-, Königs- und Fürstenhäuser, Ergänzungsband* [Andreas Thiele, R. G. Fischer Verlag, Second Edition, 2001].

### 1.3.2. Philip II

Polybius refers to a speech by Chlaeneas, the Aetolian, at Sparta. The speech is said to have been made in the autumn of 211 B.C to persuade the Spartans to join the Aetolians and Romans in their alliance against Macedon. In the speech, reference is made to the actions of

Philip II and thus serves the purpose of demonstrating the Macedonians and their very militant approach on their various campaigns. Extracts of the speech are as follows,



“Having enslaved and made an example of this town, Philip not only became master of the Thraceward cities, but reduced Thessaly also to his authority by the terror which he had thus set up. Not long after this he conquered the Athenians in a pitched battle, and used his success with magnanimity, not from any wish to benefit the Athenians - far from it, but in order that his favourable treatment of them might induce the other states to submit to him voluntarily. The reputation of your city was still such that it seemed likely, that if a proper opportunity arose, it would recover its supremacy in Greece. Accordingly, without waiting for any but the slightest pretext, Philip came with his army and cut down everything standing in your fields, and destroyed towns

and open countries alike, he assigned part of your territory to the Argives, part to Tegea and Megalopolis, and part to the Messenians: determined to benefit every people in spite of all justice, on the sole condition of injuring you.”<sup>26</sup>

To understand Philip and his attainment of legitimacy, one must first understand the Homeric groundings of the concept of kingship in the Hellenic period and the application of values taken from myth. Bell makes a very interesting observation by stating,

“Homer disseminated a ready set of associations for understanding powerful (and thus problematic) individuals and their struggles to obtain prestigious accommodation within even a democratic *polis*”<sup>27</sup>.

The focus here is on individuals in Athens and how their desire for *timē* had to be kept in check by the heavily guarded egalitarian qualities of Athenian democracy<sup>28</sup>. Macedonian individuals did not have this same draw back. According to Holt, Macedonia was a tough place that bred a ‘top population’ based on the ideologies that informed upbringing<sup>29</sup>. This

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<sup>26</sup> Polybius IX. 28.

<sup>27</sup> Bell 2004: 61.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid 2004: 61.

<sup>29</sup> Holt 2003: 7.

was meant to ensure their survival as there were many enemies on the northern fringes of Greece. Holt goes on to state “the Macedonians held fast to the heroic warrior code of Homer’s *Iliad* and *Odyssey*”<sup>30</sup>. The Macedonians were known for measuring men from king to commoner by the standards of Agamemnon and Achilles<sup>31</sup>.

The focus of Philip was mainly on military prowess, diplomacy and the resurgence of Macedonia. Divine references to Philip II are made in accordance with military exploits. Riginos alludes to the notion of Philip as the warrior king by referring to his eye injury and how would hobble as a result of wars that he led.<sup>32</sup>

According to Welles, Perdiccas III died whilst in battle with the Illyrians, which would end up promoting Philip, firstly, towards the role of regent then eventually to the role of king<sup>33</sup>. The country of Macedonia is said to have been very depressed during the transitional period from this defeat and would end up facing many threats of takeover<sup>34</sup>. The threats were now more serious than they had been for the last three decades and with Perdiccas’ son being too young to succeed his father, a situation had presented itself to enemies of the throne and the state to strike while they could<sup>35</sup>.

It was Philip who was able to see the Macedonians to safety in this time of need. The seeds of Philip’s succession to the throne were planted once Philip returned from being held hostage at Thebes in 367 BCE<sup>36</sup>. Ultimately these events and circumstances (such as Amyntas IV being too young) eventually led to Philip of Macedon being declared king in 358/9 BCE, but not without challenges from Argaios, Pausanias and Archelaus. Philip proved his prowess by leading the Macedonian recovery from 359 BCE to a period where Macedonia went out of crisis in 357 BCE<sup>37</sup>. According to Welles fortune would play a large part in the Macedonian recovery as diplomacy paved the way for the period of recovery<sup>38</sup>.

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid 2003: 7.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid 2003: 7.

<sup>32</sup> Riginos 1994: 103-119.

<sup>33</sup> Welles 1970: 6.

<sup>34</sup> Ellis 1976: 45.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid 1976: 45.

<sup>36</sup> Ellis 1976: 46.

<sup>37</sup> Welles 1970: 7.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid 1970: 7.



### 1.3.3. Alexander III

At an early age Alexander was encouraged to embrace his divinity by his mother Olympias. Plutarch notes Eratosthenes' account of a rumoured final exchange between Olympias and Alexander before the latter went to the army on his first expedition. It is rumoured that she told him the secret of his birth and "*bade him behave himself with courage suitable to his divine extraction*"<sup>39</sup>. Even at the stage of adolescence, the feats of Alexander were already highlighted as ahead of their time. The record of his exploits portrayed him as having gained maturity early enough to lead. This narrative is described extensively by Plutarch in his *Life of Alexander*. Plutarch makes note of a young Alexander and his interaction with the guests of his father and states,

<sup>39</sup> Plutarch *Alexander IV*. 161.



“While he was yet very young, he entertained the ambassadors from the king of Persia, in the absence of his father, and entering much into conversations with them, gained so much upon them by his affability, and the questions he asked them, which were far from being childish or trifling...”<sup>40</sup>

Curtius Rufus opens his *History of Alexander* by referring to Alexander’s mythological narrative, recording the events surrounding his birth and his ascension to the throne by way of succession:

“I find that Alexander possessed in abundance all the gifts of character and fortune with which a man

fated to have power so great ought to be endowed. He was the son of Philip and Olympias, of whom the former in a continuous series of wars had made the hitherto obscure people of Macedonia formidable to all men, prepared the foundation of works done after his time, made ready for an invasion of Persia, and through the Parmenion had already opened Asia. Alexander’s birth was preceded and attended by portents. Many even believed that he was the son of Jupiter, who had assumed the form of a serpent and lain with Olympias. She however, in a letter to her son begged him not to expose her to Juno’s hatred as her husband’s paramours. On the night when he was born the temple of the Ephesian Diana was destroyed by Fire, which the Magi interpreted as meaning that firebrand had appeared somewhere, by which the whole Orient would be destroyed. It happened at the same time Philip subdued Potidaea, a colony of the Athenians, and received news both of the victory of one of his chariots at Olympia and of the defeat of the Illyrians in a great battle.”<sup>41</sup>

According to Plutarch’s account, Philip fell in love with Olympias while he was in Samothrace. With her, he was initiated into the religious ceremonies of the country and he eventually married her<sup>42</sup>. Olympias would dream of a thunderbolt that fell on her body and from this a great fire arose in all directions and then extinguished. Philip would dream of

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid IV. 163-164.

<sup>41</sup> Quintus Curtius I. 4.

<sup>42</sup> Plutarch *Alexander* IV. 159.

sealing up his wife's body with a seal that assumed the impression of a lion<sup>43</sup>. These dreams would occur in the period shortly before the consummation (for Olympias) and shortly after the wedding (for Philip). Whilst some diviners did interpret Philip's dream as a warning to him, it was Aristander who interpreted that it would be strange for something empty to be sealed and went even further to predict that Olympias would have a boy who would embody the spirit of a lion<sup>44</sup>.

In a similar vein, Plutarch notes that just after he took Potidaea, Philip received three messages at one time. The first was that Parmenio had over-thrown the Illyrians in a great battle, the second that his race horse had won the course at the Olympic Games; the third was that his wife had given birth to a baby boy Alexander<sup>45</sup>. Diviners would assure Philip that this was altogether a good omen.

According to Plutarch, Alexander was born on the sixth of Hecatombaeon, which was the month the Macedonians called Lous. This was also the same day that the temple of Artemis at Ephesus was burnt. Legend later claimed that this temple was burnt to the ground whilst its mistress was away tending to the birth of Alexander<sup>46</sup>. According to Plutarch all the Eastern soothsayers at Ephesus looked at the ruin as an omen and ran about, screaming and crying that this day (Alexander's birth date) had brought about something that would prove fatal and destructive to all of Asia<sup>47</sup>.

#### **1.4.1. Alexander & the first tier of legitimacy**

On appraisal of the reports on Alexander, there is a sense of him being portrayed in an ambitious light in order to succeed Philip II. One could speculate that the conduct of Alexander was appropriate to that of a son being groomed to succeed their father. In a sense the propaganda behind it is the second dose of a supporting argument for succession of members of the royal bloodline. The narrative of Alexander being destined to lead would be informed by such accounts. Hammond states,

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid II. 1-5ff.

<sup>44</sup> Saunders 2007: 6.

<sup>45</sup> Plutarch *Alexander IV*. 162.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid IV. 161.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid IV. 161-162.

“Alexander, who had come of age just before his command at the Battle of Chaeronea, was fully aware of Philip’s plans and of the opposition to them; he was in his father’s confidence as his intended successor.”<sup>48</sup>

Dodge refers to the many wives that Philip had, which would have made succession more competitive<sup>49</sup>. The more legitimate successors (offspring) that Philip had, the greater the challenge to Alexander, who had been groomed for most of his life to take over. As the eldest legitimate son, there is a sense of Alexander’s expectation of ascending to the throne once the reign of Philip II was over. It was not as easy as that however, as the matter of succession resulted in quarrels which have been well documented.

The narrative of Alexander as the youthful adolescent overachiever continues into his adulthood. It gathers strength and as such poets and other influential figures sustain this divine aura. This is a testament to the effectiveness of the ruler cult that later formed around Alexander, as it is based largely on literary accounts that aimed to maximise his grandeur and make his character as a youth fit his adult achievements. On appraisal one could note the circumstances behind father and son falling out were due to worsening relations between Olympias and Philip. The very succession that Alexander had been groomed for was under serious threat on account of Philip’s infidelity.

#### **1.4.2. Alexander and the second tier of legitimacy**

There is much speculation as to what led to the continuation of Philip II’s legacy of conquering foreign states in the mind of Alexander. Briant’s speculations lead him to three possible reasons. The first of them would suggest that Alexander’s psychological make-up and in particular the irrational elements of his personality were the driving force behind his actions<sup>50</sup>. Briant goes on to attribute these psychological traits to Olympias being a devotee of the Dionysian cult as they were known to indulge their sensibilities to the full and without restraint<sup>51</sup>. The second possibility is more rooted in his Macedonian upbringing and the Homeric elements within this. It is speculated that Alexander would have been motivated by

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<sup>48</sup> Hammond 1997: 21.

<sup>49</sup> Dodge 1993: 130.

<sup>50</sup> Briant 2010: 25.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid 2010: 25.

his desire to imitate and or identify with Homeric heroes, as well as with gods and demigods, such as Dionysus and Herakles<sup>52</sup>. The third possibility is that Alexander was led by his *pothos* which is in fact the irrational and irresistible desire to excel, to go ever further in exploring the world and oneself.

An example of adherence to local, foreign custom by Alexander is his coronation at Memphis in 332 BCE. Schnusenburg notes the incident of the anointing of Alexander as an Egyptian pharaoh, which itself was a culturally significant event<sup>53</sup>. Such adherence to foreign custom was a positive gesture from a Macedonian conquerer in the process of courting legitimacy and thus attaining relative political stability. The naming of Alexander as son of the gods is significant as a cross-cultural phenomenon, which became the basis of the importance of this tier.

### **1.4.3. Alexander & the third tier of legitimacy**

Plutarch makes reference to the linguistic error spoken by a prophet to Alexander III, and how Alexander utilised this to his advantage. Plutarch states,

“And some say that the prophet, wishing to show his friendliness by addressing him with “O paidion,” or “O my son”, in his foreign pronunciation ended the words with “s” instead of “n” and said, “O paidios,” and that Alexander was very pleased at the slip in pronunciation, and a story became current that the god had addressed him with “O pai Dios,” or “O son of Zeus”.”<sup>54</sup>

The spreading of this story and Alexander’s subsequently adherence to Egyptian custom informs the notion of establishing cults in foreign terrain. Reverence for the Graceo-Egyptian pharaoh was the desired outcome for the formation of cults. In chapters four and five, I will argue that the informal formation of the ruler cult is one of Alexander’s legacies that he leaves behind for rulers succeeding him to emulate.

The ruler cult came to be embodied by Alexander III and this is why his name gains fame even in the contemporary period. This socio-political tool positively heightened his presence

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid 2010: 25.

<sup>53</sup> Schnusenburg 2010: 174.

<sup>54</sup> Plutarch XXVIII. 3-6ff.

in foreign territories and his subsequent acceptance of the title and honours of a pharaoh functions as evidence of the legitimacy he achieved in this part of his empire.

The ability to form cults in foreign terrain is one that needs a two-fold compromise from the conqueror towards the conquered. Alexander's attitude towards the Egyptians demonstrated a desire to confirm the importance of their customs and to encourage assimilation within the Hellenistic context. The most contentious task of the Diadochi was to achieve this without alienating the natives of the various lands.

### **1.5. Alexander and the Ruler Cult**

The basis of the ruler cult is essentially the concept of the worship of a ruler. The end goal of this would be to establish and emphasise the legitimacy of the ruler in the eyes of his subjects and subsequently achieve relative political stability. For Alexander, the basis of this political stability lay above all in his ability to be understood as the legitimate leader or hegemon of the Greek states.

Secondly, political stability would have been based on being seen as the legitimate ruler of the conquered states and citizens in foreign lands. Alexander III of Macedon defined the notion of legitimacy which members of the Diadochi strove to attain. The campaigns of Alexander receive acclaim even in this contemporary age. This acclaim informs why Alexander can be understood to be the embodiment of the ruler cult with which he is implicated in the three major events of his reign linked with ruler worship. The first of these was the *proskynesis* affair. The second was Alexander's visit to the oracle at Siwah, and lastly the alleged request made by Alexander for deification from the cities of the League of Corinth<sup>55</sup>.

#### **1.5.1. Contextualising the Ruler Worship**

Legitimacy is one of many ways of centralising ideology for the sake of political stability. Macedonian custom informed the notion of the ruler worship. The timeline of the Argeadae is incomplete without mention of their foundational mythological narrative. Mythological narrative is in fact key if one is to attain legitimacy. The ruler cult presented itself as an ideal

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<sup>55</sup> Saunders 1991: 275.

tool to provide the legitimacy which Alexander sought as a conqueror, and the Diadochi sought as successors to Alexander. The assimilation of the political and the religious was attractive in its effectiveness and far reaching potential. The majority of Hellenistic monarchs utilised this socially constructed tool for various reasons, though most had the attainment of legitimacy as Alexander successor and political stability as a common aim. As Ehrenberg states, “*A feature prevalent in most of the Hellenistic monarchies, also the result of both Eastern and Western influences was the cult of the deified ruler*”<sup>56</sup>. There is certainly an ‘oriental’ influence that informs the ruler cult; however it is contextual and should not be seen as the dominant element but rather as a result of cultural assimilation.

Religion in the Hellenistic context plays a large part in the way that Greeks would have interacted with their world. Religious ritual and myth go hand in hand as forming part of the narratives that explain the divinised nature of the gods and what makes them great. Myth also becomes the source of cultural and moral teaching, much like the Bible and Quran. The polytheistic nature of Greek religion meant there was a god for various occasions and setting, of which each would require a necessary ritual that would have to be given so as to not be in violation or *hubris*. Hellenistic Greece was made vulnerable by its own multi-faceted culture and as such the ruler cult is in effect politics’ response to religion’s dominance.

### 1.5.2. The ‘proskynesis affair’

*Proskynesis* was certainly a source of controversy as Alexander III attempted to introduce an Eastern custom to the West. In mentioning the clash of East and West it is important to note the significance of the rivalry between Alexander the Great and Darius III in introducing eastern rituals to the West. There is significance to the introduction of the oriental concept of *proskynesis* whilst the West confronted the East. Badian speaks on *Proskynesis*, stating:

“*Proskynesis* was the term used by Greeks to describe the Persian ceremonial salute of an inferior towards a superior, and in particular of subjects towards a king. It is debated in what precisely it consisted and whether (e.g.) the Persepolis reliefs provided illustrations of it”<sup>57</sup>.

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<sup>56</sup> Ehrenberg 1974: 9.

<sup>57</sup> Badian 1985: 457.

The direct imposition of a power structure by Alexander caused alarm amongst Greeks and thus *proskynesis* was received with controversy. The affair between Callisthenes and Alexander is evidence of it not being well received by all. In the Perrin translation of the *Lives*, Plutarch gives this account:

“Chares of Mytilene says that on one occasion at a banquet for Alexander, after he had drunk, passed the cup to one of his friends, who took it and rose so as to face the shrine of the household; next he drunk in his turn, then made obeisance (*Proskynesis*) to Alexander, kissed him and resumed his place on the couch. All the guests did the same in the succession, until he came to Callisthenes. The king was talking to Hephaistos and paying no attention to Callisthenes and the philosopher, after he had drunk, came forward to kiss him. At this Demetrius, whose surname was Pheidon, called out “*Sire, do not kiss him; he has not made obeisance to you.*” Alexander thereafter refused to kiss him, and Callisthenes exclaimed in a loud voice “I shall go away poorer by a kiss”<sup>58</sup>.

The main Diadochi were motivated by the allure of being hailed as legitimate successor of the kingdom with which they had controlled, and secondly to Alexander III. This status, once legitimated by the polis, would have been deemed unquestionable.

According to Henderson & Parsons<sup>59</sup>, imperative co-ordination is a benefit of being deemed legitimate, applying this to the Hellenistic age, it would have been utilised as a tool to facilitate the operational and administrative needs of governance. Imperative co-ordination is defined by these authors as “the probability that certain specific commands given from a source will be obeyed by a given group of persons”. The *proskynesis* affair would certainly be an example of Alexander the Great having attained relative imperative co-ordination based on the subservience and co-operation of bodyguard and generals alike. The *proskynesis* affair is an example of cult formations in foreign territories. The eastern and oriental influence of *proskynesis*, and the conflict it caused, displays the assimilation policy that Philip had previously followed in the European campaign. Alexander III had to now assimilate various Asian territories, and cultural fusion was an ideal shared by both father and son. In this regard, it must be noted that assimilation can be understood as continuation of typical Macedonian administrating with the end-goal being expansion. The account by Henderson

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<sup>58</sup> Plutarch *Alexander* 54.3 – 55.1.

<sup>59</sup> Henderson & Parsons 1947: 324.

and Parsons is vital in illuminating the importance of psychological infiltration as juxtaposed to the typical imperial physical imposition which would justify the usage the implementation of rituals such as *proskynesis*.

### 1.5.3. Alexander's visit to Siwah

The events that occurred in Siwah, came to dramatically affect notions of ruler worship after Alexander the Great. As these events occurred in Egypt, they also had a direct effect on Ptolemy I and the Ptolemaic dynasty, as that was the satrapy that Ptolemy would be given in the division of the spoils. Hammond refers to events in Egypt when he states,

“With the opening of communication by sea between Greece and the south-eastern Mediterranean fifteen envoys from the Council of the Greeks came to greet Alexander. As they sailed up the Nile, some may have recalled the attempt of Athens and her Allies to control Egypt which had ended in the disaster of 454. Now they bestowed on Alexander a golden crown in recognition of his services as Hegemon ‘for the safety and freedom of Greece’.”<sup>60, 61</sup>

Legitimacy entails the establishing of a cult in foreign territories. Alexander was able to do this with very little resistance from the natives and in fact received the contrary. As Hammond states,

“To the Egyptians Alexander was ‘Pharaoh’. Hieroglyphic inscriptions reveal that they gave him the traditional titles: ‘Son of Ra’ (the supreme god) and ‘King of Upper Egypt and King of Lower Egypt, beloved of Ammon and selected of Ra’. As Pharaoh he sacrificed ‘to the gods (of Egypt) and especially to Apis’; for Apis was the god against whom Cambyses and Artaxerxes Ochus had committed gross sacrilege. Thus Alexander showed his respect for the Egyptians and his acceptance of musical competition in the Macedonian manner, for which athletes and artists came from the Greek mainland”.<sup>62</sup>

The events around the establishing of Alexandria are as a result of assimilatory Macedonian custom as informed by the campaigns of Philip. Alexander asserted his legitimacy through the foundation of Alexandria, and thus the foreign legitimizer is fulfilled. The very divine

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<sup>60</sup> Hammond 1997: 99.

<sup>61</sup> Arrian *Anabasis* III. 3.1.

<sup>62</sup> Hammond 1997: 99.

undertones around the events of the establishment are informed by legitimacy and adherence towards customs. To quote Hammond again,

“There was no inconsistency; for in the belief of the polytheist there were innumerable gods. From Memphis he and a select force sailed down the western branch of the Nile. There he decided to build a city on an isthmus between the sea and Lake Mareotis which could be connected by a canal to the Nile, so that the city would have two harbours. He was seized by a longing (*pothos*) to start work at once. So he marked out the circuit-wall fifteen kilometres long, the city-centre, and the sites of temples to Isis (analogous to Demeter) and to Greek gods. The deities smiled on the enterprise; for a sacrifice proved favourable, and the barley with which Alexander marked the ground was devoured by flocks of birds. Aristander said this portended ‘prosperity especially in fruits of the earth’. The date was probably 20 January 331, and the city was to be named Alexandria.”<sup>63</sup>

Of Alexander’s acts in the East, the events at Siwah are the most fundamental in understanding the implications of the ruler worship and the ruler cult. His encounter at the shrine of Zeus Ammon would have a profound effect on Alexander and his outlook. In effect it changed him. Hammond describes these events:

“Although Alexander was not affected by Egyptian religion, he led his select force from Alexandria via Mersa Matruh to the shrine of Zeus Ammon in the oasis of Siwah. The gods favoured the journey by sending rain and then two cows to guide them, when they lost the way in dust-storms. Alexander wished to emulate his ancestors Perseus and Heracles, who had visited the shrine. He was greeted by the priest as ‘Son of Ra’, that is as the reigning Pharaoh (this was translated as ‘Son of Zeus’). Alexander entered the shrine alone. The utterances of the god were not divulged. Such was the gist of the official, written by Callisthenes and approved by Alexander. Moreover, in a Letter to Olympias Alexander wrote that he received ‘secret prophecies’ from the god, which he would tell her, and her only, on his return to Macedonia. There was of course speculation by others. Ptolemy and Aristobulus thought ‘he was trying to some extent trace his birth to Ammon’, and they reported Alexander as saying that he had heard ‘what was to his liking.’”<sup>64</sup>

Ruler worship was a practice that in essence combined religious and political elements. Callisthenes accounts for the politicizing of myth and subsequent propaganda. The events at

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid 1997: 99-100.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid 1997: 102.

Siwah changed Alexander to the extent that he would later want to be buried at the “Egyptian oasis of Siwah”. The events at Siwah would certainly provide a smoother transition for Ptolemy. The seeds of the Ptolemaic dynasty were planted by the divine elements of the visit to the oracle at Siwah. The Ptolemies merely needed to utilise the memory of Alexander’s visit and supplement this by presenting themselves as legitimate successors to Alexander as king in order to reap the benefits of the legitimacy.

#### **1.5.4. The request to the Corinthian league**

The events surrounding this request of Alexander are fundamentally important in the establishment of ruler worship. The oriental notion of deification collides against the normalized notions of Greek deification and not giving out cult honours to the living. With regards to the request of Alexander in 324 BCE, Bradley states:

“In 324, Alexander, in a controversial move, is supposed to have requested his deification. If there was such a request from Susa that he should be recognised as a god, it was directed solely to the Greeks of the Corinthian league”.<sup>65</sup>

It was Alexander’s intention to unify his empire through centralizing ideologies by way of the ruler cult. The request to the Greeks was the embodiment of the notion of the ruler cult as a political tool. On appraisal, Alexander and the request for deification from the league of Corinth was controversial to say the least. The Greek custom of deification indicated that those still living could not be deified, so the oriental face of the ruler cult is emphasised here. Furthermore, this incident, along with the *proskynesis* affair, illustrated the controversy surrounding cultural assimilation silenced by the imperial dominance of Alexander’s Macedonian regime. The basis of Alexander’s request for deification was not unfounded<sup>66</sup>, he had after all liberated the Greeks of Asia Minor from the Persian. As Klauck states,

“...It is relatively certain that the cultic veneration of Alexander as a god existed in a number of Greek cities in Asia Minor. This should not be interpreted, as some scholars assume, as the post-mortem declaration of heroic status; these cities were founded while Alexander was still alive, more specifically, in the years of his campaign in Asia Minor (334 – 333 BCE), when Alexander freed the Greeks of Asia Minor from the crushing yoke of the Persians. The

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<sup>65</sup> Bradley 2014: 194.

<sup>66</sup> Klauck 2003: 273.

honours paid to him as expressions of gratitude for what he had done remain within the framework of the cult of benefactors.”<sup>67</sup>

The Greeks of Asia Minor would have been open to the divine request made by Alexander as a gesture of gratitude for their liberation from the Persians. However, the conservative culture of the Greeks must be reiterated as well as the exceptional circumstance required for the rewarding of divine rights to those still living. One should note the interesting power dynamics that this event presented: the conquered Greek states were tasked with determining whether the son of their conqueror was eligible to be considered a god.

The request for deification was entertained by Athens and Sparta and the outcome of this was said to be the arrival in Babylon of an embassy from Greece with the intention of granting Alexander his request for divine honours<sup>68</sup>.

The details of Alexander’s request for divine honours are certainly in question. The motives of Alexander pointed to the assimilation of the Hellenic world with the East. The superhuman feats of Alexander the Great, (with regards to events in Persia), served as the Macedonian justification as to why his deification should have been granted. Alexander died before the question was realised, but before his death he set the basis upon which his successors would begin to stabilize their own monarchies through the formation of similar cults in the foreign territories.

## **1.6. Chapter 1: summary and conclusion**

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid 2003: 273.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid 2003: 273.

This first chapter began by introducing sociological definitions of legitimacy. The theoretic implications of charismatic leadership and dominance were presented. Following on from this the ideals of Macedonians were presented in order to inform our measure of legitimacy, which has been termed ‘the three tiers of legitimacy’.

In order to contextualise these theories, the narratives of the Alexander III and Philip II were presented as a way to understand the practical implications of the tiers of legitimacy. Alexander and Philip were the models of legitimacy that Ptolemy I would be seeking to emulate. The tiers were designed to illustrate the need to adhere to Macedonian ideals in order to attain legitimacy as a Macedonian king. The tiers were also designed to show the potential dilemma faced by Macedonian generals in maintaining the balance of simultaneously leading both local and foreign individuals.

The first chapter should be understood to represent the first tier of legitimacy, as it explains the mythological narrative that informed the legitimate Macedonian royal bloodline. Prominent members of the bloodline Philip II and Alexander III adhere to the customs of their bloodline that links with their Argead descent. In the context of the three tiers, Philip and Alexander are the embodiment of first tier legitimacy.

Following on from the section on mythological narrative, the ruler cult is introduced in this chapter. The ruler cult is then contextualised in the social and political sphere and this leads into the three events that shaped the ruler cult. They are the *proskynesis* affair, the Siwah affair and Alexander’s request for divine rights at the Corinthian league. Alexander is the best example of adherence to all three tiers of legitimacy and thus his fame is a legacy of being able to fulfil the tiers. The tiers and the narrative of Alexander will thus be used to measure the attainment of legitimacy throughout this thesis.

