

Western Illinois Historical Review © 2020  
Volume XI, Spring 2020  
ISSN 2153-1714

Interpreting Alexander III of Macedon's "Sexuality" in the Ancient Greco-Macedonian World

By  
Mikayla Kitchen  
Western Illinois University

Alexander III of Macedon's reign (336-323 BCE) over Macedon and conquest of the Persian Empire and India defined Alexander's career as a leader and military commander. Scholars tend to focus on the leadership and military brilliance of Alexander III of Macedon, also known as Alexander the Great, and not on Alexander the Great as a man.<sup>1</sup> Within the last few decades, scholarship has emerged raising questions about Alexander's sexuality. Alexander had maintained a united Greece, conquered the Persian Empire and India, but had anyone conquered Alexander's heart? Questions about Alexander's sexuality took a turn after the release of Oliver Stone's historical epic, *Alexander* (2004), that portrayed Alexander as bisexual.<sup>2</sup> However, applying the terms, "sexuality," "homosexual," "bisexual," or even "heterosexual" is anachronistic at best because the ancient Greeks had little to no understanding or concept of these terms. The terms do not carry the same connotations as they do in the modern world. This paper, therefore, offers a way to re-examine modern interpreters' preconceived notions of sexuality in order to better understand Alexander's sexuality.

Considering Alexander's encounters with elite women and marriages, primarily with Roxane, and his relationship with the eunuch Bagoas, Alexander's sexuality was typical of the time. It is the enigma of Hephaestion, Alexander's closest friend and commander, where scholars debate Alexander's lust versus brotherly affection the most.<sup>3</sup> However, even with this enigma of Hephaestion, Alexander's relationship corresponded with traditional ancient Greek relationships.

---

<sup>1</sup>It is common to refer to Alexander as Alexander III and Great because Alexander III of Macedon was his formal title, while Alexander the Great became his informal title. For the sake of consistency, Alexander the Great will be used throughout the rest of the paper.

<sup>2</sup>Gary Crowder, "Dramatizing the Issues that Historians Don't: An Interview with Oliver Stone," *Cineaste* 30, no. 2 (Spring 2005): 22; Jeanne Reames-Zimmerman, "The Cult of Hephaestion," in *Responses to Oliver Stone's Alexander: Film, History, and Cultural Studies*, ed. Paul Cartledge and Fiona Rose Greenland (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2010), 189.

<sup>3</sup>"The enigma of Hephaestion" comes from Daniel Ogden's chapter, "Alexander's Men: Fact and Tradition," in *Alexander the Great: Myth, Genesis and Sexuality* (Exeter, UK: Exeter University Press, 2011), 155.

Alexander the Great's sexuality was considered normal when viewed through the lens of Ancient Greek ideas about sex and relationships.

Several scholars have offered their definition of sexuality for the ancient world. K.J. Dover describes homosexuality as "the disposition to seek sensory pleasure through bodily contact with persons of one's own sex in preference to contact with the other sex."<sup>4</sup> However, David Halperin insists that sexuality and the concept of homosexuality are anachronistic because modern scholars equate them with the modern concepts of sexuality and sexual preferences.<sup>5</sup> Halperin recognizes the definition of sexuality in the ancient world was connected to political, economic, and social factors, not simply sexual attractions. Halperin also asserts, "sex did not express inward dispositions or inclinations so much as it served to position social actors in the places assigned to them, by virtue of their political standing."<sup>6</sup> Additionally Marilyn B. Skinner differentiates ancient ideas about sexuality from the modern ones. The ancient Greek ideas about sexuality functioned socially, but in modern terms sexuality is defined within sexual preferences.<sup>7</sup>

In a discussion of the relationship between Alexander and Hephaestion, Jeanne Reames-Zimmerman uses the term "homoerotic" as opposed to "homosexual."<sup>8</sup> In doing so, Reames-Zimmerman avoids the modern connotations that readers would associate with the word homosexual. Halperin's definitions, along with Reames-Zimmerman's, are continued from and expand on Dover's work. Therefore, Halperin and Reames-Zimmerman's definitions are useful when discussing Alexander's sexuality and relations with the same sex.

