

**ANCIENT AND MODERN TREATMENT OF  
ALEXANDER THE GREAT**

by

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submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for  
the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS**

in the subject

**ANCIENT HISTORY**

at the

**UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA**

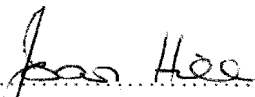
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**FEBRUARY 2002**

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I declare that "ANCIENT AND MODERN TREATMENT OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT" is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

  
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JOAN HILL (Mrs)

12 February 2002

## SUMMARY

This dissertation examines the different interpretations of the secondary sources for Alexander the Great by three modern historians, Nicholas Hammond, Peter Green and Mary Renault.

The Introduction looks briefly at the lost primary Alexander-histories, the extant works of Diodorus Siculus, Quintus Curtius, Plutarch and Arrian and includes an abbreviated *curriculum vitae* of each modern author.

Chapter I concerns modern interpretations of the controversial circumstances surrounding the accession of Alexander and the assassination of Philip. Chapter II covers the elimination of possible rivals, Attalus, Alexander Lyncestes and Amyntas son of Perdiccas, two major conspiracies – the Philotas Affair and the death of Parmenio, the conspiracy of the Royal Pages and death of Callisthenes – and the killing of Cleitus the Black. Chapter III deals with modern explanations of the death of Alexander.

The Conclusion highlights significant theories and trends presented by the modern historians, which influence their interpretations of the ancient sources.

## KEY WORDS:

Alexander the Great; Hammond; Green; Renault; ancient/extant sources; accession; conspiracy/conspirator; opposition; death; cause of death; modern scholars; interpretation; theory; trends.

*For my husband, Derek,  
and for my parents, Harry and Edna Bramley.*

# CONTENTS

Acknowledgements .....	vi
Preface .....	vii
Abbreviations .....	viii
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Legend, Propaganda and History .....	3
The Secondary Sources .....	8
Three Twentieth Century Historians .....	16
<b>Chapter I: The Accession of Alexander III of Macedonia</b> .....	<b>19</b>
The Marriage of Philip and Cleopatra (? Spring 337) .....	20
The Insult and the Flight from Pella (? Spring 337) .....	25
The Pixodarus Affair (? after the Spring of 337) .....	28
Pausanias the Assassin .....	31
Conspiracy? .....	35
Alexander .....	39
Olympias .....	42
Antipater .....	44
The Three Bodyguards .....	46
The Lyncestian Brothers .....	50
Demosthenes .....	51
Darius .....	53
The Evidence .....	56
<b>Chapter II: Conspirators and Conspiracies</b> .....	<b>58</b>
The Conspiracy and Death of Attalus .....	59
Amyntas son of Perdiccas .....	66
The Conspiracy and Death of Alexander the Lyncestian .....	70
The Philotas Affair and the Death of Parmenio (October 330) .....	76
The Death of Cleitus the Black (Autumn 328) .....	90
The Conspiracy of the Royal Pages and the Fate of Callisthenes (Spring 327) ..	98
<b>Chapter III: The death of Alexander</b> .....	<b>112</b>
<b>Conclusion</b> .....	<b>131</b>
Hammond .....	131
Green .....	138
Renault .....	143
<b>Appendix I:</b>	
<b>Summary of Evidence for the Accession of Alexander III of Macedon</b> .....	<b>149</b>
<b>Appendix II: Summary of Evidence for Conspirators and Conspiracies</b> .....	<b>155</b>
<b>Appendix III: <i>The Ephemerides</i></b> .....	<b>158</b>
<b>Appendix IV: The Battle of the Granicus River</b> .....	<b>165</b>
<b>Appendix V: Hephaestion</b> .....	<b>171</b>
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	<b>176</b>
<b>Figures and Plans</b>	
Stemma – The Argead dynasty of Macedonia .....	72

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere thanks go to my supervisor, Dr. Richard Evans, for his encouragement, advice, good humour and expert guidance and to my assistant supervisor, Ms. Martine de Marre for her positive feedback and willing assistance. They, and other members of the Department of Classics, have greatly enriched my life by their willingness to share their knowledge and expertise.

I am also indebted to the Council of the University of South Africa for financial assistance in the form of a Master's Exhibition, without which I would not have been able to continue studying.

The support and encouragement of my family has been invaluable. My sincere thanks go to my son John and my daughter Patricia for their cheerful enthusiasm and to my husband Derek, who has lived with Alexander as a constant companion for the past two years, and who has endured it with patience, encouragement and generous praise.

## PREFACE

Philip II of Macedonia was the subject of my long essay for my Honours degree and the beginning of my fascination and enthusiasm for Macedonian studies. When I came to choose a topic for a dissertation, it was an easy and logical step to proceed from the father to his more famous son. But, because Alexander the Great has been the subject of so many books, articles, and other publications, it was necessary to approach the topic from a different angle. When researching the extraordinary circumstances that surrounded the death of Philip, I had been struck by the range of opinions and theories offered by modern scholars and thus the idea was born to examine how three twentieth century scholars had used the evidence provided by the ancient sources. This approach would provide the opportunity to study a selection of the more controversial aspects of Alexander's life and expedition while exploring the equally controversial academic debate that inevitably accompanies Alexander-studies. The modern authors, Hammond, Green and Renault, were chosen precisely because of their different styles and opinions and the result of the investigation, for me at least, has been absorbing, enlightening and, occasionally, surprising.

## ABBREVIATIONS

### Modern Studies

Modern works which are referred to more than once are subsequently given in an abbreviated form, which should be self-explanatory. The following works are noted for the sake of clarity:

Atkinson <i>Commentary</i>	JE Atkinson, <i>A Commentary on Q. Curtius Rufus Historiae Alexandri Magni Books 3 and 4. of Power</i> , <i>AUMLA</i> (1962).
Brunt <i>Introduction and Notes</i>	PA Brunt, "Introduction to Arrian", <i>History of Alexander and Indica</i> .
Griffith <i>HM II</i>	NGL Hammond and GT Griffith, <i>A History of Macedonia Vol. II – 550 – 336 BC</i> .
Hamilton <i>Introduction and Notes</i>	JR Hamilton, "Introduction to Arrian", <i>The Campaigns of Alexander</i> .
Hammond <i>HM III</i>	NGL Hammond and FW Walbank, <i>A History of Macedonia (Vol. III) 336-167 BC</i> .
Heckel <i>Introduction and Notes</i>	W Heckel, "Introduction to Quintus Curtius Rufus", <i>The History of Alexander</i> .
McQueen <i>Commentary</i>	EI McQueen, <i>Diodorus Siculus: The Reign of Phillip II – The Greek and Macedonian Narrative from Book XVI. Translation and Commentary</i> .
Scott-Kilvert <i>Forward and Notes</i>	I Scott-Kilvert, "Translator's Forward and Notes", <i>The Age of Alexander</i> .
Welles <i>Introduction and Notes</i>	CB Welles, "Introduction and Notes", <i>Diodorus Siculus Vol. VIII</i> .

### Journal Titles

The abbreviations of journal titles are those listed in *L'Année Philologique*.

### Dates

All dates are BC unless otherwise stated.



# ANCIENT AND MODERN TREATMENT OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT

## INTRODUCTION

"This is his true claim to be called 'Alexander the Great': that he did not crush or dismember his enemies, ...nor exploit, enslave or destroy the native peoples, ...but that he created, albeit for only a few years, a supra-national community capable of living internally at peace and of developing the concord and partnership which are so sadly lacking in the modern world."<sup>1</sup>

"Philip's son was bred as a king and a warrior. His business, his all-absorbing obsession through a short but crowded life, was war and conquest. It is idle to palliate the central truth, to pretend that he dreamed, in some mystical fashion of wading through rivers of blood and violence to achieve the Brotherhood of Man by raping an entire continent."<sup>2</sup>

These two opinions illustrate the passionate debate that has always surrounded the life and deeds of Alexander the Great (356—323 BC). The legend and the controversy around Alexander began before he died in Babylon, and both continue to grow, even after the passage of over two thousand years as men and women are attracted by the spell of his youth and glory, or repelled by the perception of his corruption and self-deification. The "real" Alexander is the victim of his own fame, or infamy, and has been obscured by the stories, legends, propaganda and the conflicting emotions that surround his life and conquests. And, as each successive generation interprets Alexander in terms of its own background, culture and experience, often divorcing him from his fourth century Macedonian heritage and retrojecting onto him alien values and belief-systems, it becomes increasingly difficult to recover the truth about this complex and enigmatic man.

Part of the problem of discovering Alexander lies in the nature of the sources. The earliest literary source, the *Alexander Romance*, which probably dates from the third or second century BC,<sup>3</sup> ensured that fantastic accounts of his fame spread from Africa to Iceland and from Spain to China, but the Alexander of the *Romance* bears little relation to the historic soldier-king. Of the many contemporary accounts of Alexander's life not one survives. The modern Alexander-scholar relies on a mere five complete, or substantially complete, narratives, all of which are derivative and late – the earliest dates from three hundred years after Alexander's death – and

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<sup>1</sup> Hammond, NGL, *Alexander the Great: King Commander and Statesman* (London: 1981) 269.

<sup>2</sup> Green, Peter, *Alexander of Macedon* (Harmondsworth: 1974) 488.

<sup>3</sup> Cary, G, *The Medieval Alexander* (Cambridge: 1967) 9, 356; Stoneman, R, "The *Alexander Romance* from history to fiction", *Greek Fiction: The Greek Novel in Context* (Morgan, JR and Stoneman, R. Eds.) (London: 1994) 118.

all were written under the Roman Empire by men who did not understand Alexander or his Macedonian background. The evidence of archaeology, coins and inscriptions usually helps to control and supplement the literary sources, but for the reign of Alexander this type of evidence is extremely scarce. Modern historians depend almost exclusively on the written accounts and must assess the purposes and prejudices of this flawed material and must distinguish propaganda from apology and fact from fiction in their attempt to recover the historical Alexander. Their individual approaches to the ancient sources vary greatly and it follows that their interpretations of Alexander are equally diverse. For, like the ancient authors, modern scholars bring to the search for Alexander their personal prejudices, background and experiences and sometimes their own goals and these inevitably colour their portrait of Alexander the Great. In addition, modern scholars, faced with apparently incomprehensible situations, may distort the meaning of the sources to fit their preconceived opinion or desired interpretation.

The histories of Diodorus Siculus, Flavius Arrianus, and Quintus Curtius Rufus, and the biography of Plutarch, form the constant framework for the research of modern Alexander-historians. After noting the information available from these sources in connection with three aspects of the life of Alexander, this dissertation will focus on the work of three Twentieth Century scholars, Nicholas Hammond, Peter Green and Mary Renault. Their use of the discrete material provided by the sources will be examined and an attempt made to discover differences of opinion, and the possible reasoning or motivation that has resulted in divergent interpretations of the situations and the ancient evidence.<sup>4</sup> The episodes in question are:

- the accession of Alexander the Great and the immediate aftermath of the assassination of Philip II (336 BC)
- the main conspiracies that beset Alexander's rule, up to 327 BC, and
- the death of Alexander (323 BC).

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<sup>4</sup> Lane Fox, Robin, *Alexander the Great* (London: 1973) 25—27; Hamilton, JR, *Alexander the Great* (Pittsburgh: 1973) 11—12; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 4; Renault, Mary, *The Nature of Alexander* (London: 1975) 13—16.

## Legend, Propaganda and History

"Alexander accomplished great things in a short space of time, and by his acumen and courage surpassed in the magnitude of his achievements all kings whose memory is recorded from the beginning of time" (Diod. 17.1.3).

Alexander's achievements were so renowned and his personality apparently so charismatic, that it is not surprising that he became a hero and a legend in his own lifetime. Fabulous stories marked his progress from the Hellespont through the Persian Empire to the Hindu Kush and beyond. Almost immediately after his death, perhaps fuelled by his magnificent funeral cart and its long, slow journey from Babylon to Egypt, the legends depicting Alexander as a supreme hero gathered and grew.<sup>5</sup>

At the same time, in the West, a different process was taking place. Men who had marched with Alexander, and some who had not, began to write histories of the expedition or to record their experiences. Only fragments of these original writings remain, known from citations in extant historians and other writers, such as Strabo, the geographer and Athenaeus, a collector of anecdotes, and a few surviving papyri. Generally, the fragments are so meagre that it is impossible to form a judgement of the scope and tendency of the original work, although the occasional comments of later writers may provide some assistance.

The earliest historian of Alexander was Callisthenes, the nephew of Aristotle. He accompanied Alexander from the start of the Persian campaign and is regarded as the "official historian". Callisthenes was an able and experienced writer who had access to Alexander and the leading members of his staff and was well placed to describe events accurately, but, unfortunately, his brief was to stimulate Greek enthusiasm for the war of revenge against Persia. His work was almost certainly approved by Alexander before publication, and he presents Alexander in heroic mould, recalling his relationship with Achilles, and emphasising divine approval of and intervention in various incidents, such as the cutting of the Gordian knot and the passage along the Pamphylian coast. Neither his starting point, nor the end of his history is known, but his work may have been carried down to 331 or perhaps even to 329. The relationship between Callisthenes and Alexander deteriorated when the king adopted certain Persian ceremonies and customs and he was arrested, and probably executed, in 327 for complicity in the conspiracy of the Royal Pages.<sup>6</sup> The panegyric model and rhetorical style of Callisthenes' work earned him

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<sup>5</sup> Renault *The Nature Alexander* 13—14.

<sup>6</sup> See pages 98—110: "The Fate of Callisthenes and the Conspiracy of the Pages".

the reputation of a flatterer and probably accounts for the failure of his work to be used in antiquity as the principal history of Alexander.<sup>7</sup>

Several other Greeks who accompanied Alexander to Asia recorded their personal experiences. Aristobulus, Alexander's engineer or architect, was a very old man when he wrote his account of the expedition. He too was labelled a flatterer and the apologetic nature of his work suggests that it was intended to defend Alexander's memory. His history was used by Arrian and provides much of the geographical and topographical information in the *Anabasis Alexandri*.<sup>8</sup> Nearchus, Alexander's admiral and close friend, described the voyage from the Indus River to the Persian Gulf. His work forms the basis of Arrian's *Indica* and was used by Strabo and the elder Pliny. Chares, the Royal Chamberlain, provided eyewitness evidence of important events at court, such as the attempt to introduce *proskynesis* and the marriages at Susa. Onescritus, a naval officer, wrote a historical romance in which Alexander was depicted as the philosopher in arms, but he was criticised for blending fact with fiction and exaggerating Alexander's philosophical qualities.<sup>9</sup>

The campaigns of Alexander were also recorded by two important Macedonians, Marsyas of Pella and Ptolemy son of Lagos. Marsyas, a Companion, and an admiral in the fleet of Antigonos Monophthalmus, wrote a history of Macedonia from the first king (*Suida s.v.*). He intended to include the death of Alexander, but his work ends at 331, cut short by his own death in 307. As a Macedonian he understood the Macedonian army and institutions and may have been Quintus Curtius' authority for the *mores Macedonici*.<sup>10</sup> Ptolemy, a close friend of Alexander from his youth,<sup>11</sup> became one of his leading commanders, a *Somatophylax*, and, after Alexander's death, the king of Egypt. He wrote an important history on which Arrian based his *Anabasis Alexandri*, arguably the best extant history of Alexander. The assumption that Ptolemy wrote in his old age has recently been challenged by scholars who believe that he wrote soon after 320. They suggest that he exaggerated his own feats to justify his claim to the throne of Egypt and systematically denigrated Perdikkas, his bitter enemy in the struggle of the

<sup>7</sup> Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 94—95; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 13—14; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 2; Wilken, U, *Alexander the Great* (tr. GC Richards) (New York: 1967) xxiv.

<sup>8</sup> Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 16.

<sup>9</sup> Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 12, 14—15; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 2—3; Wilken *Alexander the Great* 181.

<sup>10</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 3; Hammond, Nicholas, *Philip of Macedon* (London 1994) 14.

<sup>11</sup> Heckel, W, *The Marshals of Alexander's Empire* (London: 1992) 222; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 37. Renault accepts that Ptolemy was Alexander's half-brother, Philip's child of a liaison before he was sent to Thebes (Paus.1.6.2; Curtius 9.8.22). This is highly unlikely unless Philip was extremely precocious. The rumours of the relationship probably originated in the early years of the Diadochic age when blood relationships with the Argead House had tremendous propaganda value. Both Ptolemy and Nearchus were exiled by Philip in 337 for their loyalty to Alexander (Arrian 3.6.5) or because they encouraged him in the Pixodarus Affair (Plut. *Alex.* 10.4).

Successors, editing out certain exploits to conceal the leading position held by Perdikkas at Alexander's death and enhancing his own prestige.<sup>12</sup> Ptolemy's history was Alexander-centred, and he suppressed some of the more unsavoury episodes in Alexander's career, presumably as part of the Alexander-cult which he established in Egypt.<sup>13</sup> However, Ptolemy was an experienced soldier who took part in many of the operations he described and his account of military operations preserved valuable details, such the units involved in major battle and the names of their commanders. Until fairly recently it was accepted that Ptolemy found these details in the *King's Journal*, the daily record of the king's activities.<sup>14</sup>

The most popular and influential account of Alexander's expedition was written by Cleitarchus, the son of a successful Greek historian, who wrote in Alexandria probably between 310 and 300 BC. Unlike the other leading Alexander-historians he did not participate in the events he described and had no personal knowledge of the king, but had collected eyewitness reports from people who had served with or against Alexander, including mercenaries who had fought in the army of the Great King and, in addition to this oral tradition, he made use of the contemporary histories of Alexander. Apparently Cleitarchus did not treat Alexander's campaign in Europe nor his involvement in Greek affairs in any detail, preferring to concentrate on his Asian adventure. His popularity in antiquity was no doubt due to his penchant for the personal element and for his fantastic and sensational treatment of incidents: for instance an Athenian courtesan inciting Alexander to burn Persepolis, the queen of the Amazons persuading Alexander to father her child and the Bacchanalian revel through Carmania.<sup>15</sup> Cleitarchus is generally recognised as the main primary source for Diodorus Siculus, Quintus Curtius, Plutarch and Justin,<sup>16</sup> the authors of the so-called Vulgate tradition and they have perpetuated his rhetorical and sensational style. So few fragments of Cleitarchus' work survive that it is impossible to infer how he described Alexander's character, and it may be that he did not malign Alexander as much as some modern historians believe.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Errington, RM, "Bias in Ptolemy's History of Alexander", *CQ* 63 (1969) 241; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 16.

<sup>13</sup> Hamilton, JR, "Introduction and Notes", *The Campaigns of Alexander* (Harmondsworth: 1971) 22; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 15—16; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 37; Wilken *Alexander the Great* xxv.

<sup>14</sup> Pearson, L, "The Diary and Letters of Alexander the Great", *Historia* 3 (1955) reprinted in Griffith, GT (Ed.) *Alexander the Great: The Main Problems* (Cambridge: 1966) 429—439. See pages 158—164: *Appendix III: The Ephemerides*.

<sup>15</sup> Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 17; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 2—3; Heckel, W, "Introduction to Quintus Curtius Rufus", *The History of Alexander* (tr. John Yardley) (Harmondsworth: 1984) 5—6.

<sup>16</sup> Justin's work is generally regarded as being worthless. Hammond *Alexander the Great* 40 describes it as absurd, Renault *Nature of Alexander* 16 as "inaccurate and hostile" and Wilken *Alexander the Great* xxvi refers to it as a "wretched excerpt". For this reason it is not included in the subject matter of this study, but it is referred to when necessary.

<sup>17</sup> Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 17; Hammond *Three Historians* 160; Pearson, L, *The Lost Histories of Alexander the Great* (Oxford: 1960) 216.

At the same time as these histories were being written, the Wars of the Successors, which were accompanied by bitter propaganda, were being fought and Ptolemy, Cassander and others deleted, embellished and distorted history in order to serve their own purposes. The orators and philosophers of Athens, bitter at the collapse of the *polis*, chaffing under Macedonian rule and resentful of the execution of Callisthenes, maintained an acrimoniously hostile attitude towards Alexander. This bias, perpetuated in their speeches and writings, was transmitted to Rome when Macedonia, Greece and Egypt became Roman provinces.<sup>18</sup> In Rome, the Republic gave way to the Principate. Under the autocratic rule of the early Empire the philosophers and orators of Athens continued to disseminate a negative picture of Alexander, facilitated by the fact that Romans of the governing class frequently completed their education in Greece. In addition, the excesses of the Imperial court influenced historians, many of whom were attracted by the rhetorical style of Cleitarchus' history and its emphasis on the role of *Tyche* and the deterioration of Alexander's character.<sup>19</sup>

Simultaneously, the legends and the fantasy continued to grow and spread. In about AD 300<sup>20</sup> the earliest surviving recension of *Alexander Romance* was composed in Alexandria, probably by a Greco-Egyptian who used two main sources. The first, from which the historical element of the *Romance* was derived, was a highly rhetorical and romanticised history of Alexander based on the Cleitarchus tradition. The other source was a collection of imaginary letters, based on the first century *Epistolary Romance of Alexander* describing Alexander's life and composed in the style of the rhetorical schools.<sup>21</sup> This Greek text, incorrectly ascribed to Callisthenes, is known as *Pseudo-Callisthenes*. There is no extant version of the original composition, but expanded versions which include letters supposedly written by Alexander to Olympias and Aristotle, an account of Alexander's meeting with the Indian gymnosophists and interpolations of political pamphlets and Cynic propaganda, have survived.<sup>22</sup> The vast body of legendary Alexander literature evolved from these recensions, and *Pseudo-Callisthenes* was translated into a multitude of languages ranging from Armenian (as early as the fifth century), to Ethiopian. Significantly, c. AD 350, the *Romance* was translated into Latin prose as *Res Gestae Alexandri Macedonis* by one Julius Valerius Alexander Polemius, probably an African and a freedman. By the twelfth century the *Res Gestae* and its better known ninth century, abridged version, *The Zacher Epitome*, were superseded in popularity by a new Latin

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<sup>18</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 15—16; Wilken *Alexander the Great* xxiv.

<sup>19</sup> Heckel *Introduction and Notes* 6, 8; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 16. All of the extant histories of Alexander were written between c. 20 BC and AD 170.

<sup>20</sup> Cary *Medieval Alexander* 356.

<sup>21</sup> Cary *Medieval Alexander* 356; Stoneman *The Alexander Romance* 118.

<sup>22</sup> Cary *Medieval Alexander* 9, 356.

translation, the *Historia de Preliis*. Around AD 950 Archpriest Leo of Naples brought a transcript of a Greek manuscript of *Pseudo-Callisthenes* from Constantinople to Naples and was ordered to translate it for the library of Duke John III of Campania. From these two Latin translations and from the secondary Roman sources, notably Quintus Curtius, Alexander the Great became known to Medieval Europe, for by this time Latin had replaced Greek as the universal language of the literate West.<sup>23</sup> The earliest vernacular Alexander-poem, based on Julius Valerius, was composed by Alberic in the first years of the twelfth century in a hybrid Franco-Provencal dialect. From these beginnings the *Roman d' Alexandre* grew throughout the Middle Ages, reworked, altered, edited and re-composed, in poetry and prose,<sup>24</sup> and forming the basis for several histories.<sup>25</sup> However, the most important and most popular of all Medieval Latin epics, the *Alexandereis* of Gautier de Chatillon (1178—1182), was based on historical sources, mainly Quintus Curtius and its influence was spread throughout Europe by the Alexander-books that were based on it in many languages.<sup>26</sup>

"The Middle Ages split his image in two".<sup>27</sup> The Church, the philosophers, the preachers and others who wrote for moral instruction stressed the negative aspects of Alexander, drawing on the anecdotal material derived from the hostile Peripatetic tradition. Their Alexander was a bloodthirsty, cruel tyrant, possessed by an insatiable will to conquer, a man corrupted by Fortune and prone to all vices, and, most appallingly, a man who wished to be worshipped as a god. The secular writers, who amused rather than educated, had an entirely different concept of Alexander – the ideal courtly prince, fair and generous, the consummate warrior, a godlike hero driven by a restless spirit from victory to victory.<sup>28</sup>

The changing social and economic conditions of the final medieval centuries saw the courtly romance decline to the level of unoriginal storybooks, but the didactic literature continued to flourish and the writers of manuals of popular morality indiscriminately used all the available Alexander material, history, myth, or anecdote, to illustrate their platitudes.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 18.

<sup>24</sup> The popularity of the *Roman d' Alexandre* ensured that it was translated into most of the European vernaculars and its most important derivative is the Old French prose *Alixandre le Grant*, a sophisticated courtly narrative.

<sup>25</sup> Cary *Medieval Alexander* 24—37. It was used as a source by the author of the *Histoire Ancienne jusqu' à César* (1206—1230) and by Jean Wauquelin for his *L' Histoire d' Alexandre* (1448).

<sup>26</sup> Cary *Medieval Alexander* 62—74. The many annotated manuscripts that survive bear witness to its popularity.

<sup>27</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 18. The quotations on p.1 show that modern scholars are equally divided in their assessment of Alexander.

<sup>28</sup> Cary *Medieval Alexander* 31, 111, 173, 195, 273; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 18.

<sup>29</sup> Cary *Medieval Alexander* 274.

As the medieval concept of Alexander crumbled, scholars of the Renaissance approached Alexander in the light of the new interest in personality and the new appreciation of literature. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, after the sack of Constantinople, the writings of Arrian and Plutarch were rediscovered, translated and made accessible. It was recognised that these Greek Alexander-historians were more trustworthy than the Latin writers and their texts supplied the material for a new moral and historical appraisal in which the Peripatetic attack on Alexander was countered by more moderate references to him as a balanced man and a wise ruler.<sup>30</sup>

The importance of the *Alexander Romance*, in all its versions, is that it has perpetuated the medieval view of Alexander as a man with an unstable nature, constantly yielding to his own desires and failings. The re-evaluation of Alexander that began in the Renaissance and continues to the present day has been dogged by controversy. In spite of ongoing efforts to establish the historical truth about Alexander and to eliminate the prejudice embedded in the ancient sources, modern scholars seem to be unable to reach a consensus on the nature of Alexander—some still see him as the ideal warrior-king, while others continue to present him as a cruel, dissolute tyrant. Alexander today, no less than the Medieval Alexander, is obscured by layers of fable, history, tradition, prejudice and emotion.<sup>31</sup>

## The Secondary Sources

Diodorus Siculus (ca. 80—20 BC),<sup>32</sup> a Greek of Agyrium in Sicily, is the author of the *Bibliothèque Historique*, a universal history in forty books, covering the known world from mythological times down to about 60 BC.<sup>33</sup> Of the original forty books only twenty survive and Book XVII represents the earliest extant source for the history of Alexander III of Macedonia. Diodorus perceived historiography as the means by which knowledge of past experience was handed on for the benefit of the human race and the enhancement of civilisation. The history of the *acta* of individuals would, he believed, inspire others to undertake noble enterprises and promote progress in science and the arts. Thus he understood it to be the historian's duty to stimulate the growth of virtue and discourage evil doing by

<sup>30</sup> Cary *Medieval Alexander* 267—268, 274; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 21—22.

<sup>31</sup> Cary *Medieval Alexander* 269; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 23.

<sup>32</sup> Diodorus Siculus, *The Library of History Books XVI and XVII* (tr. C Bradford Welles) (Cambridge, Massachusetts: 1970); Diodorus Siculus, *The Reign of Philip II: The Greek and Macedonian Narrative from Book XVI*. (tr. E.I. McQueen) (Bristol: 1995).

<sup>33</sup> McQueen *Commentary* 2.



making moral judgements about the deeds of famous men. In this respect Diodorus' work is closer to biography than it is to the Thucydidean tradition of historiography. He was interested in the way in which *Tyche* operated in the lives of men and in order to instruct the reader, the *Bibliothēke* includes many examples of the reverses of *Tyche* suffered by sacrilegious men and the rewards reaped by the pious.<sup>34</sup>

The title, *Bibliothēke Historike*, and Diodorus' hope that his work would provide all the information a reader needed and that it would be clear and easy to remember, suggest that the *Bibliothēke* was aimed at the ordinary reader rather than at scholars (Diod. 1.3.6; 16.1.1).<sup>35</sup> The *Bibliothēke* did, in fact, achieve general acceptance, to the extent that pirated editions of some of the earlier Books were circulated during Diodorus' lifetime and the popularity of the work must account for its survival.<sup>36</sup> Diodorus does not list his sources but his claim that he spent thirty years preparing to write the *Bibliothēke* implies that he was familiar with a vast range of material. Modern historians disagree on which sources Diodorus used, and also on whether he followed a single source, or whether he supplemented his principal authority and compared sources in order to arrive at accuracy. He certainly did not use one of the pro-Macedonian sources for the Greek and Macedonian narrative in Books XVI and XVII, probably because it was not prudent to praise the Macedonians or kingship during the politically turbulent times when he was writing. There is some agreement among modern scholars that Diodorus used Ephorus as his main source for the narrative of Greek events in Books XI to XVI, terminating with the siege of Perinthus in 340. Thereafter, his main source for Greece and Macedonia, is probably Diyllus of Athens, supplemented by Cleitarchus.<sup>37</sup> In order to keep to his chosen limit of books Diodorus had to abridge, summarise and omit material and he frequently frustrates modern historians by omitting details, such as diplomatic negotiations, constitutional settlements and administrative procedure, in favour items of human interest or stories that highlight moral values, although these are often are historically insignificant or even

<sup>34</sup> Diodorus (16.63.1) describes how the god inflicted punishment on Archidamus and the mercenaries who had sinned against the oracle of Delphi during the Third Sacred War. Some were "struck by lightning and consumed by the heaven-sent fire", whereas Philip who had championed the oracle, "... continued to have his strength built up ... until in the end, because of his piety towards the gods, he was designated commander-in-chief of the whole of Greece and won for himself the greatest of all the kingdoms of Europe" (Diod. 16.64.3).

<sup>35</sup> The only other known literary work of the Graeco-Roman world that has the word *Bibliothēke* in the title is a handbook of mythology.

<sup>36</sup> McQueen *Commentary* 5.

<sup>37</sup> Atkinson, JE, *A Commentary on Q. Curtius Rufus' Historiae Alexandri Magni: Books 3 and 4* (Amsterdam: 1980) 59; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 4; Hammond, NGL, *Three Historians of Alexander the Great: The so-called Vulgate authors, Diodorus, Justin and Curtius* (London: 1983) 160, 164; McQueen *Commentary* 13; Welles, Bradford C, "Introduction and Notes", *Diodorus Siculus: Library of History Books XVI.66 – XVII* (Cambridge Massachusetts) 13—14 and n.1. Welles suggests that Diodorus may have used Trogus, whose *Historiae Philippicae* was completed after 20 BC, as a secondary source. The use of a Latin source would account for Diodorus' lack of technical terminology.

unhistorical.<sup>38</sup> Diodorus admired Alexander and generally treats him sympathetically. His work is valuable because it preserves information, which would otherwise have been lost.<sup>39</sup>

The consensus of modern opinion is that Quintus Curtius Rufus, the author of *Historiae Alexandri Magni Macedonis*, is identical with two Curtii Rufi of the early empire: one, a rhetorician active during the reigns of Augustus, Tiberius, Gaius and Claudius, and other a soldier and politician mentioned by Tacitus (*Annales* 1.20.3—21.3) and the Younger Pliny (*Epistulae* 7.27.2—3).<sup>40</sup> If this identification is correct, Curtius rose from obscurity (he was said to be a gladiator's son) to a senatorial career, becoming suffect consul in AD 43. He was consular legate of Germany and received triumphal insignia in AD 47 or 48 and died in office as proconsul of Africa in AD 53.<sup>41</sup> During his praetorship under Tiberius he was, no doubt, forced to curry favour with the Sejanus, the virtual ruler of Rome (AD 26—31), thus earning a reputation for *tristis adulatio*. It appears that he turned to rhetoric in the time between the fall of Sejanus and the accession of Claudius, completing the *Historiae Alexandri* during the early years of that reign. The experience of politics and life at the imperial court of Rome would account for the marked rhetorical and senatorial overtones of the *Historiae* and the many Roman elements evident in the work.<sup>42</sup>

Curtius writes as a Roman of the senatorial class, scornful of the lower classes, and racially biased. As a rhetorician, he writes in a sensational and emotive style, using the standard devices, such as crowd and panic scenes, hesitations and deliberations, contrasts and ironic reversals and character-sketches. Speeches form an integral part of his work and are used to demonstrate the deterioration of Alexander's character and the Macedonians' reaction to it. In addition, Curtius writes as a moralist, condemning vice and inserting moralising observations.<sup>43</sup>

It is accepted that Cleitarchus was the chief source for the *Historiae Alexandri*, and although Curtius was very familiar with the literature of Alexander he names only two other primary

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<sup>38</sup> For instance, the visit of the queen of the Amazons to Alexander at Hyrcania is unhistorical (Diod 17.77).

<sup>39</sup> Welles *Introduction and Notes* 14.

<sup>40</sup> Heckel *Introduction and Notes* 4. Atkinson *Commentary* 57 states that the case for identifying the historian with the senator and historian is supported by the highly rhetorical style of the *Histories*, by the fact that all three personae belong to the same period, that success as a rhetorician would explain his rise in the *cursus honorum* and that Claudius would be likely to promote the career of a writer/rhetorician

<sup>41</sup> Atkinson *Commentary* 53, 56; Heckel *Introduction and Notes* 4.

<sup>42</sup> Atkinson *Commentary* 57, 69, 71; Heckel *Introduction and Notes* 4. For instance, Curtius believed that free speech was punishable by death (the death of Cleitus 8.1.20—52) and that influential courtiers intrigued to destroy honourable men (Bagoas the eunuch ruins the Persian nobleman, Orxines 10.1.22-38) and he used Roman technical and military terms such as *testudo* and *jugerum*.

<sup>43</sup> Atkinson *Commentary* 68, 69, 70, 71; Heckel *Introduction and Notes* 10—12.

sources, Ptolemy and Timagenes (Curt. 9.5.21; 9.8.15). He probably used Ptolemy for official information such as battle order, arrivals of reinforcements and appointments, and there are instances when his history coincides closely with that of Arrian. Very little is known about Timagenes and it is impossible to tell whether Curtius used him directly or through an intermediary. He had almost certainly read Pompeius Trogus' *Historiae Philippicae*, perhaps for stylistic reasons rather than for information. Curtius was well read in the Latin literature of the Augustan and post-Augustan period and the influence of Livy is pervasive and accentuates the Roman colouring of the *Historiae Alexandri*. There are also numerous parallels with and allusions to Herodotus.<sup>44</sup> In common with other writers of the Vulgate tradition, Curtius pictures Alexander as the young king corrupted by his constant good fortune and each book illustrates the deterioration of Alexander's character.<sup>45</sup> But, in spite of this, and without covering up his faults, Curtius judges Alexander positively and his history represents Alexander as "... a personality who, without quite being the Alexander of history, nevertheless attains the stature of the real Alexander".<sup>46</sup>

Curtius' work has been harshly criticised—his geography is flawed, his military narrative poor, and he is indifferent to the cause and effect of the events he describes—and his work has been dismissed as being an unhistorical collection of anecdotes, but, despite its faults, the *Historiae Alexandri* is entertaining, stylistically sophisticated and provides an alternative to the apologetic tradition of Arrian. Curtius is particularly useful for details and often supplies information about the background, career appointments and even the existence of individuals who are ignored in the other histories of Alexander.<sup>47</sup> This attention to detail and emphasis on individuals makes the loss of the first two books of Quintus Curtius' *Historiae Alexandri* particularly regrettable, for he may well have given some new perspective on Alexander's early life, including the controversy surrounding the death of his father, Philip II, and his accession.

Plutarch (c. AD 45—120), one of the last classical Greek intellectuals and one of the most accomplished of Greek prose-writers, was born and lived at Chaeronea in Boeotia. He was a learned man who lectured and wrote on many topics including philosophy, science and literature. He travelled in Greece, Egypt and Italy and taught in Rome, where he was honoured by the emperors Trajan and Hadrian. However, he never stayed away from Greece for long and

<sup>44</sup> Atkinson *Commentary* 64—67; Hammond *Three Historians* 162—163; Pearson *Lost Histories* 7. Heckel *Introduction and Notes* 7—9 lists examples of both Livian and Herodotean influence and parallels.

<sup>45</sup> Atkinson *Commentary* 70; Heckel *Introduction and Notes* 12.

<sup>46</sup> Heckel *Introduction and Notes* 14 (quoting McQueen EI, "Quintus Curtius Rufus", *Latin Biography*, (Dorey, TA, Ed.) (London 1976) 38).

<sup>47</sup> Heckel *Introduction and Notes* 14—15.

held a succession of magistracies at Chaeronea and a priesthood at Delphi, in keeping with the tradition of the Greek city-state that educated men should play a part in the life of the *polis*.<sup>48</sup>

Plutarch's *Parallel Lives* were written late in life (ca. 105—120) and are his best-known works. For these biographies, which pair eminent Greeks and Romans, Plutarch used the existing conventions of biography with great skill and artistry, and the *Lives* are a rich source for knowledge for the careers, achievements and characters of statesmen, soldiers and orators.<sup>49</sup> Plutarch believed that Greek and Roman history were complementary and the aim of the *Lives* is to convince Greeks and Romans that the other culture had produced statesmen and soldiers who deserved their respect and attention and who could serve as *exempla* for a life of public service.<sup>50</sup> Writing as a man of politics for men of politics he demonstrated to the Romans that the greatness of Greece was political and that it was derived from statesmen and generals, rather than poets and writers. Plutarch's moral and educational aims, his concern for humanity, his magnanimity and his conviction that knowledge is virtue, influenced his selection of details and are responsible for a certain lack of sympathy with the problems of power. But in spite of this Plutarch is keenly aware of the greatness of his heroes and captures the excitement of the events in which they participated.<sup>51</sup>

Plutarch used Cleitarchus, Aristobulus and Chares as the main sources for his *Life of Alexander*, but he drew on a very wide range of supplementary sources, on his own thorough knowledge of the political history of Greece for the period from Solon to the death of Alexander and on his prodigious and trained memory.<sup>52</sup> Because he used sources not epitomised by Diodorus, Plutarch provides some unique information on the life of Alexander. As a biographer, rather than a historian, Plutarch was concerned with the character of Alexander rather than the larger elements of historical composition, such as the administration of the empire, battles, sieges, and plans for exploration and conquest.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>48</sup> Scott-Kilvert, I, "Translator's Forward and Notes" *The Age of Alexander* (Harmondsworth: 1973) 13; Russell, DA, "On Reading Plutarch's Lives", *GRBS* (1966) 141.

<sup>49</sup> Scott Kilvert *Foreword and Notes* 15.

<sup>50</sup> Scott Kilvert *Foreword and Notes* 13; Russell *On Reading Plutarch's Lives* 141.

<sup>51</sup> Russell *On Reading Plutarch's Lives* 141—142; Scott-Kilvert *Foreword and Notes* 16.

<sup>52</sup> Plutarch refers to or quotes from over thirty letters supposedly written or received by Alexander, although he does not state where he found the letters, nor give his reasons for believing them to be genuine. The authenticity of the letters is hotly debated. Pearson *Lost Histories* 4, 259 believes them to have been forgeries, but Hamilton, *Alexander the Great* 20 and n 15; and Hamilton, JR, *Plutarch: Alexander—A Commentary* (Oxford: 1969) xxii, xlix, accepts at least some of them as genuine. As a rhetorician, Plutarch would have been systematically trained to memorise the vast amount of information that sophists were expected to acquire from their reading. In addition he would have had a staff of trained slaves to help with research.

<sup>53</sup> Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 19; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* xlvi, Russell *On Reading Plutarch's Lives* 148.

Plutarch does not deny that Alexander's character and temper grew worse as he gained more power and wealth, but he emphasises Alexander's moderation and self-control. He judges Alexander less harshly than some modern historians and manages to capture Alexander's charisma and inspirational qualities.<sup>54</sup> Plutarch's *Alexander* is particularly valuable for its insight into human nature (often demonstrating greatness through small actions) and especially for the unique information he provides on Alexander's childhood and youth.<sup>55</sup>

Flavius Arrianus Xenophon<sup>56</sup> was born in Bithynia in about AD 90. His family was well-to-do and his father had been awarded Roman citizenship by one of the Flavian emperors, probably Vespasian. Arrian received the customary Greek education in literature and rhetoric and then studied philosophy under the Stoic philosopher Epictetus at Nicopolis in Epirus. Later Arrian published Epictetus' teachings in eight books of *Discourses*, of which four are extant, as is the *Handbook* which summarises Epictetus' teaching for the general public. Arrian derived the high moral standards by which he judged Alexander from Epictetus, but there is little Stoic colouring in his history of Alexander.<sup>57</sup>

Very little is known of Arrian's early career in the Imperial service, but he was stationed on the Danube frontier and possibly in Gaul and Numidia before reaching the consulship in AD 129 or 130. His military and administrative ability led to his appointment as governor of Cappadocia (c. AD 132), where he commanded two Roman legions and a large number of auxiliary troops.<sup>58</sup> Three works relating to his governorship are extant.<sup>59</sup> He was recalled after the death of Hadrian in June AD 138 and retired to Athens where he spent his time writing and published works on a variety of subjects.

*Anabasis Alexandri*, his major historical book, was intended to be a masterpiece, worthy of its great subject and was designed to remedy the situation that Alexander's exploits had never been celebrated, he thought, as they deserved, in prose or in poetry (Arr. 1.12-2—5). From the mass

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<sup>54</sup> Griffith, GT, "Introduction", *The Age of Alexander* (tr. I Scott-Kilvert) (Harmondsworth: 1973) 10; Scott-Kilvert *Forward and Notes* 15; Hammond, *Alexander the Great* 4.

<sup>55</sup> Lane Fox, Robin, *The Search for Alexander* (London: 1980) 34; Scott-Kilvert *Forward and Notes* 15; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 17.

<sup>56</sup> Arrian, *History of Alexander and Indica (Anabasis Alexandri Books I—IV) Vol. I* (tr. PA Brunt) (Cambridge, Massachusetts 1976); Arrian, *History of Alexander and Indica (Anabasis Alexandri Books V—VII, Indica (Book VIII)* (tr. E Iliff Robson) (Cambridge, Massachusetts 1978); Arrian, *The Campaign of Alexander* (tr. Aubrey de Selincourt) (Harmondsworth 1971).

<sup>57</sup> Brunt, PA, "Introduction to Arrian", *History of Alexander and Indica* (Cambridge, Massachusetts 1976) ix—xiv.

<sup>58</sup> Hamilton *Introduction and Notes* 15.

<sup>59</sup> Hamilton *Introduction and Notes* 16. *The Formation against the Alans*, a description of his campaign to drive the invaders out of Armenia; *Circumnavigation of the Black Sea* an official report of a voyage from Trapezus to Dioscurias; and a *Tactical Manual* about cavalry.

of material then available to the historians of Alexander, Arrian chose to follow the less popular histories of Ptolemy and Aristobulus because he believed them to be the most trustworthy:

"... they shared Alexander's campaigns, and because the former – Ptolemy – in addition to this advantage, was himself a King, and it is more disgraceful for a King to tell lies than for anyone else. Moreover Alexander was dead when these men wrote; so there was no sort of pressure upon either of them, and they could not profit from falsification of the facts" (Arr. *Preface* 2).

Arrian's choice of these authors implies that he rejected the flattery, gossip, sensationalism and rhetorical exaggeration found in the more popular histories. He used Ptolemy, the soldier, for military information and Aristobulus for topographical details and natural history.<sup>60</sup> He also made use of Nearchus, Alexander's admiral, whom he regarded as no less reliable than Ptolemy and Aristobulus. Arrian's book is clear and coherent and he omits the fabulous stories related by Diodorus and Curtius, but he has failed to understand that Ptolemy and Aristobulus were sometimes apologetic, or that Ptolemy's history was affected by the wars that followed Alexander's death and in which he played a significant role.<sup>61</sup> Arrian records as anecdotes statements from other sources, which he regards as interesting, but not trustworthy. Some of these tales are peculiar to Arrian, and it may be that he has followed much later sources than those used by the other Alexander-historians.<sup>62</sup> Like Curtius, Arrian uses letters and speeches and their composition is probably his own, although the content may be based on material in the sources.<sup>63</sup>

Arrian's military and administrative experience, philosophical training and common sense equipped him well for the task of producing a reliable history of Alexander and his use of Ptolemy for military matters ensured good results. He uses technical terms correctly and meticulously names commanders and supplies details of administrative matters. On the other hand, he has interpreted his subject in a very narrow fashion and fails to deal with the larger issues that would interest a modern historian because he concentrates on Alexander's movements and activities. He does not provide a comprehensive account of the Persian expedition or its antecedents, and does not supply important information on Alexander's relations with the Greek states, or on events in Greece during the expedition. His portrait of Alexander reveals his admiration for his hero, but he is critical of the king's excessive ambition

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<sup>60</sup> Stadter Philip A, *Arrian of Nicomedia* (Chapel Hill: 1980) 72.

<sup>61</sup> Brunt *Introduction and Notes* xxx and xxxiv.

<sup>62</sup> Brunt *Introduction and Notes* xxxii; Stadter *Arrian of Nicomedia* 72—76.

and his lack of self-mastery over the vices of passion and drunkenness evoke the historian's pity. Arrian glosses over some of Alexander's harsh or punitive military decisions – he blames the Greek allies for the destruction of Thebes, does not comment on the massacre of Greek mercenaries after the battle of the Granicus River, nor on the massacre at Massaga in India, and does not question Ptolemy's version of the Philotas conspiracy, although other writers doubt Philotas' guilt. Prejudice against barbarians, which was common in antiquity, prevents him from appreciating Alexander's vision of joint rule by Macedonians and Persians, as expressed in his prayer at Opis, and Arrian's religious scepticism and hostility to the ruler-cult of his day blind him to Alexander's divine aspirations although he emphasises Alexander's devotion to his religious duties.<sup>64</sup>

In spite of these, and other shortcomings, Arrian illustrates many of the essential qualities of Alexander -- élan and charisma, determination and persistence, courage, endurance and generalship, the confidence he inspired in his troops and his concern for them, and his generous treatment of worthy opponents. He also avoids exaggeration and the fabulous.<sup>65</sup> The *Anabasis Alexandri* is:

"...the work of an honest man who has made a serious and painstaking attempt to discover the truth about Alexander – a task perhaps impossible by his time – and who has judged with humanity the weakness of a man exposed to the temptations of those who exercise supreme power".<sup>66</sup>

As a result of his reasoned approach, knowledge of military matters and understanding of human affairs Arrian is justifiably regarded as the best surviving source for Alexander and his campaign.<sup>67</sup> However, bearing in mind the many versions of events, the mystique surrounding Alexander, and the problems of the transmission and survival of contemporary sources, the evidence of other authors cannot be disregarded.

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<sup>63</sup> Brunt *Introduction and Notes* xxvii.

<sup>64</sup> Brunt *Introduction and Notes* lviii; Hamilton *Introduction and Notes* 22, 26–27.

<sup>65</sup> Hamilton, *Alexander the Great* 21; Hamilton *Introduction and Notes* 24–33.

<sup>66</sup> Hamilton *Introduction and Notes* 33.

<sup>67</sup> Brown, TS, "Callisthenes and Alexander" *AJPh* 70 (1949) reprinted in Griffith, GT (Ed.) *Alexander the Great: The Main Problems* (Oxford 1966) 39; Brunt, *Introduction and Notes* xvii.

### Three Twentieth Century Historians

Alexander the Great has been the subject of a very large number of histories, biographies, articles and other publications. This dissertation will concentrate on the interpretations of the ancient sources by the following three Twentieth Century historians:

- NGL Hammond (*Alexander the Great: King, Commander and Statesman* and various articles and papers)<sup>68</sup>
- Peter Green (*Alexander of Macedon; Alexander the Great*)<sup>69</sup>
- Mary Renault (*The Nature of Alexander; Fire from Heaven; The Persian Boy; Funeral Games*).<sup>70</sup>

Nicholas Geoffrey Lemprière Hammond, CBE, DSO, FBA (1907—2001) was educated at Cambridge. During World War II he served, with great distinction, as a British Liaison officer with the Greek resistance in Thessaly and Macedonia. After the War he became Senior Tutor of Clare College, Cambridge, Headmaster of Clifton College and Pro-Vice-Chancellor of Bristol University, where he was also Professor Emeritus of Greek. Hammond's scholarship has been highly influential in promoting the study of ancient Macedonia. His academic career was long and illustrious and his output of scholarly works was prodigious, beginning in the early 1930's and continuing until very late in his life.<sup>71</sup> He is probably best known as the editor of *The Oxford Classical Dictionary* (1970), *A History of Macedonia Vols. I—III* (1972, 1979, 1988), *The Cambridge Ancient History* (1970) and *The Atlas of Greek and Roman Lands in Antiquity*. In addition he has done extensive research into the nature of the Macedonian State and the history of its kings (*The Macedonian State* [1989], *Alexander the Great: King Commander and Statesman* [1981], *Philip of Macedon* [1994] and various other publications).

Hammond's approach to history is practical and his knowledge of the historical geography and topography of Macedonia, Epirus and Thessaly, built up during walks through Albania and Greece in the 1930's and during the war, is legendary. Hammond's work and his many publications display an impressive knowledge of the ancient sources as well as his wartime experience with the Allied Military Mission with the Greek resistance forces in Macedonia.

<sup>68</sup> Hammond, NGL, *Alexander the Great* (London: 1981).

<sup>69</sup> Green, Peter, *Alexander of Macedon* (Harmondsworth 1974); Green, Peter, *Alexander the Great* (London: 1970).

<sup>70</sup> Renault, Mary, *The Nature of Alexander* (London 1975); Renault, Mary, *Fire from Heaven* (London 1969); Renault, Mary, *The Persian Boy* (London 1973); Renault, Mary, *Funeral Games* (London 1981); Sweetman, David, *Mary Renault A Biography*. (London: 1993) 3, 304.

<sup>71</sup> Borza, EN, "Nicholas Hammond, CBE, DSO FBA", *Ventures into Greek History* (Ian Worthington, Ed.) xv—xviii.



*Alexander the Great* is didactic and is apparently aimed at students and scholars rather than the general public. Apart from being a very detailed study of Alexander and his career as king, general, conqueror and statesman, this book deals briefly with the ancient sources and related problems, and includes a brief review of the lost histories. Hammond has also covered the Macedonian background and the achievements of Philip II, which was Alexander's inheritance. He has included a number of maps, explanatory plans and charts of battles, technical illustrations and plans of battles as well as black and white photographs.

Peter Green (born 1924), like Hammond, attended Cambridge University. His career includes a time as Director of Studies in Classics at Cambridge and some years working as a writer, translator, journalist and publisher. He and his family emigrated to Greece in 1963. From 1966 to 1971 he lectured in Greek history and literature at College Year in Athens. In 1971 he moved to the USA and in 1974 was appointed Professor of Classics at the University of Texas at Austin. His publications include scholarly works, translations and a number of historical novels. He has published two books on Alexander the Great and *Alexander of Macedon* is the result of a comprehensive revision and rewriting of his earlier work *Alexander the Great*.

*Alexander of Macedon* was published under the banner of "Pelican Biographies" and it is designed for the general reader.<sup>72</sup> The book fulfils Pelican's requirement that it should be "readable" and includes various aids such maps, battle plans, a useful table of dates and a genealogical table. The earlier *Alexander the Great* is copiously illustrated with photographs of artworks, coins, archaeological sites and present-day scenes of places visited by Alexander.

Mary Renault (1905 – 1983) studied at Oxford, and after taking her degree she wrote her first published novel at the same time as training as a nurse. Her next three novels were written during her off-duty time in World War II. After the war she left Britain and settled in Cape Town from where she travelled in Africa and visited Greece. Her Classical and literary background resulted in her publishing a number of historical novels which explore themes from ancient Greek mythology and civilisation. She has published a scholarly work on Alexander the Great, *The Nature of Alexander* and a trilogy of popular novels on the life and death of Alexander and the Succession.

*The Nature of Alexander* is beautifully illustrated with reproductions of contemporary art, documents and specially commissioned modern photographs. The three novels of the

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<sup>72</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 569.

The three novels of the *Alexander Trilogy* are well constructed, entertaining and eminently readable for Renault has genuine insight into life in antiquity. Her books are an excellent introduction to the life and times of Alexander for they recreate the major military and political events of the age and introduce the vast range of men and women who influenced not only Alexander, but also the history of Western civilization.

## CHAPTER I: THE ACCESSION OF ALEXANDER III OF MACEDONIA

Alexander the Great succeeded to the throne of Macedonia in 336 BC in controversial circumstances. At the pinnacle of his success and aged only about 43, his father, Philip, was murdered in front of the packed theatre at Aegae, the ancient capital of Macedonia, during the festivities after the wedding of his daughter and his brother-in-law. The assassin was Pausanias of Orestis, one of Philip's *somatophylakes*. When a famous person, particularly a monarch, is assassinated speculation, argument, rumour and denunciation inevitably follow. Philip's murder was no exception: the bizarre setting, the prominence of the people involved and, most importantly, the perplexing events that preceded the murder sparked a debate that has raged ever since, and seems no closer to a solution now than it was in 336 BC.

Although Arrian begins his *Anabasis Alexandri* with Alexander's accession, stating that Philip of Macedonia died and was succeeded by his son Alexander, his coverage of events up to 334 is brief for he has modelled his work on Xenophon's *Anabasis* and concentrates on the expedition to Asia. This, together with Arrian's reluctance to comment on some of the more shameful episodes in Alexander's life, including the speculation that Alexander was party to the murder of his father, means that Arrian's readers are denied his knowledge of events relevant to the accession and the circumstances surrounding Philip's death. Arrian's omission and the loss of Curtius' first two books (virtually nothing of his treatment of the accession of Alexander and the assassination of Philip has survived) mean that modern historians depend on Diodorus Siculus, Plutarch, Justin and a few other fragments for details of Alexander's accession.

The extant narratives of Diodorus (16.91—95) and Plutarch (*Alex* 9—11) concerning the accession and its antecedents are disjointed and the chronology is confusing. This Chapter will examine events in the following sequence:

- The marriage of Philip and Cleopatra, the insult at the wedding banquet and the flight of Olympias and Alexander (Diod.16.93.9; Plut. *Alex.* 9).
- The rape of Pausanias (Diod.16.93.3—9; Plut. *Alex.* 10).
- The alleged conspiracy (Diod.16.94.1—4; Plut. *Alex.* 10).

## The Marriage of Philip and Cleopatra (? Spring 337)

Historians are agreed that Philip's marriage to Cleopatra, the young ward of Attalus<sup>1</sup> was a turning point for Alexander. Diodorus (16.93.9) is very brief and does not conjecture about the circumstances or timing of the marriage or about Philip's choice of bride. His only other reference to the marriage is when he states that Cleopatra had borne a child to Philip a few days before his death (Diod. 17.2.3).

Plutarch provides the details of the marriage and related events:

"However the disorders in his household, due to the fact that his marriages and amours carried into the kingdom the infection, as it were, which reigned in the women's apartments, produced many grounds of offence and great quarrels between father and son, and these the bad temper of Olympias, who was a jealous and sullen woman, made still greater, since she spurred Alexander on. The most open quarrel was brought on by Attalus at the marriage of Cleopatra, a maiden whom Philip was taking to wife, having fallen in love with the girl when he was past the age for it" (Plut. *Alex.* 9.3).<sup>2</sup>

It is well known that Philip had at least seven wives, but scholars disagree about the nature of these marriages. Green and Renault are among those who believe that some were marriages of state that were dynastically recognised in Macedonia and that some were liaisons contracted in the interests of diplomacy, while others were not marriages at all but merely concubinage, but Hammond and others believe that all Philip's wives were held in equal honour and that divorce was unnecessary in a polygamous household.<sup>3</sup> Monogamous societies view polygamy with repugnance and both the ancient non-Macedonian sources and modern scholars assume that polygamy led to jealousy, with consorts quarrelling over the succession.<sup>4</sup> But, the nature of polygamy has been misunderstood. Olympias was not Philip's "regnant Queen"<sup>5</sup> or "Queen consort",<sup>6</sup> she was one wife among many, all of whom were probably subordinate to Philip's mother until her death, possibly in 340. Philip's wives were all legitimate (not legal concubines) and their status relative to the king and to each other fluctuated according to a number of factors including their age, the importance of the wife's family, the immediate political climate

<sup>1</sup> See pages 59—66 for discussion of Attalus.

<sup>2</sup> Scott-Kilvert in the Penguin edition (p. 261) translates: "...Cleopatra, a girl with whom Philip had fallen in love and whom he had decided to marry, although she was far too young for him". (cf. p. 22.)

<sup>3</sup> Carney, E, "The Politics of Polygamy: Olympias, Alexander and the Murder of Philip", *Historia* 41 (1992) 189; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 27 and 515 n. 55; Green, P, "The Royal Tombs of Vergina: A Historical Analysis", *Philip II, Alexander the Great and the Macedonian Heritage* (Adams, WJ and Borza, EN, Eds.) (Lanham: 1982) 138; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 36; Hammond, NGL, "The End of Philip", *Philip of Macedon* (Hatzopoulos, MB and Loupoukoulos, LD, Eds.) (London 1981) 167; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 54; Tronson, A, "Satyrus the Peripatetic and the Marriages of Philip II", *JHS civ* (1984) 122.

<sup>4</sup> Carney *Politics of Polygamy* 189; Develin, R, "The Murder of Philip II", *Antichthon* 15 (1981) 92; Greenwalt, W, "Polygamy and Succession in Ancient Macedonia", *Arethusa* 22 (1989) 33; Green, *Alexander of Macedon* 88; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 172; *End of Philip* 187; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 54.

<sup>5</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 88.

<sup>6</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 39.

and the status of a woman's children. The most important factor was the production of male children. Olympias had only one son and lived with the possibility that one of Philip's other wives would bear him a son. In spite of the fact that Alexander was the pre-eminent choice as heir, her position was chronically insecure and if she enjoyed a time of enhanced prestige it would probably have begun when Alexander was appointed regent at the age of 16 and ended with her withdrawal to Epirus at the time of Philip's last marriage.<sup>7</sup> Apart from practising polygamy, Philip had a reputation as a philanderer (Curt. 9.8.22). He also had an unsavoury reputation for homosexual relationships with young men. He is known to have had relationships with two young men named Pausanias and possibly with his brother-in-law, Alexander of Epirus. Such sexual activity must have caused problems in the women's quarters, and it is reasonable to speculate that Alexander noted the problems associated with promiscuity and made a conscious decision to avoid both marriage and casual relationships – his self-restraint in sexual matters was certainly well known.<sup>8</sup>

Plutarch (*Alex.* 9.3) denounces Olympias as being jealous and vindictive and for encouraging Alexander to oppose his father. He uses very derogatory language (jealous and resentful or sullen) and presents a personal and subjective judgement of Olympias, based on a hostile source or sources. Similar hostility is evident in Justin and his version of Olympias' outrageous behaviour after Philip's death is barely credible.<sup>9</sup> This attitude is typical of the ancient writers, who almost always portray Olympias as being in the wrong and as interfering in matters that should not have concerned a woman.<sup>10</sup> Olympias was a member of the Molossian royal house in Epirus and her claims to heroic descent were as strong as Philip's – she was the daughter, mother and sister of kings. But Olympias lived at a time and in a society in which women were regarded as chattels, without political rights and with little opportunity for self-expression. Her status at court was almost entirely dependent on the status of her son, and it is certain that Olympias did everything in her power to advance Alexander and protect his interests and thereby her own. Green accepts the tradition that Olympias was a terrible, vengeful woman, who never forgave an insult and who displayed a "ferocity seldom equalled except in the gorier pages of the Old Testament".<sup>11</sup> But his view is extreme and it is generally agreed that although

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<sup>7</sup> Carney *Politics of Polygamy* 171–2; Greenwalt *Polygamy* 19 and 37; Ellis, JR, *Philip II and Macedonian Imperialism* (London: 1976) 212–213.

