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American Journal of Philology, Volume 133, Number 3 (Whole Number 531), Fall 2012, pp. 371-402 (Article)

Published by Johns Hopkins University Press
DOI: 10.1353/ajp.2012.0024

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Abstract. Alexander's proclamation as King of Asia was not a claim to be the new king of Persia or the new Great King. Alexander's empire was one above and beyond the local kingship of Persia, and this "revisionist" interpretation of Alexander's kingship requires a new assessment of Alexander's reconfigured royal costume. Alexander rejected the upright tiara (the symbol of Achaemenid kingship) and the "Median" (or riding) dress, such as the *kandys* and *anaxyrides*. In adopting a new and impressive royal costume, Alexander expressed the exalted nature of his recently won kingship of Asia by devising a hybrid Macedonian–Persian dress.

INTRODUCTION

WHEN ALEXANDER WAS PROCLAIMED THE KING OF ASIA (Plut. *Alex*. 34.1),[1] he came to adopt a reformed court style that included a fundamentally new and grand royal costume and an impressive set of royal insignia. As Hammond (1986) and Fredricksmeyer (2000) have argued persuasively, Alexander's assumption of the kingship of Asia was not simply a claim to be the king of Persia or the Great King. Alexander thought of himself as the new foreign king of Persia, and he regarded the Persian kingship held by Darius III as extinguished and replaced by his greatly expanded autocracy. Although the Achaemenids themselves had a grand royal ideology and multiethnic empire, long familiar to the Greek world in their stereotypical view of the Great King as a semidivine or divine tyrant,[2] Alexander still did not seek to succeed Darius on the Achaemenid throne in the strict sense, and the kingship of Asia—Alexander's new empire—was a state above and beyond the Achaemenid imperial kingship

[1] For the concept of the kingship of Asia and how this was distinct from the kingship of Persia, see Hammond 1986, 73–85, and Fredricksmeyer 2000.

[2] On the ideology and iconography of Achaemenid kingship, see Root 1979; Brosius 2007; Kuhrt 2007, 467–664.

American Journal of Philology 133 (2012) 371–402 © 2012 by The Johns Hopkins University Press

itself.[3] This viewpoint might be called the "revisionist" interpretation of Alexander's kingship and has been elucidated more recently by Lane Fox.[4] I contend that the revisionist thesis is surely right in its main details. But it also requires a new assessment of Alexander's court reforms from ca. 330 B.C.E. onwards,[5] of which the new royal costume was an important part, since the question of why Alexander would take over elements of Achaemenid royal dress arises if he did not regard himself as king of Persia in the strict sense.

I intend here to analyse Alexander's royal costume and insignia in light of the new view of Alexander's kingship, proposed by Hammond and developed by Fredricksmeyer.[6] Social history has elucidated the history and meanings of costume and dress in antiquity, and Alexander's royal sartorial style was a consciously constructed costume in which he selected elements of Macedonian and Achaemenid dress, a composite style whose significance and underlying purpose deserves greater clarification.[7] There is in fact a rich crop of ancient evidence, although not without its own problems and contradictions. I will first deal with the ancient sources relating to Alexander's dress and the elements of that dress (viz., the diadem, *chiton mesoleukos*, and the *zonē*) and then turn to the question of whether Alexander's diadem was derived from the Persian court. I conclude that the king rejected the upright tiara, the most well known symbol of the Achaemenids, and that this is especially significant and supports the "revisionist" thesis. In acquiring an impressive royal costume, throne, and sceptre, derived from the Persian court, Alexander's development of his royal style was an evolving, pragmatic policy partly caused by the crisis of 330, his desire to conciliate the Iranians, the concept and ideology of "spear-won land," and the right of the conqueror to use the property of the conquered. But he also expressed the exalted nature of his newly won kingship of Asia through luxury and display and devised a hybrid Macedonian–Persian costume in which he rejected the tiara, the full-sleeved coat (*kandys*), and the baggy trousers (*anaxyrides*), elements of the exotic Median (or riding/cavalry) dress.

[3] For Alexander's ridicule of the Achaemenids' claims to be kings of Asia, see Arr. *Anab*. 7.1.3.

[4] See Lane Fox 2007.

[5] For recent studies of Alexander's court, see Collins 2008; Weber 2009; and Spawforth 2007.

[6] The present article is based on my doctoral dissertation (see Collins 2008), a study of Alexander's kingship and court from the "revisionist" perspective.

[7] For important work on ancient dress, see Cleland et al. 2007; Cleland et al. 2005; Losfeld 1991; Llewellyn-Jones 2003.

I. ALEXANDER'S ROYAL DRESS AND HIS MOTIVES

The beginning of Alexander's use of Persian dress can be dated to 330 B.C.E. Plutarch (*Alex*. 45.3–4) reported that the king adopted barbarian costume in that year and noted that this was only in the presence of easterners or his companions at first but later when he was riding and giving audiences. Ephippus of Olynthus, a contemporary of Alexander, reported that almost every day Alexander wore a purple *chlamys* (χλαμύδα πορφυρᾶν), a *chiton* with a white middle (χιτῶνα μεσόλευκον), and the *kausia* on which he had a diadem (τὴν καυσίαν ἔχουσαν τὸ διάδημα τὸ βασιλικόν).[8] The context of the fragment concerns the last years of Alexander, but we have supplementary evidence in Diodorus. He reports that Alexander wore the diadem, the partly white tunic (διάλευκον χιτῶνα), and the Persian belt (ζώνη), and appears to assign this to ca. 330 B.C.E. onwards.[9] Eratosthenes of Cyrene describes Alexander's dress as a mixture of Persian and Macedonian elements and reports that Alexander preferred the Persian rather than the Median dress (or what is now called the "riding dress" or "cavalry dress" by modern scholars), since he rejected the tiara, the *kandys* (full-sleeved jacket), and the *anaxyrides* (trousers).[10] This agrees with Plutarch (*Alex*. 45.2) and Diodorus (17.77.5).[11]

The other Vulgate sources confirm this, though often without details. The *Metz Epitome* (1.2) lists the diadem, a *tunica mesoleucos*, a *caduceus*,[12] and the Persian belt (*zona*).[13] Duris of Samos merely says that Alexander, when he had become lord of Asia, furnished himself with Persian dress.[14] Curtius (6.6.4) and Justin (12.3.8)[15] do not give specific references to the form of Alexander's costume: they merely note his adoption of barbarian customs, and their dating of this is consistent with Diodorus. Arrian

[8] *FGrH* 126 F 5.26–28 = Ath. 12.537e–38b. Ephippus' work appears to have been published shortly after Alexander's death and can be seen as a hostile polemic (Pearson 1983, 61–68). See also Berve 1926 (vol. 2), 161; Meister 1990, 112–13; Lendle 1992, 178–79.

[9] Diod. 17.77.5.

[10] *FGrH* 241 F 30 = Plut. *Mor*. 329f–30a. On the distinction between the "court dress" and "riding dress" (or what earlier scholars have called the "Median" dress) in Achaemenid reliefs and iconography, see Stronach 2011. It should also be noted that the translation of ancient dress terms can be problematic, and the meanings of clothing terms were fluid in an historical sense. See Cleland et al. 2007, 102, on the *kandys*, and 2007, 6, on the *anaxyrides*.

[11] See Strabo 11.13.9 = 526c for the possible Median origin of the tiara and *anaxyrides*.

[12] Cf. Ephippus, *FGrH* 126 F 5.29 = Ath. 12.537f.

[13] See also *Metz Epit*. 113.

[14] Ἀλέξανδρος δ' ὡς τῆς Ἀσίας ἐκυρίευσεν Περσικαῖς ἐχρῆτο στολαῖς (Duris of Samos, *FGrH* 76 F 14 = Ath. 12.535f).

[15] Heckel 1997, 203–4.

also fails to give details of Alexander's dress but does refer explicitly to the report that around the time of the murder of Cleitus (328 B.C.E.) Alexander was expressing his admiration for the ways of the Persians and Medes, both in his change of dress and by the altered arrangements for his attendance.[16] That a specific royal costume existed by 326 B.C.E. is confirmed by an incidental story in Curtius. Shortly before Alexander's battle with Porus, he erected his tent on the river bank in view of the enemy and dressed his companion Attalus in the "royal robe" as a ruse.[17]

What was the justification for this change in dress? Alexander himself appears to have explained his actions by declaring that he was wearing Persian spoils,[18] an idea which can be related to the notion of "spear-won land." In conquering other peoples and annexing new territory, the Macedonian kings appear to have had a customary justification for their military ventures, the concept of acquiring "spear-won land" (δορίκτητος χώρα).[19] On crossing to Asia, Diodorus Siculus notes how Alexander had invoked this very concept by jumping from his ship and fixing his spear in the ground, indicating by this action that he accepted Asia from the gods as won by the spear (Diod. 17.17.2–3).[20] To receive spear-won land meant in essence that a conqueror legitimately won the right to rule and control territory by military conquest. Scholarly study of this subject can be traced to Schmitthenner who contends that Alexander's justification for territorial expansion was fundamentally based on the fact of successful conquest.[21] When Alexander received "Asia" from the

[16] *Anab*. 4.9.9; see also *Anab*. 7.29.4.

