

WOMEN AND DYNASTY AT THE HELLENISTIC IMPERIAL COURTS

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Introduction

A peculiarity of the Hellenistic empires is the powerful position royal women held at court, and their central place in dynastic representation.¹ Hellenistic kingship was a family affair, and royal women played key roles—through their public images as much as their political activities—in the creation and legitimization of the Hellenistic empires.² This goes back to the Argead Empire after the death of Alexander, when a lack of able male successors enabled several talented women of the dynasty to rise to power.³ They paved the way for later generations, as powerful women recurred in the Seleukid and Ptolemaic dynasties with a frequency that is unique in ancient history.

This chapter discusses the place and agency of women at the imperial courts of the Hellenistic world. The focus will be on the four major Macedonian dynasties: the Argeads, Ptolemies, Seleukids, and Antigonids. Despite differences, and developments through time, several characteristics were shared by these dynasties, who after all had a common background in the Aegean and were in constant interaction with each other. Themes to be discussed are royal women's roles in dynastic succession, dynastic marital strategies, and the socio-political agency of court women (royal wives, sisters, daughters, and concubines).

Court studies go back to Norbert Elias and have profoundly influenced the study of the emerging states of Early Modern Europe;⁴ of importance too is the more recent work on court culture and imperialism by Jeroen Duindam and others.⁵ A court studies perspective has offered new understandings and interpretations of ancient monarchies as well, especially the Hellenistic empires and in their wake the Achaimenid Empire.⁶ The Hellenistic courts were basically the private households of the dynasties.⁷ They were also meeting points where political and economic networks converged and where power was created, negotiated, and distributed.⁸ This actor-based perspective offers an alternative to the conventional focus on institutions and “political philosophy,” and the new interest in networks and exchange offers an alternative to the modernist conceptualization of the Hellenistic empires as states. Circumventing the traditional search for formal state institutions also means that the agency of women at court can be understood as a cardinal aspect of the exercise of power rather than as merely ancillary and incidental.

Being essentially a household, the court was not an entirely male-dominated domain to begin with, but one in which women were literally at home. Though there were to some

extent typically male and female spheres within the household—e.g. in their religious tasks, men tended to deal more with male and women more with female deities—powerful women should not be seen as intruders in politics because no distinction existed between the court as private household and the court as political institution.⁹ In Greek inscriptions and historical narratives, royal houses are sometimes called *oikos* or (*basilikē*) *oikia*,¹⁰ “the composite household of persons and property that was the focus of family identity and interest.”¹¹

The size of these households would frequently expand from a core group of people when visitors would assemble for specific festive occasions. In the Argead, Antigonid, and Seleukid empires this involved considerable movement of the court, often following a religious calendar. The ability of the Hellenistic courts to both attract *and* seek out local elites was a powerful instrument of imperialism.¹² Because many of these “great events” were organized around *rites de passage* of the royal family—births, marriages, burials, inaugurations—royal women played key roles in them.¹³

The various imperial households of the Hellenistic period were mobile. Royal courts were typically able to move, and they often did. Notably Argead, Seleukid and Antigonid kings were regularly on campaign, accompanied by their courts.¹⁴ The idea that the residual sovereign authority of the dynasty was located in a specific place even if the monarch himself was absent, such as existed in early modern Western Europe,¹⁵ never fully developed in the Macedonian empires (though some concept of a “royal city” existed in the Seleukid Empire, Seleukeia-on-the-Tigris and Seleukeia-in-Pieria being the main examples).¹⁶ To be sure, Macedonian kings often left their families behind while on campaign. “Capital” for the Hellenistic empires is an anachronistic concept because it presupposes that a process of “going out of court” was in progress or completed, that is, the formal disconnection of dynastic household and state apparatus that was the foundation of the modern nation state. If a concept of royal sovereignty in the sense of Kantorowicz’s “king’s two bodies” existed in the Hellenistic world,¹⁷ this sovereignty could also be located in royal women. In the older literature on Hellenistic kingship it is commonly stated that in the Hellenistic empires the king “*was* the state,” or words to the same effect. But the actual situation probably was plainer: there was no state. It is true that Argead and Antigonid kings were kings “of the Macedonians” (*Makedones*), *i.e.* the Macedonian *ethnos* as a political body.¹⁸ But this was only a constituent part of their overall *basileia*, the pretensions of which were more far-reaching. The Ptolemies were pharaohs of the “Two Lands” as *part* of their overall, universalistic pretensions; the Seleukids were *also* kings of Babylon, etcetera.