<sup>8</sup> Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 89; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 53.

<sup>9</sup> Ellis, JR, "The Assassination of Philip", *Ancient Macedonian Studies in honour of Charles F. Edson* (Thessaloniki 1981) 106; Ellis, JR, "Amyntas Perdikka, Philip II and Alexander the Great: A Study in Conspiracy", *JHS* 91 (1971) 21; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 24; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 37; Renault *Fire from Heaven* 10; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 13.

<sup>10</sup> Carney *Politics of Polygamy* 186 n 52; Diod. 17.114.3; Plut. *Alex.* 39.5. This attitude was, of course, prevalent in antiquity and remains a problem for woman to this day.

<sup>11</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 107.

Olympias was a formidable woman she was also the victim of hostile propaganda, much of which had its roots in Cassander's need to discredit her and Alexander during the struggle to seize the throne of Macedonia after Antipater's death.<sup>12</sup> The fact that a source is hostile does not mean that it can be ignored, but allowances must be made for exaggeration and bias, especially if this affects the credibility of a text, and Green does not appear to have made allowances for the prejudice transmitted by the hostile sources.

It is curious that Plutarch believes that Philip was too old to marry the young Cleopatra (Plut. *Alex.* 9.4). Hammond comments "At forty-five?".<sup>13</sup> The fact that Cleopatra fell pregnant soon after the marriage indicates that she was not a child and even today there is no stigma attached to the marriage of an older man to a girl twenty or more years his junior, especially in marriages of convenience. Plutarch's objection may stem from his abhorrence of polygamy (Plut. *Alex.* 9.3), rather than the age difference between Philip and Cleopatra. Modern scholars are of the opinion that if Philip had indeed fallen in love he had no alternative but to make Cleopatra his wife because her status as a Macedonian prevented him from making her his mistress.<sup>14</sup>

Hammond comments, "...Philip acted foolishly by the normal standards of royal marriages...".<sup>15</sup> By accepting that Philip's marriage to Cleopatra did not conform to standard royal practices and that it was foolish, Hammond implies that Philip had indeed fallen in love and that the marriage was not politically motivated. However, he points out that the king's marriage to a highborn Macedonian woman was significant because it would create jealousy, and more importantly, it would elevate the bride's family. This certainly seems to have happened – Attalus the guardian of Cleopatra is not mentioned by the ancient sources before the marriage, but shortly thereafter, having married a daughter of Parmenio, he was designated a general of the advance force that was to cross into Asia. Apparently, his power and status at

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<sup>12</sup> Ellis *Assassination of Philip* 106–107.

<sup>13</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 36.

<sup>14</sup> Badian, E, "The Death of Philip II", *Phoenix* 17 (1963) 244, 247; Bosworth, AB, *Conquest and Empire: The Reign of Alexander the Great* (Cambridge: 1988) 21; Bosworth, AB, "Philip and Upper Macedonia", *CQ* 21 (1971) 102; Carney *Politics of Polygamy* 173; Hammond, NGL and Griffith, GT (Eds.) *A History of Macedonia Vol. II – 550 – 336 BC* (Oxford: 1979) 676; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 40; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 36; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 505; Scott-Kilvert *Forward and Notes* 261 n. 1. Most scholars assume that Cleopatra was the daughter of a noble Lower Macedonian family, but Heckel, W, "Factions and Macedonian Politics in the Reign of Alexander the Great", *Ancient Macedonia IV* (Thessaloniki: 1983) 298 states that modern scholarship has translated assumption into fact and Ellis *Philip II* 304 n. 23; claims that there is no evidence that she was from the plains. The status of Cleopatra is important because scholars have asserted that Cleopatra's child would be a trueborn Macedonian with a better claim to the throne than Alexander, who was part Epirote.

<sup>15</sup> Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 171–2; Hammond, NGL, "Philip's Tomb in Historical Context", *GRBS* 19 (1978) 347; Heckel *Marshals* 4.

the court had increased dramatically as a result of the marriage and his new relationship with Philip.<sup>16</sup>

Hammond believes that Philip was deficient in sons and needed to father more boys before crossing to Asia to ensure the safety of the kingdom and the royal house.<sup>17</sup> But, it is by no means certain that Philip was desperate for more sons, unless he had really disinherited Alexander, which is highly improbable, if not incredible for there was no alternative heir – Arrhidaeus was incompetent and Amyntas son of Perdiccas<sup>18</sup> appears to have accepted his situation. Philip had invested a great deal in preparing Alexander for the throne and was unlikely to be influenced by a group of nobles who may not have wanted Alexander to succeed him.<sup>19</sup> He had personal experience of the bitter struggles that inevitably accompanied the succession when there was more than one claimant to the throne and, having had to deal with the claims of his three half-brothers, he may have believed that having only one possible heir was an advantage.<sup>20</sup> In 336 Philip had already reigned for 23 years, compared to an average reign of five years for a Macedonian king in the first half of the fourth century, and he was about to depart on a hazardous venture to Asia that might keep him away from Macedonia for many years. He would have been aware that an infant son would be very vulnerable to pretenders or ambitious nobles and would be unlikely to survive his father's absence, let alone the twenty-year regency that his death on campaign would require. Philip may, however, have believed that Cleopatra's son could, in due course, succeed Alexander, who had no children of his own, and the marriage may have been an additional precaution to ensure the safety of the kingdom and the royal Argead House in the event that both he and Alexander should die in Asia.<sup>21</sup>

Green sees the marriage in a much more sinister light. He believes that Philip deliberately embarked on a course of action that would cause trouble in his household and throw the kingdom into turmoil. The marriage was necessary because Philip had scrapped his carefully laid plans for the succession, repudiated Olympias on the grounds of adultery, and, significantly, he had undermined Alexander's position as heir by encouraging rumours that

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<sup>16</sup> Hammond, *Philip of Macedon* 172, Heckel *Marshals* 4.

<sup>17</sup> Hammond *End of Philip* 167; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 170–171. Justin (9.8.3) states that Philip had many sons, but there is no evidence of this and only two survived to adulthood. Hammond accepts Justin's statement and suggests that Philip's sons were the victims of disease or were killed in action.

<sup>18</sup> Amyntas had lived quietly at court since the death of his father in 359. (See pages 66–69 for further discussion.)

<sup>19</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 88; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 40.

<sup>20</sup> Bayham, E.J., "Antipater: Manager of Kings", *Ventures into Greek History* (Worthington, I, Ed.) (Oxford 1994); Green *Royal Tombs* 138 and n 31.

<sup>21</sup> Ellis *Assassination of Philip* 119.

Alexander might be illegitimate.<sup>22</sup> Green states that Philip acted in this seemingly irrational way for one reason only: he believed Alexander and Olympias were actively plotting against him.<sup>23</sup> Alexander considered himself to be the young Achilles, destined to win glory and renown in battle, but Philip, after 25 years of hard fighting and equally hard living, still survived, ambitious, experienced and likely to leave no new worlds for Alexander to conquer. Philip might even decide to leave Alexander in Macedonia as his regent and deny him a part in the conquest that he regarded as his birthright. This rivalry, in Green's opinion, was Alexander's powerful and urgent motive for wanting Philip dead. On the other hand Green does not give reasons why Philip chose Cleopatra as his bride, but implies that he may have been influenced by Parmenio and Attalus ("a brave and popular general") who formed a powerful clique which was determined to keep Alexander off the throne.<sup>24</sup>

Renault accepts that the marriage was a love-match and agrees with Hammond that Philip did not divorce Olympias, citing the fact that Alexander attended the wedding as proof of this. In contrast to Green she claims that Philip and Alexander were on friendlier terms during the time immediately preceding the wedding than at any other time and that Alexander attended the festivities as a gesture of goodwill towards his father, although Olympias opposed his giving the marriage his sanction. She adds that the occasion must have been an ordeal for the young Alexander, who was sexually fastidious and would find the drunken feast and the bawdy jokes difficult to handle.<sup>25</sup> However, Alexander's presence at the wedding cannot be taken as proof that there was no estrangement. Even if he disapproved of his father's latest match there were many compelling reasons for his attendance: self-interest or self-preservation come to mind. In *Fire from Heaven* Renault emphasises Alexander's distaste for the match and unease at the banquet, creating a tense atmosphere for the insult that forms the climax of the scene.<sup>26</sup> In her scholarly work, Renault states that the sources do not make it clear whether Attalus rose to power before or after the marriage, but her novel draws attention to the age difference between Philip and Cleopatra and stresses the fact that Philip and Attalus were contemporaries and close friends and that Attalus was the chief of a powerful clan, an important man at court and a senior commander in the army. Her narrative is structured to suggest that Attalus, knowing Philip's preferences, played the match-maker and contrived a meeting between the king and his young ward.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 88; Green *Royal Tombs* 139.

<sup>23</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 90.

<sup>24</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 88, 90—92. (See pages 76—90: "The Philotas Affair and the Death of Parmenio".)

<sup>25</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 54—55.

<sup>26</sup> Renault *Fire from Heaven* 326.

<sup>27</sup> Renault *Fire from Heaven* 259, 296, 320.



## The Insult and the Flight from Pella (? Spring 337)

"The most open quarrel was brought on by Attalus at the marriage of Cleopatra... and being in his cups, he called upon the Macedonians to ask of the gods that from Philip and Cleopatra there might be born a legitimate successor to the kingdom" (Plut. *Alex.* 9.4).

The details of the wedding feast are given only by Plutarch, who describes the insult offered by Attalus, Alexander's angry reply – "Villain do you take me for a bastard, then?" – and the violent, drunken brawl that these angry words precipitated between Philip and Alexander (Plut. *Alex.* 9.5). Plutarch makes it clear that the insult and the brawl, not the marriage itself caused the breach between Alexander and Philip and led to Alexander and Olympias leaving Macedonia. What is most remarkable in Plutarch's account is Philip's reaction to the insult. Instead of defending himself and his son and heir from this public slur, he attempted to attack Alexander physically, but failed because he was both angry and drunk. Most modern scholars dismiss Philip's actions as the inevitable result of the drunken and volatile *symposia* that were a feature of Macedonian court and political life.<sup>28</sup> Green believes that Alexander goaded Philip: "When my mother remarries I'll invite you to *her* wedding", and assumes that the drink combined with Philip's lame leg caused him to fall.<sup>29</sup> Renault's view is much the same, but she suggests that Attalus had shrewdly counted on Alexander losing his temper and that an alcoholic haze induced Philip to lose his usual composure and draw his sword.<sup>30</sup>

Hammond dismisses Plutarch's narrative of the quarrel as:

"Splendid comedy, indeed! But not to be taken as accurate reporting. No Macedonian would have thought of suggesting that the king's deputy in office and the king's commander of cavalry at Chaeronea was not in fact his son".<sup>31</sup>

In his opinion Arrian's statement that Olympias was somehow disgraced (Arr.3.6.5) can be trusted because Arrian derived the information from Ptolemy or Aristobulus, who wrote for contemporaries and therefore did not invent sensational stories.<sup>32</sup> Hammond tentatively suggests that the dishonour may have been that Philip gave his new bride the "traditional dynastic name, Eurydice".<sup>33</sup> In polygamous societies it is not unusual for the mother of the king (Queen Mother) to have status and even power far greater than any of the king's wives. Philip's mother, Eurydice was one of the few Macedonian queens to have exercised any direct

<sup>28</sup> Camey *Politics of Polygamy* 176; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 36; Heckel, W, "Philip and Olympias", *Classical Contributions. Studies in Honour of Malcolm Francis McGregor* (Shrimpton, GS and DJ McCarger, Eds.) (Locust Valley, NY: 1981) 52.

<sup>29</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 89.

<sup>30</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 55.

<sup>31</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 36.

<sup>32</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 37; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 173.

<sup>33</sup> Badian, E. "Eurydice", *Philip II, Alexander the Great and the Macedonian Heritage* (Adams, WL and Borza, EN Eds.) (Lanham: 1982) 99—110; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 173; Heckel, W, "Kleopatra or Eurydike?" *Phoenix* 32 (1978) 156; Heckel *Philip and Olympias* 56 and n. 44

political power, and she had successfully safeguarded the throne for her sons. She was held in esteem by Philip and would certainly have been the senior and most influential lady at Philip's court until her death. The date of her death is uncertain, but Hammond suggests that she lived to the age of about 70 (ca.340).<sup>34</sup> After her death Olympias would have enjoyed enhanced prestige as the mother of Philip's apparent successor. If Philip honoured Cleopatra by giving her the traditional dynastic name "Eurydice" he must have intended her to become his senior queen, if she gave birth to a son. This promotion of Cleopatra above the other royal ladies would have dishonoured Olympias and angered both Alexander and his mother.<sup>35</sup>

Green and Renault fully accept Plutarch's description of the drunken wedding feast. Both authors dramatise the scene and make the most of the scandalous details supplied by Plutarch.<sup>36</sup> In spite of uncertainty about exactly what Attalus meant when he prayed for a "legitimate heir", Green and Renault take the prayer to mean that Olympias was guilty of adultery and that Alexander's position as heir was threatened by the claim that he was not Philip's son. Renault sees this prayer as "the deadliest insult of the ancient world", but Green believes that such insults were "regular weapons in the power-game and were recognised as such".<sup>37</sup> This is inconsistent with his statement in *The Royal Tombs of Vergina* where he claims that it was the simple fact of Philip's paternity that conferred royal status on his male children.<sup>38</sup> In that case, any jibe that cast doubt on Alexander's paternity was undoubtedly an insult of the first magnitude against Philip, Olympias and Alexander. Hammond is almost certainly correct in stating that such an insult would not be tolerated, and in any event the sources do not ever suggest that Olympias was guilty of infidelity.<sup>39</sup>

Although the reason for their departure is obscure, Olympias and Alexander left the court and theories about their exile are varied and plentiful, ranging from the view that it was Olympias' intention in Molossia and Alexander's in Illyria to stir up trouble for Philip, to the belief that the exile was of short duration because father and son were soon reconciled.<sup>40</sup> There is no

<sup>34</sup> Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 173; Andronikos, M. *Vergina: The Royal Tombs and the Ancient City* [Athens 1984] 51 suggests a date in the 330's, after the battle of Chacronea (quoted by Greenwalt, W, "Amyntas III and the Political Stability of Argead Macedonia" *Ancient World* 18 [1988]) 42 n 9.

<sup>35</sup> Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 173; Heckel *Kleopatra or Eurydike* 156.

<sup>36</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 89; Renault *Fire from Heaven* 324—329.

<sup>37</sup> Carney *Politics of Polygamy* 175; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 89; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 55.

<sup>38</sup> Green *Royal Tombs* 139.

<sup>39</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 36 cf. Ellis *Philip II* 303 n. 23; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 503. Olympias was an Epirote Molossian by birth and there is not much merit in the argument that Attalus was praying for a pure-blooded Macedonian heir. Philip himself was only half Macedonian – his mother, Eurydice, was an Illyrian princess whom Amyntas III had married, presumably as a condition of peace after an Illyrian invasion in 392 BC.

<sup>40</sup> Badian *The death of Philip* 244, 245; Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 22; Calkwell, G, *Philip of Macedon* (London 1978) 179; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 99, 100; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 18; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 59, 60; Justin 9.7.7. McQueen *Commentary* 190 suggests that Illyrian hostility towards Philip made it a

record of where Alexander went in Illyria, what he did there or even how long he was away, nor is there evidence of Philip fighting an Illyrian war, possibly stirred up by Alexander, in 337 or 336, although this suggestion finds favour with many modern authors.<sup>41</sup>

Hammond disputes the view that Olympias and Alexander were exiled as a result of the quarrel at the wedding feast, which he considers to be unhistorical, and accepts Arrian's statement that the king's marriage caused suspicion between Philip and Olympias because it dishonoured her.<sup>42</sup> She showed her resentment by leaving court and going to her brother in Molossia and Alexander, forced to choose sides, went with her.<sup>43</sup> But, Hammond claims, Philip would not have allowed them to go to areas where they could foment trouble and their freedom of movement was possible only with his permission.<sup>44</sup> He believes that Alexander went to Illyria with Philip's knowledge and consent, to gain experience of Macedonia's north-western frontier.<sup>45</sup>

Green wholeheartedly endorses the theory that Alexander and Olympias intended to make trouble for Philip, and suggests that Alexander went to Langarus of the Agrianians, where he "fumed and plotted in exile".<sup>46</sup> He concludes that Olympias persuaded her brother, Alexander of Epirus to declare war on Philip, "...a fair return for having to put up with his brother-in-law's homosexual attentions at an impressionable age".<sup>47</sup>

According to Renault, Alexander's friends, including Hephaestion, escorted Alexander and his mother from Macedonia and shared his exile, but she states that some of his friends were exiled again at the time of the Pixodarus affair. She is vague about Alexander's intentions in Illyria, but believes that the conditions that he endured were extremely harsh and humiliating, so much

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suitable place for Alexander to seek sanctuary, while Develin *Murder of Philip* 95 suggests that Alexander took the opportunity to find out what the Illyrians attitude might be towards him as opposed to Philip. Griffith *HM II* 678 is very doubtful about the historicity of the "exile" because of the danger it posed to Philip and the Macedonian state at such an inopportune time and also because Philip did not exile Alexander together with his friends. Ellis *Philip II* 214 contends that although the exile is factual no source alleges that Philip banished Alexander and Olympias, but rather that they chose to go into exile. Lane Fox, Robin, *The Search for Alexander* (London 1980) 71, 72; 190 and Carney *Politics of Polygamy* 176, 179 believe that the self-imposed exile was not lengthy and that the two men were quickly reconciled.

<sup>41</sup> e.g. Develin *Murder of Philip* 88; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 106 and 524 n 67; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 505; McQueen *Commentary* 190.

<sup>42</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 36—37; Hammond *End of Philip* 168; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 173.

<sup>43</sup> Hammond *End of Philip* 91; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 178.

<sup>44</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 36—37; Hammond *End of Philip* 168; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 173.

<sup>45</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 36; Hammond *End of Philip* 168; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 173.

<sup>46</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 94.

<sup>47</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 97; Badian *Death of Philip* 244 n. 8. There is nothing in the sources to suggest that this was not a relationship between consenting partners. Green and others may find the idea of a homosexual relationship between brothers-in-law distasteful, but it is hardly credible that such a relationship could cause a war between the hardened politicians of antiquity.

so that neither her scholastic work nor her novel *Fire from Heaven* dwell on this episode. Nevertheless, she concludes that even this dark, melancholy experience had a positive effect on Alexander, teaching him fortitude, vigilance and discretion.<sup>48</sup>

### **The Pixodarus Affair (? after the Spring 337)**

This story is again unique to Plutarch (*Alex.* 10). He reports that Pixodarus, the Satrap of Caria, approached Philip for an alliance and offered the hand of his daughter to Philip's son Arrhidaeus. Alexander's friends and Olympias sent Alexander a distorted account of the negotiations implying that Philip was using this "brilliant marriage" as part of his plan to settle the kingdom on Arrhidaeus.<sup>49</sup> Alexander was so alarmed that he sent a message to Pixodarus telling him that Arrhidaeus was illegitimate as well as weak-minded and offering to marry the daughter himself. When Philip heard of Alexander's offer he reacted furiously, stopped the marriage and banished Alexander's friends, whom he believed had encouraged this foolishness (*Plut. Alex.* 10). Plutarch names the men who were banished as Harpalus, Nearchus, Erygius and Ptolemy, and Arrian adds Laomedon to his list of those exiled at the time of Philip's marriage (*Plut. Alex.* 10; *Arrian* 3.6.5).

Most scholars accept that Olympias was in Epirus at the time of the Pixodarus affair, in which case her knowledge of the negotiations must have been second-hand and her alleged involvement may be due to a hostile source.<sup>50</sup> Alexander's friends were bodyguards,<sup>51</sup> but they were not members of Philip's immediate circle of friends and advisors. The negotiations with Pixodarus must have been conducted in the utmost secrecy to keep them from the Persian king and it is unlikely that these young men would have been privy to the king's plans regarding the alliance, or any other aspects of the proposed invasion of Asia. Whatever knowledge they had was probably based on barrack-room gossip. It is, therefore, difficult to understand why Alexander believed them and why he reacted in such a provocative manner.

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<sup>48</sup> Renault *Fire from Heaven* 343—348; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 60. (See pages 31—32 for discussion of an Illyrian campaign.)

<sup>49</sup> Green *Alexander the Great* 102 believes that the marriage of Philip's daughter Cynane (Cynna) to his nephew, Amyntas son of Perdikkas, is further evidence of Philip's intention to disinherit Alexander, but this is disputed by Ellis *Amyntas Perdikka* 22 and n. 59 and *Philip of Macedon* 217.

<sup>50</sup> Griffith *HM II* 686; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 25.

<sup>51</sup> Except for Harpalus, who was physically disabled.

Plutarch states that Philip took Parmenio's son Philotas with him to Alexander's room when he confronted his son (Plut. *Alex.* 10.3).<sup>52</sup> It is possible that the biographer was planning ahead and was laying the foundation for his narrative of the plot laid against Philotas, which he would introduce later.<sup>53</sup> In line with this thinking, some commentators believe that Philotas had passed on information about the secret negotiations to his father, Parmenio, and that this betrayal was behind Alexander's hatred of the family.<sup>54</sup> Although Alexander and Philotas may have been contemporaries, there is little evidence that they were friends and Philotas is known to have been associated with Amyntas son of Perdiccas, and was then, or later, the brother-in-law of Attalus, Alexander's mortal enemy (Curt. 6.9.17).<sup>55</sup> That is one theory, but it is possible that a lacuna, which may have occurred at this point, explained why Philip went to Alexander's room rather than summoning his recalcitrant son into his presence, and why he chose Philotas as a witness to the confrontation.

Hammond believes the story is unhistorical and suggests that Plutarch found this spiteful fiction in the work of the unreliable Satyrus, who wrote for those Greeks who hated Macedonia.<sup>56</sup> He reasons that a marriage alliance would have benefited Pixodarus only after Caria's liberation from Persian rule, that it was most unlikely that Alexander wanted to marry at all in 337 BC and that four young, promising, military officers would not have been exiled for reporting the initial approach to Alexander. Instead he suggests they must have been associated with some form of protest or demonstration about Philip's marriage to Cleopatra.<sup>57</sup> It is Hammond's opinion that Macedonia was an ordered state with constitutional procedures and he argues that Alexander's friends would have been banished by the assembly of the Macedones if their action constituted treason and by the king if they were exiled on military grounds.<sup>58</sup> He believes that the marks of invention are clear in Plutarch's story – claims of knowledge of private conversations and secret negotiations, Alexander calling his half-brother a bastard, and Philip taunting Alexander with wanting to become the son-in-law of the slave of a barbarian king. Most importantly, Hammond cites Arrian's statement, based on Ptolemy and Aristobulus that the friends were exiled at the time of Philip's marriage to Cleopatra (Arr. 3.6.5) as justification for rejecting the Pixodarus affair.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 25–26.

<sup>53</sup> Plut. *Alex.* 49. 1. Only Plutarch suggests the plot was against Philotas rather than against Alexander.

<sup>54</sup> Develin *Murder of Philip* 94; Plutarch *Alexander* 10; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 60.

<sup>55</sup> Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 26.

<sup>56</sup> Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 172, 174; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 36, 37; Calkwell *Philip of Macedon* 179.

<sup>57</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 37; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 174.

<sup>58</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 37.

<sup>59</sup> Hammond, *Alexander the Great* 37; Hammond *The End of Philip* 168; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 172, 173.

Green accepts the truth of the Pixodarus affair, although he allows that the story contains illogicalities and tantalising half-truths. He claims that Alexander's reaction to the proposed marriage shows that his insecurity over the succession had reached the level of paranoia and that his secret negotiations with Pixodarus constituted a failed *coup d'etat*. Green concludes that Philip was justified in taking harsh action against Alexander's associates because he believed there was a conspiracy against him and he needed to safeguard his own position.<sup>60</sup> Green's insistence that Alexander's action was treasonable is at odds with his view that Philip acted leniently towards Alexander because of personal affection,<sup>61</sup> for Plutarch shows that Philip was extremely angry:

"... (he) upbraided his son severely, and bitterly reviled him as ignoble and unworthy of his high estate..." (Plut. *Alex.* 10.3).

Green had earlier claimed that Philip believed that Alexander was plotting to seize the throne and that their reconciliation, born of necessity, was extremely brittle.<sup>62</sup> No Macedonian king, and especially one as astute as Philip, would have tolerated repeated treasonable behaviour from any of his subjects, not even from his own son. Although Philip seldom resorted to using murder or execution as instruments of politics, he would have been compelled to act against repeated disloyalty. It would have been a simple matter for Philip to have accused Alexander before the Macedonian Assembly, (proof of treason was not really necessary in the face of the king's allegation), had him legally executed and endorsed Amyntas son of Perdiccas as his successor, until such time as Cleopatra bore him a son.

Mary Renault also sees Alexander's action as treasonable. She points out that the eagerness with which Pixodarus accepted Alexander's offer indicates that he was aware that Arrhidaeus was not the heir to the throne (Plut. *Alex.* 10.2).<sup>63</sup> Renault, along with most commentators links the exile of Alexander's friends to the Pixodarus affair, but she believes that they had shared his voluntary exile in Illyria as well.<sup>64</sup> Again, it is inconceivable that Philip would have tolerated a second incident of treason from his young officers. There would have been no second exile: Alexander's friends would have been executed.

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<sup>60</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 101.

<sup>61</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 101.

<sup>62</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 90, 91, 96.

<sup>63</sup> Ellis *Philip II* 218; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 101; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 60.

<sup>64</sup> Heckel *Philip and Olympias* 57 n. 45; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 56, 60; Renault *Fire from Heaven* 329—330, 345, 362—364.

## Pausanias the Assassin

"Pausanias ...admitting no delay in his plans because of his grievance he determined to act under cover of the festival in the following manner. He posted horses at the gates of the city and came to the entrance of the theatre carrying a Celtic dagger under his cloak. When Philip directed his attending friends to precede him into the theatre, while the guards kept their distance, he saw that the king was left alone, rushed at him, pierced him through his ribs, and stretched him out dead;" (Diod. 16.94.2—4).

Pausanias of Orestis, the murderer of Philip is an enigmatic character. The sordid story of his rape and degradation is found in Diodorus (16.93.3-94.2) and Plutarch refers to it in passing.<sup>65</sup> The rape was engineered by Attalus in order to avenge the death of his friend, another Pausanias, who had supplanted Pausanias of Orestis in Philip's affections. When Pausanias of Orestis verbally abused his rival, the young man confided in Attalus and a few days later deliberately gave his life in order to save Philip during a battle against king Pleurias of the Illyrians (Diod. 16.93.4—6).

The date of this battle is one of the most controversial aspects of the debate about Philip's murder, and it is pivotal to the question of whether Pausanias acted against Philip for personal reasons. There is no known war against the Illyrians in 337 or 336 and the latest attested Illyrian war took place in 344/3 BC, against a king called Pleuratus.<sup>66</sup> Many scholars have assumed that Diodorus garbled the names and that Pleurias and Pleuratus are the same person, in which case the rape of Pausanias must have taken place in 344/3, some eight years before he sought revenge by murdering Philip.<sup>67</sup> Hammond, however, has identified Pleuratus as king of the Ardiaei and Pleurias as king of the Autariatae. He believes that the battle against Pleurias

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<sup>65</sup> Carney *Politics of Polygamy* 181 n. 36. The ancient terminology for the assault varies. Diodorus uses the strongest language, which Carney translates as "sexual outrage and drunken treatment of him like a *hetaira*". Plutarch (*Alex.* 10.4) and Aristotle (*Pol.* 5.8.10, 1311b) use the term *hybris* which can have the meaning of a specifically sexual outrage, and Justin (9.6.5—6) says that Pausanias suffered a *stuprum* at the hands of Attalus. Modern scholars have translated the term in a general way, often avoiding the word "rape". Ellis *Assassination of Philip* 103 uses "abuse", Griffith *HM II* 684 says Pausanias was handed over to the "sexual appetites" of Attalus' stable hands, Hammond *Alexander the Great* 38, 39 uses "assaulted him sexually" and "maltreated". However, Green *Alexander of Macedon* 106 describes a gang rape and Renault *Nature of Alexander* 4, 61 uses "rape" and "injury".

<sup>66</sup> Arrian does not deal with this period, Curtius' narrative is lost and Plutarch, true to his stated aim of writing biography not history, focuses on Alexander and ignores peripheral events. Diodorus, the most comprehensive source for this period mentions an Illyrian campaign for 344 (16.69.7) and a Thracian campaign against Cersobleptes in 343/2 (16.71.2). His narrative continues with the sieges of Perinthus and Byzantium (341/0—430/39) (16.74.2, 16.76.4, 16.76.3), Philip's campaign in Boetia and the battle of Chaeronea in 338 (16.84.2—86.6), his election as *strategos* of the Hellenic League (16.89.2—89.3), the opening of the war with Persia by sending an advance party to liberate the Greek cities of Asia, the marriage of Philip's daughter Cleopatra to Alexander of Epirus and Philip's assassination at the festivities (16. 91.2—16.93.2). Then, there is a flashback to explain Pausanias' motivation for the assassination, which mentions the battle against Pleurias, king of the Illyrians (16.93.3—93-7). No other details are given and the date of this Illyrian war remains extremely uncertain. Other sources such as the Attic orators ignore Philip's activities unless they have a direct impact on the Greek city-states and give no assistance regarding the date of the battle or the name of the Illyrian king involved.

<sup>67</sup> Badian *Death of Philip* 247, 248; Bosworth *Philip and Upper Macedonia* 97; Carney *Politics of Polygamy* 183; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 63, 64; Welles *Introduction and Notes* 99.

took place in 337 or 336 BC, when Philip made a pre-emptive strike against the Autariatae to prevent them causing trouble while he was in Asia.<sup>68</sup> Green and most other modern commentators agree that an unattested battle in 337 or 336 is very likely especially as this period was unusually free of military operations for a king as active as Philip.<sup>69</sup> Green suggests that the battle may have been a skirmish provoked by Alexander's activities in Illyria during his self-imposed exile.<sup>70</sup> Renault disagrees and claims that the assault took place during a campaign against Pleuratus eight or so years before the murder. She justifies her claim by stating that Philip "naturally" refused to subject Attalus to a public trial, thus implying that Attalus was already a close associate of Philip's.<sup>71</sup> The sources are explicit: Philip could not punish Attalus, because of their relationship and because Attalus' services were needed urgently (Diod. 16.93.8), indicating that the event was a recent one. There is no record of Philip needing Attalus' services in 344 BC and therefore no reason why he could not have been brought to justice, if the incident took place in that year. Attalus was needed only in 337/6 when he was dispatched to Asia with Parmenio and the vanguard, and it is possible that Philip sent him to Asia to get him away from the vengeful Pausanias.<sup>72</sup> The relationship that Diodorus refers to clearly dates from the time of Philip's marriage to his ward, which took place sometime in 337. Plutarch connects both Cleopatra and Attalus to the humiliation of Pausanias, indicating that the incident took place after her marriage (Plut. *Alex.* 10). If Plutarch is correct in stating that Philip had fallen in love with Cleopatra, her involvement in the incident was probably limited to protecting Attalus by using her position as a young bride to influence her doting husband.<sup>73</sup>

Closely linked to the problem of the date of the assault on Pausanias of Orestis is the question of his age. The indications are that he was a young man and this is Green's view. He was still a pupil of the sophist Hermocrates (Diod. 16.934.1), he apparently took his problem to Alexander, who was in his late teens (Plut. *Alex.* 10. 4) and he was young enough to attract Philip's attention and young enough to be jealous of the other Pausanias who had ousted him from Philip's affection.<sup>74</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 170, 176.

<sup>69</sup> Develin *Murder of Philip* 88; Fears, JR, "Pausanias the Assassin of Philip II", *Athenaeum* 63 (1975) 113; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 106 and 524 n. 67; Griffith, *HM II* 684, 685; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 505; McQueen *Commentary* 190.

<sup>70</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 524 n. 67 cf. McQueen *Commentary* 190.

<sup>71</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 41.

<sup>72</sup> Griffith *HM II* 680; Heckel *Marshals* 4; Heckel *Factions and Politics* 297.

<sup>73</sup> Fears, *Pausanias* 121; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 106; Griffith *HM II* 685; Heckel *Marshals* 297; McQueen *Commentary* 190.

<sup>74</sup> Ellis *Philip II* 224; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 106 and 524 n. 67; Lane Fox *Search for Alexander* 92; McQueen *Commentary* 117.



Hammond accepts that homosexual relationships developed between pages and older men and he dates the battle in which the second Pausanias threw away his life to 337 or 336, shortly before Philip's murder. But, he is adamant that Pausanias was "a mature man of great military distinction" and that Philip promoted him to the *Somatophylakes*, the elite group of seven men of high nobility, to compensate for failing to act against Attalus.<sup>75</sup> Thus, Hammond believes that Pausanias of Orestis was considerably older and more distinguished than the Pausanias who lost his life in the Illyrian war and that Philip's relationship with him lasted from when he was a youth until 337/6 when he was senior enough to be promoted to the seven *Somatophylakes*, although a long relationship is unlikely, given Philip's reputation.<sup>76</sup> The alternative, which Hammond does not mention, is that there was a hiatus of eight years between the end of Pausanias' relationship with the king and his verbal abuse of his young rival. However, neither scenario accords with the status that Hammond believes Pausanias enjoyed. As a "mature man of great military distinction" Pausanias would surely have outgrown his youthful infatuation with Philip and would not have taunted the young page. Diodorus calls the men guarding Philip at the theatre *somatophylakes* and Hammond believes that Leonnatus, Perdiccas and Attalus were members of the elite group of seven men of the highest nobility.<sup>77</sup> But, the *somatophylakes* (otherwise known as the hypaspists or infantry bodyguards) are generally thought to have been young men, some may have been Alexander's contemporaries,<sup>78</sup> lending weight to the argument that Pausanias had been promoted from the *paides basilikoi* to the Royal Squadron of the hypaspists, and not to the *Somatophylakes*. It is possible that Diodorus misunderstood the terms and used *somatophylakes* loosely meaning the infantry bodyguards. Very little is known about the elite unit, and the term may not have been used to indicate rank in Philip's time. The surviving information, found in Arrian, derives from Ptolemy's history of Alexander, but is ambiguous and inconsistent. Alexander appointed Ptolemy as a *Somatophylax* and the group appears to have derived its importance from his history. Alexander inherited the unit from his father and when he came to the throne Philip's appointments occupied all seven positions. According to Arrian (6.28.4) in 325 they were Lysimachus, Aristonous, Peithon, Hephaistion, Perdiccas, Leonnatus and Peucestas. The last four were boyhood friends who later had successful and prominent careers under Alexander, but, strangely, the first three Lysimachus, Aristonous and Peithon remained relatively obscure

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<sup>75</sup> Ellis *Philip II* 163; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 27; Hammond, NGL, "Royal Pages, Personal Pages and Boys trained in the Macedonian Manner during the period of the Teimnid Monarchy", *Historia* 39 (1990) 265; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 176; Heckel, W, "The *Somatophylakes* of Alexander the Great: Some Thoughts", *Historia* 27 (1978) 224—229.

<sup>76</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 27; Hammond *Royal Pages* 265; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 176.

<sup>77</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 39; Hammond, NGL, *The Macedonian State* (Oxford 1989) 139; Hammond *Philip's Tomb* 346 n 37.

through the Persian campaign. This raises the question of when and why they were appointed to positions of such importance and the most likely answer is that Philip appointed them because of their family connections. The unit apparently developed from the machinery of the heroic monarchy, with members being chosen from aristocratic Macedonian families on the basis of the king's indebtedness to their fathers and forefathers. If this is correct, it is another argument against Hammond's view regarding Pausanias' age and status, since maturity and military distinction were not preconditions for appointment to the elite *Somatophylakes*. The hypothesis that the *Somatophylakes* were younger men is also borne out by the fact that Philip's known senior generals, Parmenio, Antipater, Eurylochus, Hipponicus and Attalus, are not referred to as a *Somatophylakes*.<sup>79</sup> A further objection is that Attalus' sordid revenge seems to be the action of an older man directed against someone very much his junior in status and in years. It does not seem possible that Philip could have ignored Pausanias' legitimate demands for justice if he were Attalus' equal in age and senior in rank.<sup>80</sup>

Diodorus (16.94.1) and Plutarch (*Alex.* 10) agree that Pausanias murdered Philip because he failed to act against Attalus, and Aristotle, a reliable contemporary, confirms the personal motive (*Pol.* 1311<sup>b</sup>2).<sup>81</sup> Pausanias' personal motive has been questioned on the grounds that: "Pausanias waited a long time for his revenge",<sup>82</sup> but Renault and others claim that victims of rape do not forget in a year or two and that the experience affects them for the rest of their lives. The problem is that Pausanias exacted vengeance on Philip, not on Attalus who instigated the humiliation. Perhaps the fact that this rape was committed specifically to humiliate Pausanias exacerbated the psychological damage that he suffered, and the knowledge that Philip, his erstwhile lover, laughed and boasted about it (*Just.* 9.6.4 ff.) would partially explain why he targeted Philip and not Attalus.<sup>83</sup> In addition, Pausanias' sense of grievance towards Philip might have been compounded by the fact that Attalus had been honoured by being given command of the Macedonian vanguard which crossed to Asia Minor in the Spring of 336.<sup>84</sup>

Pausanias' action fits the pattern of what Renault describes as "... a Greek blood-feud killing where honour demands that revenge be taken and be seen to be taken".<sup>85</sup> Neither the blood-feud

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<sup>78</sup> McQueen *Commentary* 176; Heckel *Marshals* 244—253; Heckel W, "The *Somatophylax* Attalos: Diodorus 16.94.4", *LCM* 4 (1979) 216; Welles *Introduction and Notes* 101 n. 2.

<sup>79</sup> Hammond, NGL, "The Various Guards of Philip II and Alexander III", *Historia* 40 (1991) 396; Heckel *Marshals* 237—257; Heckel *Somatophylax Attalos* 226.

<sup>80</sup> Heckel *The Somatophylax Attalos* 216.

<sup>81</sup> Bosworth *Philip and Upper Macedonia* 97.

<sup>82</sup> Carney *Politics of Polygamy* 180 and n. 33; Fears *Pausanias* 117; Welles *Introduction and Notes* 99.

<sup>83</sup> Bosworth *Philip and Upper Macedonia* 97 n. 2.

<sup>84</sup> Ellis *Assassination of Philip* 105.

<sup>85</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 64; Carney *Politics of Polygamy* 181, 182 and n. 37.

motive nor the personal motive excludes the possibility of a conspiracy and Hammond, Green and Renault point out that those who wished to destroy Philip for reasons of their own, may have exploited Pausanias' anger and sense of grievance by inciting him to murder the king.<sup>86</sup>

## Conspiracy?

The ancient sources have handed down a persistent tradition that several murderers were incriminated after Pausanias had carried out the assassination of Philip.<sup>87</sup> In his narrative Diodorus refers to Pausanias having horses ready for his escape, barely hinting that there may have been a plot.<sup>88</sup> A more definite reference to a conspiracy is found in Book 17 of the *Bibliothèque Historique*:

"In this year (336/5) Alexander, succeeding to the throne, first inflicted due punishment on his father's murderers..." (Diod.17.2.1).

Plutarch confirms that Alexander punished his father's assassins and supplies the additional information that Alexander was "beset by formidable jealousies and feuds" (Plut. *Alex.*11). Since Philip was confronted by an even more difficult and unstable situation when he came to the throne in 359, it may be that Plutarch's report is merely a *topos*. Unfortunately, neither Diodorus nor Plutarch provide the names of the people who were punished or any information about them, but Diodorus corroborates the Vulgate tradition of a conspiracy by the question that Alexander put to the Oracle of Ammon at Siwah:

"...have I punished all those who were the murderers of my father or have some escaped me?" (Diod. 17.51.2).

The answer, as obviously fictitious as the question, was that all the murderers of Philip had been punished. Diodorus does not elaborate any further on the controversy surrounding Philip's death and it is possible that he, or more probably his source, conformed to the "official explanation", which held that the sons of Aeropos planned the murder and used Pausanias to assassinate Philip.<sup>89</sup> This explanation was supposedly circulated in an attempt to divert popular

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<sup>86</sup> Bosworth *Philip and Upper Macedonia* 97; Develin *Murder of Philip* 88, 99; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 107; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 38; Hammond *End of Philip* 172, 174; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 64.

<sup>87</sup> Bosworth *Philip and Upper Macedonia* 93.

<sup>88</sup> It is quite possible that Pausanias alone would have needed more than one horse in order to make his escape, at speed over a long distance, to Thrace or even Persia.

<sup>89</sup> Bosworth *Philip and Upper Macedonia* 93, 97; Brunt *Introduction and Notes* lx; Ellis *Philip II* 224; Fears *Pausanias*, 111.

Develin *Murder of Philip* 87 and n. 3, 99 suggests that although Diodorus appears to be uncontaminated he omits details about the murder and the subsequent suspicions, because these would interfere with the emphasis he places on Philip's *hybris* in aspiring to be included among the gods.

suspicion away from Alexander and Olympias and is seen as an attempt to find a personal connection between Philip and Pausanias and a plausible motive for the assassination.<sup>90</sup>

Arrian refers to a conspiracy incidentally when he narrates the treachery of Alexander son of Aeropus (Arr. 1.25). He states that the two Lyncestian brothers, Heromenes and Arrabaeus had been involved in the murder of Philip and that the third brother, Alexander, had also been implicated, but had not been prosecuted because he had been the first to acclaim Alexander by putting on his cuirass and accompanying him to the palace (Arr. 1.25). This is the only time he mentions the assassination.

Hammond adopts a legalistic and conservative approach to the assassination of Philip and the accession of Alexander, and follows the sources, especially Diodorus Siculus, closely. He trusts Diodorus' narrative because Diyllus, his source for these events, was reliable and understood Macedonian institutions.<sup>91</sup> Hammond believes there was a conspiracy aimed at eliminating Philip and probably Alexander as well, but he suggests that Pausanias acted precipitately in seizing the opportunity to kill Philip and the full plot had to be aborted. In his opinion there was considerable opposition from the Macedonians to Philip's demanding and ambitious rule, especially to the transplantation of populations and the constant demand on manpower for military training and operations. The conspirators realised that Alexander was as ambitious as his father and would continue to make heavy demands on the Macedonian people, and they planned to halt these policies by assassinating both men.<sup>92</sup> Philip's half-witted son, Arrhidaeus, would be by-passed and Amyntas son of Perdiccas or one of the sons of Aeropus would succeed to the throne. Hammond sees Alexander the Lyncestian as the most likely choice because, he believes, the sons of Aeropus were members of the Macedonian royal house, being descended from Perdiccas II through Aeropus.<sup>93</sup> Alexander Lyncestes had the added advantages that he was the son-in-law of Antipater, one of the most influential men in Macedonia, and he had already proved himself a capable commander as one of Philip's *strategoi*.<sup>94</sup> There is not much merit in this argument. The sons of Aeropus were in a much

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<sup>90</sup> Bosworth *Philip and Upper Macedonia* 97.

<sup>91</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 5. Ellis *Assassination of Philip* 105 believes that Diyllus must be taken seriously because he was a genuine contemporary of Alexander's and because, in this instance, he was not influenced by the anti-Olympias propaganda apparent in Trogus. In contrast, Bosworth *Philip and Upper Macedonia* 95 states: "... the last chapters of Diodorus XVI are the most unreliable of the Bibliothekes... It seems certain Diodorus' source is late Hellenistic, compiled after the appearance of the standard redactions of the works of the Attic orators. ... The account of the death of Philip is typical of the more sensational type of Hellenistic historiography."

<sup>92</sup> Hammond *End of Philip* 172 *contra* Develin *Murder of Philip* 89.

<sup>93</sup> See *stemma* p. 72.

<sup>94</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 39, 40; Hammond *End of Philip* 171, 172; Hammond *The Macedonian State* 139; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 177.

weaker position than Amyntas because any Macedonian who had lived through the dangerous years that followed Philip's accession in 359 would have foreseen civil-war between the Lyncestian brothers, just as had occurred between Philip and his half-brothers and it is most unlikely that they wished to return to that scenario.

According to Hammond, Macedonia was a mature state where customary procedures or *mores Macedonici* were followed and he reconstructs the sequence of events that followed the assassination on this basis. First, the Assembly of the Macedones elected the new king at Aegae. Then investigations into the assassination were begun and orders were issued for the arrest of suspects. The suspects (including the corpse of Pausanias) were brought before the Assembly for trial, where they were prosecuted by Alexander and where they defended themselves with freedom of speech. The Macedones pronounced their verdict on the living and the dead and these verdicts were carried out over a period of time. Those suspected and questioned included Amyntas son of Perdiccas, who was a very strong rival for the throne; Philip's immediate entourage, including the people seated in the front row of the theatre near the throne; Leonnatus, Perdiccas and Attalus, the three bodyguards who had killed Pausanias thus preventing his interrogation; the diviner, who paid the price for having pronounced the omens favourable; the three sons of Acropus, Heromenes, Arrhabaeus and Alexander, and other unnamed people who are alleged to have been Pausanias' accomplices.<sup>95</sup>

Many modern scholars reject Hammond's hypothesis that Macedonia was an ordered constitutional monarchy and his view appears to be idealistic and anachronistic.<sup>96</sup> Idealistic in that he uses Macedonian *mores* to justify some of Alexander's questionable actions. Anachronistic because Macedonia was a monarchy and, unlike the Greek *poleis*, did not have a constitution. The more popular view is that that the Macedonian king, nobility and army had exactly those rights and powers that they could appropriate for themselves.<sup>97</sup> During the past thirty years, Hammond has discussed the assassination and accession in numerous publications and his interpretation of the sources and the events they cover is remarkably consistent.<sup>98</sup> It is somewhat surprising that, in spite of his stated view that many of the sources especially those based on Cleitarchus contain information that is fantastic, sensational and fictitious, Hammond

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<sup>95</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great*; Hammond *End of Philip* 170—171; Hammond, NGL and Walbank, FW (Eds.) *A History of Macedonia Vol. III. 336—167 BC* (Oxford: 1988) 4; Hammond *The Macedonian State* 139; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 177; Hammond *Philip's Tomb* 340—342.

<sup>96</sup> Hammond *End of Philip* 174; Hammond *Philip's Tomb* 342; Hatzopoulos, MB, "Succession and Regency in Classical Macedonia", *Ancient Macedonia IV* (Thessaloniki 1986) 279—292; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 71.

<sup>97</sup> Badian, E, "A King's Notebooks", *HSPH* 72 (1968) 198.

<sup>98</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 35—42; Hammond *End of Philip* 166-175; Hammond *HM III* 3—12; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 170—179; Hammond *Philip's Tomb* 331—350.

bases at least some of his opinions on fragments, including the *Oxyrhynchus Papyrus* 1798 (Jacoby No. 148) which he believes to be a second century AD copy of an original Hellenistic history.<sup>99</sup> This fragment has been described as unreliable evidence and some scholars consider it an epitome of indeterminate date and authorship, whilst papyrologists are undecided whether the script is Hellenistic or post-Augustan. It is also problematic that there are no reliable criteria against which the authenticity of the details given in *P. Oxy 1789 fr. 1*, which differ substantially from the source tradition, may be tested. In addition, the surviving portions of the papyrus are too fragmentary and disconnected to allow scholars to reach any conclusions about its value as a historical source.<sup>100</sup> However, the information in the *P. Oxy. 1789 fr.1* corresponds almost exactly with Hammond's conception of the traditions of ancient Macedonia, and it is possible that he has put too much faith in this dubious source.

Green argues that Alexander, who believed that he had been disinherited, Olympias, who would do anything to advance her son and who hated Philip for dishonouring her, and Antipater, who abhorred Philip's divine pretensions and was jealous of Parmenio, conspired against Philip and persuaded Pausanias, who had a genuine motive, to assassinate the king with the assistance of three bodyguards. This conspiracy theory and its variations are widely accepted.<sup>101</sup>

Mary Renault proposes the Athenian orator Demosthenes as the chief conspirator.<sup>102</sup> She believes that the orator's implacable hatred of Macedonia and Philip blinded him to Alexander's achievements and potential, and that he thought that if Philip were eliminated, Alexander the young, inept and untried king could easily be swept aside.<sup>103</sup> Demosthenes arranged for *agents provocateurs* to ensure that Pausanias knew that Philip and Attalus had boasted and joked about the rape and to suggest that Attalus had been rewarded for the assault with promotion to a high military rank and the status of a royal "in-law". Two of the sons of Aeropus, who wanted Philip removed so that they could recover the sovereignty of Lyncestis, were suborned to assist Pausanias in the assassination. The new Great King, Darius III, who

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<sup>99</sup> Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 177; Hammond *Philip's Tomb* 343.

<sup>100</sup> Bosworth *Philip and Upper Macedonia* 93 n. 8; Brunt *Introduction and Notes* xxii; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 41; Hammond *Philip's Tomb* 343; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 177. Fragments generally provide a very imperfect idea of the scope and importance of the works of which they form part.

<sup>101</sup> Badian *Death of Philip* 244—250; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 90, 107, 109; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 40—43; Milns, RD, *Alexander the Great* (London: 1968) 31.

<sup>102</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 65. Hammond *HM III* 8—9 and *End of Philip* 172 agrees that Demosthenes was aware of the plot.

<sup>103</sup> Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 60. In spite of Alexander's role in the battle of Chaeronea, Demosthenes seems to have underestimated his abilities. In a speech made in the year of Alexander's accession he ridiculed Alexander as a mere "Margites". Margites, the anti-hero of a parody of Homer's *Iliad*, was a simpleton (Aeschin. 3.160) and Alexander's Homeric pretensions must have been known in Athens, otherwise the insult would have been pointless.

relied on Demosthenes for intelligence about Greece, supplied the gold that paid the conspirators. Olympias was involved in the plot because her position as Queen Consort was threatened by Philip's latest marriage and by his repudiation of her, but Renault is not specific about Olympias' actual role – presumably she was the agent who reminded Pausanias of his grievance and incited him to action.<sup>104</sup>

In her novel *Fire from Heaven* Renault develops this theory and in a number of scenes she subtly builds up a picture of Pausanias brooding over his grievance<sup>105</sup> and of Demosthenes' covert machinations and manipulations that culminated in the assassination of Philip.<sup>106</sup>

## Alexander

"... a certain amount of accusation attached itself to Alexander also" (Plut. *Alex.* 10.4).

Plutarch appears to incriminate Alexander and his statement that Alexander answered Pausanias' complaints with a quotation from the *Medea*: "the giver of the bride, the bridegroom and the bride", has been understood as a suggestion by Alexander that Pausanias murder Attalus, Philip and Cleopatra. But Plutarch specifically notes that he is reporting hearsay thereby absolving Alexander (Plut. *Alex.* 10.4). Diodorus does not even hint that Alexander was involved in the assassination and he exonerates Alexander by mentioning that he devoted himself to the funeral of his father (Diod. 17.1.2.1), an act of filial devotion of which Diodorus approved, and one not usually associated with a man who has committed parricide. Justin is the only ancient source who states that Alexander killed Philip (Justin 9.7).

The circumstances of the assassination and the assumption that Alexander derived most benefit from it ensured that he was a prime suspect. Many modern scholars believe there is no reason to deny that Alexander killed Philip, and the fact that he was responsible for other murders, including those of Cleopatra and Amyntas is seen as further evidence of his guilt.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>104</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 61—65.

<sup>105</sup> Renault *Fire from Heaven* 140, 321, 322, 329, 332, 351.

<sup>106</sup> Renault *Fire from Heaven* 89, 91—94, 104, 195, 214, 219, 377—379, 384—386, 387—388. In one scene in the agents of Pausanias, the two Lyncestian brothers, the Great King and Demosthenes meet to finalize details of the plot. Demosthenes' man insists that the deed be done at the wedding festival in order to bring down the tyrant of Hellas at the height of his *hybris*. The strongest indication of Demosthenes' involvement in the plot is the statement: "My principal wants to be first with the news in Athens, even before the news arrives. Between ourselves, he plans to have had a vision".

<sup>107</sup> Badian *Death of Philip* 249 and n. 26; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 28; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 108.

Hammond dismisses Plutarch's allegation that Alexander incited Pausanias (Plut. *Alex.* 10.4) as fictional on the grounds that neither Pausanias nor Alexander would have revealed this very private and incriminating conversation and because Plutarch was reporting hearsay.<sup>108</sup> In addition Hammond and Renault absolve Alexander on religious grounds. He scrupulously observed his religious duties as king (and chief priest) of Macedonia and they believe that he was incapable of committing parricide, a heinous crime in the Greek world, cursed by all the gods. Renault contends that the marriage of Philip and Olympias had degenerated into estrangement and hatred and that from his earliest childhood Olympias taught Alexander that his father was Zeus, not Philip. However, she speculates that even if Alexander believed this to be true, he would not have murdered Philip in Macedonia because there would be ample opportunities to kill him during the Persian expedition. She makes the assumption that Alexander would accompany Philip to Asia, but Philip's immediate plans for Alexander are unknown. As further proof of Alexander's innocence both Hammond and Renault claim that the hypocrisy of prosecuting people he knew to be innocent of a crime which he himself had planned was incompatible with Alexander's personality. They may be correct, but such speculation cannot be proved. Similarly there is no reason to believe, as Hammond and Renault do, that Alexander would shrink from choosing to have his father murdered during a family wedding in front of delegates from the entire Greek world – rash and flamboyant actions were typical of his later career.<sup>109</sup>

Green argues that Alexander, encouraged by Olympias, thought of himself as a king in his own right, rather than as Philip's eventual successor and was impatient to rule. This rivalry was exacerbated by his success at Chaeronea and led to great quarrels between father and son (Plut. *Alex.* 9.3).<sup>110</sup> Convinced that Alexander and Olympias were plotting to overthrow him, Philip married the young Cleopatra and repudiated Alexander as his heir and Olympias as his wife.<sup>111</sup> When Cleopatra's first child was a girl, Philip was forced to recall and reinstate Alexander,<sup>112</sup> but, after the treasonous Pixodarus affair, Philip could no longer endorse Alexander's claim to the throne and indicated his choice of heir by arranging a marriage between his nephew Amyntas and his daughter Cynna (Cynane).<sup>113</sup> Alexander was now completely isolated at court, except for Olympias, who had returned to Aegeae for the

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<sup>108</sup> Cawkwell *Philip of Macedon* 180; Develin *Murder of Philip* 88, 92; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 175.

<sup>109</sup> Carney *Politics of Polygamy* 185; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 40; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 175; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 30, 62–63.

<sup>110</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 90–91.

<sup>111</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 90–94.

<sup>112</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 95.

<sup>113</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 102.



wedding of her daughter, and Antipater, who was jealous of Parmenio and abhorred Philip's divine pretensions. The birth of Cleopatra's son, Caranus a few days before the wedding festivities represented the most dire threat to Alexander's position as successor and spurred the trio into action. Pausanias, still bitterly resentful of the way he had been treated, was offered a reward to join three guardsmen in assassinating Philip.<sup>114</sup>

Green's theory has a number of weaknesses. Firstly, the existence of Caranus is extremely uncertain. In order to fit in two pregnancies before Philip's death, Green has placed the marriage of Philip and Cleopatra in October 338. But, there is no evidence that Philip returned to Macedonia from Greece before the spring of 337 (Diod. 16.89.3).<sup>115</sup> Most modern commentators accept only one child, usually a girl, and few believe that Caranus ever existed.<sup>116</sup> Secondly, there is no evidence for a conspiracy involving Alexander, Olympias and Antipater and nothing indicates that Olympias and Antipater, whose enmity is well-known, ever co-operated in anything.<sup>117</sup> Nor is there any real proof that Alexander conspired with Pausanias. Other problems include the question of whether or not the Pixodarus affair was historical and the fact that Philip's reasons for marrying Cynna to his nephew Amyntas are unknown. Nevertheless, Green claims that Alexander, aided by his formidable mother and supported by the puritanical Antipater, "became a king by becoming a parricide".<sup>118</sup> He adds that all speculation about his guilt quickly faded away once Alexander was established on the throne. Clearly, he is mistaken. The rumours and gossip sparked by the assassination may have been suppressed during Alexander's reign, but the suspicions were never completely allayed. Speculation and innuendo about Alexander's guilt formed part of the propaganda that was issued during the wars of the Successors. It pervaded and contaminated the sources and survives to the present day forming the basis of theories such as that presented by Green.<sup>119</sup>

Green is probably correct in thinking that Alexander wished Philip were dead, something even Renault concedes, but that is not proof that he had his father assassinated. Hamilton's verdict on Alexander's involvement is probably closer to the truth:

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<sup>114</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 103, 109.

<sup>115</sup> Ellis *Philip II* 302 n. 4; Fears *Pausanias* 121.

<sup>116</sup> Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 27 n. 10; Calkwell *Philip of Macedon* 179 n. 9; Ellis *Philip II* 222, 302 n. 1 and n. 4, 306 n. 54; Ellis *Assassination of Philip* 113; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 45; Hammond, *End of Philip* 172; Heckel, W, "Philip II, Kleopatra and Karanus", *RFIC* 107 (1979) 393; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 72. Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 503—504, who also argues for two children, resorts to the suggestion that Cleopatra may have been pregnant when at the time of the wedding, but he too fails to take into account Philip's absence from Pella. He believes Europa was born in the summer of 337 and Caranus in July 336.

<sup>117</sup> Badian *Death of Philip* 249 n. 25; Develin *Murder of Philip* 98; McQueen *Commentary* 192; *contra* Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 42.

<sup>118</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 90, 107, 109.

<sup>119</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 109; Green *Alexander the Great* 68

"If Alexander is to be put in the dock, the only prudent verdict would seem to be 'not proven'. Philip's marriage was clearly a great blow to Alexander, particularly as it affected the position of his beloved mother, he was suspicious and resentful of his father, and the murder was a piece of luck for him. But his career was by no means devoid of good luck."<sup>120</sup>

## Olympias

"...most of the blame devolved upon Olympias, on the ground that she had added her exhortations to the young man's anger and incited him to the deed;" (Plut. *Alex.* 10.4.).