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

[18] Curt. 6.6.5: *ille se quidem spolia Persarum gestare dicebat.* See Lane Fox 2007, 278–79.

[19] Schmitthenner 1968, 32–37; Mehl 1980–1981, 173–212; Billows 1990, 244–45; Stewart 1993, 161–62; Billows 1995, 25–28. The idea was first studied by Instinski 1949 but with rather different conclusions from those now generally accepted. For ancient sources, see Diod. 3.55.6, 19.85.3, 20.76.7, 21.1.5; Polyb. 18.51.4; App. *B. Civ*. 2.19.140.

[20] See also Just. 11.5.10; Diod. 19.105.3–4.

[21] Schmitthenner 1968, 32: "Hellenistic monarchy was based on two general principles of Greek law, the right of victory and the hereditary transfer of the right once acquired" ("hellenistische Monarchie auf zwei allgemeinen Grundsätzen des griechischen Rechts beruht habe, dem Recht des Sieges und der erblichen Uebertragung des einmal erworbenen Rechts"). It should also be noted that Schmitthenner 1968, 32, traced the idea to Bickerman 1938, 14. Cf. Walbank 1950, 79: "If . . . [sc. Diod. 17.17.2] is also true . . . at the outset of his campaign Alexander was laying claim to the Persian Empire (for this is the normal meaning of 'Asia' in such a context), and as in the . . . letter to Darius is declaring himself Great King by right of conquest."

gods he was certainly not claiming the old Persian empire in the sense of following Darius on the throne of the Achaemenids. Alexander claimed Asia as a geographical area and added this territory to that which was controlled in his own personal kingship.[22] When he defeated the Great King, he won Darius' property and the right to own it and to dispose of it as he saw fit. Alexander's use of the diadem, a *tunica mesoleucos*, the *caduceus*, and the Persian belt must be seen precisely in this context.

But this public justification of Persian costume by Alexander invoking the concept of "spear-won land" was not the only reason for the reform. A whole range of court reforms was implemented after Darius' death and began during the king's journey through Hyrcania and Parthia in the summer of 330.[23] The chronology is significant: between Alexander's departure from Zadracarta in Hyrcania (ca. August) and his move to Aria (ca. September),[24] we can glean the first expressions of his so-called "orientalising" policies.[25] The Vulgate ascribes the changes to Alexander's descent into eastern luxury and his degeneration, a moralising literary topos.[26] The first influential modern explanation of Alexander's court reforms was that he wished to promote the ethnic fusion of the Macedonians and Iranians and the "universal brotherhood of mankind."[27] Thus Robinson contends that Alexander by his actions wanted to make the Macedonians and Persians equal.[28] Although Hamilton attempted a partial revival of the "fusion" thesis,[29] it was decisively refuted by Badian and cannot be seriously entertained today.[30] In contrast, Bosworth held that the reforms were a response to Bessus' claim to the Achaemenid kingship in Bactria, news that reached Alexander in Susia.[31] According to this view, the military threat from Bessus and the need to justify his conquest of Asia provoked Alexander's reforms.[32] In particular, Bosworth contends that the "introduction of Persian ceremonial was a limited gesture, designed to capture the allegiance of his barbarian

[22] Fredricksmeyer 1991, 203. Cf. Brunt 1965, 208.

[23] Diod. 17.77.4–7; Curt. 6.6.1–8; Just. 12.3.8–11; Arr. *Anab*. 7.8.3. See Spawforth 2007, 102, and Collins 2001, 260.

[24] For the chronology, see Brunt 1976, 497–99.

[25] Diod. 17.77.4; Plut. *Alex*. 45.1–4; Curt. 6.6.1–9; Just. 12.3.8–12; *Metz Epit*. 1.

[26] See Badian 1958b, 154–57; Bosworth 1988, 144–45, and 1995, 49.

[27] For a bibliographical overview of this subject, see Seibert 1972, 186–92.

[28] Robinson 1936, 298–305.

[29] Hamilton 1987, 485.

[30] For the classic and devastating refutation of the thesis, see Badian 1958a.

[31] Bosworth 1980, 5–6. Cf. Hamilton 1987, 472–74, and Goukowsky 1978, 30–31. See Arr. *Anab*. 3.25.3; cf. Curt. 6.6.12–13.

[32] Bosworth 1980, 6.

subjects at a time of crisis."[33] Bosworth's view is also compatible with modern comparative studies of royal dress as a tool of imperial ideology in multiethnic empires, as a means by which a ruler's self-representation can incorporate cultural aspects of subject ethnic peoples for political reasons.[34] Alexander's attempts to conciliate the Iranians must be seen in this light. This pragmatic explanation of Alexander's action certainly has merit, and it is not incompatible with the view that these reforms were also the first and tentative attempts to create a new royal court and personal autocracy that was suitable for his position as king of Asia. Just as the Achaemenid kings had themselves transformed a relatively simple Indo-European ethnic kingship by adopting grandiose Elamite and Mesopotamian royal traditions, so, too, Alexander transformed his Macedonian kingship when he came to rule the Near East.

The isolation of the king from his subjects, the use of chamberlains, *proskynesis*, and the royal sceptre and throne had been features of Mesopotamian kingship for centuries before Alexander. In this respect, the king continued much more ancient traditions. When Alexander looked for a role model in developing royal insignia and court ceremonial, the Achaemenid court was a natural choice, particularly since the Great Kings had long been known as semidivine in the Greek world,[35] an idea which certainly appealed to Alexander and which was soon followed up by his *proskynesis* experiment. Moreover, there was very probably a precedent for Alexander's action derived from Persian influence on his father's own court and royal style.[36] Philip had been king of a multiethnic state and, like the earlier tyrant Dionysius I in Sicily,[37] looked to the great Persian empire as a model.[38] Finally, the adoption of a grandiose costume can be seen as part of the extravagant display and even a type of theatricality that would increasingly accompany the Hellenistic rulers and their trappings of power.[39] Demetrius the Besieger, for example, appears to have rivalled or even surpassed Alexander in the ostentation of his royal dress.[40]

[33] Bosworth 1980, 8. Cf. Lane Fox 2007, 278.

[34] On this, see Mansel 2010. See also Lane Fox 2007, 278.

[35] Eddy 1961, 43–44.

[36] Kienast 1973. See also Goukowsky 1978, 10–12.

[37] Ath. 6.251f. Stroheker 1958, 159; Sanders 1991, 281.

[38] Kienast 1973, 248–49; see in particular 249: "Thus Philip of Macedon had a model in the universal monarchy of the Persian king, which was also constructed (at least partially) on the principle of a personal union, to which Philip could relate himself in the creation of his own empire" ("Philipp von Makedonien hatte also in der Universalmonarchie des Perserkönigs, die wenigstens zum Teil auch auf dem Prinzip der Personalunion aufgebaut war, ein Vorbild, an dem er sich bei der Errichtung seines eigenen Reiches orientieren könnte").

[39] See Chaniotis 1997, 219–59, and 2005, 212–13.

[40] Plut. *Demetr*. 41.3–5, 44.6. See also Pollitt 1986, 6.

II. THE DIADEM

The diadem was a fundamental part of Alexander's royal dress and became the exclusive royal insignia of Hellenistic kings. Persian royal diadems are poorly attested before Alexander's time, and the only literary reference consists of a passage in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* (8.3.13). The Vulgate preserves the tradition that Alexander's diadem was Persian (Diod. 17.77.5), and that view has been widely accepted, not least of all under the influence of Ritter.[41]

Ephippus of Olynthus, the contemporary of Alexander, is quoted by Athenaeus in a fascinating passage about the king's dress (*FGrH* 126 F 5.26–28 = Ath. 12.537e–38b):

> Ἔφιππος δέ φησιν ὡς Ἀλέξανδρος καὶ τὰς ἱερὰς ἐσθῆτας ἐφόρει ἐν τοῖς δείπνοις, ὁτὲ μὲν τὴν τοῦ Ἄμμωνος πορφυρίδα καὶ περισχιδεῖς καὶ κέρατα καθάπερ ὁ θεός, ὁτὲ δὲ τὴν τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος, ἣν καὶ ἐπὶ τοῦ ἅρματος ἐφόρει πολλάκις, ἔχων τὴν Περσικὴν στολήν, ὑποφαίνων ἄνωθεν τῶν ὤμων τό τε τόξον καὶ τὴν σιβύνην, ἐνίοτε δὲ καὶ τὴν τοῦ Ἑρμοῦ· τὰ μὲν ἄλλα σχεδὸν καὶ καθ' ἑκάστην ἡμέραν χλαμύδα τε πορφυρᾶν καὶ χιτῶνα μεσόλευκον καὶ τὴν καυσίαν ἔχουσαν τὸ διάδημα τὸ βασιλικόν, ἐν δὲ τῇ συνουσίᾳ τά τε πέδιλα καὶ τὸν πέτασον ἐπὶ τῇ κεφαλῇ καὶ τὸ κηρύκειον ἐν τῇ χειρί, πολλάκις δὲ καὶ λεοντῆν καὶ ῥόπαλον ὥσπερ ὁ Ἡρακλῆς.
>
> Ephippus says that Alexander used to wear sacred clothing during his dinners, sometimes the purple robe of Ammon, the shoes and horns, like the god; and at other times the costume of Artemis, which he also frequently assumed in his chariot, wearing the Persian clothing, and displaying above his shoulders the bow and the hunting-spear; and on other occasions he took the costume of Hermes. But nearly *every day he wore a purple cloak, a purple tunic with a white middle, and the Macedonian kausia with the royal diadem*. On social occasions, he put on the sandals and the *petasos* on his head, and took the *caduceus* in his hand. Often he also wore the lion's skin and club just like Heracles.

