

Terrible Olimpíade

Un estudio sobre el método

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1. LA PREMISA

M. Bieber, *Alexander the Great in Greek and Roman Art* (1964).

“The historians describe her [Olympias] as arrogant, meddling, fierce, passionate, dramatic, and romantic (Plutarch, *Life of Alexander*, IX; Arrian, *Anabasis*, VII, 12). She was an ardent follower of the orphic and bacchic mysteries. She had snakes as pets and let them wind around the sacred staff of Dionysus.

(...) The passionate nature and romantic beauty of the remarkable woman are not expressed in these late minor works of art, but they may be found as her legacy in the portraits of her son Alexander.

(...) From his father, Philip, Alexander inherited his military virtues; from his mother, Olympias, he received his fiery and passionate nature, his ambition, his good looks, and romantic personality”

(Bieber 22-24).

2. EL PROBLEMA

**HERMENÉUTICA DE UNA MIRADA
ACRÍTICA Y LEGITIMADORA**

Ulrich Wilcken, *Alexander der Große* (1931)

“His mother Olympias, whom Philip made his **lawful** wife in 357, was the daughter of Neoptolemus king of the Molossians, whose dynasty was traced back to the son of Achilles and was therefore looked on as Greek, though the Molossians themselves, a tribe of Epirus, seem to have been barbarians, and were probably related to the Illyrians. In 356 Olympias, who was about twenty years old, gave birth to Alexander, and next year to his sister Cleopatra: **there were no further issue to this marriage**. So Alexander was not a pure Macedonian but had a dash of barbarian blood in his veins” (Wilcken 53).

“Both Philip and Olympias were unusually strong and impulsive in temperament. Philip’s acts bear witness to tireless energy and strength of will, and to an imdominate pertinacity in following his own purposes. His body, covered with scars, showed his bravery and a delight in battle which almost amounted to foolhardiness. These are all qualities which, perhaps even to a higher power, manifest themselves in Alexander. If, on the other hand, Philip is described to us in his private life as an unbridled voluptuary who gave himself up without restraint to the satisfaction of his sensual temperament, those of the contradictory authorities which represent Alexander as of a cool nature in amatory affairs are probably right. At any rate, the love of women never played a leading part in Alexander’s life, and he never allowed it to exert any influence on the prosecution of his great ambitions; it was simply to explain this that fictions were told of his love of boys. When he appears as a man of **demonic** passion, we may to a large extent trace here the inheritance of his mother Olympias, in whom this quality was intensified to the highest degree. But it is part of the wonderful combination of opposites in Alexander’s nature, that by the side of this passion he also exhibits a quite surprisingly cool and calm discretion” (Wilcken 54).

“Since heredity alone cannot explain his carácter, the question that influence education had on him [Alexander] is all the more worthy of interest. Philip, who from the first saw his successor in Alexander, the offspring of Olympias, beside whom he had other wives, devoted himself to his boy’s education with great love and care” (Wilcken 54).

“These pleasant relations between father and son came to an end, when Philip, son after his return from he Congress of Corinth (337), was seized by a passion for a fair Macedonian, Cleopatra, the niece of Attalus, and made her his lawful consort. This implied the repudiation of Olympias, and might ever endanger Alexander’s claim to the succession” (Wilcken 59).

“After all that had passed between Philip and Olympias, the suspicion was bound to arise that she either was privy to the murder or had instigated it. Her complicity cannot be at all confirmed, natural as it might seem in the case of so **vindicative** a character. But we must decidely reject the idea that Alexander was implicated. That is a mere calumny of his enemies” (Wilcken 60).

“But he [Alexander] was annoyed, when Olympias, to **satisfy her hatred** for her rival, murdered the infant daugter, to which Cleopatra had recently given birth, in the arms of her mother, and forced the mother to commit suicide. The conflicts of the past, for which Alexander was not to blame, caused much **bloodshed**” (Wilcken 62-3).