Olympias, who also benefited from the death of Philip by becoming the "Queen Mother", was an obvious suspect and Plutarch and Justin report the hearsay that she had incited Pausanias. Diodorus, on the other hand, rarely refers to Olympias and his only comment that even remotely connects her to the death of Philip merely shows that he disapproved of the incestuous marriage that Philip had arranged between Olympias' daughter and her brother (Diod. 16.91.4). Plutarch also reports that Alexander was angry over her savage treatment of Cleopatra during his absence (Plut. *Alex.* 10.4). Olympias' outrageous behaviour in killing Cleopatra and her baby was deplored in the ancient world and increased suspicion and criticism.

Hammond believes that these stories originated in the propaganda that was issued during the deadly quarrel between Olympias and Cassander and he dismisses Justin's narrative as absurd. Olympias, he asserts, would not have deliberately chosen to have her husband murdered in the presence of her son, at the festival in honour of the marriage of her only daughter to her brother.<sup>121</sup>

Green has no doubts about the depth of Olympias' cruelty and vindictiveness and cites the information that she committed at least five hundred political murders, "including roasting a baby over a brazier", and that she ordered over a hundred executions as proof that she plotted her husband's murder and then openly gloried in her husband's death.<sup>122</sup> This assertion not only disregards the more general opinion that Olympias' behaviour as reported by the ancient sources is wildly implausible fiction, but it also ignores the likelihood of later propaganda and

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<sup>120</sup> Hamilton, *Alexander the Great* 43. The Scottish verdict "not proven" tends to stigmatise the accused and is very different from the English "not guilty".

<sup>121</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 40; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 174, 221 n. 29. The festival was not "in honour" of the marriage – it was to honour the gods for the favourable oracle which Philip had received from Delphi and which he believed promised him victory against Persia (Diod. 16.91.5).

<sup>122</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 107; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 174, 221 n. 29

contamination as well as the fact that such vituperative descriptions of female behaviour are not unusual in ancient literature.<sup>123</sup>

Renault is less sure of Olympias' guilt and in her scholarly work she avoids the issue. But, in the *Fire from Heaven*, Renault stresses Olympias' hatred for Philip, which extends to her using black magic against him.<sup>124</sup> Because she is a wronged woman she becomes deeply embroiled in the conspiracy, but Alexander steadfastly refuses to be drawn into the intrigue.<sup>125</sup>

The verdict on Olympias' guilt or innocence depends, to some extent at least, on whether she had returned to Macedonia from exile in Epirus or not. Green and Renault believe she was at the wedding, Hammond does not. The specific ancient evidence shows that she was not in Aegeae (Justin 9.6.8—10). The strongest argument that modern scholars offer for her presence in Macedonia is that Alexander would have insisted on her return as a precondition of his reconciliation with Philip. On balance of probabilities, and bearing in mind that Olympias is said to have been the person who alerted Alexander to Philip's negotiations with Pixodarus, it is likely that she was in Aegeae. The wedding of her daughter to her brother affected her very particularly and her absence would have sent a clear signal to the Greek world that Philip had indeed repudiated her.<sup>126</sup> The ancient sources have handed down an extremely negative picture of Olympias, so much so that it is almost impossible for modern scholars to accept that she was not involved in the murder of her husband. There is no doubt that she was a formidable woman, her opposition to both Antipater and his son Cassander are proof of that.<sup>127</sup> There is also no doubt that she groomed her son for the throne and did her utmost to ensure that he maintained his position as the most likely successor – he was, after all her only direct

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<sup>123</sup> Carney *Politics of Polygamy* 186, 188 argues that the ancient hostility toward Olympias was partly due to prejudices about monarchy, particularly polygamous monarchy, and the role royal women played in this form of government. Ellis *Assassination of Philip* 106—107 agrees that there was virulent anti-Olympias propaganda and adds that there was also Philip-versus-Alexander propaganda that implied that Philip had indeed rejected Alexander's legitimacy as his successor.

<sup>124</sup> Renault *Fire from Heaven* 257.

<sup>125</sup> Renault *Fire from Heaven* 385 cf. Develin *Murder of Philip* 99. In Renault's novel Olympias' associates arrange a dinner for Pausanias at which they let it be known that Philip has broken his oath never to refer to the humiliating assault and that the king and Attalus have joked about it in public. Pausanias is also reminded that Attalus has been promoted and sent to Asia.

<sup>126</sup> Badian *Death of Philip* 249 n. 25; Carney *Politics of Polygamy* 178; Ellis *Philip II* 217 and 305 n. 36; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 104, 524 n. 64; Griffith *HM II* 685; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 40; Hammond *End of Philip* 174; Heckel *Philip and Olympias* 53, 57; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 56. Develin *Murder of Philip* 97 suggests that Olympias had been included in the reconciliation between Philip and Alexander and that she had returned to Macedonia, but that she was not in Aegeae for the wedding or the games. He sees her absence as an indication of her resentment at the fact that Philip was replacing her as the vehicle for his alliance with Epirus with the more direct link through his daughter. She plotted with Pausanias, who also had a grievance, to kill Philip so that Alexander could come to power and she could regain her former influence at court. Her absence from Aegeae was deliberate so that she would not be too close if the conspiracy failed.

<sup>127</sup> Ellis *Assassination of Philip* 106.

means to power. But that is not proof of her guilt and, although she was undoubtedly capable of murder and she openly rejoiced at Philip's death, the verdict must again be "not proven".

## Antipater

"... Antipater, with admirable speed, presented Alexander before the Macedonian army, which at once acclaimed him king."<sup>128</sup>

Antipater, a member of a leading Macedonian family was one of the most powerful of Philip's *hetairoi* and history has stereotyped him as the loyal, but puritanical, servant of the Macedonian royal house. During Philip's reign he held important military commands, acted as Philip's regent when he was absent from Macedonia and was involved on diplomatic missions, most notably when he accompanied Alexander to Athens to return the remains of those who had fallen at Chaeronea.

None of the ancient sources under discussion implicates Antipater in the events surrounding Philip's death or Alexander's accession. Diodorus emphasises Philip's *hybris* in including his statue with those of the twelve gods (Diod. 16.92.5 and 16.95.1) but he does not suggest that Antipater regarded this as blasphemy.<sup>129</sup> Only the *Alexander Romance* (*Ps.-Call.* 1.26) states that Antipater presented Alexander to the Macedonian Assembly. The *Romance* is regarded as a highly suspect source and yet this piece of evidence is almost universally accepted and is used with Arrian's statement that Antipater's son-in-law was the first man to acclaim Alexander (*Arr.* 1.25.2) as proof of Antipater's involvement in the murder.<sup>130</sup>

Hammond in his detailed analysis of the events after the assassination never suggests that Antipater was involved, but notes that Antipater may have spoken to the Macedonian Assembly in commendation of Alexander.<sup>131</sup>

Green claims that Antipater joined the conspiracy because his own influence was decreasing against that of Parmenio and Attalus and because he disliked Philip's pretensions to divinity.<sup>132</sup> His role seems to have been to stage-manage the succession.<sup>133</sup> There is, however, very little

<sup>128</sup> Green *Alexander the Great* 111.

<sup>129</sup> Bosworth, *Philip II* 95; Griffith *HM II* 683.

<sup>130</sup> Badian *Death of Philip* 248; Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 26 and n. 5; Bosworth *Philip and Upper Macedonia* 103 n. 1; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 111; Griffith *HM II* 685 and n. 5; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 44; Hammond *HM III* 4 n. 3; McQueen *Commentary* 193.

<sup>131</sup> Hammond *HM III* 4 n. 3.

<sup>132</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 103 and 108.

<sup>133</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 108.

evidence to incriminate him, and none to show that his previous loyalty to Philip had changed. Both Antipater and Parmenio were respected and trusted by the king and were given weighty responsibilities in complementary areas, Antipater in the gubernatorial and diplomatic arena and Parmenio in the military. The marriage of Attalus to Parmenio's daughter has been seen as a setback for Antipater, but there is no sign that this influenced Philip. Antipater, no doubt, continued to expect to be appointed to the highly desirable position of Philip's regent in Macedonia and Greece. Resentment could not have been his motive for wanting Philip dead. If Antipater's role in presenting Alexander to the Macedonian Assembly is accepted, the most likely explanation must be that he was acting as the senior general present, implementing a plan agreed on by Philip and his senior officers in order to prevent instability or anarchy in case of his sudden death.<sup>134</sup>

As far as Antipater's opposition to Philip's divine aspirations is concerned, Philip was not claiming divinity by including his statue in the parade with the statues of the twelve Olympian gods. Antipater would have understood this and his religious scruples would not have been a motive for Philip's murder.<sup>135</sup>

The bitter hatred that developed between Olympias and Antipater during Alexander's reign and after his death may not have existed in 336, but it is very unlikely that they ever worked together, much less that they plotted Philip's assassination.<sup>136</sup>

Renault is ambivalent about Antipater's involvement in the conspiracy and in *Nature of Alexander* he is not mentioned in connection with the murder or the accession. His position is even less clear in *Fire from Heaven*. His loyalty to the king (rather than to Philip personally) is mentioned and Renault touches on the antagonism between Antipater and Olympias,<sup>137</sup> but in the final scene Antipater appears to be genuinely shocked and surprised to find that Philip has been assassinated.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>134</sup> Ellis *Assassination of Philip* 125; Fears *Pausanias* 129 —130; Griffith *HM II* 688; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 42; Hammond *Philip's Tomb* 345 n. 34; McQueen *Commentary* 193.

<sup>135</sup> McQueen *Commentary* 193. Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 504 believes that Diod. 17.92.6 and 17.93.1 show that Philip's motive was not blasphemy and he is sceptical about the worth of *Suida*, the source of the information about Antipater's religious objections. Griffith *HM II* 683 believes that Philip's statue was an ordinary statue, not the object of a cult, and on this basis he suggests that Philip was not claiming to be a god, but merely to be the most important man alive and the greatest king that Macedonia had ever had. He adds that Philip was unwise to include his statue with those of the gods because the Greeks were certain to think it the most flagrant *hybris*.

<sup>136</sup> Badian *Death of Philip* 249 n. 25; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 42.

<sup>137</sup> Renault *Fire from Heaven* 168, 171, 176, 253, 256, 386.

<sup>138</sup> Renault *Fire from Heaven* 403—405.

## The Three Bodyguards

"Immediately one group of the bodyguards hurried to the body of the king while the rest poured out in pursuit of the assassin; among these last were Leonnatus and Perdiccas and Attalus. Having a good start, Pausanias would have mounted his horse before they could catch him had he not caught his boot in a vine and fallen. As he was scrambling to his feet, Perdiccas and the rest came up and killed him with their javelins." (Diod. 16.94.4)

There is absolutely no suggestion in Diodorus, the only source who names the guardsmen, that they did anything other than react instinctively to a dangerous situation (Diod. 16.94.4).

Hammond adheres to his belief that constitutional procedures based on precedent and the *mores Macedonici* were followed and asserts that the bodyguards were suspected of complicity and were arraigned before the Macedonian Assembly, which found them not guilty after an equitable trial. But, according to Hammond, there were repercussions and although Perdiccas and Leonnatus accompanied Alexander to Asia they "were not promoted until they won that honour by deeds of valour".<sup>139</sup> Attalus, who Hammond identifies with Cleopatra's uncle, remained under suspicion and was later eliminated.<sup>140</sup>

Green implicates the bodyguards in the murder and this view, which is supported by many scholars, is an integral part of his conspiracy theory.<sup>141</sup> In Green's opinion, Perdiccas, Leonnatus and Attalus were approached (probably by Olympias) and promised high rewards and honours if they joined Pausanias in assassinating Philip. Olympias also undertook to have horses ready for the four of them to make their escape. However, the task of the guardsmen was not to assassinate Philip but to silence Pausanias after he had served his purpose. They were chosen because they were trusted friends of Alexander and because they, like Pausanias, were Orestians with Upper Macedonian grievances against the Argead dynasty.<sup>142</sup> Green concedes that the evidence against the guardsmen is circumstantial, but claims that the Orestians' fears that the Upper Macedonian influence at court would be eliminated by the king's new marriage was cleverly exploited by those who planned the murder.<sup>143</sup>

In both her scholarly work and her novel Renault is vigorous in defence of the three guards. She believes that they killed Pausanias in a violent reaction to a violent scene, not because they were

<sup>139</sup> Hammond *End of Philip* 171.

<sup>140</sup> See pages 59—66: "The death of Attalus".

<sup>141</sup> cf. Badian *The Death of Philip* 244—250; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 42.

<sup>142</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 109; Heckel *Marshals* 91. Leonnatus was, in fact, a member of the Lyncestian royal house and was a relative of Philip's mother, Eurydice. Leonnatus and Perdiccas were eventually promoted to high office under Alexander, but these promotions may have been the result of their noble birth and superior ability rather than the reward for co-operating in the assassination of Philip by killing of Pausanias.

<sup>143</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 109.

trying to cover up a plot and that Alexander rewarded them for their quick reactions in a crisis and for avenging the death of his father.<sup>144</sup> Her novel succeeds in capturing something of the chaos, shock and suspicion of the moment.<sup>145</sup>

Not all modern commentators believe that the bodyguards killed Pausanias. The Oxyrhynchus fragment (*P. Oxy.* 1798) gives a completely different account of the death of Pausanias. Apart from the question of its general reliability, there is considerable debate about its restoration. Many scholars accept that the text reads: "...Pausanias he delivered to the Macedonians".<sup>146</sup> This is not unimportant. Hammond points out that if Pausanias had been captured alive he would have been tortured until he had made some sort of confession and, presumably, the whole question of culpability would have been resolved.<sup>147</sup> Hammond vigorously disputes this restoration. When the fragment was first published in 1922, Grenfell and Hunt established the length of the line as between 15 and 18 letters and Hammond claims:

"...there seems to be no place for the name Pausanias, and no one has been able to fit that name into the text by restoration, not surprisingly since the space in line 7 is too small and the earlier lines contain three plurals. Consequently Pausanias is not the object of *απετυπακτικαν*, 'they crucified', nor the antecedent of *[αυτο]ν*."<sup>148</sup>

Hammond offers a possible restoration of *P. Oxy.* 1789 fr. 1 "which at least fits into the known procedure in treason trials" and translates the passage as follows:

"Those with him [vis. Philip] in the theatre and his followers they acquitted and those around the throne. The diviner he [vis. Alexander] delivered to the Macedones to punish, and they crucified him. The body of Philip lie delivered to attendants to bury... [and] by the burial..."<sup>149</sup>

Hammond uses the evidence of the papyrus and the archaeological findings of Andronikos at the Great Tumulus at Aegae in his reconstruction of the sequence of events immediately following the assassination. The persons acquitted were the bodyguards and the dignitaries and friends who had been seated in the front row of the theatre near the throne. The unfortunate seer was crucified for mistakenly declaring the omens favourable for Philip. Hammond

<sup>144</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 63.

<sup>145</sup> Renault *Fire from Heaven* 400, 404.

<sup>146</sup> Bosworth *Philip and Upper Macedonia* 94; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 41 Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 504. Green *Alexander of Macedon* 425 n. 45 suggests that the person handed over could be one of the brothers of Alexander of Lyncestis.

<sup>147</sup> Hammond *Philip's Tomb* 344 n. 35; cf. Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 504.

<sup>148</sup> Hammond *Philip's Tomb* 344.

<sup>149</sup> Hammond *Philip's Tomb* 344—348. cf. Hammond *The Macedonian State* 139 and *Philip of Macedon* 221 n. 3 where Hammond says that he restored *mantin* (the diviner) because the letters were uncertain. Another possible restoration would be *ton de nekron* (the corpse), i.e. the corpse of Pausanias. This corresponds with Justin's statement that the corpse was crucified. The word *apotumpanismos* as used in the Oxyrhynchus fragment has been variously interpreted, but implies a particularly violent and unpleasant death, (e.g. cudgel to death, stone to death,

believes that the bodies of both Philip and Pausanias would have been displayed in front of the Assembly during the trial or trials. After the trial, Philip's body was placed in a tomb, partly constructed in Philip's lifetime, with pieces of the royal insignia, and was guarded by Friends and Pages until the final ceremonies were performed. When the tomb was complete and lavishly decorated (a diadem, a sceptre and a garland, all of gold were found in Philip's tomb), the corpse was cremated, the bones placed in a gold coffer and the double marble doors were sealed.<sup>150</sup> A unique feature of Philip's tomb was the discovery of two skeletons, without any offerings, in the red soil covering Tomb II.<sup>151</sup> Two swords, a spearhead and some trappings of horses taken from the cremation pyre were found on the top of the tomb and on the flat cornice Andronikos found the signs of purification – a small pyre, broken vases, small sherds and bones of birds or small animals.<sup>152</sup> The skeletons Hammond explains were the remains of Heromenes and Arrhabacus, who had been executed, wearing their uniforms and swords as custom allowed. The spear was the weapon of the assassin and the horse trappings were from the horses that had been prepared for the escape (Diod. 16.94.3). Hammond supplies the macabre detail that the remains of the corpse of Pausanias was now taken down from where it had been re-hung on the pediment of the tomb.<sup>153</sup> The assassin's corpse and everything associated with him was cremated at the tumulus in the traditional rites of purification,<sup>154</sup> and Pausanias' three sons were executed there. Hammond concludes:

"The correspondence of the archaeological evidence and the literary testimony is complete. It proves not only that Tomb II was the tomb of Philip, but also that the literary statements were factually correct – the interpretation which the authors have set upon those facts being another matter".<sup>155</sup>

Hammond's theory is so neat that it is tempting to accept it without question, but, regrettably, there are some difficulties. The identification of the occupants of the tombs has been questioned – the age of the bones in Tomb I and Andronikos' dating of pottery has been disputed.<sup>156</sup> Until these and other problems have been resolved, the archaeological evidence must be used with caution.

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chain to a stake and starve to death. Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 504 comments that chained to a stake, "Pausanias had days of hunger in which to talk." (Justin latinizes the stake to a cross.)

<sup>150</sup> Hammond *HM III* 6.

<sup>151</sup> Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 178.

<sup>152</sup> Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 178.

<sup>153</sup> Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 178; Hammond *Philip's Tomb* 349.

<sup>154</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 41; Hammond *HM III* 5–7; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 178–179; Hammond *Philip's Tomb* 348–350; It is fascinating that Lane Fox *Search for Alexander* 74 suggests that archaeological evidence from the burial mound at Vergina may some day be used to prove that Olympias ordered Pausanias' burial beside Philip's tomb and forced the people to offer sacrifices by it.

<sup>155</sup> Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 178.

<sup>156</sup> Adams, WL, "The Royal Macedonian Tombs at Vergina: An Historical Interpretation", *Ancient World* 3 (1980) 67–72; Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 27; Green *Royal Tombs* 131.



The other problems that arise from Hammond's theory are related more to the literary sources than to the archaeological evidence. Firstly, there is the question of the reliability of the Oxyrhynchus papyrus. Hammond states that this is a second century AD copy of an original Hellenistic history and it is difficult to understand how he can place so much faith in such a late, secondary source. Secondly, Hammond is the only modern scholar, at least as far as this writer has been able to establish, to claim that the three sons of Pausanias were executed at the tomb in terms of the *mos Macedonum* governing the execution of male relatives of persons found guilty of treason.<sup>157</sup> This claim implies that Pausanias was old enough to have three sons and Hammond's belief that Pausanias was a mature man has already been discussed. Although he makes the claim about the execution of the three sons in many publications, only two of them *Philip's Tomb in Historical Context* and *The Macedonian State* give a source reference.<sup>158</sup> That source is *Itinerarium Alexandri* 5. Cary comments:

"It (*Itinerarium Alexandri*) was composed in either AD 346 or 359, and contains an account of Alexander's peregrinations based on Julius Valerius and Arrian. It survives in one manuscript, and exercised no influence. Its chief interest is as a *terminus ante quem* for Julius Valerius".<sup>159</sup>

In addition, Cary's editor, Ross, states that Merkelbach has shown that

"Julius Valerius was probably himself the author of the *Itinerarium Alexandri*, which has hitherto been regarded as the work of a writer drawing on Julius Valerius".<sup>160</sup>

Julius Valerius (Consul AD 338)<sup>161</sup> was the man who originally translated *Pseudo-Callisthenes* (*The Alexander Romance*) into Latin and, whether or not he composed the *Itinerarium Alexandri*; it is a late and derivative source that falls into the same category as the *Alexander Romance*. Hammond himself classifies the *Romance* as "the least reliable of sources" and dismisses reconstructions of events after Philip's assassination, which are influenced by *Pseudo-Callisthenes*.<sup>162</sup> It may be that Hammond assumes the *Itinerarium Alexandri* to be reliable because of its association with Arrian, but it is unwise to use evidence which is not corroborated elsewhere and which emanates from so dubious a source without qualification. In his detailed discussions of the archaeological evidence Hammond lists some of the remarkable discoveries made at Vergina: the two skeletons in the soil of the tumulus and the two swords,

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<sup>157</sup> Hammond *Philip's Tomb* 343 and n. 29. Scholars often cite the Macedonian custom whereby all male relatives of traitors were executed (Curt. 8.6.28), but Heckel *Factions and Politics* 299 states: "while these statements may give consolation to Alexander's apologists they are not supported by the evidence". He adds that a few such purges would have virtually annihilated the Macedonian aristocracy.

<sup>158</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 41; Hammond *End of Philip* 171; Hammond *HM III* 5; Hammond *The Macedonian State* 140 n 6; Hammond *Philip's Tomb* 343.

<sup>159</sup> Cary *Medieval Alexander* 25.

<sup>160</sup> Cary *Medieval Alexander* 357.

<sup>161</sup> Stoneman *The Alexander Romance* 118.

<sup>162</sup> Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 177; Hammond *Philip's Tomb* 345 and n. 34.

the spearhead and the trappings of horses, even the bones of birds or small animals on the vaulted top of the tomb.<sup>163</sup> There is no mention of the bones of the three sons, of Pausanias, although he claims they were executed on the tomb.

## The Lyncestian brothers

"...he was also a brother of Heromenes and Arrabaeus, both of whom had been involved in the murder of Philip. On the occasion of his father's murder, Alexander, in spite of the fact that the evidence against his namesake looked black, did not prosecute the charge, because he had been among the first to support him on Philip's death, accompanying him into the palace, armed like his master;" (Arrian 1.25).

Arrian supplies the information that two Lyncestian brothers, the sons of Aeropus were executed for treason and the third, Alexander escaped because he was the first to acclaim Alexander as king. Neither Diodorus nor Plutarch mentions the Lyncestian brothers, although they both state that Alexander punished those who had participated in the plot (Diod. 17.2.1; Plut. *Alex.* 10.4).

Some modern scholars believe that the Lyncestians were genuine contenders for the throne of Macedonia and that they had plotted to seize the throne, for themselves or for Amyntas son of Perdiccas, while others adopt the view that because of their association with Amyntas they were used as scapegoats and were executed to divert suspicion from Alexander, Olympias and Antipater. An important aspect of both these arguments is whether or not the Lyncestians were members of the Argead (or Temenid) royal house of Macedonia, because it was an absolute pre-condition that the kings of Macedonia were members of the Argead dynasty.<sup>164</sup>

Hammond is certain that they were members of the ruling Temenid house, descendants of Perdiccas II, through Aeropus II.<sup>165</sup> He maintains that they had a legitimate claim to the throne and that they, or specifically Alexander the Lyncestian, would have been preferred to the half-witted Arrhidacus or even to Amyntas, son of Perdiccas III. Hammond believes the brothers were involved in a conspiracy and that they were tried in accordance with the laws of the land. The Macedonian Assembly found two of the brothers guilty of treason and the third brother, Alexander, was acquitted.<sup>166</sup> Hammond is one of the modern scholars who argues that the infant Amyntas had been elected king of Macedonia when his father, Perdiccas was killed in

<sup>163</sup> Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 178.

<sup>164</sup> Badian *Death of Philip* 248; Bosworth *Philip and Upper Macedonia* 96; Carney, E, "Alexander the Lyncestian: the Disloyal Opposition", *GRBS* 21 (1980) 23—25 and notes 3—9; Develin *Murder of Philip* 91; Ellis *Assassination of Philip* 125—129; Fears *Pausanias* 132; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 111; Griffith *HM II* 686.

<sup>165</sup> See p. 71—73 for further argument and *stemma*.

<sup>166</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 39; Hammond *End of Philip* 172; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 177.

battle in 359 and that Philip was appointed as his guardian and became king only two years later.<sup>167</sup> In view of this, his claim that Alexander the Lyncestian would be preferred to Amyntas as a candidate for the throne is puzzling. Amyntas does not seem to have been much of a warrior (perhaps Philip preferred to keep him unskilled in military matters so that he did not build up a following) and Alexander the Lyncestian was one of Philip's senior commanders, but as the son of a properly elected king and as a previous king himself, Amyntas would have been the logical person to succeed to the throne and would almost certainly have been the choice of the Macedonian Assembly.<sup>168</sup>

Green disputes the Lyncestian brothers' royal blood and states that they were merely "aristocrats" and that the remote mountain canton of Lyncestis was unlikely to provide a claimant who outranked the surviving male Argeads, Alexander, Arrhidæus and Amyntas. He claims that Alexander lost no time in arraigning the two brothers in order to divert suspicion away from himself and his mother. Their execution had the added advantage of getting rid of two known supporters of Amyntas. Alexander the Lyncestian escaped their fate because he had been tipped off about the plot, by his father-in-law, Antipater, and had been the first to swear allegiance to Alexander.<sup>169</sup>

Renault states that the brothers were princes of Lyncestis and were executed for treason. She offers no explanation, other than that they may have been involved in an attempt to recover their former sovereignty.<sup>170</sup>

## Demosthenes

"Now Demosthenes had obtained secret intelligence of Philip's death, and in order to inspire the Athenians with hope for the future, he appeared before the senate with an air of high spirits and told them he had had a dream which seemed to presage that some great stroke of good fortune was in store for Athens. Not long afterwards the messengers arrived with the report of Philip's death" (Plut. *Dem.*22).

Plutarch, drawing on Aeschines' *Against Ctesiphon*, reports on Demosthenes' (and Athens') celebration of the news of Philip's death. He chides Aeschines for criticising Demosthenes as a "unnatural father" for appearing in public, dressed in a splendid robe and wearing a garland, only six days after the death of his daughter. In Plutarch's opinion Demosthenes was bearing

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<sup>167</sup> Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 23, 30.

<sup>168</sup> See pp. 66—69 for discussion of Amyntas son of Perdiccas.

<sup>169</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 111—112.

<sup>170</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 70.

his loss in a "serene and resolute manner" rather than behaving in an unmanly fashion with an extravagant display of grief (Plut. *Dem.*22). There is, however, no suggestion in either *Demosthenes* or *Alexander* that Demosthenes was involved in Philip's death.

Diodorus reports that the Athenians rejoiced at the news of Philip's death, adding that they communicated secretly with Attalus, who was in Asia Minor (Diod. 17.3.2). He claims that Demosthenes had indeed received large sums of money from the king of Persia, but this was in payment for his efforts to check Alexander when he first invaded Boeotia in 335/4 to demand recognition of his status as *hegemon* of the Hellenic League (Diod. 17.4.7). The other ancient sources do not associate Demosthenes directly with the assassination.

Hammond states that some Athenians, especially Demosthenes, were aware of the plot and he suggests that Demosthenes was fanatical enough in his hatred of Philip and of Macedonia to have been involved in a conspiracy, but he does not press the point.<sup>171</sup>

Green sees Demosthenes' role differently. He believes that although the orator was not directly involved in the conspiracy, he used his advance knowledge of the death of Philip to stir up Athenian patriotism. Having watched every move in the factional struggle at Pella, Demosthenes believed that the best chance of overthrowing Macedonian supremacy lay in an alliance with the aristocratic junta which, Green believes, had backed Philip's marriage to Cleopatra. At the earliest opportunity, and with the consent of the Athenian Assembly, Demosthenes privately wrote to Parmenio and Attalus in Asia Minor urging them to declare war on Alexander and promising Athenian support for their treason. (Plut. *Dem.*23.2).<sup>172</sup>

Renault is not the only modern historian to believe that Demosthenes was deeply involved in the conspiracy to murder Philip, although few others assign him such a prominent role in the plot. Renault bases her theory about Demosthenes on a speech of Aeschines (3.77) in which he accused Demosthenes of having ruined Athens by his hatred of Philip:

"Now this was the man, fellow-citizens, ... who when informed through Charidemus' spies that Philip was dead, before anyone else had been told, made up a vision for himself and lied about the gods, pretending he had the news not from Charidemus but from Zeus and Athene... who he says converse with him in the night and tell him of things to come" (*Aeschines* 3.77).<sup>173</sup>

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<sup>171</sup> Hammond *End of Philip* 172.

<sup>172</sup> Ellis *Assassination of Philip* 108; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 114.

<sup>173</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 64.

Her view is confirmed by John Williams' comment in his *Life of Alexander*, published in 1829:

"The accuracy of his information and the falsehood respecting the alleged sources of his intelligence indisputably prove that he was an accessory before the fact, and that he had previous notification of the very day on which the conspirators were to act".<sup>174</sup>

But, Demosthenes' early knowledge of Philip's death implies only that Athenian spies brought the news to him first, although perhaps no earlier than the evening before it broke in Athens.<sup>175</sup>

The bitterly hostile speeches of the Fourth Century Attic orators are notoriously poor sources because they were primarily intended to manipulate public opinion<sup>176</sup> and Renault herself says:

"This was a time when most Athenian politicians were men on whose unsupported word one would not convict a dog".<sup>177</sup>

She is here referring to a speech by Demosthenes, but there are no grounds for claiming that Aeschines' speeches were more reliable than those of Demosthenes. It is also debatable, in the light of modern scholarship, whether William's comment, dating from almost 200 years ago, can still be considered authoritative.

## Darius

"... my father was killed by assassins whom, as you openly boasted in your letters, you yourselves hired to commit the crime" (Arr. 2.25).<sup>178</sup>

There has always been speculation that Persian gold paid for Philip's murder, but the evidence is very weak and circumstantial, and few modern writers give this assumption serious credence.<sup>179</sup> But some scholars believe that the possibility of Persian financial support for Pausanias has not been taken seriously enough. They argue that the Persians had frequently interfered in Greek affairs, that Pausanias' grievance was probably known in Persian aristocratic circles because the Macedonian court was familiar to them, and that only Persia could offer Pausanias permanent sanctuary after the murder. Also, the timing of the assassination implicates Persia because the invasion was, in fact, postponed.<sup>180</sup>

<sup>174</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 64—65.

<sup>175</sup> Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 505.

<sup>176</sup> Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 11.

<sup>177</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 64.

<sup>178</sup> Darius III began his rule in the summer of 336 and Philip died in the autumn of the same year. Darius hardly had time to get involved in plotting the assassination of Philip.

<sup>179</sup> Brunt *Introduction and Notes* ix; Develin *Murder of Philip* 98; Ellis *Assassination of Philip* 129; Hamilton *Introduction and Notes* 127 n. 38.

<sup>180</sup> Carney *Politics of Polygamy* 184; Carney *Alexander the Lyncestian* 26; Fears *Pausanias* 134.

Arrian (Arr. 2.14) and Quintus Curtius (Curt. 4.1.7—14) quote the text of letters supposedly written by Alexander after 334/333 in reply to Darius' request that Alexander restore his wife, mother and children and enter an alliance with Persia. In these letters Alexander claims that his father was murdered by assassins suborned by the promise of Persian gold. Diodorus (17.39.2)<sup>181</sup> and Plutarch (*Alex.* 29.4) refer to this exchange of letters, but do not quote the actual text of Alexander's reply nor do they suggest Persian involvement in the assassination.

There can be no doubt that Alexander wrote and received numerous letters, both personal and official, during his Persian expedition. Some letters, such as that written to the Greek city Priene were recorded on stone and are still extant and others, like the order for the restoration of exiles to Greek cities, received wide publicity and their content, if not the actual wording, is known. Unfortunately, such certainty applies to only a very small proportion of Alexander's correspondence and it is difficult to establish the authenticity of most of the letters referred to or quoted by the ancient sources.<sup>182</sup> It is equally difficult to discover whether the ancient historians were quoting from documentary evidence provided by the original Alexander-historians, who may have seen copies of actual letters, whether they were using published collections of letters (which probably included forgeries) or whether they themselves believed the letters they were using to be genuine. It was not unusual for historians of antiquity to elaborate on existing letters or to compose fictitious letters as a literary device to solve problems, for rhetorical effect, or merely to entertain the reader.<sup>183</sup> Thus, Quintus Curtius, an independent writer, was not bound by his sources, and the letters (and speeches) that he attributes to Alexander were often his own inventions to substantiate the facts that he wished to present to his readers. Because of the uncertainty about the authenticity of letters, many historians are adamant that the charge that Philip was murdered by assassins paid by Persia is not credible.<sup>184</sup>

Arrian was a serious and critical writer and the letters of Alexander quoted by him are plausible. One of these letters is Alexander's letter to Cleomenes, his governor in Egypt, ordering him to honour Hephaestion. (Arr. 7.24.8) This letter showed that Alexander intended to give wide independence to the ruler of Egypt and it was, therefore, important to Ptolemy

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<sup>181</sup> Hamilton *Introduction and Notes* 125—126; Welles *Introduction and Notes* 228. Diodorus (17.39.2) reports that Alexander suppressed Darius' letter and substituted a forgery "more in accord with his interests". The forged letter was submitted to the Council of Friends and Alexander was able to secure the rejection of the peace terms suggested by Darius in the original letter. Only Diodorus mentions this forgery.

<sup>182</sup> Brunt *Introduction and Notes* xxvii; Pearson *Diary and Letters* 444.

<sup>183</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 444, 445, 449.

<sup>184</sup> Brunt *Introduction and Notes* lx; Heckel, *Introduction and Notes* 274 n. 7; Pearson *Diary and Letters* 448, n. 82.

since it had a direct bearing on his own constitutional position as king of Egypt. If the original text survived, Ptolemy would have preserved it. If it is a fabrication, then Ptolemy was probably its author. The style of Alexander's reply to Darius, as quoted in Arrian, strongly resembles the letter to Cleomenes and it is reasonable to assume that Arrian found it in Ptolemy and was satisfied that it was genuine. But, it is impossible to tell whether Ptolemy was the editor of the correspondence or its author, or to know why Alexander accused Darius of complicity in the assassination.<sup>185</sup>

Hammond's conviction that Ptolemy had possession of the *Ephemerides* and that "the original letter was certainly recorded in the *King's Journal*" means that he believes that the letter in Arrian is genuine in substance, if not a verbatim copy.<sup>186</sup> He is, however, uncharacteristically uncertain about implicating Darius or Persia in a conspiracy, although he points out that Persia was at war with Macedonia and Persian involvement was not improbable. He adds that by 333, when Alexander made his accusation, Darius had twice attempted to have Alexander assassinated by members of his entourage.<sup>187</sup>

Green dismisses the idea that Darius was involved in the assassination.<sup>188</sup> It suits his cynical portrait of Alexander to accept Diodorus' assertion that Alexander withheld Darius' original letter, which offered a ransom for his family and cession of the territories and cities of Asia west of the Halys River. Since this offer encompassed the original aims of the Persian crusade, Parmenio and Alexander's other advisors would probably have opted to accept Darius' terms so the king deviously substituted a forged document which was not only offensively arrogant in tone, but which omitted any territorial concessions. Naturally, Green continues, the Macedonian war council rejected this lesser offer and Alexander was able to proceed with his personal plans to overthrow Darius and the Persian Empire and establish himself as Lord of Asia and the successors to the Achaemenid throne by right of conquest.<sup>189</sup> The accusation that Darius was involved in Philip's murder then fits into Alexander's aim of humiliating Darius so that he had no choice but to prepare for a second and decisive battle, which would bring about his final downfall.<sup>190</sup>

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<sup>185</sup> Pearson *Diary and letters* 449—450.

<sup>186</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 112. (See pages 158—164: Appendix III: *The Ephemerides*.)

<sup>187</sup> Hammond *End of Philip* 172; Hammond *HM III* 9.

<sup>188</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 241.

<sup>189</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 240.

<sup>190</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 240—241; Green *Alexander the Great* 133.

Renault's view is that Darius was the paymaster of Demosthenes, the man who plotted Philip's assassination.<sup>191</sup> She agrees with Hammond that Alexander's letter is authentic and uses it as proof that Darius had tried to procure Philip's death and had openly boasted about it. Renault claims that Alexander's letter was probably preserved in "the royal archives"<sup>192</sup> and she suggests that Alexander may have captured Darius' letters boasting that he had procured Philip's death at Sardis.<sup>193</sup> Like Green, Renault sees the reply as a deliberate challenge on Alexander's part. This is brought out in *The Persian Boy* as the young eunuch describes the preparations for war that followed immediately after the news of Alexander's rejection of the terms for peace reached the Great King at Susa.<sup>194</sup>

## The Evidence

The ancient sources provide very few hard facts about the accession of Alexander and these have been summarised in table form.<sup>195</sup> Arrian's decision to ignore the circumstances surrounding the accession and the loss Quintus Curtius' first two books have resulted in gaps that cannot be filled. What is known is that Philip's marriage to Cleopatra damaged his relationship with Olympias and that Alexander left the court taking his mother with him. A reconciliation was arranged, but it appears to have been less than satisfactory and there is no certainty that it included Olympias. It is possible that Alexander meddled in Philip's plans to form an alliance with Pixodarus and that some of his friends were exiled for supporting him, or they may have been banished at the time of Alexander's withdrawal from court. In 336, Philip and Olympias' daughter was married to Alexander of Epirus, Olympias' brother, and after the wedding a festival was held to honour the gods. As Philip entered the theatre one of his guards, Pausanias of Orestis, rushed forward and stabbed him to death, apparently in revenge for his failure to discipline Attalus, who had earlier instigated a gang rape by his muleteers. After his accession Alexander punished his father's murderers.

<sup>191</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 65.

<sup>192</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 1; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 100.

<sup>193</sup> Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 44; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 48, 175 n. 7; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 100. Sardis, the seat of the Lydian satrapy was surrendered to Alexander shortly after the Battle of the Granicus River (Arr. 1.17.3—4; Diod. 17.21.7; Plut. *Alex.* 17.1). The Persian garrison had not had time to clear out its citadels, which yielded treasure and documents. Plutarch in his *Life of Demosthenes* claims that the Persian king ordered his satraps to offer money to Demosthenes to keep Philip at home by stirring up trouble in Greece (Plut. *Dem.* 29.4), but this is in the context of the breakdown of the Peace of Philocrates, that is before the battle of Chaeronea in 338.

<sup>194</sup> Renault *The Persian Boy* 43—44.

<sup>195</sup> See pages 149—154: Appendix I.



This is the meagre and uncertain information available to Twentieth Century scholars and there is very little assistance available from other sources such as epigraphy, numismatics or archaeology. But modern historians are not deterred by the lack of hard facts and dissect the available information in an apparently never-ending quest to arrive at the truth, or their version of the truth, about the accession of Alexander the Great. Their interpretations of the evidence are fascinatingly diverse and reflect the different attitudes, backgrounds and perspectives of the scholars. Hammond's use of the source material is methodical and didactic and he has rejected stories and incidents that he believes to be sensational or fabricated. Using only those sources that he trusts he has exonerated Alexander and confirmed the personal motive for the assassination of Philip and has found evidence to support his theory that Macedonia was a constitutional monarchy with an equitable judicial system based on customary law. Using the same sources, but accepting all the evidence rejected by Hammond, Green portrays a semi-civilized state tottering on the brink of anarchy, where nobles conspire against each other and against the ruling house, which is itself fatally divided. Moreover, a state in which the Crown Prince is so unsure of his position and so determined to rule that he is prepared to commit parricide to achieve his goal. Renault has rejected the most scandalous and biased stories but she envisages a complicated conspiracy, planned in Athens, funded by Persia and triggered by disaffected Macedonian nobles, including the wife of the king, who used the violated Pausanias' desire for vengeance to achieve their nefarious ends.

## CHAPTER II: CONSPIRATORS AND CONSPIRACIES

It is generally accepted that Alexander embarked on a series of bloody purges in order to secure his throne and it is certain that his reign was marked by a series of conspiracies, all of which involved members of the Macedonian *hetairoi* or other well-born Macedonians. While some commentators believe these plots were genuine attempts by the men closest to the king to overthrow him and seize power, others believe that the conspiracies were, in fact, the result of a campaign, carefully orchestrated by Alexander, to eliminate all opposition to his rule.<sup>1</sup>

As in the case of Alexander's accession, there is a paucity of evidence from the ancient sources for the events that followed immediately on Alexander's accession: although Diodorus is the main source for the fate of Attalus, he only hints at turbulent times. Plutarch mentions only that jealousies and feuds beset Alexander. Curtius' narrative has, of course, been lost and Arrian plunges straight into Alexander's first campaign, ignoring the drama and intrigue that followed the accession. The situation is equally unsatisfactory regarding the conspiracies of Alexander's reign. Arrian is the main surviving source for the story of Alexander the Lyncestian, but his evidence is unsupported and confused. The accounts of all four ancient historians for the Philotas affair have survived, but Diodorus' narratives for the death of Cleitus the Black, the Pages' conspiracy and the fate of Callisthenes have been lost. Modern scholars, faced with the inadequacy of the surviving evidence, have found it necessary to interpret events in terms of their personal understanding of the conditions and practices of ancient society and their conclusions differ accordingly.

The purges and conspiracies discussed in this Chapter are:

- the death of Attalus
- the death of Amyntas son of Perdiccas
- the fate of Alexander the Lyncestian
- The Philotas affair and the death of Parmenio
- The killing of Cleitus the Black
- The fate of Callisthenes and the conspiracy of the Royal Pages.

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<sup>1</sup> Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 27; Carney, E. *Alexander the Great and the Macedonian Aristocracy* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: 1975) 2.

## The Conspiracy and the Death of Attalus (336—335)

"A possible rival for the throne remained in Attalus, who was the brother of Cleopatra, the last wife of Philip, and Alexander determined to kill him." (Diod. 17.2.4).

"Hecataeus, however, following the instructions of the king literally, had him killed by treachery..." (Diod. 17.5.2).

The sources provide very little background information about Attalus, the man who had earned Alexander's hatred by insulting him publicly. His identification by modern scholars is controversial, especially as "Attalus" was a very common name in ancient Macedonia, but some facts are known. He was a younger contemporary and colleague of Parmenio and Antipater and a *syntrophos* of Philip's. Attalus was also the guardian (not brother) of Philip's young wife, Cleopatra, and it is accepted that he was the son-in-law of Parmenio, although the only evidence for this is a speech in Curtius' *Historiae Alexandri* (Curt. 6.9.16). These relationships are important because they impact on the influence that Attalus and Parmenio could exert over Philip and his choice of a successor.<sup>2</sup>

Apart from those killed or executed for plotting Philip's assassination, Attalus was one of the first victims of Alexander's efforts to eliminate all opposition to his rule and all possible pretenders to the throne. His death and the circumstances surrounding it are recorded only by Diodorus, whose narrative is interrupted and unsatisfying. Diodorus refers to Attalus as a potential rival for the throne (Diod.17.2.4), but this statement is misleading. Attalus was not a member of the ruling Argead house of Macedonia and therefore had no realistic chance of being acclaimed king. At best, as the closest male relative of an infant son of Cleopatra and Philip, he might hope to be appointed as the child's regent. There was also a remote possibility that Attalus might be appointed regent for the deficient Arrhidaeus, if both Alexander and Amyntas son of Perdiccas were eliminated and if he was as popular with the Macedonian army as Diodorus indicates, but his chances of ruling in his own right were exceedingly slim.

Diodorus also states that Alexander had reason to fear that Attalus might find support for a *coup d'état* among the Greek states, which were on the brink of revolt. As a result of this threat Alexander sent Hecataeus and a number of soldiers to Asia Minor with orders to bring Attalus back alive or, if this should not be possible, to assassinate him (Diod. 17.2.3-6).<sup>3</sup> At this point

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<sup>2</sup> Badian *Death of Philip* 244, 247; Bosworth *Philip and Upper Macedonia* 102; Carney *Politics of Polygamy* 173; Ellis *Philip II* 304 n. 23; Fears *Pausanias* 133; Griffith *HM II* 676; Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 20; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 40; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 36; Hammond, *Philip of Macedon* 172; Heckel *Factions and Macedonian Politics* 298; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 505; Scott-Kilvert *Forward and Notes* 261 n. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Ellis *Assassination of Philip* 108. Badian *Death of Philip* 250 states that no attempt was made to bring Attalus to trial. This assumption is presumably based on the drunken argument in which Cleitus the Black reproached

in the narrative, Diodorus breaks off the story of Attalus to describe Alexander's campaign to secure the hegemony of the Hellenic League (*to koinon ton Hellenon*<sup>4</sup>) (Diod. 17.3.1—17.4.9). This shift in the narrative from Asia to Greece suggests that Diodorus believed that Attalus' defection and death were connected to the Athenian attempts of the late summer of 336 to raise a revolt in Greece.

The fact that Diodorus' narrative is interrupted makes it extremely difficult to establish the chronology of events and many historians imply that the Attalus sequence took place within a month or two of Alexander's accession, but, this is unlikely.<sup>5</sup> Demosthenes and Attalus may have begun corresponding immediately after Philip's death, but evidence that Attalus was still in command in Asia after the middle of 335 (Polyaenus 5.44.4) indicates that Alexander's counter-moves were completed only late in 335 or early 334. Justin confirms that Alexander's purge of his stepmother's relatives took place when he set out for Asia in 334 (Just. 11.5.1).<sup>6</sup>

Diodorus returns to the situation in Asia and states:

"... immediately after the death of Philip, Attalus actually had set his hand to revolt and had agreed with the Athenians to undertake joint action against Alexander, but later he changed his mind" (Diod. 17.5.1).

He does not elaborate on Attalus' role in the proposed revolt, but states that his change of mind and protestations of loyalty came too late, for Hecataeus obeyed his orders and killed Attalus, ending any threat he may have posed (Diod. 17.5.2). Although it is no longer possible to know exactly what lay behind Alexander's instruction to Hecataeus, it does appear that Attalus was the "worst enemy" that Alexander ever had (Curt. 6.9.17): he had publicly offered Alexander and his mother a mortal insult (Plut. *Alex.* 9.4; Athen. 13.557de), he was a possible choice as regent for any son born to Philip and Cleopatra and he had been in treasonable correspondence with Demosthenes (Diod. 17.5.1). Thus most commentators accept that Alexander had powerful and even legitimate motives for ordering his elimination.

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Alexander with the murder of Attalus (Curt. 8.1.42), but this speech is recorded only by Curtius in a highly rhetorical passage and the accusation is not corroborated elsewhere in the sources. (See pages 90—98: The Death of Cleitus the Black.)

<sup>4</sup> Hammond, *Philip of Macedon* 162. The modern name, "The League of Corinth" is misleading because it equates Philip's organisation of the Greek states with the Greek "Leagues" of the Fifth and Fourth centuries, under which the leading *polis* of the time sought to dominate the others, with the consent of the Great King of Persia. The organisation that Philip created was more advanced, with a sophisticated system of representation and administration and wide-ranging and absolute powers for the *hegemon* in foreign affairs, finance, justice and military matters.

<sup>5</sup> Badian *Death of Philip* 249; Bosworth *Philip and Upper Macedonia* 104; Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 72.

<sup>6</sup> Ellis *Assassination of Philip* 110.

Plutarch does not mention Attalus but confirms that the unrest and disaffection in Greece after Alexander's accession was so serious that Alexander's Macedonian counsellors suggested that he should withdraw from Greece and concentrate on securing Macedonia against its restless barbarian neighbours (Plut. *Alex.* 11.1—2). He also claims that Demosthenes corresponded with the King's generals in Asia stirring them up to make war on Alexander, but his efforts at inciting rebellion collapsed in 335 when Alexander destroyed Thebes (Plut. *Dem.* 23.1—2).<sup>7</sup>

Hammond's interpretation of the death of Attalus differs from the conventional view that Alexander ordered his death. This is understandable in the light of his belief that Attalus was present at the assassination of Philip and was one of the three bodyguards who killed Pausanias, and in view of his perception of Macedonia as an ordered, constitutional state. Very few scholars share Hammond's opinion that Attalus the guardian of Cleopatra and Attalus the guard were the same person. Unfortunately, Attalus was an extremely common name in Ancient Macedonia and it is almost impossible to make a positive identification, but Attalus the bodyguard is usually identified as the son of Andromenes, and is believed to have been one of Alexander's contemporaries.<sup>8</sup> It is widely accepted that Attalus, the guardian of Cleopatra, had been sent to Asia with Parmenio, quite possibly to get him away from the vengeful Pausanias. There is no record that he was recalled for the wedding and he is found in Asia almost immediately afterwards.<sup>9</sup> The chronology of the last year of Philip's reign is extremely uncertain, but it is unlikely that Attalus could have travelled to Asia and back, twice, in the time between his ward's marriage and Philip's death, especially as the first journey was presumably made at the pace of the foot soldiers of the advance force. Nevertheless, Hammond holds fast to his opinion that Attalus the guardian of Cleopatra and Attalus the bodyguard are the same person and that he was present at the assassination of Philip and was one of the three guardsmen who killed Pausanias.<sup>10</sup> He claims that although the Macedonian Assembly acquitted the bodyguards, Attalus remained under suspicion because the inquiry into Philip's assassination had revealed the connection between Attalus and Pausanias and the story

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<sup>7</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 526.13; Scott-Kilvert *Forward and Notes* 208. Darius employed Greek mercenary generals (Memnon of Rhodes) and refugees from Alexander's purges in his army and they were receptive to plans for destroying Alexander, but Darius rejected the approach (Aeschin. *In Ctesiph.* 238).

<sup>8</sup> Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 27; Fears *Pausanias* 115—116 n. 14; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 108; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 39; Hammond *End of Philip* 171; Hammond *HM III* 5 and 9; Hammond *Philip's Tomb* 346 n. 37; Heckel *Factions and Politics* 303; Heckel *The Somatophylax Attalos* 215—216; Welles *Introduction and Notes* 101 n. 2. In *The Nature of Alexander* Renault does not name the third guard to reach Pausanias, and therefore does not join the debate about his identity. In *Fire from Heaven* (p. 400) where she cannot avoid naming him, she calls the third guard "Aratos".

<sup>9</sup> Parmenio was evidently not at the wedding or the festival and it is a reasonable assumption that his second-in-command remained with him in Asia Minor.

<sup>10</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 39; Hammond *End of Philip* 171; Hammond *HM III* 5; Hammond *Philip's Tomb* 347.

of the rape may have been regarded as a cover for their collaboration in a plot.<sup>11</sup> This suggestion appears to be unique to Hammond but, unfortunately, he does not develop the argument, which also seems to conflict with his own opinion that there was enmity between Attalus and Pausanias.<sup>12</sup> Hammond claims that after Attalus returned to Asia further incriminating evidence, including the disloyal correspondence with Demosthenes, emerged and Alexander sent Hecataeus to arrest or kill him:

"The king had the right to arrest suspects. Sometimes a suspect was killed or killed himself in the course of arrest; but that happens even today."<sup>13</sup>

Hammond believes that the corpse of Attalus was tried by the Assembly (presumably in this instance by an Assembly of Macedones convened in Asia from the expeditionary army) and was found guilty of treason.<sup>14</sup> As Hammond rightly claims, Macedonia was a rich prize that was coveted by many enemies and drastic steps had to be taken to secure the throne and the kingdom. But his insistence that Macedonia was governed by precedents and customary law and that Alexander acted within his constitutional powers has the effect of exonerating the king of acting arbitrarily and transferring the blame for questionable executions and killings to the Assembly.<sup>15</sup> The Macedonian Assembly did function as a court of law in cases of high treason, but the justice meted out was unlikely to be equitable. The king was the prosecutor and was well placed to manipulate the assembly to comply with his wishes. In addition, the sources provide clear evidence that Alexander frequently made his own decisions, sometimes in direct opposition to his councillors.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 39; Hammond *End of Philip* 172; Hammond *Philip's Tomb* 347 n. 40.

<sup>12</sup> Hammond *Various Guards* 411.

<sup>13</sup> Hammond *End of Philip* 172.

<sup>14</sup> Hammond *HM III* 10; Hammond *End of Philip* 171.

<sup>15</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 39; Hammond *AM III* 11, 12. Hammond also justifies the killing of Cleopatra, her baby and all her relatives who held high positions on the grounds that this "...was a decision taken by the Assembly of the Macedones sitting as a People's Court and condemning the relatives of a convicted traitor in accordance with their customary law (C.6.11.20; 8.6.28)".

Hammond and other scholars frequently cite the customary law that relatives of convicted traitors could be executed, but it is probable that the custom, if it existed, was used in an extremely random fashion. Amyntas, son of Arrhabaeus the Lyncestian was not executed when his father was implicated in the assassination of Philip and continued to serve in the army, playing a prominent part in the battle of the Granicus River. Cynna, the wife of Amyntas, son of Perdiccas, was available for a diplomatic marriage to Langarus of the Illyrians. Once Attalus had been eliminated, Cleopatra posed no threat to Alexander, nor did her daughter. It would have made more sense for him to use them as pawns in his political plans, as royal women had always been used. This archaic custom, like the Macedonian "constitution" and the Macedonian judicial system and processes, are used by some modern scholars to justify murder and to shift the blame for unjust actions from the king to the Macedonian Assembly or to Macedonian tradition.

<sup>16</sup> Adams, LW, "Macedonian Kingship and the Right of Petition", *Ancient Macedonia IV* (Thessaloniki 1986) 43, 45, 47; Lock, Robert, "The Macedonian Army Assembly in the Time of Alexander the Great", *CPh* 72 (1977) 92, 95, 96, 97, 101, 103.

Green regards Attalus as a brave and popular general whose recent marriage to Parmenio's daughter had enabled the two men to form a powerful faction at court. He alleges that they detested Alexander and his aggressive foreign mother, were determined to keep Alexander off the throne, and were equally determined to eliminate the Upper Macedonian influence at court.<sup>17</sup> The marriage of Attalus' ward to Philip gravely offended Alexander and Olympias and Attalus earned Alexander's undying hatred when he prayed for a legitimate successor to the Macedonian throne.<sup>18</sup> In 336 Philip's strongest supporters, Parmenio, Attalus and Amyntas son of Arrhabaeus, led the advance force to Asia Minor, leaving Philip at Pella where he was vulnerable to an attack by a usurper.<sup>19</sup> Green believes that the accusation by Pausanias that he had been raped, not only by Attalus and his guests, but also by the grooms and muleteers, placed Philip in a very awkward position, because he could not afford to alienate his powerful father-in-law.<sup>20</sup> Although he shared Pausanias' outrage, Philip treated the incident as a joke and kept putting Pausanias off instead of acting against Attalus. This treatment enraged Pausanias, and enabled Olympias and Alexander to recruit him to assassinate the king, instead of Attalus, his real enemy.<sup>21</sup> After Alexander's accession, Demosthenes, the wily Athenian, realized that his best chance of toppling the young king lay with the aristocratic junta. He persuaded the Athenian Assembly to allow him to communicate with Parmenio and Attalus, the generals in Asia, promising them Athenian support if they declared war on Alexander. They accepted the proposal and were joined by Amyntas son of Arrhabaeus, whose father, one of the sons of Aeropos, had been executed on the "same day as Philip's death".<sup>22</sup> Alexander, realizing that his most serious opposition must come from these generals, sent Hecataeus to Asia with orders to assassinate Attalus if he could not capture him.<sup>23</sup> Although Green believes that all three generals were involved in the treasonous negotiations, he suggests that the assassination orders applied only to Attalus because Hecataeus reached private agreements with Parmenio and Amyntas, in which Parmenio switched his allegiance to Alexander and sacrificed his son-in-law in exchange for effective control of the expeditionary army. Amyntas sized up the situation and "decided to forget about the execution of his father" and made his peace with Alexander, who appointed him to various minor commands.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 93.

<sup>18</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 88, 89, 93.

<sup>19</sup> The Amyntas who was sent to Asia with Parmenio and Attalus is identified as the son of Arrhabaeus by Green *Alexander of Macedon* 98 and Heckel *Marshals* 352, and as the son of Antiochus by Hammond *HM III* 10, 11.

<sup>20</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 106.

<sup>21</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 105—107.

<sup>22</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 113—115.

<sup>23</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 115.

<sup>24</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 120. Although Green's comment about Amyntas son of Arrhabaeus appears callous, it does seem that Amyntas somehow survived the treason of his father (and his brother Neoptolemus, who died fighting for the Persians at Hallicarnassus [Arr. 1.20.10]). Bosworth *Historical Commentary* 145 suggests that Diodorus may be correct in stating that Neoptolemus fell fighting on the Macedonian side, (Diod. 17.24.4), adding

It is striking that this section of Green's *Alexander of Macedon* follows the pattern set by Diodorus (16.91.4 — 17.5.2) very closely, with the action moving backwards in time from the assassination to the details of the homosexual love affair and then returning to Alexander's efforts to secure the throne. Green digresses to set out his interpretation of the conspiracy between Olympias, Alexander and Antipater, but both authors report on the correspondence between Demosthenes and Attalus and on Hecataeus' mission before breaking away from events in Asia to deal with Alexander's first incursion into Boeotia. The narratives then move back to Asia, to report on Attalus' attempt to appease Alexander and on his death.

Although the ancient sources suggest that Alexander met with internal opposition after his accession (Diod. 17.2.2; Plut. *Alex.* 11; Plut. *Moralia de fort. Al.* 1.3, 327c), they do not give details and there is no evidence for Green's assumption that Attalus and Parmenio formed a "junta" that was working to eliminate Alexander.<sup>25</sup> Nor do the sources connect Attalus with the sons of Aeropus and Green's suggestion that this junta invited Amyntas son of Arrhabaeus to cooperate in plotting against Alexander ignores the fact that he was from the Upper Macedonian kingdom of Lyncestis and was, therefore, unlikely to be part of a powerful faction at court that was working to end Argead rule in Upper Macedonia.<sup>26</sup>

There is also no direct evidence for Green's claim that Parmenio at first colluded with Attalus, then changed sides and traded his son-in-law's life for a stranglehold over the Macedonian army, nor that he ordered Attalus' murder.<sup>27</sup> Diodorus' statement that Attalus was killed by treachery relates to Hecataeus rather than to Parmenio, and his statement that Parmenio was completely devoted to Alexander does not imply that this loyalty extended to murdering his son-in-law (Diod. 17.5.2).<sup>28</sup> The sources show that Alexander had good reasons to order the arrest or assassination of Attalus but Green overstates the importance of Attalus,<sup>29</sup> and his conflation of the evidence creates the impression that Attalus deliberately instigated the tragic series of events that resulted in Alexander committing parricide.<sup>30</sup>

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that the sources do not suggest that Arrhabaeus, the father of Amyntas was also the son of Aeropus and that this identification should be rejected. cf. Welles *Introduction and Notes* 188 n. 1.

<sup>25</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 88, 93—94.

<sup>26</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 94, 114.