Alexander's habit of dressing as Ammon must be related to the experience of Siwah and to his sincere belief in his divine sonship, which had been announced to the world by Callisthenes in his description of Alexander's prayer before Gaugamela.[42] Indeed, the use of Ammon's horns as a symbol of divinity was taken up by Alexander's Successors in their coinage.[43] A rather puzzling difficulty is the notion that Alexander would

[41] Ritter 1965, 31–55.

[42] Plut. *Alex*. 33.1–2. See Bosworth 1977, 57–60, on the derivation of this passage from Callisthenes.

[43] See Smith 1988, 40.

dress up as the goddess Artemis, which, if not simply invention, is a peculiar act of transvestism that has never been adequately explained.[44] But what emerges clearly from Ephippus is that in contrast to the king's extravagant imitation of the gods,[45] Alexander is said to have worn the diadem as part of his normal dress, which included the Macedonian *chlamys* and *kausia*. If the expression "the royal diadem" (τὸ διάδημα τὸ βασιλικόν) was used by Ephippus,[46] then by the end of Alexander's reign the diadem was regarded as a symbol of his kingship.

A fragment of Aristobulus supports this. In 323, Alexander was sailing in the marshlands near Babylon, and Arrian (*Anab*. 7.22.2–3) reports the following story: the king's *kausia* with its attached diadem was blown off and was carried onto some reeds. A sailor who swam to fetch the diadem bound it around his head, so as to avoid soaking the headband in the water. According to Arrian, many historians of Alexander said that the king gave the sailor a talent, but ordered his decapitation, since his prophets felt that the head that had worn the royal diadem should be cut off (*Anab*. 7.22.4). But Arrian then provides Aristobulus' version of the incident, in which the sailor had received the talent and was only flogged for fastening the diadem about his head.[47] Aristobulus' version obviously made the punishment less severe for apologetic reasons. If so, then the incident itself was no late fable of the Vulgate, for Aristobulus felt bound to rewrite the event to defend Alexander. We should see in the story strong evidence that the diadem was the main royal insignia of Alexander by 323.

Arrian does not explicitly explain the origin of the diadem. For this question, we must look to the Vulgate tradition. Curtius relates that in 330 Alexander adopted a "purple diadem variegated with white, like the one Darius had worn."[48] Furthermore, Diodorus has the following account of Alexander's court reforms in 330 (17.77.4–5):[49]

[44] See Stewart 1993, 13, n. 16; 195, n. 14. Cf. Connelly 2007, 107–8. Whether this act of dressing up as Artemis might be connected to ritual transvestism attested in some Greek festivals or cult rites (Scullion 2007, 199) is an open question. Lane Fox 1973, 445, raises the possibility that this was mere scurrilous polemic of Ephippus.

[45] See Pearson 1983, 61–68. Cf. Badian 1996, 26.

[46] I concede that Athenaeus may have paraphrased Ephippus and inserted the expression "royal diadem" himself. On the difficulties of ancient fragments, see Brunt 1980, 477–94.

[47] *Anab*. 7.22.4–5 = Aristobulus, *FGrH* 159 F 55. That this was an event seized upon by later propagandists seems clear: Arrian immediately records the tradition that it was Seleucus who brought the diadem back to Alexander (*Anab*. 7.22.5).

[48] Curt. 6.6.4: *itaque purpureum diadema distinctum albo, quale Dareus habuerat*.

[49] The text follows Goukowsky 1976.

> ἤρξατο ζηλοῦν τὴν Περσικὴν τρυφὴν καὶ τὴν πολυτέλειαν τῶν Ἀσιανῶν βασιλέων . . . εἶτα τό τε Περσικὸν διάδημα περιέθετο καὶ τὸν διάλευκον ἐνεδύσατο χιτῶνα καὶ τὴν Περσικὴν ζώνην καὶ τἄλλα πλὴν τῶν ἀναξυρίδων καὶ τοῦ κάνδυος.
>
> [sc. Alexander] began to imitate the Persian luxury and the extravagance of the Asian kings . . . Then he put on the Persian diadem and dressed himself in the partly-white robe and the Persian belt, and all the other things except the *anaxyrides* and the *kandys*.

Clearly, Diodorus held that it was a Persian diadem that Alexander wore. His general account of Alexander's royal costume matches that of Ephippus of Olynthus (who wrote shortly after the king's death). The *Metz Epitome* speaks of Alexander taking a "diadem, a tunic with a white middle, sceptre and a belt, and all other Persian ornaments that Darius had possessed."[50]

This ancient evidence was once widely accepted, and it was held that Alexander's diadem was derived from the Great King's costume.[51] Within the last thirty years, however, the Persian origin of Alexander's diadem has been challenged by Alföldi (1985, 105–25), Smith (1988, 34–38), and Fredricksmeyer (2000). In particular, Fredricksmeyer, in a bold argument strongly influenced by the revisionist school of thought on Alexander's kingship, holds that the diadem was taken from the iconography of Dionysus.[52] A review of the work of these three scholars follows.

In a posthumous work, Alföldi argues that the diadem had a Greek origin and was derived from the types of crowns, fillets, or headbands awarded in Greek athletic victories.[53] In his view, the diadem was an adaptation of a Hellenic agonistic crown ("Siegerbinde"),[54] and Alexander adopted such a crown (ταινία) to mark his conquest of Asia. Alföldi also contends that Alexander's diadem was connected with Dionysus, whose *mitra* was supposed to have led to the use of the diadem by kings.[55] Furthermore, Dionysus is sometimes depicted wearing a *tainia* with an agonistic function, perhaps to mark his victory over the Giants and his exploits in the east,

[50] *deditque et diadema et tunicam mesoleucum et caduceum zonam<que> Persiarum ceteraque ornamenta regia omnia, quae Darius habuerat* (*Metz Epit.* 2).

[51] See Mau 1903; Ritter 1965, 31–55. Some dissenting scholars argued that the diadem was Macedonian. See Hoffmann 1906, 55–56; Hammond 1989, 24, and 1991, 81. See Fredricksmeyer 1997, 97–98, for evidence against this view.

[52] Fredricksmeyer 1997, 97–109.

[53] Alföldi 1985, 113–16.

[54] Alföldi 1985, 114–15.

[55] Alföldi 1985, 120. See below for a discussion of Diod. 4.4.4.

and his role of "conqueror of the east" may have inspired Alexander to emulate him by adopting a headband of a similar type.[56]

Smith also rejects the Achaemenid origin for Alexander's diadem and points out that the archaeological and iconographic evidence does not show that Persian kings wore diadems.[57] Even though Cyrus and his attendants are made to wear them in Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* (8.3.13), the diadem was not an exclusive and important part of the Achaemenid royal costume, and its absence from the iconography of the Great King strongly supports that view.[58] Smith sees Alexander's diadem as a general headband taken or adapted from Greek headbands, with no particular origin.[59]

Finally, Fredricksmeyer starts from the revisionist premise that Alexander did not regard himself as a king of Persia, or as a direct and legitimate successor of the Great King.[60] According to this view, it is unlikely that Alexander adopted the diadem from the Persian court, since he did not think of himself as a Persian king.[61] For Fredricksmeyer, the evidence of Diodorus, Curtius, and Justin is questionable since it probably came from Cleitarchus.[62] Instead, Alexander adopted the diadem in 331 after Gaugamela. At this time, when Alexander was proclaimed "king of Asia" by the army, Fredricksmeyer (1997, 101) suggests that the diadem was assumed as the new insignia of Alexander's kingship of Asia. Like Alföldi, Fredricksmeyer argues that the iconography of the god Dionysus was also connected with Alexander's diadem, and that the king was emulating the god when he adopted this new royal symbol.

