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# Forever Young

## The strange youth of the Macedonian Kings\*

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**ABSTRACT** Traditionally, the belief has been that the Hellenistic kings began to shave their beards following the example of Alexander the Great. This paper proposes a new vision of this idea, given that explains the shaven face of Alexander through the youngness of the Macedonian kings. In our opinion, the sovereigns of Macedonia were presented many times by their fathers or regents like eternal teenagers in order to remain in power for as long as possible. Thus, the only way for any member of the Argead dynasty to achieve complete autonomy and to be fully free was to be seated on the throne. The same happen during the lifetime of popular generals (Parmenion) or advisers (Aratus). The royal portrait created by the Diadochoi was a symbol of power through which they could govern, never was an imitation of a real one. However, this royal portrait was inspired by Macedonian models that presented the Argead prince as inexperienced and weak when they were unbearded.

**KEYWORDS** Argead Dynasty, Hellenistic kings, Alexander the Great, Iconography, Power, Beard.

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The unforgettable Stephan Zweig (*The world of yesterday: An autobiography*<sup>1</sup>) said that maturity had always been the model sought by European man until the 20<sup>th</sup> century: “The newspapers recommended preparations which hastened the growth of the beard, and twenty-four- and twenty-five-year-old doctors, who had just finished their examinations, wore mighty beards and gold spectacles even if their eyes did not need them, so that they could make an impression of “experience” upon their first patients. Men wore long black frock coats and walked at a leisurely pace, and whenever possible acquired a slight *embonpoint* in order to personify the desired sedateness; and those who were ambitious strove, at least outwardly, to belie their youth, since the young were suspected of instability”. Young men bought powders to whiten their beards and thus appear older than they really were. This was logical in a geontocratic society in which only men who had achieved maturity were entitled to participate in politics.

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<sup>1</sup> ZWEIG 1964, 34.

Present-day society has lost this model, since what is sought is to appear younger than we really are. Modernity wishes to overcome death, prolonging as long as possible the youth of those who live in and endure this time. Clothing rarely distinguishes and marks the life stages.

This represented a radical change compared with traditional ideals. The myth of Oedipus (Apol. 3.5.8) presented us with the only three generational groups that were recognized<sup>2</sup>: *paidēs* (children); *andres* (men); *gerontes* (elderly). You were a *pais* (child) until the age of 18. However, there was an intermediate group, the *andres*, also called *neaniskoi*, who were those who had undertaken the *ephebia*, Athenian military service. They were 20 years old and some were still beardless young men (*meirakoî*). All Greek males aspired to be recognized as *andres* in order to fully enjoy their rights as an adult and citizen. Once this objective had been obtained, they could begin the career which would lead them to hold the positions of power which tended to be in the hands of men between the ages of 30 and 40. Becoming an adult did not imply having power. This remained in the hands of the elderly who justified the preservation of this power in their greater experience. Taking into account how short life expectancy was in the Greco-Roman world, it is striking how late power was attained. There were, however, some exceptions, such as Alcibiades, who at a very young age was appointed *strategos* of Athens during the Sicilian expedition.

Nevertheless, we can find one curious example which represents an exception: the unusual youth of the members of the Argead dynasty of Macedonia. As will be observed throughout this article, there are so many cases in which the youth of the Macedonian sovereigns is described or exaggerated that they cannot simply be considered as anecdotal. We understand that all these cases should be studied as elements which reflect a pattern and the message of a dynasty and never as a mere anecdote, since they respond to a dual circumstance: how these kings wanted to be seen and how their subjects expected them to be.

## THE CHILD KINGS OF MACEDONIA

Daniel Ogden recently drew our attention to the tender age of Macedonian kings<sup>3</sup>. Tripodi (2010) previously studied certain cases and concluded that an infant or a baby could be king, because for the Macedonians there was no age limit for the proclamation of a monarch. An infant king is king by right because he is a necessary king; this is quite different from when they will begin to be de facto king.

The first example that we can find is that of Perdiccas I, founder of the royal house of Macedonia according to Herodotus. He is described as the youngest of three brothers (*νεώτατος* Hdt. 8.138.1), although the characteristic term that Herodotus uses to refer to him is “ὁ δὲ παῖς” that is to say lad or boy (Hdt. 8.137.3, 5; 138.1). However, despite his youth he is the only one of the brothers who succeeded in deceiving the king of Lebaia and acceding, by the will of the gods, to the throne of Macedonia (Hdt. 8.137.5). Herodotus provides examples in which the youngest of three brothers acquired the throne, such as in the Scythian logos:

“During the reign of the three brothers, gold objects fell from the heavens (specifically, a plough, a yoke, a *sagaris* and a cup), falling on Scythia. The eldest

<sup>2</sup> CAMBINO 1993, 103.

<sup>3</sup> OGDEN 2017, 60-1.

brother, who was the first to see them, approached with the aim of seizing them; but, on drawing near, the gold became red hot. When the older brother went away, the second made his way toward them, but the gold did the same again. Thus, the gold, on becoming red hot, rejected the first two; however, when in third place the youngest brother (τῷ νεωτάτῳ) approached, the incandescence was extinguished and the boy took it to his house. Faced with these wonders, the older brothers agreed to hand over the entire kingdom to the younger” (Hdt. 4.5; my own translation).

However, despite all the parallelisms existing with the history of Perdiccas, the youngest was never described as παῖς, simply being younger than his brothers, even at an old age.

The paradigmatic case is offered by Zeus. Despite the fact that the father of the gods was younger than his brothers Poseidon and Hades, he was able to defeat all his rivals (Cronos, Typhon and Giants) and be appointed sovereign of men and gods (Hes. *Theog.* 881-885). The right of the firstborn does not appear to exist in the myths or in the founding legends of Macedonia. If the younger son had better attitudes than the firstborn, he could succeed his father<sup>4</sup>. The model of Zeus must have been an example for the Argeads who, through Heracles, were also descendants of the king of the gods<sup>5</sup>.

Youth, courage and astuteness appear to have been the most recurrent characteristics of Greek heroes<sup>6</sup>. These are the traits of Perdiccas, also shared by another of the founders of the royal house of Macedonia: Archelaus. There is a well-known anecdote of how he threw the king of Thrace, Cisseus, into a pit of burning coals (Hig. *Fab.* 219.3-4). This stratagem was repeated in the *Alexander Romance* (Recensio Alpha 1.14).