## Chapter 2

The following chapter will begin by contextualising the Macedonian model of governance by utilising an account by Aristotle, on the heroic form of monarchy<sup>69</sup>. There is a need to make this distinction in order to understand the motives behind the wars of the Successors. It will be noted that a major cause of these wars was the fact that Alexander did not leave behind an heir who might rule at once, who would succeed him. This chapter will speak to the second tier of legitimacy: the adherence to customs both local and foreign. The examples of Perdiccas, Polyperchon and Antigonos will be considered in order to illustrate individuals who did not adhere to custom.

This chapter will explore the narratives of the three Diadochi members who act as antagonists of the second tier by not adhering to local Macedonian custom. This chapter will first address the violation of dynastic marriage by Perdiccas. Following this, the narrative will follow the demise of Perdiccas, leading to Antipater's regency of Macedonia. Antipater explores the option of dynastic marriage in an attempt to protect his interests by creating familial ties with other members of the Diadochi. I will then examine the narrative of Polyperchon which was highlighted by the questioning of his legitimacy by other members of the Diadochi. The unexpected choice of Polyperchon as Antipater's chosen successor went contrary to usual and acceptable practice. The implications of this and the posthumous violation of the principles of succession by Antipater will be addressed.

Lastly, it will be shown that Antigonos violated the three tiers with his disregard of the division of the spoils recognised by the Macedonian royal assembly. His military campaign led to subsequent power struggles due to the violations of terms discussed during the division of the spoils. I will also describe how Antigonos violates local customs. These violations will be explored within the narrative of the wars of the Diadochi as illustrations of violations of the tiers. The wars of the Successors provide interesting insights into how a major error on the part of Alexander ultimately sent his empire into disarray and how the need to acquire legitimacy arises out of this chaos.

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<sup>69</sup> Aristotle *Politics* III. 14, 1285b 3-15.

## 2.1. The Macedonian model of governance

To begin with, Aristotle and his *Politics* will be utilised to contextualise the Macedonian model of governance. This will form the ideological basis of the three tiers of legitimacy. The *Politics* of Aristotle will be utilised in order to form a conceptual basis of the heroic king, for it is this work that best informs the Hellenic model of an ideal monarchy. Throughout the third book of the *Politics* Aristotle speaks on the various forms of monarchy. The heroic form would be relevant to the Macedonians and particularly the Diadochi following the death of Alexander III. Aristotle states:

“There is a fourth species of kingly ruler- that of the heroic times- which was hereditary and legal, and was exercised over willing subjects. For the first chiefs were benefactors of the people in arts or arms; they either gathered them into a community, or procured land for them; and thus they became kings of voluntary subjects, and their power was inherited by their descendants. They took the command in war and presided over their sacrifices, except those which required a priest. They also decided on causes with or without an oath; and when they swore, the form of the oath was stretching out of the sceptre. In ancient times their power extended continuously to all things whatsoever, city and country, as well as in foreign parts...”<sup>70</sup>

## 2.2. The Diadochi

Borza notes that while Alexander was alive he would confer with generals and advisors about military and other policy matters, even going so far as having symposia, i.e. drinking parties, with these individuals, some of whom would later become the ‘Successors’: the Diadochi<sup>71</sup>. The group remained close, to the extent that at his deathbed a small group of these same men were present to hear his final wishes of Alexander. The members of the Diadochi would have been well aware that they would not be able to outdo the reign of Alexander the Great. The reign of Alexander would be considered as the *ne plus ultra* of Hellenic leadership based on the relatively political stability it displayed, which allowed for his successful assimilatory campaigns. In essence, the wars of the Diadochi were a power struggle to attain closeness to the concept of domination of the whole of Alexander’s empire. These men were vital in

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<sup>70</sup> Aristotle *Politics* III. 14, 1285b 3-15.

<sup>71</sup> Borza 1990: 242.

contributing to the imperial face of Macedonian governance, as contrasted with the more liberal face of the Greek city states. Of the latter, Ehrenburg states that it was,

“the kind of state which for the first time in human history represented a community of free citizens became the basis of Western civilization. That remains true even though the society of the polis could only exist with the help of slavery.”<sup>72</sup>

The point made by Ehrenburg is vital in and of itself, and is based on notions of citizen obedience in Macedonian and Greek contexts. The Diadochi would serve as enforcers of Macedonian governance, forming part of the political system as members of the Macedonian assembly<sup>73</sup>.

Barbaric political systems of governance were synonymous with adjectives such as “tyrannical” and “hierarchical” as juxtaposed to the Greek which were viewed as ‘democratic’ and ‘egalitarian’<sup>74</sup>. The Greeks deemed the Macedonians to be barbarians and the Macedonians deemed the Greeks ineffective<sup>75</sup>. The name-calling of each side was answered by Macedonian triumph when they collided.

The desire for Macedonian prominence would have been at its peak prior to the death of Alexander III and such there would have been an urgent need to continue and retain Macedonian prominence following proceeding reigns from Macedonian royal bloodline. There certainly would have been an allure to leading the Macedonians as a whole to new frontiers, and as such each member of the Diadochi would have discreetly felt that they were the ideal candidate to continue the period of general Macedonian dominance. Informed by the sub-Homeric aspect of Macedonian identity and fuelled by the desire to be the successor to Alexander, the seeds of the wars of the Successors were planted in the succession quarrels that followed the great king’s death.

The Diadochi were a group of men in the form of generals who served close to the Macedonian king. Notable members included Perdikkas, Ptolemy, Antipater, and Antigonos among others. According to Hammond and Walbank these men were quite vital to the

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<sup>72</sup> Ehrenburg 1974: 8.

<sup>73</sup> Hammond and Walbank 1988: 148.

<sup>74</sup> Hall 1989: 1-2.

<sup>75</sup> Green 1990: 5.

functioning of the Macedonian state, forming part of the assembly of Macedonians<sup>76</sup>. The assembly of Macedonians formed the second part of the Macedonian state, the first part of which was the royal house. The assembly could make decisions that were final and in many instances hear the cases of those who were tried before it for grievances such as treason. The assembly heard cases which were punishable by execution at their discretion<sup>77</sup>.

### **2.3. The wars of the Diadochi**

Diodorus of Sicily refers to the last words of Alexander before his sudden death in 323 BCE, beginning with some philosophical meditations on the immortality of those individuals who appeared to adhere to heroic notions of the times. Diodorus states,

“Pythagoras of Samos and some others of the ancient philosophers declared that the souls of men are immortal, and also that, in accordance with this doctrine, souls foreknow the future at that moment in death when they are departing from the bodies. It seems that poet Homer agreed with them, for he introduced Hector at the time of his decease fore-telling to Achilles the death that was soon to come upon him. Likewise, it is reported that even in more recent times what we have described above has happened in the case of many men as they were coming to the end of life, and in particular on the occasion of the death of Alexander of Macedon. When he was quitting life in Babylon and at his last breath was asked by friends to whom he was leaving the kingdom, he said, “To the best man; for I foresee that a great combat of my friends will be my funeral games.”<sup>78</sup>

Homeric notions of the hero alongside the concept of the warrior king as exemplified by Alexander III during his various wars are vital in contextualising the words of Diodorus. Alexander was illustrated as having foreshadowed the wars of the Diadochi by his last words. There are mythic allusions when it comes to the way Diodorus has decided to present this information. Diodorus suggests that the wars that followed the demise of Alexander in 323 BCE resembled funeral games. One could certainly agree with this sentiment, as the wars of the Diadochi were military quarrels amongst the generals of Alexander III who felt entitled to take-over ‘the whole’, by cutthroat means in some instances. The matter of contention was legitimacy and most importantly the claim to the title of the ‘true successor’

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<sup>76</sup> Hammond and Walbank 1988: 124.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid 1988: 124.

<sup>78</sup> Diodorus XVIII. 1ff.

#### 2.4. Perdikkas (son of Orentes)

Of Alexander's generals and bodyguards most would have deemed themselves capable of preserving Alexander's empire. Alexander was not always present in all parts of his empire and members of the Diadochi had so far been delegated in order to retain relative control. As long as Alexander the Great was alive and well, the situation in conquered territories was generally manageable. Events surrounding the death of Alexander very clearly suggested that if the Argeads were to maintain their hold over the Hellenistic world, a new charismatic leader would have to lead the Macedonians after Alexander. With this stated, to say that the very passing of Alexander came unsuspected would have been a gross understatement.

Following the death of Alexander III, the Macedonians had minor setbacks as result of Alexander's stabilizing influence over conquered lands. A signal of the strength of Alexander's hold in the West was the subsequent outbreak of the Lamian War immediately after his death. Macedonian dominance had disgruntled the Greeks for many years and the requests to the Corinthian league for divine honours signalled interference to Athens. Alexander's death was an illustration of who was holding the Macedonian empire together. Shipley refers to this, stating,

“When, in June 323, he was taken ill after an extended bout of feasting and drinking and died at Babylon, the Greeks were presented with a chance to seize their freedom, while the Macedonians could now, if they wished, abandon their reluctant reconciliation with the Persians. The fact that Alexander had not indicated who was to succeed him, or had not indicated clearly, made matters worse.”<sup>79</sup>

The wars of the Diadochi begin with Perdikkas, (son of Orentes) becoming the regent of Macedonia. Diodorus recounts these events stating,

“The phalanx of the infantry was supporting Arrhidaeus, son of Philip, for the kingship, although he was afflicted with an incurable mental illness. The most influential of the Friends and of the Bodyguard, however, taking counsel together and joining to themselves the corps of horsemen known as the Companions, at first decided to take up arms against the phalanx and sent to the infantry envoys chosen from men of rank, of whom the most prominent was

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<sup>79</sup> Shipley 2000: 38.

Meleager, however, when he came to the men of the phalanx, made no mention of his mission but, on the contrary, praised them for the resolution that they had taken and sharpened their anger against their opponents. As a result, the Macedonians made Meleager their leader and advanced under arms against those who disagreed with them; but when the Bodyguard had withdrawn from Babylon and was making ready for war, the men most inclined toward conciliation persuaded the parties to come to an agreement. Straightway they made Arrhidaeus, son of Philip, their king and changed his name to Philip; Perdiccas to whom the king had given his ring as he died, they made regent of the kingdom; and they decided that the most important of the Friends and of the Bodyguard should take over the satrapies and obey the king and Perdiccas.”<sup>80</sup>

The sequence of the events following Alexander’s death sees Perdiccas, son of Orentes, being the first to step forward in the role of being a regent. In terms of the tiers of legitimacy, Perdiccas could not meet the primary tier as he was not of royal Macedonian blood. The only saving grace for him would have been his closeness to Alexander, to the point of being his personal bodyguard. The second tier of legitimacy was adherence to Argead Macedonian customs. To reiterate Shipley, the army could select who they deemed suitable within bounds which must have usually meant the ruling family which is why 323 was so unusual and there was no precedent – a point ignored by Shipley <sup>81</sup>. Perdiccas under the guise of committing to preserve the royal bloodline would ‘temporarily’ hold the throne. This is the last instance of the good diplomatic skill of Perdiccas, as he is, (to a fair extent), able to convince other potential successors that he had no ulterior motives in assuming regency.

Perdiccas is a fundamental figure in the explanation of the wars of the Diadochi, as he was in an advanced position immediately after the death of Alexander the Great. Green states,

“When Alexander lay dying in Babylon, in June 323 B.C., Perdiccas, now his senior commander, spent much time at his bedside.”<sup>82</sup>

This meant that by virtue of his presence, Perdiccas was the closest source of information concerning matters of succession from Alexander himself. The grounds for suspicion from the already riled up members of the main Diadochi were certainly warranted in this regard.

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<sup>80</sup> Diodorus XVIII. 2-3ff.

<sup>81</sup> Shipley 2000: 40.

<sup>82</sup> Green 1990: 3.

Green notes with the term “reportedly” that shortly following the death of Alexander it was Perdiccas who was in possession of Alexander’s ring which was in itself a symbol of imperial authority<sup>83</sup>. An account by Borza similarly states,

“The king’s ring was given to Perdiccas, who was not an Argead, but this does not signify succession as far as we can tell, unless one believes the unlikely event that Alexander intended that the throne pass out of Argead hands<sup>84</sup>”.

#### **2.4.1: Perdiccas as Regent**

After the death of Alexander, events at Babylon were vital in terms of planning the future of the Macedonian empire. It was here that various alliances had begun to form based on the shared interests of the ‘friends’. One such alliance was between Perdiccas, Eumenes and Nearchus. In the initial speech given by Perdiccas he stated that the kingdom should wait for the birth of Roxanne’s then unborn child, Alexander IV, and Nearchus agreed. As Pearson states,

“no one would dispute that only the blood of Alexander and a child of his was fitted for the royal majesty; but to wait for a king who was not yet born and to pass over someone who was already in being – that did not suit Macedonian spirit or the needs of the moment; the king had a son by Barsine; the diadem should be given to him”<sup>85</sup>.

One of the first acts during Perdiccas’ regime was the division of the spoils. Diodorus goes through a long list of how the spoils were divided amongst members of the Diadochi as they were allotted land to govern as satraps. Our focus however will be on the influential figures that made significant impact during the period of the wars of the Diadochi. These influential individuals include Ptolemy, Antipater, Antigonus and Seleucus, with Eumenes and Olympias playing a part during the turmoil.

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid 1990: 3.

<sup>84</sup> Borza 1990: 243.

<sup>85</sup> Pearson 1983: 116.

In Book XVIII of the *Library of the Histories*, Diodorus notes that Ptolemy was given Egypt, Antipater was assigned Macedonia, Antigonos was given Pamphylia, Eumenes was assigned Paphlagonia, and Seleucus was appointed as commander of the Calvary of companions.<sup>86</sup>

#### 2.4.2: The Fall

The coalition of Eumenes and Perdikkas was a fatal one for both parties. They would both suffer betrayals by their own forces and such betrayals can be considered the result of legitimacy not being fully attained. On appraisal, the formation of this particular coalition was not wise on the part of Perdikkas. One has to note the fact that of his closest companions, Eumenes being Greek certainly made him appear less desirable as a person fit to lead. On the basis of adherence to Macedonian customs and ideals, Perdikkas comes out worst his allies. Green states,

“...in any case, despite his seniority under Alexander, Nearchus never came to much among the Successors; but he, like Eumenes, was a Greek; worse still, he was a Cretan, and thus a proverbial liar<sup>87</sup>”.

From the very outset it is clear that the biggest factor that led to Perdikkas’ downfall was his inability to foster stability amongst the Successors. Their perception of him was not based on respect as it had been with Philip II and more explicitly, Alexander III. Shipley states

“Disagreements about the assignment of satrapies and the powers of the regent soon led to open conflict. Perdikkas tried to exert overall authority; an alliance was formed against him, and in 321 he was assassinated while invading Egypt”.<sup>88</sup>

Perdikkas gave himself the title *epimeletes tes basileias* which was itself problematic due to its ambiguous linguistic nature<sup>89</sup>. Green continues, stating that this ambiguous title had two different meanings the first of which could be translated as meaning “regent of the kingdom” and the second “guardian of the monarchy”<sup>90</sup>. Perdikkas did this in spite of the disapproval of

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<sup>86</sup> Diodorus XVIII. 3; 1-4.

<sup>87</sup> Green 1990: 7.

<sup>88</sup> Shipley 2000: 42.

<sup>89</sup> Green 1990: 3.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid 1990: 3.

the Diadochi members, and a very royalist Macedonian ideology which won him no favours. On top of this there was suspicion that the terms discussed by Alexander at his death bed, (even the possession of the signet ring), were fabricated plots meant to raise Perdiccas to the throne. At the beginning of his reign as regent, Perdiccas utilised the ambiguity of names and titles in order to maintain a strong yet covert grip on Alexander's monarchy. The opportunism of Perdiccas' regime could be understood as the explanation as to why he manoeuvred around members of the Diadochi with such care. Hammond & Walbank state,

“As it was, Perdiccas ruled as an opportunistic leader, created out of *stasis* and dependent upon the support of a clique. What he had done, others could attempt to do. He might well fall through *stasis*. One weakness was his lack of standing in Europe. Absent from Macedonia for eleven years, he had no understanding with Antipater, and no connection with the Greeks of common peace.”<sup>91</sup>

One must bear in mind that as a result of Perdiccas' position, it was of high importance that he attains legitimacy in the eyes of the other Successors in order to lead the Macedonians in a stabilized and effective manner after Alexander's death. In fact he was met with resistance from Ptolemy among others. Perdiccas was faced with assessing who was the bigger threat in the long run, being forced into a decision of choosing between Ptolemy I or Antipater in terms of forming a makeshift allegiance.

Antipater was an essential figure in the context of Europe. He had many dealings with Greece and his political position in Macedonia meant Perdiccas had more to gain from an alliance with him. Errington refers to Perdiccas' dilemma of governance stating,

“In principle the function of regent encompassed the whole empire, in practice the choice of a future base for the kings was bound to affect the current governor of the place chose; but as the Argead kings the obvious place for them was Macedonia. A clash with Antipater must therefore have seemed almost inevitable, and the need to work out a *modus vivendi* with him was fairly urgent.”<sup>92</sup>

The remedy to this potential problem would be a marriage coalition between Antipater and Perdiccas. Perdiccas would take the hand of Antipater's daughter Nicaea in marriage in order

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<sup>91</sup> Hammond and Walbank 1988: 106.

<sup>92</sup> Errington 2008: 15.

to form an alliance<sup>93</sup>. The downfall of Perdiccas can be attributed to various events, but dynastic marriage would ultimately be the main cause. In his quest to attain legitimacy, Perdiccas violated this marriage agreement, double crossing Antipater, who then switched from ally to enemy.

Diodorus refers to the violation of the dynastic marriage by Perdiccas as follows,

“After the destruction of the cities there came two women to marry Perdiccas, Nicaea, the daughter of Antipater, for whose hand Perdiccas himself had sued, and Cleopatra, who was Alexander’s own sister, daughter of Philip son of Amyntas. Perdiccas had formerly planned to work in harmony with Antipater, and for this reason he had pressed his suit when his position was not yet firmly established; but when he had gained control of the royal armies and the guardianship of the kings, he changed his calculations. For since he was reaching out to kingship, he was bent upon marrying Cleopatra, believing that he could use her to persuade the Macedonians to gain the supreme power. But not wishing as yet to reveal his design, he married Nicaea for the time, so that he might not render Antipater hostile to his own undertakings.”<sup>94</sup>

One must bear in mind that the link to lineage and succession through royal bloodline was out of reach for the members of the Diadochi. The partnership formed between Perdiccas and Olympias was thus mutually beneficial. The restlessness of the main Diadochi, meant that Olympias had to find a placeholder for Alexander IV till he came of age. A proposed dynastic marriage with Cleopatra was a way in which Olympias could retain the throne for her preferred successor Alexander IV, while for Perdiccas it would supplement his task of attaining legitimacy. The backing of Alexander’s mother meant that Perdiccas had a stamp of approval from the royal family and with Olympias in his corner; Perdiccas could attain legitimacy under the guise of being a consolidator of the monarchy. Green refers to Olympias’ solution of dynastic marriage by stating,

“She therefore sent her daughter, Cleopatra, to Perdiccas in Sardis. The death of Alexander of Epirus had left Cleopatra an eligible widow (330); the death of Leonnatus, to whom she had

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid 2008: 15.

<sup>94</sup> Diodorus XVIII. 2; 823ff.

made a written offer of marriage in return for aid against Antipater, meant that she had no prior commitments.”<sup>95</sup>

It would eventually be Antipater who succeeded Perdiccas as regent of the empire following new negotiations at Triparadeisos in Syria, as he was named “guardian of the young kings”<sup>96</sup>. Perdiccas’ lack of tactical awareness supplemented by ill-informed coalitions reflected badly on his lofty ambitions to ascend the throne. The war of the Successors was one fought out by shrewd generals and master tacticians: Perdiccas, the typical Macedonian general, could not compete.

On appraisal, the actions of Perdiccas during the period of the war of the Successors are a good example of how not to go about trying to attain legitimacy as ruler. The tiers of legitimacy needed to be fulfilled and additionally supplemented by a sense of charisma that was worthy of respect among the other Successors. Perdiccas had neither and his attempts to fulfil the primary tier through dynastic marriage ultimately backfired. He was unable to establish his importance to those around him. He had no legitimacy based on his inability to attain a level of respect worthy of a Macedonian regent.

## **2.5. Antipater**

The distribution of power, combined with ineffective governance, ultimately led to the formation of alliances both for and against Perdiccas. In Antipater he had an ally, and this alliance was at one point vital to Perdiccas, however it would turn on him, becoming the very basis of his demise due to an apparent lack of good judgement.

Before the death of Alexander, there were already rumblings of Greece preparing for an uprising. At the time of his death, Alexander was preparing to counter these revolutions. Hammond & Walbank make reference to this stating,

“Alexander had known in 324 that Athens was making preparations for war rather than surrender Samos to the Samian exiles, and he proclaimed his intention to come in person and punish Aetolia for having expelled the inhabitants of Oeniadae. As he planned to conquer

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<sup>95</sup> *ibid* 1990: 11.

<sup>96</sup> Shipley 2000: 42.

Arabia during the winter and spring of 323/2, he expected to deal with any threat from Athens and Aetolia in the latter half of 322.”<sup>97</sup>

The subsequent Lamian wars were the event that would showcase the abilities of Antipater. Antipater had veteran status among the Macedonian military wing as he had served as Philip’s trusted general as well as being Alexander’s deputy<sup>98</sup>. On appraisal, there was certainly a hint of prestige in being associated with Antipater as an ally. In terms of the first tier of legitimacy, his closeness with the Macedonian royal bloodline meant that Antipater had within him, leadership qualities that were recognised by both the old and new king. Closeness to, and or support from the Macedonian royal family could arguably be seen as legitimizing on the same principle that informed the dynastic marriage that Perdiccas attempted with Cleopatra.

The theme of marriage is one that Antipater was all too familiar with himself. He had himself married off many daughters. At the point of the dynastic marriage between the Cleopatra and Perdiccas, there were already members of the Diadochi who had become suspicious of Perdiccas and his intentions with regards to Alexander’s empire. Perdiccas' keeping of his intentions of marrying Cleopatra from Antipater led to a memorable moment in the period of the wars of the Diadochi where Antipater acted as a key component in the demise of Perdiccas.

### **2.5.1: Dynastic marriage**

Antipater had served under Philip’s regime, he had the respect of the Macedonian royal bloodline. The custom of marriage had become a way of rewarding such loyalty and forming alliances in and of itself. Hammond & Walbank state,

“For Alexander, as king, was most generous and even proved himself indulgent to those who had supported him through thick and thin. It was inevitable with this system that certain families distinguished themselves in the service of the king and that something like a

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<sup>97</sup> Hammond and Walbank 1988: 107.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid 1988: 11.

hereditary officer class tended to develop. There was also some inbreeding, because such families intermarried with one another and sometimes with members of the royal house...<sup>99</sup>

It is arguable that such marriages could be deemed more than just alliances between two or more of the hereditary officer class families. They appeared more likely to be a long term commitment to loyalty through the linking of bloodlines, and Antipater seemed all too happy to agree to this. Circumstance would necessitate such commitments and the case of Perdiccas was no exception. By way of circumstance, Perdiccas had drawn Ptolemy as one of two competitors, with the other being Antipater. If Perdiccas had any hopes to have his quest for legitimacy to be taken seriously, it appeared best to avoid Alexander's request for burial at Siwah for risk of having Ptolemy attain prestige by means of presiding over the burial ritual<sup>100</sup>. The role of Nicaea came as a diplomatic move on the part of Perdiccas to maintain a safety net that would ensure smooth dealings with the home base of Macedonia where Antipater had authority.

The quality of leadership following the demise of Alexander can be said to have declined. Antipater's approach is one of many examples of the shortfall between the "great" king and his confidants. Hammond and Walbank refer to this in context of the impending Lamian revolt by stating,

"Antipater did not seize the initiative as Alexander had done in 336 when he entered Thessaly and marched south. Instead, he offered one of his daughters in marriage to Leonnatus and asked Leonnatus and Craterus to bring their armies urgently to Macedonia."<sup>101</sup>

The situation called for bracing oneself and the consolidation of men, and there was a lack of sustainability in Antipater's solitary actions. The various marriage alliances would seem to suggest that Antipater might have had an over-reliance on this form of allegiance.

One can speculate that Perdiccas may have seen Antipater as the lesser evil though Hammond and Walbank seem to suggest that they were already friends, and the marriage to Nicaea was just a confirmation of this<sup>102</sup>. In reference to this, Hammond and Walbank state,

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<sup>99</sup> Hammond and Walbank 1988: 14.

<sup>100</sup> Errington 2008: 15.

<sup>101</sup> Hammond and Walbank 1988: 109.

“After some punitive operations in Pisidia, Perdiccas moved to Cilicia. While he was on the way, a daughter of Antipater, Nicaea, came to marry him; for Perdiccas had asked Antipater to confirm their friendship by this marriage”<sup>103</sup>.

With this in mind, Antipater’s reliance on marriages for alliances must be reiterated. In the short period following the death of Alexander, there are three relevant marriages to Perdiccas, Leonnatus and Craterus all of which involved Antipater.

### **2.5.3: The death of Antipater**

During the period following the death of Alexander, Antipater was certainly the most sincere in his maintaining of the dynasty. Errington notes the importance that both Antipater and Craterus placed on the European and Asian division in the imperial structure that was grounded in a shared Macedonian ideology<sup>104</sup>.

In the cutthroat period of the war of the Successors, Antipater’s unwavering loyalty to the Argead house and lack of ambitions to succeed Alexander made him appear weak in his old age<sup>105</sup>. Antipater took over from Perdiccas as guardian of the young kings in Macedonia with Antigonus taking over parts of Asia following new negotiations at Triparadeisos in Syria<sup>106</sup>. Babylonia was assigned to Seleucus with Ptolemy retaining Egypt. The foundations of the Diadochi period were established in Triparadeisos. Antipater passed away in 319 BCE but the prestige that he had, (considering that he had served at both Alexander and Philip), was visible and unquestionable. Errington states,

“...for no other living Macedonian enjoyed the prestige and authority of the seventy-nine-year-old Antipater, who had been one of Philip’s right hand men throughout the years of struggle for supremacy in Greece and governed Europe while Alexander was conquering Asia. In Macedonia personal prestige and charisma were at least as important as any formal position. But personal prestige was non-transferrable and died with its bearer; it was

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<sup>102</sup> *Ibid* 1988: 118.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid* 1988: 118.

<sup>104</sup> Errington 2008: 21.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid* 2008: 21.

<sup>106</sup> Shipley 2000: 42.

potentially revivable only as historical memory, but even then only within the family of its creator.”<sup>107</sup>

There is not enough evidence to conclude that Antipater himself would have harboured any intentions to eventually usurp the throne. Polyperchon rather than Antipater’s own son Cassander was chosen as his successor, there was a subsequent quarrel over this selection which would result in a civil war<sup>108</sup>. So the ideals of Antipater began to gradually wither following his death at the hands of Polyperchon.

Whilst he was alive, in Antipater’s eyes, it was Polyperchon who could continue his legacy of loyalty to the Argead house<sup>109</sup>. Polyperchon was rejected by the Diadochi primarily based on his abilities, although it could be speculated that lack of adherence to proper succession custom would have also played a part in the hostility towards him. Antigonos sided with Antipater’s son Cassander against Antipater’s chosen successor Polyperchon, and this decision would symbolise a more drastic change in the mindsets of the main Diadochi<sup>110</sup>. Following the formation of the coalition consisting of Antigonos, Cassander, Ptolemy and Seleucus against Polyperchon, there would be more overt moves towards claiming the throne. An era of finance and mercenaries would subsequently follow, alongside escalating murders and betrayals.