---

<sup>4</sup> K.J. Dover, *Greek Homosexuality*, (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), 1.

<sup>5</sup> David M. Halperin, "Is There a History of Sexuality?" *History and Theory* 28, no. 3 (October 1989): 260, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2505179>.

<sup>6</sup> Halperin, "Is There a History of Sexuality?," 260.

<sup>7</sup> Marilyn B. Skinner, "Alexander and Ancient Greek Sexuality," in *Responses to Oliver Stone's Alexander: Film, History, and Cultural Studies*, ed. Paul Cartledge and Fiona Rose Greenland (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2010), 120-21.

<sup>8</sup> Jeanne Reames-Zimmerman, "An Atypical Affair? Alexander the Great, Hephaestion Amyntoros and the Nature of Their Relationship," *Ancient History Bulletin* 13, no. 3 (1999): 81.

Dover provides a model of Ancient Greek sexuality in book, *Greek Homosexuality*. This model that Dover developed and that other historians of sexuality use is called the pederasty model. Within the pederasty model are two salient terms—*erōmenos* and *erastēs*.<sup>9</sup> An *eromenos* was the younger boy, seeking mentorship and advice from the older *erastes*, therefore the *erastes* was the “lover,” while the *eromenos* was the “loved.”<sup>10</sup> The typical age for an eromenos was between the ages of twelve and eighteen when the *eromenos* was beardless.<sup>11</sup> In Halperin’s article, “Is There a History of Sexuality?,” Halperin explains the relationship between *eromenos* and *erastes* in terms of the penetrator and the penetrated. In a typical model of pederasty in ancient Greece, the *eromenos* was always the penetrator, never the penetrated, because sexuality in the ancient world was not necessarily about sexual attraction or affection. An *eromenos* and *erastes* did not have to have penetrative sex and in most cases they did not. Rather, the participants partook in intercrural sex, which was more acceptable.<sup>12</sup> This model of pederasty was meant to educate, mentor, and assist younger men of higher elite status into Greek society.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, a man of higher status could only have same-sex relations with a citizen of lower status. Since the *erastes* was of higher status, he would always be the superordinate, while the *eromenos* was the subordinate.<sup>14</sup> This model of pederasty is used to study Alexander’s sexuality.

Greek sexuality in the ancient world consisted of status and politics. It was not necessarily about affection or love. There were probably instances in which Greek citizens actually loved each other, no evidence to support the claim. The meaning of sex and sexuality between the ancient

---

<sup>9</sup>Dover, *Greek Homosexuality*, 16; additionally, following Dover’s example, *eromenos* and *erastes* will be printed as English words, keeping the italics.

<sup>10</sup>Dover, *Greek Homosexuality*, 16.

<sup>11</sup>Daniel Ogden, “Homosexuality and Warfare in Ancient Greece,” in *Battle in Antiquity*, ed. Alan B. Lloyd (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co.), 108-109.

<sup>12</sup>Skinner, “Ancient Greek Sexuality,” 124; intercrural sex refers to the older *eromenos* ejaculating between the thighs of the younger *erastes*.

<sup>13</sup>Skinner, “*Alexander* and Ancient Greek Sexuality,” 123.

<sup>14</sup>Halperin, “History of Sexuality?,” 260.

world and modern world makes that distinction. In terms of same-sex relations, they were normal. Ideas about male-female marriage were usually about politics and status, especially among the elites.<sup>15</sup> The physical act of sex, regardless of biological sex, would still fit within these parameters defined in the penetrator-penetrated model.