We do not know the age of Archelaus in relation to his brothers, but he must have been very young too. In a fragment from the work of the same name by Euripides, Temenus the mythical ancestor of the dynasty is called *pai*: “The priestess of Dione, namesake of Zeus (*God*), said this to Temenus: “O child (*o pai*) born of the stock of Heracles, Zeus gives you a son, I prophesy, who must be called Archelaus” (Eur. *Archelaus* F228a TrGF = F2a Harder = P. Hamburg 118a. OGDEN 2011, 69). Ogden draws our attention to how close the vocative *pai* is to the genitive *God*, in such a way that the word son of Zeus can almost be formed in the mind of the listener or of the reader<sup>7</sup>. This play on words is very similar to that used by Alexander’s propaganda during his visit to Siwa (cf. *infra*).

Aeropus I (VI BC) is an extreme case since, despite being a baby, he is considered to be a legitimate king. Justin tells the story which demonstrates that the trust of the Macedonians in their kings was greater than anything known:

“The Illyrians, however, despising the boyhood of a king under age (*infantiam regis pupilli*), attacked the Macedonians, who, being worsted in the field, brought out their king with them in his cradle, and, placing him behind the front lines, renewed the fight with greater vigour, as if they had been defeated before, because the fortune of their prince was not with them in the battle, and would now certainly

<sup>4</sup> Cf. HATZOPOULOS 1986: the heir to the throne was the first male child of the monarch after his proclamation; FERNÁNDEZ NIETO 2005 highlighted that there was not a firstborn heir and that in general the king’s favourite was appointed as heir irrespective of their age.

<sup>5</sup> LE BOHEC 2002.

<sup>6</sup> Astuteness: Hector (Hom. *Il.* 7.47; 11.200); Nestor (Hom. *Il.* 3.18); Odysseus (Hom. *Od.* 1.1; 10.330). Youth: Theseus; Achilles.

<sup>7</sup> OGDEN 2011, 69.

conquer, because, from this superstitious fancy, they had conceived a confidence of victory; while compassion for the infant (*infantis*), also, moved them, as, if they were overcome, they seemed likely to transform him from a king into a captive. Engaging in battle, therefore, they routed the Illyrians with great slaughter, and showed their enemies, that, in the former encounter, it was a king, and not valour, that was wanting to the Macedonians, make war against the Macedonians (*ostenderuntque hostibus suis priore bello regem Macedonibus, non virtutem defuisse*)” (Just. 7.2.7-13; trans. WATSON 1853).

Despite being a *rex pupillus*, Aeropos is an essential element in the victory of the Macedonians over the Illyrians. The story, although possibly fictitious, leaves us with one detail to bear in mind: there was no minimum age to be proclaimed king in Macedonia, even if they had to have an *epítropos* until reaching adulthood.

The first historical king about whom we have news, Alexander I Philhellene, was also called *o pai* in the famous banquet in which the Persian ambassadors are murdered when he was a prince. The age of Alexander I at that time is unknown, but he must have been very young since he is called νέος (Hdt. 5.19.1) and his father fears that he will be carried away by his youthful zeal if he abandons the room (Hdt. 5.19.2, νεώτερα πρήγματα). When Amyntas I and Alexander are talking, we find this exchange of words: “My son (ὦ παῖ), you are angered, and if I guess your meaning correctly, you are sending me away so that you may do some violent deed” (Hdt. 5.19.2, trans. GODLEY 1920). Subsequently, Alexander introduces young beardless Macedonians into the banquet hall, with whom he does not appear to clash in view of his age, and he kills the Persian ambassadors. It could be argued that Alexander is not king, but when he sends his father away from the banquet he takes on his functions and even arranges the marriage of his sister with the general of Xerxes. For some reason Macedonian tradition or Alexander I himself wanted to present him as a beardless young man at the time of taking power.

Orestes, son of the deceased Archelaus, is also defined as a child (παῖς ὢν, Diod. 14.37.6; 84.6; 89.2; 15.60.3). This is logical, since he acceded to the throne as a minor and required a regent. In the words of Borza, his reign began a “historiographical nightmare”, being one of the most turbulent and unstable periods in Macedonian history<sup>8</sup>.

This crisis only ended when Philip II came to power, but before this occurred we find another two examples of child kings. The death of the young and fearless Alexander II made way for his brother Perdiccas III. The latter must also have been very young, since he needed a *prostates* or regent, Ptolemy of Aloros, who appears to have been behind the death of the previous king. Critics have always understood that the regency was due to youth and not for other reasons. Moreover, in a famous passage from a speech by Aeschines, the youth of Perdiccas and of his brother Philip is again highlighted:

“For shortly after the death of Amyntas, and of Alexander, the eldest of the brothers, while Perdiccas and Philip were still children (παίδων), when their mother Eurydice had been betrayed by those who professed to be their friends, and when Pausanias was coming back to contend for the throne... When Iphicrates had come into this region—with a few ships at first, for the purpose of examining into the situation rather than of laying siege to the city— “Then,” said I, “your

<sup>8</sup> BORZA 1990, 180: “The events of the first half of the fourth century B. C. present a historiographical nightmare for the historian of Macedonia”.

mother Eurydice sent for him, and according to the testimony of all who were present, she put your brother Perdicas into the arms of Iphicrates, and set you upon his knees—for you were a little boy (παῖδιον) —and said, ‘Amyntas, the father of these little children (παῖδιων), when he was alive, made you his son,<sup>1</sup> and enjoyed the friendship of the city of Athens; we have a right therefore to consider you in your private capacity a brother of these boys (παίδων), and in your public capacity a friend to us.’ After this she at once began to make earnest entreaty in your behalf and in her own, and for the maintenance of the throne—in a word for full protection. When Iphicrates had heard all this, he drove Pausanias out of Macedonia and preserved the dynasty for you.” (καὶ τὴν δυναστείαν ὑμῖν ἔσωσε)” (Aeschin. 2.26, 28-29; trans. ADAMS 1919.).

The aim of the speech by Aeschines is to remind Philip of his links and debt to Athens on the occasion of the help of Iphicrates provided in the past. This event dates back to 368 BC, when Philip, born in around 382 BC, was a sufficiently developed adolescent to be considered almost an adult according to the standards of Antiquity, when a 40-year-old man was seen as old, but never as a child who could be sitting on someone’s knees. The young age of both of them is emphasized in order to give more pathos and heroism to the action by Iphicrates, who is presented as an older brother who protects his “little siblings”. From the point of view of Aeschines, Athens continued to be a protective brother of Macedonia and was presented as the protector of the supplicants, a traditional image of the city. Bearing this circumstance in mind, it is understood that both are represented as children and that it is said that they were placed in the hands and in the lap of the Athenian general as if they were supplicants<sup>9</sup>. Cornelius Nepos (*Iphi.* 3.2) also considers the two children of Eurydice to be infants at this time, since he calls them *pueri*.