The theses of Alföldi and Fredricksmeyer certainly forced a reexamination of some widely accepted but problematic ideas on the diadem. The challenge to the diadem's Persian origin is now a central issue

[56] Alföldi 1985, 121.

[57] Smith 1988, 34–38.

[58] Cf. Ritter 1987, 290–301. See also Polyaenus, *Strat.* 11.8.

[59] Smith 1988, 36–37: "There already existed in Greek culture a rich stock of headbands used by gods and mortals, and it is much more likely that Alexander took his new royal symbol from here, rather than the east. He adapted, selected, or 'invented' a particular headband—plain white, knotted with free-hanging ends—not one which would be of a generic form familiar to Greeks and Macedonians. In 'origin' it probably meant precisely nothing . . . Originally empty of meaning, it could take on whatever significance Alexander gave it." See also Smith 1993, 207.

[60] Fredricksmeyer 1997, 100–102.

[61] Fredricksmeyer 1997, 100.

[62] Fredricksmeyer 1997, 101: "[in] light of the importance of symbols of royalty in the Near East it is quite unlikely that Alexander would have failed on this occasion to adopt some concrete symbol, or insignia, of his new kingship." See Alföldi 1985, 107–8.

in any discussion of the topic. However, there are serious problems which all these theories must face, and, in what follows, I critique each of the new theories and provide my own alternative revisionist interpretation of Alexander's diadem.

First, Alföldi's idea that Greek agonistic headbands (ταινίαι) were the fundamental inspiration for Alexander's diadem falters on the absence of any association between such victory-crowns and kingship.[63] These crowns were awarded for individual victories and were worn only briefly to symbolise the achievement and honour that had accrued to one individual.[64] Alexander's diadem, on the other hand, was a mark of his kingship and was passed to his half-brother Philip Arrhidaeus after he died (Curt. 10.6.4; 10.6.11; Diod. 18.60.5–61.3).[65] The diadem was also adopted by the Successors who founded their own kingdoms in the Asian empire.[66] Nor can headbands worn by Dionysus be associated plausibly with victory headbands.[67]

Secondly, Dionysus' connection with the diadem is not as well-founded as some believe. It is true that the myth of Dionysus' travels in the east was known by Alexander's time, and that, in later tradition, Dionysus was the conqueror of the east.[68] But the literary sources that name Dionysus as the inventor of the diadem are all much later than Alexander's time. Diodorus Siculus has the following important account (4.4.4):

> πρὸς δὲ τὰς ἐκ τοῦ πλεονάζοντος οἴνου κεφαλαλγίας τοῖς πίνουσι γινομένας διαδεδέσθαι λέγουσιν αὐτὸν μίτρᾳ τὴν κεφαλήν. ἀφ' ἧς αἰτίας καὶ μιτρηφόρον ὀνομάζεσθαι· ἀπὸ δὲ τούτης τῆς μίτρας ὕστερον παρὰ τοῖς βασιλεῦσι καταδειχθῆναι τὸ διάδημά φασι.
>
> They say that [sc. Dionysus] bound his head with the *mitra* in order to avoid the headaches that happen to men who drink too much wine, for which reason he was called *mitrephorus*. They also say that because of this *mitra* the diadem was later introduced for kings.

Diodorus attributes this information to unnamed sources. But no evidence exists for the tradition before Alexander's time, and it may have arisen in the Hellenistic era.[69] The idea that Dionysus' *mitra* led to the adoption of

[63] See Ritter 1987, 290–301.

[64] Ritter 1987, 293.

[65] The claim of Alföldi 1985, 126, that the diadem was worn by the Sicilian tyrant Dionysius (Baton of Sinope, *FGrH* 268 F 4 = Ath. 6.251e–f) before Alexander as a victor's headband is implausible (Ritter 1987, 299).

[66] Ritter 1987, 293–95.

[67] See Krug 1968, 115–17, and Ritter 1987, 298.

[68] E.g., Tac. *Hist*. 5.5 (*Liberum patrem . . . domitorem orientis*).

[69] See Fredricksmeyer 1997, 102.

the diadem also appears in Pliny the Elder, who wrote towards the end of the first century C.E. He simply reports that "father Liber invented the diadem, the royal insignia."[70]

One important observation emerges: neither of the passages links Dionysus' eastern campaigns or conquests to his adoption of the *mitra*, nor can this headband be identified with kingship, because in Diodorus the *mitra* Dionysus wore was to prevent headaches after excessive consumption of wine. This can hardly support the view that a *mitra* or diadem was a symbol of Dionysus' eastern conquests by Alexander's time.[71]

Numismatic evidence linking Dionysus with a headband worn by Alexander is particularly interesting but occurs after Alexander's death. Coins minted ca. 314–312 by Ptolemy I show Alexander wearing an elephant scalp, ram's horns, and a flat headband worn under the hairline, in a manner which matches headbands worn by Dionysus on other coins.[72] But the way in which Dionysus and Alexander wear this headband is different from the usual way in which the diadem is worn.[73] The diadem is generally worn above the hairline, not below it, so this headband is probably a *mitra* of Dionysus,[74] a divine attribute alongside the ram's horns of Ammon. The *mitra* was certainly associated with Dionysus long before Alexander's time[75] but was distinct from the diadem.

[70] Plin. *HN* 7.191: *emere ac vendere instituit Liber pater, idem diadema, regium insigne*.

[71] For this erroneous thesis, see Alföldi 1985, 125; Fredricksmeyer 1997, 105; Smith 1988, 37: "[two] later writers . . . state that the god Dionysos 'discovered' the diadem, that he wore it to symbolise his conquests [in the East], and that kings took it over from him." For the *mitra*, see Cleland et al. 2007, 127.

[72] Smith 1988, 37; Fredricksmeyer 1997, 102. See also the terracotta head of Alexander in the Allard Pierson Museum in Amsterdam (Grimm 1978, 105; see pl. 74 for Grimm's reproduction). In this statue, Alexander wears a headband which Grimm 1978, 105, sees as a diadem worn like a Dionysian headband.

[73] Ritter 1987, 298. Cf. Smith 1988, 37: "[the] form of the royal diadem, however, is not directly copied from that of Dionysos. The god always wears his headband low down on his forehead, while the kings wear it further back in the hair . . . Whether or not the diadem in origin was consciously adapted from Dionysos' headband does not really matter, for its association with Dionysos, given explicitly in the source used by Diodorus and Pliny, is starkly confirmed."

[74] Stewart 1993, 233: "the forehead band [sc. on Ptolemy's coins of Alexander ca. 314–312] is surely the *mitra* of Dionysos, not the royal diadem." Grimm 1978, 103: "Alexander here appears with the elephant headdress, aegis, horns of Ammon, and a diadem worn as a Dionysian headband" ("Alexander erscheint hier mit Elephanten-Exuvie, als Diadem getragener dionysischer Stirnbinde, Ägis und Ammonshorn"). Cf. Smith 1988, 37.

[75] Soph. *OT* 209–10 (Bacchus called χρυσομίτραν). See also Krug 1968, 115–17. For later sources, see Ath. 5.198d (Dionysus associated with μίτραι in Ptolemy's procession); Prop. 4.31 (*cinge caput mitra, speciem furabor Iacchi*).

An alternative view of the literary sources is that Diodorus preserves a Hellenistic aetiology that explained the origin of the diadem by means of a mythic connection with Dionysus. Such aetiologies were constantly invented by ancient scholars, and it most probably arose after Alexander's death, given his strong association with Dionysus in Ptolemaic propaganda.[76] We should also note that, although the myths about Dionysus' travels in Arabia, Media and Bactria were current before Alexander's time, many of the stories of Dionysus' exploits in India seem to have been invented as a result of Alexander's own conquests.[77] We cannot simply assume that in 330 Alexander knew a tradition linking Dionysus with the diadem.

The Dionysian origin of Alexander's diadem is clearly problematic. A second difficulty is the explicit contradiction of this idea by the primary sources. The wearing of apparel associated with the Olympians was an unusual and arrogant practice. When Ephippus of Olynthus, Alexander's contemporary, described the king's use of sacred dress meant to evoke the gods Hermes, Ammon, Artemis, and the hero Hercules,[78] this divine costume was opposed to the ordinary dress that Alexander regularly wore: viz., the purple *chlamys* (a Macedonian cloak), a chiton with white middle (a Persian garment), and a *kausia* (a Macedonian hat) with the diadem worn around it. The diadem does not appear to evoke the costume of Dionysus or any other Olympian, although that is precisely what one would expect if its adoption was yet another arrogant use of divine costume by Alexander.[79]

We are left with the question of why no other source mentions Alexander's adoption of the diadem in 331, if it was a brazen attempt, at that time, to imitate Dionysus, as Alföldi and Fredricksmeyer have argued. Instead, there is a uniform tradition that the diadem was adopted in 330, along with other Persian garments, as part of Alexander's mixed

[76] This important point is discussed in detail by Goukowsky 1981, 79–83.