## **2.6. Antigonos**

Following the fall of Perdikkas in 320 BC, the more prominent Hellenistic dynasties begin to take shape, with Ptolemy, Antigonos & Seleucus all appearing in the victorious coalition. Cassander and Polyperchon were also present on behalf of Antipater however their appearance is tainted by the sudden civil conflict between them. This civil conflict soon spilled over into the coalition who had to choose sides between the chosen successor in Macedonia and Greece, Polyperchon and his disgruntled son Cassander.

Antigonos had thus begun his own understanding with Cassander. The partnership seemed to be mutually beneficial as Cassander would utilise Antigonos’ assistance in Europe. Errington refers to this when stating,

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<sup>107</sup> Errington 2008: 21.

<sup>108</sup> *ibid* 2008: 23.

<sup>109</sup> Errington 2008: 22.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid* 2008: 23.

“Antipater’s death and Kassander’s ambitious dissatisfaction thus brought about a struggle for control of the old Greek cities in the Balkans, which in due course turned into a competition for their hearts and minds and dragged them into centre-stage in the power struggle emerging among the Macedonian warlords.”<sup>111</sup>

The main situation in Europe following the death of Antipater was the conflict between his successor and son, whilst Antigonos would quietly attempt to gain full control of the Asian region<sup>112</sup>.

Billows notes how Antigonos outlived Philip by thirty-five years and was only able to realise his potential for the throne much later on, after the death of Alexander and subsequent wars of the Diadochi<sup>113</sup>. In terms of legitimacy on the first tier, Antigonos’ close link to Philip II was, as it were, a link to the Macedonian royal family. Cassander on the other hand was the son of Antipater, who had his quarrels with Olympias but was held in high regard by members of the Successors. This meant that their sense of loyalty to Cassander would trump any allegiance to his foe Polyperchon.

### **2.6.1. Polyperchon**

Polyperchon was the opponent to the partnership of Antigonos and Cassander. In order to strengthen the legitimacy of his position as regent, Polyperchon took various steps to ensure that he did not allow a disgruntled Cassander to usurp him. According to Errington, Polyperchon attempted to gain the support of the Greek democracies by issuing a decree restoring all constitutions valid in the period before the Lamian War. This decree would also restore all exiles driven out by Antipater<sup>114</sup>. It is clear that Polyperchon had begun to abandon the ways of Antipater and this would only add fuel to the general dissatisfaction with him. Polyperchon would himself need to look to finance as way to secure strength in the face of opposition, another instance of abandoning the methods of Antipater. Errington states,

“Yet he was dependent on the southern Greek cities for income and manpower, since he could expect nothing more from Asia, now that Antigonos was openly supporting Kassander - in

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<sup>111</sup> Errington 2008: 23.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid 2008: 23.

<sup>113</sup> Billows 1990: 1.

<sup>114</sup> Errington 2008: 24.

318 Antigonos stopped four ships at Ephesos that were carrying 600 talents (about 20 metric tons) of silver bound for Pella, thus proving the point. Polyperchon therefore desperately needed to control Greece...<sup>115</sup>

In order to gain control of the situation and consolidate, Polyperchon felt he needed to undo all the work of Antipater. He would also begin to emphasize his formal role of guardian of the Argead house. The more Polyperchon did to attempt to consolidate control, the more any hopes of reconciliation with the friends and family of Antipater diminished. The reintroduction of Olympias by Polyperchon was an act of desperation. Bearing in mind the animosity between Olympias and Antipater, the re-introduction of the former is another example of Polyperchon turning his back on the policies of Antipater.

Polyperchon and his attempt to emphasize his formal role began to cross over towards Asia. In his efforts to gain the Asian region he rehabilitated Eumenes, as he could not afford to send men out to Asia to deal with Antigonos and his mercenaries<sup>116</sup>. As with Perdiccas, Eumenes became an ally of the regent once again, even though a Macedonian assembly had condemned Eumenes to death in 320 BCE for the murder of Craterus<sup>117</sup>. The evidence of Polyperchon and his inability, or lack of desire, to preserve the legacy of Antipater would certainly have added fuel to the claim of Cassander that Polyperchon was incapable of being regent. One gains the impression that Eumenes was to be Polyperchon way of keeping Antigonos busy: as he was perceived as not being a threat by Polyperchon, in the very volatile period of betrayals.

At first, Eumenes was able to hold his own in Iran and managed to hold Antigonos long enough for Polyperchon to focus on the re-introduction of Olympias and the resolution of the Cassander issue. The appeal of Polyperchon to Olympias proved one of the few correct moves of his regime. Led by his wife Eurydice, Philip Arrhidaeus began to turn towards Cassander. Eurydice suspecting that they would be compromised by the sudden resurgence of Olympias, began to raise troops to confront Polyperchon and Aiakides in the mountains<sup>118</sup>. The raised troops refused to fight against Alexander's blood mother and her child, and after

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<sup>115</sup> Ibid 2008: 23.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid 2008: 25.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid 2008: 25.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid 2008: 27.

being captured and mistreated by Olympias, Eurydice and Philip III were murdered in 317, thus solving the problem of double kingship<sup>119 120</sup>.

### **2.6.2: The fall of Antigonos**

In Iran Antigonos and Eumenes continued their fight until Eumenes was finally defeated in 316/5 BCE<sup>121</sup>. Following the fall of Eumenes, Antigonos continued strengthening on both the financial and military fronts. As a result of this, the army of Antigonos went from strength to strength and the incorporation of other satrapies into the Antigonoid Empire became a matter of “when” rather than “if”. Antigonos’ claim to represent the central government in Asia was most likely fuelled by the perception of him in Persia and the reception he received after his victory in Iran against Eumenes.

Hammond and Walbank state, “When the victorious Antigonos entered Persia, he was held worthy of ‘royal statuses by the Persians’<sup>122</sup>. Antigonos began to declare himself ‘Lord of Asia’ and was accepted as such by the Persians who recognized his desire to emulate Alexander and greeted him with royal honours<sup>123</sup>. In his cutthroat efforts to consolidate Antigonos identified three immediate threats in the form of officers who had earned higher distinctions in the lifetime of Alexander, namely Pithon, Peucestes and Seleucus. Pithon was executed whilst Peucestes was expelled from his satrapy. Seleucus, despite paying royal honours, left while he was still able and fled to Ptolemy<sup>124</sup>.

The reign of Antigonos marks a transition of ideals. Entitlement, finance and commerce above loyalty to the Argead house became the order of the day. The reign of Antigonos embodied an era of finance over loyalty in the pursuit of legitimacy. It certainly appears that he required money in order to consolidate the loyalty of his troops. Antigonos was among the more provocative of the Diadochi, as he looked to gain complete power over Alexander’s empire in a covert and cunning manner. His reign would be ended by Seleucus who eventually defeated him at Ipsus in 301 BCE<sup>125</sup>.

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<sup>119</sup> Diodorus XIX. 11ff.

<sup>120</sup> Errington 2008: 27.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid 2008: 28.

<sup>122</sup> Hammond and Walbank 1988: 144.

<sup>123</sup> Hammond and Walbank 2008: 147.

<sup>124</sup> Errington 2008: 29.

<sup>125</sup> Gmirkin 2006: 155.

## **2.7. Chapter 2: summary and conclusion**

This chapter began with the contextualising of the Macedonian model of governance, utilising Aristotle's account of the heroic form of monarchy. There is a need to make this distinction in order to understand the motives behind the wars of the Successors. It will be noted that a major cause of the wars of the Successors was the fact that Alexander did not leave behind a suitable heir to replace him at the time of his death.

Perdiccas made the first to attempt to perform the role of the heroic regent and in the process violated the sanctity of dynastic marriage, which led ultimately to his downfall. Antipater had no real desire for the throne due to his age. He embodied the assimilatory aspect of Macedonia through his dynastic marriages, but ultimately his decision to snub his heir apparent Cassander in favour of Polyperchon was not met with enthusiasm by the Diadochi. This is implied through their favour towards Cassander, and thus Polyperchon too is an example of an individual who fails to attain legitimacy. The third attempt is made by Antigonos, who takes a militaristic approach to attaining legitimacy. It is his disregard for Macedonian togetherness following the demise of Alexander and his subsequent hostile campaigns that led to his failure to attain legitimacy.

This chapter's main focus has been to illustrate the second tier of legitimacy. The demise of Perdiccas, Polyperchon and Antigonos came about as a result of their inability to adhere to Macedonian customs and beliefs. Antipater serves as an advocate of dynastic marriage but is indirectly involved in the demise of Polyperchon by snubbing his heir apparent Cassander. The narrative of the Diadochi has thus been utilised as evidence as to why these members did not attain legitimacy as rulers after the death of Alexander.

## Chapter 3

As our primary method of measuring Ptolemy success in attainment of legitimacy I have so far introduced three specific tiers. It has been established that the first tier of legitimacy can be understood to be founded on the basis of having familial ties with Macedonian royal bloodline. The mythological narrative of the Argeads was considered in conjunction with the narratives of Philip II and Alexander III. Connection with these two prominent figures is the basis of legitimacy for the Diadochi. In the case of Alexander, his emphasis on the mythical portion of his heritage is then emulated by way of enhancing his divine perception to followers and subjects alike.

In the absence of clear links to the royal bloodline the members of the Diadochi are tasked with fulfilling the second tier of legitimacy. This was adherence to local and foreign customs. The narrative presented of the wars of the Successors was meant to illustrate how this tier was violated and the subsequent consequences. The third chapter will introduce Ptolemy I and examine how he fares with the second tier of legitimacy. The narrative of Ptolemy will be presented including the episode of Alexander's burial and the Antigonos saga. The wars of the Diadochi will then be concluded. The second portion of this chapter will touch on Egypt and the importance of Alexandria for the Ptolemaic dynasty. Notions of Ptolemaic Egypt and the administrative as well as religious foundations will be introduced, leading to the fourth chapter which will focus on the Hellenistic ruler cult.

### 3.1.1 Ptolemy I

Ptolemy's most provocative move in the war of the Successors came during the Perdiccas' regency. The actions of Ptolemy around the period of the outbreak of the civil war can be described as destructive to the regent role of Perdiccas. Hammond and Walbank state,

“Another disruptive figure was Ptolemy, satrap of Egypt, who had strengthened his own position by seizing the treasure amassed by Alexander's unscrupulous financial officer, Cleomenes, and by annexing Cyrenaica to his satrapy late in 322.”<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Hammond and Walbank 1988: 190.



Ptolemy made a nuisance of himself to Perdiccas. He is at the forefront of the headaches which Perdiccas endured in his uninspiring and short regime. The coalitions formed during the period of the war of the Successors were essential to the eventual landscape of the successful dynasties among the Diadochi. As has already been stated, the coalition formed shortly after Antipater turned on Perdiccas, which included Ptolemy, Craterus and Antipater, together with Antigonos, played a fundamental role in the demise of Perdiccas. It must be noted that Antipater's method of assimilation by marriage (which he attempted with Perdiccas among others) and his

subsequent betrayal by Perdiccas led to Antipater's change of heart. There was a domino effect based on this, which ultimately led to a more favourable outcome for Ptolemy. On appraisal there was certainly a strengthening of the bond between Ptolemy and Antipater. As Hammond and Walbank state,

“Ptolemy was on excellent terms with Antipater, whose daughter Eurydice he had married; and it was natural for Antipater and Craterus to seek and obtain a promise of assistance from Ptolemy in their intended campaign against Perdiccas.”<sup>127</sup>

### 3.1.2. Alexander's burial

Elements of myth and divinity would certainly have attached to the prestige that the body of Alexander held. This combined with the gesture of burying the king served as symbolic capital for the legitimacy that each Diadochi member would have looked to attain. The event of Ptolemy seizing the embalmed body of Alexander happened in the Syria region around 321/2 BCE.

In his account of the seizing of the body of Alexander, Diodorus states,

“Ptolemy, moreover, doing honour to Alexander, went to meet it with an army as far as Syria, and, receiving the body, deemed it worthy of the greatest consideration. He decided for the

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<sup>127</sup> Ibid 1988: 120.

present not to send it to Ammon, but to entomb it in the city that had been founded by Alexander himself, which lacked little of being the most renowned of the cities of the inhabitant earth.”<sup>128</sup>

Ptolemy was in the middle of a campaign of his own against the regent Perdiccas. The infamous episode with Alexander’s body became a cause of tensions between Perdiccas and Ptolemy. The burial saga was a battle of symbolic proportions due to the prestige at stake concerning the kingdom that would host the body of Alexander.

The first tier of legitimacy and the symbolically close link to royal bloodline that hosting the body entailed meant that the one in possession of the body would ultimately be in a better position to found a sustainable kingdom based on the perceptions of the Macedonians.

The second tier of legitimacy, adhering to customs, meant that Perdiccas truly had a dilemma on his hands. Custom dictated that the body of any Macedonian king be buried in Aigai in Macedonia. If this had been decided upon as a course of action, Antipater stood to gain a lot of prestige over and above his veteran status<sup>129</sup>. Likewise with Ptolemy, and more so for Ptolemy, as he would have needed such an opportunity in his quest to establish his dynasty in Egypt where Pharaohs functioned as divine figures alongside their administrative role of a king<sup>130</sup>. This was the basis of the ruler cults’ oriental influence, which Ptolemy would have needed to establish the neglected third tier of legitimacy, by establishing cults in foreign territories. Hammond and Walbank refer to a divine element in the context of Alexander’s tomb, stating:

“Meanwhile Ptolemy managed to gain possession of the corpse of Alexander, which, it was commonly believed, had magical powers and would bring success to the country in which it lay, like the corpse of Oedipus.”<sup>131</sup>

Errington states,

“Perdikkas underestimated the man. Before Perdikkas had decided what to do with Alexander’s body, Ptolemy was in touch with Arrhidaios, the Macedonian officer charged

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<sup>128</sup> Diodorus XVIII. 28. 2-29ff.

<sup>129</sup> Errington 2008: 15.

<sup>130</sup> *ibid* 2008: 15.

<sup>131</sup> Hammond and Walbank 1988: 120.

with building the carriage for the cortege; and when Arrhidaios and the embalmed Alexander reached Syria, Ptolemaic troops met him by arrangement to escort the procession to Egypt (though Ptolemy was pragmatic enough not to bury his charismatic asset in a remote oasis: Memphis, the old pharaonic capital of lower Egypt from where he currently ruled, was Alexander's first resting place."<sup>132</sup>

The implied bribery that occurred would certainly make a case for the moral standing of Perdikkas as contrasted with Ptolemy. Arrhidaios agreeing to allow Ptolemy to escort the body of Alexander would however have favourable implications for the charismatic and leadership qualities of Ptolemy. In terms of legitimacy, one can look to this as one of the many instances of Ptolemy utilising brain rather than brawn to further the interests of his kingdom. The event delegitimized Perdikkas and legitimated Ptolemy's position.

Even more impressive was the method in which Ptolemy was able to seize the embalmed Alexander. Errington states, "*In order to achieve this coup, Ptolemy's forces had to repulse units of Perdikkas' 'royal army' that the regent had sent to prevent just this from happening*"<sup>133</sup>. These actions were a clear signal of intent on the part of Ptolemy and thus the rivalry between the two would begin. Perdikkas was far from pleased about the seizing of the tomb of Alexander according to Diodorus<sup>134</sup>. He needed Ptolemy to be punished in order to save face as regent of Alexander's kingdom. In an effort to consolidate his own position, Perdikkas (without negotiating) sent Eumenes to Cleopatra stating that he had decided to send Nicaea away and would like to take the hand of Cleopatra in marriage, (as discussed in the second chapter)<sup>135</sup>.

This was the catalyst for the downfall of Perdikkas, as Antipater was notified of this by Antigonos. At this point, the news of Perdikkas' dynastic marriage was merely an allegation, however, by time war broke out in 321/320 BC it was a reality. The actions of Perdikkas following this would signal the inefficiency of his regime. His actions would only add further suspicion and work in favour of his biggest foe, Ptolemy. Ptolemy did not have to do much to upstage him as Perdikkas acted impulsively, as contrasted with Ptolemy and his calculated seizure of the embalmed Alexander. The marriage of Philip III to Adea (later Eurydike) is

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<sup>132</sup> Errington 2008: 18.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid 2008: 18.

<sup>134</sup> Diodorus XVIII. 26-8.

<sup>135</sup> Hammond and Walbank 1988: 121.

evidence of Perdikkas' inefficiency and his inability to utilise forethought in handling the empire of which he was regent. Errington states,

“...where king Philip Arrhidaios took a wife, Adea, of whom Perdikkas disapproved so violently that he arranged the murder of her mother, whose idea the whole thing was, this was no mere domestic tragedy, since the murdered mother of the bride was Kynnane, daughter of Philip II and so half-sister of Alexander and of Kleopatra; Adea herself was therefore a grandchild of the great Philip II.”<sup>136</sup>

Perdikkas sense of entitlement reared its head in this instance as his ulterior motives are shown. The acts of Perdikkas depict a regent who acts on impulse without the forethought of acknowledging the lines of lineage and the implications of killing for killing's sake.

Legitimacy required respect for lineage and adherence to the customs of the royal Argead house. It was rendered impossible by committing an act of violence against the very family who had led the Macedonians to prominence.

Ptolemy's seizure of the tomb had massive implications for the war of the Successors and may very well have been one of the most important moves for the Ptolemaic dynasty. So huge were the implications of the interception of the embalmed Alexander that the rivalry of Perdikkas and Ptolemy could only escalate after this. In this rivalry it was clear that the only resolution was dependent on one of these Successors eliminating the other. During the period of the civil war, when deciding which of the satrapies the royal army would go to first, it was decided that Ptolemy in Egypt was the first<sup>137</sup>. This decision would surely have pointed not only to increased tensions between Ptolemy and Perdikkas but also the powerful position that Ptolemy had put himself in by seizing Alexander's body.

The other members of the Diadochi also recognised his position of power, as Ptolemy subsequently became the alternative to the regent Perdikkas when a coalition opposing him was duly formed for the civil war. The coalition of Antigonos, Antipater, Craterus and Ptolemy would go up against Perdikkas and Eumenes. In this instance, Ptolemy was beginning to show early shape in his quest to be seen as a charismatic leader, it however would be too early to tell whether he was the ideal leader to succeed Alexander and lead his empire.

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<sup>136</sup> Errington 2008: 19.

<sup>137</sup> Hammond Walbank 1988: 121.

It was in this period, before the coalition would bore any fruit however, that Ptolemy was summoned before the Macedonian royal court. Hammond and Walbank states,

“Meanwhile Perdiccas was on his way from Damascus towards Egypt. No doubt in the name of the kings, he had ordered Ptolemy to present himself at the frontier of his satrapy; and it was probably there that Ptolemy, being tried before the Assembly of the Macedonians of the King’s army, was acquitted of ‘the charges’. Moreover, the verdict was an indication that the majority did not want to fight a civil war against Ptolemy and they would prefer a negotiated settlement”.<sup>138</sup>

This is a further illustration of Ptolemy’s leadership qualities, recognition of which would manifest itself in the forming of the four-man coalition. The coalition was successful, with the death of Perdiccas coming in 320 BCE. This success however came with the loss of Craterus, who was killed by Eumenes whilst defending Bithynia<sup>139</sup>. The implications of the body of Alexander being in Egypt meant much more for Ptolemy than the events that led to Perdiccas’ downfall imply. This is an instance of a move that was sustainable in preserving the legitimacy which the more ambitious members of the Diadochi would fail to recognise.

In this instance Ptolemy was able to address the first tier of legitimacy alongside the second and third tier of legitimacy, as the body of Alexander would find itself in Egypt. Hammond and Walbank state,

“The members of the royal house, whether dead or alive, played a most important role. Their presence alone made a form of rule legitimate. Thus the possession of Alexander’s corpse and the institution of a cult of Alexander’s corpse land the institution of a cult of Alexander ‘with heroic honours’ at Alexandria endowed Ptolemy’s government of Egypt with a special aura of authority”.<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> *Ibid* 1988: 121.

<sup>139</sup> Errington 2008: 19.

<sup>140</sup> Hammond and Walbank 1988: 123.

### 3.1.3. The Antigonos saga

Following the revolt against Perdiccas and his subsequent fall, the War of the Successors would see, over the next decade, the triumvirate coalition slowly crumble. Antipater died shortly afterwards, leaving a disgruntled son and an uncreative successor in the form of Polyperchon. Antigonos continued with his runaway regime in Asia following the events of the war, eventually gaining military and financial strength so great that it could no longer be kept discreet. It is not surprising to note that Ptolemy was called upon to provide a solution based on the positive perceptions held of him by coalition members and soldiers alike.

There are various early instances in which the charisma of Ptolemy and his leadership qualities come to light. These are mainly instances in which members of the formed coalition seek both refuge and assistance from Ptolemy. In the instance of the news that Antipater received from Antigonos concerning his discarded daughter Nicaea, it is Ptolemy who is sent for and thus friendly co-operation between Antipater, Craterus, Antigonos and Ptolemy is established<sup>141</sup>.

A similar occurrence took place in the longer civil disagreement between Antigonos and Seleucus. Seleucus is the one who reports the intentions of Antigonos to win all of Alexander's empire after fleeing Babylon, and he reports these intentions to Ptolemy<sup>142</sup>. In times of uncertainty and impending war, members of the Diadochi would seek out Ptolemy for a solution; such was the respect that he had attained along the way. This speaks directly to the notion of a charismatic leader, as one who was seen to figuratively possess magical powers or abilities. Ptolemy being popular or sympathetic should not outweigh his own motives when he chooses to assist those who come to him for help, as on the surface they may appear as allies but on a deeper level, those who gain help from him are in his debt.

During the war it was Ptolemy who was able to focus his energies on consolidation. He subsequently administered a witch hunt for allies of the renegade regime of Antigonos. The previous post-war negotiations in 311 BCE, before the events of the civil war, led to Ptolemy not accepting the terms concerning definitions of "All Asia". Ptolemy subsequently entered a period of actively provoking Antigonos. As Errington states,

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<sup>141</sup> Errington 2008: 19.

<sup>142</sup> Hammond and Walbank 1988: 147.

“The peace terms were thus unsatisfactory for Ptolemy, and while Antigonos was bogged down in his losing war in southern Mesopotamia against Seleukos, Ptolemy seized his chance to change the situation in southern Asia Minor to his advantage by attacking the coastal cities in Rough Kilikia opposite Cyprus with his fleet – he claimed to be freeing them from Antigonos’ “illegal” garrisons”.<sup>143</sup>

The circumstances surrounding the murder of Cleopatra serve as evidence for Ptolemy’s desire to succeed Alexander. The murder is of fundamental importance in identifying the notion of dominance of the whole, i.e. Europe and Asia. Ptolemy and his motives to succeed are emphasised by this particular attempt he made to dominate the whole by way of connection to Cleopatra. In reference to the murder of Cleopatra, Hammond and Walbank state,

“Cleopatra must have feared for the safety of Alexander IV and looked for an ally. She chose Ptolemy, whose fleet held the seas, and her hope may have been to land in Macedonia. Ptolemy had his own plans. He had seen Polyperchon nearly succeed, and he knew that the killing of Heracles had alienated many of Cassander’s supporters in Macedonia. He was always persona grata with Macedonian soldiers and was the guardian of Alexander’s tomb. Now was his chance to gain ‘the following of the Macedonians’. They had shown themselves aware of the rights of Alexander IV, Eurydice, Olympias and recently Heracles. Now they would support Cleopatra. If he and Cleopatra could take over Alexander IV and Macedonia, and if his fleet ruled the eastern Mediterranean, he would be in a powerful position, But he could do so only if he had Cleopatra with him and if he gained the co-operation of a number of Greek states.”<sup>144</sup>

Diodorus refers to the incident and describes how Cleopatra failed to escape<sup>145</sup>. She was subsequently murdered by the guards of Antigonos. Ptolemy would after this go on to take over Corinth, Sicyon and even remove a garrison of Cassander’s men from Andros<sup>146</sup>.

The instances of Ptolemy being presented as a solution to issues concerning Macedonian civil conflict would certainly speak to the question of how he intended to be perceived by others. Throughout his affairs in the war of the Successors, he generally presented himself as a liberator or saviour and not an ordinary member of the Diadochi. This was followed by action

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<sup>143</sup> Errington 2008: 40.

<sup>144</sup> Hammond and Walbank 1988: 169.

<sup>145</sup> Diodorus XX. 37.

<sup>146</sup> Hammond and Walbank 1988: 170.

that supplemented the propaganda, which Ptolemy more often than not would duly prove to be true. Scholars are still puzzled regarding the events of this period, with Ptolemy's interest in the Aegean and Greek regions being of most interest. Errington speculates that his reasoning was based on the (at the time) ongoing duel between Antigonus and Seleucus and on beginning preparations to prevent Antigonus from returning to the fray<sup>147</sup>. Ptolemy had a larger than life aura on the military front, with many Diadochi members choosing to avoid outright war with the Ptolemaic regime wherever possible. The incident with his trial under the regime of Perdiccas and his subsequent acquittal would come to mind as evidence. Cassander under similar circumstances would also take the same route; hence the activities of Ptolemy were not seen as a direct challenge to Cassander. Errington states,

“His brief adventure into the Peloponnese certainly cannot be seen as a serious challenge to Cassander, who in the end simply accepted his minimal role there, and the lack of a long term perspective emerges clearly from his immediate withdrawal, as soon as the going became difficult.”<sup>148</sup>

There is a certain aura of respect towards Ptolemy that arises out of these instances of avoiding war with Ptolemy and his troops in battle. Ptolemy learnt from the mistakes of Perdiccas and Polyperchon who both placed their own motives above the needs of the Macedonians (in some instances above the royal bloodline) by way of imposition. Ptolemy being seen in the light of a saviour would certainly mean that the swaying of decisions could be done accomplished by diplomatic methods before escalating to the physicality of war. Green states,

“The day after Perdiccas's murder, Ptolemy (who may have well have been privy to the plot from the beginning) came over, provided the hungry Macedonians with fresh supplies, and in return was offered Perdiccas's position as guardian of the kingdom”.<sup>149</sup>

This instance again shows the high regard that Ptolemy was held in and also highlights another pillar of leadership that Ptolemy had, in the form of his assessing of situations and providing quick solutions. He would decline the position of regent in this instance (it would

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<sup>147</sup> Errington 2008: 42.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid 2008: 42.

<sup>149</sup> Green 1990: 14.

eventually go to Antipater), possibly due to the logistics of moving from an ideal position in Egypt to a vulnerable one in Macedonia (however this would purely be speculation). Ptolemy had the presence of mind to decline the regency. The foundations of the Ptolemaic dynasty were well calculated; it is of no real surprise that Ptolemy acquired the most stable of the kingdoms in the form of Egypt. As the only kingdom that had a single power source for the entire duration of the war of the Successors, this adds fuel to the notion that Ptolemy came out best after the events at Ipsus in 301 BC.

#### **3.1.4. Concluding the Diadochi wars**

The Macedonian royal bloodline, and especially the sons of Alexander the Great, were used as political leverage in various instances to prevent or allow a crossing over from West to East or vice versa. The runaway regime of Antigonos, which after defeating Eumenes and excluding Seleucus began to make strides towards Europe, could only be legitimized by Alexander IV, with whom Antigonos had a treaty of friendship<sup>150</sup>. Alexander IV and his mother Roxanne were subsequently killed by Cassander to prevent the dominance of the “whole” by Antigonos from happening.