It is striking that it is said that they were both present, when we know that at that time Philip was a hostage in Thebes<sup>10</sup>. The fact that Philip is one of the two kings of Macedonia who we know were called *paidion*, like Alexander, cannot be purely anecdotal. Also, the play on words in the tragedy by Euripides, *Archelaus*, should not be forgotten. The works of Euripides were well-known both in Macedonia and in Athens. It is therefore very possible that Aeschines was consciously choosing an expression with which another king of Macedonia had previously been associated. This would be a way of making Philip familiar to the Athenians.

The well-known inscription by Eurydice to the muses refers to the children of the kingdom<sup>11</sup>:

Εὐρυδικὴ Σίρρα πολὺήτισι τόνδ’ ἀνέθηκε Μούσαις εὖιστον ψυχῆ ἔλοῦσα πόθον.  
γράμματα γὰρ μνημεῖα λόγων μήτηρ γεγαυῖα παίδων ἡβώντων ἐξεπόνησε μαθεῖν.

“Eurydice, daughter of Sirrhas, offers this gift to the Muses,  
For the dear wish of her heart granted by them to her prayer,  
After the sons whom she bore had come to threshold of manhood

<sup>9</sup> CARNEY 2019, 74-75: “The ahistorical juvenalization of Philip and his older brother Perdicas (whether part of Aeschines original speech or added in 343), so as to enable Eurydice to put them into Iphicrates’ hands and lap, is clearly a play for sympathy”.

<sup>10</sup> CARNEY 2019, 67: “Philip cannot have been physically present in Macedonia since Pelopidas’ first trip to Macedonia (while Alexander II was still alive) had ended with Philip’s departure to Thebes as a hostage. Nonetheless, Aeschines’ account is generally accepted as historical”.

<sup>11</sup> MOLINA MARÍN 2017, 22-23.

Painfully did she achieved learning, letters recorders of words, how to write and to read” (My own translation, following MACURDY 1927, 212. Cf. WILHEM 1949).

It is highly likely that the inscription can be dated to the reign between the regency of Ptolemy and the rise to power of Perdikkas III (365-360/ 59)<sup>12</sup>, and therefore likewise the expression παίδων ἡβώντων does not seem suited to the real age of both Perdikkas and Philip.

### ALEXANDER THE GREAT

One member of the Argead dynasty who has been rejuvenated or presented as an eternal adolescent is Alexander the Great. His sculptural representations show the image of a beardless young man on whom time has not taken its toll. However, there are also many passages in the sources in which we find how his youth is highlighted, in stark contrast with his character. When the Persian ambassadors come to Macedonia and Philip cannot receive them, Alexander does so in his place, asking questions which are inappropriate for someone so young and never any “childish question” (ἐρώτημα παιδικόν, Plu. *Alex.* 5.1)<sup>13</sup>. When Philip and the adults fail to tame the wild horse Bucephalus, Alexander succeeds where they did not. This leads to the final dialogue between father and son: “My son (ὦ παῖ), seek a kingdom because you do not fit in Macedonia” (Plu. *Alex.* 6.5). There are parallelisms between the confrontation between Philip and Alexander and the one previously mentioned between Amyntas I and Alexander I. In both, the father’s failure gives the son’s triumph greater legitimacy, and in one way or another the latter’s actions represent a sign that they are prepared to reign. It is highly likely that the passage from Plutarch was written following Herodotus. They both establish a pattern: the Argead prince comes of age when he challenges and conquers his father’s authority. In a certain way, coming of age is linked to the head of the Argead clan, who is the king. If the prince demonstrates that he is capable of challenging him or proves that he has better qualities than his father, then this is a sign that he is ready to be king.

With Philip dead, there are numerous episodes in which Alexander is called a child or boy despite having become the monarch. Words are attributed to the Macedonian, in which he complained about the attitude of Demosthenes, who had called him a child (παῖδα) while he was fighting with the Illyrians and Triballi, then a beardless adolescent (μειράκιον) when he was in Thessaly, and therefore now that he was in front of the walls of Athens he wanted to show him that he was truly a man (ἀνὴρ. Cf. Plu. *Alex.* 11.2). On this occasion, it is the king’s enemies who exaggerate his youth to belittle his behaviour as a monarch, and he strives to demonstrate otherwise. It seems that Demosthenes had characterized Alexander’s Homeric ideals, calling him Margites: “ἐπωνυμίαν δ’ Ἀλεξάνδρῳ Μαργίτην ἐτίθετο”<sup>14</sup>. Margites is the central character of an epic poem falsely attributed to Homer which we know, from the few fragments

<sup>12</sup> ΟΙΚΟΝΟΜΙΔΕΣ 1983, 64, after the death of Amyntas III, since he is not *basilissa*, but rather *politis*; Mortensen 1992: 164, during the regency of Ptolemy of Aloros; CARNEY 2019, 81: “I would suggest a date sometime after the elimination of Ptolemy, during the independent reign of Perdikkas III”.

<sup>13</sup> HAMILTON 1969: 13. Cf. Plu. *Mor.* 342 b-c indicates that he did not ask about the wine or the clothing of the Great King, but rather about the Persian army.

<sup>14</sup> Aeschin. *In Ctes.* 160. Cf. HAMILTON 1969, 29.

conserved, was a parody of the Homeric ideal prevailing in the royal house of Macedonia<sup>15</sup>.

Before leaving for Asia, Alexander consulted the Oracle of Delphi. Since the Pythia refused to answer him as it was not a day for public consultation, Alexander grabbed her by the arm and took her to the place where the consultation had to take place. On this journey, the Pythia apparently said: “You are invincible, son” (‘ἀνίκητος εἶ, ὦ παῖ’; Plu. *Alex.* 14.4) or “boy, you are invincible” (“μειράκιον, ἀνίκητον εἶ”; *fragment sabaitico* 7). The term μειράκιον catches our attention since it refers to a person whose beard has not yet appeared, which did not apply to Alexander who at that time was 20 years old. Both versions highlight his youth and his impetuous nature but, whoever the author of this story is, it appears to be clear that it never took place<sup>16</sup>.

It is, however, of great importance to understand the Siwa episode:

“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 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” (Plu. *Alex.* 27.9; trans. PERRIN 1917).