“The effort of the Greeks to analyse the idea of divine sonship in a rationalistic way led to the tale that Amon himself in the form of his sacred serpent had had intercourse with Olympias. Others again knew that Olympias had confessed this intercourse to her husband Philip, whereupon he repudiated her as an adulteress” (Wilcken 129).

J. G. Droysen, *Geschichte Alexanders der Großen* (1833)

“El reverso más completo de él [Filipo] lo tenemos en su esposa Olimpia. La hija del rey Neoptólemo del Epiro y descendiente de Aquiles. (...) Bella, retraída, llena de fuego interior, rendía **culto secreto** a Orfeo y Baco y estaba entregada con el **mayor furor a las oscuras artes de brujería** de las mujeres tracias; cuéntase de ella que tomaba parte en las **bacanales** nocturnas, **poseída de loco frenesí**, y que se la veía correr por la montaña a la cabeza de los demás bacantes, agitando **locamente** la serpiente y el tirso; sus sueños copiaban las **imágenes fantásticas de que estaba llena su cabeza**; se dice que en la noche anterior a su boda soñó que una tormenta espantosa la abatía y que un rayo inflamaba su vientre, provocando en él un incendio salvaje, para deshacerse luego en tremendas llamaradas” (Droysen 63).

“¿A manos de quién irá a parar el reino, quién lo salvará? Alejandro es el primogénito del rey, pero hay que **temer** al **odio furioso** de su madre, despreciada y deshonrada por el muerto. En seguida se presenta en Aigai para asistir a las ceremonias fúnebres de su esposo, como si hubiese **presentido** o **sabido** de antemano lo que iba a ocurrir; se dice que ella es la **instigadora** del regicidio, la que mandó preparar los caballos para la huida del asesino. Se dice también que el propio Alejandro no desconocía lo que se tramaba y no era ajeno a ello, un indicio más de que no era hijo de Filipo, sino que había sido **concebido y alumbrado bajo las negras artes de la brujería**; de aquí la **repugnancia** que inspiraba al rey y que sentía también contra su **salvaje** madre” (Droysen 68).

“pero Olimpia –que vivía, al parecer, en el Épiro– **intrigaba** para arrebatarse a la viuda, su hija, la corona epirota” (Droysen 237).

“y hasta [Alejandro] tuvo que soportar pacientemente la **furia** y los **amargos reproches** de la reina Olimpia, empeñada en que las armas del estado macedonio apoyasen sus pretensiones al trono de Molosia” (Droysen 238).

“su halo divino [de Alejandro] no lo debería a las mentiras de Olimpia hablando de su nacimiento sino a lo que de él contara la historia” (Droysen 295).

“las constantes quejas y advertencias formuladas por Olimpia carecieran siempre de fundamento, en lo que hoy es posible colegir” (Droysen 397).

“En cuanto a la situación conyugal de Filipo, la única noticia detallada es la de Sátiro en Aten. II, 557; de las palabras de este autor, por lo menos, se desprende que Olimpia pasaba por ser su verdadera y legítima esposa” (Droysen 442).

William Woodthorpe Tarn, *Alexander the Great* (1948).

“Though both his parents claimed Greek descent, he certainly had from his father, and probably from his mother, some Illyrian, i.e. Albanian, **blood**. When his son was thirteen, Philip invited Aristotle to Macedonia to be his tutor; and, so far as his character was influenced by others, it was influenced by Aristotle and Olympias, by a philosopher who taught that **moderatio** alone could hold a kingdom together and by a woman to whom any sort of **moderation was unknown**. Olympias was proud and **terribly passionate**, with an **emotional side** which made her a **devotee** of the orgiastic worships of Thrace; but she kept her son’s love all his life, and, though he inherited from Philip the solid qualities of capacity for affairs and military talent, **his nature was largely hers**, though not his mind. For if his nature was **passionate**, his mind was **practical**” (Tarn 1.1).

“Relations between Philip and Olympias had long been strained, for Olympias was not the woman to tolerate Philip's harem” (Tarn 1.1).