<sup>27</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 120.

<sup>28</sup> *contra* Welles *Introduction and Notes* 130 n. 1.

<sup>29</sup> Ellis *Assassination of Philip* 110. Heckel *Factions and Politics* 297 believes the importance of Attalus "increases with every scholarly argument in ever-widening circles".

<sup>30</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 88, 89, 91, 98, 106—107, 114.



In *The Nature of Alexander* Renault states that Alexander opened his reign in the traditional Macedonian way, by removing those who endangered his succession.<sup>31</sup> Her analysis of the deaths that followed Alexander's accession is very brief and creates the impression that they all occurred simultaneously, whereas the sequence of events took place over a period of at least eighteen months, and Attalus was not assassinated until late 335.<sup>32</sup>

Renault accepts that Attalus mortally insulted Alexander at the wedding feast and that he was Alexander's declared and dangerous enemy. But dealing with Attalus presented special problems because he was campaigning in Asia Minor with "his own troops, many of whom were bound to him by tribal loyalties".<sup>33</sup> This implies that the leading families of Macedonia held hereditary domains from which they levied troops in times of war, but the Macedonian state did not function like medieval Europe. The king exercised direct authority and his Companions appear to have been chosen on grounds of personal merit, not family lineage (although some families served the king for successive generations – Parmenio and his sons for instance) and no Companion had his "own troops".<sup>34</sup> The army that Alexander inherited from Philip was a highly trained, professional, standing army (Diod. 16.3.1) and the sources frequently testify to Alexander sending officers to recruit men in greater Macedonia (Arr. 1.29.4; 3.6.10; Curt. 3.1.24; 5.1.3; Diod. 17.65.1).<sup>35</sup> This does not mean that Attalus did not command troops who were loyal to him for he had earned their loyalty by his conduct and attitude towards the men (Diod. 17.2.4). But, in view of their undoubted loyalty to Philip and the ruling Argead house it is highly unlikely that they would have supported rebellion during the transfer of power or joined with Attalus and the Greek states in an attempt to overthrow Alexander.<sup>36</sup>

That Renault shares Hammond's view that Macedonia was an ordered state is evident from her statement that Alexander wanted Attalus brought for trial according to Macedonian law. She further states that there were no complaints that the "letter of the law" had not been observed and that Hecataeus had been given a "royal warrant" that he could present to Parmenio and Attalus' officers. Expressions such as "observing the letter of the law" and "royal warrants" are

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<sup>31</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 71.

<sup>32</sup> Ellis *Assassination of Philip* 110.

<sup>33</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 71.

<sup>34</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 16—17.

<sup>35</sup> Hammond *Macedonian State* 49.

<sup>36</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 71.

anachronistic and they detract from Renault's understanding of the dangers that forced Alexander to act decisively at that juncture.<sup>37</sup>

In *Fire from Heaven* Renault characterises Attalus as a powerful crony of Philip's, whom Alexander hated for his role in the rape of Pausanias, for deliberately contriving the romance between his ward and Philip and mostly for insulting him at the wedding feast.<sup>38</sup> But, Renault does not include the accession or its repercussions in her novels and Attalus disappears from her narratives. *Fire from Heaven* ends with Alexander escorting Philip's body from the theatre to the citadel of Aegeae, and the first chapters of *The Persian Boy*, up to the battle of Gaugamela, are written from the Persian perspective.

### Amyntas, son of Perdiccas (336—Spring 335)

"When my cousin Amyntas engineered a treacherous plot against me in Macedonia..."  
(Curt. 6.9.17).

The ancient sources are frustratingly reticent about Amyntas. He was the son of Perdiccas III, the king who died in 359 in battle against the Illyrians and he may have been elected king, with Philip as his guardian, until the perilous situation facing Macedonia prompted the army to acclaim Philip (Justin 7.5.10).<sup>39</sup> Amyntas was brought up at Philip's court and was presumably served as one of Royal Pages,<sup>40</sup> but he does not appear to have been trained as a soldier. He enjoyed Philip's favour, held high office and was a member of the Macedonian embassy to Thebes in 338 (Plut. *Dem.* 18.2).<sup>41</sup> In recognition of his importance he was married to Cynna, the daughter of Philip and the Illyrian princess Audata (Polyaenus 8.60). The date of the marriage is unknown, but it probably took place shortly after the mission to Thebes.<sup>42</sup>

Amyntas was not accused in the trials that led to the execution of the two Lyncestian brothers and neither Diodorus nor Arrian mention him as Alexander's rival. But as a senior member of the ruling branch of the royal Argead House he posed a very serious threat to Alexander and Plutarch connects him with the Lyncestian brothers and the unrest that followed Alexander's accession (Plut. *Mor.* 327c), Quintus Curtius asserts that he plotted against Alexander (Curt.

<sup>37</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 71, 72.

<sup>38</sup> Renault *Fire from Heaven* 320—330.

<sup>39</sup> Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 26—27; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 25; Hammond *HM III* 4; Hammond *The Macedonian State* 60 n 38; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 35.

<sup>40</sup> Hammond *HM III* 14.

<sup>41</sup> Hammond *HM III* 4; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 37.

<sup>42</sup> Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 174 n. 1; Hammond *HM III* 4; Tronson *Satyrus the Peripatetic* 119.

6.9.17, 6.10.24), and Justin states that Alexander killed Amyntas (Just.12.6.4).<sup>43</sup> His death is confirmed by Alexander's offer of his wife Cynna as a bride for Langarus of the Agrianians (Arr.1.5.4).

Unusually for Macedonian history the epigraphic evidence for Amyntas is important, but it is controversial and has been interpreted in widely differing ways. The relevant inscriptions, all of which originated in Boeotia, are the *Lebadeia Inscription* (IG vii 3055), which survives only in fragmentary copies and which lists the names of people who consulted the oracle of Trophonios, including "Amyntas son of Perdiccas, king of the Macedones" and an inscription from the Oropian Amphiaraiion (IG vii 4251) which records a grant of proxeny by the Oropian Assembly to "Amyntas son of Perdiccas".<sup>44</sup> These two inscriptions together with two other inscriptions from the Oropian Amphiaraiion, which name Amyntas son of Antiochus of Macedonia and Aristomedes of Pherae have been used to build a strong case implicating Amyntas son of Perdiccas in a plot to overthrow Alexander.<sup>45</sup> It is unlikely to be coincidence that inscriptions relating to three central figures in Macedonian politics should be found in the same area, especially if they date from 336—334 as has been suggested, and the inference is that Amyntas son of Perdiccas was travelling in Boeotia, with Amyntas son of Antiochus and Aristomedes the Pheraeon, seeking support for his cause from outside Macedonia, and that Aristomedes' offering was intended to invoke the god's sanction for the conspiracy.<sup>46</sup> Aristomedes of Pherae and Amyntas son of Antiochus are known to have deserted to Darius after Philip's death (Curt. 3.11.18; Arr. 1.17.9; Diod. 17.48.2; Plut. *Alex.* 20) and in the early stages of Alexander's reign the Boeotian states were the most rebellious, lending credibility to this theory.<sup>47</sup> If it is correct, Alexander and the Macedonian Assembly were justified in bringing charges of treason against Amyntas, son of Perdiccas and sentencing him to death.

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<sup>43</sup> Badian *Death of Philip* 249 and n. 26; Ellis *Amyntas Perdikka* 20; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 45; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 41.

<sup>44</sup> Ellis *Amyntas Perdikka* 17—18; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 22. The copies of the *Lebadeia Inscription* are by Pococke in the early eighteenth and Leake in the early nineteenth centuries.

<sup>45</sup> See Ellis *Amyntas Perdikka* 16—20 for details of this theory. The additional inscriptions are IG vii 4250, which is identical in form to IG vii 4251, and records a grant of proxeny to Amyntas son of Antiochus and an inscription from the base of a votive offering which names Aristomedes of Pherae. IG vii 4150 and 4251 were first published in 1891 and have been dated in IG vii between 366 and 338. The inscription on the votive offering was first published in 1966.

<sup>46</sup> Ellis *Amyntas Perdikka* 17—19.

<sup>47</sup> Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 22—23. Hammond's understanding of the *Lebadeia Inscription* differs from that of Ellis and he does not believe it is connected to Alexander's accession. He uses the inscription in conjunction with Justin 7.5.9—6.2 and argues that when Perdiccas III was killed in 359 the Macedonians elected his son Amyntas, a minor, as king because they believed that the divine favour passed from father to son in the Temenid line. During the period of desperate fear in the winter of 359—358 the infant Amyntas IV was taken to Lebadeia so that he could establish contact with the god through his physical presence there, and the *Lebadeia Inscription* records this visit. Philip, who had been appointed as Amyntas' guardian ruled as regent until the spring of 357 when he "assumed the kingship under compulsion from the people" (Justin 7.5.10).

Hammond uses the literary evidence logically and impartially in dealing with Amyntas. He believes that Amyntas posed a very serious threat to the security of the throne and that his association with the Lyncestian brothers and with Amyntas son of Antiochus and Aristomedes of Pherae, plus the discontent in Macedonia compelled Alexander to take measures against Alexander Lyncestes to secure the throne.<sup>48</sup> Hammond makes the significant point that although Alexander the Lyncestian had the most plausible claim to the throne of any member of the collateral branch of the royal house,<sup>49</sup> he was the first to acclaim Alexander king. But Amyntas, who had a direct and therefore an even stronger claim, failed to acknowledge Alexander's kingship – an indication, perhaps, of his opposition to Alexander's rule.<sup>50</sup>

Green's use of the evidence is far more contentious. He believes that Amyntas was amiable but ambitious. His marriage to Cynna, which Green places immediately after the Pixodarus affair, had ominous implications for Alexander because it showed that Philip no longer endorsed Alexander's claim to the throne.<sup>51</sup> But, there is no real proof that Philip had disinherited Alexander and this particular marriage was so unimportant that the main sources for Alexander did not bother to report it. Marriages between close relatives were by no means uncommon in ancient Macedonia, and were aimed at keeping the throne in the family. Green accepts the epigraphical evidence for the presence of Amyntas in Boeotia<sup>52</sup> and concludes that he became the focus of a conspiracy involving the Greek states headed by Athens and Thebes, the Macedonian generals in Asia, and probably Alexander of Lyncestis, that had the removal of Alexander as its prime aim.<sup>53</sup> Alexander became aware of the plot when rumours of his death were circulated and Thebes revolted, with the moral support of Athens and secret funding from Persia.<sup>54</sup> Alexander entrusted the task of eliminating Amyntas to his mother and was so confident that his instructions would be carried out that, "with a nice touch of macabre humour", he offered Cynna to his friend Langarus in marriage.<sup>55</sup>

Renault approaches Amyntas very cautiously. He was, she believes, a full-blooded Macedonian, unlike Alexander with his unpopular foreign mother<sup>56</sup> and she suggests that he

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<sup>48</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 41; Hammond *HM III* 11.

<sup>49</sup> See *stemma* p. 72.

<sup>50</sup> Hammond *HM III* 4–5.

<sup>51</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 102.

<sup>52</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 113.

<sup>53</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 115, 136.

<sup>54</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 135–138.

<sup>55</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 141. Langarus, king of the Agrianians died before the marriage could take place. Cynna was Alexander's half-sister. Her daughter by Amyntas was born c. 336. After Alexander's death this girl married Alexander's half-witted brother Arrhidæus and became Queen Adea-Eurydice (Diod. 18.39.2–4).

<sup>56</sup> In fact they shared an Illyrian grandmother, Eurydice, and nothing at all is known about Amyntas' mother.

must have regarded Philip as a usurper because in more normal circumstances he himself would have been the reigning monarch.<sup>57</sup> There is, of course, no way of knowing whether Amyntas did regard Philip as a usurper and the fact that he lived at court suggests that he had accepted the situation.

Naturally, Demosthenes and his fellow-conspirators chose Amyntas as the focus of their plot to eliminate both Philip and Alexander, and he was, therefore, the most important victim of the purge that followed Alexander's accession.<sup>58</sup> The sources do not specify whether Amyntas was killed on evidence or on suspicion, and Renault defends Alexander by stating that he did not take revenge on his half-brother Arrhidaeus, a harmless pawn in the Carian marriage intrigue and so deserves the benefit of the doubt.<sup>59</sup> Her use of the word "evidence" implies a trial by the Macedonian Assembly, and this is confirmed in her novel *Funeral Games*.<sup>60</sup>

Amyntas barely features in Renault's novels, but she mentions him in passing in *Funeral Games*, when she explains Adea-Eurydice's royal ancestry, and comments that her father had accepted the will of the Macedonian people, as expressed by the Assembly, and had lived quietly at court, but when Philip's murder was planned he gave in to temptation and agreed to accept the throne. When this was discovered, Alexander put him on trial for treason and the Assembly condemned him to death.<sup>61</sup> Thus, even in her novels, Renault holds fast to her belief in the importance of the Assembly in Macedonian society and she reports on its meetings as an electoral body in *Fire from Heaven*, and as a court of law in *The Persian Boy*.

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<sup>57</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 70.

<sup>58</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 70.

<sup>59</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 70. In the next sentence Renault states that Alexander attached Arrhidaeus to his court and took him on his travels because he was too dangerous a pawn to leave on the Macedonian chessboard.

<sup>60</sup> Renault *Funeral Games* 87.

<sup>61</sup> Renault *Fire from Heaven* 225—226; Renault *Funeral Games* 87.

## The Conspiracy and Death of Alexander the Lyncestian

"While Alexander was still operating round Phaselis it was reported to him that his namesake, son of Aeropus, was conspiring: he was one of the Companions, and at the time commander of the Thessalian cavalry. This Alexander was brother to Heromenes and Arrabaeus, who had a part in the murder of Philip. Though he was implicated at the time, Alexander let him off, since he had been among the first of his friends to rally to him on Philip's death, and had put on his cuirass and accompanied Alexander into the palace." (Arr. 1.25.1—2)

Alexander son of Aeropus, often referred to as Alexander Lyncestes or the Lyncestian, is another problematic character of the Alexander-histories. The evidence for his activities is both confusing and deficient, and it is not surprising that he is the subject of academic debate.

Diodorus does not connect Alexander of Lyncestis with the assassination of Philip II, nor with the circumstances surrounding Alexander's accession, but records that just before the battle of Issus in 333/2, when King Alexander was in Tarsus, he received a letter from Olympias warning him to be on his guard against the Lyncestian. Since other unspecified circumstances supported her charge, he was bound and placed under guard until he "should be brought to trial" (Diod. 17.32.1). Three years later, at the time of the Philotas affair, Alexander Lyncestes was tried on charges of plotting against the king, and lacking words to defend himself, was summarily executed (Diod. 17.82.1).<sup>62</sup>

Plutarch does not refer to Alexander Lyncestes at all in his *Life of Alexander*, but *Moralia: On the Fortune of Alexander*, which extols Alexander's success in overcoming the obstacles that faced him at the beginning of his reign, links the Lyncestian to Amyntas son of Perdiccas and to the unrest in Macedonia (*Mor.*327c).

Curtius' narrative of the arrest of the Lyncestian has not survived, but some information about his alleged treachery and arrest may be gleaned from a summary in Book 7 (Curt. 7.1.5—9). His suggestion that the demand that the Lyncestian be brought to trial was pre-arranged is interesting, but must be treated with caution, since Curtius himself admits it is speculation.

Arrian provides the most detailed and the most controversial account of the arrest of the Lyncestian, which he places at Phaselis in the winter of 334/3, almost a year earlier than Diodorus' date. He confirms Diodorus' information about Alexander Lyncestes' high standing

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<sup>62</sup> Diodorus claims that the Lyncestian's trial was delayed because of his relationship to "Antigonus" (clearly this should read "Antipater). Antipater helped to save Alexander Lyncestes at the time of his brothers' execution, but his influence probably did not extend to the expeditionary army in Asia and other factors may have been responsible for the Lyncestian's survival for three years after his arrest.

and adds that the king had given him an honourable position in his personal entourage and had appointed him General of Thrace and later commander of the Thessalian cavalry (Arr. 1.24.2). When Amyntas son of Antiochus deserted to the Persians he carried "overtures and a letter" from the Lyncestian to Darius. In reply Darius sent one Sisnes on a secret mission to contact Alexander Lyncestes and offer him the throne of Macedonia and 1 000 gold talents if he would assassinate Alexander. Sisnes was captured by Parmenio and when he revealed the real purpose of his mission he was sent to Alexander for further questioning. Alexander's Council of Friends advised that the Lyncestian should be eliminated before he could plot rebellion with the Thessalians (Arr. 1.25.1-6). Since their advice was corroborated by an omen,<sup>63</sup> Alexander sent a secret message to Parmenio, who arrested the Lyncestian and kept him under guard (Arr. 1.25.9-10). Arrian does not deal with the later trial and execution of Alexander son of Aeropus.

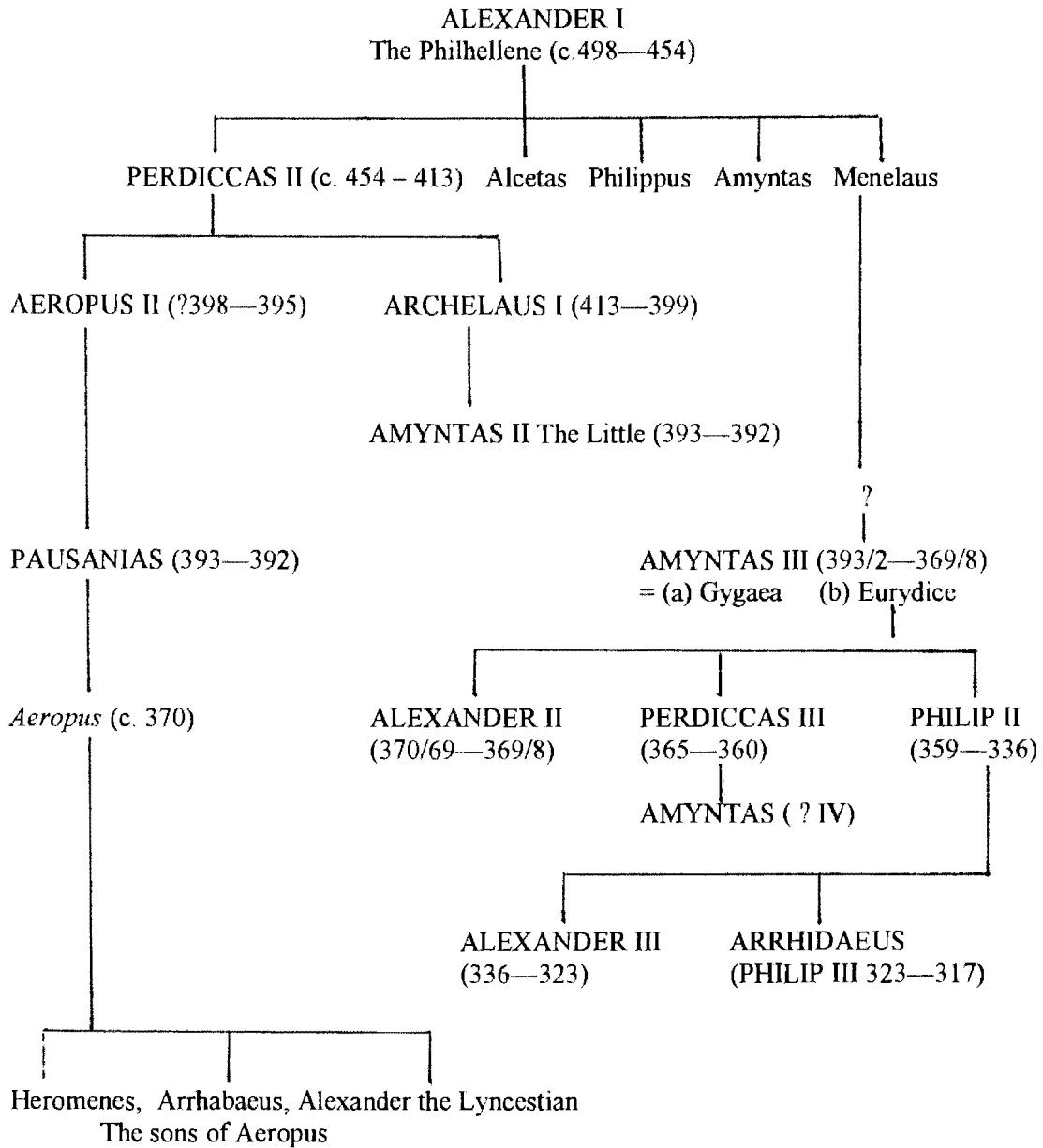
The evidence of the ancient sources raises questions about the status of Alexander son of Aeropus and why he was kept under close arrest for three years, against the advice of Alexander's Council. Most modern authorities believe that he was the leading member of the Bacchiadae, the royal house of Lyncestis, because he is often referred to as "The Lyncestian" and because his brother's name, Arrhabaeus, was common in the Bacchiad family.<sup>64</sup> Hammond argues that the regional epithet "the Lyncestian" and the name Arrhabaeus have drawn attention away from the fact that his father's name was Aeropus, a Temenid name that was held by a brother of the first king of Macedonia, by a sixth century king (Herodotus 8.139) and by Aeropus II, who reigned c. 398 to 395/4 (Diod. 14.36.7).<sup>65</sup> He suggests that Aeropus II may have had a grandson called Aeropus who was the father of Alexander and his brothers, Heromenes and Arrhabaeus. (The following stemma shows the possible relationship between Alexander son of Philip and Alexander son of Aeropus and his brothers. Capital letters indicate those who became kings.)

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<sup>63</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 88, 116, 123, 134, 191.

<sup>64</sup> Badian *Death of Philip* 248; Carney *Alexander the Lyncestian* 23; Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 71 and no. 53; Ellis *Assassination of Philip* 125; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 70; Bosworth *Philip and Upper Macedonia* 96

<sup>65</sup> Hammond, NGL, "Some Passages in Arrian concerning Alexander" *CQ* 30(1980) 458, 459; McQueen *Commentary* 191.

Stemma<sup>66</sup>

This Temenid pedigree is as likely as one linking the brothers to the Lyncestian royal house, perhaps more so, because the name Arrhabaeus was not exclusive to the Bacchidae but was found in the royal houses of Pelagonia, Orestis and Amphipolis and even in noble families of Macedonia.<sup>67</sup> Alexander of Lyncestes was certainly considered by many of his contemporaries to be a plausible candidate for the Macedonian throne. Hammond points out that the Theban

<sup>66</sup> Ellis *Philip II* 39; Hammond *Some Passages in Arrian* 459.

<sup>67</sup> Hammond *Some Passages in Arrian* 458, 459.



leaders encouraged an uprising by declaring that Alexander had been killed in Thrace and, when the Macedonian army arrived in Boeotia, the Theban leaders announced that it had come from Macedonia (not Thrace) and was led by Antipater. On being told that Alexander himself was leading the troops, they announced that this must be another Alexander, the son of Aeropos (Arr. 1.7.6). They must have believed that Alexander the Lyncestian was not only superior in rank to Antipater, but that he was the regent, or even the king.<sup>68</sup> In the same way, when Darius offered the Lyncestian the throne of Macedonia he must have assumed that at least some Macedonians would accept him as king and it was well-known that the Macedonians would not accept a king who had not been "born to rule" (Curt. 10.7.15).<sup>69</sup> This reasoning strongly supports the claim that the sons of Aeropos were Temenidae, descended through the male line, and that Alexander the Lyncestian had as good a claim to the throne as Amyntas son of Perdiccas.<sup>70</sup>

According to Hammond it was a Macedonian custom to give top positions at court and in the military to members of the royal house who were loyal to the king and he argues that Alexander Lyncestes' status as an acceptable heir, his declaration of loyalty, which indicated that he did not intend to challenge for the throne, and Alexander's strong affection for him<sup>71</sup> are the reasons why he was given important commands in spite of his brothers' treason.<sup>72</sup> Similarly Alexander rejected his Council's advice to get rid of the Lyncestian because their friendship made him reluctant to accept evidence against him and act on it, and because he was the only surviving member of the Temenid house who was capable of ruling Macedonia in the event of Alexander's own death.<sup>73</sup>

Hammond fully accepts Arrian's expanded version of the arrest of Alexander of Lyncestis, but he does not discuss Arrian's failure to mention the trial and execution of the Lyncestian although other scholars consider this omission to be a sign of Arrian's disapproval of what amounted to a lynching, or the deliberate suppression by Ptolemy and Aristobulus of evidence that they believed discredited Alexander.<sup>74</sup> Instead, Hammond cautions modern historians

<sup>68</sup> Hammond *Some Passages in Arrian* 457.

<sup>69</sup> Hammond *Some Passages in Arrian* 458; McQueen *Commentary* 191. Throughout Macedonian history down to ca. 314/12 BC, with the single exception of Ptolemy Alorites, the Temenid house had provided every king, regent or pretender to the throne.

<sup>70</sup> Hammond *Some Passages in Arrian* 458—460.

<sup>71</sup> Fears *Pausanias* 130 and n. 62 points out that the use of *philos* instead of the technical term *hetairoi* indicates that Alexander and the Lyncestian were personal friends (Arr. 1.25).

<sup>72</sup> Fears *Pausanias* 130 and n. 62; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 87, 88; Hammond *Some Passages in Arrian* 458.

<sup>73</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 87, 88; Hammond *Some Passages in Arrian* 458.

<sup>74</sup> Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 103; Brunt *Introduction and Notes* 520; Carney *Alexander the Lyncestian* 32 n. 30; Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 126.

against applying the standards of liberal democracies and passing judgement against practices such as detention without trial, the use of torture and summary execution and stresses that even in conditions of war on foreign soil Macedonian constitutional procedures were followed and the assembly, not the king delivered verdicts and enforced sentences.<sup>75</sup> He rejects Curtius' suggestion that Atarrhias' demand that the Lyncestian be brought to trial was pre-arranged, stating that Curtius, who had the example of the Roman emperors in mind, "could hardly have thought otherwise".<sup>76</sup> Hammond points out that Alexander was the prosecutor and had no need to make such an arrangement since he could initiate the trial himself, but he suggests that Atarrhias acted because Alexander was loath to bring the Lyncestian to trial.<sup>77</sup>

Green considers that the sons of Aeropus were merely "aristocrats" who supported Amyntas son of Perdiccas in his bid for the throne.<sup>78</sup> His interpretation of the later appointments of Alexander the Lyncestian is rather unusual and fits in with his theme that there was intense rivalry and antipathy between Alexander and Parmenio. He claims that Parmenio treated the Thracian and Thessalian cavalry as "more or less his own Companion Cavalry" and sees the Lyncestian's appointment as Commander of the Thracian Cavalry (c.335) as the first step in King Alexander's campaign to neutralise the general's stranglehold over the expeditionary army. Alexander's next step in undermining Parmenio's authority was to make Calas, Parmenio's adherent, satrap of Hellespontine Phrygia and appoint his own friend, Philip son of Menelaus, to the vacant command of the Thessalian cavalry.<sup>79</sup> Green's narrative is unnecessarily confusing. Arrian's evidence is clear:

"... Alexander had even held him (Alexander Lyncestes) in honour near his person, had sent him to command in Thrace, and when Calas, commander of the Thessalian cavalry, had been transferred to a satrapy, appointed him commander of the Thessalian horse."  
(Arr. 1.25.2).

Philip son of Menelaus is attested as *hipparch* of the allied cavalry from the Peloponnessos at the battle of the Granicus River and re-appears at Gaugamela as Commander of the Thessalian cavalry (Arr. 3.11.10; Diod. 17.57.4; Curt. 4.13.29), but he was probably promoted to this position in the winter of 334/3, after the arrest of Alexander Lyncestes.<sup>80</sup>

Green suggests that Parmenio wanted to be rid of Alexander Lyncestes so that he could make his own appointment. The captive Sisnes (whether his story of the 1 000 gold talents was

<sup>75</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 184—185.

<sup>76</sup> Hammond *HM III* 11 n. 2.

<sup>77</sup> Hammond *HM III* 11 n. 2.

<sup>78</sup> Bosworth *Philip and Upper Macedonia* 96; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 111.

<sup>79</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 204.

<sup>80</sup> Heckel *Marshals* 358.

genuine or not) was easily coerced into incriminating Alexander Lyncestes and Parmenio's fabricated story was believable in view of the Lyncestian's Upper Macedonian background and the known treachery of his brothers. Since Alexander in far off Phaselis could not investigate the case thoroughly, Parmenio hoped to mislead him into ordering the Lyncestian's immediate execution<sup>81</sup> and this was, in fact, what Alexander's Council of Friends advised (Arr. 1.25.5). Green adds to the confusion by including the evidence from Diodorus that Olympias, in recent letters, had warned Alexander against the Lyncestian. But, Diodorus places this warning much later, when Alexander was at Tarsus in 333/2, and his version, based on Cleitarchus, is less reliable than Arrian, who was following Aristobulus.<sup>82</sup>

Neither the sources nor Green mention Alexander of Lyncestis again until his trial and execution at the time of the Philotas conspiracy. Green's comment that Alexander was never averse to killing two birds with one stone does little to clarify his understanding of why the king chose to eliminate the Lyncestian at this particular time. He accepts Curtius' statement that the trial was prearranged, but his suggestion that the guards "had their orders" implies that Alexander wilfully contrived a way of eliminating the Lyncestian, rather than the more logical idea that he was brought to trial because Alexander believed he had been chosen as the candidate for the crown by the participants in the Philotas conspiracy.<sup>83</sup>

Renault sees the sons of Aeropus as princes of the once-independent kingdom of Lyncestis, but she accepts that Alexander was a possible successor to the Macedonian throne, and that his survival after the execution of his brothers posed a constant danger to the king. In spite of the threat, Alexander did not charge his namesake with treason when Darius' message was intercepted, because he could not prove that the Lyncestian had solicited the Persian offer of the throne.<sup>84</sup> A letter from Alexander Lyncestes soliciting Darius' assistance was necessary to convict him of treason, but when Sisnes was captured this proof was not available to the king. Curtius refers to such a letter (Curt. 8.8.6), but this could only have been discovered when Susa was taken, or at the earliest at Damascus where Darius' baggage was captured. Alexander of Lyncestis was, therefore, spared immediate execution because there was no conclusive evidence against him.<sup>85</sup> By stating that Alexander required proof before he could act against

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<sup>81</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 204.

<sup>82</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 203; cf. Hammond *Alexander the Great* 88.

<sup>83</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 345.

<sup>84</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 90.

<sup>85</sup> Atkinson *Commentary* 183—184; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 86. Green *Alexander of Macedon* 141 assumes that Darius' offer came in response to a suggestion presented by Amyntas son of Antiochus on behalf of the Lyncestian.

the Lyncestian, Renault and others imply that Alexander was bound by some sort of legal or constitutional restraint, but there is abundant evidence that Alexander acted decisively and without proof when he believed that his life or throne was threatened.<sup>86</sup>

There are probably many reasons why the ancient sources provide so little evidence for the grim struggle that secured the throne for Alexander. Among the most obvious explanations are the controversial and sensational circumstances of his accession which deflected interest away from the purge; the fact that the executions and deaths were entirely predictable and of little interest to authors firmly focused on Alexander himself and eager to move on to his great deeds; and the influence of pro-Alexander propaganda designed to reflect the king in the best possible light. But, whatever the reasons, the result is that modern authors have very little solid information on which to base their analyses. What is available is often misleading, confusing or contradictory and it is not surprising that modern interpretations of the deaths that followed Alexander's accession differ and are often highly speculative.

### **The Philotas Affair and the death of Parmenio (October 330)**

One of the most far reaching scandals of Alexander's reign was the execution of Philotas at Phadra, the capital of Drangiana and the assassination of his father Parmenio, Philip's senior general, in Ecbatana.<sup>87</sup>

Philotas, Parmenio's eldest son, first appears in Plutarch's narrative in connection with the Pixodarus affair, when Philip took him as a witness when he confronted Alexander over intriguing to marry Pixodarus' daughter (Plut. *Alex.* 10). His role in the episode is unclear but some scholars believe that he informed Philip of the secret negotiations<sup>88</sup> and that this betrayal and the fact that he did not share the exile of Alexander's friends caused hostility between Alexander and the House of Parmenio.<sup>89</sup> Philotas was older than Alexander and was probably a *syntrophos* of Amyntas son of Perdiccas, rather than a friend of Alexander, a factor that eventually counted against him, as did his relationship with Attalus. It is not known whether he

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<sup>86</sup> For example, the deaths of Amyntas son of Perdiccas, Attalus, Cleopatra and her infant. For a different interpretation of the death of Alexander Lyncestes see Badian *Death of Parmenio* 325.

<sup>87</sup> Philip is reputed to have praised Parmenio as being the only general he had found in his lifetime, whereas the Athenians elected ten generals every year (Plut. *Mor.* 177c).

<sup>88</sup> For example: Green *Alexander of Macedon* 100; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 26.

<sup>89</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 100; Heckel *Marshals* 25. The historicity of the Pixodarus affair cannot be proved and this supposed antagonism should be treated with caution.

held any military office before Alexander's accession, but he is attested as a *hipparch* in the Triballian campaign of the spring of 335 (Arr. 1.2.5). His exceptional ability as a cavalry commander was rewarded with rapid promotion and by the start of the Asian expedition he commanded the entire Companion Cavalry (Diod. 17.17.4).

The Vulgate sources connect the Philotas affair to the alienation of Alexander from the majority of the Macedonians because of his orientalization, that is his use of Persian dress and ceremonial, his growing insistence on recognition of his divine descent and his policy of reconciliation and co-operation with conquered Asian nations. (Diod 17.77.4—78.1; Curt. 6.2.1—4; Plut. *Alex.* 45.1—3, 47.3—4).<sup>90</sup> Reconciliation was a political necessity because Alexander needed the expertise of the Iranian nobility to administer his vast and growing domains and Asian manpower to maintain his army at a level adequate for his plans for future conquest,<sup>91</sup> but the Macedonians bitterly resented the appointment of former enemies to senior administrative positions and the inclusion of Asians in the military at all levels. Their resentment combined with their abhorrence of Alexander's perceived descent into the vices of oriental autocracy and his growing arrogance created a climate of suspicion and discontent in which sedition flourished (Diod 17.77.4—5; Curt. 6.6.1—9; Plut. *Alex.* 47.3).<sup>92</sup>

The Philotas plot was, and remains, a *cause célèbre* that invites speculation. The lack of accurate reporting by the ancient writers is exacerbated by their preoccupation with the fact that Philotas, the only remaining son of the great general Parmenio and the most brilliant of all the younger officers, was the principal accused.<sup>93</sup> In addition, later anti-Parmenio propaganda, created to counteract the backlash after Parmenio's death, is insidious and difficult to identify.<sup>94</sup>

The salient points of the incident are that a Macedonian named Dimnus invited his lover Nicomachus to join a plot against the king. The terrified Nichomachus immediately told his brother, Cebalinus, who approached Philotas, who was known to visit Alexander regularly,

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<sup>90</sup> Badian, E, "Alexander the Great and the Loneliness of Power", *AUMLA* (1962) 196; Bosworth, AB, *A Historical Commentary on Arrian's History of Alexander* (Oxford 1980) 120; Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 99—101; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 85.

<sup>91</sup> Badian *Loneliness of Power* 196; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 179; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 272.

<sup>92</sup> Badian *Loneliness of Power* 195—6; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 297; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 272—3; Wilken *Alexander the Great* 163. Immediately after the battle of Gaugamela, Alexander had himself proclaimed King of Asia (Plut. *Alex.* 34.1) and the use of Persian court dress, ceremonial and rituals became inevitable as he sought to win the support of the Persian nobility, who set their ruler in seclusion, hedged about by ancient ceremonial, in deference to his position as the chosen representative of Ahura-Mazda.

<sup>93</sup> Wilken *Alexander the Great* 163.

<sup>94</sup> Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 119; Heckel W, "The Conspiracy against Philotas", *Phoenix* 31 (1977) 12.

informed him of the plot and asked him to act as an intermediary. When nothing happened, Cebalinus repeated his request that Philotas inform the king. On the third day, Cebalinus decided to try a more direct approach and gained access to Alexander through Metron, the page in charge of the armoury. Alexander took the story seriously and ordered the arrest of Dimnus, who killed himself (or was killed resisting arrest). The rest of the conspirators, who had been named by Nicomachus, were seized and after consulting his inner circle of friends, Alexander decided to put them and Philotas on trial before the Macedonian Assembly. Great care was taken in the planning and implementation of Philotas' arrest to prevent the news from reaching Parmenio at Ecbatana. In the Assembly Alexander accused Philotas of treason and Philotas defended himself. The trial was adjourned while Philotas was tortured and a confession obtained. When the trial resumed Philotas and the others were condemned and stoned (or stabbed) to death, in accordance with Macedonian custom (Diod. 17.79.1—80.4; Curt. 6.7.1—7.2.38; Plut. *Alex.* 48—49; Arr. 3.26—27).

Immediately after the trial (or even during it) Alexander dispatched messengers to Ecbatana, on racing camels so that they could outrun the news of the death of Philotas, with orders to his generals in Media to assassinate Parmenio. When they learned of the death of their general, Parmenio's troops came close to mutiny but were pacified by a letter Alexander had written to them. The incident evoked horror and disgust, forcing Alexander to take drastic measures to suppress criticism (Arr. 3.26; Diod. 17.79.1—80.4; Curt. 6.7.1—7.2.38; Plut. *Alex.* 49).

After discussing Alexander's adoption of Persian dress and customs, Diodorus notes that although Alexander tried to be discreet, his orientalization was offensive and the Macedonians had to be placated with gifts. (Diod. 17.77.5—78.1). Diodorus outlines the incident, but offers no insights into why Philotas failed to warn Alexander of the plot, nor does he attempt to analyse the proceedings of the Macedonian Assembly.<sup>95</sup>

Diodorus' narrative begins:

"At this time Alexander stumbled into a base action which was quite foreign to his goodness of nature." (Diod. 17.79.1)

Initially, he appears to be voicing his disapproval of Alexander's action against Philotas (and Alexander the Lyncestian) but closer study shows that it is only Alexander's treatment of Parmenio that he censures, for he is clear that Philotas, the other conspirators and Alexander Lyncestes were condemned by the Macedonian Assembly, not by Alexander, and that Philotas

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<sup>95</sup> Wilken *Alexander the Great* 164.

confessed to the plot (albeit under torture) and was punished (Diod. 17.80.1—2).<sup>96</sup> The "base action" is the murder of Parmenio, and Diodorus (17.80.3) reveals his scepticism about the findings of the assembly—Parmenio's murder, not the punishment of the conspirators, upset the Macedonians and caused them to criticise the king (Diod. 17.80.3—4).<sup>97</sup> Diodorus touches very briefly on the repercussions of the murder, noting only that those Macedonians who were hostile to Alexander, or expressed regret at Parmenio's death were placed in a new unit, the "Disciplinary Company" (Diod. 17.80.4).<sup>98</sup>

Quintus Curtius' narrative is very much longer and far more detailed than any of the others, but he records similar basic facts. There is no doubt that he added theatrical touches, speeches, drama and pathos for the benefit of his Roman readers<sup>99</sup> but, in spite of embellishments, his account of the Philotas affair is extremely valuable, especially for the sequence of events and for evidence of the actual procedure followed at the trial. Curtius' source, Cleitarchus, drew on eyewitness reports and this may explain the detail and also the lack of cohesion that sometimes mars his narrative.<sup>100</sup> The speeches attributed to Alexander, Philotas and others are Curtius' own compositions and are consistent with his use of speeches to illustrate the changes and deterioration in Alexander's character and the reaction of the Macedonians to these changes.<sup>101</sup>

Curtius' Roman background had schooled him in court politics and intrigue and he provides insights into the inner workings of the Philotas affair and the personal rivalries among Alexander's close friends that are lacking in Diodorus and Arrian.<sup>102</sup> It is Curtius who illuminates the hostility between Craterus and Philotas and who names the confidants who urged Alexander to prosecute Philotas (Curt. 6.8.4; 6.8.17). Curtius details the careful planning that preceded the arrest so that Philotas was not forewarned and the news of his arrest did not reach his father. (Curt. 6.8.15—21; 6.11.1—8). He evokes the stress and near-hysteria that characterised the trial as well as the violence, deceit and betrayal (6.9.13—15). Curtius most clearly illustrates the fear that gripped the Macedonians, showing that Philotas had been maltreated, even before the trial, (Curt. 6.9.25) and describing the torture that caused such panic that Alexander was forced to suspend the law relating to the punishment of relatives of

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<sup>96</sup> Rubinsohn, Z, "The Philotas Affair – a Reconsideration", *Ancient Macedonia II* (1977) 411.

<sup>97</sup> Rubinsohn *The Philotas Affair* 411.

<sup>98</sup> Welles *Introduction and Notes* 351 n 3. The name, "The Company of the Undisciplined", is not used by any other source.

<sup>99</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 314—315 n 72 gives examples of the Roman influence.

<sup>100</sup> Bosworth *Historical Commentary* 359; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 181.

<sup>101</sup> Heckel *Introduction and Notes* 11.

<sup>102</sup> Heckel *Conspiracy against Philotas* 17.

traitors (6.11.20).<sup>103</sup> And, Curtius highlights Alexander's cynical use of the trial and acquittal of the sons of Andromenes to ease the tension, win the approval of the Macedonians and show that close associates of Philotas need not fear for their lives (Curt. 7.2.7—10).<sup>104</sup> But there are anomalies. Only Curtius mentions the plot of Hegelochus, which Philotas revealed under torture (6.11.21-30). This plot is probably the product of later, anti-Parmenio propaganda, but it is intriguing that Plutarch and Arrian confirm that a plot had existed in Egypt (Plut. *Alex.* 48.1—49.2; Plut. *de fort. Al.* 2.7; Arr. 3.26.1). And only Curtius implicates Calis, an unknown Macedonian, and the *somatophylax* Demetrius in the conspiracy (Curt. 6.11.35—37).<sup>105</sup>

The most important difference between Curtius' version of the assassination of Parmenio and those of Diodorus, Plutarch and Arrian, all of whom see it as plain murder, is that he indicates that charges were, in fact, brought against Parmenio and that they were set out in a letter written by Alexander to Cleander, Sitalces and Menidas, the generals in Media (Curt. 7.2.3).<sup>106</sup> He is, however, sceptical of the worth of these charges (Curt. 7.2.34) and indicates that they may have been fabricated (Curt. 6.9.13—14) or that Philotas may have admitted Parmenio's involvement under torture (Curt. 6.11.21 f).

Plutarch is commonly believed to have used Cleitarchus as his main source for the Philotas affair, but there are indications that he used additional information, possibly from Callisthenes or Chares.<sup>107</sup> Plutarch alone indicates that Philotas was the victim of the plot (Plut. *Alex.* 49.1). Some scholars believe that the plot refers to the fact that Philotas' Greek mistress, Antigone, was recruited by Craterus to spy on her lover, but others argue that it aimed at ensuring the downfall of Philotas.<sup>108</sup> Plutarch strengthens the view that Philotas was the victim by stating

<sup>103</sup> Curtius twice expresses doubts about the value of a confession obtained under duress (Curt. 6.11.21; 7.2.34).

<sup>104</sup> Gunderson, LL, "The Tymphaeans in Curtius' *Historiae Alexandri*", *Ancient Macedonia IV* (Thessaloniki: 1986) 235. Curtius claims that many prominent Macedonians fled for fear of the law that relatives of traitors could be executed, but Bosworth *Historical Commentary* 364 points out that the mass flight involved friends, not relatives, and that these men were afraid that Philotas might implicate them while under duress.

<sup>105</sup> Heckel *Marshals* 7, 262. Demetrius' name was not included in Nicomachus' list and Curtius is not clear about whether he was executed with the other conspirators (Curt. 6.11.35—38). Most modern commentators prefer the Arrian/Ptolemy version that Demetrius was executed a few weeks later in Ariaspia (Arr. 3.27).

<sup>106</sup> Bosworth *Historical Commentary* 363.

Curtius claims that Alexander forced Polydamas, Parmenio's best friend, to deliver the death warrant by holding his young brothers hostage. This story is dismissed by many modern historians, including Badian, E. "Harpalus" *JHS* 81 (1961) 22 n 39 and Atkinson *Commentary* 439; who call Polydamas' betrayal of his friend "despicable". Gunderson, LL, "Quintus Curtius Rufus: On his Historical Methods in the *Historiae Alexandri*", *Philip II, Alexander the Great and the Macedonian Heritage* (Adams, WL and Borza, EN, Eds.) (Lanham: 1982) 180—182. believes that Curtius constructed the whole Polydamas scene with "gleeful irony" to make Alexander's conduct look as bad as possible and that the incident illustrates how Curtius uses the characterisation of leading figures to pass judgement on Alexander's ruthless dealings with the Macedonian nobility. He further believes that Curtius' embellishment of historical events diverts attention away from Alexander's achievements.

<sup>107</sup> Rubinson *The Philotas Affair* 413.

<sup>108</sup> Badian, E, "The Death of Parmenio", *TAPhA* 91 (1960) 324—338; Rubinson *The Philotas Affair* 409—420; Heckel *Conspiracy against Philotas* 9—21.



that Alexander consulted those companions who hated Philotas and was persuaded by their accusations to arrest him, and by the allegation that the conspirator Limnus<sup>109</sup> was used by more important men, that is Philotas and Parmenio (Plut. *Alex.* 49.5-6).

Plutarch's narrative does not mention a trial, the army or the Macedonian Assembly and it is possible that he was more interested in the sensational episode of the torture of Philotas.<sup>110</sup> Concerning Parmenio's death, Plutarch states that Alexander sent messengers to Media and had him killed. There is no suggestion that this was a decision of the Macedonian Assembly, or that anyone other than Alexander was involved (Plut. *Alex.* 49.7).<sup>111</sup>

A rather curious remark in Plutarch's narrative links Antipater directly to the disturbances that accompanied the executions (Plut. *Alex.* 49.8). He was vulnerable to Alexander's hostility because of his relationship with Alexander the Lyncestian and because he had little sympathy for the oriental pretensions and divine aspirations of the King, but Plutarch's chronology is incorrect for the order that the Aetolians give up Oeniadae was part of the Exiles Decree, which was proclaimed at Susa in 324 after Alexander's return from India.<sup>112</sup>

The brevity and lack of detail in Arrian's narrative can be attributed to his immediate sources, Ptolemy and Aristobulus (Arr. 3.26.1). Ptolemy was promoted to *somatophylax* as a direct result of the vacancy created by the execution of Demetrius, one of the victims of the purge, and had good reason to play down the incident to protect his own interests. In addition, it is known that Ptolemy attempted to enhance Alexander's public image by portraying him as correct and just, or by omitting unfavourable incidents.<sup>113</sup> Thus, Arrian does not mention the torture of Philotas and this must be because Ptolemy suppressed it. The *Anabasis Alexandri* gives no details of the background of the plot, or information about how it was discovered, but by claiming that Alexander had known about the conspiracy since Egypt, Arrian portrays Philotas as a traitor of long standing (Arr. 3.26.1).<sup>114</sup> He does not specify what charges were laid against Philotas, but makes it clear that Philotas' failure to pass on information was

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<sup>109</sup> Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 135. Plutarch refers to the conspirator as Linus whereas the other sources call him Dimnus. An error in copying Δ to Α would be the most reasonable explanation.

<sup>110</sup> Bosworth *Historical Commentary* 361 cf. Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 124. If Plutarch really believed the plot was against Philotas then no trial was possible because there was no proof of conspiracy, only spiteful accusations and slander.

<sup>111</sup> Plutarch acknowledges Parmenio's distinction and, oddly and uniquely, mentions that he had encouraged Alexander to cross into Asia (Plut. *Alex.* 49.7). Diodorus reports that Parmenio and Antipater suggested Alexander should produce an heir before embarking on his ambitious and dangerous campaign (Diod. 17.16.2).

<sup>112</sup> Badian *Harpalus* 37 n. 159; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 139.

<sup>113</sup> Bosworth *Historical Commentary* 359; Errington *Bias in Ptolemy's History* 233, 237, 238; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 134; Heckel *Conspiracy against Philotas* 19; Rubinsoln *The Philotas Affair* 411.

<sup>114</sup> Bosworth *Historical Commentary* 359.

regarded as incontrovertible proof of guilt (Arr. 3.26.2). Arrian's description of the procedure at the trial is very abbreviated, but it corresponds with Curtius, except that Arrian places Philotas' defence before the testimony of the witnesses (Arr. 3.26.3; Curt. 6.9.7).<sup>115</sup>

Arrian's remark: "... Alexander did not believe that when Philotas was conspiring, Parmenio had no share in his own son's design"(Arr. 3.26.4) is unconvincing and he comes closer to the truth of Parmenio's assassination when he states that Parmenio had become a danger: he controlled the Treasury and Alexander's lines of communication and was extremely popular with the troops he commanded. Alexander could not allow this powerful man to survive to avenge the death of his son.<sup>116</sup>

Once again Hammond rejects the Vulgate tradition and trusts Arrian's narrative, which he believes is an abbreviation of what Ptolemy had written as an eyewitness or from firsthand information.<sup>117</sup> He is satisfied that Philotas and some other officers were properly tried by the Macedonian Assembly and that they were justly found guilty of conspiring against the king and condemned to death because Philotas' failure to report the plot was regarded as proof positive of his complicity.<sup>118</sup> Hammond warns modern scholars against retrying the cases or speculating that Alexander initiated the accusations and duped the assembly into condemning innocent men.<sup>119</sup> By contrast the overwhelming majority of modern scholars view the Arrian/Ptolemy tradition as apologetic and believe that while Philotas was guilty of gross negligence there is no evidence that he had actually taken part in a conspiracy. Most of these authors are sceptical about the fairness of the trial and most accept at least some evidence in the Vulgate tradition.<sup>120</sup> But, Hammond's conviction that "the facts in Arrian are not to be doubted"<sup>121</sup> and his subjective use of the Vulgate tradition, especially Curtius, influence his interpretation. He allows that Curtius is valuable for the procedure used at the trial, but rejects most of his narrative because of its Roman colouring.<sup>122</sup> He disregards information that is

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<sup>115</sup> According to Arrian, Philotas and the other Macedonians named by Nicomachus were executed by javelins, but Curtius says they were stoned (Arr. 3.26; Curt. 6.11.38). Since the Pages were stoned, it is likely that this was the traditional Macedonian manner of execution (Diod. 17.80.1; Arr. 4.14; Plut. *Alex.* 55.7).

<sup>116</sup> Badian *Death of Parmenio* 329; Heckel *Conspiracy against Philotas* 21; Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 102.

<sup>117</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 181—182.

<sup>118</sup> Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 102; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 180—181, 182, 184—185; Errington, RM, "The Nature of the Macedonian State under the Monarchy", *Chiron* 8 (1978) 89, 90 n. 48.

<sup>119</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 182—183.

<sup>120</sup> Badian *Loneliness of Power* 196; Badian *Death of Parmenio* 331; Bosworth *Historical Commentary* 361; Errington *Bias in Ptolemy's History* 233—242; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 134; Wilken *Alexander the Great* 164. Errington *Nature of the Macedonian State* 87 states: "Arrian based on Ptolemy is virtually useless" and Heckel *Conspiracy against Philotas* 19 agrees: "the account of the actual *Philotasprozess* is abbreviated to the point of uselessness.

<sup>121</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 181.

<sup>122</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 181 and 314 n 72.

pertinent, such as the elaborate precautions taken before Philotas was arrested (Curt. 6.8.18) and ignores useful background information, the antagonism that existed between Philotas and Alexander's friends, the speeches of Amyntas and Bolon at the trial and the Hegelochus plot, for example, but accepts some details, for instance, the plot was revealed two days before it was due to be implemented and Dimnus' corpse was displayed to the assembly (Curt. 6.7.6; 6.8.26; 6.9.28; 6.11.1—7; 6.11.21—30). Hammond's explanation of the sequence of events and legal procedure at the trial may be used to illustrate the problem. He specifically refers to Curtius' statement that the Macedonian army investigated capital cases and "...the power of the kings had no validity unless their influence beforehand had had some weight" (Curt. 6.8.25),<sup>123</sup> and uses this statement to substantiate his conclusion:

"It is clear that the king behaved correctly in accordance with Macedonian procedure; that the verdicts were passed by the assembly, not by the king; and that those killed were guilty by Macedonian standards of justice" (Curt.6.8.25).<sup>124</sup>

But, Curtius also testifies to the careful planning involved in the arrests (Curt. 6.8.1-22) and it seems reasonable to assume that this care extended to the actual trial and that Alexander had indeed used his influence before and continued to use it during the trial. According to Curtius the trial began with the king's order for a general assembly. Immediately thereafter, while the men were still confused about what was happening, they were confronted by the unsettling sight of Dimnus' corpse (Curt.6.8.23—24). The king then named the accused, starting with Parmenio and demanded the death penalty (6.9.4—24). Even the restrained Arrian concedes that the king "made his accusations in no uncertain terms" (Arr. 3.26.2). Only after the king had completed his denunciation was Philotas brought into the assembly. Curtius' statement that the men saw him "not merely on trial but condemned – even in fetters" is revealing. Alexander had made it clear that anything less than the death penalty would be unacceptable (Curt. 6.9.24—25). There are other indications of undue influence or that certain men had been assigned specific roles: some attacked Philotas, Amyntas, the king's general is unlikely to have spoken spontaneously, and the king's bodyguards orchestrated demands for retribution "crying out that they should tear the traitor to pieces" (Curt. 6.11.8). The fact that the assembly quickly acquired the characteristics of a mob is demonstrated by the stabbing of Alexander the Lyncestian, a killing that came closer to lynch-law than to a judicial execution. Hammond is correct in pointing out the danger of applying the standards of western democracy to fourth century Macedonia, but the evidence of Curtius does not inspire confidence in the equitable

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<sup>123</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 182 – Hammond's translation. The Penguin translation by Yardley reads: "... the position of the king counted for nothing unless his influence had been substantial prior to the trial".

<sup>124</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 182. Wilken *Alexander the Great* 164 is less sure that the sentence was just, but agrees that the military court functioned correctly and that the Assembly was convinced of the guilt of those who were executed: "If the condemnation of Philotas was judicial murder, it is not the fault of Alexander, but of the assembly of the Macedonian army".

procedure Hammond champions, but rather points to a process that was rudimentary, informal and highly emotional.<sup>125</sup>

Hammond adopts an apologetic stance on the death of Parmenio and accepts Diodorus' and Justin's evidence that Parmenio was condemned to death by the assembly after being tried *in absentia* (Diod. 17.80.1; Just. 12.5.3) and states:

"There are no a priori grounds for rejecting this, because neither author is apt to exculpate Alexander".<sup>126</sup>

He is normally suspicious of Diodorus, especially if he judges that Cleitarchus is his source, and almost invariably rejects Justin with contempt, but in this instance they substantiate his belief in Macedonian justice. Hammond excuses Arrian's scepticism about Parmenio's guilt by stating that Arrian was less than specific because his narrative was so concise and because he and his sources were more interested in Alexander's attitude of mind (Arr. 3.26.4). Whether or not Parmenio was guilty, and Hammond concedes that there is insufficient evidence for modern scholars to be sure of the actual findings of the court, he agrees with Arrian that Parmenio could not be allowed to survive his son's execution. His popularity and influence with the army constituted a great danger to Alexander, who therefore acted swiftly, sending secret orders to the generals in Media who killed Parmenio "mercifully unaware" of his son's death.<sup>127</sup>

Green's interpretation of the Philotas affair is based on his conviction that there was deep-seated animosity and distrust between Alexander and the house of Parmenio, dating back to Philotas' role as informer in the Pixodarus affair and the support that Parmenio and his family gave to the Attalus/Cleopatra faction at the time of Alexander's accession. He believes that Parmenio's price for switching allegiance from Attalus to Alexander was control of the expeditionary army, with family members and friends holding almost every key command.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>125</sup> Bosworth *Historical Commentary* 361; Errington *Nature of the Macedonian State* 87—91. Errington's interpretation of the trial procedure is the antithesis of Hammond's, and he argues that the assembly was not a court of law and that the Macedonians did no more than listen to the accusations and carry out the execution, which had been agreed on by a small circle of Alexander's friends. He translates Curt. 6.8.25 to read: "and the king's *potestas* was useless unless his *auctoritas* had previously been made efficacious". Thus he believes the Assembly was not about constitutional rights or about guilt or innocence, but was a trial of strength in which Alexander tested his personal political position against the popular Parmenio family. If Alexander's *auctoritas* were strong enough, he would be able to ensure Philotas' execution at the hands of the Macedonians, but if the Assembly indicated a different opinion, Alexander would have to find an indirect way of eliminating Philotas and his father. The elaborate precautions taken by Alexander suggest that he did everything in his power to ensure that his *auctoritas* was accepted before he exercised his *potestas*.

<sup>126</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 183.

<sup>127</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 183.

<sup>128</sup> Parmenio's sons Nicanor and Philotas commanded the Guards Brigade and the Companion Cavalry, his son-in-law Coenus a phalanx battalion and his brother, Asander, the light cavalry. He himself commanded the allied cavalry and was second-in-command of the entire expeditionary force. (Diod. 17.17.4).

This stranglehold resulted in a continuous and deadly struggle between Alexander and his general for effective control of the army.<sup>129</sup>

Green suggests that Alexander was forced to accept Parmenio's advice at the battle of the Granicus River and never forgave this loss of face and humiliation.<sup>130</sup> His resentment intensified the conflict between the two men and was the reason why Callisthenes consistently recorded those occasions where Parmenio gave Alexander bad or cautious advice, which he was able to reject with disdain and to good effect.<sup>131</sup> Many scholars believe these incidents were inserted after Parmenio's death as pro-Alexander propaganda and *apologia* to counteract the adverse reaction to his assassination. In addition, Callisthenes, writing to impress the Greeks, was required to show Alexander in the strongest possible heroic colouring, a brilliant military commander, courageous and loyal, while Parmenio was contrasted as unimaginative, small-minded and cautious.<sup>132</sup> But Green claims that this "smear campaign" and Alexander's efforts to neutralise Parmenio were so successful that after the Battle of Gaugamela Callisthenes could accuse the old marshal of cowardice and incompetence:

"Parmenio was sluggish and inefficient, either because old age was now impairing somewhat his courage, or because he was made envious and resentful by the arrogance and pomp, to use the words of Callisthenes, of Alexander's power" (Plut. *Alex.* 33.6).<sup>133</sup>

This misrepresentation conforms with Green's theory of antagonism between Alexander and Philotas and he uses it without explanation or reference to the fact that it is a *topos*, not historical reporting.

He accepts that after Alexander's victory at Gaugamela reconciliation with the Persian nobility became a political necessity. Opposition to Alexander's orientalization and plans for expansion grew rapidly and Parmenio became the unofficial leader of the disapproving "old guard" and even advised Alexander to turn his attention back to Macedonia, rather than to the East (Curt.

<sup>129</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 120, 159—160; Fears *Pausanias* 132; Heckel *Conspiracy against Philotas* 11.

<sup>130</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 175.

