

Aleksandar Simić, MA

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Faculty of Philosophy, Belgrade

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[aleksandarsimic10@gmail.com](mailto:aleksandarsimic10@gmail.com)

Petra Sršić, BA

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Osijek

[petrasrsic134@gmail.com](mailto:petrasrsic134@gmail.com)

## **Notorious Women in the Age of Glorious Men: Influential Women of the Early Hellenistic Period**

*Abstract:* Phillip II and his son Alexander the Great created the Macedonian empire that stretched from the Danube to the Indus. After Alexander's death, his generals dismantled the empire and established their own rule over certain territories. Their names and deeds are preserved in the sources together with a few mentions of their wives, mothers, sisters, or daughters. In the background of it all, women played important roles that are frequently overlooked by the sources due to their gender. They were mostly used by men to ensure alliances, but some were ambitious enough to strive for leadership. This article will portray the lives of these notable women who used their influence to gain power, or were used by others to secure their own position. Most influential are Olympias, Kleopatra, Antipater's daughters, Kynane, Adaia-Eurydike, Thessalonike, Barsine, Roxane, Apama, Amastris, Stratonice, Berenike, Arsinoe II, and the *hetairai*. The article will determine the importance of these women and the role they played in the world of ambitious men.

*Keywords:* royal women, Macedonia, Olympias, Kleopatra, Roxanne, Adaia-Eurydike, Apama

Before this article starts with an in-depth analysis of powerful women of the early Hellenistic period, it is important to explain the context of the time in which they lived and acted due to the complexity of different alliances and events. In 359 BC, Philip II became king of Macedonia. He reorganized the Macedonian army and

subdued Greece. After his assassination in 336, his son Alexander ascended the Macedonian throne and, after securing his rule over the Macedonians and Greeks, he embarked on a campaign against the Persian Empire. By 323, the year of his death, Alexander had conquered the Persian Empire and parts of India, and had plans to start a westward expansion campaign. The campaign never happened due to the actions of his generals, the Diadokhoi. In the aftermath of Alexander's death, his generals shared the provinces of the empire among themselves. However, the resulting atmosphere was tense and soon conflicts among the Diadokhoi, which are today known as the Wars of the Diadokhoi, erupted and lasted for the next forty years. The warring generals soon carved their own states: Ptolemy held Egypt, Antipater and his son Kassandros held Macedonia, Antigonos and his son Demetrios had their power base in Asia Minor and Syria, Seleukos was based in Babylonia and Eastern Satrapies, while Lysimakhos held Thrace. Greece was hotly contested. The power of Antigonos was crushed in the battle of Ipsos in 301 BCE and his territories were shared by Lysimakhos and Seleukos. The two of them finally clashed in the battle of Korupedion in 281 BCE and Seleukos remained as the sole ruler of most of Alexander's empire, apart from Egypt. He was killed on his way to Macedonia. After the death of Kassandros in 297 BCE, Macedonia became the battleground between his sons and other Diadokhoi, namely Pyrrhos of Epeiros, Demetrios and Lysimakhos. After much destruction, the Macedonian throne was at last occupied in 277 BCE by Antigonos Gonatas, son of Demetrios Poliorketes. Thus, the most important Hellenistic kingdoms were created.

## **Olympias**

One of the most notorious women of the ancient world, Olympias played an important role throughout her life. As a daughter of Neoptolemus, ruler of Molossia in Epeiros, whose line supposedly descended from Achilles, her lineage differentiated her from Philip's other wives.<sup>1</sup> Carney states that women in Molossia

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<sup>1</sup> William S. Greenwalt, "Macedonia, Illyria and Epirus," in *A Companion to Ancient Macedonia*, ed. Joseph Roisman and Ian Worthington (Malden MA; Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 292; "Olympias (1)," in: *A to Z of Ancient Greek and Roman Women*, revised edition, ed. Marjorie Lightman, Benjamin Lightman (New York: Facts on File, 2008 = *A to Z of Ancient Greek and Roman Women*), 239; Lynette G. Mitchell, "The Women of Ruling Families in Archaic and Classical Greece," *The Classical Quarterly* 62/1 (2012): 5.

could own and alienate property, act as guardians for their minor children, have no guardians as adults, and receive grants of citizenship.<sup>2</sup> Olympias' upbringing in such an environment, less strict than Macedonian or Greek, may have played an important role in shaping her expectations and possibilities. Philip II married Olympias in 357 to foster an alliance with Epeiros. Olympias was his fourth or fifth wife;<sup>3</sup> therefore, to strengthen her position at court, she needed to bear him a son, one who will preferably be chosen as heir. Lucky for her, the only other male contestant for the throne was Arrhidaios and he soon proved to be mentally challenged.<sup>4</sup>

Some of the valuable information about Olympias comes from Plutarch. Since her youth, she supposedly practised mystery rites that used snakes, with which she became expert and later even slept with.<sup>5</sup> Olympias was also a patron of the women's Dionysia.<sup>6</sup> It is said she fabricated a story about Alexander's divine birth. Supposedly, the night before her marriage Olympias dreamed her womb was struck by lightning; alluding to Alexander's divine origin.<sup>7</sup> Lacking other candidates, Phillip started treating her son as his heir about midway through his reign, making Olympias the most important woman at court. A testimony of her importance is the Philippeion in Olympia in which Phillip placed statues of his mother Eurydike, father Amyntas, son Alexander, and Olympias after his victory at Chaeronea.<sup>8</sup> It is obvious that Olympias is favoured among his wives as the mother of his heir.

However, Phillip decided to marry Kleopatra, a Macedonian high-born woman, and during the wedding Kleopatra's *kyrios* Attalos said that now, finally, legitimate princes will be born, alluding to Olympias' non-Macedonian descent and questioning Alexander's right to the throne. Phillip seems not to have supported

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<sup>2</sup> Elizabeth Carney, *Olympias, Mother of Alexander the Great* (New York; London: Routledge, 2006), 8.

<sup>3</sup> Athen. 13.557D; Carney, *Olympias*, 22.

<sup>4</sup> Carney, *Olympias*, 24.

<sup>5</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 2; "Olympias," 239.

<sup>6</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 2, 25; Elizabeth Carney, "Macedonian Women," in *A Companion to Ancient Macedonia*, ed. Joseph Roisman and Ian Worthington (Malden MA; Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010): 416.

<sup>7</sup> Iust. 11.11.3, cf. Elizabeth Baynham, "Why Didn't Alexander Marry Before Leaving Macedonia? Observations on Factional Politics at Alexander's Court in 336-334 B.C.." *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie*, 141/2 (1998): 149; Carney, *Olympias*, 26.

<sup>8</sup> Paus. 5.17.4, 20.10; Elizabeth Carney, "The Initiation of Cult for Royal Macedonian Women," *Classical Philology* 95/1 (2000): 24; Elizabeth Carney, *Women and Monarchy in Macedonia* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000), 212.

Alexander because he went to Epeiros with Olympias and installed her there.<sup>9</sup> There is a possibility that Olympias was instigating her brother Alexander, the ruler of Epeiros to go to war with Phillip over the insult, but Phillip thwarted her by marrying their daughter Kleopatra to Alexander of Molossia.<sup>10</sup> However, Phillip was murdered during their wedding and Olympias was accused of killing him.<sup>11</sup> Since there was no actual proof that she did it, no action was taken against her. After Alexander's proclamation as a ruler, Olympias returned to Macedonia and killed Phillip's wife Kleopatra.<sup>12</sup>

Killing the competition meant preventing possible usurpers and disruption of the throne. Dynastic murders were a common occurrence in Macedonia, so it comes as no surprise that women took part in the process.<sup>13</sup> It is said Alexander found her act too savage, but he still had Kleopatra's relatives killed to prevent future threats.<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, Alexander's close connection with his mother is implied from the letters he actively wrote to her from his campaigns. She wanted to influence the course of his campaign, but Alexander did not allow it.<sup>15</sup> Olympias was obviously seen as meddling, as Antipater likewise often complained about her intrusions. She was a woman who understood her position and knew how to use it. Alexander also sent large amounts of booty from his campaign back to Epeiros to his mother Olympias and his sister Kleopatra.<sup>16</sup>

While he was going through Gedrosia, a conflict between Antipater on one end, Kleopatra and Olympias on the other, erupted in Macedonia. Afterwards, Olympias went back to Epeiros while Kleopatra was sent to Macedonia to gather

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<sup>9</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 9; Athen. 13.557E; Iust. 9.5.8 says Phillip divorced Olympias on suspicion of adultery.

<sup>10</sup> Iust. 9.7.7.

<sup>11</sup> Plut, *Alex.* 10; Iust. 9.7.