It will be once again restated that Cleopatra’s and Ptolemy’s partnership would have served as the method of entry for Ptolemy into Europe had it not been for her murder as orchestrated by Antigonos<sup>151</sup>. With the death of Cleopatra at the hands of Antigonos in 310/9 BCE, Antigonos stifled Ptolemy. Ptolemy was not the outright winner of the wars but certainly found himself in the best position after them by acting both wisely and firmly. The notion of dominating “the whole” would have meant being in control of both Asia and Europe. The Successor who was able to do this would have required an outright victory, hence the motives behind the killings of members of the Macedonian royal bloodline.

It is here that I conclude the events of the war of the Diadochi and begin to look at post-war events, particularly in Egypt. As this dissertation is based on Ptolemy I and his alternative method of attaining legitimacy(if any), it is best to locate the Ptolemaic dynasty within the confines of Egypt and to see how they went about utilising the very useful foundations set by Alexander III particularly in the city that he founded, Alexandria. The concept of Graeco-Egyptian syncretism will also be addressed in contextualising the mythical elements of Ptolemaic rule.

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<sup>150</sup> Hammond and Walbank 1988: 148.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid 1988: 168.

### 3.2.1. Egypt

Diodorus recounts the Egyptian version of how the land came to be. In his *Library of the Histories*, he begins,

“... And since Egypt is the country where mythology places the origins of the gods, where the earliest observations of the stars are said to have been made, and where, furthermore, many note-worthy deeds of great men are recorded, we shall begin our history with the events connected with Egypt. Now the Egyptians have an account like this: When in the beginning the universe came into being, men first came into existence in Egypt, both because of the favourable climate of the land and because of the nature of the Nile. For this stream, since it produces much life and provides a spontaneous supply of food, easily supports whatever living things have been endangered; for both the root of the reed and the lotus, as well as the Egyptian bean and *corsaeum*, as it is called, and many other similar plants, supply the human race of men with nourishment all ready for use.”<sup>152</sup>

The land of Egypt in itself is shrouded in beliefs that incorporated elements of mysticism even in matters of the description of the land. Diodorus’ account claims that, according to the Egyptians, the land of Egypt is where life began. The notion of gods and men originating from Egypt is fundamental to the foundations of Egyptian mysticism and the formation of cults. In the context of the ruler cult, the sacred undertones of the land could themselves be utilised as a possible source of legitimacy to those who controlled it. Diodorus continues to describe Egypt, making sure to make particular reference to the nature of the soil, stating,

“As proof that animal life appeared first of all in their land they would offer the fact that even at the present day the soil of the Thebaid at certain times generates mice in such numbers and of such size as to astonish all who have witnessed the phenomenon; for some of them are fully formed as far as the breast and feet and are able to move, while the rest of the body is informed, the clod of the earth still retaining its natural character. And from this fact it is manifest that, when the world was taking shape, the land of Egypt could better than any other have been the place where mankind came into being because of the well-tempered nature of

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<sup>152</sup> Diodorus I. 9. 6-10.

the its soil; for even at the present time, while the soil of no other country generates any such things, in it alone living creatures may be seen coming into being in a marvellous fashion.”<sup>153</sup>

The Egyptian region occupied an area not dissimilar to that of the modern state and is said to have extended 1,000 kilometres from north to south. The main area would have been upper and middle Egypt which consisted of the Nile Valley. The fertile strip was 10-20 kilometres wide. At the northern end the channels of the river Nile expand to form the Delta, 200 kilometres across at the coast, which links Egypt to the Mediterranean region<sup>154</sup>. Shipley states that the area between the Nile and the Red Sea consisted of barren hill-land that would rise 2,000 metres above sea level during flooding<sup>155</sup>. The desert regions to the West of the Nile Valley were relieved only by the oases which were occasional. The largest oases were known as el-Bahriya and el-Kharga (Northern and Southern / Small and Great).

Before the establishment of Alexandria as the capital, Memphis was the capital and was considered the home of the Pharaohs<sup>156</sup>. Egypt was rich in natural resources and would have been an attraction for foreign takeover, as the Assyrians, Persians and Macedonians could testify. On the matter of resources alone, one notes the potential that Egypt had. The defeat of Perdicas and Antigonos during their invasions of Egypt could be attributed to the natural conditions of the country. The Ptolemaic regime simply worked with what they had to inhabit the most impregnable of all the governed kingdoms. It is therefore no surprise that Ptolemy I would have wanted to take control of Egypt during the very first division of the spoils. Alexander had left Ptolemy a very favourable piece of land to work with. All the more favourable was what Alexander had established in what was to be the new capital of the Greek world, Alexandria.

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<sup>153</sup> Ibid I. 9. 6-10.

<sup>154</sup> Shipley 2000: 192.

<sup>155</sup> Shipley 2000: 194.

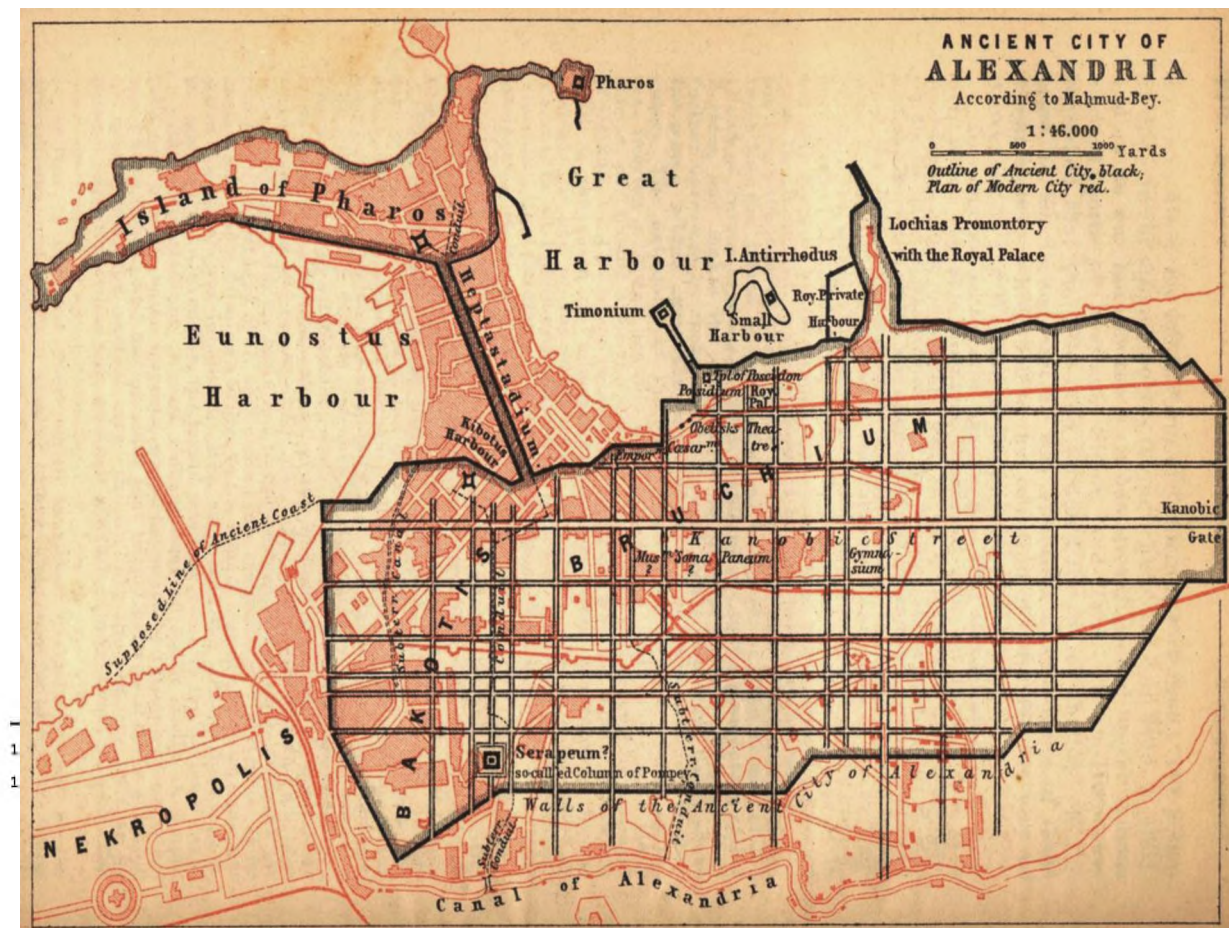
<sup>156</sup> Errington 2008: 18; Shipley 2000: 194.

### 3.2.2. Alexandria

In the *Anabasis*, Arrian gives a historical account of the founding of Alexandria by Alexander the Great stating,

“Alexander introduced a garrison into Pelusium, and ordering the men in the ships to sail up the river as far as the city of Memphis, he went in person towards Heliopolis, having the river Nile on his right. He reached that city through the desert, after getting possession of all the places on the march through the voluntary surrender of the inhabitants. Thence he crossed the stream and came to Memphis; where he offered sacrifice to Apis and the other gods, and celebrated a gymnastic and musical contest, the most distinguished artist’s in these matters coming to him from Greece. From Memphis he sailed down the river towards the sea, embarking the shield-bearing guards, the archers, the Agrianians, and of the cavalry the royal squadron of the Companions. Coming to Canopus, he sailed around the Marian lake, and disembarked where now is situated the city of Alexandria, which takes its name from him. The position seemed to him a very fine one in which to found a city, and he foresaw that it would become a prosperous one”<sup>157</sup>

Alexander marked out the main parts of the city himself, the location of the agora, how many sanctuaries there should be and of which gods, those of Greek gods and of Egyptian Isis, and the course of the city-wall. He offered sacrifice over the plan, and the omens appeared favourable.<sup>158</sup>



The foundation of Alexandria was rooted in the methods of Philip II, who believed in the founding of cities in the regions where there was little or no independent local governmental systems existing at time of conquest<sup>159</sup>. Ehrenburg states that Alexandria was founded on the Macedonian understanding of old and newly founded cities being an essential feature of Greek life<sup>160</sup>. The system was meant to bind the citizens to the conquerors. When Philip II was in the process of extending Macedonian territories towards the East in the regions of Chalcidice and Thrace, he would implement the foundation of new cities to assimilate the peoples he conquered<sup>161</sup>. Philip began to actively attempt to imitate the southern Greeks and settle men into self-governing urban settlements responsible for their own governance. The self-named 'Philippoi' and later 'Philippopolis' came about as a result of this and the foundation of cities became a means by which the ruler could heighten their name.

Alexandria is described by Shipley as being the new capital of Egypt that was laid out on a grid plan by Pergamum, a planner commissioned by Alexander III<sup>162</sup>. There were areas reserved for buildings. The public buildings were grouped in successive locations, on different terraces mounting up to the acropolis. Each terrace would hold a group of monuments that could be described as imposing and formed an architectural unity. In his descriptions Shipley notes how one could navigate from the grand lower agora to the gymnasium complex, followed by a sanctuary of Demeter and a second agora which had the altar to Zeus built by Eumenes II<sup>163</sup>.

### **3.3.1. The Ptolemaic dynasty**

Alongside the Antigonoid dynasty and the Seleucid dynasty, the Ptolemaic dynasty is one that survives until the coming of the Romans. It is vital to show the assimilation of the Hellenistic world into Egypt represented a case of Ptolemy looking to attaining a brand of legitimacy that would allow him to achieve a level of political stability in Egypt with regards to the stabilizing of the natives.

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<sup>159</sup> Errington 2008: 69.

<sup>160</sup> Ehrenburg 1974: 81.

<sup>161</sup> Errington 2008: 68.

<sup>162</sup> Shipley 2000: 92.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid 2000: 92.

The unique character of the Macedonians is emphasised by the approaches of kings and generals alike in coming up with their own unique innovations that they felt would adequately retain their individual interests alongside any ambitions which they had for the Macedonian empire.

The dynasty of Ptolemy placed an emphasis on primarily supplementing tradition with individual identity, thus forming a new identity that addressed both the interests of the Argead house and the formation of the new Ptolemaic dynasty. In the events following the death of Alexander, it was vital for Ptolemy to establish his regime in Egypt and to address the notion of the Macedonian in foreign terrain. As Errington states,

“The Macedonians’ attitude to Egypt was conditioned above all by the precedent of Alexander, who had learned in Asia Minor and Syria how unpopular in general Persian rule was and therefore had tried, with some initial successes, to present the Macedonians as freedom bringers.”<sup>164</sup>

The relationship between Alexander III and Ptolemy I was fundamental in understanding the foundations of the Ptolemaic dynasty, as Ptolemy was able to use this relationship to his advantage. Ptolemy was one of a group of close friends, who were brought up and educated with Alexander, of this group included Hephaestion. It was Ptolemy who was exiled by Philip in 337/6 BCE for demonstrating his support of Alexander III. He would then be restored by Alexander and work his way up to being *somatophylax* (King’s Bodyguard), and he would serve Alexander right up until the king’s death in 323 BCE<sup>165</sup>. Ptolemy would have understood Alexander better than many of the other commanders and bodyguards. Whilst the identities of the two would certainly have been different, the tutelage of the two would have been similar, allowing for Ptolemy to have a much greater grasp of Alexander. Certainly the conclusions both reached regarding his legitimacy as a foreign ruler in Egypt was similar.

Ptolemy I utilised the legacy of Alexander’s visit to Siwah in his favour. The oriental influences of Alexander the Great became the catalyst for the informal formation of the ruler cult. Emphasis must be placed on the fact that Philip and not Alexander was responsible for the campaigns in Europe whilst Alexander was responsible for campaigns in Asia. There were mythical and divine implications for the terrain which Alexander directly engaged with,

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<sup>164</sup> Errington 2008: 145.

<sup>165</sup> Hammond and Walbank 1988: 28.

as is the case with Egypt and Alexandria. It was in the best interest of the Successors to create links which citizens could acknowledge as coming from Alexander the Great himself.

In essence the positioning of Ptolemy and Egypt after the shrewd hijacking of the embalmed Alexander meant a sense of sufficiency in terms of the future of Ptolemaic dynasty. Lattey states that during the visit of Alexander to see the oracle of Ammon in Siwah, he had taken his most loyal and able officers<sup>166</sup>. It was during this visit that Ptolemy I was able to identify the potential of the land of Egypt. Lattey also refers to the richness of the country and the great difficulty which the narrow desert approach would have created in the case of hostile invasion<sup>167</sup>. Egypt's geography, together with supremacy at sea, would make the land impregnable.

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<sup>166</sup> Lattey 1917: 322.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid* 1917: 322.

### 3.3.2. Ptolemaic Egypt

To contextualise Ptolemy I and his beginnings in Egypt, Errington refers to Ptolemy's return to Egypt in 323 BCE as satrap. He found Cleomenes of Naucratis in place as nomarch of the Arabian district, but quickly removed him for alleged corruption and misuse of power<sup>168</sup>. Shipley notes how Cleomenes of Naucratis had been appointed by Alexander himself and was described as an efficient and ruthless administrator<sup>169</sup>. Cleomenes was to be the official deputy of Ptolemy I and presented Ptolemy with 8,000 talents upon his entry into Egypt in 323 BCE. It is between 323 and 320 BCE that Ptolemy is said to have removed Cleomenes by killing him on suspicion of his being sympathetic to Perdiccas<sup>170</sup>. The murder of Cleomenes would be a signal of the hands-on approach of Ptolemy. He would go on to seize the chance of extending his influence to the West by annexing Cyrene, without consulting Perdiccas<sup>171</sup>. Ptolemy inherited a well administered satrapy with a tightly structured administration in which the work of farming the population was controlled, with revenue flowing from taxes into the royal coffers. Ptolemy would introduce modifications to the existing administrative apparatus in order to validate the divine claims that he would attempt to establish, which had religious implications for governance<sup>172</sup>.

Alexander had previously attempted to combine the Macedonian kingship with the position of Egyptian Pharaoh and Persian king in the Egyptian and the Asian regions respectively. Ptolemy would continue this by developing a court hierarchy and etiquette to suite his satrapy<sup>173</sup>. Ehrenburg states,

“The strongest support both of monarch and of dynasty was, apart from the army, ruler worship. It could be founded by a city-state, expressing thanks flattery and fear, or established by the king as an official dynastic cult which usually included the queens. Ruler cult, a particular and important feature of the Hellenic kingship, followed the example of Alexander, but would not have been possible without such Greek traditions as the anthropomorphic

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<sup>168</sup> Errington 2008: 145.

<sup>169</sup> Shipley 2000: 201.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid 2000: 201.

<sup>171</sup> Errington 2008: 18.

<sup>172</sup> Shipley 2008: 201.

<sup>173</sup> Ehrenburg 1974: 78.

nature of religion and myth, the heroization of dead men and the occasional worship of great men even during their lifetime.”<sup>174</sup>

With this in mind, Ptolemy would pay very careful attention to how he presented himself to the native Egyptians and to the Hellenistic world. As has previously been noted, Ptolemy would present himself as a liberator, even gaining the name ‘Soter’ which can be translated as ‘the saviour’<sup>175</sup>. The naming convention was a later feature of the dynastic cult and a secondary name such as ‘Soter’ would have been intended to highlight the divine character of figures such as Ptolemy I<sup>176</sup>. A comparison can be made with Alexander and his secondary title of “The Great” as coming from a similar mind set of highlighting the divine qualities of royalty. To supplement the notion of Ptolemy retaining ties with Alexander, Ptolemy would validate his rule by representing himself as the legitimate successor to Alexander.

### **3.3.3. The formal administration of the Ptolemies**

Ehrenburg speaks of the administrative qualities of a typical Macedonian satrapy, stating that the Macedonian kings ruled by edict, which officials were tasked with carrying out, with administration varying according to the nature of the different states<sup>177</sup>. The need for royal officers to carry out these duties was apparent, as they needed to handle the central government and to administer parts of the realm. Egyptian priests were gently excluded from the bureaucracy, while administrative functions were handled by Greeks, who would take centre stage as a legacy of high Greek standards in law, finance and administration. Ehrenburg continues on to state that, of the new bureaucratic systems under the kings, Egypt was the most perfect in the centralized organization, in which the *dioecetes* (finance minister, and also chief deputy to the king) was the vital figure for administrative functioning<sup>178</sup>. In Egypt the *dioecetes* was supplemented in their functions by *stratego*i (originally ‘generals’) who would lead outside the central government, and were transitioned from military into civil officers<sup>179</sup>. There were a large body of civil servants in Egypt, extending down to the heads and scribes of the village.

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<sup>174</sup> Ehrenburg 1974: 79.

<sup>175</sup> Shipley 2000: 201.

<sup>176</sup> Ehrenburg 1974: 80.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid 1974: 80.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid 1974: 80.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid 1974: 80.

### 3.3.4. The legacy of Alexander's administration

Errington refers to Alexander's approach when he first reached Egypt as a result of the unpopularity with Persian rule in Asia Minor and Syria<sup>180</sup>. This would become the methodological attempt to present the notion of the Macedonians as freedom bringers. There seems to be a consensus that Alexander III was not entirely successful in his attempts to merge Egypt and the Hellenistic world as there were a few shortfalls even in his lifetime. Ehrenburg notes that Alexander did actively attempt to combine his Macedonian kingship with the position of Egyptian Pharaoh, described as "a people's monarchy with theoretic despotism"<sup>181</sup>. Shipley gives a valid reason as to why Alexander was not completely successful in his task, referring to the earlier history of Egypt and its administration<sup>182</sup>. In terms of administration Shipley contends that if a single administration was to be effective, a strong central power was required. There are instances of the volatile situation with the upper (southern) Egypt at times operating as a separate entity. The real problem would lie in the past, for Egypt had been in the hands of foreign rule for a period of three hundred years, including that of the Persians from 525 to 404 and again from 341 until Alexander, whose reign was followed by that of the Ptolemies<sup>183</sup>.

Alexander's attempts to assimilate the Macedonian kingship and the position of Pharaoh as a foreign king coming to foreign lands raises the issue of his relation with conquered citizens. For the people to see harmony with the rulers, Alexander (and later on the Ptolemies) would have to create a link of harmony with the gods of Egypt in order to ensure political stability. Errington goes on to state that Alexander respected the local religions, customs and priests and left the regional administration relatively unchanged in 331 BCE, though he did appoint Cleomenes to supervise before heading off<sup>184</sup>.

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<sup>180</sup> Errington 2008: 145.

<sup>181</sup> Ehrenburg 1974: 78.

<sup>182</sup> Shipley 2000: 196.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid 2000: 196.

<sup>184</sup> Errington 2008: 145.

### 3.4. Ptolemaic Egypt & divine elements

Reference to the seizing of the embalmed Alexander became a mainstay of the early days of the Ptolemaic dynasty. Ptolemy insisted on safeguarding the tomb as a national treasure within his kingdom. Errington refers to how Ptolemy would continue to exploit the charisma of the dead Alexander, whose body he managed to capture in Damascus in 321 BCE and interred at Memphis<sup>185</sup>. Alexandria became the new centre of governance by the time the Stele of the Satrap was set up in November 311 BCE<sup>186</sup>. It must be noted that Alexander's vision, Alexandria was founded by him and thus was ideal for his tomb based on the formation of new traditions manifested by his entitlement to a shrine known as a *heroon* for this reason.

The divine character of the Ptolemies would rest upon the presence of the spirit of the departed Alexander. Bell makes reference to how Alexander and his image were perennially deployed in Alexandria, thus endorsing the Ptolemies as legitimate heirs<sup>187</sup>. The Ptolemies would eventually found the official dynastic cult of Alexander with an annually appointed priest in 290/89 BCE<sup>188</sup>. The Alexander cult was utilised as the mechanism that would allow for the integration and binding together of the immigrant elite and the monarchic system as it would give high profile social interests to those who would maintain it as priests<sup>189</sup>. The dynasty was seen as legitimate and thus there was more of a valid base for ceremonial procedure. The Ptolemaic dynasty also had a legitimate backing in their claim that Alexandria was the new capital of the Greek world<sup>190</sup>.

Shipley refers to how, although traditional ceremonial language was not adopted by the more recent of the European monarchies, Egypt was the exception as the kings were crowned in accordance with the pharaonic tradition<sup>191</sup>. The Hellenistic and Egyptian ruler cults were in fact cut from the same cloth. The Egyptian ruler cult, however, saw the Ptolemaic dynasty represented as Pharaohs in the original sense of functioning as deity and king (which is a different construct when contrasted with imperialist kingship)<sup>192</sup>. The Pharaoh were

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<sup>185</sup> Errington 2008: 147.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid 2008: 147.

<sup>187</sup> Bell 2004: 120.

<sup>188</sup> Errington 2008: 152.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid 2008: 152.

<sup>190</sup> Bell 2004: 120.

<sup>191</sup> Shipley 2000: 67.

<sup>192</sup> Ehrenburg 1974: 79.

considered to be a derivative of divine elements, put in place to conquer chaos and to preserve the basic order that allowed human society to function<sup>193</sup>.

One must note the great importance of introducing new cults within Egypt. These new cults would have combined various elements of Greek and Egyptian cultures in a concept known as ‘syncretism’. Shipley refers to syncretism as being “the conflation or identification of two deities from different pantheons into a joint or single cult. For the purpose of assimilated cults there need to be assimilated deities of a Graeco-Egyptian quality”<sup>194</sup>. Shipley refers to Serapis as an example of a god recognisable to both Greeks and Egyptians alike<sup>195</sup>. The very name of the deity combines the name of two Egyptian deities in the forms of Osiris and Apis<sup>196</sup>. There is a scholarly debate as to whether Serapis was an invention of the Ptolemaic dynasty. Ehrenburg attributes the creation of Serapis to the Ptolemaic dynasty as an attempt to unite Greek and Egyptian worship<sup>197</sup>. Shipley disagrees with this, citing evidence of how Serapis received a cult at Saqqara under Alexander, and referring to how Alexander’s officer Peukestas accorded protection to this sanctuary<sup>198</sup>.

The reshaping of oriental cults required gods such as Tyche, who was a version of the assimilated gods Cybele and Isis<sup>199</sup>. Other versions of syncretised gods included Atargatis, Zeus Dusares, Pakeidas and Oddos amongst others<sup>200</sup>. Serapis would however be the syncretic god that the Ptolemaic dynasty would focus their attention on. The Isis cult was a focus of assimilation, the reason being that the cult included mysteries said to bring more certainty of salvation to the initiate, as contrasted with Greek counterparts such as the Eleusinian and Orphic or Dionysian mysteries<sup>201</sup>. The eastern cults were described as more “drastic and savage”, with the underlying story being death and the afterlife. The initiate was introduced to the idea of “the victory of life over death” and through a lengthy process of initiation in which purity and perfection was gradually attained on a road to redemption and immortal life<sup>202</sup>. One should note how the nature of such cults could attract a more intensified

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<sup>193</sup> Errington 2008: 152.

<sup>194</sup> Shipley 2000: 170.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid 2000: 165.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid 2000: 165.

<sup>197</sup> Ehrenburg 1974: 105.

<sup>198</sup> Shipley 2000: 165.

<sup>199</sup> Ehrenburg 1974: 105.

<sup>200</sup> Shipley 2000: 168-169.

<sup>201</sup> Ehrenburg 1974: 105.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid 1974: 105.

and sustainable form of worship due to notions of the afterlife being available through subservience to the cult. If the Ptolemies could implement these syncretised gods alongside their self-presentation as Pharaohs, then they would be able to maintain a relative level of political stability through the emphasis placed on such cults thus fulfilling the third tier of establishing cults in the foreign land.

One should note the lengths to which the Ptolemaic dynasty went combine the Hellenic with the local Egyptian through assimilatory religious practices. It is important also to note the needs of the Ptolemaic group to redefine rather than invent religious practices. The key word for the Ptolemies would have been ‘integration’, which they would have needed for both Greek and Egyptian socio-cultural environments<sup>203</sup>. The reign of Ptolemy I was fundamental in the formation of the Ptolemaic dynasty. It is at this point that one would look to the legacies of the inaugural king of the Ptolemies.

Ptolemy I would receive cult honours when he died, receiving the cultic title of “Soter”, said to have been already been attributed to him by Greeks following his assistance during the siege of Rhodes<sup>204</sup>. Alongside this there was to be a festival for him, held in the similar format to the Olympic Games, every four years. This was instituted by Ptolemy II Philadelphos and was to be known as the *Ptolemaieia*<sup>205</sup>.

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<sup>203</sup> Errington 2008: 152

<sup>204</sup> Ibid 2008: 152

<sup>205</sup> Ibid 2008: 152

### **3.5. Chapter 3: summary and conclusion**

This chapter began with the introduction of Ptolemy, who is the main focus of this dissertation. I argued that he emerged in the best shape from the wars of the Diadochi. This was based on his exploitation of three tiers of legitimacy and how he was able to successfully defend his kingdom during the wars of Diadochi. Significant events described in this chapter include the murder of Alexander's half-brother Arrhidaeus, known as Philip III, alongside the murder of Alexander IV. These murders were orchestrated by Olympias and Cassander respectively. This resulted in the end of the Macedonian bloodline and the inauguration of the Diadochi as Macedonian kings in the regional satrapies.

This chapter has above all sought to illustrate Ptolemy I's adherence to the second tier of legitimacy. Ptolemy found himself in a very commanding position due to his general adherence to customs local and foreign. The symbolic meaning behind his seizing of the tomb and the respect which he commanded during the wars against Antigonos speak positively of his path towards attaining legitimacy.

The third tier of legitimacy will be addressing within the fourth and fifth chapters. I will begin in the next chapter with Alexander's rendition of the ruler cult in order to ascertain, in the final chapter, whether Ptolemy was able to fulfil the third tier of legitimacy, which was cult formation in foreign territories.