The Seleukid court was very itinerant. Where Seleukid royal women and their courts resided when not accompanying the king on campaign is unknown; they may have stayed in a specific locality such as Seleukeia-on-the-Tigris or Sardis with the intention to create an additional dynastic center, where petitioners and negotiators could go when the king was progressing; or they may have traveled themselves, changing residence just as the male monarch did.

Archaeology has yielded very little evidence that Hellenistic palaces in fact served residential purposes. Hellenistic palatial architecture seems to have been ceremonial and representational above all.¹⁹ This is a trait that Hellenistic palaces share with Achaimenid palaces such as Persepolis or Susa. The best-known examples are the Antigonid palace at Vergina (Aigai) and the acropolis of Pergamon. The palace at Aigai consisted of an inner courtyard surrounded by banqueting rooms for ritualized feasting.²⁰ The exception were the Ptolemies. Although they did shift the location of their court seasonally to Memphis, and in the second and first centuries BCE²¹ ritually progressed up and the down the Nile on a floating palace, Alexandria was a relatively stable seat of power and an imperial microcosm, where monuments, fauna, flora, and knowledge symbolizing the imagined extent of Ptolemaic imperial hegemony were accumulated.

The Ptolemaic palace district mimicked that of Hekatomnid Halikarnassos, but on a grander scale, and, with its threefold setup of a huge outer palace consisting of semi-public royal/religious monuments (the so-called *Basileia* district), palace gardens, and the private “Inner Palaces,” prefigures later Mediterranean palaces such as Topkapı Sarayı in Ottoman Constantinople.

Royal women and dynastic succession

Already before the Hellenistic period, Macedonian elite women played a crucial role in the transmission of the dynastic inheritance, of which royalty (*basileia*) was the principal element.²² *Basileia* was not a public office but a hereditary privilege, a family possession. The Macedonian dynasties were based on dual descent; they accepted the transmission of inheritance through both the male and female line.²³ In this dynastic setup, women had better opportunities to become key political actors than in dynasties organized along the male bloodline.

A complicating factor was the practice of polygyny, common among the Argeads and adopted also by Alexander’s successors. In his 1999 book *Polygamy, Prostitutes and Death*, Daniel Ogden put forward the influential thesis that the Hellenistic dynasties lacked a consistent method of hierarchizing royal wives and organizing the succession, which led to a fierce competition between the wives to ensure the succession of their sons; this destructive rivalry, that broke up the royal courts and made succession conflicts endemic, according to Ogden was the main cause of the Hellenistic dynasties’ demise.²⁴

Ogden’s thesis is no longer widely accepted. It is clear that Hellenistic royal women could be hierarchized and that Hellenistic kings had various strategies at their disposal to regulate the succession.²⁵ In the Seleukid Empire, conflicts over the succession between brothers or half-brothers were actually rare; Nicholas Wright has pointed out that even in the later period of dynastic warfare, primogeniture was generally respected by each of the two rival branches of the Seleukid house.²⁶ The Ptolemaic, and infrequent Seleukid, practice of brother–sister marriage—borrowed from the fourth-century Hekatomnids, though it may have been practiced sporadically by the pre-Hellenistic Argeads²⁷—made it as clear as a bell who was the female head of the household, and only *her* children would in principle be eligible for the throne (though conflicts over the succession between these children could still occur).²⁸ Moreover, dynastic polygyny was not a feature peculiar to the Hellenistic dynasties. As Duindam has shown, with the exception of medieval and early modern Europe, polygyny was the rule in dynastic reproduction in world history and primogeniture was far from universal.²⁹ Conflicts between women close to the king were natural in courts where polygynous reproduction was practiced.³⁰