<sup>131</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 175. The following are some incidents Green uses to show Alexander rejecting Parmenio's advice: 152 Alexander disregards advice to marry; 173—175 Parmenio's advice at Granicus River; 189—190 Parmenio advises a naval battle at Miletus; 203 Alexander appoints his supporters to senior cavalry commands and undermines Parmenio's authority; 220 Parmenio warns Alexander that Philip the physician has been bribed to poison him; 287 Alexander rejects Parmenio's advice to accept Darius' terms with the famous put-down, "so should I, if I were Parmenio"; 289 Parmenio suggests a night attack at Gaugamela and Alexander replies that he will not steal victory; 319 Alexander burns the palace at Persepolis against Parmenio's advice that only a fool would destroy his own property

Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 119, points out that the sources give eighteen incidents in which Parmenio advises Alexander and only once is Parmenio depicted in a more favourable light than Alexander, that is when Arrian rejects Alexander's reasons for burning Persepolis and sides with Parmenio (Arr. 3.8.11).

<sup>132</sup> Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 411; Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 119; Fears *Pausanias* 132; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 89; Heckel *Conspiracy against Philotas* 11.

<sup>133</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 176, 203—4.

4.11.11).<sup>134</sup> At Ecbatana in 330, as soon as Alexander learned that the crisis in Greece was resolved, he "fatally loosened Parmenio's hold on the military structure". He dismissed the troops of the Hellenic League and the Thessalian cavalry in order to continue his campaign with a smaller, professional army that would give him, its paymaster, total allegiance. Parmenio, his career as chief of staff now over, was left behind as an area military commander.<sup>135</sup> Not all scholars believe that Parmenio's power was greatly reduced when he was left at Ecbatana, for as the virtual regent of the western Persian Empire he continued to wield immense power, including control over Alexander's lines of communication and the vast treasure stored at Ecbatana. Had Alexander really distrusted him and intended to eliminate him, he would surely not have given him this strategically vital task. He could have kept him close at hand and allowed the hardships of the eastern campaign to rid him of the old general. The task entrusted to Parmenio appears to be a reward for good service rather than a demotion.

Green believes that the rift between Alexander and the Macedonians deepened as the conquest of the eastern satrapies proceeded and Alexander increasingly saw Parmenio as the symbol of conservatism and leader of opposition to his policies of reconciliation and orientalization and his divine aspirations.<sup>136</sup> Since Parmenio was very popular, a direct move against him might provoke a mutiny, and Green suggests that Alexander's solution was to strike at the marshal through his son Philotas, a tactless and ostentatiously extravagant man who was resented for his arrogance and malice. To this end he suborned Philotas' mistress so that he could build up a dossier of treasonable remarks and then stage a show trial (Plut. *Alex.* 48.1—49.8). This approach yielded no evidence of treachery, but the death of his brother Nicanor left Philotas dangerously isolated and fate, or "some discreet manipulation behind the scenes", provided Alexander with an excuse to act against him.<sup>137</sup>

Green's account of the events at Phadra and the trial of Philotas is virtually a reproduction of the narrative in Curtius' *Historiae Alexandri* (Curt. 6.6.1—6.11.39).<sup>138</sup> He does omit the long, rhetorical speeches that Curtius composed, but adds his own comments, droll, cutting or ironic, but aimed at demonstrating Alexander's ruthless determination to get rid of Parmenio and his son. He suggests, for example, that Alexander had "been steadily advancing" on Philotas and saw Philotas' failure to report the plot as "the perfect instrument with which to encompass

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<sup>134</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 240, 297, 299, 303, 304, 335.

<sup>135</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 323

<sup>136</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 339.

<sup>137</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 340.

<sup>138</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 340—345.

Philotas' downfall".<sup>139</sup> Having successfully engineered the destruction of Philotas, one thing remained for Alexander to do: Parmenio must be eliminated. Again Green duplicates Curtius including even the macabre detail that Parmenio's head was hacked off and sent to Alexander (Curt. 7.11—34).<sup>140</sup>

Green accepts that the sources give clear evidence that a conspiracy of some sort existed and that Alexander convinced himself, if no one else, of Philotas' guilt<sup>141</sup> but he finds the question of whether Alexander actually regarded Parmenio as a traitor problematic. He claims that the conspiracy, if it existed, had as its single aim the overthrow of Alexander so that his unpopular policies could be ended and the Macedonians could return home. Green suggests that the main conspirators would have been the conservative Macedonian veterans with Parmenio as their natural leader.<sup>142</sup> He was in a powerful position to act against Alexander, who simply could not allow him to continue in that position after the execution of his last surviving son. Green looks at both sides of the problem. On the one hand Alexander was aware of the dissatisfaction and may have decided to act first, spurred on by his dislike of Parmenio and Philotas. On the other hand the conspiracy may have been more structured than vague general disaffection – Philotas' refusal to report the plot is inexplicable, the extract from Parmenio's letter is ambiguous and the sudden execution of Alexander the Lyncestian makes more sense if there was a possibility that he was being used as a potential successor to the throne. Green suggests a verdict of "not proven" because the truth in this matter cannot be recovered. He concludes:

"... we should not waste too much liberal sympathy on Parmenio, whose own record of judicial murder will not bear over-close examination. Those who live by the sword shall perish by the sword; this tough and wily old Macedonian opportunist merely lasted longer than most".<sup>143</sup>

Green does not join the many scholars who condemn Alexander for murdering Parmenio and his sentiments are disconcerting and unexpected from an author who has painstakingly built up a scenario of distrust, rivalry and hatred, and has consistently emphasised Alexander's determination to eliminate Parmenio and his family.<sup>144</sup>

In her scholarly work Renault continues to adopt a pro-Alexander stance. Like Hammond, she prefers Arrian to the Vulgate tradition, but she accepts Plutarch's story of Antigone and sees

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<sup>139</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 339, 342.

<sup>140</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 346—347.

<sup>141</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 349.

<sup>142</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 349.

<sup>143</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 349.

<sup>144</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 93, 100, 108, 115, 120, 159, 160, 175—176, 201, 204, 240, 279, 297, 303, 322—324, 334, 339—348.

the boasts that she reported as an early indication of Philotas' disloyalty. Renault has no doubt that there was a plot and she is adamant that Philotas was involved and that his known conduct was treasonable – he admitted that he had been told about the plot and he failed to report it. She rejects the defence that he did not believe the story:

"Some historians, in periods more peaceful than ours, have even accepted this; it can now be agreed that honest men, warned of a bomb upon a plane, do not take chances".<sup>145</sup>

She deals with the trial very briefly, commenting that Arrian, who cites both his sources, states that Philotas had a public trial before the Macedonian Assembly, that he spoke in his own defence and that the assembly judged him deserving of death.<sup>146</sup> She dismisses Curtius' version of Philotas' speech as "florid artifice". Her explanation of Ptolemy's omission of the torture of Philotas is that it was left out in deference to Philotas' high rank and war record and not because Ptolemy wished to cover up Alexander's or his own part in this incident.<sup>147</sup>

Renault believes that because Philotas was a traitor and because the plot was genuine Alexander faced a terrible decision: the fate of Parmenio. The archaic duty of blood-feud devolved on the general and there was a strong possibility he might change sides when he learned of his son's death. The ancient laws of Macedonia recognised the danger of blood-feud and provided that the male relatives of traitors should share their fate.<sup>148</sup> But, Alexander still faced two problems: Parmenio's guilt had not been established and he was surrounded by troops loyal to him personally. Alexander, faced by "power's terrible necessities" kept a last option open and his agents, who sped to Ecbatana on racing dromedaries, took with them two letters for Parmenio. He was given Alexander's letter first, as etiquette demanded, and after he had read it he was he handed the letter he believed to be from his son. Only when he showed pleasure at its contents was he struck down (Curt. 7.2.27). Had he shown any other emotion – puzzlement, irritation, disapproval, anger or fear – his life may have been spared.<sup>149</sup> Renault believes that Philotas and possibly one of the conspirators had incriminated Parmenio in the plot (Curt. 6.11.22; 6.11.29 6.11.33), but rather than accept such unsupported testimony, Alexander included a sign, extracted under torture, that would convey to Parmenio alone the news that the plot was succeeding. It was this secret sign caused Parmenio's pleasure and simultaneously sealed his fate, because it revealed his complicity in the plot. Arrian comments that Alexander, unlike other kings, repented when he knew he was wrong and on the basis of

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<sup>145</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 142.

<sup>146</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 142.

<sup>147</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 142.

<sup>148</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 142–143. Renault cites the example of the Persian princes Oxathres and Bistanes, who joined Alexander to avenge the deaths their brother (Darius) and father (Artaxerxes Ochus) respectively.

<sup>149</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 144.



this statement, Renault considers that the fact that Alexander never repented Parmenio's death is proof that he was convinced of Parmenio's guilt and that he had made a deliberate decision to have him executed.<sup>150</sup> Renault's remarks have been called "perspicacious",<sup>151</sup> but Parmenio's guilt or innocence cannot be proved and theories such as blood-feud, customary laws, and proof of guilt, frequently provide a convenient means of exonerating Alexander from the charge of murder.

The Philotas affair provides Renault with excellent material for dramatisation and she starts building a character for Philotas in *Fire from Heaven*, the first novel of the Alexander-trilogy. He is Alexander's contemporary and a pupil at Aristotle's school at Mieza, but not quite accepted by the inner circle of Alexander's friends.<sup>152</sup> In deference to Parmenio, Alexander does not allow Philotas to accompany him into exile in Illyria, along with Hephaestion, Ptolemy, Harpalus and Nearchus.<sup>153</sup> On their return, Philotas, acting on his father's instructions informs Philip about Alexander's plan to marry Pixodarus' daughter, but tries to cover up his act of betrayal.<sup>154</sup>

The story continues in *The Persian Boy*, which is written in the first person. The narrator, the eunuch Bagoas, is an unobtrusive, unnoticed attendant who listens, observes and comments on people, relationships and situations from the Persian perspective. The Bagoas/Renault version of the Philotas plot is based on Curtius with a few plausible additions and the eunuch fills in background information where necessary – Parmenio has been left to guard the western roads, "a trust on which all our lives depend";<sup>155</sup> Philotas is arrogant, scornful of Alexander behind his back and hostile to Persians and their customs.<sup>156</sup> When the plot is discovered, Alexander is devastated at betrayal by a friend, but discloses that Philotas had changed after Siwah (Diod. 17.51.1; Curtius 4.7.15; Plut. *Alex.* 27.5).<sup>157</sup> In *The Persian Boy* the connection between Alexander's orientalization and the plot against his life is much clearer than it is in Renault's scholarly work, but the novel does not condemn Philotas as emphatically and Bagoas reveals that the evidence against him was mainly concerned with "pride and insolence and his speaking against the King".<sup>158</sup> Hephaestion, beloved friend of Alexander, has never liked nor

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<sup>150</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 144.

<sup>151</sup> Rubinsohn *Philotas Affair* 418.

<sup>152</sup> Renault *Fire from Heaven* 171.

<sup>153</sup> Renault *Fire from Heaven* 330, 351.

<sup>154</sup> Renault *Fire from Heaven* 350.

<sup>155</sup> Renault *The Persian Boy* 159, 165.

<sup>156</sup> Renault *The Persian Boy* 161, 167.

<sup>157</sup> Renault *The Persian Boy* 165.

trusted Philotas and appears almost eager to torture him, although Alexander tells him that he has already made up his mind about Parmenio and has sent orders to Ecbatana for his assassination.<sup>159</sup> The novel also differs from the scholarly work in that there is no mention of the secret sign extracted from Philotas. Rather, in a prophetic statement, Alexander accepts responsibility for the assassination, even though Parmenio's guilt cannot be proved.<sup>160</sup>

### **The Death of Cleitus the Black (Autumn 328)**

As far as can be determined, Cleitus the Black was not involved in any plot against Alexander, but his death is significant for the insights it provides into the relationship between Alexander and his Macedonian soldiers, especially regarding the unpopular policies of fusion and Persianization. In addition, the interpretations of this incident by the three modern historians are particularly revealing of the individual author's understanding of the relevant issues, such as *proskynesis*, Persianization and deification.

Unfortunately, the extant sources for the death of Cleitus frequently contradict each other making it difficult to understand this incident fully. Cleitus died at the end of a long banquet characterised by very heavy drinking and the eyewitness accounts, on which the extant sources depend, are affected by the inevitable consequences of inebriation – confusion, disbelief, and the inability to recall the sequence of events or the exact words of the role players. The incident was suppressed by Ptolemy, presumably because he regarded it as shameful and inappropriate to the heroic image of Alexander. Aristobulus' version is contaminated by his attempts to exculpate Alexander and lay blame elsewhere.<sup>161</sup> In addition Greek philosophers and historians, who had no love for Alexander and who were far removed from what they believed to be a trivial, domestic matter or a personal brawl, inflated the conflict, casting Alexander as the tyrant and Cleitus as the champion of freedom.<sup>162</sup> In the light of these problems, it is not surprising that modern interpretations of the incident range from denying that it had any historical significance to suggesting that it convinced Alexander of the correctness of his policy of racial fusion and the necessity to continue with it.<sup>163</sup>

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<sup>159</sup> Renault *The Persian Boy* 169.

<sup>160</sup> Renault *The Persian Boy* 171.

<sup>161</sup> Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 115; Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 139, 140, 150; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 309.

<sup>162</sup> Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 310.

<sup>163</sup> Wilken *Alexander the Great* 168.

The immediate background is important. Firstly, the elimination of Philotas and Parmenio had suppressed Macedonian opposition to Alexander's policy of reconciliation, but many Macedonians, especially Philip's veterans, continued to resent Alexander's attempts to combine his position as king of Macedonia with the demands of his role as the Great King. They found it difficult to accept Orientals, whom they had defeated in battle and traditionally regarded as inferior, as their equal and they were confused by the mystique surrounding Alexander's claim to be the son of Ammon for many believed this involved the rejection of Philip.<sup>164</sup> Secondly, the fateful banquet took place after a year of onerous and inglorious struggle with Sogdian rebels led by Spitamenes, who was still at large. One brush with the rebels had ended in disaster when a Macedonian column was almost annihilated, the first recorded defeat of the Macedonians since 353.<sup>165</sup> The details of this humiliating encounter are hopelessly confused, but Aristobulus (as reported by Arrian) hints that Alexander was ultimately to blame because he failed to establish a clear chain of command and sent an undermanned column into battle.<sup>166</sup>

Cleitus son of Dropidas was the brother of Lanike, Alexander's nurse, and is occasionally referred to as "The Black" to distinguish him from another Cleitus. He served with distinction under Philip (Curt. 8.1.20) and at the time of Alexander's accession he commanded the Royal Squadron. Cleitus saved Alexander's life at the battle of the Granicus River and, although he is not named in accounts of the battle of Issus, he presumably commanded the Royal Squadron there, as he did at Gaugamela (Arrian 1.15.6—8; Plut. *Alex.* 16.11; Diod. 17.20.7).<sup>167</sup> He was detained at Susa by an illness and later joined Alexander in Parthia, bringing with him the Macedonians who had escorted the treasure from Persepolis to Ecbatana (Arr. 3.19.8). In 330, following the death of Philotas, Alexander divided the command of the Companion Cavalry, sharing it between Hephaestion and Cleitus. Hephaestion, Alexander's closest friend, was deeply involved in the destruction of Philotas and Parmenio, and the appointment of Cleitus is often believed to have been a gesture of conciliation to appease Philip's veterans and reassure the unsettled army.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 104—105.

<sup>165</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 192.

<sup>166</sup> Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 155.

<sup>167</sup> Arrian and Plutarch relate that Cleitus severed the arm of Spithridates just as he was about to kill the king, but Diodorus records that the attacker was Rhoesaces, the brother of Spithridates. (cf. Bosworth *Historical Commentary* 123; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 40; Heckel *Marshals* 35).

<sup>168</sup> Badian *Death of Parmenio* 336; Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 145; Heckel *Marshals* 34. Little is known about Cleitus' family but his sister Lanike had three sons who accompanied Alexander, two of whom fell at Miletus (Curt. 8.2.8; Arr. 4.9.4). A third son, Proteas, survived the campaign and remained Alexander's *syntrophos* and drinking companion until the king's death (Plut. *Mor.* 760c).

The loss of Diodorus' text for the end of the year 328/7 and the beginning of 327/6, which included the fateful quarrel with Cleitus, is regrettable, but his reference to the sin against Dionysus in the *Contents of the Seventeenth Book* may be an indication that he, like Arrian, was following Aristobulus. It is also reasonable to assume it indicates that Diodorus endorsed the view that the tragedy was a result of the wrath of the god, rather than a deliberate act by Alexander.

It is generally accepted that Plutarch's source for the death of Cleitus was Chares but this cannot be proved. Very little is known about Chares' book *Stories about Alexander*, which seems to be concerned with details and court ceremonial rather than the history of Alexander's campaign.<sup>169</sup> Plutarch places the Cleitus episode between two other examples of Alexander's lack of self-control – the trial of Philotas and the fall of Callisthenes. He introduces his account with an overview of the crime, stating that the idea that the killing of Cleitus was more savage than that of Philotas is incorrect because it was not a deliberate act, but a misadventure brought about by anger, intoxication and the *daimon* of Cleitus.<sup>170</sup> Unexpectedly, Plutarch the philosopher adopts the most rational attitude of all the ancient historians towards the death of Cleitus and limits his moralising to this opening statement and to his disapproval of Anaxarchus' remark that everything done by a ruler is lawful and just, because he believed that it encouraged Alexander to become more autocratic and proud (Plut. *Alex.* 50.1; 52.1–4).<sup>171</sup>

Plutarch's version of the death of Cleitus (Plut. *Alex.* 50.1–52.4) is favoured by many scholars because of its detail and lack of bias and because it is psychologically convincing. But, because Plutarch is again using a *topos*, there is an inconsistency inherent in the way he has combined two kinds of narrative, one favourable and the other hostile. The tone of the initial scenes is friendly and demonstrates the affectionate, longstanding relationship between Alexander and Cleitus (Plut. *Alex.* 50.1–3) and the later scenes of grief and consolation echo this idealistic picture of human relations (Plut. *Alex.* 52.1–4). But, the tone and psychology of the narrative of the banquet and quarrel is hostile, with bitter insults, malice and aired grievances, suggesting long-time enmity (Plut. *Alex.* 50.4–51.6).<sup>172</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> Brown *Callisthenes and Alexander* 238; Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 179; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 139; Wilken *Alexander the Great* 166.

<sup>170</sup> Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 151.

<sup>171</sup> Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 165.

<sup>172</sup> Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 161–162.

Curtius provides the most detailed narrative, but it is also the most sensational. He places it in its correct chronological position and begins with background material about Cleitus including the information that he had recently been appointed satrap of Bactria and Sogdiana. This statement is not attested by Plutarch or Arrian, probably because they set the Cleitus story outside its chronological order.<sup>173</sup> The appointment is significant and has caused considerable speculation. Some modern commentators believe that the appointment was a demotion and that, with the example of Parmenio in mind, Cleitus perceived it as the prelude to his destruction, but others suggest that this attitude ignores the importance of the satrapy of Bactria and the responsibility of governing a frontier province.<sup>174</sup> Cleitus' attitude to his appointment cannot now be determined, but if he was unhappy about it this would go a long way towards explaining his belligerence and why, in his drunken state, he was prepared to challenge Alexander's move towards oriental despotism.<sup>175</sup>

Curtius is also the only author to make the very significant connection between Philip, Parmenio and Attalus. These are the three men who supposedly stood between Alexander and the throne and by mentioning them Curtius may be suggesting a political explanation for the death of Cleitus for Alexander may have regarded him as a relic of the hated Parmenio-Attalus faction as well as the irritating spokesman for his generation and the defender of Philip and Macedonian conservatism. For his part, Cleitus may have seen his appointment as satrap of Bactria (Curt. 8.1.35) as part of Alexander's plan to relegate Philip's officers, men like Calas, Asander, Antigonus, Balacrus and Parmenio, to provincial appointments because he considered them too old for active service.<sup>176</sup>

It is impossible to say whether Curtius is more or less accurate than Plutarch or Arrian, but there is no doubt that his account of the killing is the most chilling and menacing. Curtius' claim that Alexander seized a spear, waited for Cleitus and established his identity before killing him (Curt. 8.1.49—51) suggests an element of premeditation or wilfulness rather than drunken rage. Curtius' description of Alexander's remorse is rational and there is no attempt to blame Fate, instead, once Alexander has sobered up he recognises the enormity of what he has done. (Curt. 8.1.49—8.2.7) Because of this, and in spite of lurid details, Curtius' statement that

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<sup>173</sup> There is no reason to reject this information. Curtius frequently provides details of appointments and personnel that are not available elsewhere, but which are readily accepted by modern scholars. Inventing such a detail would have been unnecessary since it does not enhance Curtius' narrative.

<sup>174</sup> Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 114; Carney, E. "The Death of Clitus" *GRBS* 22 (1981) 151—152; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 140; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 311

<sup>175</sup> Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 114.

<sup>176</sup> Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 114; Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 171; Heckel *Marshals* 36.

Alexander tried to turn the spear on himself has a quality of reality that is lacking in Plutarch. Curtius does not mention any philosophic consolation or advice, but states that the Macedonians, in a move that was both pragmatic and intuitive, legalised Cleitus' death so that Alexander need not be ashamed.<sup>177</sup>

Arrian relates the Cleitus story out of chronological order and gives it political significance by placing it immediately after his description of the Persian-style punishment that Alexander meted out to Bessus for his treachery against Darius and his philosophical comment on Alexander's Persianizing and growing despotism (Arr. 4.7.3—5). He later negates this political aspect by suggesting that Cleitus was acting on a personal grudge rather than as the spokesman for a group of Macedonians who shared his dislike of the changes in Alexander.<sup>178</sup>

Arrian and Plutarch begin their accounts by reporting on neglected sacrifices, a device clearly intended to exonerate Alexander from responsibility for the murder. In Plutarch, Cleitus abandons the sacrifice before it has been completed and Aristander claims that fate pre-ordained the tragedy (Plut. *Alex.* 52.1) and in Arrian, Alexander arouses the wrath of Dionysus by failing to observe his sacred day (Arr.4.9.5).<sup>179</sup>

Arrian's version is very different in tone from that of Plutarch or Curtius and it is the historian, who resorts to moralising: Cleitus gets drunk and will not keep quiet (Arr. 4.8.5), he gets himself killed because of his insolence towards the king (Arr. 4.9.6), Alexander is to be pitied because he yielded to the vices of anger and drunkenness (Arr. 4.9.1), he should be praised for recognising the savagery of his actions and not attempting to justify his crime (Arr. 4.9.2; 4.9.6) and Anaxarchus is a corrupt influence whose bad advice harms the king (Arr. 4.9.8).<sup>180</sup>

Although the ancient sources, especially Arrian, try to exonerate Alexander, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that Alexander was guilty of a violent murder, even though he had been provoked.<sup>181</sup> But the Cleitus incident also demonstrates how far Alexander had moved away from the Macedonian concept of "*primus inter pares*". Macedonian nobles had always had

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<sup>177</sup> Brown *Callisthenes and Alexander* 239; Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 170.

<sup>178</sup> Carney *Death of Clitus* 154; Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 164—165.

<sup>179</sup> Alexander was punctilious in his performance of religious rites and sacrifices and this transgression is inexplicable. No historian, ancient or modern, as far as I could determine, has even attempted to explain how such a mistake could occur, or what could have motivated the change if it was intentional.

<sup>180</sup> Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 165.

<sup>181</sup> cf. The quarrel at the wedding feast. If Philip hadn't slipped, he may well have killed Alexander in exactly the same way as Alexander killed Cleitus.

freedom of speech and although Cleitus may have been insolent Alexander had no right to silence him. In killing Cleitus, Alexander acted outside Macedonian *mores*, which entitled a noble to the benefit of a trial by the army (Curt.6.8.25). He also he transgressed the ancient and immutable laws of hospitality by killing a guest. To make matters worse this guest had not only devoted his life to the service of the royal house of Macedonia, but had saved Alexander's life in battle. However, the incident is most important because it reveals the underlying feelings of the Macedonians and of Alexander. They believed they could not survive in hostile territory without him and therefore had to find a way to persuade him to continue, even if it meant condoning his conduct and his crime. By contrast Alexander realised that conflict with the conservatism of the Macedonians was inevitable and that his aim of world conquest could only be achieved through co-operation with the Persians and other Iranians. He would, in future, implement his policy of fusion of conquered and conquerors, of East and West in spite of Macedonian opposition. His marriage to Roxane, daughter of the Bactrian chieftain was visible notification of his intent.<sup>182</sup>

Hammond accepts Arrian's narrative of the death of Cleitus and his account is as brief as that of his source. He believes that Arrian's account was derived from Aristobulus and sees the fact that Arrian did not note any discrepancy between the versions of Aristobulus and Ptolemy as proof that the two historians agreed. In spite of commenting that eye-witness accounts of traditional Macedonian dinners are far from dependable and that the extant versions of this particular banquet are late and have been corrupted by elaboration and invention, Hammond judges the Arrian/Aristobulus narrative to be "as close to the truth as we are likely to get".<sup>183</sup> He adds that Aristobulus' claim that the fault that led to the tragedy lay entirely with Cleitus (Arr. 4.8.9) was not an attempt to absolve Alexander from either responsibility or blame for the death of Cleitus.<sup>184</sup>

Green's interpretation of the Cleitus story is detailed and rather sinister. After mentioning the strained and irritable atmosphere in the Macedonian camp at Maracanda (Samarkand) and the hatred and jealousy that existed between Philip's veterans and Alexander's Graeco-Oriental courtiers Green moves directly to the banquet and the quarrel between Alexander and Cleitus. He suggests that the banquet was held in honour of Cleitus' appointment to the hazardous and responsible post of governor of Bactria, but he does not speculate on the reasons for Cleitus'

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<sup>182</sup> Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 184—185; Wilken *Alexander the Great* 167—168.

<sup>183</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 194—195.

<sup>184</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 195.

deployment. Green sees the dispute as far more than a question of youth versus age (Curt. 8.1.30—37) and reasons that the division was:

"...fundamental, irreconcilable – nationalism against the orientaling policy, simplicity against sophistication, blunt free speech against sedulous conformism".<sup>185</sup>

He bases his interpretation of the banquet and the killing of Cleitus on Plutarch's narrative in which Alexander repeatedly attacks Cleitus, who responds with increasing anger. This version bears out Green's suggestion that Alexander, who had become ultra-sensitive to plots, deliberately provoked the altercation in order to learn what the Macedonian veterans really thought.<sup>186</sup> Ridiculing the Macedonian generals who were defeated by Spitamenes (Plut. *Alex.* 50.4) was part of his strategy and was effective because Cleitus "clearly had been one of the generals involved".<sup>187</sup> According to Green, Alexander baited Cleitus, calling him a coward and provoking the outburst in which Cleitus reminded him that he saved his life and reproached him for disowning Philip and murdering both Parmenio and Attalus (Curt. 8.1.38—42). Green interprets Cleitus' reference to Attalus as an indication that he had sympathised with Attalus during Alexander's struggle for power and Alexander's reply as a sign that he was suspicious of Cleitus and unwilling to tolerate opposition. In spite of Cleitus' outrage, Alexander continued to goad him with a deliberate aside to two Greek guests, "Do not the Greeks appear to you to walk about among Macedonians like demi-gods among wild beasts?" (Plut. *Alex.* 51.2) that was guaranteed to "make any old-guard Macedonian lose his last vestige of self-control".<sup>188</sup> Green, like most commentators, believes that when Alexander's friends tried to restrain him from killing Cleitus he thought that he was the victim of a plot and that he, like Darius, had been betrayed.<sup>189</sup>

Green's opinion of the aftermath of the killing and of the supernatural element that is prominent in the sources is sceptical. He suggests that Dionysus' anger over the omission of a sacrifice and the various premonitory omens were "manufactured" by the soothsayers to transfer the burden of responsibility from Alexander to Fate and that Alexander used his display of grief and time of seclusion to frighten the Macedonians into granting him absolution as well as a vote of confidence.<sup>190</sup> Anaxarchus' philosophical justification that the king stood

<sup>185</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 362.

<sup>186</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 362; Carney *The death of Clitus* 156 n 21 states "Such intentional provocation seems implausibly dangerous".

<sup>187</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 362. The sources do not name Cleitus as one of the generals involved in this defeat.

<sup>188</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 363. Green frequently refers to Philip's veterans as the "old-guard". These men were considerably older than Alexander and are perceived to have been conservative and, therefore, opposed to Alexander's policies.

<sup>189</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 363.

<sup>190</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 365



above mere human laws was precisely what Alexander hoped to hear and when the Macedonians saw his reaction they responded by decreeing that Cleitus had been justly put to death. (Curt. 8.2.12).<sup>191</sup> Green comes to the conclusion Cleitus had been killed for daring to voice open criticism of the king and that his death, coming "so soon" after Parmenio's marked the end of freedom.<sup>192</sup>

Renault glosses over ancient accounts of the disastrous campaign against Spitamenes and she attributes the Macedonian defeat to the fact that the commanders were inadequate, rather than Alexander's failure to establish a clear chain of command.<sup>193</sup> Her narrative follows Arrian's pattern through the execution of Bessus to Alexander's acceptance of Oriental customs. Renault believes that it was correct that all members of Alexander's court and administration, Greek or Asian, should be placed on an equal footing and she argues that it was practical, statesmanlike and highly civilised for Alexander to make use of his divine status as the son of Ammon in order to achieve a compromise over the issue of prostration. Since the Macedonians were unwilling to bow down to a king, the status of Alexander, the son of Ammon, should be upgraded to that of a god. This would allow both the Persians and the Macedonians to perform obeisance without losing face.<sup>194</sup>

From this discussion of the reasons for and merits of *proskynesis*, Renault's narrative moves to Alexander's attempts to introduce the custom to the Macedonians (Arr. 4.10.5—12.1; Curt. 8.5.5—22; Plut. *Alex.* 54.1—2).<sup>195</sup> The ancient historians use the issue obeisance as the preamble to the conspiracy of the Royal Pages and the death of Callisthenes, which took place after the killing of Cleitus, but Renault records the *proskynesis* issue before the Cleitus incident and uses it to stress the friction and faction that existed between Alexander's young officers and Philip's old guard.<sup>196</sup> This change in chronology plus Renault's endorsement of Alexander's right to demand obeisance has the effect of justifying his action.

Renault considers the killing of Cleitus to be "a common bar-room brawl". For the second time, at least in the passages under review, she draws a comparison between incidents at Alexander's court and modern criminal justice, but her verdicts are inconsistent. Philotas, who failed to report a plot would, in her opinion, be found guilty of treason and be sentenced to

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<sup>191</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 365.

<sup>192</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 365—366. In fact Parmenio had died two years earlier.

<sup>193</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 150.

<sup>194</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 151—152. cf. Hamilton *Introduction and Notes* 218.

<sup>195</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 151—152.

<sup>196</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 151—153.

death, whereas Alexander, who stabbed a man to death, would be sentenced to "two or three years with remission for good conduct".<sup>197</sup>

Renault ends the section by describing Alexander's display of grief and the various strategies that were adopted by the Macedonians to persuade him to abandon his excessive mourning and self-imposed isolation. But she focuses on Alexander's feelings of shame, self-pity, and self-absorption rather than regret or penitence, claiming that only the assurance that Dionysus had wielded his weapon of madness brought the king solace.<sup>198</sup>

Although Renault prefers Arrian for her scholarly work, she follows Plutarch's more detailed and emotional narrative for the Cleitus affair in *The Persian Boy* and she allows Alexander to escape the blame by suggesting that Dionysus had sent his sacred frenzy onto Alexander for sacrificing to the Heavenly Twins and onto Cleitus because he had left his sacrifice unfinished.<sup>199</sup>

### **The Fate of Callisthenes and the Conspiracy of the Royal Pages (Spring 327)**

The conspiracy of the Royal Pages and the destruction of Callisthenes, the court historian, followed closely on the death of Cleitus. These episodes are inextricably linked, and the surviving narratives of Curtius, Plutarch and Arrian, place them in the context of the mounting dissatisfaction of the Macedonians, especially the older men, over Alexander's policy of fusion and his adoption of Persian customs.<sup>200</sup> Even more unacceptable to them was the suggestion that Ammon, not Philip, was Alexander's father and the perception that Alexander wished the Macedonians to prostrate themselves before him (Arr. 4.8.9; Plut. *Alex.* 54.2; Curtius 8.5.6).<sup>201</sup> In Persia *proskynesis* was a social practice which inferiors performed before their superiors and all Persians performed before the Great King. The Greek word originally meant "to blow a kiss" and because this action was used towards the gods, the word acquired the meaning "to do homage" or "to abase oneself before". Greeks sometimes prostrated themselves in worship,

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<sup>197</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 155.

<sup>198</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 156.

<sup>199</sup> Renault *The Persian Boy* 225.

<sup>200</sup> Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 117; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 130; Hammond, NGL, *A History of Greece to 322 BC* (Oxford 1967) 623; Milns *Alexander the Great* 194. Alexander's marriage to Roxane, daughter of the Bactrian chieftain Oxyartes and the recruitment of 30 000 native youths to be taught Greek and to be trained in the Macedonian warfare, are seen as part of the policy of fusion. (Plut. *Alex* 47.4; Curt. 8.4.21—30; Arr. 4.19.5).

<sup>201</sup> Balsdon, JPVD, "The 'Divinity' of Alexander", *Historia I* (1950) 374; Milns 194.

but it was solely a religious gesture and the Persian social practice of *proskynesis* shocked them and some Greeks saw it as evidence of Persian belief in the divinity of their king.<sup>202</sup> More importantly, they regarded *proskynesis* as an intolerable act of oriental servility that represented a violation of personal dignity.<sup>203</sup> *Proskynesis* posed a very particular problem for Alexander. He wished to create a single empire of Asians and Greeks, under a single administration with himself as its head and this required the adoption of a uniform procedure in approaching the king.<sup>204</sup> He could not refuse to receive *proskynesis* from the Asians, as this would lead to the belief that he was not a real king,<sup>205</sup> and he could not allow the Macedonians and Greeks to continue to disregard his status as the King of Asia. The only solution was to demand prostration from the Greeks and Macedonians, at least on formal occasions. In view of the stubborn prejudice<sup>206</sup> of the older Macedonians against this form of veneration, Alexander must have discussed the problem with high-ranking Macedonians, as well as the "sophists and leading Medes and Persians" (Arr. 4.10.4). The sources give two distinct stories relating to the implementation of *proskynesis*,<sup>207</sup> and they agree that attempts to implement this practice caused the irreversible estrangement between Alexander and Callisthenes.<sup>208</sup>

The first story, reported in Curtius (4.10.5—11.9) and Arrian (4.10.5—11.9), involves a debate, supposedly organised by Alexander himself, between Anaxarchus the eudaemonist, and Callisthenes.<sup>209</sup> The subject of the debate is the apotheosis of Alexander, which may have been suggested as a means of overcoming Macedonian opposition to *proskynesis*.<sup>210</sup> Anaxarchus argues for deification, suggesting that the god Alexander would be a specifically Macedonian god, whereas neither Dionysus nor Heracles was directly associated with Macedonia. He also suggests that it was only right that Alexander be worshipped while he was

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<sup>202</sup> Balsdon *Divinity of Alexander* 375; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 150; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 320; Scott-Kilvert *Forward and Notes* 312 n. 1.

<sup>203</sup> Balsdon *Divinity of Alexander* 374; Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 284—285; Green *Alexander the Great* 373; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 150—151; Milns *Alexander the Great* 197; Scott-Kilvert *Forward and Notes* 312.

<sup>204</sup> Balsdon *Divinity of Alexander* 373 and 376.

<sup>205</sup> Balsdon *Divinity of Alexander* 376.

<sup>206</sup> Balsdon *Divinity of Alexander* 376 n. 69; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 321. Greek resistance to performing obeisance was so great that it had caused problems in the past for Greek ambassadors to the Persian court, with the Greeks adopting various strategies to avoid it, such as sending in a letter to the Great King or dropping a ring and pretending that the *proskynesis* was necessary to pick it up.

<sup>207</sup> Balsdon *Divinity of Alexander* 372.

<sup>208</sup> Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 325; Rubinson, WZ, "The Philosopher at Court: Intellectuals and Politics in the time of Alexander the Great", *Ancient Macedonia V Vol. II* (Thessaloniki 1993) 1322.

<sup>209</sup> Balsdon *Divinity of Alexander* 377; Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 285; Brown *Callisthenes and Alexander* 243; Edmunds, Lowell, "The Religiosity of Alexander", *GRBS* 12 (1971) 387; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 374, 387; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 151; Wilken *Alexander the Great* 170. Edmunds and Green believe the debate may contain echoes of something historical, but Balsdon and Brown believe it is fiction added by writers wishing to damage Alexander's reputation.

<sup>210</sup> Balsdon *Divinity of Alexander* 377; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 374.

alive because it was certain he would be deified after his death (Arr. 4.10.6).<sup>211</sup> Callisthenes opposes deification stating that men cannot create gods (Curt. 8.5.18) and that the distinctions between man, hero and god, as expressed in the different kinds of honours paid to them, are not to be tampered with by mere mortals (Arr. 4.11-3—4). In arguing against deification and *proskynesis* Callisthenes voiced the dissatisfaction of the Macedonian officers at Alexander's growing despotism and supported their implacable refusal to practise prostration, thus winning their approval.<sup>212</sup> But, Callisthenes' untimely opposition forced Alexander to back down on the issue of *proskynesis* and earned the king's hostility.<sup>213</sup> His anger is amply demonstrated by his violent reaction to a senior Companion's ridicule of clumsy obeisance by one of the Persians (4.12.2; Curt. 8.5.22).<sup>214</sup>

Alexander's Master of Ceremonies, Chares (Plut. *Alex.* 54.3), is the authority for the second story, which seems to be historical and involves an actual attempt to introduce *proskynesis* (Arr. 4.12.1—5; Plut. *Alex.* 54.3—4).<sup>215</sup> At a banquet, by previous arrangement with selected Macedonians, Alexander drank from a cup that was then passed to a guest, who stood up, drank, prostrated himself before the king and received a kiss from Alexander. When the cup came to Callisthenes, he drank and approached Alexander without performing obeisance. Alexander, talking to Hephaestion, did not notice the omission, but Demetrius, one of the Bodyguards, pointed it out. Since Callisthenes had not complied, Alexander refused to kiss him. Callisthenes had agreed to the experiment and changed his mind,<sup>216</sup> or so Hephaestion said (Plut. *Alex.* 55.1). Callisthenes' tactless remark: "Very well then, I shall go away the poorer by a kiss" (Plut. *Alex.* 54. 2—4) indicates that he regarded the incident as trivial, but he failed to understand the significance of the kiss. The kiss was the most courteous response to the *proskynesis*—having acknowledged the king as his superior, the courtier was restored to his former dignity and acknowledged as a social equal.<sup>217</sup> Callisthenes' refusal to perform *proskynesis* and the fact that his defiance was well received proved that Macedonian opposition was overwhelming. Alexander was forced to drop the project and would never forgive the historian for ruining his plans.<sup>218</sup> The silence of both Ptolemy and Aristobulus on

<sup>211</sup> Balsdon *Divinity of Alexander* 377; Edmunds *Religiosity of Alexander* 389.

<sup>212</sup> Balsdon *Divinity of Alexander* 378; Edmunds *Religiosity of Alexander* 389; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 375.

<sup>213</sup> Balsdon *Divinity of Alexander* 378; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 375.

<sup>214</sup> Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 286.

<sup>215</sup> Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 286; Edmunds *Religiosity of Alexander* 387.

<sup>216</sup> Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 286; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 106; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 324.

He probably changed his mind because, like his uncle, Aristotle, and other Greeks, he regarded *proskynesis* as a degrading servile act that placed Greeks on the level of the barbarians they had conquered.

<sup>217</sup> Balsdon *The Divinity of Alexander* 381; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 323.

<sup>218</sup> Balsdon *The Divinity of Alexander* 382; Brown *Callisthenes and Alexander* 245; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 325; Wilken *Alexander the Great* 169. Lane Fox's assertion: "It is far from certain that the custom was ever

the incident is probably a deliberate attempt to shield Alexander and illustrates the depth of feeling aroused by the *proskynesis* fiasco.<sup>219</sup> Callisthenes seems to have been unaware of the extent of Alexander's anger and exacerbated the situation by "giving himself great airs as though he were determined to abolish a tyranny" (Plut. *Alex.* 55.2). His foolish attitude made it easy for the court sycophants to discredit him and Alexander may have encouraged them because Callisthenes' views threatened his aspirations.<sup>220</sup> But, Callisthenes was too influential to be removed by violence,<sup>221</sup> not only was he writing a serialised account of Alexander's campaign, but Alexander could not afford to offend Greek opinion while he was campaigning in India.<sup>222</sup>

In the late Spring of 327, a few months after the *proskynesis* affair,<sup>223</sup> the sensational conspiracy of the Royal Pages took place.<sup>224</sup> This was a serious attempt on the king's life, the more so because it involved the young men who were his personal attendants.<sup>225</sup> The sources agree that the instigator was Hermolaus, son of Sopolis. He had broken the rules of the hunt and was punished by a public flogging and was deprived of his horse. To gain revenge he recruited his lover and a number of other Pages to kill the king on a night when they were all on duty. The plot was aborted only because Alexander heeded the warnings of a Syrian woman who begged him to return and spend the whole night at a drinking party. Next day, one of the Pages confided in his lover and the news was soon taken to Alexander by Ptolemy. The plotters were arrested, admitted their guilt under torture, were tried by the Macedonian Assembly and were stoned to death. Callisthenes, who was closely associated with the Pages,

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dropped" is supported by Arrian, who comments that the plan to introduce obeisance was "not yet abandoned" (Arr. 4.14.2) and by his description of the resentment that followed the mass marriages at Susa (Arr. 7.6.2—5).

<sup>219</sup> Brown *Callisthenes and Alexander* 245; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 325.

<sup>220</sup> Edmunds *The Religiosity of Alexander* 390.

<sup>221</sup> Brown *Callisthenes and Alexander* 247; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 377; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 107; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 325 all believe that Alexander was so angry that he planned to eliminate Callisthenes. Wilken *Alexander the Great* 170 suggests that Alexander was willing to believe the worst about Callisthenes. Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 118 states that Callisthenes' enemies took advantage of the Pages' conspiracy and suggested guilt by association.

<sup>222</sup> Brown *Callisthenes and Alexander* 244; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 148.

<sup>223</sup> The sources do not make the chronology clear.

<sup>224</sup> The *paidēs basilikoi* was a uniquely Macedonian institution, which is described by Curtius (5.1.42 and 8.6.2) and Arrian (4.13.1). The alleged plot of these *paidēs basilikoi* was taken seriously and the question of their ages is therefore relevant. Arrian states that they were enrolled as Pages when they reached puberty but he also refers to them as mature, (military age) and they would presumably have reached this age by the time they arrived in Asia, having completed their initial training in Macedonia. Curtius, describing their arrival in Asia, refers to them as *liberos adultos*. It would appear that these *paidēs basilikoi* were not young boys of about 15, but young men of at least 18 (the age of Alexander at Chaeronea), who were capable of planning treachery. Alexander was right to take the plot seriously. It is unfortunate that the original terminology *paidēs basilikoi* has been translated as Royal Pages, an anachronistic term taken from Medieval Europe. Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 206 suggests that "Royal Youths" would be a more appropriate translation.

<sup>225</sup> Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 118; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 326.

perhaps as their tutor,<sup>226</sup> was arrested on suspicion of having encouraged the plot. The sources give various versions of his death (Arr. 4.13.1—14.4; Curt. 8.6.1—8.20; Plut. *Alex.* 55.2—5).

Although the plot appears to have been precipitated by the personal motive of revenge, the flogging of Hermolaus cannot be the sole motivation for all of the conspirators.<sup>227</sup> The Pages, in the speeches attributed to them by Arrian and Curtius, explicitly state that they plotted because they could "no longer endure Alexander's arrogance". (Arr. 4.14.2). It is reasonable to assume that the growing despotism of Alexander's court, his rejection of Philip, his policy of fusion and adoption of Persian dress and customs (Curt. 7.8.1—15) were as unacceptable to some of the younger Macedonians, especially those newly arrived from Macedonia, as they were to Philip's veterans. The actual catalyst for the plot may then have been the attempt to introduce *proskynesis* and Callisthenes' bold opposition may have inspired the Pages to act.<sup>228</sup> Some scholars are sceptical of the evidence in the rhetorical speeches and support the theory that the Pages acted to avenge the demotion or change in status of their fathers. Arrian states that Hermolaus' father, a senior cavalry commander, was sent back to Macedonia to fetch reinforcements in the early Spring (Arr. 4.18.3), that is before the Pages Conspiracy. He is never heard of again. Another conspirator was Antipater son of Asclepiodorus, the former satrap of Syria. Asclepiodorus had recently left his province and joined Alexander with reinforcements (Arr. 4.7.2) but had not been given another command. Charicles', who is named by Arrian is usually thought to be the son of the Menander who became the satrap of Lydia, a post he occupied until after Alexander's death. Menander does not appear to have been downgraded presumably because his son was instrumental in exposing the plot and was not named as a conspirator. But, there is the possibility that Charicles was the son of another Menander, the Companion executed by Alexander for refusing to remain in command of a garrison in Bactria (Plut.*Alex.*57.3). The execution took place shortly before the conspiracy and, if this identification is correct, vengeance and the duty of blood-feud may explain Charicles' involvement in the conspiracy.<sup>229</sup>

The reasons for Callisthenes' arrest are unclear. Aristobulus and Ptolemy state that Callisthenes incited the Pages, but all the extant sources disbelieve this: "...most authorities have a different version" and all agree that even under torture the Pages did not implicate

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<sup>226</sup> Wilken *Alexander the Great* 170.

<sup>227</sup> The personal motive of revenge for public humiliation is very reminiscent of Pausanias.

<sup>228</sup> Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 117—118; Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 204; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 107; Wilken *Alexander the Great* 170.

<sup>229</sup> Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 209—210; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 327—328; Heckel *Marshals* 351.

Callisthenes (Arr. 4.12.7; 4.14.1; Curt. 8.8.19—21; Plut. *Alex.*55.2—3). A letter from Alexander to Craterus, Attalus and Alcetas confirms this:

"...the youths confessed under torture that they had made this attempt of themselves, and that no one else was privy to it" (Plut. *Alex.* 55.3).

That this letter is authentic, unlike most of the letters attributed to Alexander, is proved by the names of the recipients. Early in 327 Alexander sent Craterus, Polyperchon, Attalus and Alcetas to Pareitacene to deal with a rebellion and the Conspiracy of the Pages took place during their absence. At the time when the letter was dispatched, Polyperchon had been detached and sent to Bubacene (Curt. 8.5.2). A forger would not have known this, but Alexander did and addressed his letter to the three generals who were in Pareitacene.<sup>230</sup> The evidence of this letter seems to confirm that Callisthenes was arrested because Alexander "had already come to hate" him (Arr. 4.14.1) and the king, or those sycophants who supported his new policies, took advantage of the Pages' treachery to have Callisthenes convicted by association. (Arr. 4.14.1; Curt. 8.7.8—10; Plut. *Alex.*55.2—3).<sup>231</sup>

The actual fate of Callisthenes is a mystery. Ptolemy says that he was tortured and hanged. Aristobulus and Chares claim that he was bound in fetters and carried around with the army until he died of illness. Chares adds that he was kept alive in order to be tried by the full council of the Greek League in the presence of Aristotle (Arr. 4.14.3; Plut. *Alex.* 55.5). Ptolemy had broken the news of the plot to Alexander and it seems likely that he would have shown a keen interest in the fate of the conspirators and would surely have known how Callisthenes died. A second letter in Plutarch may throw some light on the question. In this letter from Alexander to Antipater Alexander says:

"...the sophist I will punish together with those who sent him to me and those who harbour in their cities men who conspire against my life" (Plut. *Alex.* 55.4).

The authenticity of this second letter is less certain, but Chares may be correct in claiming that Alexander intended to have Callisthenes tried by the *synhedrion* of the Hellenic League. He was a Greek and, technically at least, fell under the jurisdiction of the *synhedrion* and Alexander would have written to Antipater, his general in Europe to inform him of this. The punishment Alexander planned for Aristotle may have been for him to see his nephew tried and convicted. Ptolemy's statement does not necessarily mean that Callisthenes was hanged immediately. Alexander may have taken him with the army with the intention of trying him in the *synhedrion* and then changed his mind after a few months and had him executed. The most

<sup>230</sup> Bosworth *Historical Commentary* 155; Hamilton, JR. "The Letters in Plutarch's Alexander", *PACA* 4 (1961) 15—16; Heckel *Introduction and Notes* 291 n. 40.

<sup>231</sup> Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 118; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 107; Wilken *Alexander the Great* 171.

cogent reason for rejecting the letter is that the threat to punish the Athenians is inappropriate at this time.<sup>232</sup>

Plutarch's narrative moves directly from the death of Cleitus to Callisthenes and he presents a few carefully selected instances that illustrate how Alexander's dislike for Callisthenes grew. He begins by saying that the king had always found Callisthenes disagreeable (Plut. *Alex.* 52.4) and later relates a story intended to demonstrate Callisthenes' lack of *sophia*.<sup>233</sup> At a drinking party Callisthenes received an ovation for an impromptu speech in praise of the Macedonians, whereupon Alexander suggested that a true test of eloquence would be for Callisthenes to speak against the Macedonians. Callisthenes took up the challenge with relish and freely denigrated Philip and the Macedonians. His palinode earned him the "implacable hatred of the Macedonians" and Alexander remarked that Callisthenes had proved his ill will rather than his eloquence. Callisthenes left the banquet aware that he had alienated not only the Macedonians but also Alexander himself (Plut. *Alex.* 53.3—54.1).<sup>234</sup> This incident probably took place after Callisthenes' refusal to perform *proskynesis* and the anecdote is susceptible to the interpretation that Alexander deliberately tried to create a rift between Callisthenes and the Macedonians because he had decided to eliminate his historian.<sup>235</sup>

Plutarch gives no information whatsoever on the "conspiracy of Hermolaus" except to say that Callisthenes incited Hermolaus by telling him that he could become famous by killing the most illustrious man and by reminding him that Alexander was mortal. This is simply not credible and Arrian relates a similar story as hearsay.<sup>236</sup>

The narratives of Arrian and Curtius are very similar and differ only in details. Both report the eristic debate on deification and *proskynesis*, but in Curtius' version "Clcon of Sicily", a "corrupt" Greek, introduces the topic of Alexander's apotheosis. His argument for deification is identical to that of Anaxarchus in Arrian and the two men are clearly the same person (Curt. 8.5.7—12; Arr. 4.10.5—7).<sup>237</sup> Curtius names Polyperchon as the Companion who mocked the

<sup>232</sup> Bosworth *Historical Commentary* 155; Hamilton *Letters in Plutarch* 16; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 189.

<sup>233</sup> Golan, D. "The Fate of a Court Historian, Callisthenes" *Athenaeum* 66 (1988) 117 n. 68; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 147.

<sup>234</sup> Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 149 believes that it is inconceivable that Callisthenes could have repeated the line from The *Iliad* "Braver by far than yourself was Patroclus, but death did not spare him", without being punished, and accepts Berve's suggestion that the account has been contaminated by the Peripatetic tradition.

<sup>235</sup> Balsdon *The Divinity of Alexander* 372 n 46; Brown *Callisthenes and Alexander* 245, 236, 247; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 377; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 148; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 325.

<sup>236</sup> Bosworth *Historical Commentary* 154.

<sup>237</sup> Edmunds *Religiosity of Alexander* 387; Borza, EN, "Anaxarchus and Callisthenes: Academic Intrigue at Alexander's Court", *Ancient Macedonian Studies in honour of Charles F Edson* (Thessaloniki: 1981) 81.



clumsy act of obeisance and incurred Alexander's wrath. However, on his own evidence Polyperchon was in Bubacene at the time of the *proskynesis* incident (Curt. 8.5.5) and Arrian must be correct in stating that it was Leonnatus.<sup>238</sup> Both explain the Macedonian institution of the Royal Youths (Arr. 4.16.6; Curt. 5.2.13) and both relate the story of the hunt and public flogging that was the immediate cause of the conspiracy. They also mention the intervention of the Syrian woman, who begged Alexander to continue drinking. Both authors attribute to Hermolaus a speech spelling out the grievances of the Macedonians – the illegal deaths of Philotas, Parmenio, and Cleitus, the adoption of Median dress and the plan to introduce obeisance. Curtius adds a speech in which Alexander defends himself and condemns Callisthenes. (Curt. 8.8. 1—19). Arrian includes the Ptolemy/Aristobulus statement that Callisthenes instigated the plot, but shows his disbelief by stating that most authorities believed that Alexander hated Callisthenes and by recording the self-defence speech of Hermolaus (Arr. 4.14.1—2). Curtius has a different version of the death of Callisthenes and states that he and the Pages were tortured to death. Another difference is that Curtius is sympathetic towards Callisthenes and stresses his own belief in the philosopher's innocence (Curt. 8.8.21) whereas Arrian believes that Alexander' hostility was justified because the historian did not treat him as a king deserved and because of his arrogance (Arr. 4.12.7)

Hammond keeps to the chronological order of events and his interpretation of the Callisthenes affair is separated from his explanation of Alexander's "Kingship of Asia" (that is the adoption of Persian dress and etiquette, the recruitment of Asians into the army and administration and his attempt to enforce *proskynesis*).<sup>239</sup> He reviews the Philotas Affair, the death of Cleitus, the subjugation of the north-eastern satrapies and the social revolution of agriculture and urbanisation that followed,<sup>240</sup> and then summarises Arrian's narrative of the third plot to kill Alexander (Arr. 4.13.2—7), again pointing out that Arrian's account is from Aristobulus and Ptolemy and must therefore be trustworthy. Hammond accepts that the motive for the Pages' Conspiracy was personal revenge and downplays its political significance. He does not investigate the connection between the conspiracy and Macedonian resentment of Alexander's policies and disregards Arrian's summary and Curtius' longer version of Hermolaus' speech, both of which list the Macedonian grievances (Arr. 4.14.2; Curt. 8.7.1—15).

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<sup>238</sup> Heckel, W, "Leonnatus, Polyperchon and the Introduction of Proskynesis", *AJPh* 99 (1978) 459—46.

<sup>239</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 178—179.

<sup>240</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 176—196.

Hammond sees the arrest and death of Callisthenes as the consequence of his involvement in the Pages' Conspiracy rather than the result of his opposition to *proskynesis* or Alexander's hostility towards him and disregards most of Plutarch's evidence about Callisthenes, *proskynesis* and the Pages' Conspiracy and all of Curtius' narrative of these events.<sup>241</sup> He believes that Callisthenes was not arrested at the time of the trial because there was no evidence of his actual complicity, only that he had encouraged the Pages. But, he adds, according to Strabo (11.11.4):

"His arrest and imprisonment were said to have occurred not at Bactra but at Cariatae (Str. 571), presumably on evidence obtained after the trial".<sup>242</sup>

In Hammond's opinion, Alexander's letter to Antipater (Plut. *Alex.* 55) confirms both Callisthenes' guilt and the fact that his arrest was delayed until the evidence of guilt had emerged.<sup>243</sup> If Strabo's evidence can be accepted, rather than that of Curtius, this is a reasonable explanation of the discrepancy between the two letters in Plutarch, and it is in line with Hammond's theories about Macedonian justice. However, Hammond ignores Curtius' evidence that Callisthenes was arrested with the Pages, as well as the likelihood that mere suspicion would have condemned Callisthenes in the same way that it had condemned Philotas, for it is by no means certain that Macedonian justice was so impartial and so well administered that no arrests were made before proof of guilt was found.

It is perhaps typical of Green's approach that he emphasises the Persianization of Alexander's court, a development with potential for convoluted politics and intrigue. He believes that Alexander wished, above all else, to be recognised as the Great King, the Chosen One of Ahura Mazda.<sup>244</sup> Although the Magi failed to acclaim him, Green believes that Alexander continued to behave as though he were in fact the legitimate successor to the Achaemenid throne, and his desire for power and conquest continued to grow, fed by sycophantic courtiers, delusions of grandeur and increasing addiction to drink.<sup>245</sup> As Alexander's empire and ambition expanded he was forced to employ large numbers of Asians in his administration, army and court. In order to be accepted by these men he needed to play the part of the Great King, using the elaborate court ceremonial, and in doing this he risked alienating the Macedonians.<sup>246</sup> But, Green continues, instead of being wholehearted about adopting Persian customs Alexander chose to compromise (Diod. 17.77.7) and while the court toadies

<sup>241</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 197.

<sup>242</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 197—198.

<sup>243</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 198. Hammond ignores Curtius' evidence that Callisthenes was arrested with the Pages (Curt. 8.7.8—9; 8.8.19).

<sup>244</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 314, 318.

<sup>245</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 324—325; 329.

<sup>246</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 334.

professional officers like Craterus were indifferent, Philip's veterans were bitterly resentful (Diod. 17.78.1).<sup>247</sup> Green follows Curtius' chronological pattern and covers Alexander's progress from Persepolis, through the death of Darius to the subjugation of the north-eastern provinces and his marriage to Roxane, which brought a measure of local Asian support, and helped reconcile the leading Persians to Alexander's rule. He places a menacing interpretation on the recruitment of 30 000 Asian youths to be given a Macedonian military training stating that the short term aim was that they would serve as hostages, but in the long term, Alexander was training them as replacements for his depleted officer corps. They were to be the "Successors" to the Macedonian old guard in an increasingly Persian court and military establishment (Arr. 7.6.1—2; Curt. 8.5.1; Plut. *Alex.* 46.3).<sup>248</sup> For the present Alexander was stuck with his Macedonian officer corps "whose blunt Macedonian irreverence kept pricking the bubble of his oriental self-aggrandisement".<sup>249</sup> The question of *proskynesis* typified the division in Alexander's court and Green gives an explanation of the custom and accepts the ancient accounts of the debate about Alexander's deification. He sees Callisthenes' rejection of deification and *proskynesis* as an abrupt change from his previous adulation of Alexander and suggests that this change was not the result of offended religious scruples, but a reaction to a change in the balance of power at court. Callisthenes, Green says, had anticipated a Greek take-over once Philip's veterans had been eliminated and he embraced the cause of Macedonian conservatism only when it became clear that any future take-over would be Persian rather than Greek.<sup>250</sup> Having been balked on the issue of deification, Alexander with some friends devised a plan to introduce *proskynesis* on a secular basis. Once again Callisthenes thwarted his plan and Alexander set about destroying him. The first step was to undermine his newly won popularity with the Macedonians and Callisthenes fell into the trap set by Alexander and mortally offended the old guard with his palinode against Macedonia (Plut. *Alex.* 53.4). Then, in Green's opinion, it became a simple matter for Alexander to find a plot in which he could implicate the historian.<sup>251</sup> The Pages' Conspiracy, which Green believes was motivated by a personal grudge, provided the ideal opportunity and in spite of the fact that none of the pages would implicate Callisthenes, Alexander managed to twist the philosopher's advice to Hermolaus to "remember that he is a man", into incitement to murder (Curt. 8.6.25).<sup>252</sup>

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<sup>247</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 335.