<sup>12</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 9; Iust. 9.7.12 says: "Next she forced Cleopatra, for whose sake she had been divorced from Philippus, to hang herself, having first killed her daughter in her lap, and enjoyed the sight of her suffering this vengeance, to which she had hastened by procuring the death of her husband.", cf. Daniel Ogden, „The Royal Families of Argead Macedon and the Hellenistic World," in *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman Worlds*, ed. Beryl Rawson (Malden MA; Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 94.

<sup>13</sup> Elizabeth Carney, "Olympias and the Image of the Virago," *Phoenix* 47/1 (1993): 38-39.

<sup>14</sup> "Olympias", 239.

<sup>15</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 27, 39, *De Alex.* 333A, 340A, *Reg. et Imp. Apophth.* 180D; Diod. 17.114.3.

<sup>16</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 25; Iust. 12.14.3.

support against Antipater. Their conflict was unresolved while Alexander lived.<sup>17</sup> Alexander did not fear his mother's plan because he thought the Macedonians would never accept a woman as their leader. However, Alexander died in Babylon in 323 and did not witness his mother's efforts to become one.

Preserved sources provide information about Olympias' actions in Macedonia and Epeiros. She dedicated a cup to the statue of Hygieia in Athens. She had a conflict with the Athenians when they wanted to make a dedication to a statue of Dione in Dodone. Since Dodone was in Epeiros, Olympias claimed that the Athenians were trudging in her domain. Her most notable role was as a recipient of a large shipment of grain from Kyrene during the hunger of early 320s. Curtius Rufus claims that Alexander planned to deify her after death.<sup>18</sup>

### **Olympias after Alexander's death**

Olympias could now rely only on the influence she had from her personal relationship with Alexander, and her membership in the royal dynasty of Macedonia, whose reputation and religious sanction she shared.<sup>19</sup> Olympias wanted to return to Macedonia and oust Antipater so she sent word to Perdikkas about a possible union between him and her daughter Kleopatra, who she used to retain her power.<sup>20</sup> Kleopatra went to Sardis, but the union never happened. Around 320, Olympias lost control over her daughter who remained in Sardis for the duration of her life.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 68; Robin Lane Fox, "Philip's and Alexander's Macedon," in *Brill's Companion to Ancient Macedon: Studies in the Archaeology and History of Macedon, 650 BC–300 AD*, ed. Robin Lane Fox (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2011), 389. Supposedly Alexander sent Krateros to replace Antipater because of Olympias, cf. Dawn L. Gilley and Ian Worthington, "Alexander the Great, Macedonia and Asia," in *A Companion to Ancient Macedonia*, ed. Joseph Roisman and Ian Worthington (Malden MA; Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010): 202.

<sup>18</sup> Hyp. 4.19, 24-25; Curt. 9.6.26, 10.5.30; cf. Alain Bresson, "Grain from Cyrene", in: *The Economies of Hellenistic Societies, Third to First Centuries BC*, edited by Zosia H. Archibald, John K. Davies and Vincent Gabrielsen (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2011), 76.

<sup>19</sup> Carney, *Olympias*, 50.

<sup>20</sup> Fanula Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, (Beograd: SKZ 2010) 187; Édouard Will, "The Succession to Alexander," in: *The Cambridge Ancient History VII-1*, Second Edition, eds. F.W. Walbank, A.E. Astin, M.W. Frederiksen, R.M. Ogilvie (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 35.

<sup>21</sup> Elizabeth Carney, "The Sisters of Alexander the Great: Royal Relicts," *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 37/4 (1988): 388.

Due to his son Kassandros' young age, Antipater left the regency over Macedonia to his general Polyperchon, an act that sparked civil war. The conflict between Polyperchon, Antigonos, and Kassandros opened space for Olympias to manoeuvre for power. Polyperchon asked Olympias to return to Macedonia and take custody over the kings.<sup>22</sup> He sent her another letter with the same request after Kassandros allied himself with Antigonos who became the Governor of Asia after Perdikkas' death.<sup>23</sup> Olympias asked Eumenes for help against her enemies and asked him whether to return to Macedonia or stay in Epeiros; he advised staying.<sup>24</sup> This letter to Eumenes portrays her caution and political acuteness; she did not want to rush into an uncertain alliance.

In Asia, Ptolemy tried to deter the Silver Shields, an elite infantry unit, who supported Eumenes, but the letters from Polyperchon and, more importantly, Olympias, convinced them in the righteousness of their struggle.<sup>25</sup> Later Olympias invited Eumenes to take Alexander's son, Alexander IV, into custody while Antigonos besieged him in Nora.<sup>26</sup> Eumenes stayed in Nora until Antigonos left to deal with Perdikkas' other followers. During that period, the wife of Phillip Arrhidaios, Eurydike, made her husband pronounce Kassandros the regent, causing Polyperchon to flee to Epeiros with Alexander IV and Roxanne. Olympias finally answered his pleas for help and decided to return to Macedonia and reclaim the throne for her and Alexander IV, Polyperchon and his army by her side. Considered sacred by the Macedonians, Olympias apparently led the army and their numbers were boosted by the troops of Kassandros' ally, Eurydike, who defected to their ranks when their armies met at Eui on the Macedonian- Epeirote border.<sup>27</sup>

Most likely Eurydike rushed into the battle out of desire to prove herself; had she waited for Kassandros, who was in southern Greece, she might have survived. Olympias showed cruelty in dealing with Arrhidaios and Eurydike; first she imprisoned and starved them and then she had Arrhidaios killed and made Eurydike

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<sup>22</sup> Diod. 18.49.4; cf. Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 194-195.

<sup>23</sup> Diod. 18.57.2.

<sup>24</sup> Diod. 18.58.3-4; Nep. *Eum.* 6; cf. Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 195.

<sup>25</sup> Diod. 18.62.1-2.

<sup>26</sup> Plut. *Eum.* 13; Nep. *Eum.* 6

<sup>27</sup> Athen. 13.560F; Will, "The Succession to Alexander", 44; Pasi Loman, "No Woman No War: Women's Participation in Ancient Greek Warfare," *Greece & Rome* 51/1 (2004): 45.

kill herself.<sup>28</sup> She killed a number of opponents, including Kassandros' brother Nikanor and disturbed the ashes of his other brother Iolaios.<sup>29</sup> Her behaviour proved to be too much for the Macedonians who lost their regard for the old queen.<sup>30</sup> When Kassandros, who was at the time besieging Tegea, found out what Olympias did, he terminated the siege and hastened to Macedonia.<sup>31</sup> Aitolians wanted to please Olympias so they blocked Thermopile, but Kassandros went around them.<sup>32</sup>

Olympias retreated to Pydna even though there was not enough food for her army. She hoped that her allies would save them so she took Alexander IV, Roxanne, Phillip's daughter Thessalonike, and Pyrrhos' sister Deidameia with her.<sup>33</sup> Kassandros was not far behind and he besieged Pydna from land and sea.<sup>34</sup> For Olympias, things got worse; Epeiros declared for her enemy, and with it, the rest of her allies. Only Polyperchon remained faithful, but Kassandros' general soon defeated him.<sup>35</sup> In Pydna, the strain of the siege caused hunger and Olympias surrendered in 316.<sup>36</sup> The civil war was effectively over; Kassandros dealt with his enemies. Only Amphipolis needed incentive in the form of a letter from Olympias to surrender.<sup>37</sup>

Though he had Olympias imprisoned, Kassandros knew he needed a safe and legal way to get rid of her and not cause resentment; after all, she was Alexander's mother. Therefore, he convinced the relatives of Olympias' victims to prosecute her so the assembly can convict her. However, fearing her power, Kassandros did not let Olympias speak before the assembly. Afterwards, he sent soldiers to kill her, but they

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<sup>28</sup> Diod. 19.11.4-8; *FGrHist* 155 (= *Heidelberg epitome*) F1.5.

<sup>29</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 77; Iust. 14.6.1 says: "But neither did Olympias reign long; for having committed great slaughter among the nobility throughout the country, like a furious woman rather than a queen, she turned the favour with which she was regarded into hatred". He implies that the act was not of political but emotional nature.

<sup>30</sup> Diod. 19.11.4-8; Paus. 1.11.4.

<sup>31</sup> Diod. 19.35.1.

<sup>32</sup> Diod. 19.35.2.

<sup>33</sup> Diod. 19.35.5-6.

<sup>34</sup> Diod. 19.36.1; cf. Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 196.

<sup>35</sup> Diod. 19.36.5-6.

<sup>36</sup> Polyæn. 4.11.3; Diod. 19.50.4-5; Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 196.