“He [Alexander] left Antipater with (probably) 9,000 foot and a few horses as his general in Europe, to govern Macedonia and Thrace, act as deputy Hegemon of the League of Corinth in his place, supervise the affairs of Greece, and keep Olympias quiet, a more difficult task” (Tarn 1.10).

“The son of Olympias was bound to be shaken by devastating gusts of passion; but though this showed in impatience, in irritability, in decisions repented of later, only once, apparently, did he absolutely lose control; then his wrath swept to its goal in total disregard of every other consideration, human or divine” (Tarn 1.123).

G. W. Cawkwell, *Philip of Macedon* (1978).

“All monarchies in **less advanced societies** are liable to the **disorders** caused by pretenders, but Macedon was particularly vulnerable by reason of the **practice of polygamy**. Speaking generally, polygamy was not practised in Greece. (...) So polygamy may not have been practised in Macedon by the ruling house alone, where it was regular. Philip had seven wives, none of whom appears to have **divorced** (save perhaps the mother of Alexander on grounds of adultery). (...) There was of course **nothing peculiar to Macedon in such mariages** other than polygamy which allowed the Macedonian Kings more frequently so to marry without **offending** those previously placated. But polygamy increased the number of heirs to the throne and the rivalry of factions at the court” (Cawkwell 23-4).

“Philip had seven wives. The sixth was the daughter of a Thracian king and the marriage set the seal of the Thracian campaign of the late 340s. Her arrival at the court in no way incommoded Olympias, who understood the needs of imperial policy. The seventh was different. (...) The marriage was an affair of the heart and instantly menaced the position of Olympias at court, and not only Olympias” (Cawkwell 178).

“Olympias, however, was finished with Philip and Philip with her. If she was to regain her power and influence, it could be only when Philip had been replaced by her son” (Cawkwell 179).

“There were two direct beneficiaries of the deed [of Philip’s death]. Alexander gained the throne and Olympias regained her influence. So some believed that one or the other incited Pausanias. Olympias was said to have returned promptly enough and publicly honoured the murderer’s corpse, though if she did she may have done so out of gratitude for her return” (Cawkwell 180).

“As one of the first acts of his reign, Alexander had Attalus murdered, just as his mother spilled her spite in the blood of the seventh wife’s baby” (Cawkwell 180).

R. D. Milns, *Alexander the Great* (1968)

“On the sixth day of the Macedonian month Loüs, 356 (26th July) a son was born to King Philip and his wife Olympias. (...) The marriage between Philip and Olympias had taken place about a year before this. They had met at a celebraion of the wild mystery religiön that was performed in Samothrace. (...) The two fell in love at the first meeting and requested the consent of Olympias’ guardian to the marriage. Such an Alliance had strong political possibilities for the Epirote King and Arrybas gladly gave his consent” (Milns 17).

“The **love-match** between Philip and his wife, which Plutarch describes, was not destined to be of lengthy duration. Philip was an excellent general and a shrewd politician, but in his private life was much **addicted to drink** and to **sexual licence**. **Whatever may have been the Macedonian law of marriage**, Philip was not a believer in monogamy, though it must be stated that most of his marriages were of a political nature, formed for the purpose of cementing some desired alliance” (Milns 18).

“Through Olympias’ illustrious descent and forceful personality secured her predominance in his harem at least down to 337 – it is likely that she was the **legal wife**, while the technical status of the others was that of concubine – she was a woman of great pride and a passionate disposition, and it seems probable that she viewed Philip’s marriages and amours with a considerable resentment and wounded vanity. Philip, for his part, found his wife’s **domineering and violent nature** irksome. Besides, there was something frightening and mysterious in her unrestrained participation in the wild and orgiastic mystery religious. When the rift between the pair began cannot be said; but the hatred which was unleased by her repudiation in 337 indicates **a bitterness and odium** on Olympias’ part towards her husband that was not newly formed.

Thus the young Alexander was brought up in an atmosphere of mutual dislike between his parents” (Milns 19).