## Chapter 4

In this chapter I will focus on Alexander's rendition of the ruler cult. The focus will be on Alexander and his role in the formative stages of Hellenistic ruler worship. The implications of Macedonian religion will be addressed alongside the fate of the ruler worship following the death of Alexander. This multi-faceted custom will be addressed in categories.

The **first** category will be 'art', and will address the symbolic and artistic elements of the ruler worship, including but not limited to royal insignia. The diadem will be considered as well as other symbolic items which had political implications in the context of ruler worship. The **second** category will look at propaganda. This category will look to connect the art world with the political and discuss how the ruler cult existed within this context. The polytheistic nature of religion and religion's link to the arts will be addressed in order to illustrate art's susceptibility to being used for propaganda. The **third** category will be based on festivals. This category will address the motive of the ruler behind the staging of religious festivals. Reference will be made to how Hesoid and Homer inform the mythological basis of festivals through the reinforcement of religious ideals. The hero cult will be contrasted with the ruler cult in order to understand how the ruler cult is not necessarily self-deification but in fact a form of ruler worship on a religious scale. The **fourth** and final category will be concerned with the reception of the ruler cult. This is an important facet of the ruler cult as this religious phenomenon was result driven. The ideal result would have been to reinforce subservience to the ruler, thus maintaining a sense of stability, and so it is vital to consider how the ruler cult was received by subject peoples.

This chapter focuses on the third tier of legitimacy, which is cult formation in foreign territories. The described categories will focus on Alexander and how he was able to form the prototype of the Hellenistic ruler cult, as well as how he implemented politically motivated art and propaganda. On the basis of the third tier, Ptolemy I and his Egyptian rendition of the cult required similar usage of the arts and other enhancers of grandeur in order to convey the message that he was the true successor to Alexander III.

#### 4.1. The Hellenistic ruler cult

The notion of ruler worship became a religious obligation of a Macedonian monarch: in this context the ruler was engaged in intense self-validation. There was much importance placed not only on kingship in and of itself, but on the ‘aura’ around kingship. Hammond and Walbank make an important observation that informs the visual presentation of the ruler cult<sup>206</sup>. Even though the Macedonians existed within the Hellenistic period and in the Hellenistic region, one must not be insistent on referring the late fourth century as ‘Hellenistic’. Hammond and Walbank<sup>207</sup> base this argument on the meaning of ‘Hellenistic’ of which means ‘imitative of the Greeks’: Macedonian culture was not an imitation but rather an assimilation. The identity of the ruler worship (but not before Philip II) is essentially Macedonian.

The most enduring legacy of Alexander and his reign would surely have been his ability to utilise the foundations of his lineage to reinforce his legitimacy. An allusion to this is made by his mentor Aristotle in his treatise on *the Art of Rhetoric*:

“Well, good birth, for a people and state, is to be indigenous or ancient and to have distinguished founders with many descendants distinguished in matters that excite envy. For the individual, it is good descent in both the male and the female line, with legitimacy in both, and, just as with the city, the distinction of the earliest ancestors for virtue, wealth or some other of the sources of status and the eminence of many of their line, both male and female, both young and old.”<sup>208</sup>

Alexander’s lineage was vital in referring to his legitimacy, as he descended from the Macedonian royal bloodline which contained various divine members such as Zeus and Dionysus. The ruler cult is founded on the concept of what Aristotle alludes to as ‘exciting envy’. As for his ancestors before him, the foundations set by the Argead founders and their narrative was, for Alexander III, an ‘enhancer of envy’, and his own narrative becomes alluring for members of the Diadochi.

There was value for the Diadochi in attributing one’s position to Alexander as the founder of the assimilated empire. Members of the Diadochi who made strides in affirming allegiance to

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<sup>206</sup> Hammond and Walbank 1988: 181.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid 1988:181.

<sup>208</sup> Aristotle *Rhetoric* 1360b.

the royal bloodline spoke to the first and second tiers of legitimacy. Becoming an actual member of the Macedonian royal bloodline was largely unattainable and so the next best thing was to place value on association or connection with Alexander III or Philip II.

The ruler cult essentially draws on Persian elements alongside Greek political ideals. The development of the cult however can be deemed to be Hellenistic<sup>209</sup>. The ruler cult in essence was popularized by Alexander the Great and became one of the few instances in the Hellenistic world where men of note were honoured in a ritualistic manner whilst still living. Noted individuals were normally only granted divine honours on the merit of heroic feats once they had passed on. The ruler cult was driven by Macedonians: a culturally assimilated people who had Illyrian and Thracian influences evident in their spoken dialect, which also included Greek<sup>210</sup>. The Macedonians were essentially the original 'Hellenists', as the cultural fusion of the various sects of the Hellenistic world be initiated under the rule of the Argead dynasty. The influence of various cultures was not new to the formation of Macedonian identity. Establishing an identity on foreign lands is grounded in Macedonian ideology, forming part of the legitimization of the Macedonian ruler. An instance of one such influence is found in the customs of the Greek colonies. Boak states,

“Most of the great families of Greece traced their descent from some god or hero, just as the Macedonian royal house itself claimed Heracles as its ancestor. The Greek colonies regularly raised their oikistes, upon his death, to the dignity of a hero, honoured by the state with suitable ceremonies of worship...”<sup>211</sup>

The comparison is made as the Macedonian identity roots itself in such divine lineage and thus there is a shared element with the Greeks. On the basis of Boak, the shared element of divine lineage between Greek and Macedonian families is evident; however the utilisation of this lineage is implemented differently. In the Macedonian context these were the foundations upon which the ruler cult is built. Mythological narratives would not only depict epic tales of gods and demi-gods, but would also be utilised for the sake of propaganda with the intention of conferring divine rights upon the living. In the conservative Greek context however, the line would be drawn at inferring divinity in order to avoid *hubris*.

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<sup>209</sup> Boak 1916: 293.

<sup>210</sup> Shipley 2000: 111.

<sup>211</sup> Boak 1916: 293.

Macedonian ideology is informed by the notion of the Macedonians as the ruling people of the world. According to Ehrenburg they were a small minority who simply upheld Macedonian traditions wherever their campaigns took them. The fact that the Macedonians adopted features of Hellenism should come as no surprise<sup>212</sup>. The idea of assimilation and of mixing is an element of Macedonia that did not begin with Greece but was most emphatically conveyed by the notion of the “Hellenized Macedonian”<sup>213</sup>.

The Macedonian ruler cult is a product of the political changes that came about during and after from the political regime of Philip II in Greece from the 338 period onwards. Shipley states,

“The political changes of the period 338-276 entailed serious consequences for the old city-states of Greece. Kingship was anathema to the archaic and classical poleis; according to their mythology they had repudiated it very early, perhaps actually during the period we call the dark ages (c.1100 – c.900 BC). Apart from Sparta, whose two kings were in any case not particularly different from ordinary citizens, only barbarians like Persians had kings; in Greek ideology Xerxes and his successors embodied all that was worst about irresponsible sole power.”<sup>214</sup>

The ruler cult came about as Alexander’s method of cultural assimilation between Greece and Egypt. The combination of the best elements from both Europe and Asia meant that there the centrality of ideologies was ideal in order to be able to preserve and stabilise Macedonian imperialism. Ehrenburg refers to this when he states,

“It was Alexander who by his conquests and his empire, not least by the latter’s break-up, created a new world to which both East and West belonged.”<sup>215</sup>

In essence the ruler cult was implemented by merging different cultures that functioned under Macedonian rule. Centralization was the order of the day as Alexander attempted to unite the work done in Philip’s campaigns in Europe with his own in Asia. Alexander’s assimilatory methods showed that there was indeed strength in numbers and centralized ideologies. The combination of various dichotomies into hybrid forms was the basis of this innovative method, sustainable only as long as Alexander was alive, as the demise of most Diadochi members proves.

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<sup>212</sup> Ehrenburg 1974: 78.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid 1974: 78.

<sup>214</sup> Shipley 2000: 59.

<sup>215</sup> Ehrenburg 1974: 9.

Hammond & Walbank refer to Aristotle's influence on Alexander stating,

“Onto such general views Aristotle grafted some remarks which sprang from his own experience at the Macedonian court after 343 BCE. He drew a distinction between despotic kingship and ‘hereditary constitutional kingship. A holder of the latter ruled over “willing’ men, was guarded by citizen guardsmen and used his Friends to enlarge and implement his administrative and executive powers.”<sup>216</sup>.

Coming before Alexander popularized the ruler cult, the role of Philip is often a forgotten aspect of its origins. In the mid 4<sup>th</sup> century, Isocrates had been attempting to get a prominent figure to take on the Persians. The discourse known as the *Philippus* is an essential piece of evidence in deciphering the origins of the ruler cult. Isocrates had made similar suggestions to the likes of Jason of Pherae, Archidamus of Sparta and Dionysius I of Syracuse<sup>217</sup>. More than the other the rulers that came before him however, Isocrates attempted, with some very persuasive language, to get Philip to commit to such a move against Persia. In order to do this, he utilised the mythological narrative which Philip and the Macedonian royal bloodline would have certainly held in high regard. He refers to the mythical ancestor of Philip, Heracles,

“I do not mean that you will be able to imitate all the acts of Heracles, for even some of the gods would be unable to do that; but, in intellectual character, love of mankind, and goodwill such as he showed towards the Hellenes, you might approach his aims. And, if you listen to my advice, it is possible for you to win such a reputation as you yourself might desire.”<sup>218</sup>

Markle makes an interesting point as to whom the arguments in the *Philippus* were really directed<sup>219</sup>. On the surface it seems they were directed at Philip, but on a deeper level it is implied that they are directed towards the Greeks in general. The *Philippus* illustrates the propagandist motives of the intellectual Isocrates in his political courtship of Phillip II. It is implied by Isocrates that should Philip II create a pan-Hellenic state that would go on to confront Persia and that the ruler responsible for this would be immortalized through time. Whether Isocrates was correct in his prophecy is beside the point, the importance of

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<sup>216</sup> Hammond and Walbank 1988: 180.

<sup>217</sup> Markle 1976: 80.

<sup>218</sup> Isocrates *Philippus* V. 115.

<sup>219</sup> Markle 1976: 85.

Isocrates' political courtship is the notion of 'the feat' as one that not only legitimizes but also one that immortalizes.

The ruler cult owes its existence to educated intellectuals such as Aristotle and Isocrates as much the mythological narratives of the likes of Heracles and Temenus. It is still however startling that the conservative Greek ideals around divine rights made an exception for the ruler cult of Alexander III. Boak offers an explanation for the allowance of an otherwise sacred ritual reserved for the dead:

“The rendering of divine honour to human beings while yet on earth was not an outgrowth of extreme superstition, but was made acceptable by the rationalistic attitude toward the gods current in educated circles of the time.”<sup>220</sup>

The political context here was the inability of the Greek democracies to cope with disorder. On the other hand, monarchy and the concentration of power in the hands of particular individuals were thought to be more effective<sup>221</sup>. In this context it is significant that, according to Plutarch, the first Greek to be granted divine honours while living was the Spartan general Lysander, who presided over the Spartan victory in the Peloponnesian war, and established the Spartan hegemony after 405 BCE. The honours given to him should be seen against the backdrop of the disorders of the late 5<sup>th</sup> century. Plutarch in his *Life of Lysander* states,

“For he was the first Greek, as Duris writes, to whom the cities erected altars and made sacrifices as to a god, the first also to whom songs of triumph were sung. One of these is handed down, and begins as follows:

The general of sacred Hellas  
Who came from wide-spaced Sparta  
We will sing, O! Io! Paian.

The Samians, too, voted that their festival of Hera should be called Lysandreia.”<sup>222</sup>

The 4<sup>th</sup> century saw paian, songs traditionally song in honour of the gods, especially Apollo, composed in honour of several men, including Ptolemy himself. As Athenaeus states,

“Nor has the song the burden, which all paean, of Io Paean, as that song written on Lysander the Spartan, which really is a paean, has; a song which Duris, in his book entitled

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<sup>220</sup> Boak 1916: 294.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid 1916: 295.

<sup>222</sup> Plutarch *Lysander* 18. 3-4.

The Annals of the Samians, says is sung in Samos. That also was a pæan which was written in honour of Craterus the Macedonian, of which Alexinus the logician was the author, as Hermippus the pupil of Callimachus says in the first book of his Essay on Aristotle. And this song is sung at Delphi, with a boy playing the lyre as an accompaniment to it. The song, too, addressed to Agemon of Corinth, the father of Alcyone, which the Corinthians sang, contains the burden of the pæan. And this burden, too, is even added by Polemo Periegetes to his letter addressed to Aranthius. The song also which the Rhodians sing, addressed to Ptolemy the first king of Egypt, is a pæan: for it contains the burden Io Pæan, as Georgus tells us in his essay on the Sacrifices at Rhodes. And Philochorus says that the Athenians sing pæans in honour of Antigonus and Demetrius, which were composed by Hermippus of Cyzicus”<sup>223</sup>

There needed to be a logical base for legitimating and implementing a new form of rule. It would also be vital that monarchy not be presented as the use of absolute power, for risk of it being seen as tyranny. The legitimacy of the monarchy in the Hellenistic world was needed for it to be seen as a justifiable way forward. Boak states,

“Theory legitimized monarchy only if it was exercised with the consent of the ruled – if the will of the ruler was identified with the end of the state. In practice there was no absolute criterion by which this could be determined, and, consequently, the right of monarchical rulers was continually challenged. Yet monarchy, absolute monarchy, was recognized as a justifiable form of government. The problem was how to reconcile this with the freedom of the individual citizen and the autonomy of the city-state.”<sup>224</sup>

The grandeur of the absolute ruler being linked with the divine is designed to create an air of an undeniable phenomenon, denial of which would border on *hubris* on the one hand, and offend the political regime on the other. The legitimising of mortal men occurred through the emphasis placed on mythological narrative and bloodline. Isocrates placed particular emphasis on the ancestral heritage of Philip for these reasons. Lefkowitz illustrates the point of the gods favouring those who are in some ways related to them stating,

“The gods care deeply about those human beings who are related to them by blood. They will also support exceptional people who pay them particular honour and display qualities that the

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<sup>223</sup> Athenaeus *Deipnosophistae* XV. 52.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid* 1916: 295.

gods respect, but they are not, in general, particularly concerned with the lot of hardships of humans as a whole.”<sup>225</sup>

When one speaks of the gods’ and the gods’ love for those who are related to them by blood, the notion of the demi-god arises. Macedonian and Greek nationalisms are informed by the notion of having an ancestral heritage connected with the gods. In essence those related to the gods are the gods closest physical manifestations in human form and as such carry themselves in ways worthy of being deemed ‘godly’. It is here one needs to refer to the role of visual elements of the ruler cult in the spread of the cultic elements of the Hellenistic ruler.

#### **4.2.1. Art**

When we refer to art, we must make note of the various visual, symbolic representations of kingship. The diadem, coinage and ceremonial dress all denote the divine attributes of the deified ruler; however they are presented in different forms by the different members of the Diadochi. On appraisal one could state that the aesthetic elements of the ruler cult had purposes rooted in propaganda. The importance of the appearance of the ruler was politically motivated. This is an importance placed on affairs outside of administrative functions. Bell refers to this stating,

“When Hellenic kings were not busy making war or superintending their streams of revenue, they also devoted a great deal of energy and resources to managing affairs that concern ‘what may perhaps be called self-validation.’”<sup>226</sup>

The Macedonians could essentially utilize an appearance that would allow greater cultural infiltration into foreign lands and the subsequent cultural fusions which the third tier of legitimacy relies upon. In reference to this Bell states,

“Possessing the resources to produce fabulously new staging’s of personal significance and prestige, Hellenic kings continued to define and validate themselves through their spectacular gestures in their cities. Spectacular parades, such as those of Ptolemy Philadelphos or Antiochus IV of Syria which are particularly telling, constituted a simultaneous demonstration of both the instruments and the naturalness of a power that increasingly could be understood best through the emotions germane to widely shared notions of divinity.”<sup>227</sup>

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<sup>225</sup> Lefkowitz 2003: 3.

<sup>226</sup> Bell 2004: 114.

<sup>227</sup> Bell 2004: 115.

When Cassander murdered Alexander IV, he essentially killed the last of the royal Macedonian bloodline. This occurrence meant that if chosen by the Macedonian assembly, any one of the Diadochi was eligible to be hailed as the new king. They duly did this and self-declaration period began with the Antigonoid regime when in 306 BCE both Antigonos and his son Demetrius declared themselves kings. They were followed by Ptolemy, Lysimachus, Cassander and Seleucus, who declared themselves kings in 305/4 BCE<sup>228</sup>. Antigonos assumed the position of king following confirmation of the demise of Alexander IV in March 306 BCE. Antigonos followed Macedonian custom in terms of procedure though not completely, with both Antigonos and Demetrius being acclaimed kings at the headquarters of the Antigonos regime in Syria<sup>229</sup>. The position of two kings was certainly unique to the Antigonoid regime and would turn out to be a wise move on the part of Antigonos. This was in an instance of forethought regarding succession when contrasted with his predecessor Alexander III. In the event of the demise of Antigonos in 301 at Ipsus, Demetrius would remain present to preserve the challenge on behalf of the Antigonoid house. Here is an instance of one of the Successors having learnt from the errors of Alexander III.

Bell refers to the sudden rush to self-declaration as “the trappings of grandeur”<sup>230</sup>. The establishing of new conventions or connotations was established in the public realms. It is noted that the kings in Egypt or Syria would wear garb that communicated their royalty, such as boots, cloaks, and broad-brimmed hat or a helmet for war<sup>231</sup>. Most important of the items that symbolised royalty would have been the diadem. Shipley describes the diadem as being a white or purple and white woollen headband with each headband being unique to a particular king as it was the visual representation solely reserved for him<sup>232</sup>. The diadem was not an originally Macedonian item of clothing, as according to Bell it had been worn by many Greek mortals and in representations of immortals<sup>233</sup>. The diadem would begin to take on new symbolic meaning in the Hellenistic world, being seen as a symbol of the king.

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<sup>228</sup> Shipley 2000: 41.

<sup>229</sup> Hammond and Walbank 1988: 172.

<sup>230</sup> Bell 2004: 119.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid 2004: 119.

<sup>232</sup> Shipley 2000: 66.

<sup>233</sup> Bell 2004: 119.

In the event of the new king's accession, the diadem would be presented in a procedure following election by the assembly of Macedonians. After the victory of Demetrius in Cyprus in 306 BCE, the friends of Antigonos presented him with a diadem (in the process implying that he was the successor to Alexander IV) in or near Syria, and crowned him king. Antigonos in turn would himself send a diadem to his son in Cyprus, also declaring him king<sup>234</sup>.

Ptolemy did not do the same in 305 BCE. He was also elected by his army as king but did not claim himself to be the successor of Alexander IV for diplomatic reasons. His alliance with Seleucus, Lysimachus and Cassander prevented Ptolemy from making a provocative move such as this. The *diadema* took on significance as an emblem and was a matter of contention for the Diadochi<sup>235</sup>.

No doubt there was increased urgency after the Antigonoid regime had begun to announce themselves as outright kings. The difference was that Antigonos and Demetrius had declared themselves as kings who had universal rule by way of the symbolic diadem whereas the four kings Ptolemy, Lysimachus, Cassander and Seleucus maintained that they were simply kings of the land that they governed. The diadem is implicated in the civil war conflict from 303-301 BCE, which pitted the Antigonoid dynasty against the four kings. The origins of the diadem certainly played a part as a matter of contention in the war of the Successors. Bell notes how Dionysian elements came to light by way of an aetiology which described it as being worn by Dionysus.<sup>236</sup>



Following the death of Alexander, the diadem came to suggest Alexander-like kingship and became a symbol of the ruler's personal charisma and victory. There are in fact various portraits of the diadem found at the Herculaneum now in the Naples Museum, including a bronze replica of Seleucus I wearing the diadem<sup>237</sup>. At the same museum there is thin, tubular

<sup>235</sup> Shipley 2000: 66

<sup>236</sup> Bell 2004:119

<sup>237</sup> Errington 2008:37

version of the royal headband worn by Demetrius Poliorketes. In the version of Demetrius, the Dionysian attribute is presented as small bull horns<sup>238</sup>.

Stewart argues that the image of Hellenistic kings such as Alexander III became a technique to express overwhelming charismatic power<sup>239</sup>. The diadem, (alongside lavish attire) were one of the many ways in which rulers could depict their grandeur and put it on display within the context of the conquered kingdoms.

On appraisal one could note that the very display of grandeur in terms of appearance would convey the impression of the king to the people within the kingdom. There was also mythic symbolism to denote heritage, Macedonian sentiments and homage to the royal Macedonian bloodline. There were political underpinnings motivating the appearance of the divine merging with the notion of the Macedonian king. These political motives continued to spread to the realms of the art.

#### **4.2.2. Propaganda**

With the flourishing of cultural and societal activities within the Macedonian controlled Hellenistic world, lavish depictions of kings and their significance increased. Poetry of the Hellenistic age alongside the drama performed at the new religious festivals meant that the kings could establish their significance in the spirit of the ruler cult. Shipley contends that the religious and political order of the period was made apparent in visual representation<sup>240</sup>. It was not only deities who were depicted in sculptures and coins, as the heads of monarchs would also begin to be represented. In making reference to such a representation Shipley states,

“The precedent was set by Alexander, who at an early stage became typified as a youthful figure with luxuriant hair (parted off centre) and eyes upturned to heaven as if in recognition of his divine descent. In statues and in other media his standard portrait not necessarily life-like is modified in various ways, such as by the addition of ram’s horns to symbolize his links to his divine father Zeus Ammon. Not surprisingly, his portraits are the most numerous among royal statues, and provided a type upon which other statues were modelled.”<sup>241</sup>

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<sup>238</sup> Shipley 2000: 66

<sup>239</sup> Stewart 1993: 60.

<sup>240</sup> Shipley 2000: 69.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid 2000: 69.

The Athenian legacy of becoming *prostates* (a champion) among the *demos* informs the very same ambition that was exhibited by Pericles<sup>242</sup>. Bell refers to this ambition as *philotimia* and refers to treasures and extreme self-regard as the grounds for such lavish depictions<sup>243</sup>. Honour and prestige (*timê*) was the end goal and the acquiring of *timê* in the eyes of citizens was deemed necessary to the attaining of power (*dynamis*). The notion of *timê* is an important one in the Hellenic world, and is the central theme of the *Iliad*. Bell states that *timê* cannot exist without collective bestowal and confirmation<sup>244</sup>. Bell refers to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as demanding the critical reflection on the role of self-assertive individuals to a community<sup>245</sup>.

The Macedonians place just as much importance on the Homeric text as their Greek counterparts. As a legacy of Alexander and Philip the arts and visualisation were points of contention for the reaffirming of honour and prestige by the Macedonian kings. Hammond and Walbank refer to Philip as marking the beginning of the tendency towards the use of the arts by mentioning that under Philip's regime, artists from the Greek city states were recruited, with the finest artists creating paintings and offerings, as exhibited in the royal tombs of Aegeae<sup>246</sup>. As a result, Alexander was surrounded by writers, philosophers, scientists, engineers, sculptors, painters and actors. The foundations of visual representation of the kings were linked with the Homeric undertones that informed the Macedonian political ideology. The *Iliad*, much like Hesiod's *Works and Days*, becomes a fundamental text due to the tendency of Macedonians such as Alexander III to claim descent from Heracles and Achilles<sup>247</sup>. Bell refers to the accessibility of Homeric representations and their legibility to anyone, regardless of class<sup>248</sup>.

The venue of the heroization of living men would have been in events such as the Olympic Games where poets would write victory odes to celebrate the winners of events. There were various instances of the poet pandering to the gods for allowing the athlete to become the hero that has won their particular event. The artists who describe the heroization imply divine

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<sup>242</sup> Bell 2004: 52.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid 2004: 52.

<sup>244</sup> Bell 2004:58

<sup>245</sup> Ibid 2004:58

<sup>246</sup> Hammond and Walbank 1988: 83.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid 1988: 15.

<sup>248</sup> Bell 2004: 59.

intervention for the hero, but stop short of calling or implying that the heroes are gods. Pindar ends *Olympian 5*, written for Psaumis of Camarina, by stating “*He should not strive to become a god*”<sup>249</sup>. In the *Iliad* Homer makes a distinction between divine appearances and divine actions by noting that the feats of Hector (the Trojan hero) appear divine, but he is not able to follow this up once he meets a hero of demi-god status in the form of Achilles<sup>250</sup>.

The ruler cult is expressed in ways that imply divine lineage rather than the performance of the divine feats. The ruler cult can be understood as more sustainable than traditional Greek heroization, based on its visualisation and implied godliness rather than god-like feats alone. The ruler cult the closest a mortal can get to receiving divine honours in their lifetime.

### 4.2.3. Festivals

One of the key components of the ruler cult was the management of perceptions. The Macedonian kings had an infatuation with heightening the reputation of kingship, the visual aspects of which were informed by mythological narratives. The Hellenized Macedonian was a product of assimilation with the Greeks. Lefkowitz refers to the Hesiod’s *Works and Days* alongside Homer’s *Iliad* as fundamental texts of the Hellenic world serving almost as the moral compass of the times<sup>251</sup>. The Macedonians, and particularly Alexander, found resonance with the *Iliad*.

In the Hellenic world there were no specified sacred texts such as the Bible or the Quran, however myth to some extent served this purpose. There were many moral underpinnings that would come from myth which were intended to be the moral compass that would shape the ideologies of the *demos*. A quotation from Hesiod stating the essence of his message goes as follows:

“For the gods have hidden away the bread of man’s life; if it were not so, a day’s work might easily have won thee store enough to live idle for a year; the rudder might be hung up in the smoke, and the labour of oxen and patient mules be as nothing. But Zeus hid it away in the

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<sup>249</sup> Pindar *Olympian 5*. 24.

<sup>250</sup> Homer 22. 390-394.

<sup>251</sup> Lefkowitz 2003: 13.

anger of his heart, because the cunning, Prometheus had deceived him; therefore Zeus devised for man labour and sorrow.”<sup>252</sup>

The poet draws a contrast between god and mortal with man being punished due to the Prometheus’ cunning, which meant that all men would have to be subservient to the superior gods. This same motif is expressed through other myths by playwrights and poets alike. Dramatic works such as the *Bacchae* and *Hippolytus* and the *Iliad* also convey the importance of subservience, respect and praise of divine figures.

The formation of the Graeco-Macedonian culture is endorsed by engaging with these texts. Hammond and Walbank refer to the merger of the two different cultures, even going so far as to state that the two cultures had become undistinguishable from the other<sup>253</sup>. On the one side there was the Isocratic notion of intelligence as essentially Greek. On the other side there were the military efficient Macedonians who had for two centuries been adapting to and adopting Greek thought and art.

The artistic world of the period would have been set aside from the worlds of military matters, politics and the administrative functioning of the state. The meeting of the masses for societal and cultural reasons presented a potential tool for those in power to continue to flaunt their grandeur by artistic means. Shipley states that the Hellenistic period can be seen as a golden age of Greek poetry, with its practitioners said to measure up against the lyric poets of the archaic age<sup>254</sup>. Shipley goes on to state that the poetry of the Hellenistic age itself is valuable in that when interpreted carefully it can give greater insight and depth into the social attitudes of the period<sup>255</sup>. There are certainly elements of the Classical age within the appraisal of art in the Hellenistic world and as such further evidence of Greek and Macedonian cultural assimilation.