[77] Bosworth 1996, 140–66. See Dihle 1987, 47–57.

[78] *FGrH* 126 F 5.26–28 = Ath. 12.537e–38b.

[79] See also Herodian (1.3.3–4), which contrasts the symbols of Dionysus with the diadem and *kausia*. Speaking of the concern of the emperor Marcus Aurelius for his son Commodus, Herodian makes the following statement: "Antigonus modelled himself completely on Dionysus, wearing an ivy wreath on his head instead of a royal Macedonian *kausia* with a diadem, and carrying an ivy wand instead of a scepter" (Ἀντίγονος δὲ Διόνυσον πάντα μιμούμενος καὶ κισσὸν μὲν περιτιθεὶς τῇ κεφαλῇ ἀντὶ καυσίας καὶ διαδήματος Μακεδονικοῦ, θύρσον δὲ ἀντὶ σκήπτρου φέρων). There is some confusion about the Antigonus to whom this refers, and some scholars suspect that it is a mistake for Demetrius Poliorcetes (cf. Ritter 1965, 59), but here the ivy wreath is contrasted with the *kausia* and diadem, as if the latter were not associated with Dionysus.

Macedonian and Persian costume.[80] As seen above, the Persian garments were the *chiton mesoleukos*, the *zonē*, and the diadem, and the manner in which Alexander wore the diadem around his *kausia* certainly evokes the wearing of a diadem around the royal tiara.[81]

Given that the diadem became a symbol of monarchy after Alexander, it is possible that later writers mistakenly attributed diadems to Persian kings as a royal insignia and that such references are anachronistic.[82] But such an objection would not apply to literary sources before Alexander's time. Xenophon presents a scene in which Cyrus, when he appeared in a procession as a pretender to the Persian throne, wore an upright tiara and a diadem around it, as did his kinsmen.[83] A diadem appears here as part of Cyrus' regal dress and, even if it was not an exclusive insignia of the Great King, this is evidence which, contrary to the later myths about Dionysus, was written some sixty years before Alexander's time. Moreover, there is ample evidence for the use of diadems by other Near Eastern peoples, such as Assyrians, Babylonians, and Medes.[84] The diadem appears in Persian dress, and even of the Great Kings,[85] although it was also worn by Achaemenid courtiers and attendants.[86] Although the absence of more iconographic evidence for the Great King's diadem in

[80] Eratosthenes of Cyrene, *FGrH* 241 F 30 = Plut. *Mor*. 329f–30d.

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

[82] Smith 1988, 36: "The later sources which ascribe . . . [the] diadem to Persian or Oriental kings in general . . . have no weight against contemporary archaeology. They simply reflect the fact that all Oriental kings of the Hellenistic period (and later) wore the diadem." See Plutarch's *Moralia* (488d). Here Plutarch reports a story about Xerxes: after Darius died, the succession was between Ariamenes and Xerxes, and the latter, before he was formally appointed Great King, performed the functions of a king and wore a diadem and tiara, which he removed when his brother approached him (Ἀριαμένης μὲν οὖν κατέβαινεν ἐκ Μήδων οὐ πολεμικῶς ἀλλ᾽ ἐπὶ δίκην ἡσυχαῖος, Ξέρξης δὲ παρὼν ἔπραττεν ἅπερ ἦν βασιλεῖ προσήκοντα. ἐλθόντος δὲ τοῦ ἀδελφοῦ θεὶς τὸ διάδημα καὶ καταβαλὼν τὴν τιάραν, ἣν φοροῦσιν ὀρθὴν οἱ βασιλεύοντες). See also Polyaenus (7.12.1), who refers to the diadem of Darius.

[83] Xen. *Cyr*. 8.3.13.

[84] Calmeyer 1976, 51–63.

[85] Calmeyer 1976, 61–63. Note that in Persian iconography the Great Kings tend to wear crenellated crowns, as in the Behistun relief. See Cook 1983, pl. 8, and Tuplin 2007, 72–73, and 78, for analysis.

[86] Ritter 1965, 7.

Persian art is puzzling, this is, in the end, an argument from silence, and we should not regard it as decisive.[87]

We can now present an alternative explanation of Alexander's diadem. That Alexander did not see himself as the new Great King is a major conclusion of the revisionist view of his kingship. The fact that the diadem is rarely attested as a headdress of Achaemenid kings is no real argument against the view that it was Persian in origin. Alexander, after all, is also said to have worn a Persian belt, and such belts were worn by ordinary Iranian people, not just by the Great King. We should remember that Alexander's costume, according to one tradition, was a mixture of Persian and Macedonian elements[88] and that the king rejected the "Median" (or riding) dress because it was exotic and outlandish. This would mean that Alexander examined the Persian costume—both that of the Great King and other Persian courtiers—and selected those articles of clothing he wanted to combine with his normal Macedonian apparel. That the diadem was not an exclusive insignia of Persian kingship did not concern him, since he did not regard himself as a Persian king. He will have selected a headband that was associated with the Great King and then adopted it as a symbol of the kingship of Asia.[89] Being similar to Hellenic headbands and inoffensive to the Greeks and Macedonians, the diadem was thus the perfect symbol for his Asian conquests.

III. THE *ZONĒ*

The Persian belt or *zonē* was another Persian item of dress that Alexander assumed.[90] The outlandishness of certain types of oriental clothing was a concern to Alexander, so it was no doubt alarming for him to learn that, to the Greeks, the way the belt was worn—probably with the tunic partly covering it and drawn up in baggy folds[91]—was considered effeminate (Curt. 3.3.18) and an object for derision (Plut. *Alex*. 51.5). Why, then, did

[87] See also Tuplin 2007 on the absence of the upright tiara from Persian monumental art. It should be noted that no pictorial representation of the *kausia* survives from the period before Philip II, but this can hardly be proof that the *kausia* was not Macedonian, since literary evidence shows that it was (Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1993, 141–42).

[88] Eratosthenes of Cyrene, *FGrH* 241 F 30 = Plut. *Mor*. 329f–30d.

[89] For the manner by which the diadem changed from a symbol of the kingship of Asia to a mere symbol of Hellenistic kingship, see Ritter 1965, 126–27.

[90] Diod. 17.77.5; *Metz Epit*. 1.2; Plut. *Alex*. 51.5. See Alföldi 1955, 48–49; Widengren 1956, 241.

[91] Widengren 1956, 241. A representation of this belt can be seen in the Demetrio Alexander and Hephaestion statuettes from Egypt. See Stewart 1993, pls. 144 and 145.

Alexander adopt it? The answer probably lies in the highly symbolic nature of the belt in Iranian culture and royal ideology: the belt was a cultural icon and symbol of loyalty, and it symbolised the bond between a superior or person in authority and his subjects and close subordinates. Casting off a belt, for example, signified rebellion or rejection.[92] Alexander's adoption of the belt was a powerful appropriation of Iranian cultural modes of power and submission, but now assimilated to himself as the new Macedonian king of the Iranians.

IV. THE *CHLAMYS*, *KAUSIA*, AND PERSIAN *CHITON*

It is evident that the chiton with the white middle (*chiton mesoleukos*) was Persian in origin, but the *chlamys* and *kausia* were Macedonian items of clothing.[93] The *chlamys* was certainly the Macedonian cloak, with a characteristic semicircular shape.[94] The *kausia* was the traditional headdress of Macedonians and may have been part of their military equipment, although it was perhaps a general cap rather than a type of helmet.[95] Many argue that the cap was made of felt, but a case can be made for the use of leather.[96] *Kausiai* of the Macedonian king and nobility were later dyed purple and were the gift of the king.[97] In the literary and iconographic evidence, the *kausia* appears to be worn most notably by kings, Macedonian generals, companions, and royal pages.[98]

[92] For the symbolism of the belt in Iranian culture, see Widengren 1968 and Briant 2002, 325–26.

[93] Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1993, 122–49.

[94] Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1993, 143–45.

[95] Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1993, 123: "although basically an item of defensive armour, the *kausia* could also be used in other circumstances . . . [the] *kausia* should be included in the equipment of a Macedonian soldier; yet its rarity in monuments showing Macedonians in martial action . . . suggests that it was a substitute rather than a true helmet [sc. one which was] used occasionally as defensive armour." See Fredricksmeyer 1994, 140–58, for an exhaustive list of the ancient sources relating to the *kausia*. On its shape, see Dintsis 1986, 183–95. The thesis of Kingsley 1981, 39–46, that the *kausia* was an oriental head-dress adopted by the Macedonians in Afghanistan or India, has been refuted by Fredricksmeyer 1986 and 1994, 135–58. See now the epigraphic use of the word *kausia* in a graffito cited by Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1993, 141–42. For the etymology of the word, see Hoffmann 1906, 58, n. 44; Kalléris 1988, 205; Dintsis 1986, 183, n. 1; Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1993, 126–27.