“Some indication of the influence she exerted over her son’s Outlook during his childhood – an influence from which Alexander never completely broke free...” (Milns 19).

“Not only did Olympias encourage Alexander to believe in an outstanding destiny; but she also seems to have tried to **turn the boy against his father**, perhaps by belittling his achievements and pouring scorn on his moral laxity. Certainly in the later years of Philip’s life **there was a deep dislike – even hatred – between father and son**, and Alexander himself was eager, when King, to disclaim the parentage of Philip. Olympias, on the other hand, he always held in the deepest respect and admiration and some of her most horrible atrocities were passed over with little more than a mild rebuke. The reluctance – called by some restraint – that Alexander showed with regard to sexual matters may well stem from the deep hold that Olympias exerted during the first twelve years of his life and from the dislike of his father she instilled in him. One esitates to indulge in the technical jargon of modern psychology, but there are many indications in Alexander’s life of the notorious Oedipus complex” (Milns 20).

“One reason for this unpopularity may have lain in the fact that Alexander was not of pure Macedonian birth, the nobility wanting a full-blooded Macedonian to the throne. (...) The main reason is in all probability the hatred with which the arrogant overbearing Olympias was regarded by the nobility – and Alexander was clearly very much attached to his mother and deeply influenced by her; so much so, that his attitude towards Philip was strongly coloured by Olympias’ detestation of her husband. To the nobility, then, the prospect of Alexander as King, with the dowager Olympias ruling through him, was unbearable” (Milns 27).

“In 337 he [Philip] formally divorced Olympias – “a jealous and evil-tempered woman”, as **Plutarch calls her** – and took as is **lawful wife** Cleopatra” (Milns 27).

“Olympias had shown as little regard for matrimonial fidelity as her erstwhile husband” (Milns 28).

“Plutarch says that ‘most of the blame devoted upon Olympias, on the ground that she had added her exhortations to the young man’s anger and incited him to the deed; but a certain amount of accusation attached itself to Alexander also’. Justin says that ‘it was also believed that Pausanias had been instigated by Olympias the mother of Alexander, and that Alexander himself was not without knowledge of his father’s murder’.

In fact, it does appear highly likely – though, of course, it can never be proved conclusively – that Olympias and Alexander were the forces that impelled Pausanias to the deed” (Milns 30-1).

“Olympias returned to Macedonia, filled with hatred and burning for vengeance. To her savagery Alexander gladly sacrificed Cleopatra, Philip’s recent bride, and her baby daughter”.

“[Antipater], a man who had been the subject of a continuous barrage of complaints and slander by Olympias” (Milns 249).

“Alexander’s terrible mother, Olympias, seized control of both Macedonia and Arrhidaeus for a brief while Antipater’s death. After murdering Arrhidaeus and instituting a **Reign of Terror** against the supporters of Antipater, she was herself put to death by Antipater’s ruthless son, Cassander” (Milns 269).

Peter Green, *Alexander the Great* (1974)

“Best to all, on about 20 July, his [Philip’s] wife Myrtale – better known to us by her adopted name Olympias – had given birth to a son: his name was Alexander” (Green 19).

“**Feudal societies** such as Macedonia, Thrace and Illyria (in contrast to the political more developed Greek city-states) operated in a **tribal system of kinship** and reciprocal obligations. For them **dynastic marriage**, as an **instrument of political self-insurance**, stood second only to **dynastic murder**. (...) During his comparatively short life he [Philip] took no fewer than five wives” (Green 28).

“In the autumn of 357 the Regent of Macedonia married his Epirot princess. For the first time in his life he found that he had taken on rather more than he could handle. **Olympias was not yet eighteen**, but already, it is clear, a **forceful, not to say eccentric, personality**. She was, among other things, **passionately** devoted to the **orgiastic** rites of Dionysus, and her Maenadic frenzies can scarcely have been conducive to **peaceful domestic life**. One of her more *outré* habits was keeping an assortment of large tame snakes as pets. Our sources, while admitting Olympias’ beauty, describe her variously as **sullen, jealous, blood-minded, arrogant, headstrong and meddling**. **To these attributes we may add towering political ambition and a quite literally murderous temper. She was determined to be Queen in something more than name**: this did not endear her to the Macedonian barons and was later to involve Philip in the most serious crisis of his career” (Green 28).