<sup>37</sup> Diod. 19.50.8.

balked when they saw the queen. Lastly, Olympias was killed by those cousins of her victims that took her to trial.<sup>38</sup> Justin writes that she bravely accepted her demise.<sup>39</sup>

Kassandros' negative propaganda and the opinion on women's roles ancient authors had, formed a partly negative narrative about Olympias. She was not doing anything extraordinarily bad for that period; political murders were a common occurrence in the Macedonian royal house and Olympias utilized every option that was at her disposal to protect the rule of her grandson, and through him, her rule.<sup>40</sup> Rid of his opponents, Kassandros married Alexander's half-sister Thessalonike to strengthen and legitimize his claim to the throne, and he imprisoned Alexander IV and Roxanne in Amphipolis.<sup>41</sup> Hearing about this at Tyros in 315, Antigonos issued a proclamation in which he accused Kassandros for murdering Olympias and imprisoning Roxanne and Alexander, whom he demanded to be released.<sup>42</sup> Unfortunately, Kassandros had other plans.

## **Kleopatra**

Born in 354, Kleopatra was the only daughter of Olympias and Phillip and the sister of Alexander the Great. Very little is known about her until she married Alexander of Molossia, Olympias' brother who was the ruler of Epeiros, when she was 18. The marriage was deemed necessary by Phillip to strengthen political ties between Macedonia and Epeiros, which were weakened by his marriage to the Macedonian noblewoman Kleopatra in 337.<sup>43</sup> Kleopatra gave birth to two children, Kadmeia and Neoptolemos II of Epeiros.<sup>44</sup> When her husband died during a military expedition in Southern Italy in 331, Kleopatra, soon joined by her mother, controlled Epeiros by working closely with Alexander's heir, Aiakides, who espoused their

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<sup>38</sup> Diod. 19.51.1-6; *Marm. Par.* B14; cf. Miltiades Hatzopoulos, *Macedonian Institutions under the Kings: A Historical and Epigraphic Study* (Meletimata 22, Athens: Research Centre for Greek and Roman Antiquity; National Hellenic Research Foundation, 1996), 273-275.

<sup>39</sup> *Iust.* 14.6.11-12.

<sup>40</sup> Elizabeth Carney, "The Politics of Polygamy: Olympias, Alexander and the Murder of Philip," *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 41/2 (1992): 186-188.

<sup>41</sup> Diod. 19.52.1-4; cf. Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 196.

<sup>42</sup> Diod. 19.61.1-3; Will, "The Succession to Alexander", 47.

<sup>43</sup> Carney, "The Politics of Polygamy", 179; "Cleopatra (3)," in *A to Z of Ancient Greek and Roman Women*, 75.

<sup>44</sup> Carney, "The Sisters of Alexander the Great", 396.



cause against Antipater.<sup>45</sup> Kleopatra was also a recipient of a large sum of grain from Kyrene. On the other hand, she was selling grain to the Athenian Leokrates, who was shipping it to Korinth. It would seem that she kept in close contact with her brother: he sent her spoils from the siege of Gaza and she made peace between Alexander and Dionysios, the tyrant of Herakleia Pontike.<sup>46</sup> Late in Alexander's reign, Kleopatra and Olympias made a pact against Antipater. Kleopatra went to Macedonia to raise support against the old general, while Olympias remained in Epeiros.

After Alexander the Great died, Kleopatra was one of the few remaining members of the royal Argead line. Furthermore, she was Alexander's sister so marrying her meant one could lay claim to the throne of Macedonia, and the whole empire, and justify it as a means of keeping Alexander's memory and family safe. As she herself was too old to marry again, Olympias had apparently offered Kleopatra's hand in marriage to Leonnatos, Alexander's *somatophylax* (bodyguard) but he died in Thessaly during the Lamian War.<sup>47</sup>

Well aware that they need a strong ally, Olympias sent Kleopatra to Perdikkas to thwart Antipater, whose daughter Nikaia also arrived to be wed to him. Perdikkas did not broke off his engagements, instead, he decided to wait and see which one will prove more beneficial to him.<sup>48</sup> Sources differ whether or not Perdikkas married Kleopatra.<sup>49</sup> Antipater probably started doubting Perdikkas at this point and turned to other Diadokhoi for alliances. He found them in Antigonos, Ptolemy and Lysimakhos and soon Perdikkas attacked Egypt. The excursion to Egypt cost Perdikkas his life and Kleopatra was left to seek another suitor.<sup>50</sup> According to Plutarch, Kleopatra supposedly wrote a letter to Eumenes, in which she invited him

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<sup>45</sup> Paus. 1.11.3; Aesch. 3.242; Liv. 8.24; Greenwalt, "Macedonia, Illyria and Epirus", 296.

<sup>46</sup> *FGrHist* 434 (= Memnon) F4.1; Lyc. 1.26; Plut. *Alex.* 25; Greenwalt, "Macedonia, Illyria and Epirus", 295; Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 89; Mitchell, "The Women of Ruling Families", 4; John Whitehorne, *Cleopatras* (London; New York: Routledge, 2002), 59.

<sup>47</sup> Plut. *Eum.* 3; Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 184; Will, "The Succession to Alexander", 31.

<sup>48</sup> Diod. 18.23.1-3; Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 187.

<sup>49</sup> The second version of the event is that he wanted to marry Kleopatra but could not because he died, cf. Carney, "The Sisters of Alexander the Great", 400; Will, "The Succession to Alexander", 35.

<sup>50</sup> Diod. 18.25.3; Before he died, Perdikkas supposedly made Kleopatra the civil governor of Lydia; the former satrap retained his military powers and had to obey her, cf. Alexander Meeus, „Kleopatra and the Diadochoi,“ in *Faces of Hellenism: Studies in the History of the Eastern Mediterranean (4th Century B.C.-5th Century A.D)*, ed. Peter Van Nuffelen (Leuven; Paris; Walpole, MA: Studia Hellenistica 48, 2009), 78.

to take the throne of Macedonia and her hand in marriage. Other sources say that she warned Eumenes that Antigonos has laid a trap for him near Sardis and because of her Eumenes retreated to the east, to Kelainai.<sup>51</sup> After that, she had a fight with Antipater whose charges she countered with skill 'in a way more like a man than a woman', but they parted peacefully.<sup>52</sup> Eumenes' death in 316 left Kleopatra without allies.

Alone in Sardis, the new protector of Asia, Antigonos, did not let Kleopatra to leave. Unwed, she offered her future husband a connection to Alexander's line and the accompanying favour from the Macedonian troops and almost all the Diadokhoi were interested in her hand in marriage.<sup>53</sup> Antigonos could have married her, but he did not want to cause strife with the others. In 308/307, she had a conflict with Antigonos and wanted to go to Ptolemy in Egypt. After the deaths of Roxanne and Alexander IV, Kleopatra thought she might be safe in Egypt.<sup>54</sup> Seeing as he could not control her, and her alliance with the other Diadokhoi could cost him dearly, Antigonos ordered some women to kill her and later punished them to cover it all up.<sup>55</sup>

### **Warrior women: Kynane and Adaia-Eurydike**

Kynane was Phillip's daughter by his Illyrian wife Audata. Audata was well versed in martial skills, a trait she passed to her daughter.<sup>56</sup> She was also one of the rare women in antiquity who actually participated in battles. Polyainos says that she slew an unnamed Illyrian queen in battle.<sup>57</sup> Kynane was married to Amyntas, the nephew of Phillip II, and had a daughter Adaia by him. After his death, Alexander

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<sup>51</sup> Plut. *Eum.* 3, 8; *FGrHist* 156 (Arrian = Arr. fr.) F10.8, 11.40; Carney says that Eumenes came to Sardis but Kleopatra did not offer marriage, cf. Carney, "The Sisters of Alexander the Great", 400.

<sup>52</sup> Arr. fr. 1.40; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 66.

<sup>53</sup> Diod. 20.37.3-6; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 66.

<sup>54</sup> Diod. 20.37.3-6; *Heidelberg epitome* 4 claims that Ptolemy actually captured Kleopatra after Perdikkas' death and that he married her. This narrative is not supported by other sources. Carney, "The Sisters of Alexander the Great", 402-403; Whitehorne, *Cleopatras*, 68.

<sup>55</sup> Diod. 20.37.3-6; *Marm. Par.* B19; David Braund, "After Alexander: The Emergence of the Hellenistic World, 323-281," in *A Companion to the Hellenistic World*, ed. Andrew Erskine (Malden MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 28.

<sup>56</sup> Athen. 13.557B; Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 58.