When Alexander married Roxane during the Sogdiana campaign in the spring of 327 BCE, the diplomatic marriage fit into the model that Alexander was accustomed to growing up in Philip's court. Alexander's marriage to Roxane was a political strategy to end the campaign in Sogdiana and resume the trek toward India.<sup>16</sup> Peace was secured in Bactria with the marriage, and Alexander continued his campaign East. While the extant sources discuss Roxane's beauty and how her beauty captivated Alexander, no evidence suggests that he was *in love* with Roxane.<sup>17</sup> Rather, Alexander must have viewed his marriage to Roxane as a political necessity in order to secure the empire and continue his conquest of India. The extant sources support this as they go from narrating the marriage to Alexander's trek into Asia, with the marriage putting an end to the fighting in Sogdiana.

After Alexander's campaign in India, there were the marriages at Susa in Spring 324 BCE. Alexander married two women—Stateira, the daughter of Darius III and a second wife, who is believed to be Parysatis, another Persian noblewoman.<sup>18</sup> It was a common Macedonian tradition for Alexander to take multiple wives. After all, Alexander was the son of Olympias, Philip's seventh wife. Polygamous marriages for the sake of political alliances were not uncommon. The court in Macedon, in which Alexander grew up, had been exposed to polygamous marriages

---

<sup>15</sup> Elizabeth Carney, "The Politics of Polygamy: Olympias, Alexander and the Murder of Philip," *Historia* 41, no. 2 (1992): 170, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4436236>.

<sup>16</sup> Elizabeth Donnelly Carney, "Alexander and Persian Women," *American Journal of Philology* 117, no. 4 (Winter 1996): 568, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1561949>.

<sup>17</sup> Arr. 4.19.5; Curt. 8.4.23-26; Plut. *Alex.* 47.5. Extant ancient sources are abbreviated consistent with those provided by the *Oxford Classical Dictionary*<sup>4</sup>: <https://oxfordre.com/classics/page/abbreviation-list/#p>.

<sup>18</sup> Arr. 7.4.4-6; Curt. 10.3.12; Diod. Sic. 17.107.6.

among the Macedonian kings.<sup>19</sup> Therefore, it is not surprising Alexander's sexual relations with his wives were driven by political and diplomatic considerations— they served the purpose of maintaining the peace, retaining the empire, and producing heirs. There are no extant sources to prove that Alexander was in love with any of these women, but in Ancient Greek culture, sexual relations did not constitute love. The extant sources hardly discuss Alexander's wives in comparison to the rest of his life, because women were of lower status and did not deserve much attention in the ancient world. Alexander's wives served their purpose of maintaining diplomatic relations and producing heirs, not capturing the heart of the conqueror. Alexander's sexual relations with his wives were normal considering Greek ideas about sex, in the context that sexual intercourse was linked with politics and power, not mutual attraction.

Alexander's relations with the Persian eunuch are another point of discussion among scholars. Eunuchs in Persian culture were typically appointed in positions of power to the Persian king, so it was traditional Persian custom for Alexander to keep Bagoas in court.<sup>20</sup> However, it was Persian custom, not Greek custom to have eunuchs in the court. Greek ideas about sexuality concerning prostitution were strict. Bagoas could be seen as either a prostitute or *eromenos* to Alexander. Scholars have determined that Alexander had sexual relations with Bagoas; however, it is the role that Bagoas played in Alexander's court that draws attention from the Greek understanding of sexuality.<sup>21</sup> From the Greek perspective, Bagoas could be seen as a *kinaidoi*, a reviled type of person in the Greek society.<sup>22</sup> Since Bagoas was perceived to enjoy the sex he received from Alexander, the Greeks portrayed him as a *kinaidoi* since the Macedonians were

---

<sup>19</sup>Elizabeth Carney, "Politics of Polygamy," 183.

<sup>20</sup>Andrew Michael Chugg, *Alexander's Lovers*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Austin: AMC Publications, 2012), 152.

<sup>21</sup>Curt. 6.5.22-3; Plut. *Alex.* 67.3.