Duindam further noted that dynastic women “rarely acted only as passive vehicles of reproduction or as disinterested outsiders in succession conflicts. Even in dynasties based entirely on the notion of a male bloodline, women played marked roles.”³¹ The Hellenistic dynasties were certainly based on succession through the matriline as well, amplifying women’s agency in the succession. An early example is that of Kleopatra, the sister of Alexander whom various Diadochs (Leonnatos, Perdikkas, Kassandros, Lysimachos, Antigonos, Ptolemy) desired to marry in order to “legitimate” their rule—or so her role in Alexander’s “funeral games” is usually explained.³² In fact, it was not Kleopatra’s relationship with Alexander that made her a key player on the political scene between 323 and her death in 308: more important was the circumstance that after Alexander’s death she had become the main claimant to the heritage of her father, Philip II. Her popularity among a multitude of power-hungry suitors cannot be explained with the vague term “legitimacy,” but rather by the very tangible fact that if she bore a son, this son would inherit the Argead family’s *basileia*. By producing offspring with Kleopatra, a

man like Perdikkas could translate the Argead *basileia* to his own family, while for 16 years or so he could act as regent for his minor son. But this arrangement would also have given Kleopatra substantial power.

A comparable scenario unfolded at the very end of Hellenistic history, when Kleopatra VII, who was the inheritor of both the Ptolemaic and Seleukid *basileia*, concluded a marriage alliance with Caesar. For Kleopatra this was a way to find a strong ally who could help her secure her rule and make her empire great again; for her Roman companion it was a means to bring Hellenistic kingship into his *familia* and, more importantly, to control the Near Eastern vassal kings as regent for his minor son, Ptolemy XV (Caesarion). After Caesar's death, Antony continued this policy when in 34 BCE he proclaimed Kleopatra "Queen of Kings" and Caesarion "King of Kings," and gave local kingdoms to his own children with Kleopatra.³³

A wife could be elevated to the status of first queen by granting her the title of *basilissa* and the right to wear a diadem. King's wives were not routinely called *basilissa*. The title bestowed special status and authority on a consort, and elevated her above possible other spouses.³⁴ Demetrios Poliorketes had several wives and many concubines but only one, Phila, bore the title of *basilissa*.³⁵ Thus, a *basilissa* was originally *mutatis mutandis* a first queen, or queen mother, and this in turn was a means to hierarchize royal women and pre-arrange the succession; it also enhanced the loyalty of the designated first queen and made the members of her paternal family stakeholders in the imperial project. Support from the court, the army, and powerful local elites could be generated by making the *basilissa* a central figure in dynastic representation.³⁶ The title of *basilissa* was later also granted to princesses; this presumably can be associated with concerns about the succession as well.³⁷

The wish to secure the succession and dynastic continuity was likely a significant motivation for the brother–sister marriages of the Ptolemaic dynasty, which in turn increased the formal equality of king and queen in this dynasty. The prominent position of the queen at the Ptolemaic court is reflected in court poetry; queens both acted as patrons of poets and feature in poetic texts, for instance in Kallimachos' *Victory of Berenike*, an epinician ode celebrating the victory of the queen's horses in the Olympic Games.³⁸

A second mechanism to ensure a harmonious transition of power was the elevation of one son above his (half-)brothers by giving him far-reaching responsibilities, honors, and authority. This partly explains the well-known Hellenistic practice of joint kingship, in which the successor received the title of *basileus* during his father's lifetime.³⁹ The son who acted as co-ruler was thereby not only signaled as successor, but also given the opportunity to gain support of the army and local elites, so that it would be difficult to remove him from power after his accession as sole king. Dual kingship was practiced occasionally and with varying degrees of success.⁴⁰