<sup>57</sup> Polyæn. 8.60.

wanted to marry her to his ally Langaros, the king of Agriani, but Langaros died before the wedding.<sup>58</sup>

When Alexander died, Kynane raised an army and went to Asia Minor to marry Adaia to Arrhidaios. Recognizing her as a threat to his power, Perdikkas had his brother Alketas order Kynane to withdraw or be killed. She refused to withdraw so she was killed.<sup>59</sup> Alketas' poor treatment of a high-born Macedonian woman did not sit well with the rest of the Macedonians.<sup>60</sup> The army mutinied and the marriage was allowed. Adaia married Arrhidaios and took Eurydike as her royal name.<sup>61</sup>

After Perdikkas' failure in Egypt, the remainder of his army, along with the kings, returned to Triparadeisos where some of the Diadokhoi were rearranging matters of empire now that Perdikkas died. Custody over the kings was given to Antipater. While the negotiations lasted, the troops mutinied because of lack of payment. Adaia-Eurydike took advantage of the atmosphere and riled the soldiers even more against Antipater.<sup>62</sup> Antipater barely calmed the situation by cowing the young queen.<sup>63</sup>

Adaia-Eurydike returned to Macedonia with her husband. Polyperchon got custody of the kings after Antipater died and brought the kings with him on campaigns. However, Eurydike used the incompetence or the mental disability of Arrhidaios to come forth in public and use her power.<sup>64</sup> She separated Arrhidaios from Polyperchon and allied herself with Kassandros whom she proclaimed regent, causing Polyperchon to flee to Epeiros.<sup>65</sup> Eurydike heard that Olympias is coming to

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<sup>58</sup> Arr. *Anab.* 1.5; Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 69; Baynham, "Why Didn't Alexander Marry Before Leaving Macedonia?", 146.

<sup>59</sup> Polyæn. 8.60; Arr. fr. 9.22; Loman, "No Woman No War", 470; Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 187; Carney, "The Sisters of Alexander the Great", 392-393; "Cynane," in: *A to Z of Ancient Greek and Roman Women*, 101.

<sup>60</sup> Polyæn. 8.60; Antigonos ran to Antipater and Krateros to Macedonia after Kynane's death, he told them of Perdikkas' plan against them and he exaggerated the death of Kynane thus persuading them to make war with Perdikkas, cf. Arr. fr. 9.23-24.

<sup>61</sup> Eurydike was slowly becoming a dynastic name for Macedonian queens, cf. Waldemar Heckel, "Kleopatra or Eurydike?" *Phoenix* 32/2 (1978): 157.

<sup>62</sup> Diod. 18.39.1-4; Arr. fr. 9.31, 33; Braund, "After Alexander", 23; Hatzopoulos, *Macedonian Institutions*, 305. Adaia-Eurydike was trained in military affairs by her mother, Kynane, see Polyæn. 8.60.

<sup>63</sup> Diod. 18.39.1-4; Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 190.

<sup>64</sup> Elizabeth Carney, "The Career of Adea-Eurydike," *Historia: Zeitschrift für Alte Geschichte* 36/4 (1987): 499.

<sup>65</sup> Diod. 19.11.1; Grace H. MacUrduy, "Roxane and Alexander IV in Epirus," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 52/2 (1932): 258-262; Carney, "The Career of Adea-Eurydike", 500.

Macedonia so she took action. She wrote to her ally Kassandros to join her from the Peloponnese and started to raise an army.<sup>66</sup> In the meantime, in 317, Polyperchon came to help Olympias and Alexander get the throne of Macedonia back. Olympias led an army to Macedonia and she met opposition from Eurydike at Eui. Eurydike's troops defected to Olympias' side because they honoured Alexander's mother and child more than they did Eurydike and Arrhidaios.<sup>67</sup> Phillip Arrhidaios was captured there while Eurydike was caught on the way to Amphipolis.<sup>68</sup> Olympias gave the order to kill Arrhidaios, but she made Eurydike kill herself.<sup>69</sup> After Kassandros defeated Olympias, he gave Eurydike, Arrhidaios, and Kynane a proper burial at Aigai.<sup>70</sup>

Kratesipolis, Polyperchon's daughter-in-law, the wife of his son Alexander, deserves an honorary mention among these warrior women. After Alexander was killed in battle, Kratesipolis managed to gain control of her husband's army. She successfully suppressed the revolt of the Sikyonians and held Sikyon and Korinth until 308 when she handed those cities to Ptolemy. Afterwards, nothing is known of her.<sup>71</sup>

### **Thessalonike**

Thessalonike was Phillip's daughter by a Thessalian noblewoman Nikesipolis from Phairai. Little is known about her life before Kassandros took her as his wife in 316; mostly to justify his rule of Macedonia. Kassandros established a city called Thessalonike in her honour, which would in the future become one of the foremost Macedonian cities. Apart from producing heirs, Thessalonike's role during Kassandros' lifetime was, as far as we know, practically nonexistent. After his death in 297, she became a sort of regent for their young sons Antipater and Alexander.

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<sup>66</sup> Athen. 13.560F; Diod. 19.11.1; cf. Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 196; David Braund, „After Alexander: The Emergence of the Hellenistic World, 323-281,“ in *A Companion to the Hellenistic World*, ed. Andrew Erskine (Malden MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 24.

<sup>67</sup> Diod. 19.11.2. Eurydike went into battle dressed in Macedonian armour, see Athen. 13.560F.

<sup>68</sup> Diod. 19.11.3.

<sup>69</sup> Athen. 13.560f; Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 196; Braund, „After Alexander“, 24. Apparently she sent her a sword, a noose, and hemlock to kill herself, but Eurydike hanged herself with the straps of her gown, cf. Ael. *VH* 13.36; „Eurydice (2) (Adea),“ in: *A to Z of Ancient Greek and Roman Women*, 128.

<sup>70</sup> Athen. 4.155A; Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 145.

<sup>71</sup> Diod. 19.67.1-2, 20.37.1; Polyæn. 8.58; about possible romance with Demetrios Poliorketes see Plut. *Demetr.* 9; cf. Carney, „Women and basileia“, 384; Loman, *No Woman No War*, 46.

The elder, Antipater, was dissatisfied with his mother's rule and her apparent preference of his brother, so he orchestrated her murder. Macedonia was plunged in civil war from which Demetrios Poliorketes emerged as king.<sup>72</sup>

### **Women from the East: Roxanne, Apama, Barsine and Amastris**

Certain women from the Persian Empire played a large role during Alexander's reign and subsequent events. Those women were: Roxanne, Alexander's first wife, Apama, wife of Seleukos, Barsine, Alexander's influential lover, and Amastris, wife of Krateros, Dionysios, and Lysimakhos. Their common trait was that they were from the highest echelons of society: Roxanne and Apama were daughters of foremost noblemen from Baktria and Sogdiana, while Barsine and Amastris were connected to the Akhaimenid court. Their destinies were different, but all of them had to deal with Graeco-Macedonian cultural biases towards the Easterners, especially Roxanne and Barsine.

**Roxanne.** While in Baktria, Alexander married the Sogdian princess, daughter of Oxyartes, Roxanne, in order to get a firmer grasp on that restless territory.<sup>73</sup> She was captured by Alexander during a revolt by her father and was immediately acknowledged as one of the most beautiful women in Persia.<sup>74</sup> Their child, later king Alexander IV was born 324. Plutarch states that after Alexander's death, Roxanne killed his other wife Stateira and her sister with the help of Perdikkas.<sup>75</sup> It was supposedly done in a fit of jealousy, but the real reason was probably to shield herself and her child from possible 'false heirs' Stateira might yet produce. The

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<sup>72</sup> Plut. *Demetr.* 36, *Pyr.* 6; Diod. 19.52.1; Athen. 13.557C; Dion. Hal. 1.49.4; *Heidelberg epitome* 2.3; cf. Braund, "After Alexander", 32; Ogden, "The Royal Families", 93; Will, "The formation of the Hellenistic kingdoms", 104; Carney, "The Sisters of Alexander the Great", 386; Daniel Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes and Death: The Hellenistic Dynasties* (London: Duckworth with The Classical Press of Wales 1999), 56.

<sup>73</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 47; Metz *ep.* 29; cf. Heather M. Loubé, *The Metz Epitome: Alexander (July, 330 B.C. - July, 325 B.C.): A Commentary* (Master thesis, Ottawa: University of Ottawa 1995), 32-34. See also Marcel Renard et Jean Servais, „A propos du mariage d'Alexandre et de Roxane“, *L'Antiquité Classique* 24/1 (55): 29-50.

<sup>74</sup> Metz *ep.* 70, states that Alexander and Roxanne had another child, who died while Alexander was in India, cf. Loubé, *The Metz Epitome*, 64-65; "Roxane," in: *A to Z of Ancient Greek and Roman Women*, 286.