<sup>248</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 371—372.

<sup>249</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 372.

<sup>250</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 375.

<sup>251</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 376—377.

<sup>252</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 378.

Renault, like Hammond, follows a chronological pattern that separates the *proskynesis* issue from the Pages' Conspiracy. Her explanation of the increased orientalism at Alexander's court follows on from the Persian-style punishment of Bessus (cf. Arrian 4.7.3—4) and she points out that Alexander's court had become as much Persian as Macedonian. Renault claims that the deference of Alexander's Persian followers was necessary to endorse his legitimacy as the new Great King and was welcomed by Alexander. He was, however, aware of the scornful attitude of the Macedonians and consulted Hephaestion about regularising the situation.<sup>253</sup> Knowing that the Macedonians would not bow down before a king, their solution was to upgrade Alexander's status from king to god. Renault sees this as a practical and statesmanlike move, but adds that it was not mere form, for Alexander believed in his divine prerogative.<sup>254</sup>

Renault considers that Arrian (following Aristobulus and Ptolemy) provides the most reasonable account of the debate on deification, and she suggests that Aristotle may have urged his nephew to take a stand against Persianization and deification. After the setback at the debate, an attempt to introduce *proskynesis* at a dinner party for Macedonians only was carefully planned. Renault suggests that Alexander and Hephaestion anticipated that Callisthenes would refuse to bow down and arranged that Alexander would deliberately not notice, and would give Callisthenes the kiss of kinship. This would enable Callisthenes to "keep his philosophic pride without official cognisance" and any odium incurred by the omission would be directed at Callisthenes, not Alexander. What they failed to take into account was the obtuseness of others, and their face saving exercise was frustrated when Demetrius drew attention to the omission of the obeisance.<sup>255</sup> Even though Callisthenes had now twice snubbed Alexander, thereby thwarting his political aims, he took no action against this "offensive and obstructive person", clear evidence, says Renault, of Alexander's aversion to secret murder and proof that he had not degenerated into an oriental tyrant. His only reaction was to test the sophist's popularity by suggesting that Callisthenes deliver the palinode that so angered the Macedonians (Plut. Alex. 53.4).<sup>256</sup>

Having discussed the divisiveness of *proskynesis*, Renault's narrative continues in chronological order to the death of Cleitus, the conquest of Sogdiana and Alexander's marriage to Roxane. She believes that this marriage scandalised Callisthenes, a southern Greek who deplored polygamy and was deeply offended by the thought of Greece being ruled by the son

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<sup>253</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 150—151.

<sup>254</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 151—152.

<sup>255</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 153.

<sup>256</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 153.

of a barbarian woman.<sup>257</sup> As a result he was sympathetic when Hermolaus complained about being flogged (Renault believes he had earned this punishment by "accumulating a bad record") and his praise of tyrannicides may have inspired the plot to kill Alexander.<sup>258</sup>

For the Conspiracy of the Pages, Renault uses some details from Curtius to supplement Arrian's brief narrative. She accepts Ptolemy's statement that Callisthenes was tortured (in order to establish whether the plot had its origins in Athens) and that he was hanged (Arr. 4.14.3). She justifies the execution on the grounds that Callisthenes had created the moral climate for the plot and was therefore as guilty as the plotters.<sup>259</sup> Renault dismisses Hermolaus' speech of self-defence as the words of a fanatic. She clearly agrees with Hammond and Green that the motive for the murder was personal revenge, but her use of the word "fanatic" is ambivalent for it has political or religious connotations.

Renault claims that the killing of Callisthenes was the "one great blunder of Alexander's life" and that the real significance of Callisthenes' death lies in the reaction of the Athenian schools of philosophers. These embittered but influential opinion-formers combined to execrate Alexander for the martyrdom of one of their number. Alexander's marriage was derided, rumours of sexual debauchery circulated and legitimate military operations represented as atrocities. Blatantly forged letters were circulated, one even denying that the Pages had implicated Callisthenes (Plut. *Alex.* 55.3)<sup>260</sup>. Renault believes that this negative picture passed from Athens to Rome and continues to bedevil the history of Alexander to this day.<sup>261</sup>

Once again, Renault makes certain aspects of the downfall of Callisthenes and the Pages' Conspiracy clearer in her novel, *The Persian Boy*, than in her scholarly work. It may be that the reason for this is that her narrator sees things from the Persian perspective and is able to point out the foolishness of some of the Macedonian prejudices. She uses the voice of the eunuch to insinuate that Aristotle encouraged Callisthenes to oppose all things Persian, including deification and *proskynesis*<sup>262</sup> and to develop a relationship between Callisthenes and Hermolaus, implying that the philosopher indoctrinated certain Pages, fanned their racial prejudice and used Hermolaus' humiliating punishment as a way of inciting this group of Pages

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<sup>257</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 160. Callisthenes must have been aware that the Macedonian kings practised polygamy, although he, like other Greeks, regarded the custom as uncivilised.

<sup>258</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 160.

<sup>259</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 161. This is in line with her attitude towards Philotas, whom she condemns for not reporting the plot.

<sup>260</sup> Hamilton *The Letters in Plutarch: Alexander* 15—16.

<sup>261</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 161.

<sup>262</sup> Renault *The Persian Boy* 178, 206, 250—253.

to tyrannicide.<sup>263</sup> The novel leaves the reader in no doubt that Alexander believed that Callisthenes was behind the plot and that he was implicated by all the Pages under torture.<sup>264</sup> But, in the novel, as in her scholarly work, Renault dismisses Hermolaus' speech as "mere insolence", thereby denying the possibility that the Pages were politically motivated and had genuine objections to Alexander's policies. Renault accepts that they were youths, not boys, and that they had been chosen to be trained as leaders and must, therefore, have been reasonably intelligent and capable of independent thought. But, it seems that she does not wish to admit that these young men, who were particularly close to Alexander, were as likely to support the ignoble cause of Macedonian racial supremacy, as Alexander's plans for racial harmony.

It is almost impossible for scholars of the twentieth century with a Western, Christian perspective to fully understand the complex issues of deification of rulers and *proskynesis*, or the problems that the Greeks and Macedonians had with accepting the Persianizing of Alexander's court and his policy of racial fusion. Because of this it is inevitable that these issues are interpreted in the light of each person's own personal experiences and prejudices and this explains the differences in interpretation of problems such as the death of Cleitus, the Pages Conspiracy, the downfall of Callisthenes and their relationship to the perceived deterioration in Alexander's character and his descent into oriental tyranny. It is clear that Alexander's reign was punctuated by conspiracies against his life, the three most important being the conspiracy of Alexander the Lyncestian, the Philotas affair and the Pages' conspiracy. The fact that Alexander reacted swiftly and harshly, executing or eliminating those found guilty of treachery, or even suspected of disaffection or corruption, indicates just how seriously he viewed these conspiracies. Since the conspirators are consistently found among the inner circle of Alexander's *hetairoi* his violent reactions are hardly surprising, but the ancient sources do not provide much assistance in interpreting the various conspiracies, for they seldom supply the type of evidence that modern historians rely on when forming opinions and making judgements. A particular problem is the lack of insight into the motives and aims of the conspirators, making it difficult to decide whether the plots were part of a continuous, orchestrated campaign to overthrow Alexander, or whether they were isolated incidents, provoked by particular circumstances, by motives of personal vengeance or even the desire for fame and immortality. Another problem is the tendency of the sources to present personal motives for conspiracy where political considerations appear to be paramount. In addition, the

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<sup>263</sup> Renault *The Persian Boy* 218, 251, 252, 253, 256, 262.

<sup>264</sup> Renault *The Persian Boy* 262.

sources frequently misunderstand unusual customs and practices and this makes it difficult for modern scholars to interpret these events. Further, lost passages or late propaganda confuse and cloud issues, compounding the problems of interpretation and causing modern scholars to look beyond the evidence and make subjective judgements in their search for the historical realities concerning the conspiracies and conspirators of the reign of Alexander.

## CHAPTER III: THE DEATH OF ALEXANDER

Alexander the Great was only thirty-three years old when he died. His youth and the fact that he died of an unexplained illness rather than in battle, and the discrepancies in the ancient accounts of his death, have combined to make the study of his death as fascinating and controversial as any aspect of his life. This Chapter will look at the ancient accounts of the last days of Alexander and at modern interpretations of these accounts, especially the various theories about the cause of death and the suggestions that Alexander was poisoned.

The three surviving narratives of Alexander's death all begin with the Chaldaean seers' warning that the king should not enter Babylon (Diod. 17.112.1—6; Plut. *Alex.* 73.1; Arr. 7.16.5—8). Alexander disregards this warning, enters the city and the omens of imminent disaster continue. They include the extinguishing of the sacred flame for the funeral of Hephaestion, (Diod. 17.114.4); a sacrifice offered by Apollodorus, the commandant of Babylon, to learn Alexander's fate where the liver of the victim had no lobe (Plut. *Alex.* 73.2; Arr. 7.18.1—5); an incident where an escaped prisoner put on the king's robes and diadem and sat on the royal throne (Diod. 17.116.2—4; Plut. *Alex.* 73.3—4; Arr. 7.24.1—3) and another where Alexander's diadem blew off during a boating expedition and was recovered by a sailor who put it on his own head in order to keep it dry (Diod. 17.116.5—7; Arr. 7.12.1—5). The last two omens were considered particularly serious because they implied that the diadem, the sign of kingship, would pass to another man. As a result, the king was advised to sacrifice to the gods on a grand scale to avert disaster (Diod. 17. 117.1; Arr. 7.24.4).

Diodorus' narrative is the earliest consecutive account of the death of Alexander and it is generally accepted that most of his information was derived from Cleitarchus,<sup>1</sup> but he wrote as late as c. 45 BC and it is therefore very likely that his account, as well as the other extant sources, were contaminated by the propaganda disseminated by Alexander's successors.<sup>2</sup>

After recording the Chaldaeans' prophecy, Diodorus draws a parallel between the deaths of Philip and Alexander – in the same way that the Pythia knew that Philip would be slaughtered like a garlanded sacrifice, the Chaldaeans have knowledge of the coming death of Alexander (Diod. 16.91.3; 17.112.2).<sup>3</sup> Philip did not understand the meaning of the oracle, but Alexander

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<sup>1</sup> Hammond *Three Historians* 78; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 208.

<sup>2</sup> Bosworth, AB, "The death of Alexander the Great: Rumour and Propaganda", *CQ* 65 (1971) 113.

<sup>3</sup> Hammond *Three Historians* 74.



does and tries to comply, but is dissuaded by the rationalism of his Greek philosophers. Diodorus later reiterates the parallel between the two deaths when he states that Alexander was at the peak of his power and good fortune when Fate cut short his life (Diod. 17.116.1), an almost exact repetition of his claim that Philip had achieved the pinnacle of success when death struck him down (Diod.16.93.2). The parallel between Alexander and Philip is continued with Diodorus' statement that Alexander was called away from the sacrifice that followed the omens of the diadem by one of his friends, Medius the Thessalian to take part in a *comos*, a curious statement since Alexander was known to be punctilious in carrying out required sacrifices and religious rites.<sup>4</sup> Perhaps Diodorus wished to suggest that the gods exacted retribution for Alexander's impiety in neglecting so important a sacrifice in much the same way as he had implied that Philip was struck down for *hybris* when he included his statue with the statues of the twelve Olympian gods (Diod. 16.92.5; Plut. *Alex.* 50.3).<sup>5</sup>

Initially, Diodorus attributes Alexander's death to heavy drinking, followed by draining a huge cup of wine in commemoration of the death of Heracles. After this, he shrieked aloud as if he had been struck and was led back to his chamber by his friends (Diod. 17.117.1—2). Nothing could be done for him. In great pain and despairing of his life he gave his ring to Perdicas and made two remarks: that he left the kingdom to the strongest and that he foresaw that the leading Companions would stage a vast contest in honour of his funeral. He died after a reign of twelve years and seven months (Diod. 17.117.3—5). Diodorus adds that some historians disagree about the death of Alexander and say that he was poisoned, but he does not seem to be convinced. These historians claim that Antipater was in conflict with Alexander because the king had sided with his mother in her feud with the general and because the murder of Parmenio had terrified Antipater, as it did all Alexander's commanders. He arranged for his son Iolas, the king's wine-pourer, to administer poison to Alexander. According to Diodorus, this story was not published until after the deaths of Antipater and his son Cassander who ruled in Europe after the death of his father (Diod. 17.117.5—118.1).<sup>6</sup>

Plutarch's account moves from the portents of disaster to a digression on the extremely hostile reception accorded to Antipater's son, Cassander, when he arrived at Alexander's court (Plut.

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<sup>4</sup> cf. Plut. *Alex.* 50.3 for Alexander's actions at the time of the Cleitus affair.

<sup>5</sup> Hammond *Three Historians* 76—77.

<sup>6</sup> Hammond *Three Historians* 78. This information is probably from Hieronymus of Cardia, Diodorus' chief source for Books 18 and 19, who wrote after Cassander's death.

*Alex.* 74.1—4). It is difficult to determine the state of the relationship between Alexander and Antipater from the ancient sources and modern scholars offer a wide range of opinions.<sup>7</sup>

Hammond accepts Arrian's word that relations between the two men were still excellent (*Arr.* 7.12.7). He believes that Alexander had been wise in leaving Antipater as his general in Europe and that the general had acquitted himself well. By 323 he was seventy-four and had spent ten difficult years dealing with the volatile, wilful Queen Mother and the unstable Greek states. Alexander could have ordered him to retire, but instead paid him the compliment of asking him to bring the new recruits to Asia. He appointed a younger, but equally experienced man in Antipater's place, but said and did nothing that diminished his prestige.<sup>8</sup> However, is doubtful that Antipater would have regarded it as a compliment to be moved from ruling over Europe to escorting raw recruits to Asia, a job that could be, and had previously been, undertaken by junior officers.

In Green's opinion, the relationship between Alexander and Antipater had deteriorated beyond hope of repair. Antipater had consolidated his position in Europe and was well known and trusted in Macedonia, whereas Alexander had been an absentee ruler for ten years. Antipater had apparently forced Olympias to retire to Epirus, from where she sent a stream of correspondence to Alexander vilifying the general.<sup>9</sup> According to Green, Antipater had been deeply and genuinely shocked by Alexander's request for deification and was totally opposed to every aspect of Alexander's orientalizing policy. The relationship between the king and his general was further soured by Antipater's close friendship with Aristotle, who also took exception to Alexander's divine pretensions. The executions of Philotas, Parmenio, Alexander of Lyncestis and Callisthenes, the increasing signs of paranoia and megalomania, such as the ruthless purge of satraps and threats against Antipater and Aristotle, were seen as the actions of an arbitrary, unpredictable tyrant, and as Aristotle himself wrote (*Pol.* 1295a), "no man willingly endures such rule".<sup>10</sup>

Renault agrees that the relationship between Alexander and Antipater was troubled. She believes that Antipater ensured the subservience of the southern states by supporting harsh

<sup>7</sup> Badian *Harpalus* 28, 36—37; Bosworth *Rumour and Propaganda* 125; Wilken *Alexander the Great* 222 *contra* Griffith, GT, "Alexander and Antipater in 323 BC", *PACA* 8 (1965) 12—17.

<sup>8</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 257, cf. Ashton, NG, "Craterus from 324 to 321 BC", *Ancient Macedonia V* vol. ii (Thessaloniki: 1993) 126—127, who believes that Antipater was to be installed as overall commander, governor and king's representative in Asia.

<sup>9</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 458.

<sup>10</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 476.

oligarchic governments. When Alexander returned from the East, he firmly, though civilly, made his subordinates, including Antipater, aware that he did not approve of everything that had been done in his name.<sup>11</sup> Renault considers Antipater's decision to send Cassander to negotiate with Alexander a serious error of judgement. There was longstanding antipathy between Alexander and Cassander, demonstrated by the fact that he was not chosen to accompany Alexander on his Asian adventure. Time had not improved matters and the unsuitability of Cassander for his mission led the ancient world to suspect that his real task was more sinister than mere negotiations.<sup>12</sup> Renault may be correct in thinking that Alexander had always disliked Cassander, but some of the younger commanders had to stay in Europe with Antipater, and his son was a suitable and logical choice.

Plutarch resumes the narrative of Alexander's death with a comment about his obsession with the supernatural and superstition, clearly indicating his disapproval, but at the same time warning against atheism. The arrival of the oracular response from the temple of Ammon, indicating that Hephaestion might be honoured as a hero, lightened Alexander's spirit and he again took part in sacrifices and drinking-bouts. He hosted a banquet for Nearchus and then, although he had prepared for bed, joined a party at Medius' invitation. This party lasted through the next day and he began to feel feverish (Plut. *Alex.* 75.1—3). Plutarch specifically denies the report that Alexander became ill because he drained a very large quantity of wine in honour of Heracles' death, stating that this dramatic end was invented by writers who wished to embellish the occasion (Plut. *Alex.* 75.5 *contra* Diod. 17.117.1—2; Justin 12.13). According to Plutarch a fever began at the party and Aristobulus states that Alexander, mad with thirst and fever, drank wine to quench his thirst, became delirious and died on the thirtieth day of the month *Daesius* (10 June 323 BC) (Plut. *Alex.* 75.3—4).

Finally, Plutarch describes Alexander's last days as set out in the *Royal Journals*. His version of this official record mainly agrees with Arrian's, although there are differences in detail. Starting on the eighteenth day of *Daesius* (2 June), the *Journal* chronicles Alexander bathing, sleeping and sacrificing as well as dicing with Medius, listening to Nearchus' account of his voyage, and discussing appointments with his officers, while his fever increases and he weakens. Eventually he has to be carried to perform the daily sacrifices. His bed is moved to the side of the great bath and to the palace on the west bank of the river but his condition deteriorates until he becomes speechless. The Macedonians believe he has died and insist on

<sup>11</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 204 implies that the Exiles' Decree was partly intended to undermine Antipater's rule in Greece.

<sup>12</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 219.

being allowed to see him. Python and Seleucus are sent to the temple of Serapis to enquire if Alexander should be moved there, but are told to leave him where he is. On the twenty-eighth he dies.<sup>13</sup>

Plutarch stresses that this account is word for word what was given in the *Journal* and that no one suspected that Alexander had been poisoned.<sup>14</sup> Five years later Olympias scattered the ashes of Cassander's brother, Iolas, on the suspicion that he had administered the poison (Plut. *Alex.* 77.1). Other extant sources relate that the rumours of poisoning were current immediately (Diod. 17.117.5—118.2; Curt. 10.10.14—19). Both Arrian and Plutarch reject the story that Alexander was poisoned and Diodorus and Curtius do not appear to believe it. But, it is not surprising that such rumours surfaced and that Antipater and his sons were the chief suspects. They had the motive (dislike of Alexander's policies, the supercession of Antipater by Craterus, Alexander's threats, Cassander's hostile reception and his obvious fear of Alexander) and the opportunity (Cassander's recent arrival in Babylon, and the fact that Iolas was Alexander's cup-bearer) and were obvious targets for vilification. In addition, given her hatred of Cassander and Antipater, it is likely that Olympias started the slander.<sup>15</sup> Aristotle, who is supposed to have supplied the poison was also known to have disapproved of Alexander's divine pretensions and had been threatened by Alexander at the time of the death of Callisthenes (Plut. *Alex.* 57.5). The story that the poison was the icy water of the River Styx, from northern Arcadia and transported in an ass' hoof is duplicated in Curtius. The ancient belief that this water was deadly is confirmed by the fact that oaths were sworn on it (Herod. 6.74; Homer *Iliad* 2,751). Plutarch reiterates that most writers believed the poisoning story to be a fabrication. Curiously, he cites the fact that the body showed no sign of corruption, but remained fresh for the duration of the initial quarrels between Alexander's commanders, as proof that the allegation of poison was false (Plut. *Alex.* 77.3). Again, this story is corroborated by Curtius, but with the rider that it is the traditional account and he does not believe it himself (Curt. 10.10.9—13).

Of the surviving sources, only Plutarch relates that after Alexander's death Roxane, who was pregnant, murdered Stateira, Alexander's Persian wife, and her sister and threw their bodies into a well. She was assisted by Perdicas who had seized control in Asia and was using

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<sup>13</sup> Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 210.

<sup>14</sup> Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 213.

<sup>15</sup> Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 214.

Philip's son Arrhidaeus as a puppet-king.<sup>16</sup> The *Life of Alexander* ends, quite abruptly,<sup>17</sup> with the accusation that Arrhidaeus had been physically and mentally damaged by a drug given to him by Olympias (Plut. *Alex.* 77.4—5). Arrhidaeus' weakness of mind was well documented in antiquity (Diod. 18.2.2; Justin 13.2) and the allegation that Olympias was responsible may arise from Cassander's propaganda, for there is no other evidence of her guilt.<sup>18</sup> It is striking that many of the allegations against Olympias seem to originate from the desperate struggle for the throne during the years 320—315 BC.

Very little of Curtius' narrative of the death of Alexander has survived and there are no details of the banquet or the course of Alexander's illness. His account resumes as the Macedonians file past the dying king and includes Alexander giving his ring to Perdiccas and his last words bequeathing the kingdom to the best man and predicting great funeral games for himself (Curt. 10.5.1—6). One snippet of information that is unique to Curtius is Alexander's instruction that his body should be transported to "Hammon", that is to Ammon at the oasis of Siwah in Egypt (Curt. 10.5.4). Curtius' description of the scenes that followed Alexander's death is poignant and powerful and captures the grief, bewilderment, turmoil and terror of the moment. He includes an expanded version of the death of Darius' mother, Sisygambis, who decided she could not live on after Alexander (Curt. 10.5.18—25). The chapter finishes with a short assessment of Alexander in which Curtius attributes his strengths to his nature and his weaknesses to fortune or his youth (Curt. 10.5.26—36).

Arrian's account of the last months of Alexander's life is the longest and most detailed and he includes many of the bad omens as well as information about Alexander's elaborate plans for future conquest and exploration.

Where Diodorus suggests that Alexander sacrificed to placate the gods and was called away by Medius, Arrian reports that he sacrificed in thanksgiving for his success and because of the seers' advice. Some of the sacrificial meat was distributed to the army and Alexander feasted with his Companions (Arr. 7.24.4). At this point, Arrian introduces the *Royal Diaries*, which confirm the report that Alexander would have retired to bed, but Medius, a trusted Companion, invited him to continue the party at his house (Arr. 7.24.4). The rest of Arrian's

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<sup>16</sup> Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 217.

<sup>17</sup> Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 217. The beginning of companion *Life of Caesar* has been shown to be missing, owing to the loss of a leaf or leaves of the original, and it is possible that this loss may have involved the end of *Alexander* as well.

<sup>18</sup> Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 217.

narrative of Alexander's death, like Plutarch's, is based on the *Diaries* and the two versions are substantially the same, although there are some differences in the details. Arrian records two drinking parties with Medius and says that after the second Alexander bathed and slept where he was because he already had the fever. Both give details of eating, sleeping and bathing and show Alexander's meticulous performance of the required daily sacrifice. There is also evidence in both, but especially in Arrian, that Alexander continued to consult with his officers and to plan for the coming expedition to Arabia (Arr. 7.25.1—6; Plut. *Alex.* 76.1—3). Both versions record that Alexander ordered his generals to wait in the courtyard of the palace and the commanders of divisions and companies to spend the night outside. And both describe the procession of the Macedonian rank-and-file, paying their last respects to their king (Arr. 7.26.1—2; Plut. *Alex.* 76.3—4). There are some differences between the two versions of the visit to the temple of Sarapis: Arrian names Peithon, Attalus, Demophon, Peucestas, Cleomenes, Menidas and Seleucus, while Plutarch names only Python and Seleucus, but both report that the oracle said it would be better if Alexander were not brought to the temple (Arr. 7.26.2—3; Plut. *Alex.* 76.4). Shortly after the Companions returned from the temple, Alexander "breathed his last; this, after all, being the 'better thing'" (Arr. 7.16.3).

Arrian specifically points out that the accounts of Ptolemy and Aristobulus end at the point of Alexander's death and that they do not include details of his last words, or the report that he died of poison supplied by Aristotle and sent by Antipater to his son Iolas, which are found in works by other writers. He denies the report that Medius and Iolas were lovers and plotted Alexander's death as revenge for some slight and dismisses the story that Alexander felt a sharp pain after draining a cup of wine. He indignantly rejects a report that Alexander tried to drown himself in the Euphrates so that there would be no trace of his body, leading posterity to believe that he had gone to join the gods, but was stopped by Roxane (Arr. 7.27.1—3). *Anabasis Alexandri* ends with the date of Alexander's death, the 114<sup>th</sup> Olympiad in the archonship of Hegesias at Athens and with a favourable appraisal of Alexander's life and achievements (Arr. 7.28.1—30.3).

Although the ancient sources reject or are sceptical of claims that Alexander was poisoned modern historians are divided about the cause and course of Alexander's illness and death. In narrative section of *Alexander the Great* Hammond quotes Arrian 7.26.1 (the dying Alexander greets the Macedonian soldiers as they file past his bed and some of the Companions consult the god Sarapis), but says very little else about the death of Alexander. He does not comment on the portents or about the cause of Alexander's illness, and, unlike Arrian, he does not

mention the stories of drinking parties or the rumours of poisoning. There is, however, more information in *Appendices I and II* and the *Notes to the Text*.<sup>19</sup>

*Appendix I* ("The King's Journal on the last days of Alexander") begins with a statement that that Alexander drank late into the night at an official banquet and that Arrian derived this information from the accounts of Ptolemy and Aristobulus. After reporting Medius' invitation to Alexander to join a *komos*, Hammond gives his own translation of *The King's Journal* as set out in Arrian (Arr. 25.1—26.3). This is followed by a statement that Plutarch's freer citation shows that this is only part of the original *Journal* (Plut. *Alex.* 76). Hammond suggests that each author selected the information he wanted and used his own words, but that the two versions have enough details and words in common to prove that they were drawing on the same official record.<sup>20</sup> There is no further comment or explanation of the quoted passage.

*Appendix II* ("Alexander: a drinker or a drunkard?") sets out to disprove the perception that Alexander was a drunkard. According to Hammond banqueting and drinking with the Companions and his friends was a traditional activity of the Macedonian king and Alexander, who was a sociable man, naturally participated in official banquets and private parties. He points out that Macedonians drank harder liquor than southern Greeks because they did not dilute their wine with water.<sup>21</sup> In Babylon, where the water was impure, the Macedonians slaked their thirst with wine and held their parties at night, sleeping during the heat of the day, a practice that he believes is not incompatible with brilliant leadership. Hammond accepts Aristobulus' statement that when the fever came on it caused derangement and thirst, which Alexander attempted to quench by drinking a large amount of wine. This, in turn, led to delirium and death (Plut. *Alex.* 75.6). Hammond points out that Aristobulus was referring to the day when Alexander died (30 *Daisios*), not to the banquet of Medius and that Aristobulus meant what he said – that the excessive amount of wine was the cause of death.<sup>22</sup> But, he continues, those who hated Alexander transferred this final desperate act to the beginning of his illness and portrayed his death in sensational fashion as a drunkard's well-deserved fate

<sup>19</sup> Even in the *Appendices* and *Notes* there is no comment about omens, which is strange since Hammond has great respect for and understanding of ancient religious concepts.

<sup>20</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 295—296.

<sup>21</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 297 cf. Borza, EN, "The Symposium at Alexander's Court", *Ancient Macedonia III* (Thessaloniki: 1977) 48 ff. who suggests that the Greeks diluted their wines for economic reasons and because Mediterranean wines were strongly flavoured, often with additives like resin, and highly alcoholic. Wines from the Macedonian highlands were of superior quality and there was no need to dilute them for reasons of taste or economics.

<sup>22</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 324 n 130.

(Diod. 71.1171—2; *Itin. Alex.* 53; Justin 12.13.8 Ehippus *FGrH* 126 F 3; Nicobule *FGrH* 127 F1).<sup>23</sup>

The dispute between those who consider Alexander a drunkard and those, including Aristobulus, who think of him as a drinker has continued down the ages (Arr. 7.29.4, cf. Plut. *Alex.* 23.1). Aristobulus argues that Alexander drank because he enjoyed companionship, but other scholars turn to the *King's Journal*, which records drinking bouts and Alexander sleeping afterwards, sometimes for an entire day, to prove that Alexander was a drunkard (cf. Plut. *Alex.* 23.5). Hammond cites two passages from the *Journal*, one for the month of *Dios* (Ael. *VH* 3.23 = *FGrH* 117 F 2a), which begins with a party at the house of Eumaeus and the other, recorded by Arrian, starting with the *komos* at Medius' house. The first covers a period of over a month (3<sup>rd</sup> *Dios* to 5<sup>th</sup> of the following month) and has Alexander dining with Eumaeus, Perdikkas and Bagoas. The second covers twelve days and Alexander dines only with Medius. Hammond believes that these are extracts from different parts of the *Journal* and claims that scholars have incorrectly amended the text so that *Dios* reads *Daisios* and even changed Eumaeus to Medius. Furthermore, they have treated the two citations as different accounts of the same event, that is the last illness of Alexander.<sup>24</sup> After analysing the citation for *Dios*, Hammond concludes that the *Journal* shows that Alexander attended three dinners at which he drank with his friends and one other occasion when he drank and comments:

"Hardly an excessive programme for royalty! As the parties were night-parties he can hardly be blamed for sleeping a part of the next day, or even after a couple of such parties for a couple of days (as in Athen. 434b)".<sup>25</sup>

He concludes that the best evidence that Alexander's detractors could produce was based on the *King's Journal* and that it proves that Alexander was a drinker, not a drunkard.<sup>26</sup>

In a note, Hammond sets out his opinion of the cause of Alexander's death.<sup>27</sup> After reiterating his belief in the accuracy of Arrian and Plutarch, he suggests that the symptoms they describe, a high fever, terrible thirst and periods of coma, are those of *malaria tropica* or Blackwater Fever. He rejects the rumours that Alexander was poisoned, because his symptoms were incompatible with poisoning and because these stories were, sensibly, dismissed by Arrian and Plutarch.<sup>28</sup> Finally, Hammond suggests that the deep coma of *malaria tropica* may account for the fact (reported in Curtius) that Alexander's body did not decompose, because death may

<sup>23</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 298 *contra* Bosworth *Rumour and Propaganda* 115.

<sup>24</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 298; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 210; Lane Fox 465.

<sup>25</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 299.

<sup>26</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 299.

<sup>27</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 323 n 116.

<sup>28</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 323 n 116.



have come much later than was thought.<sup>29</sup> Hammond's theory has received some support from Engels, who proposes a similar theory.<sup>30</sup> He notes that the symptoms recorded by the sources – a raging intermittent fever, loss of voice and severe back pains – are not compatible with those for strychnine poisoning,<sup>31</sup> and suggests that Alexander's symptoms were very similar to those caused by a pernicious manifestation of *Plasmodium falciparum* malaria,<sup>32</sup> a disease which is endemic in both Cilicia and Babylonia in the summer, especially in June and July.<sup>33</sup>

Green's narrative of the death of Alexander includes information from all of the sources and like other historians he begins with the Chaldaeans' warning to Alexander, for which he follows Diodorus. He calls the priests' proviso that the danger could be averted if Alexander undertook to rebuild the temple of Bel-Marduk "a splendid piece of effrontery" (Diod. 17.111.3), adding that Alexander was probably aware of their chicanery, but decided to play it safe. Even after the philosophical sceptics like Anaxarchus, astonished by the king's superstitious nervousness, persuaded him to disregard the warnings he attempted to find a way into Babylon through the swamps and marshes lying to the west of the river, as instructed by the Chaldaeans (Diod. 17.112.4–5; Arr. 7.16.6). This attempt failed and his entry was followed by a series of appalling omens.<sup>34</sup>

Green summarises Alexander's activities in Babylon, including the omen of the diadem lost in the swamps, using Arrian as his source (Arr.7.22.1–4). On his return to the city, Alexander

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<sup>29</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 323 n. 116 suggests that Hephaestion, who had a high fever and died quickly, may have died of the same disease.

<sup>30</sup> Engels, D. "A Note on Alexander's Death" *Classical Philology* 73 (1978).

<sup>31</sup> Engels *A Note on Alexander's Death* 224–225. For a large dose of strychnine, these are a series of muscular convulsions shortly after ingestion, followed by unconsciousness and death. Subfebrile temperatures, muscular rigidity, photophobia, hypersensitivity to noise and lassitude are the symptoms of poisoning by repeated doses over a long period.

*Contra* Milns *Alexander the Great* 257, who suggests that Antipater and Aristotle had strong motives for wanting Alexander's death and that Aristotle had the necessary skill to bring this about. He was the most famous botanist of his age and knew the common root poisons such as strychnine. Milns suggests Alexander's last illness included certain features compatible with slow poisoning by strychnine – lassitude and an increased body temperature. (Lassitude is not a decisive symptom since it would be expected in any case of terminal illness.) He believes that the poison was administered by Iolas, son of Antipater. At the party given by Medius the king was drinking pure undiluted wine and Theophrastus, in his passage on strychnine, said that the best way to overcome the bitter taste of strychnine was to mix it with pure wine.

See also Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 464 and Bosworth *Rumour and Propaganda* 112–136 for other opinions.

<sup>32</sup> Engels *A Note on Alexander's death* 225, 227. Violent fever with lucid intervals and loss of voice are common symptoms of *falciparum* malaria, and so is back pain, which some sources report, if the infection affects the spinal cord. Other symptoms include mental depression, irregular breathing and finally unconsciousness and coma, often followed by death. Engels believes that the near fatal illness Alexander suffered in Tarsus in 333 may also have been an attack of malaria.

He also makes the pertinent observation that those who suggest that Alexander was poisoned tend to overlook the fact that in other conspiracies against his life, he acted mercilessly against the perpetrators and was unlikely to allow himself to be poisoned over a period of some ten days.

<sup>33</sup> Engels *A Note on Alexander's death* 228.

<sup>34</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 468–469.

was shaken by the portent of the escaped prisoner who seated himself on the throne and Green suggests that Alexander may have been correct in suspecting a nationalist plot (Arr. 7.24.3) since the incident was so reminiscent of the Rite of the Mock King in the Babylonian New Year Festival, which was held at that time of the year. He suggests that the portents may have been manufactured before the event by those interested in eliminating the king in order to make the king's death appear to be due to divine or natural causes, rather than to human agency.<sup>35</sup> Although Alexander continued his preparations for the invasion of Arabia he fell into a deep depression and was drinking so heavily that he caused his Greek doctor serious concern (Plut. *Alex.* 74.1, 75.1; Plut. *Mor.* 207D; Diod. 17.116.4).<sup>36</sup>

Green's account of the banquet and the onset of Alexander's illness is a combination of Plutarch (*Alex.* 75.3) and Diodorus (17.117.1—2). (The original banquet was in honour of Nearchus, the usual drinking took place, Alexander wanted to leave but was persuaded to attend Medius' party, there was more carousing, the king drained a large cup of wine, shrieked with pain and was taken to bed.) He remarks that it was unusual for the king to retire early and that this change in routine and his depression suggests that he was suffering from some kind malaise.<sup>37</sup> For his version of Alexander's last days Green follows his usual pattern of combining evidence from various sources. In this case he uses Plutarch for the sequence of events and Arrian for the visit to the temple of Sarapis (Plut. *Alex.* 76.1—4; Arr. 7.26.2—3).<sup>38</sup>

After narrating Alexander's death, Green discusses the cause, starting with the strange tale of Apollodorus of Amphipolis and his brother, Peithagoras the soothsayer. Scared by the ruthless purge of officials that followed Alexander's return from the east, Apollodorus wrote to his brother about his future, stating that he was particularly afraid of Alexander and Hephaestion. Peithagoras' replied that he had nothing to fear because both men would soon be removed from his path (Arr. 7.18.1—3). Green believes that sacrificial manifestations, such as livers without lobes, were a cover for the fact that Peithagoras had inside information of some sort, and may have been encouraged to create some suitable prophecies before the event.<sup>39</sup> He points out that Hephaestion died only a day or so after Apollodorus received Peithagoras' letter and that his symptoms were the same as those of Alexander – heavy drinking followed by a raging fever. Green moves on to the tradition, recorded in all the ancient sources, that

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<sup>35</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 472.

<sup>36</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 473.

<sup>37</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 474.

<sup>38</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 474—5.

<sup>39</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 475.

Alexander was poisoned: Aristotle prepared the drug, Antipater's son Cassander took it to Babylon and Iolas, the cup-bearer, administered it in a cup of unwatered wine. Green comments that until quite recently, many scholars regarded this tradition as the flagrant propaganda of Alexander's warring generals, especially Craterus, Antipater and Perdicas, using smear-tactics against each other.<sup>40</sup> But, he adds that the allegation that the tradition is propaganda cannot be proved and that propaganda does not exclude the possibility that murder was committed during a *coup d'état* involving a number of conspirators.<sup>41</sup>

It is Green's contention, on the grounds of the *cui bono* principle, that Antipater "and his clique" were responsible. He believes that Alexander's threats against the Antipater suggest that he had convinced himself that this last member of the powerful old guard, was plotting to seize the throne. By the same token, the purge of officers and satraps had alerted Antipater to the fact that he might be Alexander's next target, and the news that Craterus had been ordered to replace him as General in Europe must have convinced him that he was to be made the scapegoat for Alexander's repressive policy in Greece.<sup>42</sup> Green believes that war between the king and his general was inevitable, and that Antipater's chances of besting Alexander were good – the defeat of King Agis had left the old general supreme in Greece and his troops were fresh, not worn out and mutinous like Alexander's.<sup>43</sup> In these circumstances, Antipater ignored the king's summons to Babylon and sent Cassander to negotiate on his behalf. He was also instructed to make an assessment of the king's intentions and mental state and he may have been briefed to discuss the possibility of a take-over with senior officers such as Perdicas and to meet with Craterus in Cilicia and negotiate a deal with him.<sup>44</sup> Green subscribes to the theory that Alexander died from strychnine poisoning but while some scholars believe the conspirators were Antipater, Aristotle and Antipater's sons, Green suggests that Alexander was murdered by a junta of senior commanders headed by Craterus, Antipater and Perdicas.<sup>45</sup>

Although this conspiracy theory is popular and seemingly plausible since the main conspiracies of Alexander's reign invariably involved members of leading Macedonian families, there are some difficulties in accepting it. Firstly, the sources reject the idea of a plot to poison the king, some alleging that this is hearsay (Diod. 17.117.5), while other specifically

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<sup>40</sup> Bosworth *Rumour and Propaganda* 114 ff.; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 475—6.

<sup>41</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 476.

<sup>42</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 458—459.

<sup>43</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 460.

<sup>44</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 460.

<sup>45</sup> Bosworth *Rumour and Propaganda* 136; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 476—477; Milns *Alexander the Great* 256—257.

deny the rumours, quoting Ptolemy and Aristobulus, who were eyewitnesses. (Arr. 7.26.3—27.3; Plut.*Alex.* 75.4). The sources, are often contradictory and confusing, but in this instance their unanimity lends credulity to their claims and it goes beyond the evidence to speculate that the primary sources may have tampered with the evidence.<sup>46</sup> Secondly, it is impossible to prove that Antipater, Craterus, and Perdiccas were in a position to conspire together to murder Alexander – the logistics of such a conspiracy are formidable, even assuming that Cassander was the "liaison officer", and in any case, co-operation between these ambitious men is improbable.<sup>47</sup> Craterus, in particular, is an unlikely conspirator: his loyalty to Alexander was unquestioned in antiquity, by Alexander or anyone else (Diod. 17.114.1-2).<sup>48</sup> The poison-theory appears to be based on the assumption that strychnine could readily be administered in the unmixed wine that was habitually drunk by the Macedonians, and because Iolas as Alexander's cup-bearer had the opportunity to administer the poison. But, this is speculation not evidence and accusations against Iolas were the inevitable result of the bitter propaganda of the Wars of the Succession. Finally, there is the seemingly insurmountable problem that not one of the alleged conspirators was a member of the ruling Argead House of Macedonia. It is much more likely that Alexander's death was due to natural causes – most probably malaria.

Of the three modern scholars under discussion, Renault devotes the most space to the death of Alexander. After recording the Chaldaeans' warning and Peithagoras' omen of the lobeless liver,<sup>49</sup> she, like Arrian, refers back to the death of Hephaestion (Arr. 7.16.8). But whereas Arrian suggests that it would be better for Alexander to die at the height of his fame, Renault conjectures that Alexander accepted that his own death would come soon for he had avenged his friend's death by hanging the doctor and must pay the price for revenge, just as Achilles paid the price of avenging Patroclus.<sup>50</sup> This romantic notion is not entirely plausible in the light of Alexander's elaborate plans for the future.

Renault also observes that although Roxane was in Babylon and was known to be pregnant, Alexander made no announcement about his plans for her child. She speculates that Alexander had decided that his heir should be of royal Persian blood and that he had visited Stateira in Susa *en route* to Babylon with the result that Darius' daughter was some months

<sup>46</sup> Bosworth *Rumour and Propaganda* 115.

<sup>47</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 460.

<sup>48</sup> Ashton *Craterus from 324 to 321 BC* 127.

<sup>49</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 212, 217.

<sup>50</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 212, 217, 218. Renault refers to the parallels between Alexander and Achilles throughout her scholarly work and in her novels. She believes that Alexander took this very seriously. (See *Nature of Alexander* 47, 83, 209, 221, 222, 226 (Alexander as Achilles and Hephaestion as Patroclus); 34, 104, 226 (Lysimachus as Phoenix) and 45, 52, 68, 127, 139, 181 for general references to Homer and *The Iliad*.)

pregnant when Alexander died, a fact that would make more sense of her murder at the hands of Roxane.<sup>51</sup>

Renault's scholarly work includes a detailed description of the arrangements for Hephaestion's funeral and his grandiose funeral pyre, and she specifically points out that extinguishing the sacred fire was a rite reserved for the death of the Great King.<sup>52</sup> She emphasises the portent of the occupation of the throne by the deranged man, saying that Alexander was aware that it was a capital offence,<sup>53</sup> but that the seers now warned that it was worse than mere disrespect, it was a symbol of disaster. Unlike Green who suggests that the portents of death were set up, Renault believes that these incidents were the product of genuine chance which therefore carried great weight in the ancient world.<sup>54</sup> Even more serious, because Renault believes that it was connected with the likeliest cause of Alexander's death, was the omen of the diadem lost when Alexander was exploring the lakes and channels of Babylon.<sup>55</sup> In her opinion, none of the ancient writers recognised the significant fact that the sewage effluent of the huge city of Babylon drained into the swamps and channels that Alexander was exploring.<sup>56</sup>

Renault accepts the authenticity of the account of Alexander's illness as set out in the Royal Journals, claiming that the case history described is straightforward and is consistent with the medical knowledge of the time.<sup>57</sup>

She examines the poisoning theory beginning with Medius, who could have administered the poison at two parties in his own home, but comes to the conclusion that he had no known motive for wishing Alexander dead, and every reason for wanting him alive because he was a generous friend. She believes that the suggestion that Medius was Iolas' lover is a later false report designed to furnish him with a motive.<sup>58</sup> Although Plutarch and Arrian mention the story of Alexander draining the "cup of Heracles" only to reject it, Renault thinks that the incident may be historical. Her suggestion is that Alexander went to the second of Medius' parties with a rising fever and that the sharp cry of pain may have been an involuntary reaction

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<sup>51</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 218.

<sup>52</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 224; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 458.

<sup>53</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 224. Renault refers to Curt. 8.4.15—17 for the story of how Alexander gave up his chair by the fire for a frost-numbed soldier. When the soldier recovered and saw the throne and the king, he was terrified, but Alexander reassured him with the remark: "Soldier, do you realise how much better a lot you Macedonians enjoy under a king than the Persians do? For them sitting on a king's throne would have meant death; for you it meant life".

<sup>54</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 224—225; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 475.

<sup>55</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 225.

<sup>56</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 225.

<sup>57</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 226.

<sup>58</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 227.

to an instant and violent stomach cramp caused by draining a large cup of chilled wine.<sup>59</sup> Although the incident seemed insignificant at the time, it was suppressed by Medius and his guests after Alexander's death, because of mutual suspicions and personal fears.<sup>60</sup>

Renault believes that Alexander was poisoned and she sees Cassander as the most likely culprit, aided by his brother, Iolas, and advised and encouraged by Antipater and Aristotle. Cassander had powerful motives for wanting Alexander dead. He had been excluded from the great adventure and glittering prizes of the Persian conquest. He had watched Olympias' constant intrigue against his father and had seen Antipater's policies in Greece shattered by the Exiles' Decree. He had shared the fear, disappointment, and resentment of his father's reassignment to a demeaning position and the ominous summons to court, and his own reception in Babylon had been hostile in the extreme.<sup>61</sup> As the king's cup-bearer, his brother Iolas had ample opportunity to administer the poison. Plutarch states that the poison was ice cold water from a cliff in Nonacris and that it was gathered up like dew and transported in an ass' hoof (Plut. *Alex.* 77.2—3). Renault claims that it was something far less romantic but far more deadly, "... the water of downstream Euphrates, laden with the untreated excreta of a dozen diseases".<sup>62</sup> She contends that it was well known in antiquity that water from certain sources could be lethal and suggests that polluted water may have been the instrument of many undiscovered murders.<sup>63</sup> The disadvantage of using water, that it was unreliable, was perhaps outweighed by the advantage of it being undetectable, unless someone talked. According to Plutarch, she continues, that someone was Antigonus Monophthalmus, who told the story to a man named Hagnothemis. Nothing further is known about Hagnothemis, but Antigonus became a major player in the age of the Successors and came into close contact Antipater at that time.<sup>64</sup> Aristotle, who is said to have advised Antipater, would have been aware of the danger of drinking water from certain sources.<sup>65</sup> Another aspect of Renault's poison-theory is an obscure detail, found only in *Pseudo-Callisthenes*, that the ass-hoof container had been boiled and she suggests that malevolent empiricists may have discovered

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<sup>59</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 227. Renault suggests that in the Babylonian summer, the wine may have been chilled in a snow pit.

<sup>60</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 228.

<sup>61</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 219, 227.

<sup>62</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 228.

<sup>63</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 228 claims that the Persian kings had their drinking water drawn from a special spring and had it boiled. The reason for this is unknown and Renault suggests that this ritual may have preserved the lost science of an earlier age and that the practice was probably continued as routine in Alexander's time. There are, of course, no figures available, but it is likely that water-borne diseases were rife among Alexander's troops and they may have resulted in many deaths.

<sup>64</sup> Heckel *Marshals* 53; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 228.

<sup>65</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 228.

that the jelly formed in a boiled hoof not only made a perfect culture for a "microbiotic strain", but would preserve it from contamination by other organisms.<sup>66</sup>

Renault accepts that the progress of Alexander's illness is correctly set out in the Royal Journals and points out that there is no mention of any doctor attending Alexander, a situation that she interprets as stubborn mistreatment of the illness and an equally stubborn refusal to recognise the danger.<sup>67</sup> Hammond also notes that there was no doctor in attendance, but believes it to be an indication that the king managed his own affairs to the end.<sup>68</sup> Renault interprets Plutarch's statement that Alexander quenched his thirst with wine when he was feverish as another indication that his death was due to malice on the part of Iolas. She states that it is natural for people with a high fever to lose their desire for alcohol preferring something more refreshing as this is part of the healing process and she claims that alcohol is little short of poison for a man in this condition. If wine was offered to Alexander (by Iolas or anyone else) it was a vindictive action that may have been fatal.<sup>69</sup>

According to Renault, the effects of the contaminated water, compounded by ten years of abnormally stressful wear and tear on Alexander's body led inevitably to the final complications of his illness – pneumonia and pleurisy. She discounts Alexander's reported remark that he foresaw a great contest at his funeral games as too glib adding that Alexander had never been a wit and at the time of his death was scarcely able to speak.<sup>70</sup> Renault gives the metaphysical relationship between Alexander and Achilles great prominence and it is curious that she rejects this anecdote, which fits so well with the *Iliad*-theme. She comments that when Alexander gave Perdikkas his royal ring he meant no more than to appoint Perdikkas as his temporary deputy although his generals mistakenly accepted the gesture as the appointment of a Regent.

Renault interprets Alexander's answer to the question: "To whom do you leave your kingdom?" in an unusual manner. It is normally assumed that Alexander had been asked to choose a successor from among his senior officers and his answer "to the strongest" acquired the force of prophecy during the wars of the Succession. But Renault harks back to the possibility that Stateira may have been pregnant and suggests that Alexander had confided to one or more of his high-ranking friends the fact that he had two unborn children both of whom

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<sup>66</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 228.

<sup>67</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 229.

<sup>68</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 297.

<sup>69</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 228.

<sup>70</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 230.

might be male. Alexander's words, "Hoti to kratisto" (to the strongest) can also be translated "to the best" and Renault believes that he may have meant, but been unable to explain, that when his children were of age, the Macedonian Assembly should choose between them.<sup>71</sup> This is, of course, no more than a theory and Renault offers an alternative: that Alexander had said "Kratero". Craterus, the most senior and trusted general, had already been appointed Regent of Macedonia and it is possible that Alexander intended him to take over as Regent of the empire on behalf of his unborn heir or heirs. This would have been unwelcome news to Perdikkas and since Alexander's words were barely audible, Renault suggests that he deliberately confused the two words.<sup>72</sup>

Having deprecated Curtius throughout her book for his rhetorical flourishes and dramatic rendition of events, Renault pays him the backhanded compliment of accepting his version of Alexander's last words, "When you are happy", in answer to Perdikkas' question about when he wished to receive divine honours.<sup>73</sup> And, with an unintentional touch of irony she ends her scholarly work with a romantic and highly dramatic quotation, worthy of Curtius at his rhetorical best:

"A dark mist crossed the sky, and a bolt of lightning was seen to fall from heaven into the sea, and with it a great eagle. And the bronze statue of Arimazd in Babylon quivered; and the lightning ascended into heaven, and the eagle went with it, taking with it a radiant star. And when the star disappeared in the sky, Alexander too had shut his eyes".<sup>74</sup>

The last chapter of *The Persian Boy* is the story of the death of Alexander, and with its drama and pathos it is, of course, the stuff of which romantic historical novels are made. Renault uses the eunuch, a Persian, to discuss the various omens and in this way shows them to be ominous in the extreme, particularly because true omens come without intent.<sup>75</sup> Bagoas also reports on the arrival of Cassander at court and, as an observer, he is able to emphasise the intense and bitter hatred between the two men by describing their meetings and commenting on the quarrels of their childhood and youth and hinting at the likelihood that Cassander and his brother might be guilty or at least suspected of foul play.<sup>76</sup>

There are some interesting perspectives in *The Persian Boy*. In her scholarly work, Renault is sympathetic towards Medius and suggests that his friendship with Alexander was sincere, but

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<sup>71</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 231.

<sup>72</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 231.

<sup>73</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 231.

<sup>74</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 231. There is no acknowledgement of the source of this quotation.

<sup>75</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 225; Renault *The Persian Boy* 391—393.

<sup>76</sup> Renault *The Persian Boy* 388—390.



in her novel *Medius* is depicted as an uncaring social climber.<sup>77</sup> In both books, Renault mentions the fact that the kings of Persia had their water drawn from a special spring, and that it was boiled.<sup>78</sup> In her scholarly work, Renault comments that no doctors attended Alexander in his final illness, however in *The Persian Boy* Alexander's generals bring three doctors to him, but they are unable to help.<sup>79</sup>

In the novel the course of Alexander's illness follows the information given by the sources, except that Bagoas nurses Alexander and is privy to all the secrets of the sickroom. As a result of his position as an almost invisible attendant the eunuch discovers that while he slept Alexander was been given wine to drink instead of the pure water. Although the Bagoas cannot prove it he assumes that Iolas, the brother of the hated Cassander, brought the wine. In this way, Renault avoids making the outright accusation that the sons of Antipater murdered Alexander.<sup>80</sup> Bagoas is present when Perdicas asks to whom Alexander leaves the kingdom and hears the answer, which Perdicas says was "to the strongest", but which the eunuch thinks was "to Craterus". And, it is Bagoas who suggests that Alexander meant to leave Craterus as regent for his unborn child.<sup>81</sup> He also witnesses Alexander giving his ring to Perdicas, and comments that it meant no more than that Perdicas had been chosen as deputy while Alexander was too sick to rule.<sup>82</sup> There is a scene in *The Persian Boy* where Roxane is brought to visit the dying Alexander, but her uninhibited display of grief disturbs the king and she is taken away. Although this is not mentioned in the sources, nor in Renault's scholarly novel, such a visit is a possibility and certainly adds to the dramatic atmosphere of the novel.<sup>83</sup> *The Persian Boy* ends with the confusion that followed immediately after Alexander's death.<sup>84</sup>

Bagoas is no longer the narrator in the final novel of the trilogy, *Funeral Games*, but appears as a rather shadowy character.<sup>85</sup> This novel begins as Alexander lies on his deathbed, and the action centres on his successors and heirs. In order to fill in the background for this story of the Succession, Renault has included certain information that was covered in the last chapter of *The Persian Boy*. The reader learns that Alexander has given his ring to Perdicas, although the other generals do not know whether as deputy or as Regent.<sup>86</sup> Alexander's ambiguous

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<sup>77</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 227; Renault *The Persian Boy* 396.

<sup>78</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 228; Renault *The Persian Boy* 398.

<sup>79</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 229; Renault *The Persian Boy* 402.

<sup>80</sup> Renault *The Persian Boy* 400—401.

<sup>81</sup> Renault *The Persian Boy* 402.

<sup>82</sup> Renault *The Persian Boy* 403.

<sup>83</sup> Renault *The Persian Boy* 404.

<sup>84</sup> Renault *The Persian Boy* 407.

<sup>85</sup> Renault *Funeral Games* 7.

<sup>86</sup> Renault *Funeral Games* 4.

answer to the question of who should inherit the kingdom is included and, as in *The Nature of Alexander* and *The Persian Boy*, Renault conjectures that Alexander had whispered "to Craterus".<sup>87</sup> She also repeats the scene from *The Persian Boy* where Roxane pays a visit to the dying Alexander and is hurried away because her frenzied grief disturbs him.<sup>88</sup> A new factor, which Renault features in *Funeral Games*, is Stateira's pregnancy.<sup>89</sup> Roxane is aware of her Persian rival's condition and begins planning her murder as soon as she learns that Alexander has died.<sup>90</sup> In this novel too, Renault shies away from a direct accusation that Cassander arranged Alexander's murder with the aid of his brother Iolas and the approval of his father, but she includes a scene where Cassander suggests that Alexander's fever resulted from the marsh air, not from drinking dirty water, but he warns Iolas not to mention swamp-water.<sup>91</sup>

Renault's description of the chaotic scenes that followed immediately after Alexander's death is based on Curtius, and like her source she captures the desperation, fear and confusion and uncontainable grief that attended the death of Alexander, the greatest ruler of the ancient world.<sup>92</sup>

Alexander's death, like so many aspects of his life, is highly controversial and modern scholars are hampered in their search for the truth by the inadequate and inconsistent evidence of the ancient sources. The real cause of Alexander's death, be it alcohol, poison, malaria or water can now never be proved, but, the controversy and debate continue as scholars endeavour to formulate credible theories based on the written evidence, informed by relevant external factors and, unavoidably, influenced by their own background, convictions and emotions.

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<sup>87</sup> Renault *Funeral Games* 5.

<sup>88</sup> Renault *Funeral Games* 17.

<sup>89</sup> Renault *Funeral Games* 6; Renault *Nature of Alexander* 231.

<sup>90</sup> Renault *Funeral Games* 19—21.

<sup>91</sup> Renault *Funeral Games* 27.

<sup>92</sup> Renault *Funeral Games* 23—25.

## CONCLUSION

The aim of this dissertation has been to discuss how three twentieth century scholars have used the evidence of the ancient sources to reconstruct and interpret certain incidents in the history of Alexander the Great. The ancient histories of Alexander have been studied and analysed by many experts in this academic discipline, who are better qualified to comment on the sources and for this reason the focus here will be on the three twentieth century writers and their use of the surviving evidence.

### Hammond

Hammond's *Alexander the Great: King Commander and Statesman* is a scholarly and detailed examination of the life and deeds of Alexander, that draws on Hammond's in depth knowledge of the sources and the history and geography of Macedonia and his own wartime experiences. Almost every author begins his history of Alexander by stating that he or she will attempt to bridge the gap between romantic hero worship and uncritical acceptance of the evidence on the one hand and scholarly demonisation and hypercritical undermining of the evidence on the other, and Hammond is no exception. But in spite of his intentions, a close study of his work reveals specific trends and characteristics in the way he has used the evidence for his interpretation of Alexander<sup>1</sup>.

A significant trend that is immediately obvious is Hammond's belief that Arrian's history is a consistent, objective, military record of Alexander's campaign, which was based on the factual account of the *King's Journal*.<sup>2</sup> His choice of Arrian as the main ancient source for his history of Alexander is not surprising for although the authors were born some 2000 years apart their backgrounds were similar and both had followed successful careers as soldiers, administrators and scholars. Both historians assert that Ptolemy and Aristobulus wrote the most reliable contemporary histories of Alexander because they had participated in Alexander's campaigns and because they wrote after Alexander's death so that they were free from coercion or hope of reward. Furthermore, both men accept that Ptolemy told the truth because it is disgraceful for a King to lie (Arr.1.1) and Hammond comments, "this is as true now as it was then".<sup>3</sup> Hammond particularly values Ptolemy as a primary source because he was a Macedonian,

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<sup>1</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* v.

<sup>2</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 5.

<sup>3</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 5.

who understood Macedonian institutions and the Macedonian army. Most importantly, Hammond trusts Ptolemy because he believes he was in possession of the *Ephemerides*, "...the detailed day-by-day record of the twelve years of Alexander's almost constant campaigning".<sup>4</sup> Few modern scholars share Hammond's faith in the *Dairy* and many believe that this record, if it existed, at all consisted of brief summaries of the king's public and private actions, while others believe it to have been a forgery.<sup>5</sup> In contrast to his admiration of Ptolemy/Arrian, Hammond is scathing about the writers of the early Roman Empire, who based their histories on the sensational and hostile history written by Cleitarchus, deeming them to be untrustworthy.<sup>6</sup>

Because he trusts Arrian/Ptolemy/Aristobulus Hammond frequently uses only this version of an event, ignoring the evidence of the Vulgate tradition. Thus he accepts Arrian's statement that the marriage of Philip and Cleopatra caused a rift between Philip and Alexander and his mother and dismisses the sensational stories from Diodorus, Plutarch and Justin about the marriage of Philip and Cleopatra, the quarrel at the wedding feast, Alexander's flight to Illyria and the Pixodarus affair, labelling this evidence "... the story of the gossip-writers".<sup>7</sup> He also accepts Arrian's version of the arrest of Alexander the Lyncestian, in spite of its overtones of drama and intrigue which have led other scholars to question it (Arr. 1.25.3—10). But, Hammond's distrust of the Vulgate sources goes much deeper than the admittedly bizarre goings-on at Philip's court. He accepts that Arrian's description of the battle of the Granicus River is a factual report based on Ptolemy and Aristobulus in spite of the fact that other scholars consider it to be implausible and inconsistent.<sup>8</sup> He rejects the accounts of Diodorus, Plutarch and Curtius for the Philotas affair because they were derived from sensational sources and contain fictional, speeches. Instead he uses Arrian/Ptolemy, stating that this version is not to be doubted because Ptolemy was an eyewitness, or had first-hand information.<sup>9</sup> But many modern commentators question Arrian's version because it is pro-Alexander and they are sceptical of Arrian's claim that Philotas was given a fair trial. Hammond professes to be wary of eyewitness reports of drinking parties, but he accepts that Arrian's account of the death of Cleitus is accurate because it is derived from Aristobulus, an eyewitness, and ignores the other sources.<sup>10</sup> Again, Arrian's narrative is apologetic and he resorts to moralising in order to exonerate Alexander from the

<sup>4</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* and 307 n. 1. (See p. 159 "Appendix IV: *The Ephemerides*.)