<sup>22</sup>Daniel Ogden, "Homosexuality," in *A Cultural History of Sexuality: In the Classical World*, ed. Mark Golden and Peter Toohey (Oxford: Berg, 2011), 38; a *kinaidoi* is a man who enjoyed and actively sought to receive anal sex.

unfamiliar with the idea and customs of eunuchs in the royal court.<sup>23</sup> When Plutarch describes the extravagant kiss and affection Alexander shows Bagoas in front of everyone, it is not the affection that bothers the Greeks. Instead, it is Alexander's open absorption of the Persian custom and dress.

The Orsines episode reflects the ideas of the Greeks toward male prostitution.<sup>24</sup> Orsines was a Persian governor with whom Bagoas did not get along with. In ancient Greece, male prostitutes did not have full citizenship and were typically barred from civic functions.<sup>25</sup> However, the hostility from Orsines is directed at Bagoas for being a submissive to Alexander in a relationship, not at Alexander for having sexual relations with a man. The Orsines event then reflects ancient views about sexuality. It was permissible for Alexander to be an *erastes* to Bagoas because Bagoas had a lower status than Alexander. However, the notion the Bagoas either prostituted himself or enjoyed receiving sex means it was Bagoas, not Alexander, who does not fit the traditional Greek sexual system. Alexander's sexual relationship with Bagoas was within the defined limits of ancient Greek sexuality. Allowing Bagoas such influence within the court and persuading Alexander to execute Orsines was not.

Alexander's relations with both women and men have been consistent with classical ideas about Greek sexuality. It is the enigma of Hephaestion that does not necessarily fit the model of male affection in the Ancient Greek world. There are three ways to look at Alexander's relationship with Hephaestion. The first explanation would be defining the relationship within the traditional model of pederasty. The second analysis would take the model of pederasty and apply it in a military sense. The third possibility is to define the relationship as one between *erōmenos* and *erastes* that developed beyond boyhood, but was not sexual in the later years. Hephaestion was

---

<sup>23</sup>Daniel Ogden, "Alexander's Men," 167.

<sup>24</sup>Curt. 10.1.25-7.

<sup>25</sup>Skinner, "Ancient Greek Sexuality," 122.

Alexander's "dearest friend."<sup>26</sup> Alexander and Hephaestion had grown up together as members of the Royal Pages and were probably tutored by Aristotle together. Hephaestion came from a predominantly noble Greek family. Hephaestion then became Alexander's chiliarch and most trusted advisor, friend, and potentially lover.<sup>27</sup> If Alexander and Hephaestion were actually romantic, sexual partners, then their relationship would not fit the traditional model of pederasty accepted among Ancient Greeks. The model required the *eromenos* to be younger, while the *erastes* was an older, mature man. Alexander and Hephaestion were coevals and were both of high elite status growing up. With Alexander being of higher status than Hephaestion, Alexander would be designated the *erastes*, with Hephaestion as his *eromenos*.

Some city-states encouraged same-sex relationships among soldiers in the same unit. It was perceived as a way of encouraging men to fight harder to essentially protect their *eromenos* and *erastes*. The Sacred Band in Thebes is an example of this type of homoerotic military bond.<sup>28</sup> Philip II of Macedon, having spent his youth as a hostage in Thebes, would have been exposed to this type of homoerotic military bonding. It is also with Philip's time in Thebes that the Royal Pages system in Macedon could be attributed.<sup>29</sup> Philip therefore had a tradition of both military and personal homoerotic knowledge going into his kingship. Philip also partook in an *eromenos/erastes* relationship. The most infamous evidence is the assassination of Philip II. Pausanias, Philip's scorned *eromenos* assassinated Philip after being brutally raped as revenge for the death of Philip's other *eromenos* also named Pausanias.<sup>30</sup> The second Pausanias sacrificed himself in battle for his *erastes* Philip, then leading to revenge attack on the first Pausanias,

---

<sup>26</sup>Curt. 3.12.16.