<sup>75</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 77; Curt. 8.4.25; Arr. *Anab.* 7.4.4. She supposedly also killed his other wife Parisatis, daughter of Artaxerxes III Okhos, cf. Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 107. Alexander married Stateira and Parisatis in Susa, see. Diod. 17.107.6, *Iust.* 12.10.9; Curt. 10.3.12.

murder also implies that Stateira, the daughter of Dareios, had a good position at court during Alexander's life.<sup>76</sup>

Shortly after, Perdikkas was chosen as the guardian of Phillip Arrhidaios and Roxanne's new-born son, Alexander IV. Roxanne and Alexander went with him on campaign against Ptolemy. However, Perdikkas met his demise in Egypt and Roxanne was sent to Greece with Antipater, where she stayed during the tumultuous civil war. She had no real political power since her child was too young and therefore only a pawn in the hands of the Diadokhoi, and she was a foreigner with no support. When Eurydike proclaimed Kassandros the governor of the kings Polyperchon fled with Roxanne and Alexander to Epeiros. After Kassandros defeated Olympias, he placed Roxanne and Alexander IV in Amphipolis to get them out of the way. After many battles which the Diadokhoi fought for control over the empire, it was slowly beginning to be clear that even if the territory is again united, it will not be done by Alexander's son, but by one of them. Therefore, Kassandros probably judged that there was no need for pretence and that it was easier if Alexander IV is removed so no one could use him to further his or her gains. After things quieted down a bit, in 310/309 or 308/307, Kassandros had Roxanne and Alexander IV killed.<sup>77</sup>

**Apama.** The first wife of Seleukos Nikator, Apama was his bride at the mass wedding in Susa in 324. She was the only bride from that wedding that a Diadokhos did not repudiate after Alexander's death. She was the daughter of the Sogdian or Baktrian Spitamenes, who led a revolt against Alexander.<sup>78</sup> All the other Diadokhoi left their Eastern wives so they could marry Macedonian women, but Seleukos needed the connection to the East. He kept Apama by his side because her father controlled several satrapies and it was crucial for his subjects to accept him as king to

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<sup>76</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 70, *De Alex.* 329E, 338D-E; Arr. *Anab.* 7.4.4-6; Iust. 12.10.9-10; Curt. 10.3.12; Diod. 17.107.6; cf. Elizabeth Carney, "Alexander and Persian Women," *The American Journal of Philology* 117/4 (1996): 577.

<sup>77</sup> Diod. 19.52.4, 105.2; Paus. 9.7.2; *Heidelberg epitome* 1.6; *Marm. Par.* B18; cf. Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 201.

<sup>78</sup> Arr. *Anab.* 7.4; Plut. *Demetr.* 31.3; cf. Ann-Cathrin Harders, "The Making of a Queen – Seleukos Nikator and His Wives," in: *Seleukid Royal Women Creation, Representation and Distortion of Hellenistic Queenship in the Seleukid Empire*, eds. Altay Coşkun and Alex McAuley (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2016): 31; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes and Death*, 119.

be legitimately connected with a daughter of a local leader. It also enabled him to include the Eastern satrapies in his kingdom.<sup>79</sup>

When Seleukos became the satrap of Babylonia in 320, she gave birth to their daughters Apama and Laodike. She might have stayed in Babylon when Antigonos made Seleukos flee to Ptolemy in Egypt and worked to make his comeback easier.<sup>80</sup> The importance of Apama to Seleukos and his rule is clearly visible in the fact that she was the second of the Hellenistic queens to carry the title of *basilissa*.<sup>81</sup> Furthermore, in an effort to organize his kingdom, Seleukos founded many cities, around three of which he named after her - Apameia, probably to promote their relationship and his devotion to her and thus make the changes he was doing more acceptable to the inhabitants.<sup>82</sup> Apama regularly accompanied Seleukos in his travels and appeared publicly by his side. Whether she accepted Seleukos' religion or not, she gave donations to temples in Didyma and Delos, sanctuaries of Apollo and Artemis.<sup>83</sup> She probably did it because Seleukos chose to spread a story that he was descended of Apollo in order to give his rule divine affirmation and because it was expected of a queen to be a benefactor.<sup>84</sup> A statue was dedicated in her honour at Didyma in 299/8 because she helped the Milesians who were fighting in Seleukos' army in the east. On this rare epigraphic mention of Apama, the Milesians call her queen.<sup>85</sup>

There is a possibility that she died in 299, before Seleukos married Stratonike, but she might also have been eliminated to make room for Stratonike.<sup>86</sup> It is possible

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<sup>79</sup> David Engels and Kyle Erickson, "Apama and Stratonike – Marriage and Legitimacy," in: *Seleukid Royal Women Creation, Representation and Distortion of Hellenistic Queenship in the Seleukid Empire*, ed. Altay Coşkun and Alex McAuley (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2016): 41-42; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes and Death*, 119-120.

<sup>80</sup> Gillian Ramsey, "The Diplomacy of Seleukid Women: Apama and Stratonike," in *Seleukid Royal Women Creation, Representation and Distortion of Hellenistic Queenship in the Seleukid Empire*, ed. Altay Coşkun and Alex McAuley (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2016): 93-94.

<sup>81</sup> Harders, "The Making of a Queen", 30.

<sup>82</sup> App. Syr. 57; Harders, "The Making of a Queen", 33.

<sup>83</sup> Engels and Erickson, "Apama and Stratonike", 43.

<sup>84</sup> Iust. 15.4.5-9.

<sup>85</sup> *IDidyma* 480; Ramsey, "The Diplomacy of Seleukid Women", 88-89.

<sup>86</sup> Engels and Erickson, "Apama and Stratonike," 43.

she was in the background until 293, when Seleukos allowed Stratonike and Antiokhos to marry, and then regained her former position.<sup>87</sup>

**Barsine.** Barsine was from a notable Persian family of Artabazos. She actually spent some time at court in Pella while her father was exiled from the Empire. She was later married to Mentor, and after his death to Memnon of Rhodes, famous mercenary commanders in the army of Dareios III. After Memnon's death and the battle of Issos, she became emotionally involved with the young Macedonian king.<sup>88</sup> Their relationship had a political dimension as well: she came from a powerful Persian family, whose support Alexander needed. Her father was one of Alexander's satraps. She bore Alexander a son, called Herakles. Their relationship ended when Alexander married Roxanne. He may also have lost the support of Barsine's family, because at the same time her father resigned his post of satrap, apparently citing his old age as the reason.<sup>89</sup>

At the wedding in Susa, Barsine's daughter was married to Alexander's admiral Nearkhos. In the immediate days following the king's death, Nearkhos proposed naming Barsine's son Herakles the heir to the throne. However, no one supported him.<sup>90</sup> Barsine and Herakles would mostly remain out of political and military strifes between the Diadokhoi. Still, Herakles was Alexander's son and therefore potentially dangerous to anyone who would pretend to the Macedonian throne. For that reason, Kassandros arranged his murder in 310/9. Barsine was probably killed on that same occasion.<sup>91</sup>

**Amastris.** Amastris was a daughter of Oxathres, brother of Dareios. Apparently, Amastris was wed to Krateros in Susa. After being repudiated by Krateros Amastris married Dionysios, the tyrant of Herakleia Pontike on the Black Sea, whose realm flourished because of the wealth she brought with her.<sup>92</sup> After he died, she ran the city until their children grew. She even minted her own money.<sup>93</sup> In

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<sup>87</sup> "Apama (1)," in: *A to Z of Ancient Greek and Roman Women*, 31.

<sup>88</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 21; Bosworth, *The Legacy of Alexander*, 30; Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 101, 104.

<sup>89</sup> Carney, "Alexander and Persian Women", 573-574; Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 102; cf. Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes and Death*, 43.

<sup>90</sup> Curt. 10.6.10-12; Bosworth, *The Legacy of Alexander*, 30.

<sup>91</sup> Diod. 20.20.1-2, 28.1-3; Paus. 9.7.2; Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 149-150.

<sup>92</sup> Memnon F4.5; Diod. 20.109.7.

<sup>93</sup> Strab. 12.3.10; Memnon F4.9; Ramsey, "The Diplomacy of Seleukid Women," 95.



302, Herakleia entered into an alliance with Lysimakhos, who wanted the city, sealed by their marriage.<sup>94</sup> Memnon states that Lysimakhos even loved Amastris or showed her “equal affection”, until he married Arsinoe.<sup>95</sup> Amastris went back to Herakleia and later named a city she founded after herself, on the sea-coast of Paphlagonia.<sup>96</sup> After her sons, Klearkhos and Oxathres,<sup>97</sup> became rulers of the city, they caused Amastris to drown in 289. Lysimakhos later killed the brothers and took Herakleia under his protection.<sup>98</sup>

### Antipater’s daughters

Antipater had three daughters, Nikaia, Phila, and Eurydike. He tried to use them to garner support and build a network of alliances.