“Philip decided, wisely, that what with political intrigues and the ubiquitous influence of Olympias, Pella was no place for the young prince at this stage of his career” (Green 39).

“The story does much to discredit that quasi-Freudian ekenebt which modern scholars have professed to discover in the relationship between Alexander and Olympias. The truth is less romantic, but of considerable significance for future events. Even at this age Alexander’s one over-riding obsession (and, indeed, his mother’s) was with his future status as King. If he had any kind of Oedipus complex it came a very poor second to the burning dynastic ambition which Olympias so sedulously fostered in him” (Green 39-40).

“His [Alexander’s] claim to succession remained beyond challenge – until, that is, Philip suddenly put away Olympias on the grounds of suspected adultery, and began to encourage rumours that Alexander himself was illegitimate. At this point his latest marital adventure took on a new and ominous complexion” (Green 56).

“Philip, as we have seen, never confused marriage with mere casual amours. Even if Cleopatra, like Anne Boleyn, held out for marriage or nothing¹, there was still no conceivable reason why Philip should repudiate Olympias much less Alexander, whom he had spent nearly twenty years in training as his chosen successor. There is one motive, and one only, which could have riven Philip to act as he did: the belief –whether justified or not – that Alexander and Olympias were engaged in a treasonable plot to bring about his overthrow.

(...) So much seems clear. But the crucial point for the modern reader is whether or not Philip’s suspicions were in fact justified, and here the only possible verdict is ‘non-proven’. At the same time, it is not hard to see how such suspicions could have been arosen. From the very beginning, Olympias had encouraged Alexander to think of himself as King in his own right, rather than as Philip’s eventual successor. This, we need not doubt, ws the main source of those ‘great quarrels’ between father and son, which the Queen’s **jealous temper** actively encouraged, and in which she invariably took Alexander’s side” (Green 62).

¹ Una magnífica prueba de la incapacidad académica para encajar la cuestión de la poligamia: no es comparable Ana Bolena con las mujeres de Filipo, porque éste no hubo de divorciarse para tener más esposas (!).

Robin Lane Fox, *Alexander the Great* (1973 / 2004)

“Olympias was a woman of wild emotion, who would later show no scruple in murdering the family rivals who threatened her” (Lane Fox 23).

“He [Alexander] was living under the disgrace of Olympias’s dismissal” (Lane Fox 23).

“She was asking a high Price of his [Alexander’s] patience in return for the nine months she had taken to bear him. There can be no doubt that Alexander’s mother was both **violent** and **headstrong**. She was seldom, however, without provocation” (Lane Fox 45).

“The influence of this highly **emotional carácter** on Alexander’s development can be guessed but never demonstrated” (Lane Fox 45).

“Eurycide [Cleopatra] was a Macedonian, and an affair of the heart; children from a Macedonian girl, not a foreign Epirote princess, could upset Olympias’s plans for her own son’s succession, and as soon as the two wives’ families had met for the wedding banquet, that very suggestion had been voiced by Eurydice’s uncle (...). It seemed now for Olympias to return to her old authority” (Lane Fox 18).

“But Epirus was Olympias’s home and place of refuge: she could claim past kinship with Pausanias’s people, accessible even in her exile, and she might not have found it hard to work on a nobleman whom Philip had recruited away from his local friendships” (Lane Fox 22).

“For Olympias, the murder had been timed and planned ideally” (Lane Fox 22).

“Arguments from timing and benefit make Olympias’s guilt a probability, Alexander’s only a speculation” (Lane Fox 24).