[96] For felt, see Dintsis 1986, 183. For the view that the *kausia* was made of leather, see Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1993, 123–26.

[97] Plut. *Eum*. 8. Eumenes bestowed purple *kausiai* and *chlamydes* on his officers, and this was a gift of the king.

[98] Saatsoglou-Paliadeli 1993, 132–40, and Fredricksmeyer 1994, 148. There is also a representation of a *kausia* as worn by a Ptolemaic royal guard in a drawing of the Palestrina mosaic: see Walker 2001, 334, plate no. 353.

Alexander apparently used a purple *chiton* in imitation of the colour of the Persian royal costume, and he also distributed the purple robes of Achaemenid courtiers and Persian harnesses to his own companions (Diod. 17.77.5–6).[99] Plutarch (*Alex*. 51.5) refers to the white tunic (διάλευκον χιτῶνα). The latter is the same expression used by Diodorus. Since the prefix *dia-* ought, in this context, to be understood as "partly,"[100] the translation should be "partly-white tunic," which is perfectly consistent with the chiton with a white middle (χιτῶνα μεσόλευκον) of Ephippus.

The *mesoleukos* tunic was a purple robe with a white strip down the middle, and it appears in Persian monumental art.[101] This type of Persian royal robe is described by Curtius as worn by Darius III: "a purple tunic interwoven with a white middle" (*purpureae tunicae medium album intextum erat*, 3.3.17). Xenophon distinguishes the χιτὼν μεσόλευκος from the *kandys*, and the following scene in his *Cyropaedia* provides fundamental information about the Persian royal chiton (Xen. *Cyr*. 8.3.13):

> ἐπὶ δὲ τούτοις ἤδη αὐτὸς ἐκ τῶν πυλῶν προυφαίνετο ὁ Κῦρος ἐφ' ἅρματος ὀρθὴν ἔχων τὴν τιάραν καὶ χιτῶνα πορφυροῦν μεσόλευκον (ἄλλῳ δ' οὐκ ἔξεστι μεσόλευκον ἔχειν), καὶ περὶ τοῖς σκέλεσιν ἀναξυρίδας ὑσγινοβαφεῖς, καὶ κάνδυν ὁλοπόρφυρον.
>
> After these men Cyrus himself appeared on a chariot near the gates, wearing an upright tiara, a purple tunic with a white middle (for it is not permitted for another to wear the *mesoleukos*), and trousers (*anaxyrides*) of dyed scarlet around his legs, and a completely purple mantle (*kandys*).

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

[100] See *LSJ*, s.v. διά D.VI.

[101] See Gow 1928, 143 (fig. 3, costume type II); Alföldi 1955, 48. See also Jacoby's commentary to *FGrH* 126 F 5. Cf. Pliny, *HN* 27.102, for the sense of the adjective *mesoleukos* (but not applied to costume). Although Darius appears to wear such a garment in the Alexander Mosaic (for a reproduction, see Cohen 1997, pl. 3), the value of this representation is limited, given that the mosaic is so late and Persian monumental art must be regarded as our primary iconographic evidence (cf. Sekunda 2010, 256–58, and Tuplin 2007, 78, on the value of the Alexander Mosaic for its representation of the Great King's tiara and *chiton*). Sekunda 2010 argues that before 538 the Persian kings wore as their ceremonial garment the Elamite royal robe, then the "Achaemenid robe" from some point after 538 (the dress seen in Persepolis and other Achaemenid reliefs), and finally the "riding dress" (sometimes called Median dress or familiar *chiton*, *kandys*, and *anaxyrides*) after the later sixth or early fifth century B.C.E. But cf. Stronach 2011. See also Goldman 1964.

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

Evidence from later lexicographers, though slightly confused, even provides us with a Persian name for this garment. It seems that the Persian term for "tunic" was taken into Greek and transliterated as *sarapis* (σάραπις).[102] The Old Iranian term itself was most probably a loan word from the Middle Elamite *sarapi*, attested in the Susa Tables (650 B.C.E.).[103] The Greek word is glossed by Julius Pollux, Hesychius, and Photius. Julius Pollux, the lexicographer of the late second century C.E., calls the *sarapis* a "garment of the Medes, a purple tunic with a white middle."[104] Photius, in his *Lexicon*, also defines *sarapis* as "a Persian chiton with a white middle."[105] Hesychius provides the following gloss on the word (*Lexicon*, s.v. σάραπις, sigma.193 = Ctesias, *FGrH* 688 F 41):

> Σάραπις· Περσικὸς χιτὼν μεσόλευκος, ὡς Κτησίας· καὶ διαρρηξαμένη τὸν σάραπιν καὶ τὰς τρίχας καθειμένη ἐτίλλετό τε καὶ βοὴν ἐποίει.
>
> *Sarapis*: a Persian *chiton* with a white middle, as Ctesias says: "and she tore her hair and cried out, having ripped the *sarapis* and having let her hair fall down."

Hesychius here quotes a fragment of Ctesias in which a woman tears the tunic, apparently in mourning.[106] Since this fragment may be identical with another surviving fragment of Ctesias (*FGrH* 688 F 25), it probably refers to the queen-mother Parysatis, when she learned that the younger Cyrus had been killed (Hinz 1969:72–74).

The word *sarapis* may merely have been a general Persian name for any type of Persian *chiton*, but the *sarapis* with the central white strip was the specifically royal garment. On this view, the Greeks later

[102] Widengren 1956, 238.

[103] Hill 1988, 288–89; Hinz 1969, 72; Henkelman 2003, 206–10, 228–31. On Elamite royal robes in the Achaemenid period and earlier, see Álvarez-Mon 2009 and Sekunda 2010, 264–67.

[104] ὁ δὲ σάραπις· Μήδων τὸ φόρημα, πορφυροῦς μεσόλευκος χιτών (Julius Pollux, *Onomasticon* 7.61).

[105] Photius, *Lexicon*, s.v. *sarapis* (σάραπις· χιτὼν Περσικὸς μεσόλευκος).

[106] Berve 1926 (vol. 1), 17. See also Hinz 1969, 72–74.

came to associate the word *sarapis* with the specifically royal garment, and its generic meaning in Persian (simply as a word for "tunic") may have been forgotten.[107]

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

V. MEDIAN COSTUME AND PLUTARCH, *ALEXANDER* 45.2: ALEXANDER'S MIXED DRESS

The traditions in Ephippus of Olynthus, Diodorus, the *Metz Epitome*, and Eratosthenes of Cyrene provide consistent evidence concerning Alexander's Persian clothing. This consistency is marred by two contradictory traditions, both of which relate to Alexander's alleged use of Median clothing. First, we must deal with a troublesome issue of textual criticism that relates to Plutarch's life of Alexander. The surviving manuscripts of Plutarch have this statement (*Alex*. 45.2):[108]

[107] By Hellenistic times *sarapeis* were used by the Greeks of Asia Minor (see Democritus of Ephesus, *FGrH* 267 F 1 = Ath. 12.525d). It should also be noted that the words σαλητόν and σάρητον may be variant readings of *sarapis*. Hesychius has the following curious entry (*Lexicon*, s.v. σαλητόν, sigma.110):

> σαλητόν· Σοφοκλῆς Ἀνδρομέδᾳ. Ἀντίπατρος [ἢ] βαρβαρικὸν χιτῶνα. οἱ δὲ καὶ μεσόλευκον αὐτὸν εἶναί φασι.
>
> *Saleton*: [sc. this occurs] in the *Andromeda* of Sophocles. Antipater [says it is] a barbarian chiton. People also say that it has a white middle.

Hesychius ascribes the primary characteristic of the *sarapis* (i.e., *mesoleukos*) to the *saleton*. The second variant of the word (σάρητον) is defined by Hesychius (*Lexicon*, s.v. σάρητον, sigma.208) as a "*sarapis*, a kind of chiton" (ὁ σάραπις. [καὶ] εἶδος χιτῶνος). Photius (*Lexicon*, s.v. σάρητον) simply glosses σάρητον as a "barbarian chiton" (σάρητον· βαρβαρικὸς χιτών).

[108] The Greek text follows Ziegler 1968. See Hamilton 1969, 121–22, for the textual and linguistic problems.

> οὐ μὴν τήν γε Μηδικὴν . . . [sc. στολὴν] προσήκατο παντάπασι βαρβαρικὴν καὶ ἀλλόκοτον οὖσαν, οὐδὲ ἀναξυρίδας οὐδε κάνδυν οὐδε τιάραν ἔλαβεν, ἀλλ᾽ ἐν μέσῳ τινὰ τῆς Περσικῆς καὶ τῆς Μηδικῆς μιξάμενος εὖ πως, ἀτυφοτέραν μὲν ἐκείνης, ταύτης δὲ σοβαρωτέραν οὖσαν.
>
> Indeed [sc. Alexander] did not approve of the Median dress, which was wholly barbaric and strange, and he did not wear the *anaxyrides*, or *kandys*, or tiara, but a mixed style which was midway between the Persian and Median, more modest than the one and more impressive than the other.