**Nikaia.** After Perdikkas pacified some territories of Alexander’s empire, Antipater sent his daughter Nikaia to be his wife and therefore strengthen their alliance. As was mentioned, Kleopatra also arrived in Asia with the intention to marry him.<sup>99</sup> Perdikkas could choose between Nikaia and strengthening his position among the Diadokhoi and the apparel that he is keeping Alexander’s legacy safe<sup>100</sup> or Kleopatra and a chance to become king due to the connection to Alexander’s and Macedonia’s royal house. Perdikkas chose to marry Nikaia first and later divorce her for Kleopatra because that meant he could be seen as a successor to the throne and not only as regent.<sup>101</sup> Antipater discovered the plan and sought to make alliances with the other Diadokhoi. Instead, he sent Nikaia to Lysimakhos in Thrace.<sup>102</sup> She bore him three children, among which was a son, Agathokles.<sup>103</sup>

**Eurydike.** Eurydike was sent to be Ptolemy’s wife in 321, about the time he stole Alexander’s funeral cortège and brought it to Egypt.<sup>104</sup> Their children were

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<sup>94</sup> Diod. 20.109.7; Memnon F4.9; Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 210; Braund, “After Alexander”, 31.

<sup>95</sup> Memnon F4.9.

<sup>96</sup> Memnon F4.9; Strab. 12.3.10; Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 208.

<sup>97</sup> She had three children with Dionysius, Klearkhos, Oxathres, and Amastris, and a son, Alexander, with Lysimakhos, Memnon 4.8; cf. „Amastris,“ ,” in: *A to Z of Ancient Greek and Roman Women*, 20.

<sup>98</sup> Memnon F5.2-3.

<sup>99</sup> Diod. 18.23.1-3; Arr. fr. 9.21.

<sup>100</sup> Iust. 13.6.4; he also needed an alliance with Antipater in order to get fresh troops from Macedonia.

<sup>101</sup> Arr. fr. 9.21, 26; Braund, “After Alexander”, 23.

<sup>102</sup> Ogden, “The Royal Families”, 102.

<sup>103</sup> Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 221.

<sup>104</sup> Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 189; Elizabeth Donnelly Carney, *Arsinoe II of Egypt and Macedon: A Royal Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2013), 19.

daughters Lysandra, Ptolemais, Theoxena, and sons Ptolemy Keraunos (Lightning), Meleager who left Egypt when his father married Berenike, Argaios and an unnamed one, who were killed by Ptolemy II.<sup>105</sup> When Ptolemy married Berenike, Eurydike moved to Miletus, where she had considerable influence. Short time after the Korupedion Eurydike was installed in Kassandreia by her son Keraunos, and there she was in charge of a troop of mercenaries with which she controlled the city.<sup>106</sup> The inhabitants honoured her with a festival called Eurydikaia because she gave freedom to the city.<sup>107</sup>

**Berenike.** Although not a daughter, but a niece of Antipater, Berenike appeared on the stage of history with her cousin Eurydike and later married the same man. Berenike came to Egypt as a part of her cousin Eurydike's retinue when she married Ptolemy. She was Kassandros' (Antipater's brother) granddaughter, daughter of Antigone and Lagos. She was widowed when she came to Egypt and had several children, among whom were Magas and Antigone.<sup>108</sup> Ironically, Ptolemy preferred Berenike to Eurydike so he married her around 317.<sup>109</sup> When Pyrrhos, who was in good relations with Demetrios, was sent to Egypt as a hostage after the battle of Ipsos, he impressed Berenike and he married her daughter from her first marriage, Antigone.<sup>110</sup> It is told Pyrrhos was so impressed with Berenike that, as well as founding and naming a city in Epeiros after his wife Antigone, he did so for Berenike too.<sup>111</sup> Arsinoe, Philotera, and Ptolemy, the future king of Egypt, later to be known as Philadelphos, were her children with Ptolemy.<sup>112</sup> After her death between 281 and

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<sup>105</sup> App. Syr. 62; Braund, "After Alexander", 33; Janice J. Gabbert, *Antigonos II Gonatas: A Political Biography* (London; New York: Routledge, 2004), 2; Carney, *Arsinoe II of Egypt and Macedon*, 19-20.

<sup>106</sup> Polyaen. 6.7.2; cf. Loman, "No Woman No War", 45; "Eurydice (3)," in: *A to Z of Ancient Greek and Roman Women*, 128; Carney, *Arsinoe II of Egypt and Macedon*, 61.

<sup>107</sup> Polyaen. 6.7.2. Euergetism is a practice of sharing one's wealth in order to improve a community, e.g. by commissioning the building of a monument or a sanctuary, cf. Carney, "Macedonian Women", 421.

<sup>108</sup> Magas would later rule Kyrene, and Antigone would marry Pyrrhos, cf. "Berenice I," in: *A to Z of Ancient Greek and Roman Women*, 56; Carney, *Arsinoe II of Egypt and Macedon*, 20.

<sup>109</sup> Rachel Evelyn White, "Women in Ptolemaic Egypt," *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 18 (1898): 243, Berenike was some 26 years younger than Ptolemy, cf. "Berenice," 56.

<sup>110</sup> Plut. *Pyr.* 4; Paus. 1.11.5; Carney, *Arsinoe II of Egypt and Macedon*, 21.

<sup>111</sup> Plut. *Pyr.* 6. Pyrrhos was a man who built his power by political marriages. After the death of Antigone, he married Lanassa, the tyrant of Syrakuse Agathokles' daughter, Birkenna, the daughter of the Illyrian king Bardylis, and lastly, a Paionian princess, the daughter Audoleon, and his fifth wife was the daughter of Ptolemy Keraunos, cf. Plut. *Pyr.* 9; Iust. 24.1.8; Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 216.

<sup>112</sup> Braund, "After Alexander", 33.

271, Ptolemy II instituted the cult of his divine parents - *theoi soterēs* (saviour gods).<sup>113</sup> It should be noted that Berenike was the first woman in the Hellenistic period who won the Olympic chariot race.<sup>114</sup>

**Phila.** Phila was known for her great wisdom; she was reportedly so wise that she could even calm a riot by manipulating soldiers without taking control of them and her father sought advice from her.<sup>115</sup> She was first married to a man named Balakros with whom she had a son, but she was soon widowed.<sup>116</sup> After they conquered Athens in the Lamian war, Antipater honoured Krateros and gave him Phila's hand in marriage. They had one son, but their marriage was brief because Krateros died in battle.<sup>117</sup>

Phila's most important marriage was with Demetrios Poliorketes. Although he had a number of wives, and Phila was some 12 years older than he was, Demetrios respected her the most. Their marriage was arranged by Demetrios' father, Antigonos, after the conference in Triparadeisos, partly because of the influence she had due to her marriage with Krateros and the fact she was the daughter the new guardian of the kings, Antipater. Phila gave Demetrios two children, Stratonike and Antigonos.<sup>118</sup>

She was the first of Hellenistic royal women to receive the title of *basilissa* (queen) at the same time Demetrius took the title of *basileus* around 306 and was even acknowledged as such in the ruler cult.<sup>119</sup> She was also the only one of his wives who

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<sup>113</sup> Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 219; Carney, "The Initiation of Cult", 33; Carney, *Arsinoe II of Egypt and Macedon*, 67.

<sup>114</sup> Carney, *Arsinoe II of Egypt and Macedon*, 28, especially stresses this fact.

<sup>115</sup> Diod. 19.59.3-5.

<sup>116</sup> Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 165; "Phila (3)," in: *Who's Who in the Age of Alexander the Great, Prosopography of Alexander's Empire* (Malden MA; Oxford; Carlton: Blackwell Publishing, 2006), 208.

<sup>117</sup> Diod. 18.18.7; Plut. *Demetr.* 14; Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 186; Braund, *After Alexander*, 23; "Phila," in: *Encyclopedia of Women in the Ancient World*, ed. Joyce E. Salisbury (Santa Barbara; Denver, Oxford: ABC-CLIO, 2001): 275.

<sup>118</sup> Plut. *Demetr.* 14, 53; Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 191; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes and Death*, 174.