<sup>27</sup>Reames-Zimmerman, "Cult of Hephaestion," 189-90; for a more in depth biography of Hephaestion and his military command, see this chapter.

<sup>28</sup>Ogden, "Homosexuality and Warfare," 110-11.

<sup>29</sup>Ogden, "Homosexuality and Warfare," 122.

<sup>30</sup>Diod. Sic. 16.93-4; Ogden, "Homosexuality and Warfare," 121.

insinuating that *eromenos/erastes* relations in military settings occurred.<sup>31</sup> Additionally, the Royal Pages system was believed to have nurtured homoerotic relations between boys.<sup>32</sup> Since the Royal Pages is where Alexander and Hephaestion met and bonded, it is not implausible to assert that the two young boys became close to one another and that this in turn affected their closeness in military campaigns. Ogden attributes this as “peer homosexuality” within a military context that was still acceptable in accordance with Greek ideas.<sup>33</sup>

Alexander and Hephaestion had affection toward one another. The two men were close friends, grew up together, and spent nineteen years of their lives with each other.<sup>34</sup> The idea that the two had a physical relationship cannot be definitively proven. However, given the context of ancient Greek sexuality and the sources indicating the system of Greek homoerotic behavior, it could have been possible that Alexander and Hephaestion were *eromenos* and *erastes* of the same age, but not social status. As long as the relationship was physical during boyhood and not beyond, the two men would have fit the model of pederasty put forth by Dover, but with just a few exceptions. However, the affection (not physicality) between the two would still fit within the traditional model of Greek sexuality. This theory explaining the relationship between Alexander and Hephaestion is the most reasonable and plausible, as Reames-Zimmerman argues.

While the extant sources do not provide us with explicit examples of the Alexander and Hephaestion’s possible homoerotic relationship, the sources provide passages of possible instances of Alexander and Hephaestion’s affection toward one another. Curtius discusses a man similar to Hephaestion by the name of Excipinos, who was similar to Hephaestion as an *eromenos*, but did

---

<sup>31</sup>Ogden, “Homosexuality and Warfare,” 121.

<sup>32</sup>Ogden, “Homosexuality and Warfare,” 121; Ogden goes into detail about the conspiracies against Alexander among the Royal Pages provided in the extant sources and the relationship between them.

<sup>33</sup>Ogden, “Homosexuality and Warfare,” 121; Daniel Ogden, “Alexander’s Sex Life,” in *Alexander the Great: A New History*, ed. Waldemar Heckel and Lawrence A. Tritle (West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009), 213.

<sup>34</sup>Reames-Zimmerman, “An Atypical Affair?,” 92.

not have the same charm and qualities as Alexander's Hephaestion.<sup>35</sup> If it is accepted that Excipinos was to serve as an *eromenos* to Alexander, then the comparison between Excipinos and Hephaestion as *eromenos* is plausible. Curtius compared the two because he possibly believed it true, as modern scholars do today, that Hephaestion was Alexander's *eromenos*. Diodorus Siculus discusses the terminology used by Alexander when describing his relationship with Hephaestion. Alexander uses the term *philoalexandros* ("Alexander-loving") to describe his relationship with Hephaestion, while using the term *philobasileus* ("king-loving") to explain Craterus's relationship to Alexander.<sup>36</sup> This terminology (*philoalexandros* vs. *philobasileus*) would then denote a difference between those who loved their king and those who loved Alexander. Hephaestion fits the latter, in that Alexander believed Hephaestion loved him as Alexander, not Alexander III, King of Macedon and conqueror of Persia and India. There is then the questionable incident in which Darius III's mother mistakes Hephaestion for Alexander, in which Alexander replies that Hephaestion too, is Alexander.<sup>37</sup> This remark by Alexander was probably more so a quip than a serious statement, but it is still important to note because it gives credence to Diodorus's *philoalexandros* terminology. It also suggests that the two were one or at least equals if Alexander regarded Hephaestion as Alexander as well.