“It is Olympias who remains most suspect; her guilt will never be proved, and the role of her son should not be guessed, but it is all too plausible that Philip was murdered by the wife he tried to discard” (Lane Fox 25).

“There was also a dispute about his [Alexander’s] parents. Much of this was posthumous legend; the Persians later fitted Alexander into their own line of kings by a story that Olympias had visited the Persian court, where the King made love to her and then sent her back to Macedonian because her breath smel appallingly bad. There was more to the argument that natonalist romance, Olympias, it was said, probably by Alexander’s own court historians, spread **wild stories** about the manner of Alexander’s birth and referred his origins to a god: this will raise acute problems later in his life, but for the momento it is enough to remember that **Olympias was a divorced woman who might well disown the husband who betrayed her.** Her past behaviour and her carácter, **itself a problem**, make this only too plausible” (Lane Fox 44).

“Olympias was an orphan under her uncle’s guardianship when Philip first met her; they caught each other’s eye, so the story went, while they were being initiated into a mystery religi3n of **underworld demons** on the island of Samothrace; falling in love, they promptly married” (Lane Fox 44).

“stories of her wild behaviour multiplied beyond the point of verification. They turned, mostly, on religi3n. Worship of **Dionysus, Greek god of nature’s vital forces**, had long been established in Macedonia, and the processions which led to the slaughter of a goat and the drinking of its blood, ore ven in extreme cases to a human sacrifice, were nothing new to the **women** of the country. To the Greeks, Olympia was known as a devoted Bacchant, or reveller in the god’s honour, and there must be truth in their exaggerations; seh would lead the processions herself, and on Philip’s Macedonian coins, as never before, the portrait of Heracles, ancestor of the kings, is often combined with the grapes and cups of Dionysus, a deity honoured in Macedonia but surely also a reference to the religious preferences of the

queen. (...) Again, there is truth in this, for according to Cicero, Olympias kept her own pet snake, and snake-handling is a known practice in the **wilder sorts** of Greek religion.

(...) ‘Whereas others sacrifice tens and hundreds of animals’, wrote Aristotle’s most intelligent pupil, ‘Olympias sacrifices them by the thousand or tenthousand’. Theophrastus would have known Olympias personally, and although he had cause to slander her his remark confirms her strong attachment to religious ritual which letters and stories of doubtful authorship suggest. On Alexander this example would not be wasted. His mother’s **wild mysticism** was also combined with a quarrelsome temper and a reputation, at least partly deserved, for atrocity, certainly, she quarrelled with royal officials and other women of the family, and whatever the truth of Philip’s murder, she showed herself as capable as any other Macedonian of killing family rivals who threatened her. The methods and numbers of these murders were enlarged upon by Greek gossip, whereas in Macedonia they were not inexplicable, but here too gossip was founded on truth” (Lane Fox 44-5).

“‘Alexander’s fame’, wrote Callisthenes, very probably, ‘depends on me and y history, not in the lies which Olympias spread about his parentage’. The lies, then, were a fact (Lane Fox 214”.

“Though mother of a promising son, she had been dismissed from court in favor of a noble Macedonian wife and she had seen her son’s succession threatened. Like Dionysus’ mother, she was a foreigner; she was also a queen of heroic ancestry in her own right. Disappointed in her marriage or keen to assert her superiority over Philip’s many other women, she might well have spread a story that her son was special because he owed nothing to Philip and was child of the Greek god Zeus. Sexual knowledge in the ancient world was not enough to refute her, for the role of the female in conception was unknown, as it remained until the nineteenth century, and if maids in Thessaly could be believed to conceive through the agencies of a brisk west wind there was no reason why the queen of Macedonia could not have been visited by Zeus in equivalent disguise. The kings and heroes of myth and of Homer’s epic were agreed to be children of Zeus: Alexander, like many, may have come to believe of himself what he had begun reading of others.

(...) Psychologists, too, would willingly see Alexander’s love for Hephaestion as a search for a father-figure, later found in Zeus” (Lane Fox 215-216).