The editors Coraes and Schmieder felt that the expression "Persian and Median" was an error. They emended it to "Persian and Macedonian" (Μακεδονικῆς), in agreement with Plutarch's *Moralia* (330a). Although Hamilton (1969, 123–24) criticised this emendation, even if Plutarch did in fact write "Persian and the Median," it seems that this was a mistake on his part, since in the very same passage (*Alex*. 45.2) he reports that Alexander did not wear the "Median" (or riding) costume. He again flatly contradicts himself in the *De Fortuna Alexandri* (Plut. *Mor*. 329f–30a):

> Ἀλέξανδρος οὐ τὴν ἐσθῆτα προσήκατο τὴν Μηδικήν, ἀλλὰ τὴν Περσικὴν πολλῷ τῆς Μηδικῆς εὐτελεστέραν οὖσαν. τὰ γὰρ ἔξαλλα καὶ τραγικὰ τοῦ βαρβαρικοῦ κόσμου παραιτησάμενος, οἷον τιάραν καὶ κάνδυν καὶ ἀναξυρίδας, ἐκ τοῦ Περσικοῦ καὶ Μακεδονικοῦ τρόπου μεμιγμένην τινὰ στολὴν ἐφόρει, καθάπερ Ἐρατοσθένης ἱστόρηκεν.
>
> Alexander did not approve of the Median dress, but accepted the Persian one, since it was simpler. Disapproving of the unusual and theatrical clothing of the barbarian world, such as the tiara, the *kandys*, and the *anaxyrides*, he wore a mixed dress from the Persian and Macedonian fashions, as Eratosthenes records.

The statement in *Alexander* 45.2, then, is contradicted by Plutarch's own statements in his writings about Alexander. Moreover, the notion that Alexander mixed "Persian and Median" dress is inconsistent with Diodorus and presumably with the original account of Cleitarchus.[109] This provides strong evidence that the phrase "Persian and Median" in Plutarch's life should be rejected, perhaps as a mistake by Plutarch or a corruption of the text. The conclusion that Alexander's dress was a compromise between "Persian and Macedonian" elements follows directly.

The "strange and theatrical" (ἔξαλλα καὶ τραγικά) nature of barbarian dress appears to have been a fundamental concern for Alexander. Most

[109] Diod. 17.77.5.

probably he rejected the Median (or riding) dress because it evoked the most pompous types of garments used in the Greek theatre for orientals, Great Kings, and other mythical kings. This type of costume, the dress of the "theatre king" ("Theaterkönig"), was examined in the seminal study of Alföldi,[110] whose views are essentially confirmed by Miller.[111] In particular, garments like the *kandys* were notorious on the Greek stage as oriental, theatrical, and effeminate, and it is no surprise that Alexander rejected even more barbarous clothing like the Persian trousers (*anaxyrides*).[112] For example, the Persian-style *kandys* had been worn by Athenian women from the last third of the fifth century B.C.E., and the finding that there appear to be no instances of men wearing it in Athenian art and iconography reinforces the view that it would have seemed exotic and effeminate in the fourth-century Greek world.[113]

However, there were precedents in the Greek world for the use of luxurious long-sleeved tunics like the Persian *chiton mesoleukos* sometimes found in the theatre. Duris of Samos noted that the Spartan king Pausanias (409–395 B.C.E.) "used to wear the Persian dress" (τὴν Περσικὴν ἐνεδύετο στολήν),[114] and the tyrant Dionysius I of Sicily wore the long robe (ξυστίς), golden crown, and buckled mantle,[115] a royal costume remarkably similar to that of Alexander. These garments were regarded as luxurious eastern clothes evoking the costume of the Great King but also marking the wearer as a person of great power.[116] Alexander's adoption of such

[110] Alföldi 1955, 15–55. The chief items in this costume were the long-sleeved tunic, *himation*, the Persian mantle (*kandys*), the belt and bracelet (Alföldi 1955, 41–50).

[111] For a critical review of Alföldi's thesis on the dress of the *Theaterkönig*, see Miller 1997, 156–65. See also Matthey 2000. At Athens, citizen women, particularly rich ones, began to wear the eastern-style, long-sleeved *chiton* from around the middle of the fifth century B.C.E., and it was at this time that such garments appear in the theatrical dress of mythological kings (Miller 1997, 164). On the use of Persian dress in Greece, see Miller 1997, 156–87.

[112] Alföldi 1955, 41–44.

[113] Miller 1997, 169–70.

[114] Duris of Samos, *FGrH* 76 F 14 = Ath. 12.535e.

[115] See Ath. 12.535e–f: ὁ δὲ Σικελίας τύραννος Διονύσιος ξυστίδα καὶ χρυσοῦν στέφανον ἔτι δ᾽ ἐπιπόρπημα μετελάμβανε τραγικόν.

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

clothing was thus an attempt to express his authority and sovereignty, and no doubt his newly won position as king of Asia. They elevated him above his subjects through luxury and display. We simply do not need to assume that the king wanted to present himself as a true Great King by this act, because he explicitly rejected the tiara, the symbol of the Persian kings in the Greek world.

VI. DID ALEXANDER WEAR THE TIARA?

The second discrepant tradition we are faced with is found in Arrian. He reports that Alexander exchanged his traditional Macedonian headdress (the *kausia*) for the tiara of the Persians (*Anab*. 4.7.4). This is a tradition also found in the *Itinerarium Alexandri* (89) and Lucian (*Dial. mort*. 12.4). The view that Alexander wore the tiara has been supported by Berve,[117] Neuffer,[118] and now Olbrycht,[119] but was questioned by Ritter,[120] whose views have been followed by many later scholars.[121] Ritter argues that the *Itinerarium Alexandri* and Lucian are late and derivative and that they carry little weight. Hence the question whether Alexander ever used the tiara is largely dependent on the veracity of the *Anabasis*. Some have been reluctant to dismiss the evidence of Arrian, but there are good reasons for doing so here, since his statement is at variance with Plutarch (*Alex*. 45.2) and Eratosthenes of Cyrene (*FGrH* 241 F 30 = Plut. *Mor*. 329f–30d). Arrian is not infallible, and, in this passage, he seems to contradict himself, since Alexander continued to wear the *kausia* (*Anab*. 7.29.4). Arrian's statement occurs in the context of moralising about Alexander's descent into barbarian customs. Like Plutarch, he may have relied on an inaccurate tradition from the Vulgate sources,[122] or may have deliberately composed this statement for the purposes of his narrative, since the traditional Macedonian *kausia* juxtaposed with the outlandish Persian tiara is an effective rhetorical device, one which drives home the theme of Alexander's abandonment of his native customs.[123] The view that Alexander never wore the tiara is thus confirmed.[124]

[117] Berve 1926 (vol. 1), 15–18.

[118] Neuffer 1929, 35.

[119] Olbrycht 2010, 356–57.

[120] Ritter 1965, 31–55.

[121] Ritter's views on this question are certainly to be preferred to those of Berve and Neuffer. See Hamilton 1969, 120–21; Hammond 1989, 181; Lane Fox 2007, 278.

[122] See Hammond 1989, 83, n. 47.

[123] See Bosworth 1995, 50; Ritter 1965, 41–47, and 1987, 295.

[124] The idea that Alexander is depicted wearing a tiara in the Porus medallions (Hill 1922, 191; Alföldi 1955, 42, n. 212) is now completely discredited (Price 1982, 76; Fredricks-

Moreover, the tiara or *kidaris* was very well known to the Greeks as the Great King's distinctive headdress.[125] In 324, for instance, Bessus wore it to declare his assumption of the Persian kingship,[126] and later a Median usurper called Baryaxes was executed because he had worn the tiara upright (Arr. *Anab*. 6.29.3). If Alexander ever wished to explicitly claim the Persian throne as a strict Great King, he merely had to assume the tiara. That he did not do so is our best evidence that Alexander never intended any such thing.

VII. THE THRONE AND SCEPTRE[127]

Both the throne and sceptre were important insignia of the Great King. In Persepolis, the king is usually depicted enthroned with a royal footstool

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meyer 2000, 153–54; Holt 2003, 120, n. 8; Tuplin 2007, 77). Cf. Olbrycht 2010, 356–57, and 2007–2008, 19–20: "Alexander's headdress in the dekadrachms seems to be a combination of an upright Iranian tiara with elements of a Macedonian helmet, i.e., tall plumage and possibly a crest. This combination could have been a conscious device. To the Macedonians, Alexander's headgear looked like a battle helmet, while to the Iranians it was an upright royal tiara." Even if the Porus medallions do evoke the tiara in such an ambiguous manner, this does not prove that Alexander actually wore the tiara as part of his royal costume. For example, in Egyptian iconography, Alexander is regularly depicted wearing the traditional royal garments of the pharaoh, but we know that Alexander never actually dressed in this manner as part of his royal style. Cf. also the speculation of Badian 1996, 21, n. 48: "[sc. Alexander] may have changed his style over the years, or he reserved the wearing of the tiara for formal and ritual (Persian) occasions, as indeed the King himself have may have done." I see no evidence for this view, and, even if it were true, it is clear that Alexander never wore the tiara as part of his regular royal costume. Debord (1999, 479–92) has argued that certain Greek cities in Asia Minor minted coins showing Alexander dressed in Persian style, like a satrap, but the coins in question probably show mere mythical figures (Lane Fox 2007, 271).