<sup>119</sup> Inscription mentioning Phila as *basilissa*: IG XII 6 1 30 (= Syll<sup>3</sup> 333); Phila was associated with Aphrodite, see Athen. 6.254A, 255C; Carney, "Macedonian Women", 419. She was the first to have a cult dedicated to her while she was alive, cf. Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 169; Carney, *Arsinoe II of Egypt and Macedon*, 95. Paschalis Paschidis, *Between City And King: Prosopographical Studies on the Intermediaries Between the Cities of the Greek Mainland and the Aegean and the Royal Courts in the Hellenistic Period (322-190 BC)*, Meletimata 59 (Athens: Research Centre for Greek and Roman Antiquity, National Hellenic Research Foundation 2008) 388-389, claims that the inscription mentioning Phila as queen dates from 299 BCE when Phila was visiting her brother Kassandros in Macedonia.

held the title.<sup>120</sup> Although she knew of his affairs, Plutarch testifies that Phila was a committed wife. While Demetrios was besieging Rhodes in 305-304, she sent him letters and supplies.<sup>121</sup> However, when Demetrios returned to Athens, his profligate antics continued without interruption from his wives. He lived with known courtesans on the Acropolis, in the temple of Athena Parthenos.<sup>122</sup> Phila's biggest threat was Demetrios' next wife Deidameia, the sister of Pyrrhos of Epeiros whom he married in 303. She might have proved useful and her children might have been favoured as heirs.<sup>123</sup> Still, a daughter born of Phila, Stratonike, was sent to be the wife of Seleukos, and Phila was present at the meeting between the two Diadokhoi.<sup>124</sup> After the wedding, Demetrios took Kilikia from Kassandros' brother Pleistarkhos, and Phila was sent to appease her brother Kassandros.<sup>125</sup> This exemplifies the trust Demetrios put in Phila to deal with her brother. In the meantime, Deidameia fell ill and died.<sup>126</sup>

Demetrios used his connection to Phila to legitimize his conquest of Macedonia after the death of Kassandros. Phila's connection to the Macedonian throne helped their son Antigonos Gonatas to be recognized as Macedonian king in 277 BCE.<sup>127</sup> Phila was devoted to Demetrios so much that she drank poison in despair after Pyrrhos and Lysimakhos chased him out of Macedonia in 287.<sup>128</sup>

## Arsinoe (II)

After the battle of Ipsos new alliances had to be forged, which meant new marriages were arranged. Lysimakhos, then an aged king, married 15-year-old

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<sup>120</sup> IG XII 6 1 30; Harders, "The Making of a Queen", 30; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes and Death*, 174.

<sup>121</sup> Plut. *Demetr.* 22; Diod. 20.93.4.

<sup>122</sup> Plut. *Demetr.* 24.

<sup>123</sup> Plut. *Demetr.* 25; Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 213. Other Demetrios' wives were: Athenian Eurydike, descendant of famous Miltiades, Lanassa, daughter of Syrakusan tyrant Agathokles, Phila's sister Eurydike and Ptolemy's daughter Ptolemais, cf. Plut. *Demetr.* 14, 46, 53, *Pyr.* 10; cf. Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 217.

<sup>124</sup> Plut. *Demetr.* 32; Gabbert, *Antigonos II Gonatas*, 6; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes and Death*, 175.

<sup>125</sup> Plut. *Demetr.* 32; Gabbert, *Antigonos II Gonatas*, 6; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes and Death*, 175.

<sup>126</sup> Plut. *Demetr.* 32.

<sup>127</sup> Plut. *Demetr.* 37; Braund, "After Alexander", 32; Albert Brian Bosworth, *The Legacy of Alexander: Politics, Warfare and Propaganda under the Successors* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 252.

<sup>128</sup> Plut. *Demetr.* 45; Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 218; Gabbert, *Antigonos II Gonatas*, 18. In another story, Seleukos captured Demetrios and kept him in luxurious confinement where he drank himself to death in 283. Phila drank poison after that, cf. "Phila (1)," in: *A to Z of Ancient Greek and Roman Women*, 254.

Arsinoe, Ptolemy's daughter.<sup>129</sup> Lysimakhos renamed Ephesos into Arsinoe and gave his wife sufficient funds for her to finance the building of a rotunda in Samothrake.<sup>130</sup> At one point, Lysimakhos came back from Herakleia after punishing the sons of Amastris, full of praise for her and her cities; Arsinoe wanted to be the mistress of those places so she convinced him to give the cities to her.<sup>131</sup> She bore him sons, Ptolemy, Lysimakhos, and Phillip,<sup>132</sup> and wanting to secure the throne for Ptolemy, she persuaded Lysimakhos to kill Nikaia's son Agathokles in 284/283.<sup>133</sup> Furthermore, Agathokles' wife was Arsinoe's half-sister Lysandra who ran with her brother Ptolemy Keraunos to Seleukos in Asia.<sup>134</sup>

Lysandra pleaded Seleukos for help, which he readily provided; seeing an opportunity to win the territory ruled by Lysimakhos.<sup>135</sup> In 281, at Korupedion, Seleukos and Lysimakhos fought the last battle of the Diadokhoi wars, and Lysimakhos died on the battlefield. In the aftermath Arsinoe barely escaped from Ephesos to Macedonia, to Kassandreia where she commandeered an army, and was forced into marriage by Ptolemy Keraunos, her half-brother who afterwards took Macedonia. His marriage to Arsinoe aided in legitimizing his rule.<sup>136</sup> However, he soon started killing her children with Lysimakhos. He killed her two younger sons and only Ptolemy survived.<sup>137</sup>

<sup>129</sup> Paus. 1.10.3; Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 214; Gabbert, *Antigonos II Gonatas*, 9.

<sup>130</sup> OGIS 15; Strab. 14.1.21; Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 174; Carney, *Arsinoe II of Egypt and Macedon*, 36, 38..

<sup>131</sup> *FGrHist* 434 (= Memnon) F5.4-5. The cities were Herakleia, Tius, Amastris, and Kassandreia, cf. "Arsinoë II Philadelphus," in: *A to Z of Ancient Greek and Roman Women*, 43; Carney, *Arsinoe II of Egypt and Macedon*, 37.

<sup>132</sup> Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 174; Carney, *Arsinoe II of Egypt and Macedon*, 35.

<sup>133</sup> Memnon 5.6; Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 221; Ogden, "The Royal Families," 95. Pausanias reports (1.10.3-4) that Arsinoe wanted to be with Agathokles; Will, "The formation of the Hellenistic kingdoms", 112; Carney, *Arsinoe II of Egypt and Macedon*, 44-45.

<sup>134</sup> Memnon 6.6-7; Paus. 1.10.3-4; Ogden, *The Royal Families*, 95; Will, *The formation of the Hellenistic kingdoms*, 113; Carney, *Arsinoe II of Egypt and Macedon*, 45.

<sup>135</sup> François Chamoux, *Hellenistic Civilization*, trans. Michel Roussel (Oxford; Malden MA Blackwell Publishing, 2002), 63.

<sup>136</sup> Memnon 8.7; Iust. 17.2.7-8; Polyæn. 8.57; Keraunos was fleeing because he assassinated Seleukos; cf. Chamoux, *Hellenistic Civilization*, 64. He was Antipater's grandson by Eurydice and Kassandros' cousin which gave him the right to the throne of Macedonia; cf. Winthrop Lindsay Adams, "Alexander's Successors to 221 BC," in *A Companion to Ancient Macedonia*, ed. Joseph Roisman and Ian Worthington (Malden MA; Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010): 219; Carney, *Arsinoe II of Egypt and Macedon*, 47, 51, 54.

<sup>137</sup> Iust. 24.2-3; Ogden, "The Royal Families", 100; Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 176; "Arsinoë II Philadelphus," 44; "Arsinoë II," in: *Encyclopedia of Women in the Ancient World*, 17.

Again, Arsinoe ran to Samothrake and then to Egypt, where she married her own brother Ptolemy around 276, earning him the nickname Philadelphos.<sup>138</sup> He probably married her to have a chance at the throne of Macedonia since she was married to Lysimakhos and Ptolemy Keraunos, who were both kings of Macedonia in certain periods. Other possible reasons were that he wanted to unify his house and stabilize the dynasty.<sup>139</sup> She is said to have strengthened Egyptian sea power and helped expand the sphere of Egypt's influence. In the inscription concerning the Chremonidean War Arsinoe is praised as instigator of alliance between Egypt, Athens and Sparta.<sup>140</sup> She was also the first Greek woman ruler of Egypt to appear alongside her husband on coins.<sup>141</sup> Arsinoe and Ptolemy II were the first to deify themselves during their lifetime - the *theoi adelphoi* (sibling gods). She died in 268.<sup>142</sup>

### Stratonike

Even though he was already married to Apama and had a son, Antiokhos, with her, Seleukos Nikator asked for the daughter of Demetrios and Phila, Stratonike, to be his wife after the battle of Ipsos, as an answer to the alliance between Ptolemy and Lysimakhos.<sup>143</sup> He wanted to ensure their friendship the same way Lysimakhos did when he asked Ptolemy for his two daughters, one for him to wed and the other for his son Agathokles.<sup>144</sup> Moreover, she ensured a stable western boundary with Macedonia.<sup>145</sup> For a while, Stratonike took over Apama's role by Seleukos' side, and he might have dedicated a city in her honour - Stratonikeia.<sup>146</sup> However, in order to secure a painless succession for his son and prevent strife that might erupt between Stratonike's children and Antiokhos, Seleukos gave Stratonike

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<sup>138</sup> Paus. 1.7.1; Will, "The formation of the Hellenistic kingdoms", 114; Carney, *Arsinoe II of Egypt and Macedon*, 62, 70-71; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes and Death*, 74-75.