The Athenian model and the political structure seem to suggest a method of fusion for the political and the cultural. Funding and support by the Hellenistic monarchies can be understood to place a further emphasis on lavishness and grandeur of the kingdoms. On

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<sup>252</sup> Hesiod *Works and Days* 42-45.

<sup>253</sup> Hammond and Walbank 1988: 183.

<sup>254</sup> Shipley 2000: 18.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid 2000:18.

further inspection of the naming of the festivals there is a clear reasoning behind the notion that they are an extension of the kingdom.

Shibley suggests that art alongside ritual had begun to be utilized in order to express new social relations<sup>256</sup>. The ceremonial code set by Greek traditions of cultural events such as the *symposium* and *polis* festivals was being selected as a way in which to uphold values set by the king. One can speculate that the king would no doubt uphold his own values alongside Macedonian custom. Shibley notes that this conservative approach was more sensible than forcefully imposing<sup>257</sup>. Errington brings to light the Macedonian kingdoms' needs to cultivate conquered cities with provisions of security, gifts and attention to their sensitivities, in return for the citizens' co-operation with the monarch<sup>258</sup>. The Macedonian conquest of Persia is fundamental as Isocrates had foreseen, due to the dynamics of power between Greece and Macedonia after this moment. According to Errington<sup>259</sup> the Hellenists would give thanks for their protection of their "freedom and autonomy" and this was placed in the mythic realms which it was felt only the gods could support, hence the city cults of kings and dynasts.

#### 4.2.4. Reception

Another component of the Hellenic ruler cult was concerned with how the ruler cult was received by citizens. Shibley makes an important note that there is in fact a difference between deification and the receiving of divine honours<sup>260</sup>. Antigonos is noted as one of the first to receive divine honours amongst the members of the Diadochi. The ruler and divine implications that would have been spread throughout the kingdom and to its citizens would certainly have elements of what Cioffi refers to as the epiphanic metaphor<sup>261</sup>. The interaction between Achilles and Pallas Athena in book I of the *Iliad* is an ideal instance of the epiphanic metaphor and has implications with regards to how citizens under Macedonian rule were intended to respond to the kings.

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<sup>256</sup> Shibley 2000: 68.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid 2000: 68.

<sup>258</sup> Errington 2008: 139.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid 2008: 139.

<sup>260</sup> Shibley 2000: 156.

<sup>261</sup> Cioffi 2015: 3.

“She stood behind and grabbed the son of Peleus by his golden hair, appearing to him alone. None of the others saw her, but Achilles was amazed. He turned around and immediately he recognized Pallas Athena, Her eyes flashed terribly.”<sup>262</sup>

Cioffi goes on to define a set of what he refers to as ‘epiphanic protocols’ in order to describe the phenomenon<sup>263</sup>. The three step process would include **divine self-revelation** as the first step. This was the moment where Pallas Athena reveals herself to Achilles. This was followed by **mortal perception** or the sighting of the divine. Thirdly, there was the **recognition** or the sudden realization of divinity. Bell notes how Hellenistic culture tends to be infatuated with theatrics as a form of power politics<sup>264</sup>. The epiphanic metaphor can be utilised in describing the nature of the intended reception of the lavishness of Hellenistic kings. Shipley describes public ceremonies as introducing citizens, as an audience, to a show implying divine lineage<sup>265</sup>. The ceremonial language reserved for the Hellenistic kings would incorporate the revelation of the ruler as standing out from the ordinary citizen. Cioffi refers to the nature of epiphanic situations between the divine and the mortal. He goes on to state that epiphanic situations were even the more striking when experienced by a large group of people<sup>266</sup>.

The reception of the ruler cult would occur in the visual sense. Cioffi refers to the intention being to present an ‘extraordinary visual experience’ stating,

“a mortal’s likeness to a divinity, sometimes termed *Gottähnlichkeit* on the one hand and divine anthropomorphism on the other, Mortals’ resemblance to divinities could function on many levels (beauty, strength and intelligence), but novelists single out their protagonists visual beauty and, less often, their voice. Paradoxically, artistic representations of divinities simultaneously depend upon, reinforce, and challenge the similarities between men and gods; gods were imagined and depicted in cult statues as looking like humans, but more beautiful and more outstanding.”<sup>267</sup>

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<sup>262</sup> Homer 1. 197-200.

<sup>263</sup> Cioffi 2015: 3.

<sup>264</sup> Bell 2004: 117.

<sup>265</sup> Shipley 2000: 67.

<sup>266</sup> Cioffi 2015: 6.

<sup>267</sup> Ibid 2015: 6.

The power dynamics required for a divine depiction is described as the establishing of the ‘king-for-worship’ in order to acquire a deep sense of subservience from citizens. Lattey refers to the ruler cult as “*preparing men’s minds for the idea of the god-despot in general, rather than as providing a model to be followed*”<sup>268</sup>. Loyalty and devotion to the monarch were intended to be the outcome of this presentation of the ruler. One notes how the cultural affirmation of the Macedonian monarch in the eyes of the people governed was meant to supplement their military outlook towards other kingdoms. According to Lattey, absolute superiority was essential in ensuring that they established a constitutional position<sup>269</sup>. Lattey refers to this as “*a product of scepticism*”. The reaffirming of their superior position in relation to citizens was important for kings to establish. There were many resources to attain the desired reception for their lavishness, as one can gather. Ritualistic language is even implicated in the creation of kings able to be worshipped, though this was passively implied and not demanded.

The ambiguities of the language in the presentation of the ‘king-for-worship’ establish a method of infiltration that utilised the religious sensibilities of citizens in order to attain their submissive reception. The term that is the most well known in regard to the sacred was *hieros* which would address most aspects of sanctuaries and gods<sup>270</sup>. The example that Bremmer makes would be the word used for sacrifice, *hiereisthai*; a priest was known as *hiereus*<sup>271</sup>. *Hieros* as a word comes to almost define the sacred realm: Bremmer refers to *hieros* as “a shadow that’s cast by divinity”<sup>272</sup>. The form of expression most vulnerable to infiltration by the ruler cult comes in the form of a term used to address both gods and humans, “*hagnos*”<sup>273</sup>.

Furthermore, the implanting of divinity in the minds of citizens was supplemented by the use of a surname or nickname in order to further reassert the language which citizens would be expected to use when referring to the king. Shipley addresses the variations of the names that one could be given<sup>274</sup>. Antigonos I was called *Monophthalmos* which is translated to mean ‘one-eyed’, in recognition of his military prowess. Ehrenburg refers to this phenomenon as

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<sup>268</sup> Lattey 1917: 327.

<sup>269</sup> Ibid 1917: 327.

<sup>270</sup> Bremmer 1994: 3.

<sup>271</sup> Ibid 1994: 3.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid 1994: 3.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid 1994: 3.

<sup>274</sup> Shipley 2000: 65.

being part of the process of distinction that came from the dynastic cult<sup>275</sup>. Kings and royal couples could have secondary names which would indicate divine character. Some examples would include *Theos* (god) and *Philopater* (father-loving), amongst others. Shipley states when such titles are utilised during the kings lifetime it is most likely a reflection of how they would want to be portrayed<sup>276</sup>.

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<sup>275</sup> Ehrenburg 1974: 80.

<sup>276</sup> Shipley 2000: 66.

### **4.3. Chapter 4: summary and conclusion**

The chapter began with an introduction of the Hellenistic ruler cult. The basis of the monarchy led by Alexander was understood in the context of Aristotle's explanation of the heroic monarch in *The Art of Rhetoric*.

The definition of Hellenistic was then contextualised in order for us to understand the motive behind Macedonian expansion and admiration for the Greeks. The reigns of Philip and Alexander represented a period of Macedonian dominance in the Hellenic world. The period following the demise of Alexander led to the subsequent wars of the Successors.

The chapter then set about contextualising how religious obligation informed the Hellenistic model of the ruler cult. The mythological narrative of the Macedonian royal bloodline has religious undertones considering that there were mythic figures within the family tree. The Hellenistic ruler cult would function as a culturally motivated political tool for infiltration into the public space and most importantly public perception.

Three categories were identified as viable for infiltrating and disseminating the message of the superiority, grandeur and royal qualities of the king. In this chapter the three categories included the arts, propaganda and festivals. Reception was also considered in order to contextualise how public opinion would be formed once the dissemination of the message of the divine ruler had been shared publically.

The chapter will lead into the fifth and final chapter of the dissertation that touches on the Egyptian rendition of the ruler cult. Ptolemy and his rendition of the ruler cult will be contrasted with that of Alexander's model in order to ascertain whether he was able to attain legitimacy through his rendition.

## **Chapter 5**

This chapter will focus on the Egyptian rendition of the ruler cult. As such it will lead on from both chapter four, which looked at Alexander and the Hellenistic ruler cult, and from chapter three, which discussed Ptolemy, Egypt and the religious infiltration of Egyptian custom. This chapter will touch on the legacy of Alexander and his vision of Alexandria, which will lead into an appraisal of the legacy of Ptolemy I. The main purpose of the chapter is to take the ruler cult from Alexander and the Hellenic context towards Ptolemy and the Egyptian context.

It would certainly be a lot to ask for a single kingdom to measure up to that of an Alexander-controlled Macedonia, however the precedent is set which Successors have to maintain. The following will be an appraisal of whether Ptolemy I was able to fulfil this task in the region of conquered Egypt. The chapter will begin with Alexander and his narrative, the purpose of which will be to transfer the focus from Alexander's primarily Hellenic rendition of the ruler cult to the Ptolemaic hybridized Egyptian rendition. Ptolemy will be my focus, however there is a need to consider the foundations set by Alexander and look at the ways in which the Ptolemies elaborated on these foundations.

The purpose of this chapter is to answer the main question of the dissertation by gaining an understanding of how Egypt became Ptolemaic and the implications of this. Ptolemy consolidates his position in Egypt by methods previously utilised by Alexander and Philip II before him. This is true in more ways than one; however this final chapter will also look to address the question of whether the successful attainment of legitimacy was even possible following the separation of the Macedonian satraps, as they became independent kingdoms following the murder of Alexander IV.

### **5.1. The legacy of Alexander and his Alexandria**

Arrian makes note of a speech that Alexander III gave to his troops who were hesitant and sluggish towards anymore campaigns. Within the speech we find elements of Alexander's own characteristic traits that are typical of heroic figures, such as being overly ambitious and

determined. The speech shows us an individual dedicated to adhering to the Macedonian custom of assimilation. The speech is as follows,

“I, for my part, think that to a brave man there is no end to labours except the labours themselves, provided they lead to glorious achievements. But if any one desires to hear what will be the end to the warfare itself, let him learn that that the distance still remaining before we reach the river Gauges and the Eastern sea is not great; and I inform you that the Hyrcanian Sea will be seen to be united with this, because the Great Sea encircles the whole earth. I will also demonstrate both to the Macedonians and to the Grecian allies, that the Indian Gulf is confluent with the Persian, and the Hyrcanian Sea with the Indian Gulf. From the Persian Gulf our expedition will sail round into Libya as far as the Pillars of Heracles. From the pillars all the interior of Libya becomes ours, and so the whole of Asia will be brought to us, and the limits of our empire, in that direction, will be those which God has made also the limits of the earth. But, if we now return, many war like nations are left unconquered beyond the Hypasias as far as the Eastern Sea, and many besides between these and Hyrcania in the directions of the north wind, and not far from these the Scythian races. Wherefore, if we go back, there is reason to fear that the races which are now held in subjection, not being firm in their allegiance, may be excited to revolt by those who are not subdued.”<sup>277</sup>

On the basis of establishing cults in the foreign land, Alexander continued the Macedonian custom of assimilating various cultures. Alexander excelled in his campaigns by adhering to Homeric notions of the warrior king. The contents of the speech which he gave to rally his troops would correlate with traditional notions of heroic character traits equivalent to the likes of Achilles.

Scholars have depicted the Macedonians under the reign of Philip II to be war-driven, a quality in which Alexander inherited from birth and displayed until his eventual demise in 323 BCE. The imperial campaigns of the Macedonians were sophisticated in that they attempted to infiltrate on both the physical and psychological levels. As a legacy of Philip II, the Macedonians led the conquered into absolute submission. The ruler cult on the other hand was employed as a supplementary tool that bought about psychological submission. The ruler cult appears in various distinguishable forms, such as Alexander’s ‘informal’ and Ptolemy’s ‘formal’ types. The word ‘metamorphosis’ can be used to describe this change, which

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<sup>277</sup> Arrian *Anabasis* V. 26.

continued into the more developed and rigid form of ruler worship that followed the demise of Ptolemy I. The Ptolemaic model represents a metamorphosis of the Alexandrian model.

In Arrian's *Anabasis*, Alexander's visit to the temple of Ammon is an account of the mythic legacy that forms the basis of the ruler cult, a legacy which Alexander is responsible for. Arrian states,

“Alexander was seized by an ardent desire to visit Ammon in Libya, partly in order to consult the god, because the oracle of Ammon was said to be exact in its information, and Perseus and Heracles were said to have consulted it, the former when he was despatched by Polydectes against the Gorgons, and the latter when he visited Antaeus in Libya and Busiris in Egypt. Alexander was also partly urged by a desire of emulating Perseus and Heracles from both of whom he traced his descent. He also deduced his pedigree from Ammon, just as the legends traced that of Heracles and Perseus to Zeus. Accordingly he made the expedition to Ammon with the design of learning his own origin more certainly, or at least that he might be able to say that he learned it.”<sup>278</sup>

On Alexander's mythic elements in his presentation, Lewis states,

“Dominated by monarchies in lieu of the city-states of classical times, the Hellenistic world did introduce one major change into the religious practices of the Greeks. When the Hellenistic rulers, following the lead of Alexander the Great, there quickly arose, as there had in the earlier Oriental monarchies, a need for a priesthood to serve the royal cult.”<sup>279</sup>

The Alexandrian rendition of the ruler cult was largely an informal affair and was cultivated by divine notions of Alexander influenced by intellectuals and poets. The arts and the ruler cult went hand-in-hand in the centralizing of minds. Great importance was placed on the arts during the rule of Alexander and his more informal ruler cult, and it is mainly in this context that emphasis was regularly placed on his divine origin. The mythological narrative of Alexander, supplemented by that of his massively successful military campaigns, bought a sense of a balanced legitimacy that was disturbed only by his sudden death. The very foundations of Alexandria are shrouded under the guise of Alexandrian religious rule. Fraser states,

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<sup>278</sup> Arrian *Anabasis* III. 3.1ff.

<sup>279</sup> Lewis 1986: 136.

“Alexander marched away to the south-west to subdue Egypt, then under Persian hegemony, and to consult the oracle of Zeus Ammon in the Libyan desert. On his way down the Nile from Memphis, where he was crowned Pharaoh, he halted at a point about forty miles north-west of Naucratis, at the western extremity of the Delta, west of the Canopic branch of the Nile, and between Lake Mareotis and the sea.”<sup>280</sup>

The formal deification aspect is a matter of contention for scholars. It must be noted that self-deification was implied and not declared outright, with Macedonian rulers being deified more formally following their demise. Green refers to this stating,

“Throughout Greek history, alongside moral warnings against hybriistic, more-than-mortal aspirations, we also find the quasi metaphorical definition of rare individuals as, in some sense, *theoi*, divine, at least in the speaker’s estimate: a god *to him*, *isotheos*, the gods’ equal, whether in attributes or achievement. Much confusion has been caused by scholars who, having seen that certain humans were given honours that gods also received, drew the conclusion (by a famous logical fallacy) that these kings must have been deified, rather than simply sharing, as a high compliment, some of the gods’ divine prerogatives. Sacrifices, sacred enclosures, tombs, statues, prostration (*proskynesis*), hymns, altars and other such divine appanages are all, as Aristotle specifically states, simply marks of honor: the gesture itself, not its recipient (whether god or man), is the important thing.”<sup>281</sup>

This did not stop the rulers from believing in their mythological narratives, as did Alexander the Great. It was an aspect of Macedonian heritage which formed a part of the customary rituals which were performed by rulers from time to time. Fraser describes the transitional period in Alexandria as marking a triumph of Graeco-Egyptian elements over the previously fully Greek elements with Egyptian and Egyptianized deities<sup>282</sup>. This would be a product of the ever-changing construct of the ruler cult being modified to become location specific and relevant to the Egyptians of Ptolemaic Egypt.

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<sup>280</sup> Fraser 1972: 3.

<sup>281</sup> Green 1990: 402.

<sup>282</sup> Fraser 1972: 191.

## 5.2. The Ptolemaic ruler cult

Ptolemy I looked to emulate Alexander and his ability to administer cults in foreign territories. Like Alexander, Ptolemy needed to utilise mythological narrative as a foundational basis for cult formation in the foreign territory. It is important to refer to Theocritus and *Idyll* 17 with reference to the Egyptian rendition of the ruler cult. The Egyptian rendition can be thought of as relative to the Hellenic version based on allusions made within the *Idyll*. Theocritus states,



“With forebears I’ll begin with Lagus’ son,  
Old Ptolemy, dreamer and doer, one  
Who’d carry through what others would not even  
Dare to conceive. Zeus gathered him to heaven,  
The father to the father. A gold throne  
Set for him near his old companion,  
Bright-diademed Alexander, bane of the East,  
He sits among the gods and shares their feast.  
The Centaur-killer, mighty Heracles  
Sits opposite, enthroned on steel, and sees  
(Joy touching his stern heart) his progeny  
Transformed to gods, healed of mortality  
By Cronus’ son, their stock proclaimed divine.  
To Heracles both kings trace back their line  
And in his valiant son unite their stem.  
He rises from the feast and hands to them  
His club, blunt-ridged with iron, his shafts and bow.  
They bear his arms before him as they go,  
Proud to escort a god, born of a god,  
Amorous with nectar, to his wife’s abode,  
To shining-ankled Hebe’s fragrant house.”<sup>283</sup>

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<sup>283</sup> Theocritus *Idyll* 17. 13-33.

The Idyll alludes to mythological narrative which Alexander himself deployed in his mythic representations, also making similar allusions to a familial relation to Zeus. The closeness of Alexander to Ptolemy can once again be seen in the lines, “*A gold throne set for him near his old companion, bright diademed Alexander, bane of the East...*”<sup>284</sup>. The closeness and intimateness of the line enhances the notion that Ptolemy I is the true successor to the throne left vacant by the Macedonian bloodline. This would inform our notion that the Egyptian rendition of the ruler cult comes across as a direct offspring of Alexander’s myth. The same brand of myth that ensured Alexander’s relative political stability presented its potential to members of the Diadochi as viable means for retaining their own dominance. Ptolemy I was fully aware of this, hence the title ‘Soter’, meaning saviour, being assigned to his royal name<sup>285</sup>. The name was an allusion to Ptolemy’s desired mythic presentation. This would be a product of the representation of the ruler, hence the portrayal of Ptolemy I as saviour.

There was also the need for the continuation of the mythological narrative in accordance with the life of Ptolemy that was still being documented, hence any conquests and victories from the reign of Ptolemy I were celebrated as an act by the ‘Saviour’.

Green contextualises one of the many reasons for Ptolemy and how he justified his control of Egypt was by making reference to Alexandria as a meeting place between Africa and Europe, calling it ‘*a meeting place of all races and creeds*’<sup>286</sup>. Hammond also makes reference to Alexandria becoming the chief commercial centre of the south-eastern Mediterranean<sup>287</sup>. The mythic and divine elements of the Ptolemaic regime appear to find their roots in the city of Alexandria alongside its commercial viability. In the naming of Alexandria, one can notice that parts of the Alexandrian model of the ruler cult became a foundational pillar of the city. This tradition would continue in the regime of the Ptolemaic dynasty.

For the purpose of juxtaposition and contrast, the following sub-sections will look at the Ptolemaic rendition of the ruler cult in similar contexts and categories as its predecessor, Alexander’s ruler cult. The purpose of this is to highlight that in their fundamentals they are in fact the same, with differences arising due to the need to assimilate into Egyptian culture

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<sup>284</sup> Theocritus Idyll 17, 17-19.

<sup>285</sup> Shipley 2000: 159.

<sup>286</sup> Green 1990: 80.

<sup>287</sup> Hammond 1989: 211.

more directly. The purpose of this is to illustrate the lengths to which the Ptolemaic administration had to go in order to obtain a measure of control over the foreign and oriental other. The attainment of legitimacy by Ptolemy I would stem from his ability to assimilate the Egyptian ways that bring about compliance rather than resistance. Ideal compliance would have rivalled that of the great king, Alexander III.

Much like Alexander's vision, the Ptolemaic ruler cult would have had to appeal to the aesthetic and the visual through the utilization of the arts as a tool for propaganda. It would have been vital for the Ptolemies to be attentive to information being disseminated among Egyptian population, as well as being attentive to how the information that received.

### **5.2.1. Art: coinage**

Sayles refers to coinage as the visual records of man's experience. Sear elaborates on this idea, stating how the formative period of Greek numismatic art informs our understanding of how one could place coinage in such high regard when it comes to the disseminating of political ideologies<sup>288</sup>. In his account Sear states,

“The choice of types in the formative period of Greek numismatics is of special interest. Traditions were being established which were to have a lasting influence on all subsequent coinage, right down to the present day. It was recognized, almost from the start, that here was a completely new medium for artistic expression, whilst the issuing authorities saw the opportunity of advertising the special characteristics of their states. The great diversity of deities in the Greek pantheon and the different interpretations of the roles played by each god and goddess provided scope for much of the local variation in religious beliefs. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that religious subjects were dominant in the earliest phases of coinage.”<sup>289</sup>

Coinage is a significant topic when one discusses the consolidation of political power with reference to the Hellenistic ruler cult. The Macedonians utilised Greek numismatic art in order to consolidate narratives formed by myth and thus maintain positions of power and relative political stability. The depictions on the coins were vital in the basis of their two-fold

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<sup>288</sup> Sayles 1997: 2.

<sup>289</sup> Sear 1978: xviii.

eneration. Firstly, on the veneration to the issuer of the coin, examples of which would include Alexander the Great, Philip II etc. Secondly and most importantly, the symbolic veneration to mythic figures to whom the issuers of the coin would have been paying homage. The first Macedonian king said to have issued coinage was Alexander I, who ruled from 495 BCE – 454 BCE<sup>290</sup>. The Argead dynasty would continue in this tradition, with both Philip II and Alexander III issuing coins, though the point must be made, that their coins did not bear the likeness with the coins of Alexander bearing his face only after his death.



The following example of Greek numismatic art depicts Philip's triumph in the Olympic Games.

Philip's Olympic victory coinage

Following on from Alexander I, Philip II continued the tradition of minting coins in his likeness in Greece. In his 1965 journal article entitled *The Coins of Philip II and Alexander the Great and their Pan-Hellenic Propaganda*, Perlman explains the significance of the imagery on the coins as alluding to the mythic and divine origins of the Macedonian bloodline. In his account, Perlman states,

“The coins struck by Philip continue the propaganda of his predecessors underling the Hellenic origin of the Macedonian royal family. To this the king added a new motif, the symbol of his victory at Olympia. There can be little doubt that Philip's coinage aimed at propagating his pro-Hellenic attitude and his Pan-Hellenic policy within the Greek world.”<sup>291</sup>

Alexander the Great would himself follow suit in this tradition. Sayles notes how the coins of Alexander included religious symbolism, which would have been politically motivated <sup>292</sup>. In his account on the Greek numismatic art found on the coins of Alexander, Sayles states,

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<sup>290</sup> Sayles 1997: 31.

<sup>291</sup> Perlman 1965: 67.

<sup>292</sup> Sayles 1997: 33.

“The coinage of Alexander is quite interesting. The standard gold staters with the helmeted head of Athena and a standing Nike circulated in huge numbers throughout the entire ancient world. Likewise, the silver tetradrachm with Herakles wearing lions skin and Zeus seated on a throne could be found everywhere.”<sup>293</sup>



Alexander's Athena and Nike coinage

It would be appropriate to note the significance of coinage in the portrayal of the king as a divine spectacle or otherwise the appealing to the gods. According to Fredricksmeyer<sup>294</sup>, Alexander appealed to the gods in his impending war against the Persians. The imagery of Athena, Zeus and Heracles all have their own significance on the Alexander's issue of coinage before his departure for war in Asia. He would appeal to these particular gods whilst serving as the Greek hegemon during the period of impending war against Persia. Fredricksmeyer notes the reasoning behind the choice of specific gods on the coinage of Alexander, stating that Athena may have been chosen due to the symbolic meaning she had concerning Athens<sup>295</sup>. The Greeks themselves were implicated as victims of the Persians and Alexander certainly would have required their assistance in waging war against the Persians. It is also noted that Athena may very well have been the patron-goddess of Alexander's Corinthian league.

Curtius Rufus contextualises Alexander's connection to Heracles stating,

“But Alexander, who was by no means inexperienced in working upon the minds of soldiers, announced that an apparition of Hercules had appeared to him in his sleep, offering him his right hand; with that god leading him and opening the way he dreamed that he entered the city. In his speech he also reminded them of the murder of the heralds and the violation of the

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<sup>293</sup> Ibid 1997: 33.

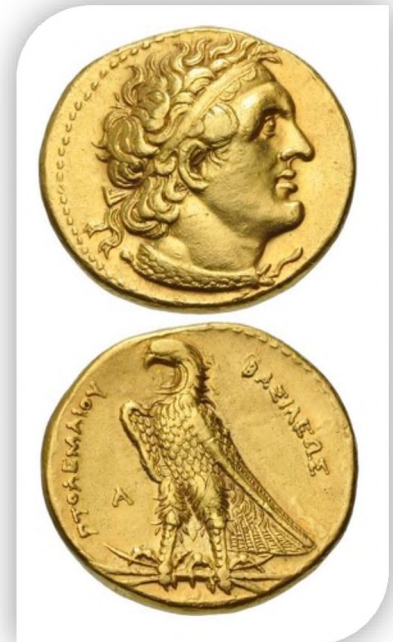
<sup>294</sup> Fredricksmeyer 1991: 203-204.

<sup>295</sup> Fredricksmeyer 1991: 204.

law and nations; this, he added, was the only city that had ventured to delay the victors progress”<sup>296</sup>



Alexander’s Heracles and Zeus coinage



Heracles’ representation on the coinage is said to have been based on him being the Pan-Hellenic hero-god and progenitor of the Macedonian royal family. Zeus’ selection was seen as the most appropriate from his being the patron god of Alexander based on the status he had as a king and his ambitions for empire.

The coins issued during the reign of Alexander were intended to consolidate power by providing to the general population a divine representation that conveyed a message about the ruler mythical associations and ambitions. Lawton<sup>297</sup> notes how Alexander the Great was responsible for the reforming of Macedonian coinage by issuing coinage that would be circulated even after his demise in 323 BCE. The most important coins would have been the tetradrachms that replaced the Athenian owls.

### 5.2.2. Coinage for Ptolemaic ruler cult

The influence of Greek numismatic art would spread to most of the satrapies and became evident in the coinage of each individual kingdom. Lawton notes how Ptolemy I initially depicted the likeness of Alexander III on coins issued in Egypt, however with increasing

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<sup>296</sup> Curtius Rufus IV. 2. 17.

<sup>297</sup> Lawton 1996.

independence he begin to place his own likeness on coins alongside the eagle on a thunderbolt, which is an allusion to Zeus<sup>298</sup>. The royal diadem and the Aegis around his neck are meant to symbolize the royal status of Ptolemy are similarly an allusion to Zeus<sup>299</sup>.