Dual kingship considerably increased the status and power of the successor's mother.⁴¹ In the early Seleukid Empire, not only the father–son dyad but also the public unity of mother and son was emphasized in dynastic representation. In 300/299 and 299/298, the Milesian *dēmos* in rapid succession voted a decree in honor of Antiochos, Seleukos I's heir, and the setting up of a statue of Antiochos' mother, Apama; in both cases the initiative came from the powerful Seleukid *philos* Demodamas of Miletos, and thus ultimately from the Seleukid court.⁴² The promotion of Apama at this specific time can be related to Seleukos' marriage to Stratonike, the daughter of Demetrios Poliorketes, which made it necessary to secure Apama's status as first queen and her son Antiochos' primacy in the succession.⁴³ Thus an image was created of the harmonious unity of the Seleukid king, queen, and male successor. In the Antiochos Cylinder from Borsippa (268), Antiochos I, Stratonike, and their son, Seleukos, repeatedly appear together as a mirror image of the divine Babylonian triad of Marduk (father), Erûa (the mother "who creates offspring"), and

Nabû (“first son”).⁴⁴ This simplified nuclear family of king/husband, queen/wife, and heir/son, which was also presented in other media, has been called the Seleukid reigning triad.⁴⁵

Family ties were constantly stressed by the Macedonian dynasties, for instance by the use of dynastic epithets (Eupator, Philopator, Philadelphos, Philometor), by sharing divine honors, by a preference for family groups in portrait sculpture,⁴⁶ by naming cities after kings, queens and their children, and through the pronunciation of family traits on coin portraits, such as the Ptolemaic “strong chin” or the bull’s neck of the early Seleukids.⁴⁷ An interesting aspect of family resemblance in coin portraiture is the process of “assimilation,” by which a queen’s face would be subtly altered to resemble the features of her husband.⁴⁸ After his victory in the Battle of Chaironeia (338), Philip II commissioned the building of the Philippeion in Olympia, which housed statues of himself, his parents, his queen Olympias, and his heir Alexander.⁴⁹ To the sphere of family politics also belongs the use of dynastic names. Seleukid princesses were most often called Laodike or Antiochis, while the name Stratonike (after the Antigonid wife of Seleukos I and Antiochos I) also recurred.⁵⁰ In the Ptolemaic kingdom the use of dynastic names was radical. Since Ptolemy Soter by coincidence had been succeeded by another “Ptolemaios,” all Ptolemaic kings bore this throne name, while after c. 200 BCE all queens were named Kleopatra, creating an image of a superbly stable and eternally ongoing monarchy.⁵¹ Other recurring female dynastic names among the Ptolemies were Berenike, Arsinoë, and Ptolemais.

Dynastic marriage

The Seleukids intermarried more with royalty than did the Ptolemies, who in most generations avoided marriage with external dynasties. For their daughters, the Seleukid house mostly arranged hypogamous marriages, where the woman is married to a man of lower status, thereby affirming the superiority of the Seleukid imperial house over the vassal dynasty. Eumenes II of Pergamon rejected a marriage with a daughter of Antiochos III because this would give her father too much authority over Eumenes’ house.⁵² David Engels, Richard Wenghofer, and this author have shown how Seleukid kings (above all Antiochos III) consolidated alliances and brought local dynasts into the extended Seleukid family through dynastic marriages; they thereby exchanged in the periphery of the empire failing attempts at direct rule for rule by proxy.⁵³

As we have seen, the royal household was the meeting point where the networks converged that held the Hellenistic empires together, and where exchanges and negotiations between stakeholders in the imperial project took place. Princesses were key actors in the establishment of imperial cohesion, creating lasting connections between secondary houses and the imperial dynasties. Queens could act as diplomats through their paternal families’ local networks. For instance Apama—Seleukos Nikator’s Iranian bride and mother of his successor and co-ruler, Antiochos I—played an important role in the establishment of Seleukid hegemony in her native Central Asia, while also representing the dynasty in the West.⁵⁴ Alex McAuley has shown how the Seleukids interacted with regional rulers in Anatolia by arranging diplomatic marriages of these rulers to Seleukid princesses, enabling Seleukid interference in the households of their clients; the principal agents of these interventions were the Seleukid princesses themselves, who remained in contact with their paternal house.⁵⁵