<sup>5</sup> Badian *A King's Notebooks* 197; Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 171, 299; Brunt *Introduction and Notes* xxiv; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 16; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 464—470.

<sup>6</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 4—5, 37.

<sup>7</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 36.

<sup>8</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 68—77.

<sup>9</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 181.

<sup>10</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 194—195.

charge of violent murder. In the case of the Pages' conspiracy and the downfall of Callisthenes, Hammond summarises the Arrian/Ptolemy narrative and accepts that the motive for the conspiracy was personal revenge. But the political significance of the conspiracy is attested by the grievances listed in Curtius' version of Hermolaus' speech (and Arrian's summary), which Hammond disregards (Curt. 8.7.1—15; Arr. 4.14.2). Perhaps the most conspicuous example of Hammond's reliance on Arrian is his conviction that his account of the last days and death of Alexander is accurate because it preserves the details recorded in the *Ephemerides*.<sup>11</sup>

In spite of his misgivings about the Vulgate sources, there are occasions when Hammond uses their evidence, or evidence from other less credible sources, to support his particular interpretation of a situation. For example, he uses evidence from the fragmentary *Oxyrhynchus Papyrus* (*P. Oxy. 1789 fr.1*) to justify his reconstruction of the procedures and the trials that followed the assassination of Philip.<sup>12</sup> He accepts the unsupported evidence of the *Itinerarium Alexandri* that Pausanias of Orestis had three sons and that they were executed on Philip's tomb because this questionable source supports his conviction that Macedonian *mores* provided for the execution of all male relatives of a convicted traitor. It is ironic that this custom, which is cited by many modern historians, is based on evidence in Curtius, a source Hammond himself considers untrustworthy.<sup>13</sup> In his discussion of the trial of Philotas Hammond selects evidence from Curtius that agrees with his theories about the way in which the Assembly of the Macedones functioned as a court of law, but rejects most of Curtius' narrative because of its Roman influence and rhetorical style.<sup>14</sup> Also, he follows Diodorus' in claiming that Parmenio was condemned to death by the Assembly after being tried *in absentia* (Diod. 17.80.1) because this evidence legalises Parmenio's execution and exonerates Alexander from the charge of murder.

In the *Preface of Alexander the Great* Hammond states that he will present most of the evidence and bring the reader into the task of its evaluation,<sup>15</sup> but he often attaches subjective comments to the evidence of the Vulgate sources, which detract from the reader's ability to form an unbiased judgement. His comment on the Vulgate tradition for the marriage of Philip and Cleopatra and the quarrel at the wedding feast, illustrates this tendency:

<sup>11</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 295—299.

<sup>12</sup> Hammond *The Macedonian State* 140 n. 6; Hammond *Philip's Tomb* 343.

<sup>13</sup> Bosworth *Philip and Upper Macedonia* 93 n. 8; Brunt *Introduction and Notes* xxii; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 41; Hammond *Philip's Tomb* 343; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 177.

<sup>14</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 181 and 314 n 72.

<sup>15</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* v.

"The love-life of royalty attracts the sensationalist writer of every period. That of Philip and his seven or eight wives is no exception, and some of the stories about them deserve as much credit as a modern strip-cartoon".<sup>16</sup>

Hammond's account of the battle of the Granicus River provides an extreme example of his use of the damning aside:

"... this is a romantic fantasy. The impossible is achieved: the crossing of a river defended by 110 000 men is completed without a blow by forces much inferior in number. No explanation is offered. Cleitarchus has waved his fairy wand. ... Let us waste no more time on this version".<sup>17</sup>

In many instances, Hammond's approach to the sources is fundamentalist and rigid, and his interpretation is sometimes very individualistic, but he is extremely consistent and does not deviate from his opinions and theories, even in the face of fairly severe criticism.<sup>18</sup> He is almost alone in suggesting that Alexander was not exiled after his quarrel with Philip at the wedding feast, but was sent to Illyria to gain military experience.<sup>19</sup> Despite very convincing counter-arguments from other scholars, Hammond steadfastly claims that Attalus the guardian of Cleopatra and Attalus the *somatophylax* who was involved in killing Philip's assassin, are the same person.<sup>20</sup> Another example of his tenacity is his insistence that Perdikkas, Leonnatus, Pausanias and Attalus were members of the elite *Somatophylakes* and that Pausanias was a mature man of great military distinction<sup>21</sup>. Hammond's reconstruction of the trials that followed Philip's assassination is controversial, but he has repeated it in many publications, in spite of scepticism and criticism. Hammond's individualistic approach to the sources is also seen in his interpretation of the death of Attalus, especially his contention that investigations revealed a suspicious connection between Attalus and Pausanias, that Attalus was killed resisting arrest and that his corpse was tried by the Assembly.<sup>22</sup> His suggestion that Callisthenes was not arrested with the Pages, but only later when evidence of his guilt became available is also disputed.<sup>23</sup>

There are, of course, occasions when Hammond's use of the sources, although individualistic, is logical and well founded. His assertion that Amyntas son of Perdikkas was a real threat to

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<sup>16</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 35—36.

<sup>17</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 72.

<sup>18</sup> Borza *Nicholas Hammond* xvi; Gunderson *Quintus Curtius* 183; Hammond *Alexander* 36, *Alexander the Great* 177 and n.70, n.114. Errington, RM. "Review-Discussion: Four Interpretations of Philip II", *AJAH* 6 (1981) 71 refers to Hammond's work as "gullible" and "eccentric".

<sup>19</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 36; Hammond *End of Philip* 167—168; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 173.

<sup>20</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 39; Hammond *End of Philip* 171; Hammond *HM III* 5 and 9; Hammond *Philip's Tomb* 346 n. 37; *contra* Heckel *The Somatophylax Attalos: Diodorus 16.94.4* 215—216.

<sup>21</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 38, 39; Hammond *Various Guards* 400.

<sup>22</sup> Hammond *End of Philip* 172.

<sup>23</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 197—198.

Alexander and that his connections with the Lyncestian brothers and other known dissidents compelled Alexander to take drastic action to secure the throne, is one.<sup>24</sup> He has also argued convincingly that the sons of Aeropus were members of a collateral branch of the Temenidae, the ruling house of Macedonia.<sup>25</sup> In addition, his identification of Pleuratus as king of the Ardiaei and Pleurias as king of the Autariatae is almost certainly correct and most modern commentators agree that an unattested battle against Pleurias took place in 336.<sup>26</sup>

Hammond has done extensive research into the nature of the Macedonian State and the findings and theories that stem from this research heavily influence his interpretation of the history of Alexander. Among these theories is his belief that the Assembly of the Macedones elected the Macedonian kings and that they "...held the supreme and total command of their armed forces with an absolute constitutional right from the moment each was elected".<sup>27</sup> While it is true that some sort of election was held, the fact that many Macedonian kings were elected on the battlefield or immediately after an assassination, coupled with Curtius' description of the confusion and disarray at the Assembly held after Alexander's death, point to an *ad hoc* arrangement rather than an established procedure (Curt. 10.6.1—8.23). Hammond also believes that some form of constitutional system of government existed in Macedonia and that Alexander regularly consulted the assembly of Macedones and followed Macedonian customs in treason trials.<sup>28</sup> Many modern scholars reject this interpretation and believe that the king, the nobles and the army claimed whatever rights they thought they could get away with. The king was the state. Alexander consulted the assembly only when it suited him and his disapproval alone, even without conclusive evidence, was enough to convict a man.<sup>29</sup>

There are many examples of Hammond applying his theory of established or constitutional procedures to events and situations during Alexander's reign. Among these are his arguments that Alexander's friends would have been banished by the Assembly, not Philip, if their action against the king had constituted treason and his reconstruction of the events immediately after Alexander's accession. In both these cases Hammond implies that constitutional procedures

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<sup>24</sup> Ellis *Amyntas Perdikka* 17—18; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 41; Hammond *HM III* 11.

<sup>25</sup> Hammond *Some Passages in Arrian* 459.

<sup>26</sup> Develin *Murder of Philip* 88; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 106, 524 n. 67; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 505; McQueen *Commentary* 190.

<sup>27</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 24

<sup>28</sup> Errington *Review-Discussion* 71; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 38, 39, 182.

<sup>29</sup> Badian *A King's Notebooks* 198; Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 58; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 183.

were followed and that equitable trials were granted to those suspected of treason.<sup>30</sup> He claims that Alexander acted within his constitutional and legal rights in connection with the arrest and assassination of Attalus, the death of Amyntas son of Perdiccas, and the arrest and eventual execution of Alexander the Lyncestian.<sup>31</sup> Hammond's interpretation of the trial of Philotas is yet another example of his belief in an equitable system of justice, especially his opinion that the Assembly, not Alexander, condemned Parmenio to death (Diod. 17.80.1; Just. 12.5.3).<sup>32</sup> Similarly, his analysis of the Pages' conspiracy is in line with his theories about Macedonian justice and his claims that Callisthenes was arrested only after proof of his complicity had been obtained presupposes the existence of a sophisticated legal system.<sup>33</sup> Hammond is not alone in referring to constitutional rights, but rights of this sort are a modern phenomenon and interpretations based on constitutional procedures result in an apologetic bias, in which Alexander is protected from criticism and exonerated from responsibility for some of the questionable actions of his reign. In contrast, many scholars believe that Alexander instituted a reign of terror when he acceded to the throne and that Attalus, Amyntas son of Perdiccas and Alexander the Lyncestian were victims. Even Arrian believes that Alexander ordered Parmenio murdered and all the sources agree that the Pages did not implicate Callisthenes in the conspiracy, with Arrian stating that Callisthenes was arrested because Alexander hated him (Arr.3.26.3—4; 4.14.1; Curt. 8.7.8—10; Plut. *Alex.*55.2—3).<sup>34</sup>

An important aspect of Hammond's work is his treatment of the major battles of Alexander's campaign, and other military actions. Apart from careful study of the written evidence he includes analyses of the terrain, usually based on thorough site inspections, and explanatory maps and charts. His experience as a soldier is evident in his attention to detail and his understanding of military factors such as troop formations, weapons, strategy and tactics, descriptions of the action.<sup>35</sup> He also includes relevant and instructive material about other military events such as sieges, route marches and skirmishes. Hammond views Alexander as the consummate general, excelling in speed and precision of thought, versatile in invention,

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<sup>30</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 35—42; Hammond *End of Philip* 166—175; Hammond *HM III* 3—12; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 170—179; Hammond *Philip's Tomb* 331—350.

<sup>31</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 41, 87, 88, 184—185; Hammond *End of Philip* 171; Hammond *HM III* 10, 11; Hammond *Some Passages in Arrian* 458.

<sup>32</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 183.

<sup>33</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 197—198.

<sup>34</sup> Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 118; Hamilton *Alexander the Great* 107; Wilken *Alexander the Great* 171.

<sup>35</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 68—76, 94—110, 137—148, 202—212.



confident, courageous and, most importantly, concerned for his men who were rewarded for courage and devotion to duty.<sup>36</sup>

It is characteristic of Hammond that throughout *Alexander the Great* and his other publications he includes information on Macedonian religious rites and customs, including omens and their interpretation and the various sacrifices and festivals offered to the gods. He shows great respect for and understanding of these observances and notes their importance to the Fourth Century Macedonians. Hammond mentions religious incidents such as the cutting of the Gordium knot, the visit to the oracle at Siwah, Alexander's companions visit to the temple of Sarapis in Babylon at the time of Alexander's death, and many others. The Macedonian king was also the chief Priest of the state, and Hammond emphasises Alexander's dedication to his duties and his practice of sacrificing daily for the safety of the state, even when he was so ill he had to be carried to the ceremony.

Another feature of Hammond's work is his approval of Alexander's attempts to forge a collaborative multi-racial empire without imposing Greek or Macedonian rule on conquered nations.<sup>37</sup> In Hammond's opinion, Alexander had no choice but to move towards multi-national army and administration and he adopted Persian dress and customs out of respect for the Iranians and in an attempt to win the support of the Persian nobles.<sup>38</sup>

There are many other elements involved in Hammond's methods, interpretations and theories, but those outlined above are the outstanding features of his use of the sources for the events covered in this dissertation. In spite of his attempt to produce an unbiased history of Alexander, the tone of his book is decidedly apologetic and the reader is left in no doubt of his admiration for every aspect of the great soldier king. This attitude is first seen in Hammond's categorical denial that Alexander had any part in his father's assassination. It continues in his assertion that Amyntas son of Perdiccas, Attalus and Alexander the Lyncestian were executed on the orders of the Macedonian Assembly rather than murdered, and in his defensive position regarding the Philotas affair and what he sees as the execution of Parmenio. The same apologetic attitude is noticeable in Hammond's handling of the death of Cleitus, which he excuses, and the Pages' Conspiracy. It is also very evident in his conviction that the Persianization of Alexander's court and the army was not only necessary, but also statesmanlike. This apologetic stance is seen in Hammond's tendency to follow Arrian's

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<sup>36</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 255—257.

<sup>37</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 169, 171, 179.

<sup>38</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 179, 197.

pattern of suppressing or omitting evidence that reflects badly on Alexander. Incidents that he avoids or excuses include Arrian's omission of the trial and execution of Alexander Lyncestes, the torture of Philotas, doubts about Parmenio's guilt, much of the background information and dialogue for the death of Cleitus, and Alexander's heavy drinking.<sup>39</sup> Perhaps Hammond's long and detailed descriptions of battles and other military operations provide the most obvious evidence of his admiration for Alexander.<sup>40</sup>

Even if Hammond has not entirely succeeded in his aim of presenting an objective portrait of Alexander (something which is in any case impossible), his *Alexander of Macedon* is a major contribution to modern scholarship. He has used his wealth of knowledge of the sources (in their original languages) and of the terrain of both Macedonia and Greece, his experience of mountain warfare, his in depth study and knowledge of ancient Greece, Macedonia and Epirus, and his own moral and ethical background to present a multi-faceted portrait of Alexander the Great and a thorough examination of his great Persian adventure.

## Green

The differences between almost every aspect of Green's *Alexander of Macedon* and Hammond's work make it difficult to believe that the two historians researched the same subject and using the same sources and at first glance only names of people, battles and places seem to be the same. These differences are the result of a number of factors, including the underlying attitude of the authors: Hammond is pro-Alexander, but Green's approach is hostile; the differing aims of the books, Hammond's is a history for students and scholars while Green's is a biography aimed at a wider readership; and the different way in which they have used the sources and the evidence they provide.

Appropriately for a biography, Green's style is journalistic and *Alexander of Macedon* reads like a novel, with vivid narrative, anecdotal material and entertaining asides. For example, Green comments on Alexander's apparent lack interest in women:

"... Olympias herself, we are told, frequently begged him to have intercourse with this woman – which does not suggest any great enthusiasm on his part; but then what son would take kindly to a maternally selected mistress?"<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 181—183, 194—195. Hammond argues that Aristobulus was correct in claiming that Alexander was not a heavy drinker, but drank because he enjoyed the companionship (Arr. 9.27.4).

<sup>40</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 39, 40, 41, 180—185, 194—195, 196—198, 69—77; 94—110, 137—194.

<sup>41</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 66.

And, on the death of the Great King's wife while in Alexander's care, seemingly in childbirth or as the result of a miscarriage:

"Since she had been separated from her husband since November 333, almost two years before, Alexander may conceivably not have found her quite such an 'irritation to the eyes' (let alone to his long-term dynastic ambitions) as he liked to proclaim".<sup>42</sup>

A device, presumably aimed at making his work accessible to the general reader, is Green's use of familiar terms such as "crown prince", "barons", and "junta". These terms are anachronistic and cannot correctly be applied to the ancient Macedonian system of kingship or society, but they have emotive connotations that accord with Green's interpretation of Alexander.<sup>43</sup>

Green has set out his biography of Alexander in much the same way that Plutarch and other ancient biographers structured their work. Thus he begins with a short review of the history of Macedonia and of Alexander's ancestry and then moves on to Alexander's childhood, youth and his early military success. The first climax is Alexander's accession to the throne and the major battles, conspiracies and other significant events provide climaxes for the detailed account of Alexander's campaigns in Europe and Asia. The prescribed dramatic change in Alexander's fortune begins with the mutiny at the Hyphasis and leads on to Green's account of Alexander's death. The book ends with an assessment of Alexander's personality, achievements and influence.<sup>44</sup> A related feature of Green's work is that he frequently follows the literary patterns set by the sources for specific events. This can be seen in his treatment of Attalus, where he follows Diodorus' narrative structure very closely, including the use of flashbacks and digressions (Diod. 16.9.4—17.5.2). Similarly, Green's account of the trial of Philotas is virtually a summary of Curtius (6.6.1—6.11.39) and his narrative for the banquet and killing of Cleitus is closely modelled on Plutarch's (*Alex.* 50—52).<sup>45</sup>

A different and disturbing use of the sources is the way in which Green consolidates all the evidence from two or more of them, apparently in order to dramatise or sensationalise certain events. Unfortunately these combinations usually result in interpretations that are complicated, confusing and unconvincing. He combines Diodorus' statement that Attalus handed Pausanias to his stablehands and Justin's evidence that Attalus himself raped Pausanias, presumably because this outrageous situation makes it more likely that Pausanias was willing to become a

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<sup>42</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 287

<sup>43</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 85 and 88; Carney *Politics of Polygamy* 172.

<sup>44</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon*; Russell, DA. "On reading Plutarch's Lives, *Greece and Rome* 13 (1966) 149.

<sup>45</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 88—120; 342—346; 360—363.

part of Alexander's plot to murder his father.<sup>46</sup> In discussing the fate of Alexander the Lyncestian he combines Arrian's claim that it was Parmenio who warned Alexander of the threat from the Lyncestian (Arr. 1.25.1—10) with Diodorus' account of warnings given by Olympias (Diod. 17.32.1). Olympias warnings actually came much later than Parmenio's and conflating the evidence exacerbates the problems of understanding an already incomprehensible passage, but it suits Green's purpose of showing the ongoing animosity between Alexander and Parmenio.<sup>47</sup> The most extreme example of conflating the sources is the "Appendix: Propaganda at the Granicus" in which Green merges the similar accounts of Arrian and Plutarch with the very different narrative of Diodorus. The result is unsatisfactory and has been vigorously rejected by modern scholars as unwarranted invention.<sup>48</sup>

As in the case of Hammond, various themes are evident in Green's *Alexander of Macedon*. One of these is his theory that there was intense opposition to Alexander's rule from a section of the Macedonian *hetairoi* led by Parmenio, and he presents the various conspiracies and purges that occurred during Alexander's reign as part of this struggle for supremacy, which began even before Alexander's accession, continued throughout the Persian campaign ending only when Alexander died in 323 in Babylon. This theme is never far from the surface of Green's book and can be seen in his claim that Parmenio traded his son-in-law's life for control of the army, in his narrative of the battle of the Granicus River, in the arrest and subsequent execution of Alexander the Lyncestian, and, most obviously in the conspiracy of Philotas.<sup>49</sup>

Just as Hammond's interpretation of Alexander is apologetic, so Green's is hostile and he consistently portrays Alexander as insatiably ambitious, calculating and vengeful and he believes that the combined effects of absolute power, limitless wealth, a string of unbroken victories, political pressure and incipient alcoholism, caused a marked degeneration in Alexander's character.<sup>50</sup> He begins by stating that Alexander became a king by becoming a parricide, that he used Pausanias as a pawn in his power play and that the sons of Aeropos were arraigned for the assassination in order to divert suspicion away from Alexander. The hostility continues with Green's claims that Attalus was eliminated because of Alexander's longstanding hatred and that Alexander cynically offered Amyntas' wife to his friend in the

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<sup>46</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 106.

<sup>47</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 203—204.

<sup>48</sup> Badian, E. "The Battle of the Granicus: A New Look", *Ancient Macedonia II* (Thessaloniki: 1977) 272 n 5; Hammond, NGL. "The Battle of the Granicus River", *JHS 100* (1980) 74. (See pages 165—170 Appendix IV: The Battle of the Granicus River.)

<sup>49</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 120, 173—181, 202—204, 339—349.

<sup>50</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 443.

knowledge that he was to be murdered. Green's interpretation of the trial and execution of Philotas and the assassination of Parmenio is clearly designed to present Alexander in the worst possible light and Green believes that Alexander engineered the trial and execution of Philotas and cold-bloodedly had Parmenio murdered. His interpretation of the death of Cleitus is sinister, hostile and unnecessarily complicated and he claims that Alexander deliberately orchestrated the bitter argument that led to the killing of Cleitus. Similarly, his understanding of the downfall of Callisthenes is based on his assumption that Alexander deliberately undermined Callisthenes' popularity by provoking him to make a speech denouncing the Macedonians and then used the flimsy excuse of the Pages' conspiracy to arraign him as an accessory. Green follows the sources closely for the death of Alexander, but even so his interpretation is unsympathetic, stressing Alexander's heavy drinking and the hatred that existed between the king and Cassander.<sup>51</sup>

This approach to Alexander may be the reason why Green chooses to follow the Vulgate tradition, which is more hostile than Arrian and why he readily accepts evidence from questionable and unsympathetic sources. Only Justin testifies to the birth of Cleopatra's son, Caranus, and Green uses this dubious evidence as the basis of his suggestion that the dire threat of a rival for the throne prompted Alexander to activate his plan for assassinating Philip.<sup>52</sup> In the same way, Green uses the evidence from the *Alexander Romance* (*Ps. Call.* 1.26) that Antipater presented Alexander to the Macedonian army for acclamation as king because this supports his theory that Antipater joined Alexander and Olympias' plot to murder Philip.<sup>53</sup> Green's acceptance of Justin's evidence Olympias was a cruel and evil woman who murdered hundreds people and roasted her husband's child over a brazier,<sup>54</sup> is in line with his opinion that Alexander and his mother were cruel and malicious, but he overlooks the fact that such extreme behaviour was highly unlikely, if not impossible.<sup>55</sup> In all these instances the use of the Vulgate or other unfavourable sources leads to a negative portrait of Alexander. In the case of the conspiracies of Philotas and the Royal Pages, Green's use of the Vulgate tradition, especially Curtius, suggests that Alexander was tyrannical and paranoid, rather than a king taking legitimate action to suppress dangerous conspiracies. Unfortunately, in using the Vulgate sources, Green has ignored the contamination of the anti-Alexander propaganda that emanated from of the Athenian philosophers, from Cassander's war with Olympias and from

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<sup>51</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 88—90, 93, 107, 109, 111—112, 141, 339—348, 360—366, 370—379, 472—477.

<sup>52</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 109.

<sup>53</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 103.

<sup>54</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 107—108.

<sup>55</sup> Carney *Politics of Polygamy* 186, 188; Ellis *Assassination of Philip* 106—107; Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 174, 221 n. 29.

the Wars of the Successors as well as later political and cultural influences on men writing under the tyrannical rule of emperors such as Tiberius, Gaius, Claudius and Nero for an audience that had witnessed their excesses and licentiousness.

Some of Green's opinions are so deeply entrenched that he goes beyond the evidence in order to sustain them. His suggestion that Philip encouraged rumours that Alexander was illegitimate, disinherited him and divorced Olympias because he believed that they were actively plotting against him is not supported by the sources.<sup>56</sup> He makes the unlikely suggestion that Alexander of Epirus declared war on Philip to avenge his homosexual advances, but there is no evidence to suggest that the relationship, if it existed, was not a voluntary one.<sup>57</sup> There is no direct evidence that Parmenio double-crossed Attalus and ordered his murder in exchange for control of the expeditionary army, as Green alleges, although Parmenio had probably been informed of Hecataeus' mission.<sup>58</sup> His interpretation of the death of Cleitus is based on the theory that Alexander deliberately provoked an argument to find out what the Macedonian generals felt about his policies, but there is nothing in the sources to support this, nor to support his claim that Cleitus reacted to Alexander's provocation because he was one of the generals who had been defeated by Spitamenes (Plut. 50.4).<sup>59</sup> The most deeply rooted and sustained example of going beyond the evidence is Green's theory that Parmenio headed a junta that was determined to prevent Alexander from succeeding to the throne and that vied for control of the army from the accession until Parmenio was eliminated in 333. It is possible, even likely, that there was animosity between Alexander and his father's senior general, but there is no hard evidence for this in the sources and claims that Parmenio opposed Alexander's accession contradict those sources that emphasise Parmenio's devotion to Alexander (Diod. 17.5.2). Nor is there any evidence that Alexander distrusted Parmenio more than any of Philip's other generals.<sup>60</sup> There is also no justification for Green's claim, set out in his Appendix on the battle of the Granicus River that Alexander never forgave Parmenio for the humiliation of having to accept his advice.<sup>61</sup> Most scholars believe that the anti-Parmenio incidents that appear in the sources were pro-Alexander propaganda inserted after his death, or the result of Callisthenes portraying Parmenio as cautious in order to present Alexander as a brilliant and heroic general, rather than the "smear-campaign" suggested by Green. It is also by no means certain that Parmenio's appointment as area military commander at Ecbatana was

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<sup>56</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 88, 90-92.

<sup>57</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 94, 97.

<sup>58</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 120.

<sup>59</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 362.

<sup>60</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 120, 159—160; Fears *Pausanias* 132; Heckel *Conspiracy against Philotas* 11.

<sup>61</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 175.

a demotion and Alexander's elaborate precautions to maintain secrecy at the time of the trial and execution of Philotas reveal that Parmenio was still enormously powerful.<sup>62</sup> If these examples do not actually go beyond the evidence, then it must, at least, be conceded that Green fails to make sufficient allowances for the propaganda of the Wars of the Successors, or the hostile attitude of the philosophic schools of Greece.

Green's *Alexander of Macedon* is exciting, entertaining and expansive, but it is not an objective study of Alexander. It is perhaps significant that *Alexander of Macedon* is dedicated to Ernst Badian, who, in Green's opinion is the doyen of researchers in this field, for Badian is prominent among those scholars who adopt a cynical and sceptical attitude towards Alexander the Great. In spite of this Green's book has helped to popularise the study of the great soldier king and it reveals a different and more robust Alexander than that found in Hammond's restrained and methodical work.

## Renault

The stated aim of Renault's *The Nature of Alexander* is to strip off the accumulated layers of fable, myth, history, tradition, romance and emotion, and show Alexander as he saw himself and as he was seen by his friends and enemies.<sup>63</sup> For this formidable task Renault studied the extant ancient authorities, fragments preserving statements made by those who knew him and the folk-memory as preserved in the lands he ruled. The format of her book is different from both Hammond's and Green's and although she provides a continuous narrative of Alexander's life and career, *Nature of Alexander* is designed as "... a piece of historical travel writing, each chapter advancing with Alexander across his world: Macedonia, Troy, Persia, India, Babylon".<sup>64</sup>

Like Hammond, Renault distrusts the Vulgate tradition of Justin/Trogus, Diodorus Siculus and Quintus Curtius because their work was based on primary sources contaminated by the hostile propaganda of the Athenian schools of philosophy which hated Alexander for the martyrdom of Callisthenes, and of Alexander's former generals during the bitter Wars of the Successors. Once transferred to Rome the hostile portrait was nurtured by the repressive atmosphere of the

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<sup>62</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 176, 203—4, 323, 343; *contra* Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 411; Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 119; Fears *Pausanias* 132; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 89; Heckel *Conspiracy against Philotas* 11.

<sup>63</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* blurb, cf. Sweetman *Mary Renault* 257—258.

<sup>64</sup> Sweetman *Mary Renault* 275.

Principate and adopted by Roman historians whose interest lay in describing the corruption of absolute power, the deterioration of Alexander's character and the evils associated with the cult of ruler-worship. Plutarch receives slightly more approval – indeed *Fire from Heaven*, the first book in her trilogy of novels, is based on this unique source for Alexander's childhood and youth. Renault shares Hammond's trust in Arrian on the grounds that he dismissed both the romance and the propaganda that surrounded Alexander and chose instead to follow Ptolemy, Aristobulus and Nearchus. She relies heavily on Arrian for evidence for the conspiracies and purges of Alexander's reign and deals with each event separately. She too accepts Arrian's statement that it is shameful for kings to lie, arguing that this does not stem from a superior sense of honour, but is "sensible" because kings are vulnerable to public disgrace.<sup>65</sup>

Perhaps because she was primarily a novelist, Renault concentrated on the psychology of Alexander and her scholarly work and novels emphasise aspects of Alexander's character. She contends that the marriage of Philip and Olympias soon degenerated into estrangement and hatred that scarred the young Alexander deeply. In Renault's opinion, the chronic insecurity of his early years and Olympias' possessive love resulted in a need for constant reassurance that he was loved for himself and the inability ever to forgive any slight or insult. Renault's interpretation of Alexander's relationship with Hephacstion, the man "with whom he remained in love, at a depth where the physical becomes almost irrelevant" and from whom he could not bear to be parted, even in death,<sup>66</sup> and her understanding of his relationship with Bagoas, the eunuch who became his *eromenos* emphasise Alexander's need for love and reassurance.<sup>67</sup> These relationships are most fully developed in the novels *Fire from Heaven* and *The Persian Boy*. Alexander's inability to forgive an insult is seen in his attitude towards Attalus, who insulted him at the wedding feast, Philotas, who betrayed him at the time of the Pixodarus Affair and was accused of disloyalty in Egypt, and Cassander whom he had always disliked.<sup>68</sup>

In addition she believes that from his earliest childhood, Olympias taught Alexander that Zeus, not Philip, was his father.<sup>69</sup> On more than one occasion Renault raises the question of Alexander's belief in his divine ancestry, especially in her novels. In *Nature of Alexander* she claims that Alexander could have committed parricide only if he was absolutely convinced that

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<sup>65</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 38.

<sup>66</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 222.

<sup>67</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 160.

<sup>68</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 55, 60, 71, 110, 219.

<sup>69</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 30, 32, 62, 110, 210; Renault *Fire from Heaven* 12, 65, 201, 328, 367,



Zeus, not Philip was his father. She also notes that his visit to the oracle at Siwah was inspired by his belief in his divine birth and that the answer he received from the Oracle confirmed that he was in some way Ammon's son and intensified his sense of destiny. Her suggestion that Alexander asked the Oracle of Ammon at Siwah to grant Hephaestion divine honours so that they would not be separated in the world to come is probably correct.

A complex motif in *Nature of Alexander* is Renault's theory that Olympias raised Alexander in the knowledge that his ancestry could be traced back to the heroic strain of Achilles and the royal blood of the Temenidae of Troy and that she taught him to honour both sides that participated in the Trojan War, laying the platform for his future honourable and impartial dealings with the Iranians and other conquered people.<sup>70</sup> In the context of this dissertation the most important example of Alexander identifying with Achilles concerns the death of Hephaestion and Alexander's own death, for Renault believes that when Hephaestion died, Alexander deliberately imitated Achilles by his extravagant display of mourning and by avenging his friend's death. And, although she admits that there is no proof of her theory, she suggests that Alexander knew that his death, like Achilles', would follow shortly, because the price of revenge was death.<sup>71</sup>

The theme of Alexander's respect for barbarians and their customs and his lack of racial bias is prominent in Renault's work. In her opinion, Alexander adopted Persian customs and dress, applied a policy of racial fusion to his administration and army, appointed noble Persians to high-ranking posts, married three Asian women and gave his leading officers high-born Asian wives out of respect for the Persians and their ancient traditions. Most significantly, she contends that he tried to persuade the Macedonians to perform *proskynesis* because he understood that the Persians would not accept a Great King who did not require prostration and did not want them to be humiliated by doing it alone. When the Macedonians refused to comply because they would bow down only to the gods, it was, not *hybris*, but respect for his fellow men, both Macedonian and Persian, and their customs, that led to Alexander's attempt to solve the problem by upgrading his status from king to god.<sup>72</sup>

Although Renault states that she wishes to show Alexander as he really was, her attitude towards him is extremely defensive and she almost always depicts him as honourable, just and

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<sup>70</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 29—34.

<sup>71</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 209, 217.

<sup>72</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 139, 141, 151—152, 200; Sweetman *Mary Renault* 263.

sensitive, seldom acknowledging that he might have had faults or failings.<sup>73</sup> One of the reasons why she rejects the accusation that Alexander killed his father is because she contends that he "never stands suspect of a surreptitious killing" throughout his reign. In spite of the fact that Attalus had mortally insulted Alexander she claims that that his death at the hands of Hecataeus was not revenge, but was justified and that Alexander had wanted to bring him to trial according to Macedonian law.<sup>74</sup> She has absolutely no doubt that Philotas deserved the death penalty and defends the execution of Parmenio with her theory that Alexander had tested his loyalty by including a secret phrase in a letter purported to be from Philotas.<sup>75</sup> She dismisses the killing of Cleitus as a bar-room brawl and defends the execution of Callisthenes because he was morally guilty of treason.<sup>76</sup>

Renault, like Hammond believes that Macedonia was governed by constitutional or traditional procedures and that it had an orderly system of justice. This is evident from her interpretations of the death of Attalus, the Philotas affair, the death of Cleitus and the conspiracy of the Pages and in her case too, the application of this theory effectively transfers the blame for questionable executions from Alexander to the Macedonian Assembly. Renault's suggestion that Alexander could not act against the Lyncestian without proof that he had solicited assistance from Darius implies the king was bound by legal or constitutional restraints, but, in fact, he was entitled to take whatever steps were necessary to safeguard the safety of the realm and there is abundant evidence that Alexander acted decisively and without proof when he believed that his life or his throne was threatened.<sup>77</sup> A related theme is Renault's theory that blood-feud was a fundamental element in Macedonian tradition. She accepts that this tradition obliged Pausanias to avenge the outrage committed by Attalus, even though he may have waited eight years for an opportunity to be seen taking revenge.<sup>78</sup> She believes that the ancient law of Macedonia that provided that male relatives of any traitor should share his death merely recognised blood-feud. Although this is may be correct, the blood-feud theory provides Renault with an excuse for Alexander's action against Parmenio.<sup>79</sup>

In *Nature of Alexander* Renault occasionally presents an unusual or perceptive aspect of a problem that has been overlooked by Hammond and Green. Important examples are her

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<sup>73</sup> Sweetman *Mary Renault* 257.

<sup>74</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 71.

<sup>75</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 141—144.

<sup>76</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 161.

<sup>77</sup> cf. Hammond *Alexander the Great* 15. For example, the deaths of Amyntas Perdiccas, Attalus, Cleopatra and her infant. For a different interpretation of the death of Alexander Lyncestes see Badian *Death of Parmenio* 325.

<sup>78</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 64.

<sup>79</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 142.

theories that Parmenio betrayed his complicity in the plot against Alexander by reacting favourably to a secret code extracted from Philotas under torture and inserted into a forged letter,<sup>80</sup> and that Alexander and Hephaestion had made allowances for the fact that Callisthenes would refuse to perform obeisance, but had not anticipated that anyone would be stupid enough to draw attention to his failure to prostrate himself.<sup>81</sup> Renault's interpretation of the death of Alexander is also original, especially her suggestion that Stateira was pregnant when Alexander died, and that he may have been poisoned with the polluted water of the Euphrates River. She is also the only one of the modern authors under discussion to suggest that on some sub-conscious level Alexander conceived his own death as the blood-price for avenging the death of Hephaestion.<sup>82</sup>

Renault's scholarly book is not as detailed as those of Hammond and Green, perhaps because it was never intended to compete with the many authoritative histories of Alexander, but was rather a defence of her hero<sup>83</sup> and an attempt to discover the real Alexander, freed from the many layers of fable, tradition, emotion and propaganda that have distorted his image. Like Hammond and Green, Renault has not been entirely successful in her quest, but her scholarly book provides a valuable and different perspective on the life and the nature of Alexander.

The three modern scholars have used the same ancient sources for their work on Alexander the Great and three different Alexander-histories have emerged. Hammond and Renault have modelled their Alexander on the ideal warrior-king found in Arrian while Green echoes much of Curtius' portrait of a gifted man utterly corrupted by the relentless pursuit of power. The discrepancies are not surprising for the ancient sources seldom supply the type of evidence that modern historians rely on when forming opinions and making judgements. Personal motives are presented where political consideration appear to be paramount, unusual customs and practices are difficult to interpret and lost passages or late propaganda confuse and cloud issues. The result is that modern scholars are often forced to look beyond the evidence in their search for the historical reality of Alexander and have to rely on background knowledge, an understanding of the culture, customs, traditions, and the political, military and judicial systems of ancient societies. In addition, scholars are influenced by their own backgrounds, cultures, temperaments and the political, social and economic conditions of their own times.

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<sup>80</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 144.

<sup>81</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 153.

<sup>82</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 224, 226, 228, 229.

<sup>83</sup> Sweetman *Mary Renault* 275.

Hammond and Renault are members of the generation that experienced and participated in the British Empire at the height of its power and who participated in the fight against the tyranny of fascism. It is, therefore, understandable that they accept that it was necessary for Alexander to impose the outward trappings of power, even to the extent of demanding such unpopular practices as prostration, in order to rule his huge empire effectively. Their view of the efficient and equitable functioning of the Macedonian system of justice is also understandable in the light of their experience of life in a twentieth century, Western democracy with a tradition of order, the rule of law and trial by jury. Green's interpretation of the Page's conspiracy and the death of Callisthenes is far more cynical and reflects his experiences as a member of a later and more disillusioned generation.

Alexander the Great changed the face of the world decisively and it is not surprising that his achievements and his personality have fascinated men and women of every age and that his life, personality and achievements have been interpreted in terms of each generation's values, experiences and traditions. Green expresses the process eloquently:

"Everyone uses him (Alexander) as a projection of their own private truth, their own dreams and aspirations, fears and power-fantasies. Each country, each generation sees him in a different light. Every individual biographer, myself included, inevitably puts as much of himself, his own background and convictions into that Protean figure as he does of whatever historical truth he can extract from the evidence.

... each student inevitably selects, constitutes criteria, according to his own unconscious assumptions, social, ethical or political. Moral conditioning in the widest sense, plays a far greater part in the matter than most people – especially the historians themselves ever realize. So, indeed, does contemporary fashion".<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 480.

**APPENDIX I:  
THE ACCESSION OF ALEXANDER III OF MACEDONIA**

<b>SUMMARY OF RELEVANT SECTIONS OF THE ANCIENT SOURCES</b>			
<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>DIODORUS SICULUS</b>	<b>PLUTARCH</b>	<b>ARRIAN, QUINTUS CURTIUS, JUSTIN AND OTHERS</b>
<b>The marriage of Philip and Cleopatra</b>	The king had just married Cleopatra, a relative of Attalus, who had been selected as a general of the advance force to Asia (16.93.9).	Philip's love affairs caused strife that infected the whole kingdom and led to quarrels between Philip and Alexander. Olympias, a jealous woman, exacerbated these arguments ( <i>Alex.</i> 9.3). Philip fell in love with Cleopatra, although he was past the age for it ( <i>Alex.</i> 9.4).	<b>Arrian:</b> Philip took Eurydice to wife (3.6.5). <b>Curtius:</b> Narrative lost.
<b>The quarrel at the wedding feast</b>	Not mentioned	At the wedding feast Cleopatra's uncle, Attalus, who was drunk, called on the Macedonians to pray that Cleopatra would bear a "legitimate" heir. Enraged, Alexander responded: "Do you take me for a bastard?" and threw his wine cup at Attalus. Philip attacked Alexander and would have killed him, but his anger and wine made him trip and fall ( <i>Alex.</i> 9.4—5).	<b>Arrian:</b> Does not mention the wedding feast. There was a lack of confidence between Alexander and Philip after Philip married Eurydice and disgraced Olympias (3.6.6). <b>Curtius:</b> Narrative lost. <b>Justin:</b> At a banquet, Alexander quarrelled with Attalus and Philip, whose friends prevented him from killing Alexander (9.7.3-5). <b>Athenaeus:</b> During the wedding Attalus said that now legitimate princes would be born (13.557 de Satyrus).

<p><b>The exile of Alexander and Olympias</b></p>	<p>Not mentioned</p>	<p>Alexander took Olympias to Epirus and he went to live in Illyria (<i>Alex.</i> 9.5). Demaratus, a Corinthian actor arranged a reconciliation, and Philip brought Alexander home (<i>Alex.</i> 9.6). There is no mention of Olympias.</p>	<p><b>Arrian:</b> At the time of Philip's marriage to Eurydice, Alexander's friends (but not Alexander or Olympias) were exiled for their loyalty to Alexander (3.6.6).  <b>Curtius:</b> Narrative lost.  <b>Justin:</b> Alexander and Olympias fled to Epirus and then Alexander went to the king of the Illyrians. They were reconciled to Philip with difficulty. Olympias urged her brother to make war on Philip, but he was dissuaded by an offer of marriage to Philip's daughter, Cleopatra (9.7.3-5).</p>
<p><b>The Pixodarus affair</b></p>	<p>Not mentioned</p>	<p>Pixodarus, the satrap of Caria, tried to make an alliance with Philip and offered his daughter in marriage to Philip's son, Arrhidaeus. Olympias and Alexander's friends told him that Philip was using the marriage to settle the kingdom on Arrhidaeus (<i>Alex.</i> 10.1). Alexander was so alarmed that he sent a message to Pixodarus telling him that Arrhidaeus was a bastard and weak-minded. He offered to marry the daughter himself, which greatly pleased Pixodarus (<i>Alex.</i> 10.2). Philip heard of Alexander's offer and reacted furiously. He took Philotas, son of Parmenio, with him into Alexander's room, where he berated Alexander for being willing to marry the daughter of a mere Carian, the slave of a barbarian king. Alexander's friends were banished from Macedonia and did not return until Alexander recalled them (<i>Alex.</i> 10.3).</p>	<p><b>Arrian:</b> The friends were exiled because they were loyal to Alexander at the time when there was friction between Alexander and Philip, after Philip had married Eurydice and disgraced Olympias (3.6.6).  <b>Curtius:</b> Narrative lost.</p>

<p><b>The assassination of Philip</b></p>	<p>Pausanias, one of the king's bodyguards, assassinated Philip (16.94.3).</p>	<p>Pausanias killed Philip (<i>Alex.</i>10.4).</p>	<p><b>Arrian:</b> Does not mention Pausanias.  <b>Curtius:</b> Narrative lost.  <b>Justin:</b> Pausanias, a noble youth killed Philip. Olympias, who resented her divorce and Cleopatra's advancement, and Alexander, who feared the rivalry of his step-brother, encouraged him. (9.6—7).</p>
<p><b>The rape of Pausanias and the motive for the assassination</b></p>	<p>Pausanias of Orestis was beloved by the king. When he saw that Philip was becoming involved with another Pausanias, he verbally abused this man (16.93.3—4).  Unable to endure the insult, this Pausanias informed his friend Attalus of his intention to bring about his own death. A few days later, during a battle against king Plurias of the Illyrians, the second Pausanias was killed when he stepped in front of the king and shielded him from the blows aimed at (16.93.5—6).  The incident became widely known and Attalus, who was a member of the court circle, invited the first Pausanias to dinner, got him drunk and then handed him to his stablemen to abuse sexually in drunken rape (16.93.7).  When Pausanias recovered he was very bitter and charged Attalus before the king. Philip was incensed but could not act against Attalus because of their relationship – Attalus was the guardian of Philip's new wife. Also, Attalus, who was courageous in battle, had just been chosen as a general of the advance force to Asia. But, the king tried to appease Pausanias with gifts and by promoting him to a more honourable position among the bodyguards (16.93.8—9).</p>	<p>Pausanias had been outrageously humiliated by Attalus and Cleopatra. When he could get no justice from Philip he killed him. (<i>Alex.</i>10.4)</p>	<p><b>Arrian:</b> Does not mention the rape of Pausanias.  <b>Curtius:</b> Narrative lost  <b>Justin:</b> Pausanias, a noble Macedonian youth was abused by Attalus. He complained to the king, but Philip was unsympathetic and ridiculed him. Because of this, and especially when Philip appointed Attalus to command the advance force, Pausanias' anger was directed against Philip (9.6—7).</p>

	<p>Pausanias kept up his resentment. He was determined to exact vengeance from the perpetrator of his injury and also from the one who had failed to avenge him. (16.94.1).</p> <p>He was a student of the sophist Hermocrates and asked him how one could achieve the greatest fame. Hermocrates said it would be by killing the person who had performed the greatest deeds, because the killer would be as well remembered as the victim (16.94.1).</p> <p>Pausanias linked this answer to his personal anger and decided to act during the festival (16.94.2).</p> <p>He stationed horses at the gates and came to the entrance to the theatre with a concealed Celtic dagger. When Philip entered the theatre alone, having instructed the friends to go in front of him and the bodyguards to stand aside, Pausanias rushed at him, stabbed him through the ribs, killing him (16.94.3).</p> <p>As he tried to reach his horses, he tripped and was killed by the bodyguards, Leonnatus, Perdikkas and Attalus, who had pursued him (16.94.4).</p>		<p><b>Justin:</b> Olympias prepared horses for the escape of Pausanias (9.6—7).</p> <p><b>Justin:</b> Pausanias killed Philip (9.6—7).</p> <p><b>Justin:</b> Pausanias was himself killed (9.6—7).</p>
<p><b>Was there a conspiracy?</b></p>	<p>Alexander inflicted due punishment on his father's murderers (17.2.1).</p> <p>At Siwah in Egypt Alexander asked the god: "Have I punished all those who were the murderers of my father, or have some escaped me" (17.51.2).</p>	<p>Alexander did seek out the participants in the plot and punished them (<i>Alex.</i> 10.4).</p> <p>All Macedonia was festering and looking towards Amyntas and the sons of Aeropus (<i>de fort. Al.</i> 1.3, 327c).</p>	<p><b>Arrian:</b> Heromenes and Arrabaeus had a part in the murder of Philip. Although he was implicated their brother was let off because he was the first to acclaim Alexander (1.25.2).</p> <p><b>Curtius:</b> Narrative lost.</p> <p><b>Justin:</b> Olympias, who resented her divorce, and Alexander, who feared the rivalry of his stepbrother, instigated Pausanias' act (9.6-7).</p> <p><b>Aristotle:</b> Pausanias acted out of personal motives provoked by Philip's <i>hybris</i> (<i>Pol.</i> 5.8.10, 1311b2).</p>



<b>Conspirators: i. Alexander</b>	Not mentioned.	Some of the blame attached to Alexander because it is said that he incited Pausanias to act by quoting a verse from the <i>Medea</i> : "The giver of the bride, the bridegroom and the bride" ( <i>Alex.</i> 10.4).	<b>Arrian:</b> Does not discuss the conspiracy. <b>Curtius:</b> Narrative lost. <b>Justin:</b> Alexander incited Pausanias because he feared the rivalry of his stepbrother (9.6—7).
<b>ii. Olympias</b>	Not mentioned.	Most of the blame devolved on Olympias on the grounds that she encouraged Pausanias and incited him to the deed. ( <i>Alex.</i> 10. 4)	<b>Arrian:</b> Not discussed. <b>Curtius:</b> Narrative lost. <b>Justin:</b> Olympias resented her divorce and the advancement of Cleopatra and therefore incited Pausanias to murder Later Olympias publicly crowned the corpse of the assassin, cremated his body on Philip's tomb and provided annual sacrifices to the assassin and consecrated Pausanias' sword in her own "maiden" name. She also forced Cleopatra to commit suicide, after first killing her daughter in her lap (9.6-7).
<b>iii. Antipater</b>	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	<b>Pseudo-Callisthenes:</b> After Philip's death Antipater presented Alexander to the Assembly for acclamation as king ( <i>Ps. Call.</i> 1.26).
<b>v. The Lyncestian Brothers</b>	Not mentioned.	All Macedonia was festering and looking towards Amyntas and the sons of Aeropus ( <i>de fort. Al.</i> 1.3, 327c).	<b>Arrian:</b> Alexander of Lyncestis was the brother of Heromenes and Arrabaeus, who had been involved in the murder of Philip. Although there was strong evidence against Alexander he was not prosecuted because he had been the first to support Alexander after Philip's death (1.25.2).
<b>vi. Demosthenes</b>	Alexander was afraid Attalus would join the Greeks, who were ready to revolt. Demosthenes agitated against Macedonia and the Athenians communicated secretly with Attalus and arranged to co-operate with him (17. 2.4—13.1).	Demosthenes was paid by Persian generals to stir up trouble for the Macedonian king. Details of amounts paid by the generals were found in the generals' papers in Sardis ( <i>Dem.</i> 20.4-5).	<b>Arrian:</b> Does not discuss. <b>Curtius:</b> Narrative lost.

		Demosthenes had secret intelligence of Philip's death. In order to inspire the Athenians he told the council that he had had a dream that foretold good fortune for Athens. Shortly thereafter messengers arrived with the report of Philip's death ( <i>Dem.</i> 22.1).	
<b>vii. Darius Great King of Persia</b>	Not mentioned	The Persian king ordered his satraps to offer money to Demosthenes to create a diversion and keep the king of Macedonia at home by stirring up trouble in Greece. In Sardis (334). Alexander found letters and papers of the king's generals with details of the sums of money paid to Demosthenes ( <i>Dem.</i> 20.4-5).	<b>Arrian:</b> In a letter to Darius (332) Alexander accused Darius, as follows: "My father was murdered by conspirators, whom you Persians organised, as you yourselves boasted in your letters to all the world..." (2.14.5). <b>Curtius:</b> "Philip was murdered by assassins whom your people had seduced with the expectation of a huge Persian reward (4.1.12).

**APPENDIX II:  
CONSPIRATORS AND CONSPIRACIES  
SUMMARY OF RELEVANT SECTIONS OF THE ANCIENT SOURCES**

<b>The Conspiracy of Attalus</b>		
<b>DIODORUS SICULUS</b>	<b>PLUTARCH</b>	<b>ARRIAN, CURTIUS AND OTHERS</b>
<p>Attalus, the "brother" of Philip's wife Cleopatra was a possible rival for the throne and Alexander determined to kill him (17.2.4).</p> <p>Attalus had been sent ahead to Asia to share the command with Parmenio and had become very popular with the soldiers because of his easy manner and readiness to do favours. Alexander had reason to fear that Attalus might challenge his rule and conspire against him with the Greeks. He sent Hecataeus to Asia with orders to bring Attalus back or assassinate him if this was not possible (17.2.4-6).</p> <p>In Asia, immediately after Philip's death Attalus had set his hand to revolt and had agreed with the Athenians to undertake joint action against Alexander. Later he changed his mind and sent the letter he had received from Demosthenes to Alexander with expressions of loyalty in an attempt to divert suspicion.</p> <p>However, Hecataeus followed his instructions "literally" and killed Attalus by treachery.</p> <p>With Attalus dead and Parmenio completely devoted to Alexander, the forces in Asia were free from any incitement to revolution (17.5.1—2).</p>	<p>Alexander sought out the participants in the plot (against Philip) and punished them (<i>Alex.</i> 10.4).</p> <p>Plutarch does not mention Attalus in connection with the plot against Philip.</p> <p>Demosthenes completely dominated the Athenian Assembly and he wrote letters to the generals in Asia inciting them to make war on Alexander (<i>Dem.</i> 23).</p> <p>When Alexander established his authority and led his army to Boeotia the Athenian led rebellion collapsed (<i>Dem.</i> 23.2).</p>	<p><b>Arrian:</b> Does not mention Attalus.</p> <p><b>Curtius:</b> Attalus was the brother-in-law of Philotas (and son-in-law of Parmenio) (6.9.16). He was the worst enemy that Alexander ever had (6.9.17).</p> <p><b>Satyrus ap. Athen.</b> (13.557d) and <b>Didymos ap. Marsyas of Pella, <i>FgrHist</i> 135/6/F17.</b><sup>1</sup> Attalus was the uncle of Hippostratus son of Amyntas, who had been named as a casualty in the pursuit of the Ardiaeans in 344.</p> <p><b>Justin:</b> Alexander put to death all his stepmother's relatives whom Philip had advanced to positions of dignity or military command (11.5.1).<sup>2</sup></p> <p><b>Polyaenus:</b> Attalus was still in command in Asia after the middle of 335 (5.44.4).<sup>3</sup></p>

<sup>1</sup> Hammond, *Philip of Macedon* 171; Heckel *Marshals* 4. Hammond believes that Cleopatra was the sister of Hippostratus.

<sup>2</sup> Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 72; Heckel *Marshals* 5 n. 13.

<sup>3</sup> Ellis *Assassination of Philip* 109, 102.

<b>Amyntas son of Perdiccas</b>		
<b>PLUTARCH</b>	<b>ARRIAN</b>	<b>DIODORUS, CURTIUS AND OTHERS</b>
<p>Amyntas was a member of the embassy Philip sent to Thebes to put forward the Macedonian case and oppose the Athenians (<i>Dem.</i> 18.2).</p> <p>(After Philip's death...) All Macedonia was festering and looking towards Amyntas and the sons of Aeropus (<i>de fort. Al.</i> 1.3, 327c).</p>	<p>Alexander promised to give his sister Cynna, (Amyntas' wife) to Langarus in marriage (1.5.4).</p> <p><i>Successors</i> (22) and Polyaeus (8.60)<sup>4</sup>: Philip gave Amyntas the hand of Cynna, his daughter by the Illyrian princess Audata, in marriage.</p>	<p><b>Diodorus:</b> Does not mention Amyntas.</p> <p><b>Curtius:</b> Refers to Amyntas only in connection with the trial of Philotas. Alexander in a speech claims that Amyntas had plotted against him in Macedonia (6.9.17 and 6.10.24).</p> <p><b>Justin:</b> Amyntas was elected king by the Macedonians (359), with Philip acting as his guardian. When more dangerous wars were imminent and help was withheld because the king was an infant, Philip assumed the kingship under pressure from the people (7.5.9—6.1.2).<sup>5</sup></p> <p><b>Justin:</b> Alexander killed Amyntas (12.6.4).<sup>6</sup></p> <p><b>The Lebadeia Inscription (IG vii 3055)</b><sup>7</sup> The list of names of people who consulted the oracle of Trophonios includes "Amyntas son of Perdiccas, king of the Macedones".</p> <p><b>The Oropian Inscriptions</b><sup>8</sup></p> <p>i. <i>IG vii 4251</i>: Records a grant of proxeny by the Oropian Assembly to Amyntas son of Perdiccas of Macedonia.</p> <p>ii. <i>IG vii 4250</i>: Records a grant of proxeny to Amyntas son of Antiochus of Macedonia.</p> <p>iii. Votive offering: Dedicated by Aristomedes of Pherae.<sup>9</sup></p>

<sup>4</sup> Ellis *Assassination of Philip* 119.

<sup>5</sup> Hammond *Philip of Macedon* 23.

<sup>6</sup> Carney *Macedonian Aristocracy* 79.

<sup>7</sup> Ellis *Amyntas Perdikka* 16.

<sup>8</sup> Ellis *Amyntas Perdikka* 17, 18.

<sup>9</sup> Ellis *Amyntas Perdikka* 19 n 38. This inscription was first published in 1966 in *Adelt* xxi.

## The Conspiracy and Fate of Alexander the Lyncestian

DIODORUS AND PLUTARCH	CURTIUS	ARRIAN
<p><b>Diodorus:</b> Sometime after the siege of Halicarnassus, Alexander received a letter from his mother warning him against Alexander the Lyncestian, one of his trusted friends. There were other reasons to support the charge and the Lyncestian was arrested and kept under guard until he could be brought to trial (17.32.1—2).</p> <p><b>Plutarch:</b> (After Philip's death...) All Macedonia was festering and looking towards Amyntas and the sons of Aeropus (<i>de fort Al.</i> 1.3, 327c).</p>	<p>Atharrias demanded that Alexander the Lyncestian be brought for trial. He had been denounced earlier by two informers and was in his third year of imprisonment. It was thought certain that he had conspired with Pausanias to murder Philip but he had been reprieved because he was the first man to salute Alexander as king and because Antipater, his father-in-law, pleaded for him.</p> <p>The crisis of the Philotas affair reminded the men of the earlier crisis and they demanded that the Lyncestian be brought to trial. Although he had had three year to prepare, he was unable to defend himself and this was taken as a sign of a guilty conscience and the men standing nearby stabbed him to death (7.1.5—9).</p>	<p>At Phaselis a report reached Alexander of the intended treachery of Alexander the Lyncestian, a Companion and the brother of Heromenes and Arrabaeus, who had been involved in the murder of Philip. Their brother had been spared because he had supported Alexander. He had been given an honourable position and was eventually appointed to command the Thessalian cavalry.</p> <p>Amyntas, who deserted to the Persians, took a letter from the Lyncestian to Darius, who sent one Sisnes to contact the Lyncestian to offer him the throne of Macedonia and 1000 gold talents if he would assassinate Alexander. He was captured by Parmenio and sent to Alexander.</p> <p>The king discussed the situation with his Companions who said he had been mistaken in promoting Alexander Lyncestes and that he should be summarily executed. Their anxiety was exacerbated by the omen of a swallow, which was interpreted as portending a friend's treachery.</p> <p>A messenger was sent to Parmenio, ordering him to arrest the Lyncestian and keep him in custody (1.25).</p>

### APPENDIX III: THE *EPHEMERIDES*

The *Basileioi Ephemerides* (*King's Journal* or *Dailies* i.e. *Diaries*), also known as the *Hypomnemata* (Records) or *Grammata* (Papers) is believed to have been the official record of a king's reign which was written up on a daily basis by the Chief Secretary.<sup>1</sup> In antiquity it was believed that Eumenes, the royal secretary, and Diodotus, who appears to have been the secretary of Antipater, published the *Diary* to refute the rumours that Alexander had been poisoned, which reached Greece very shortly after his death. Until recently it was also accepted that Ptolemy had use of Alexander's *Ephemerides* and that this was the source of the detail and accuracy of his history.<sup>2</sup> Although the existence of the *King's Journal* is attested in the ancient writings,<sup>3</sup> no writer actually claims to use it as a source for the history of Alexander until Arrian and Plutarch cite it for their description of the last days of Alexander's life.<sup>4</sup> Plutarch claims that most of his account "is word for word as written in the *Journals*" (Plut. *Alex.* 77.1) while Arrian states that the details "are all to be found in the *Diaries*" (Arr. 7.25.1).