It is possible that the king dialogued with the priests in Greek without the help of an interpreter, since it was frequently visited by the Greek community of Cyrene. Greek must, therefore, have been a language in common use in Siwa. It is, however, striking that there is a similar play on words to that which we saw in the tragedy *Archelaus* by Euripides and that Alexander is called *paidion*, little boy, the same term used for Philip in the speech *On the Embassy* by Aeschines. *Paidion* is a highly inadequate name for Alexander, since it was used exclusively for nursing children, a stage of his life that the Macedonian, who was 24 years old, had long ago left behind.

Philotas was the firstborn son of Parmenion, the trusted general of Philip II who became the most powerful man in Macedonia together with Antipater after Alexander acceded to the throne. Plutarch (*Alex.* 48.5) attributes him with having called the king a beardless young man (μειράκιον) who had risen to power thanks to his father’s efforts: Ἀλέξανδρον δὲ μειράκιον ἀπεκάλει δι’ αὐτοῦς τὸ τῆς ἀρχῆς ὄνομα καρπούμενον. The conspiracy took place in 330 BC, when Alexander was about 25/26 years old. At that time he was a man who had reached maturity according to both our modern standards and ancient standards. This indicates that this type of comments did not have to be in line with a person’s age<sup>17</sup>. Whenever there was some kind of dependence you could receive epithets such as *pais*, even if you were elderly<sup>18</sup>. Philotas apparently belittled the merits of Alexander, not so much because of his age, but rather assuming that it was his father who really governed. In a certain way, Parmenion was like a tutor for the king and while he lived rivalled him in popularity among the soldiers. Curiously, royal propaganda presented Parmenion as a senile old man who never understood the true

<sup>15</sup> Plat. *Alc.* 147a: “He knew many things, but he knew them all badly”. On the influence of the Homeric ideal in Macedonia cf. CARLIER 2000.

<sup>16</sup> PRANDI 1990; MENDOZA 2019.

<sup>17</sup> It was said of Pompey that he obtained his first triumph even before his beard appeared, although he was 24 or 25 years old. The first time that Octavian shaved took place in 39 B.C., when he was 23 or 24 years old (Dio. 48.34.3). Plutarch (*Cic.* 28.2) also says the same about Clodius, although he was in his thirties.

<sup>18</sup> Aristophanes (*Wasps* 1299) does not hesitate to call an old slave *pais*, since he lacks rights: “it is fair to call someone who receives blows *dim-witted* (παῖδα), even if he is old”.

intentions of the monarch<sup>19</sup>, while the general's family exaggerated the king's youth in order to continue to justify his influence due to the king's lack of experience.

We do not find any other similar references after the conspiracy of Philotas, but in the *Alexander Romance*, in the words of C. Joanno its main character is an eternal child who never grows up<sup>20</sup>, characterized by his curiosity and his *metis*.

## OTHER KINGS OF MACEDONIA

Alexander IV Aegos (323-309 BC) was another child king. He became king following the death of Alexander the Great, although we do not know whether he was ever officially proclaimed as such. He appears to have had many legal guardians: Perdikkas, Antipater, Olympias and Cassander. He was king in name, but never governed. He lived for as long as he was necessary, but following peace in 311 BC, Cassander had him poisoned with the backing of the other Diadochi who wished to take the royal diadem.

Even after the Argead dynasty disappeared, we continue to find examples of great youth among the Antigonids. It is said (Plu. *Demetr.* 6.1) that, when Antigonos heard about the victories of Ptolemy I in Gaza against his son Demetrius I, he downplayed them saying that they had been obtained by defeating beardless young men (*ageneious nenikekota*) but that now he would have to fight against real men.

The Roman sources highlight the youth of Philip V. Polybius stresses his inexperience through his age:

“The king gave the final decision, if that decision may be called the king's: for it is not reasonable to suppose that a mere boy (παῖδα) should be able to come to a decision on matters of such moment” (Plb. 4.24.1; trans. SHUCKBURGH 1889 [1962]).

“Perhaps, however, one ought not to lay all the blame for what was done on that occasion on Philip, taking his age into consideration (τὴν αἰτίαν διὰ τὴν ἡλικίαν); but chiefly on his friends, who were in attendance upon him and co-operating with him, among whom were Aratus and Demetrius of Pharos” (Plb. 5.12.5; trans. SHUCKBURGH 1889 [1962]).

“young (νέω) as he was on his succeeding to the government of Macedonia, than they had ever been to any of his predecessors” (Plb. 7.12.4; trans. SHUCKBURGH 1889 [1962]).

“For Philip would seem to have undergone a very great and inexplicable change,<sup>1</sup> in that from a gentle prince and chaste youth (μετρακίου) he became a lascivious man and a pernicious tyrant” (Plu. *Arat.* 51.4; trans. PERRIN 1917).

Polybius consequently assumes that Philip V was simply a young man controlled by his counsellors, since his young age made him depend excessively on his counsellors Aratus and Demetrius of Pharos. In Macedonia, with both Argeads and Antigonids it was common for the new king to inherit the trusted men of the previous king after

<sup>19</sup> Granicus (Plu. *Alex.* 16.3); Darius' peace proposal (Plu. *Alex.* 29.7-9); burning of Persepolis (Arr. *An.* 3.18.11-2). Cf. BAYNHAM 2000, 263-85; ZAHRT 2011.

<sup>20</sup> JOANNO 1995, 269-289.



acceding to the throne<sup>21</sup>. During a good part of his reign, Alexander's main generals were those of his father, Philip II. They also continued to have regents or *prostates* who governed like kings while the successor was still a minor<sup>22</sup>. Antigonus III Doson was indeed the guardian of Philip V until he died in an expedition against the Illyrians. Aratus was Philip's main counsellor, being capable of exerting considerable influence over his opinion, thus earning him the envy of the other courtiers. It is said that Philip had him poisoned in order to free himself from his influence (Plu. *Arat.* 52), a rumour which was probably based on the power that Aratus had over the monarch. We again have a young king whose inexperience is exaggerated by the people around him and his enemies in order to weaken his power, and the sovereign's reaction is, presumably, to eliminate them in order to achieve full independence.

### BEARDED KING VS BEARDLESS KING

The appearance of the beard marked the difference between man and child. The beard even distinguished men from eunuchs (Luc. *Eun.* 9). One of the first Greeks to shave his beard was Alcibiades (Pl. *Prt.* 309a). It has been suggested that Macedonian society was still anchored in the standards and norms of the Homeric world and that it was reluctant to adopt the shaving and hair cut habits of the Athenians<sup>23</sup>. Athenaeus (6.260e-f = Theopompus, *FGrH* 115F 225b) includes a parody of Theopompus about the sexual habits of the *hetairoi* on indicating that they appeared more like hetairai on not using the beard as a reference in homoerotic relations, as occurred with the Greek *póleis*<sup>24</sup>. The fact that many of them had a shaved face like the Athenian prostitutes could have led to this play on words.