[125] Ar. *Av*. 487; Hdt. 3.12.17; 7.61.3; Ctesias, *FGrH* 688 F 20.31–32; Xen. *An*. 2.5.23, *Cyr*. 3.1.13, 8.3.13; Strabo 11.13.9; Julius Pollux, *Onomasticon* 7.58.5–59.2. See also the *Scholia in Aves* 487.1–7: "this [word *kurbasia*] is found in historical works. Every Persian was allowed to wear the tiara, but not the upright tiara, as Cleitarchus [says] in the tenth book [of his history]. For only the Persian kings themselves used to wear the upright tiara (as I have said, the tiara is the *kidaris* [worn] on the head. It is the custom for others to wear it by placing it before themselves and wrapping it around the forehead, but the kings wear the upright *kidaris*)" (τοῦτο ἐξ ἱστορίας εἴληφε. πᾶσι γὰρ Πέρσαις ἐξῆν τὴν τιάραν φορεῖν, ἀλλ' οὐκ ὀρθὴν, ὡς Κλείταρχος ἐν τῇ δεκάτῃ. μόνοι δὲ οἱ τῶν Περσῶν βασιλεῖς ὀρθαῖς ἐχρῶντο. τὴν δὲ ἐπὶ κεφαλῆς κίδαριν. ἔστι δὲ αὕτη, καθὰ προείπομεν, τιάρα. τοῖς μὲν ἄλλοις ἔθος καὶ ἐπτυγμένην καὶ προβάλλουσαν εἰς τὸ μέτωπον ἔχειν, τοῖς δὲ βασιλεῦσιν ὀρθήν). On the Great King's headdress and the tiara, see now Tuplin 2007. For the *kidaris* in Greek art, see Miller 1991, 59–82.

[126] Arr. *Anab*. 3.25.3.

[127] For the sceptre, see Briant 2002, 217. On the royal throne, see Hug 1936, 614–16; Ritter 1965, 26–27; Alföldi 1949–1950, 537–66.

and sceptre.[128] The king's throne was golden (Ath. 12.514c), and it was a capital offense for anyone other than the king to sit on it. Alexander is made to deride this very tradition in an anecdote in Curtius (8.4.15), although the speech may be nothing more than a Vulgate fiction. The throne had not been a significant symbol of royalty in the Greek tradition, but the sceptre was associated with kings even in the Homeric myths.[129]

At some date, Alexander adopted a Persian-style throne and used it for audiences.[130] In a fragment of Ephippus of Olynthus, we learn that a golden throne was set up for Alexander in a Persian *paradeisos* where he used to hold court.[131] The most prominent incident, however, was the occasion in Babylon when a man was found sitting on the royal throne. The eunuch attendants refused to remove the man because of a Persian custom (*Anab*. 7.24.3).[132] The event, which was most probably a Mesopotamian substitute king ritual prearranged by the Babylonian priests,[133] demonstrates that Alexander had moved towards an eastern style of enthronement by the final year of his life. But the throne had been an important symbol of kingship, not just in Persia, but throughout the Near East.[134] The king's throne may well have been influenced just as much by Babylonian traditions as by those in Persia.

The *Metz Epitome* (1.2) lists the sceptre (*caduceus*) as part of Alexander's normal royal costume. It was included by Diodorus among the king's insignia after his death (18.61.1), and Alexander's funerary carriage even had a representation of the king holding his sceptre (18.27.1). It was during official audiences that the most important use of this item was made, as Polyaenus reports that Alexander would sit enthroned in his tent with the sceptre in his hand.[135] In Athenaeus, Alexander's use of the sceptre

[128] Briant 2002, 217.

[129] Lenz 1993, 62–72; Hug 1936, 613: "in Homeric times, the throne was not yet the insignia of kingship, but only the sceptre. It was not only the kings but also the noble lords who sat on thrones, which existed in large numbers in the king's palace" ("in homerischer Zeit ist der Thron noch nicht das Abzeichen des Königtums, sondern nur das Szepter. Nicht nur die Könige, sondern auch die adeligen Herren sitzen auf Thronsesseln, die im Königspalast in großer Menge vorhanden sind").

[130] Arr. *Anab*. 7.24.1–3; Diod. 17.116.2–4.

[131] Ephippus, *FGrH* 126 = Ath. 12.537d. See also Alföldi 1949–1950, 556.

[132] Diod. 17.116.2–4; Plut. *Alex*. 73.7–9.

[133] This was an ancient Babylonian apotropaic rite that protected the king by transferring whatever danger he faced onto another man who was briefly made king. See Spek 2003, 51; Panaino 2000, 43.

[134] Grayson 1975a, 100; 1975b, 84.

[135] *Strat*. 4.8.2.

was meant to evoke the gods,[136] and this receives striking confirmation in recent interpretations of the commemorative Porus medallions.[137] These decadrachms were struck during the king's lifetime to celebrate his victory over Porus; they show him in a divinised form, holding a thunderbolt and most probably a sceptre.[138] In Alexander's coinage, Zeus is frequently depicted holding a sceptre,[139] and Alexander, in the Porus medallions, is obviously portrayed as a hero-god assimilated to Zeus.[140] The sceptre that Alexander used in his royal costume was probably modelled on that of the Great King, but it appears to have been interpreted by the king as a symbol of his relationship to his divine father Zeus. In short, the sceptre was not simply an insignia showing his claim to the Persian throne.

CONCLUSION

We have strong evidence in Ephippus of Olynthus, Diodorus, and Eratosthenes of Cyrene that Alexander mixed Persian and Macedonian costume, but that the king rejected the "Median" dress (or riding dress), which included the tiara, the full-sleeved jacket (*kandys*), and the baggy trousers (*anaxyrides*). These were "strange and theatrical" (ξένα καὶ τραγικά) items of barbarian dress, and evoked the more exotic types of garments of the Greek "theatre kings."

There seems to be no compelling evidence for the view that the diadem was derived from the iconography of Dionysus, nor for Alföldi's thesis that it was essentially a Greek victor's headband ("Siegerbinde") with a Dionysian interpretation, assumed by Alexander to mark his victory over Darius at Gaugamela. The violence done to the ancient sources must be regarded as a serious problem for all those who question the diadem's Persian origin. The diadem was unquestionably a symbol of Alexander's assumption of the kingship of Asia. Another point that does command respect is that it was adopted as an inoffensive symbol, and became a royal prerogative in the Hellenistic world and beyond.[141] Nevertheless, it was also Persian in origin.

[136] Ephippus, *FGrH* 126 F 5.29 = Ath. 12.537f.

[137] For reproductions of the medallion, see Davis and Kraay 1973, nos. 10–12, and Holt 2003, pls. 2–8. For the possibility that Alexander's sceptre was eventually buried in Tomb II at Vergina, see Borza 1990, 264–65.

[138] Borza 1987, 113; 1990, 264–65; Holt 2003, 121–22.

[139] See Price (1991 [vol. 2], 553–54, s.v. caduceus) for a full listing of such coins.

[140] Holt 2003, 121–22.

[141] Ritter 1987, 293–95.

Although the *chiton* with the white middle (*chiton mesoleukos*) signified the Persian king, according to Xenophon, this was also an extremely obscure fact, and it was the upright tiara that was known to the Greeks as the exclusive headdress of the Great King.[142] Alexander's rejection of the tiara adds weight to the thesis that he did not wish to assume the Persian kingship or present himself as a Persian king in the strict sense. Alexander's mixed royal costume included eastern garments that indicated his sovereignty over Asia and elevated him above his subjects through luxury and display. To some extent, the process was merely Alexander's acquisition of the spoils of a defeated enemy, and completely consistent with the doctrine of "spear-won" land, and Alexander himself apparently justified the act by appealing to this specific notion (Curt. 6.6.5).

Alexander's selective use of Persian royal garments was part of his attempt to create a new royal court and personal autocracy that was suitable for his position as king of Asia. As has been noted above, the "kingship of Asia" was not a mere claim to the Persian empire, but a kingdom greater and more exalted than any earlier kingship. Alexander transformed his Macedonian kingship when he came to rule the Near East, by adopting what he thought was a splendid court dress and insignia that set him over and above his subjects.

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