Hellenistic dynastic marriages were celebrated with much pageantry and must have been arranged well in advance to allow visitors to arrive. Unfortunately, the details of such ceremonies have not been preserved.⁵⁶ Princesses typically were not accompanied by their fathers, but by court dignitaries, and they presumably had with them a personal entourage of servants, ladies

in waiting, and guards. Around 178, Laodike, daughter of Seleukos IV, traveled to Macedonia to marry king Perseus accompanied by a huge bridal escort on board a flotilla of Rhodian warships; the marriage was connected to Perseus' inauguration as king some time earlier.⁵⁷ Shortly after the accession of Antiochos III, his young bride Laodike was escorted to Seleukeia-on-the-Euphrates (Zeugma), a border town, where Antiochos awaited her "with all due pomp and splendor" and where the wedding ceremony took place "with royal magnificence;" the couple then proceeded to Antioch-on-the-Orontes, where Laodike in a second ceremony was proclaimed *basilissa*.⁵⁸

Queens introduced their own following into their husbands' households, a phenomenon that is known as the "doubling" of the court. Though there is no archaeological evidence that Hellenistic palaces were divided into male and female spaces, there is some scattered evidence that Hellenistic queens indeed had their own courts. Berenike Syra, one of the wives of Antiochos II (aka *Phernophoros*, "Dowry-Bringer"), had a personal bodyguard of Galatian warriors given to her by her father, Ptolemy II.⁵⁹ For the later Seleukid household, a chamberlain and chief physician of the queen have been attested.⁶⁰ There is some evidence that, at the Ptolemaic court of the late third century, queens were attended by female pages, who may have been the daughters of important *philoí*.⁶¹

Though we know that queens upon marriage brought with them substantial dowries, it is difficult to say if they themselves had command of these possessions.⁶² The practice of returning a princess a generation later, who would then bring back a dowry to her mother's paternal house, seems to indicate that the dowry in principle would become the inheritance of the queen's children, and thus be lost to her paternal family if no such strategies were employed to prevent it. The fact that Seleukid and Ptolemaic queens acted as benefactors of cities and as patrons of the arts shows that they, in one way or another, had substantial financial resources at their disposal.⁶³

Royal women as power brokers

From the original brother-sister reign of Arsinoë II and Ptolemy II—who shared the cult title Philadelphos ("brother/sister-lover")—Ptolemaic queens wielded considerable power, culminating in the sole reigns of Berenike IV and Kleopatra VII in the mid-first century BCE.⁶⁴ But also in the Argead and Seleukid dynasties, royal women regularly had a degree of formal authority not seen in the Achaimenid or Roman empires. Because male rulers were often away on campaign, they delegated power to their mothers or wives. Alexander left his mother Olympias practically in charge of the Argead household in Macedon, where she seems to have served as counterweight against the male regent, Antipatros.⁶⁵ Olympias was able to consolidate her position of primacy and accumulate enough support to remain powerful after her son's death.⁶⁶ Another interesting example is Laodike, wife of Antiochos III. While Antiochos was on campaign, Laodike represented him as monarch, maintaining diplomatic contacts with the poleis of Asia Minor and having authority over the royal treasury. This is clear from a famous letter to Iasos from c. 195, in which Laodike states that she is acting "in accordance with the wishes of my brother,"⁶⁷ an expression of fictive kinship stressing the closeness of husband and wife. Antiochos himself likewise emphasized that Laodike was his other self by calling her "our sister and queen" in *his* correspondence.⁶⁸ There are more examples of Seleukid queens acting in their own name as benefactors of civic communities.⁶⁹ Women's authority increased when queen mothers ruled temporarily as regents to bridge a gap between two male rulers. Olympias, whose example most of all created acceptance for later queens to rule, was regent for Alexander's son, Alexander IV. Women ruling as regent thereafter reappear with some frequency,

the best example being the powerful Seleukid queen of Ptolemaic descent, Kleopatra Thea, in the later second century BCE.⁷⁰