It has traditionally been said that the first king to shave his beard was Alexander. We do not have portraits of Macedonian kings prior to Philip in order to be able to corroborate this fact, but we do have some images of Philip II in which he is bearded. There is also a well-known anecdote according to which Lucius Mummius, who famously destroyed Corinth (146 BC), mistook a portrait of Philip II for one of Zeus<sup>25</sup>. This could not have happened if he did not have a beard, since the father of the gods was never represented beardless<sup>26</sup>.

Alexander therefore represented a break with his father in this respect, appearing as an eternal adolescent in his portraits. This custom spread among his officials and soldiers. Athenaeus, citing Chrysippus, mentions that shaving one's beard began to spread in the times of Alexander: "The custom of shaving one's beard increased with Alexander, although the majority of men did not follow it" (Ath. 13.565a). Plutarch (*Mor.* 180a-b) mentions a discussion between Alexander and Parmenion on the desirability of shaving one's beard, and we should therefore understand that not all the

<sup>21</sup> HABICHT 1958.

<sup>22</sup> ANSON 1992, 41, stresses that the Greek sources use the words *próstates*, *epimeletes* and *epítropos* as synonyms, although *próstates* must have been the term that the Macedonians used: "The prostates was the traditional title of the regent or guardian of a king; epimeletes and epitropos were generic terms used to describe the functions, but were not traditional Macedonian titles".

<sup>23</sup> ALONSO TRONCOSO 2010: 17.

<sup>24</sup> FLOWER 1994: 108.

<sup>25</sup> Dion Chrys. 3.42. Cf. OIKONOMIDES 1985, 272.

<sup>26</sup> At least until the Hellenistic period when the portrait of Zeus changed under the influence of that of Alexander. Cf. SCHWARZENBERG 1976, 262: "Zeus and Alexander have often been confused, because the portraiture of Alexander influenced the iconography of that god".

members of his military staff followed this guideline. Consequently, news such as this from Plutarch on a formal and categorical ban should be considered as false:

“And Alexander of Macedon doubtless understood this when, as they say, he ordered his generals to have the beards of their Macedonians shaved, since these afforded the readiest hold in battle” (Plu. *Tes.* 5.4; trans. PERRIN 1917).

This decree recalls other similar decrees of doubtful credibility in which Alexander ordered that he should only be portrayed by Lysippos and Apelles (Hor. 2.1.232-44; V. Max.8.1 ext.2; Plin. *NH* 7.125; 35.85). Stewart (1993, 25-27) has denied the truth of this and, like many other stories, it appears to have simply been an explanation *post eventum* in order to explain the origin of an iconographic model of the governor. It is well-known that the old and the new Macedonia coexisted in Alexander’s army and that they were not all inclined to accept his opinions on Persian customs. We know that there were bans on shaven faces in certain cities, such as Rhodes and Byzantium (Ath. 13.565c-d), and therefore it would appear to be difficult to understand that Alexander could impose his criterion on such a thorny issue throughout his vast empire.

This news arose as a result of the court portrait which became common during the Hellenistic period. This portrait was characterized by the *anastolé*, the turning of the neck, leonine hair and a shaven face. The result did not have a precedent in Greek iconography. Its origin appears to have been in Lysippos. Antiphilus would also appear to have painted an Alexander *puer* in the company of Philip (Plin. *HN* 35.114). However, this does not permit us to specify the time of the painting, since the Romans could use the term *puer* to refer to anyone under the age of 17.

There are anomalies, such as the vases of Apulia in which the Macedonian is represented with a moustache and beard, although it is taken for granted that this is a mistake by the painter.

There is consensus that Philip III Arrhidaeus did not follow this custom, and that he preferred to keep his beard, given that “the royal paradigm would be the father, not the unbearded half brother” (ALONSO TRONCOSO 2010, 22). The Hellenistic monarchs appeared with their face shaven or unshaven, at their own discretion. Thus, while Demetrius Poliorcetes imitated Alexander’s iconographic model, other Antigonid kings, like Philip V or Perseus, followed that of Philip II. There does not ever appear to have been a single way of representing royalty. Obviously, the degree of dependency on tradition was greater when the position of the monarch was weaker.

As Alonso Troncoso indicates, the absence or presence of facial hair was not so much an indicator of age as of the status of the individual. It reflected whether they were married and their entry into the world of citizens or even their wisdom, since it became an iconographic trait of the philosopher. Doing away with the beard could be considered as a sign of femininity (Ath. 13.565a-d). What implications did it have for a king to appear before his subjects beardless?

Recently, Lorber and Iossif (2009) have drawn our attention to the fact that, with the exception of Demetrius II in his second reign, the Seleucid kings were normally represented shaved on their coins. However, several Seleucids had a beard on some of their monetary portraits. These authors maintain that such a transient beard was the external sign of a vow made before a military campaign, shaving it off after its successful completion. Beards were associated with specific types of campaigns, in the Orient, when they involved invaders, usurpers and dynastic rivals. The deities to which each Seleucid offered his vows may be those represented on the coins on which their bearded effigy appears.

We can likewise find coins of the kings of Macedonia on which Heracles is not bearded and others on which he is. A clear example is the bronze coins produced by Amyntas III on which the shaven face of the young demigod can be seen (cf. Image 1). Heracles had previously appeared on the coins of Archelaus, a way of being linked to the last great king of the dynasty. The same occurred with the coinage of Perdiccas III, to such an extent that it is tempting to wonder whether the young king associates himself with the model of his father or identifies with the founder of his dynasty through his youth<sup>27</sup> (cf. Image 2). The same image appears on the gold, silver and bronze coins of Philip II (cf. Image 3). These representations coexist with others in which a bearded Heracles is found. There is no explanation for this fact, because we do not have a clear chronology of these coins. They were moreover reused according to the needs of the time, and it is therefore impossible to know whether the coins with the beardless Heracles appeared at the beginning or at the end of each monarch's reign. In any case, this iconographic motif may refer to Heracles' effort to achieve virtue. However, the image of the beardless Heracles was associated with the mythological character performing his tasks, that is to say with the hero who had to undertake a mission to achieve the greatest recognition: the attainment of his divinity. Heracles became a model of behaviour among thinkers of the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, having achieved virtue through effort (D. L. 6.2). In a sense, the Macedonian king is another Heraclid who seeks excellence with the same vigour. Philip did not hesitate to sacrifice the parts of his body necessary in his search for the *arete* (D. 18.67). Olympias had asked Alexander to perform feats worthy of his birth (Plu. *Alex.* 3.3) and one of Alexander's Boeotian soldiers reminded him through a verse of Aeschylus that "for him who has done a deed the suffering (*παθειν*) is payment" (Arr. *An.* 6.13.5.). There is, apparently, a symbolism which equated the actions of the king of Macedonia with those of Heracles, thus coming closer to the feats of his ancestor, and indicating that the path to follow should be the same: achieve glory through effort and pain<sup>28</sup>.