After the death of Hephaestion, the argument of a possible homoerotic relationship between the two gained more traction. Upon the death of Hephaestion, Alexander's person declines. Alexander orders the execution of Hephaestion's physician and orders an extravagant burial for his beloved friend.<sup>38</sup> However, it is the parallelism between Alexander's treatment of Hephaestion after death and Achilles's grieving for Patroclus that led some to believe Alexander and

---

<sup>35</sup>Curt. 7.9.19.

<sup>36</sup>Diod. Sic. 17.114.1-2; Plut. *Alex.* 47.5; Ogden, "Alexander's Men," 159.

<sup>37</sup>Arr. 2.12.7; Curt. 3.12.17; Diod. Sic. 17.37.5-6

<sup>38</sup>Arr. 7.14.1-10, 16.8; Diod. Sic. 17.110.8, 114.3-115.5; Plut. *Alex.* 72.

Hephaestion were homoerotic partners in life. Alexander mourned for Hephaestion nearly the same way Achilles had mourned for Patroclus, by shaving his head and having the horses shorn as well.<sup>39</sup> Alexander, according to Arrian, wanted to emulate Achilles.<sup>40</sup> Additionally, Alexander strove for godhood in his lifetime and asked for Hephaestion to be revered as a god as well. While Alexander's request for Hephaestion was denied, Hephaestion was granted hero status among the Greek world.<sup>41</sup> Alexander lost commanders and friends on his campaigns, but he never reacted so strongly to any of their deaths as he did to Hephaestion's.

The treatment of Hephaestion and his relationship to Alexander has received more scholarly discussion than Alexander's relationship with women and Bagoas. The latter instances fit nearly perfectly into the models of sexuality that the ancient Greeks understood and welcomed. Hephaestion's relationship with Alexander was somewhat different because it is unclear exactly what their relationship entailed. There is no definitive proof that the two men had sexual relations, although the bond and affection between the two is evident in the extant sources. Alexander and Hephaestion were most likely homoerotic lovers in boyhood and had a deep affection for one another throughout their lives. This characterization of the relationship between Alexander and Hephaestion was seen as normal through the traditional thought of Ancient Greek ideas about sexuality.

Alexander the Great had relations with both men and women. However, applying the terms "homosexual," or "bisexual" would be imposing modern terms onto a man who lived in a world that had no understanding of those concepts. Alexander had his own accepted ideas about sex and sexuality. Since Alexander was in the highest position of power, he could partake in *erastes*

---

<sup>39</sup>Plut. *Alex.* 72.

<sup>40</sup>Arr. 7.14.4; Plut. *Alex.* 72.

<sup>41</sup>Arr. 7.23.6-8.

relations with *eromenos*. Additionally, Alexander's relations with women fit within the established Macedonian traditions. Alexander engaged in polygamous marriages and also had relations with the opposite sex while married. These practices were typical for the ancient Greeks. Alexander's relationship with Hephaestion was more complex, but was still considered normal when we consider ancient Greek ideas about sex. It is unclear from extant sources if there were romantic feelings among any of Alexander's partners, and we do not know if anyone managed to conquer the heart of Alexander the Great.

## Bibliography

### Primary Sources

Diodorus Siculus,. *Library of History: Books XVI.66-XVII*. Translated by C. Bradford Welles. Loeb Classical Library, 422. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963.

Lucius Flavius Arrianus,. *The Landmark Arrian: The Campaigns of Alexander*. Edited by James Romm. Translated by Pamela Mensch. New York: Anchor Books, 2012.

Plutarch. *Life of Alexander*. Last modified December 10, 2016.

[http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Plutarch/Lives/Alexander\\*/home.html](http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Plutarch/Lives/Alexander*/home.html).

Quintus Curtius Rufus,. *The History of Alexander*. Translated by John Yardley. New York: Penguin Books, 1984.