<sup>139</sup> Paus. 1.7.1; Iust. 24.2; Ogden, "The Royal Families", 99; Carney, *Arsinoe II of Egypt and Macedon*, 76-77.

<sup>140</sup> IG II<sup>3</sup> 1 912; "Arsinoë II Philadelphus", 44; "Arsinoë II", 17; Carney, *Arsinoe II of Egypt and Macedon*, 90-93.

<sup>141</sup> "Arsinoë II Philadelphus", 44; Carney, *Arsinoe II of Egypt and Macedon*, 78.

<sup>142</sup> Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 219; Carney, "The Initiation of Cult", 33; Carney, *Arsinoe II of Egypt and Macedon*, 77, 104. She was considered an incarnation of Isis, cf. "Arsinoë II Philadelphus," 44.

<sup>143</sup> Papazoglu, *Istorija Helenizma*, 214.

<sup>144</sup> Plut. *Dem.* 31.3; Gabbert, *Antigonos II Gonatas*, 9.

<sup>145</sup> Eran Almagor, "Seleukid Love and Power – Stratonike," in *Seleukid Royal Women Creation, Representation and Distortion of Hellenistic Queenship in the Seleukid Empire*, ed. Altay Coşkun and Alex McAuley (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 2016): 70.

<sup>146</sup> Strab. 14.2.26; App. *Syr.* 57; Harders, "The Making of a Queen", 35-36.

to Antiokhos as a wife in 293. Furthermore, she received the title Queen of the Eastern provinces/upper satrapies.<sup>147</sup> Stratonike and Antiokhos are said to have loved each other and produced five children together.<sup>148</sup> She is known as a benefactor to the temple at Delos and she was shown divine rights in Smyrna, where she was celebrated as Aphrodite Stratonike.<sup>149</sup> Her daughter Phila married her uncle Antigonos Gonatas, who started a festival Stratonikeia at Delos in her honour when Stratonike died around 253.<sup>150</sup>

### *Hetairai*

*Hetairai* were elite courtesans, well-educated and influential. One of the most famous *hetaira* was Aspasia, the lover and associate of Perikles. Many distinguished courtesans emerged in the early Hellenistic period, some of them having and even surpassing the influence that Aspasia had.

The first to mention is Thais, who was an Athenian concubine. Plutarch says that she was Ptolemy's lover, while Athenaios claims that she was Alexander's. Her most notable deed was that she allegedly inspired the burning of the royal palace in Persepolis in 330, during one of the revels. According to the sources, she led the procession and threw the first torch. Later, she is reported to have married Ptolemy I.

<sup>151</sup>

Alexander's treasurer and friend-turned-enemy Harpalos had two famous *hetairai*, both from Athens. The first, Pythionike, was famous for her funeral honours. When she died, Harpalos spent 30 talents on her tomb, built on the Sacred Road between Athens and Eleusis, which Pausanias dubbed as "the most noteworthy of all the old Greek tombs".<sup>152</sup> After her death, Harpalos had an affair with Glykera. Before

<sup>147</sup> Plut. *Demetr.* 23, 38; App. *Syr.* 60-61; Will, "The formation of the Hellenistic kingdoms", 104; Harders, "The Making of a Queen", 37; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes and Death*, 122-123.

<sup>148</sup> Plut. *Demetr.* 38; App. *Syr.* 59; Luc. *De dea Syr.* 17-18; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes and Death*, 124.

<sup>149</sup> IG XI 2 161, 287; OGIS 228; Ogden, "The Royal Families", 103; Engels and Erickson, "Apama and Stratonike", 50; Ramsey, "The Diplomacy of Seleukid Women", 98-99.

<sup>150</sup> IG XI 2 287; ID 366; Ramsey, "The Diplomacy of Seleukid Women", 101.

<sup>151</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 38; Athen. 13.576D-E; Loman, "No Woman No War", 49; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes and Death*, 68-69.

<sup>152</sup> Plut. *Phoc.* 22; Diod. 17.108.5; Paus. 1.37.5; Athen. 13.594D-595C; Ogden, "The Royal Families", 98-99; Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 217; Carney, "The Initiation of Cult", 31; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes and Death*, 262, 264.

joining Harpalos in Athens, she lived like a queen with him in Babylon and Tarsos. Harpalos ordered for a statue of Glykera to be raised in a Syrian town of Rhossos.<sup>153</sup>

Demetrios Poliorketes was (in)famous for his many lovers. Two of the most famous concubines were Lamia and Leaina. He gained Lamia when he defeated the Ptolemaic forces near Salamis. Even though she was much older, they became lovers.<sup>154</sup> The most notorious phase of Demetrios' love life was during his second coming to Athens in 304. Demetrios and many of his lovers, including Lamia and Leaina, lived in the Parthenon. He even made the Athenians collect the sum of 250 talents, which he gave to Lamia and her courtesans. Although a *hetaira* of the Hellenistic king, Lamia retained some sort of independence. She apparently had her own property and funds. The Athenians and Thebans erected temples to Lamia as Lamia Aphrodite. Leaina as well was celebrated by the Athenians as Leaina Aphrodite.<sup>155</sup> Athenaios also mentions a *hetaira* Myrrhine who ruled with Demetrios, although she did not carry a crown.<sup>156</sup>

## Conclusion

All of the women above have played important roles and their acts are mentioned by ancient sources who either condemn or praise them. The women can be divided in three groups: the relatives of Phillip and Alexander, i.e. Olympias, Kleopatra, Thessalonike, Kynane, Adaia-Eurydike; the women from the East: Roxanne, Apama, Barsine and Amastris; and lastly the daughters of the Diadokhoi. In this last section, one should mind the generational gap between Phila and, for example, Arsinoe.

It is important to point out how and why these women were influential. The significance and regard people held for them stemmed out of the following factors. Firstly, they were members of ruling dynasties (Argead, Molossian) and any connection to them meant a connection to the dynasty and a claim to the throne in

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<sup>153</sup> Diod. 17.108.6; Athen. 13.586C, 595D-F; Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 218; Carney, "The Initiation of Cult", 31; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes and Death*, 231, 240, 262.

<sup>154</sup> Plut. *Demetr.* 16; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes and Death*, 232, 241.

<sup>155</sup> Plut. *Demetr.* 24, 27; Athen. 6.235A-B; Ogden, "The Royal Families", 96-97; Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 218; Carney, "The Initiation of Cult", 32; Carney, *Arsinoe II of Egypt and Macedon*, 95; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes and Death*, 237, 262.

<sup>156</sup> Athen. 13.593A; Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 233; Ogden, *Polygamy, Prostitutes and Death*, 238.



case of a lack of heir. They were daughters, sisters, or mothers of influential men, some of which could be used to broker an alliance, which would entail military support and more, via marriage; they offered their husbands territory, wealth and the connection to his new people (Apama). Of the women mentioned, most notable and kept in high regard is Olympias, a Molossian princess descended from Achilles, Philip's wife and queen of Macedonia, and the mother of the greatest leader the Macedonians and Greeks ever knew, Alexander the Great. She yearned for power and influence and she meant to use her grandchild to get it. A clear evidence of her importance and esteem is the fact that she led an army to Macedonia to fight for what she deemed a righteous and legitimate cause. Yet, it is important to note that women from the Argead line could hold such power after the death of Alexander because there were no men to supplant them.<sup>157</sup> Alongside Olympias, two other women led armies, Kynane and her daughter Adaia-Eurydike, also determined to gain a better position and more power. It appears that military action by women in support of dynastic goals was acceptable.<sup>158</sup>

However, the most important role of a wife is a passive one: she was to be the link to the Macedonian throne, or a guarantee of a political alliance through a dynastic marriage. These marriages could forge an alliance, but polygamy and the general complexity of the intermarriage policy of the Diadokhoi has in many cases led to conflict. One needs to look no further than the court of Lysimakhos, whose complicated household relations ultimately led to the end of his dynasty and his life. On the other side, Antipater cleverly used dynastic marriages to establish connections to the most powerful of Alexander's Successors.

From the time of Olympias to the time of Phila and Apama (among others), the role of the king's wife changed and the position of a Hellenistic queen has more or less been defined. She was to be the link between powerful or royal families, she was to provide an heir, participate in the dynastic cult and uphold the dignity of the

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<sup>157</sup> Carney, *Women and Monarchy*, 118.

<sup>158</sup> Elizabeth Carney, "Women and Basileia: Legitimacy and Female Political Action in Macedonia," *The Classical Journal* 90/4 (1995): 389.

dynasty by benefactions. The path set by Phila and Apama was followed by most of the subsequent queens.

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