We maintain that the bearded or shaven images of the kings of Macedonia should be associated with the historical context of their reign, and that the images of the bearded Heracles only appeared when their "labours" had reached the end, that is to say when their power was consolidated. Amyntas used the iconographic model of the bearded Heracles after defeating those who had usurped his throne<sup>29</sup>. Perdiccas III possibly used it after killing his regent, the murderer of his brother, Ptolemy of Aloros (Diod. 16.2.2). Philip II, after having consolidated his power and having defeated all of the enemies who were besieging Macedonia after he acceded to the throne, abandoned the coinage with a beardless Heracles in order to be associated with Zeus. Alexander also began his reign by resorting to the beardless Heracles. However, his early death prevented us from observing whether a change was going to take place. From the beginning of his reign until the date of his death he was in a continuous, uninterrupted military campaign. Consequently, it is possible that his shaven face was not just an imitation of Achilles and that it had some value as an *ex-voto*. It should be recalled that Peleus sacrificed the hair of his son Achilles to the River Spercheios, so that he would return safe and sound from Troy (Hom. *Il.* 23.140-151; Plat. *Rep.* 391b), or that the famous Queen Berenice

<sup>27</sup> GREENWALT 1994, 131: "Was Perdiccas thereby thrusting his own youthful mien into the Heracles type as it had appeared on his father's largest coins? Was he now identifying with the Hero/Founder as his royal predecessors had done?"

<sup>28</sup> FREDRICKSMEYER 1958, 273: "Alexander's understanding of his own deeds and accomplishments as labors (*ponoi*) suggests that he patterned his own life on the ideal set by his great ancestor, the incessant labors which finally raised him to the gods".

<sup>29</sup> D.S. 14.92.3-4; 15.19.2-3.

promised a lock of her hair for the safe return of her husband Ptolemy III (Callimachus, *Aitia* 4.110).

Hair may, consequently, have had some ritual meaning for the kings of Macedonia which our lack of evidence and fixation with Alexander the Great prevents us from observing. It makes little sense to state that a mature Alexander could have maintained his youthful and boyish image forever.

It was the Diadochi who once and for all developed the image and the myth of the king which has come down to us, especially Ptolemy, Seleucus and Lysimachus. The images of Alexander as Ammon, with the skin of a panther or elephant, are not his own creations, but rather those of his generals. Producing a coin different to that of the deceased monarch was a sign of independence which depicted the division of the empire. On the contrary, the decision of Antigonos to maintain the previous coins was a way of demonstrating continuity and setting out his claims over the whole empire (THOMPSON 1982, 114).

If we accept that the royal portrait was created by the Diadochi, we must ask ourselves the purpose of presenting the king as an eternal beardless adolescent. The message transmitted by these images is that of a monarch who has died, but who at the same time has overcome death, since he does not age. The beardless Alexander that the Diadochi disseminated was a king who did not reign. It was a reminder of great authority and impression, a symbol of power rather than a specific and real being. It was a king with *auctoritas*, but without *potestas*, like his son and successor Alexander IV. It was a king who was present, but sufficiently absent for them to be able to govern on his behalf, as if he were a perpetual minor.

#### COMING OF AGE: RITES OF PASSAGE IN MACEDONIA.

Becoming a man in Macedonia was a different process to that of the Greek *poleis*. Athenaeus (1.18a) reminds us that no Macedonian could eat sitting on a bed without having killed a wild boar with a spear and without the help of nets. Even king Cassander had to experience this tough custom in the flesh, since due to his health he was never capable of hunting this animal, according to these rules<sup>30</sup>. According to Aristotle (Arist. *Pol.* 1324b11) there was a custom, which was not practised in his time, which was that of becoming a man by killing an enemy.

Given this circumstance, it is logical to wonder when a member of the Macedonian royal house reached adulthood. A citizen from the *poleis* did so through several important events in the life of a man: sex, the consumption of wine, participation in a war and marriage<sup>31</sup>. However, when it came to hold public office the minimum age was around 40.

Le Bohec (1993) has stated that coming of age was at the age of 20, but much earlier they began to hold office and positions which in the Greek world were reserved for people with greater experience. The Argead princes participated in the first two events very early. We know that the Macedonians drank pure wine, without mixing it, and that the king matched his subjects, demonstrating that he was a heavy drinker. The Athenian

<sup>30</sup> LANDUCCI 2003, 37 considers that this passage of Athenaeus “sottolinea il suo stato di “inferiorità” visto che non era riuscito a portare a termine il cimento venatorio”.

<sup>31</sup> CAMBINO 1993, 118: “Sex was another decisive factor to determine who could be an adult citizen”; 111: “With marriage, the woman more than the man underwent a radical change of situation”; 118: “Access to wine represented the first step toward integration in the world of adults”.

ambassadors said that Philip of Macedonia was the heaviest drinker that they had ever seen, to such an extent that Demosthenes said that he resembled a sponge (Plu. *Dem.* 16.2). His son Alexander followed his father's model, which was certainly the behaviour characteristic of a king from the Argead dynasty, since he was capable of emptying the so-called cup of Heracles (Ath. 10.434a-b). This cup had a capacity of some 2 *congi*, that is to say approximately 6.5 litres.

All of the princes appear to have entered the world of war at a very early age. The legend of Aeropus indicates that he participated in a skirmish against the Illyrians while still a baby. It is known that Alexander, when barely 16 years old, crushed an uprising by a tribe of Paeonians (Plu. *Alex.* 9.1), and that at the age of 18 (Diod. 16.86) he led the attack against the Sacred Band of Thebes, which decided the Battle of Chaeronea (338 BC). Cynane, the daughter of Philip II and Audata, participated in the Scythian campaign when she was barely 18, during which she supposedly killed a rival queen in a duel<sup>32</sup>. Demetrius also took on great responsibility in war at a very young age (Plu. *Demetr.* 5.2: νέος καὶ ἄπειρος), the most famous example being the Battle of Gaza.