In 1955 Pearson initiated an academic debate when he proposed that the *Diary* cited by ancient scholars was not the genuine *Ephemerides*, but a work of fiction "composed in later times and based in part on the work of historians like Ptolemy, Aristobulus and their contemporaries"<sup>5</sup> and that extra details had been added in an attempt to shock people with "startling new revelations" about the character of Alexander.<sup>6</sup> He adds that the commonly accepted belief that Ptolemy consulted the *Diary* when writing his history is "no more than a hypothesis" and that a keen memory rather than a documentary source is an adequate explanation of the quality of Ptolemy's work.<sup>7</sup> Pearson suggests that this fake *Diary* was composed by Strattis of Olynthus, a historian mentioned in the *Suida* lexicon, but otherwise unknown.<sup>8</sup> His supporting arguments are based on the following points:

- fact that Arrian and others mention the *Diary* as they would "a familiar literary work" separate from Ptolemy and Aristobulus whose accounts had "no detail in addition to these";<sup>9</sup>
- Ptolemy's failure to mention the *Diary* as a guarantee of his truthfulness;
- Arrian's failure to cite the use of the *Ephemerides* as his strongest reason for trusting Ptolemy;<sup>10</sup>
- and the reference in both Arrian and Plutarch to the shrine of Sarapis,<sup>11</sup> which is regarded by many scholars as an anachronism.

Pearson suggests that if other documents such as the *Stathmoi* (*Stages*) and various letters which are cited by those authors who also use the *Diary* can be shown to be fictitious this will

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<sup>1</sup> Heckel *Marshals* 346; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 464; Pearson, L, "The Diary and the Letters of Alexander the Great" *Historia* 3 (1955) 434.

<sup>2</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 435; Bosworth *Rumour and Propaganda* 117; Bosworth *Historical Commentary* 23; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 1, 4, 57.

<sup>3</sup> Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 59; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 1; Hammond, NGL, "The Royal Journal of Alexander" *Historia* 37 (1988) 130.

<sup>4</sup> Bosworth *Historical Commentary* 23; Lane Fox *Alexander the Great* 465; Pearson *Diary and Letters* 429—430.

<sup>5</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 439.

<sup>6</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 437. The nature of the information recorded in the *Diary* for the last illness of Alexander is intriguing for it includes details of all-night drinking sessions which took up to thirty-six hours to sleep off, but it stresses that Alexander died from an incidental fever, not from drink or poison.

<sup>7</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 435—437; contra Devine, AM, "Alexander's Propaganda Machine: Callisthenes as the Ultimate Source for Arrian, *Anabasis* 1—3", *Ventures into Greek History* (Oxford: 1994) 90.

<sup>8</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 437. In addition to the *Five Books of Diaries* Strattis also published *On the Death of Alexander* and Pearson suggests that this work was an appendix to the *Diary*.

<sup>9</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 436, 438 449, 455.

<sup>10</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 436.

<sup>11</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 438.

greatly strengthen the case for rejecting the authenticity of the *Journal*.<sup>12</sup> The *Stathmoi* are referred to by Strabo and Athenaeus while Aelian and Pliny the Elder name some of the *Bematistae* (Pacers), who wrote or published these topographical records. Pearson claims that quotations show that the reports of the *Bematistae* were not routine official reports, but were "literary works designed to interest and startle readers", and that they included legends, marvels of natural history and strange customs, giving rise to the suspicion that their authors were borrowing from existing histories of Alexander.<sup>13</sup> There is no trace of the work of the *Bematistae* in Arrian's narrative, which indicates that neither Ptolemy nor Aristobulus used these records.<sup>14</sup> Similarly, Pearson believes that the letters in the Alexander histories are fictitious and form part of a published collection of Alexander's correspondence or are elaborations of existing letters, although he concedes that the letters quoted by Arrian are reasonable and plausible and may have been taken from Ptolemy or Aristobulus.<sup>15</sup> Pearson sums up his arguments:

"The analogy of the letters and the *Stathmoi* suggests that a published version of the Diary would not be an authentic or accurate copy of the original document written by Eumenes and Diodotus; and reports of Alexander's drinking and its after-effects, as well as the error about the Sarapeum, make it difficult to believe that the quotations are in fact genuine"<sup>16</sup>

Green, rather surprisingly, has very little to say about the *Ephemerides*. In a note he states that the *Royal Ephemerides* have been over-worked and debated with "fanciful" results, but that corrective assessments have been published by Samuel, Badian and especially Bosworth, "who presents an excellent case for regarding the *Ephemerides* as a forged concoction put out as propaganda by Alexander's murderers."<sup>17</sup>

Similarly, Renault does not say much about the *Royal Journal*. She accepts that what is known from Plutarch and Arrian is very frank for a court document but believes that the description of Alexander's illness is genuine and straightforward with a "consistency far beyond the medical knowledge of the time to invent".<sup>18</sup> Renault complains about scholars who apply anachronistic moral standards in their judgement of Alexander but the concept of "royal archives"<sup>19</sup> in Macedonia or travelling with the expeditionary forces might be termed an administrative anachronism. Records of some description must have been kept, but both Hammond and Renault imply a sophisticated and permanent bureaucracy staffed by trained civil servants and housed in buildings equipped with some kind of filing system. The reality was probably much more primitive and it is hardly surprising that no sign of any "royal archives" has survived.

According to Hammond, the content of the *Archive* included a detailed record of all the king's movements and acts, even his sleeping, drinking and hunting expeditions as well as plans, all orders, negotiations, letters, embassies, records of royal lands and land grants.<sup>20</sup> Most of information was common knowledge – sacrifices, festivals, parades, assemblies were public acts, and some items (decisions, decrees or instructions) were recorded on papyrus, tablets or

<sup>12</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 439.

<sup>13</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 441.

<sup>14</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 441.

<sup>15</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 448, 449.

<sup>16</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 455.

<sup>17</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 562—563 n 85. The publications he refers to are: CA Robinson, *The Ephemerides of Alexander's Expedition* (Providence, 1932); AE Samuel, "Alexander's Royal Journals", *Historia* 14 (1965); AB Bosworth, "The Death of Alexander the Great: Rumour and Propaganda", *CQ ns* 21 (1971); E Badian, "A King's Notebooks", *HSPH* 72 (1967).

<sup>18</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 226.

<sup>19</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 100.

<sup>20</sup> Hammond *HM III* 18; Hammond *Royal Journal* 131—132; Hammond *Three Historians* 7.

stone as well as in the *Journal*.<sup>21</sup> Some of the contents, such as battle orders and orders in the field, were restricted, while some items, for example plans, orders, instructions and negotiations were secret, known only to the king and the Chief Secretary, "a man of honourable station, of trust and of known thoroughness" (Nepos. *Eum.* 1.5). Because the king had only one *Archive*, the whole *Archive* was kept secret, but he would inform his people about his administration from time to time (Plb. 4.87.7).<sup>22</sup> Hammond contends that the *Archive* was vital for orderly government in a state where the executive power concentrated in the hands of the king and it therefore moved with the king.<sup>23</sup> When Alexander died in Babylon the *Archive* was there and was initially taken over by Perdikkas the "manager of the kingship" who submitted some of Alexander's plans to the Assembly (Diod. 18.4.2). Normally, the *Archive* would be deposited at Aegae, the burial place of the Macedonian kings, but Hammond believes that when Ptolemy intercepted Alexander's corpse he took over the *Archive* and kept it in Alexandria.<sup>24</sup>

Hammond bluntly and consistently defends the *Ephemerides* and Ptolemy's use of this resource and his in his article *The Royal Journal of Alexander* (1988) he claims that Pearson's arguments have been uncritically accepted by other writers.<sup>25</sup> To demonstrate the existence of the *Ephemerides* Hammond tables various references by the ancient authors (Nepos, Athenaeus, Polyacnus, Pseudo-Callisthenes, Polybius and Strabo) to the *Journals* of the Macedonian kings Philip II, Alexander III, Antigonos Doston and Perscus, and to Chief Secretaries in the Ptolemaic and Seleucid kingdoms – convincing evidence that a precise daily record (or *Archive*) was kept, probably from the time of Alexander I.<sup>26</sup>

Hammond disputes Pearson's proposition that if other documents (Letters and the *Stathmoi*) can be shown to be fabricated, the case for rejecting the *Diary's* authenticity will be greatly strengthened<sup>27</sup> and dismisses the analogy of the Letters:

"... 'Letters' do not form an analogy at all. The letter was a recognised fictional form, practised in schools for instance, and a letter of this kind was not designed to challenge and displace an official letter, recorded for instance in an Archive".<sup>28</sup>

He examines the two passages in Strabo that provide evidence for Pearson's comparison of the *Archive* and the *Stathmoi*.<sup>29</sup> The first passage refers to a financial survey undertaken so that taxes could be fairly assessed:

"Patrocles says that those who campaigned with Alexander inquired cursorily (vis. into distances) in each case but he Alexander made (them) accurate, since the entire territory was written up for him by those who were most experienced. The written up (account) was given to him (i.e. Alexander), he says, later by Xenocles the Treasurer" (Strabo C. 69).<sup>30</sup>

Strabo found Patrocles' statement "not incredible", implying that Patrocles had access to the documents. Xenocles, the chief financial officer, would have been the appropriate person to conduct the survey and collate the results and copies would have been kept in the Treasury and the headquarters of the financial divisions of the empire as well as in the *Archive*. Thus

<sup>21</sup> Hammond *Royal Journal* 133.

<sup>22</sup> Hammond *HM III* 18; Hammond *Royal Journal* 132—133, 147.

<sup>23</sup> Hammond *Royal Journal* 131, 134, 147.

<sup>24</sup> Hammond *HM III* 18; Hammond *Royal Journal* 134; *Three Historians* 9.

<sup>25</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 4, 57; *Ephemerides*, *HM III* 17—21; *Royal Journal*; *Three Historians* 5—10, 37, 77, 84, 143, 158d, 169, 171, 182.

<sup>26</sup> Hammond *Royal Journal* 130—131.

<sup>27</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 439.

<sup>28</sup> Hammond *Royal Journal* 137.

<sup>29</sup> Hammond *Royal Journal* 137; Pearson *Diary and Letters* 439—443.

<sup>30</sup> Hammond *Royal Journal* 137. The translation is Hammond's.



Hammond believes that the survey was accessible to Patrocles in the *Archive* at Alexandria or at a place such as Babylon which had been a divisional headquarters.<sup>31</sup> Pearson's translation differs:

"... he (Patrocles) says that the record was shown to him subsequently by Xenocles, the curator of the Treasure" (Strabo 2.1.6).<sup>32</sup>

Hammond maintains that Pearson has misunderstood, or mistranslated the pronoun "him" as referring to the subject of the sentence, Patrocles,<sup>33</sup> and that Xenocles could not have shown the great survey to Patrocles.<sup>34</sup> In his opinion, Pearson was mistaken in inferring that the passage in Strabo is the only ancient reference to the preservation of Alexander's official records, that Babylon was the obvious place to keep them and that the Seleucid kings there inherited them.<sup>35</sup>

Pearson comments on the second passage in Strabo,

"But, Eratosthenes was not able to consult the official records himself, and he makes it clear that no complete copy of them was published at the time when he wrote; in fact he complains of the difficulty of collecting information from the various authors of *Stathmoi*, whose names are not always known" (Strabo 2.1.23).<sup>36</sup>

Although the text is corrupt,<sup>37</sup> Hammond states that he sees little relation between Pearson's interpretation and the actual text, which he takes to mean that Eratosthenes went back to the original reports in the *Archive* of Alexander and found that some of them did not have the titles he had expected them to have. Eratosthenes was the Librarian of the great library at Alexandria and Hammond assumes that this is where he would have read the *Archive*. He also fails to see the analogy between these genuine reports of "stages" and the alleged publication of a forged diary.<sup>38</sup>

After dealing with these issues, Hammond responds to Pearson's "case for the Diary mentioned by four ancient authors being not (as they of course supposed) genuine, but spurious".<sup>39</sup> His disapproval is obvious:

"It is of course a daring and exciting proposal; for it has the cachet that modern scholarship has surpassed in acumen not only those four ancient authors but also, less significantly, all predecessors of Pearson in Alexander studies. But I shall need a strong case to be convinced".<sup>40</sup>

Hammond categorically rejects any suggestion that the *Archive* referred to by Arrian and Plutarch was a forgery.<sup>41</sup> A false *Journal* published within memory of Alexander's reign would be denounced by the leading Macedonians, who were eyewitnesses of what truly happened during Alexander's illness. In addition, the thousands of soldiers who filed past Alexander'

<sup>31</sup> Hammond *Royal Journal* 138.

<sup>32</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 440.

<sup>33</sup> Hammond *Royal Journal* 138 and n. 28. Hammond adds that Berve (I.54) and the Loeb translator made the same mistake.

<sup>34</sup> Hammond *Royal Journal* 139 n. 30.

<sup>35</sup> Hammond *Royal Journal* 139; Pearson *Diary and Letters* 439—443.

<sup>36</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 443.

<sup>37</sup> Hammond *Royal Journal* 139.

<sup>38</sup> Hammond *Royal Journal* 139—140.

<sup>39</sup> Hammond *Royal Journal* 140.

<sup>40</sup> Hammond *Royal Journal* 140; cf. Hammond *HM III* 19; Hammond *Three Historians* 6.

<sup>41</sup> Hammond, NGL, "Αί Βασιλειαί Εφημερίδες", *Ancient Macedonia V vol. ii (Manolis Andronikos in memoriam)* (Thessaloniki: 1993) 572; Hammond *HM III* 20; Hammond *Royal Journal* 150; Bosworth *Rumour and Propaganda* 122.

deathbed would not have been fooled by a fake.<sup>42</sup> He also rejects suggestions of a later forgery<sup>43</sup> questioning the purpose of waiting for fifty years or more after Alexander's death and he is sceptical of a fake *Journal* being accepted in place of the real one after so many years. Even more daunting would be the task of actually forging the many entries necessary to recreate an *Archive* for Alexander's exceedingly busy reign.<sup>44</sup>

Pearson suggested that Strattis of Olynthus was the forger but Hammond disputes this and queries his translation of the *Suida* entry as "Five Books of Diaries about the Exploits of Alexander"<sup>45</sup> on the grounds that no author would write five books of day-by-day reports. Hammond maintains that the *Suida* entry should read "Strattis of Olynthus, historian: *On the Ephemerides of Alexander* five books" indicating that Strattis' work was a commentary on Alexander's *Archive*.<sup>46</sup> He dismisses Pearson's suggestion that Strattis called himself 'Strattis the Olynthian' in order to make it appear that he was a contemporary of Alexander, asking why the ancient authors cited the work as *The King's Ephemerides* and not as *Strattis' Ephemerides*. Further, he points out that an Olynthian cavalryman appears on an Egyptian papyrus dating from about 240 BC and suggests that Strattis may have been his contemporary.<sup>47</sup> At this time Eratosthenes had access to the *Archive* in Alexandria and Hammond believes that Strattis had the same facility to write his five books of commentary on *The Ephemerides of Alexander*.<sup>48</sup>

In support of his argument that Plutarch, Arrian, Athenaeus and Aelian had the whole *Diary* available, Hammond cites an author not mentioned by Pearson: Philinus, writing around the middle of the third century BC, who noted that the *Ephemerides* frequently mentioned Alexander's drinking and sleeping habits and obviously believed that he was referring to a genuine record.<sup>49</sup> Hammond explains his point:

"When five authors separately make citations simply from "The Ephemerides" there are no grounds for supposing that all were using a book (or books) which contained only those cited passages".<sup>50</sup>

Pearson translates Arrian *Anabasis* 7.26.3 as "no detail in addition to these" (is recorded by Aristobulus and Ptolemy)<sup>51</sup> meaning that there may be details in the *Diary* which do not occur in Ptolemy or Aristobulus and comments that details that seem incredible or historically impossible can be explained as additions by Strattis, not errors of Ptolemy and Aristobulus. He also claims that Arrian sometimes "corrects the *Diary* by reference to Aristobulus or Ptolemy".<sup>52</sup> On the other hand, Hammond understands Arrian's phrase to mean that the accounts of Aristobulus and Ptolemy were similar to the *Ephemerides* and that Arrian was comparing the three accounts which he regarded as independent, correctly so, since Ptolemy and Aristobulus were intimates of Alexander who visited him during his illness and were well qualified to write personal versions of his death.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Bosworth *Rumour and Propaganda* 122—123; Hammond *HM III* 20; Hammond *Royal Journal* 135; Hammond *Three Historians* 6.

<sup>43</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 437.

<sup>44</sup> Hammond *Ephemerides* 532; Hammond *Royal Journal* 136, 147; Hammond *Three Historians* 8.

<sup>45</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 437.

<sup>46</sup> Hammond *Ephemerides* 570—571; Hammond *Royal Journal* 141; Hammond *Three Historians* 9.

<sup>47</sup> Hammond *Royal Journal* 142. The reference for the papyrus is: *Flinders Petrie Papyri*, Eds. JP Mahaffy and J Gilbert Smyly (Dublin 1903) p. 115. col. 1.15 = Brit. Lib. Pap. 573 (2) verso.

<sup>48</sup> Hammond *Royal Journal* 142; Hammond *Three Historians* 9.

<sup>49</sup> Hammond *HM III* 20; Hammond *Royal Journal* 140—141; Hammond *Three Historians* 7; Pearson *Diary and Letters* 436. Philinus is cited by Plutarch (*Moralia* 623).

<sup>50</sup> Hammond *Royal Journal* 140 n 36.

<sup>51</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 438.

<sup>52</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 438.

<sup>53</sup> Hammond *Royal Journal* 142 – 143.

Pearson finds the language of Plutarch and Arrian for the passage based on the *Ephemerides* to be similar but not identical, and Hammond observes that this is to be expected from ancient authors who did not copy documents, but preferred to use their own particular style of writing.<sup>54</sup> In support of his theory that Plutarch was quoting from the false *Diary* while Arrian was using it, but correcting it by reference to Aristobulus or Ptolemy, Pearson discusses a number of "significant" discrepancies between the versions of Arrian and Plutarch, particularly the details of Alexander's conversations with Nearchus.<sup>55</sup> Bosworth surmises that these discrepancies are evidence that the *Ephemerides*, originally published to refute rumours that Alexander had been poisoned, was a propaganda document that was progressively altered as the political climate changed.<sup>56</sup> Hammond rejects both these opinions and argues that Pearson, Bosworth and others failed to consider the evidence about the *Royal Journals* for other reigns and that when Alexander was dying the *Journal* recorded not only the course of his illness, but also all other actions – eating, sleeping, visitors, conversations, and orders issued by Alexander. Plutarch and Arrian were not paraphrasing the *Journal*; rather each author selected the information that most interested him. Thus Arrian, the soldier, reports the issuing of orders seven times to Plutarch's once, gives more details of the consultation of Sarapis and describes Alexander's heroic effort to acknowledge his men as they filed past, while Plutarch, the biographer, emphasises the dramatic, human interest details such as the sick man being entertained by Nearchus' account of his voyage and the soldiers being so anxious about their king that they demonstrated until they were allowed to file past, informally dressed in the *chitons*.<sup>57</sup> Hammond is convinced that "Alexander's *Journal* did record the last words and the last days of Alexander" and that Plutarch and Arrian, who were practised in assessing the authenticity of documents, believed that they were working from the genuine *Journal*.<sup>58</sup>

Pearson accepts that some kind of diary was kept, but suggests that it was "a familiar and recognised literary work" that had been published and was separate from Ptolemy and Aristobulus.<sup>59</sup> Hammond agrees that the *Diary* was separate, but argues that

"... it is a matter of modern taste whether one considers such sentences as 'next day he bathed again, sacrificed the appointed sacrifices and after sacrificing continued in constant fever' to be the mark of a literary work, rather than a factual diary of events and sayings".<sup>60</sup>

He adds that publishing is a modern concept and stresses his belief that the *Diary* was accessible, whether in the original form or as a copy.<sup>61</sup> Pearson suggests that the paucity of references to the *Ephemerides* by ancient authors, particularly Arrian and Plutarch, and Arrian's failure to mention Ptolemy's use of it as one of his reasons for trusting his history are further indications that it was a forgery.<sup>62</sup> Hammond comments that it is surprising that Philinus, Arrian, Plutarch, Athenaeus and Aelian name their sources at all, because this was not the normal practice of ancient authors, nor did they quote documents that had no literary merit.<sup>63</sup>

The key point of Pearson's theory is that the reference to the temple of Sarapis in Babylon (Arr. 7.26.2; Plut. *Alex.* 76.4) is an anachronism (a "romantic addition by a later writer"),

<sup>54</sup> Hammond *HM III* 19; Hammond *Royal Journal* 145; Pearson *Diary and Letters* 432.

<sup>55</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 432–433 and notes 15–20, 438, 439.

<sup>56</sup> Bosworth *Rumour and Propaganda* 121.

<sup>57</sup> Hammond *Royal Journal* 145–146.

<sup>58</sup> Hammond *HM III* 19; Hammond *Three Historians* 5–6.

<sup>59</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 436; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 210.

<sup>60</sup> Hammond *Three Historians* 7.

<sup>61</sup> Hammond *Royal Journal* 141.

<sup>62</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 436.

<sup>63</sup> Hammond *Royal Journal* 145; Hammond *Three Historians* 7–8.

which proves the *Diary* to be a forgery.<sup>64</sup> For Hammond the reference to Sarapis by three independent writers is incontrovertible proof that a shrine to this god did exist in Babylon at the time of Alexander's death. Babylon was a great cosmopolitan city and there was probably an Egyptian community, similar to the Jewish community that is known to have existed there from the late sixth century and Alexander may have had Egyptian troops in the city for Arrian reports that Egyptians had campaigned as far as India (Arr. *Ind.* 18.1; 31. 3). In addition, Alexander was greatly influenced by Egyptian religion and had Egyptian seers with him at Gaugamela in 331 (Curt. 4.10.4) and his body was embalmed by Egyptians (Curt. 10.10. 13). The mention of Sarapis in the *Ephemerides* is not the only reference in the Alexander literature, for Plutarch says that it was Sarapis who miraculously freed the man who sat on Alexander's throne and foreshadowed his death (Plut. *Alex.* 73.9). In the context of Alexander's illness, Hammond believes that a consultation with Sarapis, the god of healing (as separate from Ptolemy's special cult of Sarapis [Tac. *Hist.* 4.83—84]) by those close to Alexander, is to be expected.<sup>65</sup>

Hammond's absolute consistency over many years of scholarship lends authority to his arguments, some of which are sounder than those of Pearson, Bosworth and other writers. Hammond's translation and discussion of the passages in Strabo (about the *Stathmoi*) and of the Suida reference to Stattis of Olynthus is more convincing than Pearson's. Similarly his rebuttal of Pearson's arguments about the lack of acknowledgement of the *Ephemerides* as a source, the apparent discrepancies between Plutarch and Arrian and the "recognised literary work" are well founded and sensible. In particular, Hammond's arguments in favour of the existence of a shrine of Sarapis in Babylon are clear, logical and plausible, whereas Pearson's suggestion that "it is a 'romantic' addition by a later writer"<sup>66</sup> is weak. Hammond is probably justified in stating that Arrian was correct in preferring Ptolemy to other writers on Alexander because he had exclusive use of Alexander's *Archive*.<sup>67</sup> In addition, Hammond shows that the balance of probability favours his view that Plutarch, Arrian and others did have access to the genuine *Journal* or, that they thought that they did.

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<sup>64</sup> Bosworth *Rumour and Propaganda* 120; Pearson *Diary and Letters* 438; cf. Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 210. Bosworth sees the mention of Sarapis as an indication that the fake *Diary* was published early, claiming that Belus and Oserapis may have been regarded as twin manifestations (the bull god of Babylon and the Apis bull of Egypt in its deceased form) of the same deity.

<sup>65</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 240; Hammond *AM III* 20 n 1; Hammond *Royal Journal* 143—144; Hammond *Three Historians* 6. Alexander had arranged for 6000 troops to be trained in Egypt (probably in 331 BC) (Suida) and Hammond believes that they, like the *Epigoni* were trained for service outside their own country.

<sup>66</sup> Pearson *Diary and Letters* 439.

<sup>67</sup> Hammond *Ephemerides* 573.

## APPENDIX IV: THE BATTLE OF THE GRANICUS RIVER

The Battle of the Granicus River is of particular interest to scholars because of the differences between Diodorus' account of the action (17.19.1—22.6) and the narratives of Plutarch (*Alex.* 16.1—8) and Arrian (1.13.1—16.7), both of whom appear to have based their accounts on Ptolemy and Aristobulus. The most important differences are: Diodorus has the battle take place at dawn; Alexander's forces cross the river without hindrance and engage the Persians on the far bank, possibly on the plain of Adrasteia, whereas Plutarch and Arrian state that the battle took place in the late afternoon (in spite of Parmenio's advice to wait until the following morning) and they describe the fiercest action taking place between the Macedonians trying to cross the river and the Persian cavalry trying to hold the river bank.

Hammond's analysis of the battle of the Granicus River is typically careful and detailed and is backed by a thorough site inspection.<sup>1</sup> He scornfully dismisses Diodorus' account as a romantic fantasy based on Cleitarchus.<sup>2</sup> Predictably, Hammond turns to Arrian whose narrative is, he believes, a factual report based on Ptolemy and Aristobulus that supplies accurate details for the Macedonian side of the exact battle-order, names of unit commanders, orders issued, troop movements, Alexander's feats in battle and detailed losses.<sup>3</sup>

Because Hammond follows Arrian so closely, his account of the battle is conservative, but he does discuss some of the controversial aspects. Firstly, he states that the speeches attributed to Parmenio and Alexander were intended to introduce the coming battle by setting out, in dramatic form, the problems that Alexander was likely to encounter.<sup>4</sup> Secondly, Hammond accepts that Arrian's description of Alexander's order of battle is accurate and intelligent; that Alexander acted speedily in order to prevent the Persians from altering their dispositions and that by deploying his troops from marching order into extended line he was able to offset his enemy's superior numbers.<sup>5</sup> Thirdly, Hammond believes that Alexander deceived the enemy by ordering his special assault force to make a frontal attack while he led the right wing into the river bed. The Persians, expecting an immediate attack stood firm, but the troops to the right of Alexander moved progressively upstream and to the right to outflank the Persian left. Hammond explains that by extending his own formation in line and advancing against the current and to the right, Alexander was able to avoid his forces emerging from the river in

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<sup>1</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 70; Hammond, NGL "The Battle of the Granicus River" *JHS* 100 (1980) 77.

Features that Hammond believes correspond with those described by the ancient writers include the level plain of Adrasteia, the steep clay banks of the Granicus and the deep pockets in the river's clay bed.

<sup>2</sup> Badian *Battle of the Granicus* 273 and 273 n 6; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 72. For perhaps the first time Hammond and Badian are in agreement on some aspect of Alexander-history for Badian also dismisses Diodorus, suggesting that he used a rhetorical formula derived from Cleitarchus for both the battle of the Granicus River and the battle of Issus.

<sup>3</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 72; Hammond *Battle of the Granicus River* 82 and n 27. By contrast Badian *Battle of the Granicus* 274—275 suggests that Arrian's account is based on the court historian Callisthenes and "is hardly an account of a battle at all", and Bosworth *Historical Commentary* 116 states that Arrian is inconsistent and at times implausible.

<sup>4</sup> Badian *Battle of the Granicus* 276; Bosworth *Historical Commentary* 115; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 73.

Badian believes that Parmenio's speech is merely a foil to set off Alexander's superior insight and that it originates from Callisthenes' consistent denigration of Alexander's second-in-command. Bosworth agrees that the dialogues between Alexander and Parmenio are designed to portray Parmenio as pragmatic and cautious in contrast to the romantic impulsiveness of Alexander.

<sup>5</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 73; contra Badian *Battle of the Granicus River* 282—283, who claims that Arrian described Alexander's battle-line with characteristic carelessness and that his description of the Persian battle-line is completely inadequate.

disorder and in column, a danger that had been foreseen by Parmenio. He claims that those scholars who believe that the sideways movement was downstream and to the left have mistranslated Arrian 1.14.7.<sup>6</sup>

The final controversial point is the massacre of the Greek mercenaries, which is mentioned by both Arrian and Plutarch. Plutarch states that they alone stood firm against the Macedonians (Plut. *Alex.* 16.6), but Arrian claims that the mercenaries, stunned by the unexpectedness of the situation did nothing (Arr. 1.16.2), a statement that Hammond echoes.<sup>7</sup> The implication in Arrian is that the mercenaries behaved in a cowardly fashion and did not attempt to defend themselves. Nevertheless he calls Alexander's action a massacre. Hammond does not disparage the Greeks, but by admitting that they were the most formidable enemy and claiming that they fought to the death he turns the massacre into a battle and avoids having to censure Alexander for his inexplicable and senseless savagery.<sup>8</sup>

Hammond's overall assessment of the battle is that Alexander demonstrated the superior qualities of his cavalry in close combat and the supremacy of the Macedonian pike over the hoplite's spears. In his opinion, the most significant feature of the battle was Alexander's ability to co-ordinate his heavy cavalry, light cavalry and light infantry in a single victorious attack.<sup>9</sup>

Although Green uses Diodorus as his main source he borrows freely from Arrian and Plutarch for his unconventional reconstruction of the battle. Thus, Alexander arrives at the Granicus in battle order (Arr. 13.1—2), but Parmenio tries to dissuade him from immediate action (Arr. 1.13.3—5; Plut. *Alex.* 16.2) suggesting that Arsites, who was heavily outnumbered in infantry might decamp during the night, the one thing, according to Green, that Alexander had to prevent at all costs.<sup>10</sup> It is unclear why he believes that the Persians might have withdrawn for none of the sources suggest this.<sup>11</sup> Philip's veterans, who recognise that they are facing a death-trap, raise religious objections against fighting in the month Daesius, but these are swept aside by Alexander's intercalation of a second Artemisius (Plut. 16.3). Green speculates that if a direct assault actually took place in the late afternoon it must have been a failure and that for this reason, or for some other unknown reason, Alexander was forced to accept Parmenio's advice to launch a dawn attack – a loss of face and humiliation which he never forgot or forgave.<sup>12</sup> Under cover of darkness, probably leaving campfires burning to deceive the Persians, Alexander moved his army downstream to a suitable ford, where they crossed at dawn with Alexander successfully warding off a surprise attack by a few Persian cavalry regiments.<sup>13</sup> Green bases this otherwise undocumented attack on a sentence in Polyaeus (4.3.16), and he claims that a minor action during the crossing is logical since an army as large

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<sup>6</sup> Badian *Battle of the Granicus* 288 and n. 51; Hammond *Battle of the Granicus River* 75; Hammond *Alexander the Great* 74. Badian differs from Hammond in his analysis of the Macedonian troop formation at the crossing. He considers that the initial formation was the Macedonian wedge, which would have brought them out of the river on a narrow front and that Alexander lengthened his front while crossing the river-bed until it precisely filled the width of the gravel slope for which he was making, thereby neutralising any advantage to the Persians. Badian also argues that the river was pulling the troops sideways, to the left, and that Arrian (1.14.7) gives the direction of the move and at the same time makes the point that it was ordered so as to take advantage of the current.

<sup>7</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 76; Hammond *Battle of the Granicus River* 86.

<sup>8</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 76.

<sup>9</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 76.

<sup>10</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 169, 173—175. Green believes that Alexander's financial position was critical and his one hope of acquiring sufficient funds to continue his campaign was to tempt the Persians into a set battle and win it.

<sup>11</sup> Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 39.

<sup>12</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 175.

<sup>13</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 176.

as Alexander's could not have crossed the river unobserved.<sup>14</sup> It would be equally surprising if Alexander had managed to move his army downstream undetected, even if fires were left burning to deceive the Persians, but Green does not notice this incongruity and comments that similar ruses were surprisingly successful in antiquity.<sup>15</sup> Hammond points out that the Persians, on the other side of a narrow river, could hardly have avoided noticing the movement of close on 50 000 men and 6 000 horses, especially since the campfires would illuminate the situation.<sup>16</sup> The skirmish over Alexander deployed his troops in battle formation at right angles to the river on the Adrasteian plain, ideal terrain for a cavalry engagement. Arsites and his colleagues reacted quickly and put their cavalry regiments into the front line on as wide a front as possible, keeping the weak infantry in reserve (Diod. 17.19.3) the only course open to them, in Green's opinion.<sup>17</sup>

Green's describes the battle as a desperate Homeric struggle in which Alexander receives a massive blow to the helmet that lays his scalp open to the bone, Cleitus severs Spithridates arm at the shoulder saving the king's life in the nick of time for Alexander collapses, half-fainting to the ground.<sup>18</sup> Green has embellished the sources for although they all describe the battle in heroic terms and agree that Alexander was struck on the head and that his life was saved by Cleitus' swift action, not one suggests that Alexander was seriously injured and virtually unable to continue. Arrian says Alexander's helmet withstood the blow and Alexander hurled Rhoesaces to the ground (Arr. 1.15.8). Plutarch claims that the helmet absorbed the blow, but battle-axe "touched the topmost hair of his head" (Plut. *Alex.* 16.5). Even Diodorus, whose account is closest to Green's, mentions only a slight scalp wound, and states that in spite of a number of blows Alexander surmounted every danger "borne up by an exaltation of spirit" (Diod. 17.20.7; 17.21.1—3).

Green accepts Diodorus' description of the conclusion of the cavalry battle (Diod. 17.21.4) and follows his source in giving the Thessalians under Parmenio perhaps more than their fair share of the glory.<sup>19</sup> Hammond and Badian dismiss Diodorus' account of the heroic resistance of the Thessalians as propaganda to exalt the Greeks and belittle the Persians,<sup>20</sup> or as part of a rhetorical formula for an Alexander battle.<sup>21</sup>

Diodorus does not mention the massacre of the Greek mercenaries, commenting that the battle of the foot soldiers did not last long because the Persians were dismayed by the rout of their cavalry. Since this omission does not accord with Green's portrayal of Alexander as temperamental, vengeful and prone to violent, uncontrolled rages, he includes the evidence from Arrian and Plutarch for the slaughter of the Greeks.<sup>22</sup>

In the *Appendix: Propaganda at the Granicus* Green elaborates on his interpretation, discussing some of the problems associated with the evidence for the battle – the discrepancies in the ancient accounts, particularly regarding the timing of the battle; whether or not the crossing was contested; the serious differences in the figures given for the sizes of the

<sup>14</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 533 n 45. Bosworth *Historical Commentary* 115 believes the Polyaeus' reference is compatible with Diodorus' report that the Persians attacked from the high ground.

<sup>15</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 176 and 533 n 44.

<sup>16</sup> Badian *Battle of the Granicus* 272 n. 5; Green *Alexander of Macedon* 173; Hammond *Battle of the Granicus River* 74.

<sup>17</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 176—177, 500. Diodorus states that the Persian footmen numbered not fewer than 100 000 (Diod. 17.19.4). His figure is hugely inflated as Green argues in his *Appendix* where he suggests an infantry force of 15—16 000 of which up to one third were Greek mercenaries.

<sup>18</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 178.

<sup>19</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 179.

<sup>20</sup> Hammond *Battle of the Granicus River* 87.

<sup>21</sup> Badian *Battle of the Granicus* 273—274.

<sup>22</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 507.

opposing armies; and the apparently inexplicable strategies adopted by both Alexander and the Persians.<sup>23</sup> After summarising the "facts that have emerged", he sets out his hypothesis that there were "... two battles at the Granicus, one, abortive, in the afternoon, the second, overwhelmingly successful, the following morning..."<sup>24</sup>.

Green claims that that the evidence for the battle has been deliberately and systematically altered to conceal an initial failure and that the conflicting evidence in the sources can be reconciled if it is accepted that an "official version" and an "independent" account have survived, which disagree on several crucial points.<sup>25</sup> And, he adds, the only person who could have altered the record used by Ptolemy and Aristobulus, both of whom were aware of the truth, was Alexander himself, aided by Eumenes his chief secretary and Callisthenes, the expedition's official historian.<sup>26</sup>

The evidence on which Green bases this theory is Alexander's treatment of the Greek mercenaries. He maintains that Alexander had always reacted extremely badly to opposition and that his instinct was to destroy those who thwarted his ambition and his will.<sup>27</sup> Thus the wholesale slaughter of the majority of Memnon's Greek mercenaries, the most competent and experienced troops on the Persian side, and the enslavement of the survivors, was Alexander's terrible retribution for their part in his humiliation.<sup>28</sup> Green adds that the "official" record was altered to exaggerate the threat represented by the Greek mercenaries and increase the glory of overcoming them. At the same time their part in the actual crossing of the Granicus was deleted, although this made the Persian's battle plan wholly unbelievable.

Having made this assertion, Green reconstructs what he believes may have been the true course of events. Alexander reached the Granicus and found that Arsites had made his dispositions well with the cavalry positioned along the bank, and Memnon and his mercenaries at the crossing point. In spite of Parmenio's advice and the reluctance of the Macedonians to attack under unfavourable conditions, Alexander, true to his Homeric destiny, charged headlong across the Granicus River with thirteen squadrons, but could make no headway against Memnon's professionals and was forced to turn back.<sup>29</sup> According to Green, it is this central fact – that Alexander's first brush ended in humiliating defeat and that Alexander had to swallow his pride and accept Parmenio's advice – that Ptolemy and Aristobulus are at such pains to conceal.<sup>30</sup> During the night the army marched downstream and forded the Granicus. Next day the Macedonians won an overwhelming victory. Alexander was not yet strong enough to settle the score with Parmenio, who had been so embarrassingly right, but he took savage revenge on Memnon's mercenaries, disguising his personal anger by claiming to be acting on behalf of the Hellenic League.<sup>31</sup> Green suggests that the fact that only thirteen squadrons were involved in the initial debacle may explain the unbelievably small number of Macedonian casualties. It was now necessary to put the record straight for propaganda purposes and the two engagements were merged and the scene of the conflict changed from dawn to evening and from the plain to the river bank. Although no one would dare to publish

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<sup>23</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 489—500

<sup>24</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 506.

<sup>25</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 504—506.

<sup>26</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 505.

<sup>27</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 506. This theme runs through Green's book.

<sup>28</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 506—507.

<sup>29</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 508, 509. Green further suggests that the phalanx did not follow Alexander on this occasion. Parmenio's advice had been flouted and most key commands were held by Parmenio's sons, relatives and personal nominees, and they may have seized the opportunity to "make a Urah" of Alexander.

<sup>30</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 509.

<sup>31</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 509—510. Aristobulus states that Alexander was "influenced more by anger than by reason" (Plut. *Alex.* 16.7).



the truth in Alexander's lifetime a tradition recording the true facts survived and was utilised by one of Diodorus' sources and appears, severely abbreviated, in Diodorus' narrative.<sup>32</sup>

Green admits that his theory does not solve the enigma of the Battle of the Granicus River beyond any reasonable doubt, but claims that his hypothesis answers more questions than it raises. He insists that Diodorus' account is sane and commonsensical in comparison with Arrian's and that it cannot be dismissed as "rhetorical fiction straight from the Issus stock-pot".<sup>33</sup> Needless to say, Hammond is scathing about Green's theory calling it an uncritical amalgam of two sources in which Green invents a night march downstream and two engagements.<sup>34</sup> Badian is equally critical and states that Green has rewritten Diodorus and has introduced evidence that is not even hinted at in his chosen source.<sup>35</sup> I can only agree with these distinguished scholars. This is perhaps the most extreme example of Green's penchant for using all of the evidence available, but in this instance he has gone beyond the evidence and produced an implausible and unconvincing conglomeration of speculation.

Renault's narrative of the Battle of the Granicus River is based on Arrian and although it offers no surprises it is carefully thought out. She adopts General Fuller's explanation that military etiquette dictated the Persian tactic of placing the cavalry along the river bank in front of the infantry.<sup>36</sup> Renault expands on Arrian's comment that experience and long cornelwood lances enabled the Macedonians to defeat the Persian cavalry (Arr.1.15.5), making the observation that Medieval knights on big horses anchored by stirrups into massive saddles and holding huge lances in rests would have offered an impregnable line of defence, but that the Persians had only the insecure seat of the ancient horseman and were equipped with two missile javelins that were inferior to the Macedonians strong cornelwood lances.<sup>37</sup> She notes that Alexander slaughtered the Greek mercenaries, but follows Arrian in claiming that he regarded them as traitors to the Hellenic League (Arr. 1.16.6).<sup>38</sup>

While it is true that the evidence for the battle of the Granicus River is inadequate, contradictory and highly rhetorical, the most important fact and the one that is common to all the sources is that Alexander won the battle and won it decisively. In view of this it is fascinating that scholars, who must all use the same evidence, interpret the battle in such diverse ways. An added problem for many scholars is the fact that few have the military knowledge or experience needed to assess the evidence for battles correctly, something which applies to ancient scholars as much as to modern historians. Because Hammond has this

<sup>32</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 510—511.

<sup>33</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 512.

<sup>34</sup> Hammond *Battle of the Granicus River* 74.

<sup>35</sup> Badian *Battle of the Granicus* 272 n 5.

<sup>36</sup> Renault *Nature Alexander* 84. General Fuller *The Generalship of Alexander* (1958) 148 quoted by Green *Alexander of Macedon* 493: "... throughout history the cavalry soldier has despised the infantryman, and to have placed the Greek mercenaries in the forefront of the battle would have been to surrender to them the place of honour. Military etiquette forbade it." Schachermeyr *Alexander der Grosse: Ingenium und Macht* [1949] 143 described it as a formal contest of *Junker gegen Junker* where only the cavalry would participate, and both sides would observe the rules of knightly warfare. Badian *Battle of the Granicus* 287 and n 49 agrees that Arrian 1.14.4 and 1.15.3 support the knightly ethic of *Junker gegen Junker* that was the social reality for both Alexander and the Persian barons. Green *Alexander of Macedon* 493 disagrees with both Fuller and Schachermeyr, stating that no knightly code required the Persians to adopt the formation they did and pointing out that the Greek mercenaries were in the forefront of the battle of Issus and Gaugamela.

<sup>37</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 84.

<sup>38</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 84—85. Green *Alexander of Macedon* 507 and 568 n72 rejects Arrian (1.16.6): "...Greek public opinion was something of which Alexander took notice only when it suited him; and the league served him as a blanket excuse for various questionable or underhand actions, the destruction of Thebes being only the most notorious". He adds that the argument that Alexander could not afford the services of the mercenaries until after Miletus does not explain the "almost hysterical savagery" with which he treated them.

experience and because of his detailed knowledge of the topography of the battle site, it is possible that his analysis of the battle is the most sound. But, the study of Ancient History is not a competition and scholars will, no doubt continue to interpret the sources in accordance with their particular situation, experience, prejudice and background

## APPENDIX V: HEPHAESTION

"Hephaestion was by far the dearest of all the king's friends; he had been brought up with Alexander and shared all his secrets. No other person was privileged to advise the king as candidly as he did, and yet he exercised that privilege in such a way that it seemed granted by Alexander rather than claimed by Hephaestion" (Curt. 3.12.16).

It is almost universally accepted that Hephaestion son of Amyntor had been brought up at court with Alexander and was his closest friend and his lover.<sup>1</sup> His activities before the battle of Gaugamela are poorly attested and derive mainly from the Vulgate tradition which depicts him as being close to the king and as having organisational rather than military talent. After the Battle of Gaugamela he features more prominently in the sources, sometimes in shared military commands, but more frequently in non-military operations such as founding cities, building bridges and securing communications.<sup>2</sup> He played an important and sinister role in the Philotas affair (Curt. 6.8.17, 6.11.10—11; Plut. *Alex.* 49.6) and after Philotas' death was promoted to joint command of the Companion Cavalry, a clear indication that he manipulated Alexander and benefited from their friendship.<sup>3</sup> The record of Hephaestion's dealings with individuals shows him to have been quarrelsome and incompatible by nature and in addition to Philotas, Callisthenes, Craterus and Eumenes were victims of his malice (Plut. *Alex.* 47. 6—7; Plut. *Mor.* 337a; Arr. 7.13.1; 7.14.9). In spite of this Alexander came to rely more and more on Hephaestion, especially after the disappointment of the Hyphasis mutiny.<sup>4</sup> It is not known when he became a *Somatophylax* (one of the elite Seven) but Arrian first lists him in this capacity in 325 (Arr. 6.28.4).<sup>5</sup> After the return from India, if not before, Hephaestion was made Chiliarch of the first hipparchy of the Companion Cavalry and was given the position of Grand Vizier so that officially he was second in rank only to the King.<sup>6</sup>

In the autumn of 324 in Ecbatana, Hephaestion fell ill with a fever. On the seventh day he disregarded the strict diet prescribed by his doctor and died after eating a boiled fowl and drinking a vast quantity of wine. Although the exact nature of his illness is not known Hephaestion's death is invariably linked with heavy drinking. Alexander's grief at the loss of his friend was excessive to the point of insanity and his frenzy of mourning included emulating Achilles by cutting his hair, shaving the manes of his horses and mules, tearing down city-walls, embracing the corpse of his Patroclus and refusing food and water. He vented his anger on Glaucias the physician who was executed, the temple of Asclepius, which was razed and in an attack on the Cossaeans, a barbaric people to the west of Ecbatana. An ostentatious and extremely expensive funeral was arranged at Babylon where Alexander, ominously, ordered the sacred fire of Persia to be extinguished for the duration of the rites. As his final tribute, or

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<sup>1</sup> Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 130.

<sup>2</sup> Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 130; Heckel *Marshals* 68, 71, 77.

<sup>3</sup> Heckel *Marshals* 68—71; Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 130 states: "... he was appointed joint commander (with Cleitus) of the Companion Cavalry, and rapidly proved his ability in Bactria, Sogdiana and India where he frequently held independent commands."

<sup>4</sup> Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 131; Heckel *Marshals* 72.

<sup>5</sup> Welles *Introduction and Notes* 294—295 n 1. Heckel *Marshals* 70—71 believes that he replaced Ptolemaios who died at Halicarnassus in the first year of the Asian campaign.

<sup>6</sup> Bosworth *Conquest and Empire* 157; Heckel *Marshals* 87; Wilken *Alexander the Great* 206. There is some uncertainty about the nature of the chiliarchy. Bosworth *Rumour and Propaganda* 131 states that the chiliarch was second only to the king and that apart from commanding the Immortals, the élite battalion of the Persian army, he had a major role at court which included ceremonial duties. Although there is no evidence of any specific administrative function the chiliarch was the king's agent, entrusted with confidential state business, especially in emergencies. This office, together with other Persian institutions was absorbed into Alexander's court and fell to Hephaestion in 324 and Chares' description of *proskynesis* scene in Bactria probably shows him performing his office's ceremonial functions. Hamilton *Plutarch: Alexander* 130—131 suggests that Hephaestion was appointed to this position because of his support for the policy of fusion and his ability to deal with Asiatics, as well as because of Alexander's affection for him.

perhaps as an act of desperation, Alexander, the son of Ammon, sent envoys to Siwah to inquire if Hephaestion might be worshipped as a god<sup>7</sup>

Hephaestion was very important and influential in Alexander's life, but scholars have often represented him as a dull, almost characterless reflection of Alexander, and this is certainly true of Hammond, who diligently reports on the various assignments carried out by Hephaestion,<sup>8</sup> but does not comment on his character or ability. He is ambivalent about the nature of the relationship between Alexander and Hephaestion. On the one hand he accepts that men who had been Royal Pages together frequently developed homosexual relationships<sup>9</sup> and states that homosexual and heterosexual relationships were equally reputable in ancient Macedonia and had no effect on achievement in war or politics.<sup>10</sup> But, he points out that the sources do not indicate that the loyalty and affection Alexander felt for his boyhood friends originated in sexual practices and suggests that these close friendships were due to sharing common aims and dangers during ten years of absence from their womenfolk.<sup>11</sup> In general, Hammond's treatment of Hephaestion avoids negative information which might reflect badly on Alexander or on his relationship with Hephaestion. Thus he does not mention Hephaestion's unsavoury role in the Philotas affair and sees nothing untoward in his promotion to the command of the Companion Cavalry, in spite of his unremarkable early career.<sup>12</sup> Nor does he mention the heavy drinking that was apparently the direct cause of Hephaestion's death, reporting only that he died after a brief illness (Arr. 7.14.1; Diod. 17.110.8; Plut. *Alex.* 72.1)<sup>13</sup>. Similarly Hammond does not include the information that for three days, Alexander refused food and water and "took no care of his health" (Arr.7.14.8) nor does he mention the various excesses of mourning, such as lying on the corpse, cutting his hair, executing the doctor and razing the temple of Asclepius (Arr. 7.14.2—6), all of which are reported by Arrian.

Commenting on Alexander's campaign against the Cossaei, Hammond makes a curious remark, "Alexander killed young Cossaeans as human sacrifices to the dead Hephaestion".<sup>14</sup> Indeed, Plutarch reports that Alexander called the slaughter of the Cossaeans "an offering to the shade of Hephaestion" (Plut. *Alex.* 72.3), but Arrian and Diodorus represent them as a troublesome and warlike tribe that lived by brigandage. It is undeniable that Alexander found solace for his grief in the campaign and in view of his mental anguish it is not surprising that what probably began as a justifiable action turned into a massacre. But, Hammond's off-hand suggestion that Alexander indulged in human sacrifice is problematic. The practice was abhorrent to the Greeks (and to all civilised people) and the justification that Alexander wished to immortalise his love for Hephaestion as conspicuously as Achilles had done for Patroclus because of an emotional bond with his ancestor is unconvincing, especially from a scholar who consistently praises Alexander for acting reasonably, respecting the prevailing legal systems, reducing the harshness of customary law, treating his enemies with honour and promoting civilisation, culture, peace, partnership and prosperity within his kingdom.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Heckel *Marshals* 88—89.

<sup>8</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 200, 212, 213, 219, 222, 237. These assignments include: bridging the Indus River, collecting supplies from the kingdoms of Porus and Taxiles after the battle of the Hydaspes River, helping to regain control of the territory of Bad Porus and commanding part of the army, including 200 elephants on the journey down the Indus River, in action against the Mallians and conducting the main army up the Tigris after the journey through Gedrosia.

<sup>9</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 245.

<sup>10</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 265.

<sup>11</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 246.

<sup>12</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 185 comments that Alexander chose Hephaestion, his closest friend, and Cleitus, who had saved his life at the Granicus River, as joint commanders of this important unit.

<sup>13</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 246.

<sup>14</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 246.

<sup>15</sup> Hammond *Alexander the Great* 256, 257, 260, 261, 269.

Green's treatment of Hephaestion is low-key and surprisingly conventional. He notes the special relationship that existed between Hephaestion and Alexander and records his occasional commands and assignments. He does not emphasise Hephaestion's role in the Philotas affair and comments that his promotion to joint command of the Companion Cavalry was his first major post and that his subsequent rise to power was not entirely based on nepotism since he was a competent, if uninspired officer.<sup>16</sup> In common with many modern historians he believes that Alexander designated Hephaestion as his most likely successor when he arranged for him to marry a daughter of Darius at the mass wedding at Susa and revived the office of Grand Vizier for him.<sup>17</sup> Only when narrating Hephaestion's illness and death does Green express his opinion about Alexander's *alter ego*:

"Tall, handsome, spoilt, spiteful, overbearing and fundamentally stupid, he was a competent enough regimental officer, but quite incapable of supporting great authority. His most redeeming quality was his constant personal devotion to Alexander".<sup>18</sup>

Green describes Alexander's violent and extravagant mourning in his usual acerbic fashion, but offers no new insights into his behaviour except to point out that Roxane became pregnant in the month after Hephaestion's death and the son she subsequently bore was Alexander's sole legitimate heir.<sup>19</sup>

Renault treats Hephaestion very favourably and in her scholastic work she comments that he "may be one of the most underrated men in history".<sup>20</sup> She maintains that after starting his army career in the Companion Cavalry he was promoted on merit, eventually attaining the highest military<sup>21</sup> and civil rank<sup>22</sup> and that he was successful in all his independent assignments, both military and civil,<sup>23</sup> but that his rivals who wrote history downgraded or ignored his achievements.<sup>24</sup> She believes him to have been highly intelligent, the only one of Alexander's contemporaries able to keep up with him, and notes that he corresponded with two philosophers and she mourns the loss of the correspondence between Hephaestion and Aristotle.<sup>25</sup> But it is his relationship with Alexander that really captures her attention and she suggests that this partnership conforms with Aristotle's teaching that the vital relationship in a man's life would be a friendship with another man which promoted and desired the greatest good for the partner.<sup>26</sup> Although Renault does not deny the sexual aspect of the relationship she frequently refers to Hephaestion's good qualities such as loyalty, discretion, tact and understanding and implies that Alexander was more psychologically than physically dependent on Hephaestion.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>16</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 348.

<sup>17</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 448.

<sup>18</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 465.

<sup>19</sup> Green *Alexander of Macedon* 467.

<sup>20</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 46.

<sup>21</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 145. Completely disregarding his role in the Philotas affair, Renault claims that Hephaestion had proved himself in command and would probably have been Alexander's choice to command the whole of the Companion Cavalry had he not been identified with the controversial policy of fusion.

<sup>22</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 198. She sees Hephaestion's promotion to Chiliarch (Grand Vizier) as the just reward for his support and strength during the march through the Gedrosian desert.

<sup>23</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 85, 101, 102, 106, 122, 163, 168, 171, 183, 185, 189, 192, 195, 198, 205.

<sup>24</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 46, 102, 141, 167, 185.

<sup>25</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 46—47, 50, 54. The two philosophers are Aristotle and Xenocrates, the head of Plato's academy.

<sup>26</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 46—47, 60.

<sup>27</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 46—47, 60, 83, 101, 110, 145, 160, 181.

Renault's analysis of the cause of Hephaestion's death is distinctive. She believes that after seven days Hephaestion was on the mend, when he suddenly took a turn for the worse and although Alexander hurried to his sickbed he was too late.<sup>28</sup> The sources claim that Hephaestion broke the strict diet imposed by his doctor and died as a result and Arrian says that Alexander hanged the doctor for giving the wrong medicine (Arr. 7.14.4; Plut. *Alex.* 72.1). Renault contends that a sudden crisis in a young man is hard to account for in medical terms, but would be consistent with poisoning, something she considers a distinct possibility since Hephaestion had many enemies.<sup>29</sup> This much of her argument is sound, but her suggestion that the doctor deliberately gave the wrong medicine, told the patient he might eat a meal, which could later be blamed for his death and then went away leaving the drug to do its work, goes beyond the evidence available.<sup>30</sup> She adds that in his frenzy Alexander hanged the doctor, although he was only an intermediary and in spite of the fact that knowledge of the identity of his principal would be lost.

In her interpretation of Alexander's grief Renault attempts to discover the psychological reason for his extreme behaviour. She suggests the lacuna in Arrian (7.12.7) may contain evidence of ongoing friction between Hephaestion and Eumenes, which started shortly after the march through the Gedrosian desert and flared up violently in the incident missing from Arrian.<sup>31</sup> Alexander apparently lost patience and publicly called Hephaestion a fool and a madman and threatened to kill them both if they quarrelled again (Plut. *Alex.* 47.6—7). Although there is no indication that Hephaestion and Alexander were still estranged when Hephaestion died Renault suggests:

"...the self-reproaches of bereavement are pitilessly retrospective; everything is remembered. Not long since, Alexander had put kingship before friendship, perhaps with good cause; but such things are re-lived with agony".<sup>32</sup>

She adds that Eumenes strove to prove his innocence by instituting elaborate and costly memorials and dedications (Arr. 7.14. 9).<sup>33</sup> Renault has no doubt that the loss of Hephaestion drove Alexander to the brink of insanity and points out that the embassy to Siwah asking for Hephaestion to be granted divine honours was a desperate attempt to ensure that in the world to come the deified son of Ammon could be reunited with the mortal son of Amyntor.<sup>34</sup>

Renault's discussion of Hephaestion's death ends with a novelistic twist as she names the person she believes was responsible for the murder:

"...Among those on whom they (Alexander's suspicions) fell, there is no word of the one with the strongest motive of all; who comforting him in his loss, must have most rejoiced at it. He was not to know that she had resolution and ruthlessness enough to have brought it about. That was not revealed till after he was dead. Then it was clear that no one can have hated Hephaestion as bitterly as did Roxane, who murdered his young widow the moment her hands were free".<sup>35</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 208.

<sup>29</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 209.

<sup>30</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 209.

<sup>31</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 207—208. Incidents that contributed to the friction include the burning of Eumenes' tent and Hephaestion's high-handed action in billeting visiting musicians in a house reserved for Eumenes. (Plut. *Eum.* 2.2—3).

<sup>32</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 209.

<sup>33</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 210.

<sup>34</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 210.

<sup>35</sup> Renault *Nature of Alexander* 210.

Hephaestion features prominently in her novels and in *Fire from Heaven* she emphasises Hephaestion's unquestioning loyalty and his positive influence on Alexander. It is perhaps a weakness of *The Persian Boy* that Renault emphasises the homoerotic aspect of Alexander's relationship with the eunuch and represents his relationship with Hephaestion as Platonic, transcending physical desire. The result is that her characterisation of Hephaestion is rather weak, his relationship with Alexander is obscured and he comes across as a devoted, gentlemanly brother who is completely overshadowed by his brilliant sibling. In addition the character of Hephaestion suffers because Bagoas, the narrator is completely focused on Alexander and does not mention events, such as Hephaestion's missions, which take place away from court. It comes as some surprise that the courteous Hephaestion of the novel is malicious enough to take the lead in torturing Philotas.<sup>36</sup>

In *The Persian Boy*, the narrative of the death of Hephaestion and Alexander's reaction is based on Arrian and Renault describes Alexander's torment and descent to near insanity with insight and sympathy, explaining some of his more bizarre actions in terms of his determination to emulate and surpass Achilles.<sup>37</sup> Although her scholarly work barely mentions the campaign against the Cossaeans, she gives the incident some prominence in *The Persian Boy* and notes that Alexander announced that he would dedicate any Cossaeans he killed to Hephaestion, as Achilles had dedicated Trojans on Patroclus' funeral pyre. But she avoids the concept of human sacrifice by having Bagoas comment that although he had dreaded a "sick-brained, furious slaughter" Alexander had come to his senses and killed only as the battle required it.<sup>38</sup>

It is extremely difficult for modern scholars to interpret the characters of Alexander's companions and commanders because the ancient sources provide so little information about them, preferring to concentrate exclusively on Alexander himself. This is especially frustrating in the case of Hephaestion, who was more important to Alexander than the sources allow, and modern scholars have no choice but to portray him in terms of their own understanding, background and preferences. Thus, Hammond, the soldier and administrator justifies his appointment to high office on the grounds that he was a brilliant commander and administrator, Green, rather more cynically almost ignores him and Renault, the romantic, characterises him as the perfect companion of the hero-king.

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<sup>36</sup> Renault *The Persian Boy* 169.

<sup>37</sup> Renault *The Persian Boy* 370—377.

<sup>38</sup> Renault *The Persian Boy* 379.

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