Sear<sup>300</sup> makes reference to the Ptolemaic influence on the Egyptians and how the demand for coinage increased following the arrival of the Macedonians. Sear begins his account stating,

“The ancient civilization of the land of the Pharaohs felt little need of coinage before the time of Alexander the Great. However, demand for silver was high and large quantities of Greek coins, from all areas, found their way into Egypt from the closing decades of the 6<sup>th</sup> century. B.C. Once it had been imported this silver was treated merely as bullion and many individual transactions. Large numbers of Athenians tetradrachms entered Egypt in the second half of the 5th century and these served as models for the insignificant Egyptian issues of the closing years of Persian rule. After the time of Alexander, Egypt once more became a powerful independent kingdom under the rule of the Greek Ptolemaic dynasty”<sup>301</sup>

Sayles makes notes how coins are able to reveal the times by acting as chronological mileposts based on the circumstances surrounding their issuing<sup>302</sup>. Sayles goes on to say that dating of the coins can become apparent based on the die-links, over-strikes and stylistic similarities and it is the imagery that allows the coins to speak for themselves<sup>303</sup>.

Alexander would regularly venerate gods such as Herakles and Zeus. Ptolemy would follow suite with the gods Dionysus and Zeus. Evidence of Ptolemaic veneration would be the representation of Alexander alongside Dionysus on coinage issued by Ptolemy I. Dahmen states that representations of Alexander with a fillet also known as the Dionysiac mitra are found on two types of bronze coins. Of these two coins the first depicts Alexander with short hair whilst the second with longer hair and a ram’s horn<sup>304</sup>. The headdress that he wore does not bear the royal diadem but instead has the Dionysiac mitra which was worn below the hairline and not above. This served as an allusion to the god Dionysus who was revered by the Ptolemaic regime.

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<sup>298</sup> Lawton 1996.

<sup>299</sup> Ibid 1996.

<sup>300</sup> Sear 1978: 577.

<sup>301</sup> Ibid 1978: 577.

<sup>302</sup> Sayles 1972: 2.

<sup>303</sup> Ibid 1972: 2.

<sup>304</sup> Dahmen 2006: 42.

The Dionysus link is important when one refers to its cultural significance to the Macedonians. The Macedonians were, according to Saunders<sup>305</sup>, prominently linked with Dionysus in a religious context. The struggle among Macedonian kings lay in attaining a sense of legitimacy that stabilizes the political landscape. The dominance of religion meant that to stabilize one would have to infiltrate religious doctrine. Once there is a link with a cult that the *polis* could relate, a sense of legitimacy would follow. Once Greece is assimilated into the Hellenistic world as led by the Argead dynasty, the mythological narrative became a more potent tool as it is now more far reaching.

The Greek numismatic arts are relevant to understanding Ptolemy's self-representation and his need to retain the mythological bond with his predecessor Alexander. Ptolemy utilised propaganda in order to create a familial link between himself and the Macedonian royal bloodline. The coins themselves serve as examples how the likeness of predecessors such as Alexander III influenced Ptolemy even in the numismatic arts. It must be made apparent that the Ptolemy and the representation of Alexander on coinage depicts him wearing an elephant scalp. Toynbee argues that this was an allusion to Egypt being in Africa. In her account, Toynbee states,

“It is the elephant headdress, the most distinctive of attributes of Hadrianic *Africa*, that takes us back to the earliest symbolic allusions to Africa in Greek art. The head-dress itself first appears at the end of the fourth century BC., on coins struck by Ptolemy I when he was acting as governor of Egypt for Alexander IV (316-311 B.C); these show on the obverse the head of Alexander the Great wearing the elephant head rest, and Ptolemy himself appears with this head-gear on the obverse of a gold coin bearing his own name.”<sup>306</sup>



There is a deep significance to Greek numismatic art in the Ptolemaic context. Alexander's likeness, the likeness of Ptolemy and the likeness of divinities are all symbolic. In terms of the aesthetic one can see it as a form of propaganda and as such there is a

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<sup>305</sup> Saunders 2007: 6.

<sup>306</sup> Toynbee 1934: 35.

visual implication of the notion of Ptolemy I as the successor to Alexander III. The common features between Alexander and Ptolemy include their utilisation of the Greek gods to consolidate the idea of being a divine monarch. Ptolemy takes this a step further by utilising coinage to assert his promotion from satrap to Pharaoh. His ascendance to the throne is enhanced by this visual representation that would be engaged with daily by citizens as they traded. The imagery functions as a suggestion to the people of the greatness of Ptolemy and his intimate connection to his predecessor Alexander III.

### 5.2.3. Art: idealism versus realism

The positioning of the rulers as channels to the divine realms has been described as part of a traditionalist mythological narrative. There is a sense that the organisation of the festivals and the king's leading of ceremonial sacrifice is not only an act of honour but also a part of the prestige of being ruler. In this instance Ptolemaic Egypt would have been no different, though monarchs were to be known as Pharaohs rather than kings and queens, the Ptolemaic regime certainly had the same challenges as their Diadochi counterparts in foreign lands.

In Plutarch's *Life of Alexander* the importance of art in the ruler cult is emphasised by the mention of the Greek painter, Apelles. The matter of contention is idealism versus realism in the arts. The sculptor Lysippus and the Greek painter were on opposite sides of the spectrum, with Lysippus adhering to idealism and Apelles being more inclined to realism. In his account on visual representation by the artists, Plutarch states,

“The outward appearance of Alexander is best represented by statues of him which Lysippus made, and it was by this artist alone that Alexander himself thought it fit that he should be modelled. For those peculiarities which many of his successors and friends afterwards tried to imitate, namely, the poise of the neck, which was bent slightly to the left, and the melting glance of the eyes, this artist has accurately observed. Apelles, however, in painting him as wielder of the thunder-bolt, did not reproduce his complexion, but made it too dark and swarthy. Whereas he was of a fair colour, as they say, and his fairness passed into ruddiness on his breast particularly, and in his face.”<sup>307</sup>

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<sup>307</sup> Plutarch *Alexander* IV. 1-6.

Apelles created portraits for Philip and Alexander, and eventually Ptolemy I. There is a reference made to appearances that were ideal to the king but were not necessarily realistic impressions on the canvas. One must bear in mind, that a society run by monarchy as its form of governance would have a king who had subjects ready to uphold that monarchy and ultimately accept the king as part of its functioning as an institution<sup>308</sup>. It is interesting to consider the clash of realism and idealism in the ways in which ideals of the ruler cult were applied in the visual arts. Green refers to this dilemma when Apelles is confronted with a disapproving Alexander following his portrait stating,

“The finished picture of Alexander, however, did not meet the king’s approval: Alexander believed, to put it mildly, in self-alignment with the ideal (whatever divine or merely Achillean), and expected his portraitists to convey that quality in their work. Apelles, by way of self-justification, had Bucephalas brought into the studio and placed in front of the finished work- probably a panel painting on wood, a more popular medium by that time than the mural. When the live horse neighed at its painted likeness, Apelles said: “You see, O King, the horse is really a far better judge of art than you are.”<sup>309</sup>

The quote above describes the conflict between the impression which the kings had of themselves and the artist’s impression, which could potentially affect the ruler cult negatively. One must bear in mind that the ruler cult was a tool whose power was based on perception, and whose main purpose was to heighten subjects’ positive perceptions of their ruler. Alexander spoke to the need to convert the conquered into believers by way of a visual presentation worthy of a conqueror.

Lewis refers to scholarly theories on how the Greeks who settled in foreign territories such as Egypt ceased to be Greek and became Graeco-Egyptians<sup>310</sup>. The extent of mutual influence of the two cultures would be the outcome of interactions between the two. The irony is that the Greeks were themselves assimilated with the Macedonians even though they felt themselves to be culturally superior to all alien societies<sup>311</sup>. The function of the Ptolemaic king was to maintain his public image over both Greek and Egyptian subjects. Lewis elaborates stating,

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<sup>308</sup> Errington 1990: 218.

<sup>309</sup> Green 1990: 92.

<sup>310</sup> Lewis 1986: 4.

<sup>311</sup> Green 1990: 312.

“The king himself had two distinct aspects reflecting the cleavage: in one he was the incarnation of an ideal of kingship formulated by Greek philosophers (as, for example, in Aristotle’s *Politics*), while in the other, he retained for the Egyptians the role of the successor and continuator of their line of Pharaohs<sup>312</sup>”.

In terms of juxtaposition and contrasts, the Ptolemaic ideology is an extension of their Macedonian identity and continues the tradition of placing the same emphasis on the divine quality of the ruling dynasty. The most vital point Lewis contributes would be the latter part which addresses the issue of the king’s distinction as successor and continuator of the line of Pharaohs. This line is of particular importance to the question of whether Ptolemy I and the Ptolemaic dynasty are able to attain their sense of legitimacy based on the ability to establish foreign cults in different territories. On appraisal there would be two pressing questions towards assessing Ptolemy I and his ability to conquer. The first of these would be the way that foreign citizens interacted with the Hellenist settlers and whether there was a ‘coming together’ during the process both administratively and culturally.

### **5.3. Propaganda**

The propaganda for the divinity of the ruler is a tradition that is carried on by Ptolemy. Green refers to how members of the Diadochi would be faced with the very same dilemma faced by Alexander during his conquests, and would have had to adopt solutions similar to those utilised by the great king<sup>313</sup>. This would have been a source of strength and weakness for the eventual kingdoms. The strength stemmed from the reputation of Alexander and his empire, with each Diadochi member placed in a position of power adjacent to potential succession if they strategized correctly. The weakness lay in the form of the question of the individual identities of the new kingdoms formed and how these were received. The other weakness came with trying to succeed a strong regime and continuing the legacy of Alexander, which was no easy task.

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<sup>312</sup> Lewis 1986: 4.

<sup>313</sup> Green 1990: 187.

The sentimental advantage of the tomb of Alexander being in the possession of Ptolemy was fundamental in his appearance as ‘the Successor’<sup>314</sup>. The mythic implications went a long way in reaffirming the strength of Ptolemy. Similarly to the reassurance of physical gold backing a currency, the tomb of Alexander backed Ptolemy in his claim to be successor. There is sense that Ptolemy is hinting at his eventual takeover with this first move. Ptolemy would claim the right to be seen as Alexander’s successor by the sentimental virtue of having his predecessor’s tomb, rather than this being assumed by virtue of him being one of the Diadochi. Ptolemy’s moves are tailored more towards the psychological appearance rather than the physical. Although physical appearances exist only to reaffirm divine sentiments directly related to the person for whom the message of legitimacy is intended. From the very outset Ptolemy placed himself in an intimately close relation to the great king Alexander and his father, Philip II. Pausanias refers to this stating,

“Ptolemy encouraged the belief that he was the natural son of Philip II, whether by a casual liaison or because his mother, Arsinoe, was pregnant by Philip before she married a Macedonian commoner, called Lagus. Ptolemy himself claimed Temenid descent through Arsinoe, a second cousin of Philip II, and he therefore held the that he was descended, like Philip and Alexander, from Zeus and from Dionysus”.<sup>315</sup>

Besides this claim and being in possession of the tomb of Alexander, Ptolemy was in good standing to enhance his appearance to the general Egyptian population and to his own subordinates. This claim would only be strengthened by his close relation to Alexander the Great, which played a part in the inheritance of Egypt. Mahaffy appears to imply that Ptolemy was fortunate rather than deserving, stating that the possible intimacy between Philip II and his mother Arsinoe, was his only claim to ‘blue blood’<sup>316</sup>. If the familial bond was to be believed however, then Ptolemy had the upper-hand over the other Diadochi members who could not claim a similar connection to the royal bloodline, and could only attempt to show a strong association.

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<sup>314</sup> Mahaffy 1895: 25.

<sup>315</sup> Pausanias I. 6.2 OGIS 54 and n.23.

<sup>316</sup> Mahaffy 1895: 20.

The familial closeness emphasized by a figure like Ptolemy I could change the way in which he was seen in contrast to other members of the Diadochi. If we believe him to be a blood relative, then he is entitled to a similar symbolic representation as other members of the Macedonian royal bloodline. Hammond makes note of the cultic notions of Alexander, stating that there were three important mythic characteristics<sup>317</sup>. The first was the linkage to the Temenid bloodline flowing from divine ascendants such as Zeus and Dionysus. The second was founding the city in his name and his subsequent formal deification as the cities founder. The third would be the founding of the cult of Alexander in Egypt. Based on the mythic notion of Alexander, the informal ruler cult utilised by Alexander was informed by the reassurance of bloodline, descent, military exploit and mythical representations.

#### **5.4. Festivals**

The Ptolemaic family sought to glorify their kings and queens through the use of a ruler cult which also had to appeal to the native inhabitants of Egypt. The Ptolemaic regime had the desire to heighten the reputation of members who held positions of royalty, though they had to contextualise their importance in ways that the native Egyptians could recognise and acknowledge. Green notes the significance of Alexandria's replacement of Memphis as the administrative capital<sup>318</sup>. This event would occur immediately following the arrival of Ptolemy I, and can be seen as a significant action in the context of propaganda<sup>319</sup>. Green goes on to state that Ptolemy had decided on Alexandria becoming a new home and source of the best Greek art, alongside science and scholarship. One might see this venture as being the inevitable outcome of Alexander's vision. Firstly, on the basis of his elaboration of Philip's exploits through his campaigns and secondly on the basis of being the recognised as the original founder of Ptolemy's Egypt.

Like Alexander III before him, Ptolemy continued to reaffirm the artistic festivals and other endeavours in order to uphold the values of the Ptolemaic regime. There would have been a mythic undertone to such events that would run parallel with elements that form the foundations of the ruler cult. Hammond states,

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<sup>317</sup> Hammond 1989: 281.

<sup>318</sup> Green 1990: 84.

<sup>319</sup> Ibid 1990: 84.

“The king was invested with a religious aura which was all-important. He was the intermediary between the Macedonian people and the gods; and in this numinous role he was an object of veneration to his people. His semi-divine power was resident in his physical person, and it was transmitted from father to son for generations (from Perdiccas to Orestes). The presumption that this power was transmitted was held very strongly; for it prompted the election of an infant to be king, when a capable brother of the deceased father was available.”<sup>320</sup>

It is vital to note the father to son transmission mentioned by Hammond and the infamous insistence of Ptolemy I on being acknowledged as the illegitimate child of Philip II<sup>321</sup>. In light of the transmission of religious aura from father to son, Ptolemy could utilise these mythic depictions to further justify his claim to being the true successor, not only by name or lineage but also by virtue of the semi divine powers presumed to be passed down from father to son. The nature of the festivals was to affirm the king’s divine identity whilst simultaneously honouring the gods. Hammond emphasises the importance of the king’s position as the intermediary between the mortal and divine words by referring to the act of the sacrifice<sup>322</sup>. The sacrifices which were led by the king were ‘prescribed’, ‘approved’, ‘ancestral’, and ‘customary’ and were appropriate for their specified occasion. These sacrifices included but were not limited to the crossing of a river or the Hellespont, launching a campaign, (or turning back), consulting the gods and commemorations<sup>323</sup>.

The kings were understood to be cultural supporters, and there was already a history of this with previous kings. Green states,

“The Greek world had a long history of enlightened cultural support from kings and tyrants. Peisistratus fostered and developed dramatic festivals for Athens, and was probably responsible for a standard revised text of Homer being made public property. Wealthy rulers such as Hieron or Gelon in Sicily, and Arcesilas IV in Cyrene, had commissioned victory odes and entertained poets and artists. In Macedonian itself, King Archelaus (r. 413- 399) had

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<sup>320</sup> Hammond 1989: 21-22.

<sup>321</sup> *Ibid* 1989: 281.

<sup>322</sup> *Ibid* 1989: 22-23.

<sup>323</sup> *Ibid* 1989: 23.

bought such celebrities such as Euripides and Agathon to his court (Socrates got an invitation, but turned it down), and commissioned the great artist Zeuxis to paint his palace murals.”<sup>324</sup>

Ptolemy I continued in the tradition of affirming his divine identity while at the same time illustrating his power by both commissioning poets and artists, and keeping them around him to serve as status symbols<sup>325</sup>. In a similar tradition as festivals in honour of Zeus, Ptolemy placed Dionysus in high regard, particularly at Alexandria. This would still be the case long after his death, even in the reign of Ptolemy IV Philopater<sup>326</sup>. In the Egyptian context, Hammond refers to the central importance of continuing Macedonian customs, stating,

“A cult of Alexander as founder of the city was established by 320, and a national cult of Alexander was instituted later with a priest, by whose year in office various contracts drawn up in Greek or in Egyptian demotic were dated. The central importance of this Macedonian cult (the priest was never a native Egyptian) appears in the description of great processions at Alexandria in 271/0, which were part of a festival- probably the Ptolemaicia- in honour of the reigning dynasty.”<sup>327</sup>

The religious festivals gave Ptolemy the opportunity to provide an aesthetic spectacle of grandeur through which the people would acknowledge the sheer grandiose stature of their ruler and be reminded of the power that the Pharaoh of Egypt held.

## **5.5. Reception**

On appraising of Ptolemy and the issue of legitimacy, it is vital to note the reception of Egyptians with regard to being led by foreigners. One need only look at the art to notice that the Macedonian method of cultural assimilation was not very well received. The art of Ptolemaic Egypt would depict the Ptolemaic dilemma in administering his form of rule as juxtaposed to that of Alexander III. The Macedonian traditionalist required the conquering of foreign territories in sustainable ways in order to obtain a sense of legitimacy. Cultural assimilation alongside syncretism formed a hybrid identity founded upon both Greek and Egyptian ideals. Pollitt states,

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<sup>324</sup> Green 1990: 84.

<sup>325</sup> Ibid 1990: 84.

<sup>326</sup> Green 1990: 397.

<sup>327</sup> Hammond 1989: 23.

“What is unique about the art of Ptolemaic Egypt is not so much its originality as its split personality. Just as the population of the Ptolemaic realm consisted of an urbanized Greek and Macedonian elite, which followed Greek cultural traditions and had little serious cultural contact with the rest of the country, and a native Egyptian population that lived very much as it had thousands of years earlier in the time of the Pharaohs’, so too the art of Hellenic Egypt had distinct Alexandrian and Pharaonic traditions. And like the cultures and populations whose values they expressed, these two traditions remained substantially impervious to one another. Greek artists, as we shall see, occasionally absorbed a few Egyptian motifs into Alexandrian art in order to evoke a certain local charm, but the Pharaonic tradition went on almost as if the Greeks had never existed.”<sup>328</sup>

Pollitt describes the fundamental flaw in the cultural assimilation of the Greek and Egyptians in his above statement. Ptolemy I require the centralizing of minds rather than separation. Green refers to the diffusion of Greek culture and language as the cornerstone of a greatly exaggerated notion of the civilizing of the other, with motives in the moral justification of imperialism<sup>329</sup>. Green describes the resistance from the ‘other’ as an opponent of imperialism stating,

“this trend has been matched by a persistent tendency to underplay the lure of conquest, commercial profits, and generous land grants, which provided the main driving force behind this Greek diasporas not to mention the stubborn refusal of allegedly inferior races to embrace the benefits of Greek enlightenment thus rudely thrust upon them.”<sup>330</sup>

Ptolemy chose also to continue the quest for assimilation, which was met with resistance in spite of the unifying notions of syncretism which were an innovative contribution by Ptolemy I. However, as innovative as it was, this contribution arose out of circumstances in order to legitimate the Ptolemaic dynasty. Drawing similarly on a point made by Pollitt<sup>331</sup>, Lewis goes on to make a similar point about the reception of syncretised religious custom stating,

“In Greek and Egyptian milieus alike, the god Serapis was an instant and enduring success, one that lasted all through antiquity until the triumph of Christianity, even though the Egyptians never even came close to the status of equality with the Greeks that Serapis was

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<sup>328</sup> Pollitt 1986;250.

<sup>329</sup> Green 1990; 312.

<sup>330</sup> Ibid 1990: 312.

<sup>331</sup> Pollitt 1986: 250.

supposed to symbolize. For them that symbol remained no more than an ideal in a hoped-for future, never becoming a present reality. In fact, there were really two separate cults of Serapis: the Greeks worshipped him with the rituals of a Greek god, often portraying him in one of the guises of Zeus, while the Egyptians treated him entirely as one of their own<sup>332</sup>”

The Ptolemies encouraged worship of themselves and their respective queens and divinities such as Serapis, and subsequently the temples became significant landholders and enjoyed privileges<sup>333</sup>. The reception of Ptolemaic rule by the Egyptians does not speak favourably however in terms of the attainment of legitimacy. It is implied that initial conquest and passive aggressive force had forced the native Egyptians into submission, hence the different sects of the cult of Serapis. The Egyptians were placed in a submissive position by Alexander III under circumstances which Ptolemy later inherited. It was his duty to uphold positions secured during the campaigns of Alexander and to utilise the ruler cult in order to attain a sense of stability, in order to run the kingdom.

## **5.6. The legacy of Ptolemy I and his Alexandria**

In his quest to become the legitimate successor to an empire left suddenly by Alexander the Great, Ptolemy utilised a similar brand of religious ruler worship to his predecessor, meant to repel opposition from the population and his subordinates by exploiting divine sentiments. Theocritus' *Idyll 17*, written for the purpose of celebrating the marriage between Ptolemy II and his sister Arsinoe, gives an example of the consolidation of divine sentiments that would repel opposition<sup>334</sup>. The initial stages of the *Idyll* form a mythological narrative of the Ptolemaic dynasty and thus the *Idyll* is important when contrasting the Ptolemaic mythic methodology with those implemented by Alexander and the Macedonian royal bloodline.

The initial formation of the Ptolemaic rendition of the ruler cult would have begun with the arrival of Alexander III in Egypt. It is interesting to note the parallels between Hellenic and Egyptian religion and culture, with the very similar mythological narratives being a legacy of Alexandrian and Ptolemaic settlement.

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<sup>332</sup> Lewis 1986: 70.

<sup>333</sup> Bagnall & Rathbone 2004: 14.

<sup>334</sup> Theocritus, *Idyll 17*. 113.

As a site, Alexandria is vital in understanding the religious elements of the formalized ruler cult. Green states,

“A commercial age wanted investments it could see and judge, with a fair chance of returns: this applied to its royal pantheon no less than to its building and estates, The Olympians had long paid poor and irregular dividends, Nor was there any check on their activities. Alexandria offers little evidence for the personal, as opposed to the formal and public, cult of Olympians; more popular were those demotic deities of grain and grape, Demeter and Dionysus, together with that least anthropomorphic of all-purpose deities, the Good spirit (*Agathos Daimon*), which sometimes manifested itself as a house snake. Greek cities everywhere instituted individual cults of the great Hellenic monarchs.”<sup>335</sup>

Ptolemy, in taking on the project of embellishing Alexandria, had much bigger motives than meets the eye and his contribution here forms part of the legacy which he left for his successors. The Ptolemaic dynasty as a whole benefited from the foundations set by Ptolemy I including the founding of Ptolemais. The city of Alexandria is certainly a matter of contention when it comes to discussing the formalizing of the ruler cult by the Ptolemaic regime. The transition from the informal to the formal aspects of the ruler cult occurs in Alexandria. From the entrance towards the sea, Ptolemy I had intentions to improve the double harbour entrance to Alexandria. According to Lewis, Ptolemy arranged for the architect Sostratos of Knidos to design and direct a lighthouse that became fully operational in the reign of Ptolemy II<sup>336</sup>. The lighthouse said to have reportedly been 400 cubits (210 metres) high, and was said to have been one of the Seven Wonders of the World. It is the inscription on the plaque dedicated to the lighthouse that displays the mythic elements of the ruler cult stating, ‘to the Saviour Gods, for the protection of those at sea’. These saviour gods were known to Greek seafarers as Castor and Polydeuces, the Dioskouroi, but the expression is noted to be a *double entendre* towards the ruling king and queen as protectors<sup>337</sup>.

The significance of Alexander tomb being moved to Alexandria can also be understood to mark the transition from Alexander and his Hellenic rendition of the ruler cult towards the

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<sup>335</sup> Green 1990: 402-403.

<sup>336</sup> Lewis 1986: 11.

<sup>337</sup> Ibid 1986: 11.

cult's initial Ptolemaic rendition. Bagnall & Rathbone refer to the symbolism of rituals that mark beginnings and endings stating,

“At Memphis Alexander sacrificed to Apis and other gods, and held Greek-style games and musical competitions. This was enough to show the Egyptians that the Persians had been replaced and that he was the new ruler of Egypt. In Life, as later in death when Ptolemy I brought his embalmed body to Memphis, Alexander's presence marked the past importance of the city which was soon to be eclipsed by his new foundation, Alexandria.”<sup>338</sup>

The Ptolemaic dynasty made massive strides for the Macedonians following on from the presence of Alexander III and his subsequent religious awakening. If one can say Philip had an admiration for the Greeks, then it is certainly arguable that Alexander has an admiration for Egypt. The Ptolemies' takeover of Egypt led to one of the more significant Hellenistic kingdoms that followed the demise of Alexander and the end of the Macedonian royal bloodline. Following the battle of Ipsos in 301 BCE, the Ptolemies were in control of Coele Syria, Palestine, Cyrene, Cyprus and number of other Aegean islands<sup>339</sup>.

The main focus of this dissertation has been Ptolemy I. A major theme has been the founding of dynasties and the actions that allowed these dynasties to sustain themselves. The cultic implications of the ruler cult are part of the foundational basis upon which legitimacy would be built. The Ptolemaic dynasty focused on mythic elements based on the region in which it was in control. Egyptian society, like that of the Greeks and the Macedonians, placed much emphasis on the religious and the mythic.

Lewis notes that Ptolemy I followed Alexander in the founding of another Greek city in Egypt and naming it after himself<sup>340</sup>. *Ptolemais* was founded not too far from Thebes and was used to attract Greek settlers, rivalling only Alexandria in significance and importance. Ptolemaic rule brought about Greek influence in the administrative affairs of Egypt, however none of these measures were transformative in the sense of creating a single unified culture. The irony was that the very same Alexandrian understanding of the financial had borrowed elements from Persia<sup>341</sup>.

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<sup>338</sup>Bagnall & Rathbone 2004: 94.

<sup>339</sup> Ibid 2004: 13.

<sup>340</sup> Lewis 1986: 8.

<sup>341</sup> Manning 2010: 203.

As has already been noted, Ptolemy was groomed alongside Alexander and was said to have had similar views on the arts, science and education, hence the formation of the library at Alexandria and the continuation of religious festivals. His investment in the Egyptian world and mysticism is perhaps his biggest and most vital contribution, and one that determined whether Ptolemy I as the initial foreign Pharaoh of his dynasty could attain a sense of political stability. Syncretic religious customs were put in place by Ptolemy I as his defence. Lewis states,

“The earliest worship at Memphis was a cult of the bull, Apis. Before long that became associated with the cult of Osiris, and the godhead became known as Osiris-Apis, or Oserapis. This was the obvious source of the name Serapis- or Serapis, both spellings were common- the name chosen by Ptolemy for the politically inspired Egypto-Hellenic cult figure that he created in or about 286 BC. His choice was dictated, or at least influenced, also by the fact that the Memphis shrine had been growing in importance for some time...”<sup>342</sup>

The contributions of Ptolemy were limited to laying the foundations for the future. The foundations however cannot be solely attributed to Ptolemy I. His reign could be questioned for having very few innovative features of his own, as contrasted with the reigns of Philip and Alexander. Such was his contribution to creating the foundations for the future, that the second century of Ptolemaic rule is known as a tale of ‘contraction, disarray and decline’<sup>343</sup>. Bagnall and Rathbone conclude that the demise of the Ptolemaic regime started with the assassination of Ptolemy IV in a palace coup. Following this there was the accession of his son Ptolemy V, who at the time was barely six years old. All the while, the regents lost Coele Syria and various other Ptolemaic foreign possessions. Rome entered the fray in Egypt in 168 BCE, making it a protectorate<sup>344</sup>. The reigns of Ptolemy VI & VIII were uninspiring, with the former requiring Roman intervention to regain Egypt from Antiochus IV, and the latter’s reign described as a disaster in every way. Ptolemy XII would die in 51 BC after years of exile, leaving Egypt to his daughter Cleopatra VII and her younger brother Ptolemy XIII, who in 49 BCE went to war among themselves, with Ptolemy XIII eventually succumbing to Julius Caesar in 48 BCE. Cleopatra is the last remaining member of the Ptolemaic regime. After cohabiting with Caesar before his assassination in 44 BCE, she would herself commit suicide following the defeat of her fleet in Actium in 31 BCE.