### Secondary Sources

Carney, Elizabeth Donnelly. "Alexander and Persian Women." *The American Journal of Philology* 117, no. 4 (Winter 1996): 563-83. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1561949>.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Politics of Polygamy: Olympias, Alexander and the Murder of Philip." *Historia* 41, no. 2 (1992): 169-89. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4436236>.

Chugg, Andrew Michael. *Alexander's Lovers*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Austin: AMC Publications, 2012.

Crowdus, Gary. "Dramatizing the Issues that Historian Don't": An Interview with Oliver Stone." *Cineaste* 30, no. 2 (Spring 2005): 12-23.

Dover, K.J. *Greek Homosexuality*. London: Bloomsbury, 2016.

Halperin, David M. "Is There a History of Sexuality?" *History and Theory* 28, no. 3 (Oct. 1989): 257-74. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2505179>.

Ogden, Daniel. "Alexander's Men: Fact and Tradition." In *Alexander the Great: Myth, Genesis and Sexuality*, 155-173. Exeter, UK: Exeter University Press, 2011.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Alexander's Sex Life." In *Alexander the Great: A New History*, edited by Waldemar Heckel and Lawrence A. Tritle, 203-17. West Sussex, UK: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Homosexuality and Warfare in Ancient Greece." In *Battle in Antiquity*, edited by Alan B. Lloyd, 107-168. London: Gerald Duckworth & Co., 1996.

\_\_\_\_\_. "Homosexuality." In *A Cultural History of Sexuality in the Classical World*, edited by Mark Golden and Peter Toohey, 37-54. Oxford: Berg, 2011.

Reames-Zimmerman, Jeanne. "An Atypical Affair? Alexander the Great, Hephaestion Amyntoros and the Nature of Their Relationship." *Ancient History Bulletin* 13, no. 3 (1999): 81-96.

\_\_\_\_\_. "The Cult of Hephaestion." In *Responses to Oliver Stone's Alexander: Film, History, and Cultural Studies*, edited by Paul Cartledge and Fiona Rose Greenland, 183-218. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2010.

Skinner, Marilyn B. "Alexander and Ancient Greek Sexuality: Some Theoretical Considerations." In *Responses To Oliver Stone's Alexander: Film, History, and Cultural Studies*, edited by Paul Cartledge and Fiona Rose Greenland, 119-34. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2010.

Alexander III of Macedon, known as Alexander the Great (21 July 356 BCE – 10 or 11 June 323 BCE), was the son of King Philip II of Macedon. He became king upon his father's death in 336 BCE and went on to conquer most of the known world of his day. He is known as 'the great' both for his military genius and his diplomatic skills in handling the various peoples of the regions he conquered. He is further recognized for spreading Greek culture, language, and thought from Greece throughout Asia Minor, Egypt, and Mesopotamia to India and thus initiating the era of the "Hellenistic World".

**Alexander's Youth.** Macedonia is an ancient land with a history that stretches back a thousand years before Christ. Best known of Macedonia is King Philip II who expanded Macedonia's territory, unified the various tribes he conquered and made great political, economic and military strides transforming Macedonia from an ordinary state into a super power. Alexander was a seasoned politician with a vision of uniting all the world's nations together as equals in a democratic system (in the modern sense). Besides his political qualities, Alexander also had a great interest in culture and the natural sciences. Wherever he went he built cities, libraries, cultural centers, museums and many other wonders. He listened to poetry and comedy and took part in debates.

I who speak am Alexander the Macedonian. With that he rode away back to the camp and his own station there. The Greco-Persian Wars and Herodotus' account are significant because this is the first time in Greek history the Greeks united, even if only to face a common enemy. Though their kings bore ancient Greek names, the Macedonian people called Philip Bilippos instead of the normal Greek Philippos. This only served to make them an object of further scorn to their pretentious critics in the Athenian assembly. He studied with Aristotle in the Greco-Macedonian town of Naoussa and began his campaign with a ceremonial celebration in the town of Dion-(located on the Macedonian side of Mount Olympus).