They also married at a younger age than the majority of the inhabitants of the Greek *poleis*<sup>33</sup>. However, the final decision about their marriage lay with the king or the *prostates*. Philip's anger with Alexander in the so-called Pixodarus affair appears to have occurred in part on having taken on a power which lay solely with the king as the head of the Argead clan: to arrange the marriage of the members of the clan<sup>34</sup>. This was what Philip did with his nephew Amyntas and his daughter Cynane (Arr. *Succ.* 1.22), or with his brother-in-law Alexander of Epirus and his daughter Cleopatra (Diod. 16.91.4-6; Just. 9.6.1-3). Subsequently, the marriages of his sisters would appear to have been ordered by Alexander, and he would appear to have been the main person responsible for some of them not marrying. One example is his promise to hand over Cynane, one of his sisters, in marriage to Langarus, the leader of the Agrianians (Arr. *An.* 1.5.4-5).

Consequently, the members of the Argead clan are minors in relation to the king or to his guardian irrespective of their age. This degree of dependence does not end until the death of whoever is subjecting them. Becoming king is also a rite of passage, a change which transmutes the nature of the person, since it involves becoming the leader of the clan, the head of the family. You are not born an Argead king; you become king when the clan decides that you have reached adulthood, and this only occurs with the death of the guardian. Minor kings reach their fullness following the death of their guardian (Philip V) or on killing him (Perdiccas III).

It is in this context that we understand the relations of rivalry and admiration that could exist between the princes and the king<sup>35</sup>. The only way for any member of the Argead dynasty to achieve complete autonomy and to be fully free was to be seated on the throne. Polygamy and complex amphimetric relations caused true carnage in each

<sup>32</sup> Pol. *Strat.* 8.60. Cf. HECKEL 2006, 100.

<sup>33</sup> GREENWALT 1988, 93-95: "Potentially at odds with the evidence suggesting that males of Philip's household customarily married in their early twenties is the case of Alexander the Great (...) with the probable exception of Sparta, it seems to have been common for Greek men to marry at about age thirty and for Greek women to do the same in their mid-teens... In contrast, a bridegroom of Philip's household could count on a much less significant age gap between himself and at least his first spouse if he had more than one. The main reason why this was so had to do with politics, not economics".

<sup>34</sup> RUZICKA 2010, 9: "Alexander's marriage diplomacy thus represented a usurpation of Philip's royal prerogative and an assertion of Alexander's independent status".

<sup>35</sup> FREDRICKSMEYER 1990, 309: "Alexander was moved by the rivalry with Philip which had first been instilled in his childhood. This rivalry was not inspirational and reverential, as was Alexander's emulation of the long (and conveniently) dead Heracles and Achilles, but compelling and traumatic".

succession from which you could only definitely escape by being seated on the throne of blood that you had fought to conquer<sup>36</sup>.

However, this full freedom was not consumed simply on acceding to the throne, given that the new king inherited the *hetairoi* or the counsellors of the previous king. The style and the political guidelines of the predecessor persisted until the new king had sufficient power to do away with them and appoint people in whom he had full confidence. Alexander was proclaimed king in 336 BC, but was not fully independent until he disposed of his father's most important general in 330 BC, Parmenion<sup>37</sup>. Due to the personal nature of the Macedonian monarchy, irrespective of whether they were constitutional or absolutist, the beginnings of the reign were always difficult, and left the new kings with less manoeuvrability. The political lines traced by the previous king continued to exist through their trusted men. The new sovereign, who aspired to be completely independent, had to do away with them but, until he had accumulated sufficient power to do so, had to act like a young man listening to the voice of his elders.

## CONCLUSION

Any clan-based society is by nature conservative and traditional. However, we see how in Macedonia there is a heroic ideal which leads to a youthful representation of the monarch, and which at the same time predisposes him to share the power with the relations of patronage that he has created or inherited from the previous sovereign. The king wants to be young, like the heroes whom his elders have taught him to emulate, but at the same time he aspires to behave with the full autonomy which comes with maturity. This paradox may be due to several reasons:

— 1) The Homeric ideal which existed in Macedonia invited them to seek the *arete*, emulating and competing with the heroes of the past. With some exceptions, such as Odysseus, these heroes are young men who perish in the prime of life. The king therefore tends to fight on the front line of battle, dying young or leaving an heir who is even younger (Perdiccas III, Ptolemy Ceraunus, Demetrius II, Antigonus III). The Argead king is a second Heracles, who throughout his reign carries out arduous tasks like his ancestor with a view to obtaining glory. It should also be borne in mind that Heracles, when he achieved the much sought-after immortality, was betrothed to Hebe, the goddess of youth (Hom. *Od.* 11.602-604; Hes. *Teog.* 950-955; Eur. *Heraclid.* 915-6; Ov. *Met.* 9.400-1; Apollod. 2.7.7) and that one of the enemies that he defeated was Geras, old age (Hes. *Theog.* 225)<sup>38</sup>.

— 2) This youthful ideal was reinforced by the relations of patronage and by the clan-based conception of power. The nobles and other members of the clan were interested in the king being someone young. It was thus easier to influence him and to hold on to the power, at least temporarily, while he continued to be an

<sup>36</sup> OGDEN 1999, the concept *amphimetro*, to share the same father, but to have a different mother, explains many of the situations which occurred in the courts of the Macedonian kings.

<sup>37</sup> MÜLLER 2003, stresses that Alexander was a weak king dependent on his counsellors, especially Antipater and Parmenion, until the battle of Issus (333 BC).

<sup>38</sup> We would like to thank Mario Agudo Villanueva for having shown us the importance of this passage. Cf. BEAULIEU 2016, 51: "By crossing beyond the night and defeating her son Geras, Heracles passes beyond the limited time allotted to mortals to attain eternity".

inexperienced young boy. Consequently, it was interesting for those who aspired to power for the king to have a second youth, if necessary, since it was characteristic for a young hero to listen to his counsellors and to let himself be guided by those who know. The search for the *arete* may have been encouraged by the clan and by the guardians of the prince or king in order to establish the idea or belief that they had something to achieve or demonstrate. Someone who has to prove something to his people is a governor who is dependent on those around him and who has to listen to them. All young men have to have a Nestor on whom to rely (Hom. *Il.* 3.150-152). This resolved a peculiarity of Macedonian history: only the members of a dynasty could govern. Thus, the Argeads continued to be the only ones who reigned, although they became necessary instruments of those who had some longing for power.