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<sup>342</sup> Lewis 1989: 69.

<sup>343</sup> Bagnall and Rathbone 2004: 14.

<sup>344</sup> Ibid 2004: 14.

The contributions of Ptolemy I are admirable insofar as he possessed an outlook that had the future in mind. The ideas that he utilised, such as syncretism proved to be a means to the end of creating the divine aura that was typical of a Hellenistic, and most importantly a Macedonian monarch. In the general sense, these ideas were however an adaptation of Alexander's and his ideals when it came to ruling over the foreign. A case can be made for similarities with the Seleucid Empire. Green refers to these, noting that like Ptolemaic Egypt, the Seleucid East was also spear-won territory held under imperial circumstances<sup>345</sup>. An important difference is noted however, in that the Seleucid empire did not have a clear distinction of the land which they controlled. There were shortcomings on the part of the Seleucids but Greek-controlled strongholds were common to both the Seleucid and Ptolemaic dynasties. Green most importantly notes the ruler cult in the Seleucid East stating,

“The Seleucids, again like the Ptolemies, also instituted a royal cult: the worship of kings was well acclimatized in the East. The Babylonians, for example, were quite ready to worship Seleucis Nicator (officially, now, descended from Apollo) along with their other gods. Ilium, similarly, offered him monthly sacrifices, and instituted quadrennial games in his honor. In various cities he had his own priest, was given the title of *theos*, and provided with a divine genealogy. It was only later when Antiochus III and his successors began raiding native temples for their tithe as “god manifests” that they, like the Ptolemies, ran up again a blank wall of religious hostility, once more with a strong nationalist ingredient to it.”<sup>346</sup>

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<sup>345</sup> Green 1990: 194-195.

<sup>346</sup> *Ibid* 1990: 195.

### **5.7. Does Ptolemy successfully attain legitimacy?**

Bagnall & Rathbone describe the motive behind syncretised religion as ideological unity<sup>347</sup>. The Macedonian ideal of a common universal civilization was the aim of syncretism<sup>348</sup>. If Ptolemy was going to make a valid attempt at being deemed legitimate in the eyes of the native Egyptians, he would have to be acknowledged by them as a Pharaoh. Failure to ensure this reception would ultimately put the Macedonian ideal of a common universal civilization at risk of losing momentum following the advances made by Philip II and Alexander III. Indirectly, this may also have led to the delegitimizing of those who were unable to continue the imperial legacy of Macedonia.

The focus of the dissertation had been built around the three tiers that have been identified as an adequate measure of legitimacy. This notion was supported by the lives of Alexander II and Philip III who did not experience extended and severe moments of political instability based on an inability to attain legitimacy. Philip II and Alexander III emphasise their strengths in order to attain this legitimacy, with the latter tending towards divine presentation. Alexander and his ideals of a common universal civilization were expressed and emphasised through his usage of the socio-political construct known as the ruler cult. The basis of which is to centralize the minds of local and foreign citizens in order to attain a relative sense of political stability realised by the notion of a universal civilization.

The following will be an appraisal of Ptolemy and his quest to attain legitimacy utilising the three tiers of legitimacy as informed by Bendix/Weber and sociological theories on the charismatic leadership. It will be argued that Ptolemy does not attain legitimacy based on his inability to fulfil the third tier. The conclusion will look to contextualise why he was unable to fulfil the third tier.

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<sup>347</sup> Bagnall & Rathbone 2004: 32.

<sup>348</sup> Acheraïou 2011: 23.

### **5.7.1. Legitimacy via the Macedonian royal bloodline**

The suggestion that Ptolemy was part of the Macedonian royal bloodline should be noted for being an attempt at fulfilling the first tier of legitimacy. Mahaffy implies that Ptolemy was fortunate rather than deserving of the close ties with Alexander, and emphasises Ptolemy's need to present the narrative of being linked with the Macedonian royal bloodline<sup>349</sup>.

The claim of Ptolemy to be a member of the Macedonian royal bloodline should be regarded with scepticism at best. He claimed to be an illegitimate son of Philip, arguably in order to stand out from his Diadochi counterparts. The claim was opportunistic at best, as there is no record of Ptolemy making such an assertion during the lifetime of either Philip or Alexander. It can best be considered as an act of propaganda on Ptolemy's behalf, aimed at ascertaining legitimacy as a successor of Alexander. Had he been able to prove and provide a link for his assertion, then Macedonian custom would have dictated that he was undoubtedly the true successor following the demise of Alexander IV.

Where propaganda is concerned, suggestion is often effective in its own right. It was enough for Ptolemy that the idea of his being part of the Macedonian royal bloodline was 'out there', even if it appeared implausible.

### **5.7.2. Legitimacy via adherence to local and foreign custom**

The differences between Greeks and non-Greeks led to a form of co-existence but also to an avoidance between the two cultures. Lewis states,

“The Greeks never developed a priestly class in their Aegean homeland. In the cities of classical Greece ‘priestly office [was] open to every man’ as the orator Isocrates explained to the king of Cyprus. In Egypt, in contrast, a clergy is in evidence from earliest historical times, called into being, no doubt, by the need of the worship of the Pharaoh, a god-king. The clergy, their temples endowed with treasure, rich ornament, and landed estates, became—especially in major centres such as Thebes and Memphis, with their vast complexes of impressive structures—great powers in their own right. As such, and as servants of a

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<sup>349</sup> Mahaffy 1895: 20.

transcendent god from whom the Pharaoh's own powers derived, the priesthoods in the course of Egypt's millennial history."<sup>350</sup>

Following the demise of Alexander, the Great, the Ptolemaic administration administered an assimilated custom that left both Greeks and Egyptians equally alienated. The Egyptian priesthood was the last to be infiltrated by the imperialist Macedonian conquerors, however the cult of the Ptolemies was considered dynastic<sup>351</sup>. The Ptolemies themselves kept their distance from the native theocracy and only flirted with integration by way of the imposition of themselves and their cults for political ends. It is noted that the Egyptian priests were treated with 'munificence' and in return the Ptolemies received pharaonic honours<sup>352</sup>. The creation of Serapis and the Graeco-Egyptian complex seems to suggest a move away from pure Greek and Macedonian custom by the Ptolemaic regime. The purpose of the exploration of Ptolemaic Egypt and divine elements is to note how the customs had ceased to be Greek in nature and were Greek only by name and in terms of administrative governance. The custom had formed a Graeco-Egyptian complex that itself divided Greeks and Egyptians and these could not be considered grounds for attaining legitimacy if the minds of citizens are not centralized. Alexander and Philip set a benchmark which Ptolemy I and the subsequent Ptolemies were not able to adhere to, with regards to a suitable enough retention of Macedonian custom whilst in foreign territory, and they did not have a stronghold of psychological control on the population. The matter of resistance will be elaborated upon in our assessment of the third tier.

### **5.7.3 Legitimacy via cult formation in foreign territories**

The Ptolemaic dynasty and their ability to attain a sense of legitimacy via cult formation can be questioned on appraisal. The introduction of a blended Graeco-Egyptian culture occurred gradually from the time of Alexander. In regarding Ptolemy and his successful attainment of legitimacy, Green's observation on the assimilation of Egyptians should be noted where he states,

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<sup>350</sup> Lewis 1986: 134-135.

<sup>351</sup>Green 1990: 405.

<sup>352</sup> Ibid 1990: 405.

“Any Egyptian who wanted to get anywhere under the Ptolemies had to speak and preferably also write, *koine* Greek. We have a letter of complaint (ca. 256/5) to an official from his (probably Egyptian) native servant about the contemptuous ill treatment he has received “because I am barbarian” and petitioning for regular pay in the future “so that I do not starve because I can’t speak Greek”. Similarly, an Egyptian priest is resentful at a Greek settler who “despise me because I am an Egyptian”. Though later, as we shall see, a certain degree of low-level acculturation took place, in the fourth and third centuries imperial racism was rampant among the Greeks and Macedonians of Alexandria, and never entirely died out.”<sup>353</sup>

The subject of resistance is one that rears its head particularly in matters of custom. Lewis refers to a latent hostility of the priesthood and their resistance that led to ten revolts during the Ptolemaic period, though none was strong enough to bring about a full revolution<sup>354</sup>. In comparison to the rule of Alexander and Philip, the Ptolemies like the Seleucids were more isolated from the people over whom they ruled. Resistance came about as a result of a lack of proper assimilation with the natives. The Greek-Macedonia assimilation that took place under Philip and his predecessors were not fully emulated in Egypt due to an underlying xenophobia towards the natives on the part of the Hellenists. Based on this, the conclusion of this thesis is that that Ptolemy I did not fully attain the legitimacy he sought and thus could not be hailed as the true successor of Alexander the Great.

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<sup>353</sup> Green 1990: 313.

<sup>354</sup> Lewis 1986: 135.

#### **5.7.4 Legitimacy: conclusion**

The argument of the Ptolemaic dynasty ruling Egypt for centuries when contrasted to the comparatively shortened period for Philip II and Alexander III should not be seen as legitimator of the Ptolemaic dynasty. The reigns of Philip II and Alexander III continued the Macedonian custom of expansion and assimilation in their own autonomous way of which brought about a sense of dominance from both reigns. Bendix/Weber and the sociological notion of the charismatic leader have informed our understanding of dominance. A dominance of which the Ptolemaic dynasty lacked.. Ptolemy I was famous for applying links connecting the narrative of Alexander to that of his own with very little elaboration of his own on the status quo. His insistence on taking Egypt on as a satrap was one of many such instances. The failed attempt to dominate the whole and the inability to expand significantly is evidence of dynasty that could not succeed its predecessor. The reign of Ptolemy was lacking in components, which lead to further expansion but as a result was able to acquire longevity due to a reactive rather than proactive administrative model. The stagnant nature of the Ptolemaic expansion is not in line with traditional Macedonian dominance.

The basis of my argument that Ptolemy did not fully attain legitimacy is his lack of adherence to the Macedonian policy of assimilation. The dissertation has sought to show that the Ptolemaic distance kept adherence to this custom at a bare minimum and were never truly able to lay a foundation for effective cult formation. Their inability to do this kept the native Egyptians at a distance and thus the Macedonian ideal of cultural assimilation was not fully realised.

There is a point to be made with regards to Macedonian motives when it came to assimilating Egypt. The best comparison of a relatively stable process of assimilation during Alexander's reign would be Greece. The reign of Philip and the subsequent conquest of Greece should be seen in the context of his genuine admiration for the Greek life and culture.

Legitimacy was not attained by Ptolemy and successors in Egypt. The divine aura of kings was continuously questioned by natives. The continuous threat of revolt by the native Egyptians is a sign that the divine aura of the kings did not have a solid basis that allowed for political stability. Green's observations on the assimilation of Egyptians show that

assimilation was forced in ways that had elements of oppression and thus the citizens could not openly and sincerely worship an oppressive force posing as their Pharaoh<sup>355</sup>.

Ptolemaic Egypt is kept politically stable by the distance of the imperial elite from the natives rather than convergence between the two. The slow death of the Ptolemaic dynasty came from its inability to foster a psychological stronghold on the native Egyptians. Based on these three tiers of legitimacy then, Ptolemy did not attain legitimacy as the true successor of Alexander.

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<sup>355</sup> Green 1990: 313.

## **5.8. Chapter 5: Summary and Conclusion**

The fifth and final chapter of this thesis has focused on the Egyptian rendition of the ruler cult. The main question of the dissertation is whether Ptolemy I is able to attain a legitimacy, firstly as Alexander's true successor and secondly, as the Pharaoh of Egypt.

At the outset, we began with an explanation of the Egyptian rendition of the ruler cult and stated how it shared elements with Alexander's version of the ruler cult. The main contributions came during the reign of Alexander however the reign of Ptolemy presented a new challenge in presenting foreign Pharaoh to the peoples of Egypt. The recurring theme in this chapter would be the positioning of rulers as divine channels to divine ancestors. This would be evident in the mythological narratives and festivals presented by the Macedonian emperors, of which Ptolemy I is no exception.

The legacy of Alexander the Great in Egypt is the starting point of the chapter. It is vital to begin by concluding on the lasting legacy of Alexander and his conquest of Egypt. The highlight of this was his founding of Alexandria. The oriental and mythic elements of Alexander's narrative are at their height of emphasis during his stay in Egypt. The Ptolemaic regime took over from Alexander and had to adapt to the Egyptian ways and in the process create a hybridized system of ruler worship. It is important to note in this transition from Alexander to Ptolemy the similarities and the differences.

The Egyptian rendition of the ruler cult was analysed in the very same four categories as its Hellenic counterpart. The first of these was considered the visual elements of the ruler cult. In the first instance, the previous chapter sought to look at the visual representations of the kings in general whereas in this instance, the focus is solely on how Ptolemy looked to have himself represented both in the physical and psychological sense. This would have been informed by his insistence on adhering to the first tier of legitimacy by presenting himself as the illegitimate son of Philip and subsequent artistic representations of this fact.

As a continued quest to adhere to the first tier, the utilising of Apelles the painter forms part of the subject of art as propaganda and becomes one of many instances in which Ptolemy follows the trail of the Macedonian royal bloodline and places himself as a direct descendent. This was followed by a brief appraisal of the arts, leading into Ptolemy's interaction with the

second tier of legitimacy and the question of whether the cultural assimilation motif was completed. The third category of honour and prestige speaks of the fairly prestigious festivals in Egypt which the Ptolemaic regime would have hosted. Ptolemy and his goal to be recognised as the true Successor spoke to honour and prestige by way of succession. There was a great deal invested in having followed correct protocol and the retaining of a divine identity.

The final category in appraising the ruler cult was its reception by the public. The Ptolemaic regime utilised religion in forms of syncretism and the arts in order to adhere to the Macedonian custom of assimilating other cultures. The chapter illustrated that the reception in Egypt was not necessarily the desired one, with there being an implied segregation between the Greeks and the Egyptians even in times of worship. This segregation would also spread administratively and thus became a spanner in the machine for the Ptolemaic regime.

The legacy of Ptolemy and his additions to Alexandria would suggest that few changes were made to Alexander's initial blueprint, however, by the very same token, changes were made in an attempt to establish the Ptolemaic identity.

This would not reflect positively on the task of Ptolemy and his attempt to attain legitimacy. Ptolemy was unable to attain the sense of legitimacy which he sought, however he was able to effectively run the kingdom. This conclusion is based on the three tiers of legitimacy, each of which were flawed and did not run concurrently and effectively within the standards set by the previous members of the royal Macedonian bloodline.

The eventual coming of the Romans would end the sustainable Ptolemaic regime and many of the remnants of the Hellenistic age. The legacy of the Ptolemaic dynasty is arguably forgotten based on the way in which the kingdom began to function autonomously, rather than existing as its Macedonian conquerors and cultural assimilators intended.

## **Conclusion**

The main point of legitimacy would be attaining political stability and most importantly dominance. Alexander III was an important figure as he was able to exhibit a model of dominance that Ptolemy was not able to duplicate. Philip II exhibited a sense of militaristic dominance, however the method of Alexandrian dominance implanted an additional component that contributed to a more rapid expansions as contrasted to his predecessor.

When the successors continued adhering to customs and traditions of their predecessor (Alexander III), they illuminated their intention to identify as Macedonian and to gain a sense of legitimacy. The individual satrapies could have formed an autonomous and unique individual identity that could have distanced itself from Alexandrian ideals, but they chose not to. While one could argue that the military and the ability to retain what has been won in warfare was adequate enough not to prioritize legitimacy, the point of this dissertation is to assert that the generals were well aware of the extra edge that one would be granted from attaining legitimacy as Alexander's successor following the period of instability into the division of the spoils. The victories of the Ptolemaic dynasty owe a great deal to the foundations set by Alexander and his vision for Alexandria.

## **The First Tier**

The conceptual basis of the dissertation was the Bendix/Weber sociological theory on charismatic leadership. The first chapter began with Weber and his coining of the term *Herrschaft* which means 'domination'. He used this to describe notions of authoritarian powers of command and thus the need to attain legitimacy. According to the Bendix/Weber sociological theories, recognition of 'charisma' is required in the individual who seeks to attain the legitimacy.

From the introductory chapter, based on Bendix's three-fold division of domination of which were based on Weberian notion of dominance taken from his essay 'politics as a vocation'. We understood the first tier to be a part of what Weber called 'Domination on the basis of constellations of interest, especially on the market'. This informed the first tier of legitimacy, which we referred to as 'legitimacy via Macedonian Royal bloodline'.

On the basis of the first tier of legitimacy, Ptolemy made an attempt to include himself within the Macedonian royal bloodline. In the fifth chapter's propaganda section, we saw how Ptolemy discreetly alluded to being the illegitimate son of Philip II by his biological mother Arsinoe. This was understood to be an attempt at securing the first tier of legitimacy, which would have been the most convincing of the tiers based on succession customs that the Macedonians rigidly observed.

The legitimacy of Philip II and Alexander III was consolidated by this tier. The mythological narratives on the origins of the Argead dynasty gave them a divine justification which was vindicated by military campaigns, which were themselves emphasised by propaganda spread by artists and intellectuals commissioned by the monarch. There was also a religious significance to the artistic allusion of divinity by proven members of the Macedonian royal bloodline.

The major problem for the Diadochi lay in their inability to justify making allusions which they made in the arts such as coinage. As discussed in the third chapter, the attempted partnership between Ptolemy and the Macedonian royal family member Cleopatra was also an attempt to fulfil the first tier. Antigonos subsequently murdered Cleopatra in 310 BC in order to intercept this attempt.

None of the members of the Diadochi were able to fulfil the first tier. This inability was the basis of the War of the Successors as they all laid claim to the succession based on the last words of Alexander, which alluded to the notion of the strongest member succeeding him. Ptolemy was unable to convince scholars and contemporaries that he was indeed the illegitimate child of Philip II, and he was thus unable to adequately fulfil this tier.

## **The Second Tier**

From the sociological theories on legitimacy, we are presented with a threefold division of domination; we understood the second tier to be a part of what was to be called ‘domination on the basis of established authority’. This informed the second tier of legitimacy of which we referred to as ‘legitimacy via adherence to local and foreign customs’.

Our subject Ptolemy made attempts at the second tier and was able to fulfil it. On the basis of adhering to local customs, his exploits during the War of the Successors, including the defeat of Antigonos, justified and fulfilled his adherence to Macedonian customs and ideals. The respect which he received from fellow soldiers during and after the demise of Perdiccas was discussed in the second chapter. The compliance of his fellow Diadochi in forming a coalition with Ptolemy is a testament to this and supplements the respect he received from his fellow soldiers.

On this basis I have attempted in the third chapter to illustrate how Ptolemy was able to stand out with regard to his exceptional leadership quality. To state that he was devoid of any hint of ‘charisma’ would be a harsh criticism of a leader who was able to quell the runaway regime of Antigonos. However it is his attitude towards the native Egyptians that is in question, and there is a sense of a minimalist approach in his adherence to foreign custom.

On the subject of adhering to foreign customs, Ptolemy was able to fulfil this tier, though it must be emphasized that there are questions to whether he did this adequately. His own assimilation into Egyptian culture was discussed within the third chapter. The main point is that on the basis of Ptolemy adhering to the Egyptian customs; it cannot be denied that he did do so, though he may not have achieved the reception that he sought. I have discussed the passive, and in some cases hostile, reception received by the Ptolemaic dynasty in the fifth chapter.

Ptolemy adhered to Egyptian custom not by over-hauling and discarding it, but by assimilating it into a concept of the Graeco-Egyptian. The Egyptian priests however were disgruntled, and were still able to function within their original contexts. Ptolemy and his adoption of the role of Pharaoh signalled his adherence to Egyptian customs. On this tier he

was able to fulfil the requirement, though on a very shallow level with regards to Egyptian custom.

### **The Third Tier**

The third tier of legitimacy was once again based on sociological theories by Bendix/Weber of which we get the three-fold division of domination. We understood the third tier to be a part of what Bendix/Weber called 'domination on the basis of leadership (the extraordinary power of a person and the identification of followers with that person). Through this division of domination, we understood the third tier to be 'legitimacy via cult formation in the foreign terrain'.

The conclusion to chapter five argued that Ptolemy did not attain legitimacy based on his inability to fulfil this tier. On the Bendix/Weber's sociological theoretic basis, Ptolemy displayed his extraordinary power through his rendition of the Ptolemaic ruler cult, alongside syncretic cults such as that of Serapis. The usage of Graeco-Egyptian deities such as Serapis was discussed in the third chapter. These deities were utilised in order to assimilate the native Egyptians with the Greeks. The centralizing of ideologies was vital in order for Ptolemy to demonstrate his extraordinary power as a Pharaoh and also as the successor to Alexander the Great. The usage of the numismatic arts alongside the visual arts provided an aesthetic representation of Ptolemy's power. Theocritus' *Idyll 17* provided an example of positivist propaganda disseminated by artists and or intellectuals in order to court a following and encourage identification from the native Egyptians.

In this regard, Ptolemy was unable ultimately to empower the native Egyptians to recognise him and his Graeco-Egyptian administrators as one of their own. The sense of hostility and disgruntlement was evident in the worship of syncretised deities such as Serapis, which was done separately based on ethnicity.

The fact that Egyptians and the Greeks worshipped separately, combined with the lack of administrative opportunities for non-Greek speakers, alienated rather than attracted the following of the native Egyptians. It is on these grounds that Ptolemy was unable to adequately form cults in Egypt that bound his subjects together under one Graeco-Egyptian identity.

On the part of Ptolemy, this was not for a lack of trying. The Ptolemaic dynasty had, however, alienated the native Egyptians to the point that one can state that the Ptolemaic dynasty was not as effective in this regard as Alexander and his interactions during his journey to Siwah. The Egyptians were receptive to Alexander based on his whole-hearted approach and openness to the culture of the native Egyptians. He was not adequately emulated by Ptolemy.

Ptolemy was recognised as a conqueror, though evidence of the reception of his regime in the fifth chapter illustrates that he was not recognised as one with the Egyptians. If he hoped to succeed Alexander, Ptolemy would have needed this recognition in order to, firstly, attain legitimacy as an Egyptian Pharaoh and, secondly, attain legitimacy as the successor to Alexander.

### **Verdict**

When the generals made an attempt to gain legitimacy, they committed to adhering to the customs and traditions set by their predecessor (Alexander III). Those who went to war in the main war of the Diadochi committed themselves in ensuring the continued unity of the Alexandrian vision of the Macedonian kingdom. I have argued that when the generals make the attempt to attain legitimacy, it is a proactive rather than reactive method of counteracting internal and civil warfare and focusing the military force on the external. The focus on the internal would be the psychological consolidation that incurred a lesser literal and figurative expense in so doing. The focus on the external would be the process of expansion and an attempt made to dominate the whole of which cannot be done as smoothly without being recognised as legitimate.

Alexander III and Philip II were able to make strong cases to describe their extraordinary qualities. It was 'charisma' that gave them uniqueness and thus one can be more assured in asserting that that they did attain legitimacy. In the first chapter reference is made to Bendix/Weber sociological theories which state that the man who possesses a genuine sense of charisma would go onto exercise domination. The case for Ptolemy's charisma is inconclusive. On appraisal one can note that he is exceptional, however he doesn't fully exceed this in order to become extraordinary. His abandonment of the domination of the whole after Antigonos foils his plan to unite with Cleopatra and the inability to adequately

ensure political stability in Ptolemaic Egypt is damning insofar as it illustrates the importance of gaining legitimacy. The Ptolemaic dynasty was protected by the impenetrable landscape of Egypt and the coalitions formed by Ptolemies meant for an implied control of the situation but not dominance.

His inability to dominate 'the whole' during the period of the wars of the Successors becomes a major hindrance to his attempts at gaining legitimacy. His triumphs, with the successful acquisition of the tomb of Alexander, alongside the defeat of Antigonos, were admirable initial steps. However, having made the attempt to partner with Cleopatra, and implied his relation to Alexander by virtue of being the illegitimate son of Philip II, Ptolemy signalled his intention of conquering 'the whole'. Had he not signalled this intention and looked to consolidate Ptolemaic Egypt, then his claims to legitimacy would not suffer such a major blow. His inability to combine Ptolemaic Egypt with Asia and Europe meant that he did not fulfil his own task of reuniting Alexander's empire.

Alexander's implied divinity acted as a crutch supporting his various campaigns, by which he was successfully able to combine kingdoms into a unified empire. He had reliable generals to guard these kingdoms based on his legitimacy. Ptolemy was unable to create a divine persona strong enough to fulfil the task of assimilating the native Egyptians with the Greek ruling class. The introduction of syncretised religious phenomena and the xenophobic attitude of the Greeks and Macedonians towards the Egyptians meant that Ptolemy and his notion of cultural assimilation were merely superficial. The innovations of Ptolemy I are too few and far between to illustrate him as equal successor to Alexander III. A main point of our argument has been to illustrate that Ptolemaic victories do not belong to the kingdoms, as they are based on continuing on pathways founded on the blueprints of Alexander the Great. The telling signs of an autonomous and charismatic leader are not adequate in describing Ptolemy I. Ptolemy I can be described to be calculated and opportunistic, however his biggest defeat and disappointment came in his failed attempt to dominate the whole (by way of colluding with Cleopatra) which was eventually abandoned.

Following this, Ptolemy and his further attempts to succeed Alexander fell short once again in Egypt. The evidence of this finding would be in the reception of the Ptolemaic ruler cult found in the fifth chapter. No unified culture that can be described as Graeco-Egyptian would

ever appear. The third tier of legitimacy was not fulfilled adequately enough, although an attempt was certainly made. A consequence of this was the native Egyptians' disgruntled distain for the Ptolemaic dynasty, illustrated by the separation rather than convergence of cultures. The militaristic advantage of the geographical location of Egypt leads one to question whether the basis of the Ptolemies' victories truly belonged to them, as their losses away from home illustrated the importance of the Alexandrian foundations. Legitimacy was vital insofar as supplementing co-operative soldiers and citizens which meant fewer issues within an Alexander's kingdom still expanding as contrasted with Ptolemy's kingdom that had very little to no expansion with the natives.

Alexander was able to ensure relative political stability. This is emphasised by the fact that after he died the Greeks made attempts to liberate themselves from the Macedonians. Ptolemy however had ten revolts during his lifetime, though none strong enough to bring about a revolution. It is due to his inadequate fulfilment of the third tier that Ptolemy does not attain legitimacy, either as the rightful king of Egypt, or as the true successor to Alexander the Great.

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