Royal women could exercise considerable influence by acting as mediators, or brokers, between the king and others at court. We are told that Pyrrhos the Molossian, who as a young man stayed as a hostage at the court of Ptolemy Soter, “cultivated Berenike in particular, seeing that she was the most influential and the most virtuous and intelligent of the wives of Ptolemy.”⁷¹ The resultant (anti-Antigonid) alliance between Pyrrhos and Ptolemy I was sealed by a marriage involving not a daughter of Ptolemy, but a daughter of Berenike from an earlier marriage, Antigone. It is perhaps noteworthy that Antigone derived status from her mother’s rank as queen rather than through her father, Philippos son of Amyntas, an infantry officer in the army of Alexander and “a Macedonian of no note and of lowly origin.”⁷²

Diodoros recounts how in 316 Dokimos, a partisan of Eumenes, was captured by Antigonos Monophthalmos but made a dramatic escape by negotiating with Antigonos’ wife Stratonike; he later rose to high office in Antigonos’ army.⁷³ Josephus tells a tale about a woman whose husband, a court dignitary named Arion, had been thrown in jail: “Arion’s wife informed Kleopatra of this, [and] Kleopatra informed the king of it,” after which Arion was released.⁷⁴ Though the historicity of especially the last tale is dubious—Josephus’ narrative clearly belongs to the genre of court stories, and the identity of queen “Kleopatra” is extremely hard to establish—it may be noted that in such stories queens consistently act as intermediaries between the king and others.

More detail is given in another, and again rather novelistic, passage from Josephus’ *Jewish Antiquities*. Josephus writes how in the later third century Joseph, a member of the priestly Tobiad family of Jerusalem, traveled to the Ptolemaic court to obtain the right to collect taxes in Judea: “[He] privately sent many presents to the king, and to [queen] Kleopatra, and to their *philoï*, and to all that were powerful at court, and thereby purchased their goodwill to himself.” Finally, a meeting with the king was arranged by the queen; while Ptolemy was traveling from Memphis to Alexandria, Joseph waited beside the road at a place agreed upon in advance, was invited into the royal carriage, and was granted restricted time to address the king: “With his amusing and clever conversation he made a good impression on the king, who began to like him, and he was invited for dinner at the palace, as a guest at the royal table.”⁷⁵

In terms of court studies, the queen in these examples is not merely acting as an intermediary, but at the same time as a filter through which matters had to pass on the way to the king. The point is, that for ideological reasons kings were obliged to be open and accessible; but for reasons of status and honor they could not openly refuse requests or ignore advice. Accessibility therefore could be a risk for the king, but advantageous for powerful individuals whose status gave them admission to him.⁷⁶ Court dignitaries like the chiliarch at Alexander’s court or so-called favorites therefore often were given the task of regulating access and creating a protective screen between the king and those seeking to exploit him. To the category of favorites—relative outsiders to court society who are elevated to a position of primacy by the favor of the king—also belong a group of court women not discussed thus far: royal concubines.⁷⁷

In the literary sources we often find the *topos* of the royal concubine as a vulgar, unscrupulous, power-hungry seductress who makes the king her sex slave. Polybios writes about the Ptolemies: “But what are Mnesis and Potheine but flute-players, and was Myrtonion not one of those vulgar professional mime actors? And was Ptolemy Philopator not the slave of the courtesan Agathokleia, who brought the kingdom to the brink of collapse?”⁷⁸

The negative image of royal concubines in the Greek narrative sources has carried through to modern scholarship, where they are often depicted as courtesans. But when Polybios writes that Ptolemy II set up public statues of his concubine, Kleino, he unintentionally reveals the

high status these women actually had.⁷⁹ It indicates that being a royal concubine was also a formal *public* role—an aulic office, reminiscent of the official *Maitresse en Titre* at the court of Louis XIV.⁸⁰ One of the most notorious concubines in Hellenistic history, Agathokleia, was in fact the sister of Agathokles, Ptolemy Philopator's minister-favorite. In other words, she was a woman of noble birth, connected through kinship with one the most powerful men in the empire.