“His mother Olympias was to act as Macedonia’s queen” (Lane Fox 91).

“Their surplus was sent to Olympias as queen of Macedonia” (Lane Fox 123).

“Olympia the queen regent” (Lane Fox 147).

“While Olympias was queen and Antipater mere general” (Lane Fox 452).

Paul Cartledge, *Alexander the Great. The Hunt for a New Past* (2004)

“Fingers of suspicion were pointed at Philip's estranged wife Olympias, Alexander’s mother, and indeed at Alexander himself, perhaps with some reason” (Cartledge 13).

“Beginning at the beginning, we may wish to *especulate* – there is no other way - about the characteristics, aptitudes and predilections Alexander inherited from his parents, Philip and Olympias. Here, for example, is Plutarch on the latter’s alleged enthusiasm for ecstatic religious mysticism...” (Cartledge 19).

“Or perhaps Alexander suffered from a repressed Oeipus complex (his relationship with his mother is one of the great unresolved puzzles of his life). This at any rate is more plausible than the suggestions that he was either impotent or/and a preferred homosexual” (Cartledge 19).

“More important to him than women, or than sex with women anyway, was his religion. Alexander was the classic *daisidaimôn* (Superstitious Man)” (Cartledge 20).

“Both the neutral and the hostile sources paint a picture of Alexander as degenerating morally throughout his reign” (Cartledge 20).

“And Philip’s union of body with Olympia is thought, plausibly, to have had something to do with Alexander's own peculiarly potent combination of leadership qualities and passionate mysticism. On the other hand, the disunion of hearts between his parents was to lead to his estrangement from his father - a threat, as he apprehended it, to his succession to the Macedonian throne. And it probably also helped to foster a permanent deep-seated sense of insecurity for which he compensated in a variety of ways, not all of them pleasant or positive” (Cartledge 50).

“his mother Olympias would have done nothing to discourage the idea [of Alexander?] that he [Alexander] was destined by heaven as well as by nature to succeed Philip – not least because this put her in the position of senior among Philip’s several (eventually seven in all) wives and queens” (Cartledge 50).

“It is at least worth considering the hypothesis – graphically depicted by the novelist Mary Renault - that he was put off the act by the sight of his hirsute, battle-scared, one-eyed father making **violent love** to his mother. Alternatively, as already suggested, Alexander – appropriately for one who modelled himself on the Greek heroes of the mythical past – may have suffered from a repressed Oedipus complex”. (Cartledge 207).

“On the other hand, there is equally no proof that Alexander was **impotent**, or a **preferred homosexual**”.

(...) If **sex did not thrill Alexander, religion certainly did**. This facet of his character may well have been, in significant part, **an inheritance from Olympias**" (Cartledge 208).

3. LA ESPERANZA?

LOS MAESTROS

N. G. L. Hammond, *Alejandro Magno: Rey, General, Estadista* (1980) / *Philip of Macedon* (1994)

“Al escribir sobre los macedonios tenemos que estar en guardia frente al uso de términos actuales que puedan implicar valoraciones modernas desde el punto de vista de la perspectiva y de la crítica. Así, es demasiado fácil tildar los poderes de un rey macedonio de tiránicos, aun cuando fueran constitucionales desde el punto de vista de los hechos históricos; condenar a Filipo como disoluto por tomar a una séptima esposa con la esperanza de tener otro heredero, a menos que recordemos que el único heredero competente, Alejandro, había dirigido la carga de la caballería en Queronea y se esperaba que condujese otras en Asia; elegir a una esposa como reina y llamar a las otras prostitutas, como hicieron los escritores griegos; y hablar de divorcio entre Filipo y Olímpíade, la madre de Alejandro, cuando ella se retiró a la corte molosa en el Épiro”. (Hammond 36).

“La vida amorosa de la realeza atrae al escritor sensacionalista de todas las épocas. La de Filipo y sus siete u ocho esposas no es ninguna excepción, y algunas de las historias sobre ellos merece tanto crédito como una fotonovela moderna.