— 3) The figures of the regents played an important role in this process of infantilization of the king. Despite life expectancy being so short at that time, the Macedonian oligarchy was not in a hurry to make the young heirs de facto kings. The alacrity with which they participated in war, started to drink wine or married contrasts with the delay in rising to the throne or governing without guardians. There is no example in which the prince is proclaimed king with the regent still living. The same occurred with the kings. Even in the cases in which the kings could associate their children with the throne and share power to the extent of being able to talk about a diarchy, as in the case of Seleucus I and Antiochus I (Plu. *Demetr.* 38.8), or of Antigonus and Demetrius (Diod. 20.53), one of them always had more power and authority. And it was always the senior king. This circumstance meant that the relations between those who held the power and those who aspired to hold it in Macedonia were never easy. The best way to remain as a regent was extending the cause which prevented them from becoming king for as long as possible; this inexperience was clear in their absence of facial hair.

— 4) This process of infantilization is reflected in the epithets with which the Argead princes and kings are designated in our sources: *pais*, *neos*, *paidion*, *meirakion* or *agenos*. These expressions are present in the way in which they address each other: “ὁ παῖδες, πάντα προλήψεται ὁ πατήρ ἐμοὶ δὲ οὐδὲν ἀπολείψει μεθ’ ὑμῶν ἔργον ἀποδείξασθαι μέγα καὶ λαμπρόν/ Boys, my father will anticipate everything; and for me he will leave no great or brilliant achievement to be displayed to the world with your aid” (Plu. *Alex.* 5.2). It is highly likely that the *basilikoï paides*, the royal pages, addressed each other using similar terms. Although this institution was reformed by Philip, he was not its creator and it had existed for a long time<sup>39</sup>.

We can also see this in the iconography and in the aesthetics of the court. The portraits of mature men or gods coexist with those of others who are beardless and which were considered to a certain extent to be an *alter ego* of the monarch, since there are no numismatic portraits of Macedonian kings until the reign of Demetrius I Poliorcetes<sup>40</sup>. As already mentioned, it is impossible to offer a definitive explanation for the existence of two iconographic models of some kings: Amyntas III, Perdikkas III and Philip II. However, if the *hetairoi* shaved

<sup>39</sup> KOTTARIDI 2005.

<sup>40</sup> KAKAVAS 2016, 74.

their beards we must imagine that they were emulating trends of the Argeads, since in all societies it is the elites who establish the trends in fashion and appearance, because all high culture is, as W. Jaeger said, aristocratic culture. It has always been taken for granted that Alexander was the creator of his portrait, but it should be borne in mind that he was born in the context of the Sacred War<sup>41</sup>, and that Philip, champion and avenger of Apollo, could have presented his son in accordance with the iconographic model of the god. It was, however, certainly his money with which Lysippos was paid. For us it is also inconceivable that Alexander planned to look like an adolescent once he attained maturity and even less in old age. If his iconographic model was perpetuated, this was because it favoured the interests of those Diadochi who aspired to govern independently. The images of the Diadochi were syncretized, in such a way that it is not possible for us to know whether the portraits belong to Alexander or to one of his generals, such as Seleucus (FULINSKA 2011, 128). A deceased king represented with the features of an adult can more easily be confused with a living one. The Diadochi sought to create a symbol of power through which they could govern, never a rival. After all, it is characteristic for a young man to listen to his elders.

— 5) We can conclude that there was no minimum or maximum age to be king of Macedonia. However, you are sovereign *pleno iure* when you have the power to seize it from those who dispute it. Power is something that is conquered and which, as the moribund Alexander said, is only handed over to the strongest<sup>42</sup>. Philip III himself was a minor for his generals, despite being an adult man, due to his mental condition. Taking his state into account, it was somewhat superfluous whether or not he left his beard.

Also, we should not overlook homoerotic relations, which were very common in Macedonia<sup>43</sup>, if we want to fully understand the complicated system of relations existing between the Macedonian prince and his counsellors. Young boys (*erómenoi*) tended to become the lovers of mature men (*erastés*) who guided them in their process of entering the adult world. The relationship came to an end with the appearance of the first signs of a beard. To a certain extent, a beardless king did not cease to be an *erómenos* for the regents, who see him as a young man who needs to be guided due to his lack of experience. The *próstates* or *epítropos* is a sort of equivalent to the *erastés* who knows that his control over the prince will disappear as soon as the first traces of a beard are glimpsed. That is why they continue to be called *meirakios* despite the fact that in view of their ages it was impossible that they were.

It should not be forgotten that the images of the beardless Heracles that we mentioned are associated with the first works of the demigod in which he captures or kills animals or monstrous beings at the command of his cousin Eurystheus. The ancestor of the Argeads was in the service of this king for some 10 years following a decision of the Oracle of Delphi. It was his relative who imposed the labours on him and who decided that he had achieved the maturity which would represent Heracles attaining immortality. Apollodorus (2.5.1) uses the following words to describe how

<sup>41</sup> We would like to thank Dr. Borja Antela Bernárdez for having stressed the importance of this fact.

<sup>42</sup> D.S. 17.117.4; Arr. An. 7.26.3. Cf. ANTELA BERNÁRDEZ 2009.

<sup>43</sup> MORTENSEN 2007, highlights that there were differences between Greek and Macedonian homosexuality due to the existence of the monarchy and to the greater hierarchy of society; ANTELA BERNÁRDEZ 2010; MOLINA MARÍN 2018, 238.



the son of Zeus came to serve Eurystheus: “καὶ τὸ προσταττόμενον ὑπὸ Εὐρυσθέως ἐτέλει”/ “and fulfilled what Eurystheus ordered”. We know that Heracles was the model of behaviour for the kings of Macedonia, and if another was needed for the regent or *próstates* we have to conclude that Eurystheus was a mythical archetype who could be used to give a legal basis to the period during which the Argead prince or king was under guardianship.

Also, we must understand that the process of infantilization of the king was not only of interest to his counsellors and regents. It was especially useful for the other members of the Argead clan who did not at all consider themselves to be inferior to the current king. The monarch was thus reminded that he was just another member of the clan and that he should listen to and work alongside the other Argeads with a common goal: the preservation and enlargement of the clan.

The destiny of an Argead king who did not listen to his clan and to his counsellors and who did not let himself be directed by them was death. This was the fate of Alexander II<sup>44</sup>. They may have reached true maturity, but achieving it depended on their elders and not on them, the only way to shake off the yoke which oppressed them and to become men being to kill their rivals.

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<sup>44</sup> GREENWALT 2017, 90.

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