A king's relationship with a concubine could thus be a semi-marital link with a member of his own court. Another reason for maintaining relationships with concubines may have been to produce extra offspring: either loyal "bastard" sons to whom responsibilities could be delegated, or girls to be given in marriage to seal alliances inside or outside the court.

Because concubines were in a position to communicate with the king in private, without other people being present, they too could regulate access to the king by acting as brokers, as well as perhaps acting as mediators between a powerful family of *philoï* and the king, as in the example of Agathokles and Agathokleia. But these women likely were also themselves able to exert influence on the king, for "whoever had the king's ear shared to some extent in his power."⁸¹

Conclusion

Despite significant differences between the dynasties, Hellenistic queenship was a pan-Mediterranean and inter-imperial institution—and perhaps a category of its own. Royal women were central figures in the dynastic households, and as mothers, heirs, and regents played key roles in the maintenance of dynastic continuity. They sometimes had responsibilities that many cultures consider typically male, such as acting as benefactors of cities or having leading roles in warfare (e.g. Olympias, Arsinoë III, Kleopatra Thea, and Kleopatra VII). They acted as power brokers at court, as public representatives of dynasties, and maintained contact with their paternal families.

Notes

- 1 The classic study of Hellenistic royal women is Macurdy 1932; for the Argeads also Carney 2000. Whitehorne 1994 offers short biographies of the many Argead, Seleukid, and Ptolemaic royal women who were named Kleopatra. For Seleukid royal women see Coşkun and McAuley 2016. I was unable to consult Hämmerling 2019.
- 2 Nourse 2002.
- 3 Carney 1991; cf. Macurdy 1927.
- 4 Elias 1969.
- 5 See *i.a.* Duindam 1995; 2003; 2016.
- 6 Spawforth 2007; Strootman 2007; 2014; Jacobs and Rollinger 2010; Llewellyn-Jones 2013; Carney 2015; Erskine, Llewellyn-Jones, and Wallace 2017. A two-volume book on the Roman imperial court, edited by Ben Kelly et al., is forthcoming from Cambridge University Press.
- 7 Strootman 2013a.
- 8 On this function of the court see Duindam 2018.
- 9 Carney 1994, for the Argead court; cf. Müller 2007; Strootman 2014: 93–110.
- 10 Strootman 2014: 38; Seleukid evidence is discussed by Coloru 2012: 85–6.
- 11 Patterson 1998: 3.
- 12 Strootman 2013b; 2018.
- 13 On Hellenistic inauguration ritual, see Strootman 2014: 210–32.
- 14 For women at Alexander's itinerant court, see Carney 2003.
- 15 Rodríguez-Salgado 1991: 207.
- 16 Von Reden and Strootman in press.
- 17 Kantorowicz 1957.