“Tanto los escritores antiguos como los modernos han estudiado varios aspectos de la personalidad de Alejandro. Su vida sexual, por ejemplo, ha sido objeto de burdas especulaciones. Algunos han sugerido que su proximidad a su madre y su continencia ante la madre, esposa e hijas de Darío era un indicio de impotencia sexual; otros han pensado

justamente lo contrario, que viajaba con un harén que le permitía pasar cada una de las noches del año con una mujer diferente, y otros que mantenía relaciones homosexuales con multitud de eunucos, con Hefestión, con Héctor y con un muchacho persa. No podemos llegar a saber cuál es la realidad, pero tampoco es de gran impotencia, ya que en la corte macedonia gozaban de la misma consideración tanto las uniones homosexuales como las heterosexuales, y no parece que la vida sexual de Filipo, por ejemplo, haya tenido efecto alguno en sus logros en el campo de la guerra y en el de la política. Para desdicha de escritores sensacionalistas, las relaciones de Alejandro con las mujeres parecen haber sido lo suficientemente normales como correspondía a un rey macedonio” (Hammond 377).

“Justin 9.5.8-9.6.8 and 9.7.1-3 reported the divorce of Olympias for suspected sexual depravity (ropter stupri suspicionem’), the subsequent marriage of Philip to Cleopatra, the assassination of Philip by Pausanias, the background of Pausanias’ action, and the 'belief' (‘creditum est’) that Pausanias had been instigated by Olympias, not without the knowledge of Alexander. (...) What is the value of such analyses? A modern writer who accepts all the material in Diodorus and Justin at its face value has no criterion of judgement but simply chooses those details, incidents and comments which appeal to his concept of probability and his sense of what Philip intended and could have achieved. His version is inevitably subjective' (Hammond, *Philip* 15).

“Many features of the Macedonian court seemed strange to city-state Greeks. Whereas they were monogamous, the king was polygamous. He married ‘with war in mind’, or as we should say with policy in mind, since we are not

almost continually at war. For that reason he usually married members of a foreign dynasty. His wives were all queens, and his children by them were all princes and princesses. Philip had taken four wives - none from the old kingdom - by 357. Before he died, he took three or four more, of whom only one was of the old kingdom. Philip has 'many sons recognised in accordance with royal custom'. The leading lady at court was the Queen Mother. She played a prominent part in public life, as we have seen in the case of Philip's mother, Eurydice. The mother of the king's chosen heir might have herself aspired, as Olympias probably did but her position was still unofficial" (Hammond *Philip* 40-41).

“so Olympias, the legitimate wife’ (Hammond *Philip* 172).

“to judge from the **passionate and violent emotions and behaviour of Olympias** in later life (...). His [Alexander] mother's tears mattered most, and he went with her to Molossia. The previous trust between father and son was replaced with suspicion” (Hammond *Philip* 173).

“Alejandro y su celosa madre” (Hammond 65).

“La leyenda seguía contando que Olimpiade montó en cólera al enterarse [del enlace de Filipo con Cleopatra], se dedicó a hacer nacer el resentimiento en Alejandro y sugirió que Filipo estaba haciéndose menos a su heredero” (Hammond 65).

A. B. Bosworth, *Conquest & Empire* (1988)

“Filipo, polígamo sin reparos" (Bosworth 7).

“[El enlace entre Filipo y Cleopatra] era un insulto directo dirigido a la fidelidad matrimonial de Olimpíade y a sus orígenes no macedonios”.

“[A la muerte de Filipo, Olimpia] mostraba su satisfacción sin inhibiciones. Mientras Alejandro estaba fuera de la capital temporalmente, dio muerte de modo brutal a madre [Cleopatra] e hija. Alejandro mostró su horror ante el crimen, pero no parece que hubiera hecho nada para proteger a las víctimas y, además, sus muertes no dejaban de favorecerlo" (Bosworth 36).

4. CONCLUSIONES