- 18 On the ethnos of the Makedones, see Hatzopoulos 2015.
- 19 Strootman 2014: 54–90; on Hellenistic palace architecture, see Nielsen 1994; Brands and Hoepfner 1996; Kutbay 1998.
- 20 Hatzopoulos 2001.
- 21 All dates in this chapter are BCE unless otherwise indicated.
- 22 Mirón Pérez 2000.
- 23 See Carney 1994 for the Argeads, and Strootman 2010 and 2016 for the Ptolemies and Seleukids. A consequence of this custom, is that when the Seleukid dynasty became extinct in the patriline, the Seleukid heritage was claimed by various matrilineal descendants, including Mithradates VI of Pontos (a grandson of Antiochos IV Epiphanes), Antiochos I of Kommagene (grandson of Antiochos VIII), and Kleopatra VII (heir to the Seleukid throne by multiple links).
- 24 Ogden 1999: ix–xi.
- 25 Strootman 2007: 111–17; Müller 2009: 18–84.
- 26 Wright 2011.
- 27 Ogden 1999: 125.
- 28 On Ptolemaic sibling marriage, see Ager 2005; Buraselis 2008 and Chapter 29 in this volume.
- 29 Duindam 2016: 109–27, 153.
- 30 Duindam 2016: 125.
- 31 Duindam 2016: 89.
- 32 On Kleopatra's role in the Argead succession, see Meeus 2009. See also Chapter 27 in this volume.
- 33 Strootman 2010.
- 34 Strootman 2014: 107, 198–9; Widmer 2019.
- 35 Carney 1991: 161; on Demetrios' wives, see Harders 2013.
- 36 Müller 2013.
- 37 Ritter 1965: 116.
- 38 On the public image of Ptolemaic queens, see Wikander 1996; Hazzard 2000.
- 39 On joint kingship, see Holton 2018.
- 40 Billows 1995.
- 41 McAuley 2017b.
- 42 *I. Didyma* 479 and 480; cf. Engels and Erickson 2016.
- 43 Widmer 2015.
- 44 See Strootman 2013b; Holton 2018: 118–23. For the titulature of Stratonike, see Widmer 2019.
- 45 McAuley 2017a: 190.
- 46 Hintzen-Bohlen 1990; Müller 2009: 156–386.
- 47 Fleischer 1990.
- 48 Wood 1999: 59.
- 49 See Carney 2007.
- 50 McAuley 2018.
- 51 Strootman 2014: 100.
- 52 Polyb. 21.20; App., *Syr.* 5; cf. Ager 2017: 176.
- 53 Engels 2011; Strootman 2011; 2016; Wenghofer and Houle 2015; Wenghofer 2018. See also Chapter 17 in this volume.
- 54 On Apama's role in creating the Seleukid Empire, see Harders 2016; Ramsey 2016; Plischke 2016.
- 55 McAuley 2017a.
- 56 Sources for Hellenistic dynastic weddings are discussed by Ager 2017: 166–71.
- 57 Polyb. 25.4.8; Liv. 42.12.3; App., *Mac.* 11.2.
- 58 Polyb. 5.43.3–4.
- 59 Just. 27.1.4–7; App., *Syr.* 65; Val. Max. 9.10 *ext.* 1; Polyæn. 8.50.
- 60 *RIG* 1158 (c. 100 BCE).
- 61 Polyb. 15.33.11.
- 62 Strootman 2014: 102–3.
- 63 Bringmann 1997: 172.
- 64 Van Minnen 2010; cf. Müller 2009: 85–155. See Chapters 7 and 11.
- 65 On Alexander's suspicion of Antipatros and his house, see Müller 2003: 44–6.
- 66 On the career of Olympias, see Carney 2006.
- 67 Austin 1981: no. 156; *SEG* 26, 1226.
- 68 Austin 1981: nos. 191 and 200; cf. Coloru 2012: 89.

- 69 Bringmann 1997; Ramsey 2011.
70 D'Agostini 2019.
71 Plut., *Pyrrh.* 4.
72 Paus. 1.7.1, who may be exaggerating.
73 Diod. 19.16.
74 Jos., *AJ* 12.4.8 (204).
75 Jos., *AJ* 12.4.5 (185).
76 On these mechanisms, see Strootman 2017b.
77 Literature on Hellenistic concubines is limited; it includes Ogden 1999: 215–72, and Buraselis 2017.
78 Polyb. 14.11.2–5.
79 Polyb. 14.11.2–5.
80 Horowski 2004: 98–107.
81 Knecht 1982: 89.

Abbreviations

Abbreviations of ancient authors, works, and document collections not listed here are those found in the *Oxford Classical Dictionary* (online at <https://oxfordre.com/classics/page/abbreviation-list/>).

RIG Michel, R. (ed.) 1900. *Recueil d'Inscriptions Greques*. Brussels.

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