

THE MACEDONIAN ARMY ASSEMBLY IN THE TIME OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT

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THERE has been a tendency among modern scholars to see the Macedonian heavy infantry force which went to Asia with Alexander the Great as a politically and nationally conscious body with defined rights and a defined role in its relationships with the king. But a study of the ancient evidence reveals a degree of flexibility in the attitudes of Alexander and his men toward each other which would scarcely be possible in a rigidly defined political system. I shall argue in this paper that no theory, nor anything that can properly be called an ideology, influenced the relationship between the Macedonian king and the troops: it was essentially a simple relationship, governed solely by the personalities involved in, and the circumstances surrounding, any particular issue. I have divided the discussion into two parts. In the first part I consider the arguments used by scholars to prove the existence of a theoretical basis for the Macedonian state. In the second part I discuss the episodes which scholars have thought were influenced by the constitutional relationship between the Macedonian king and his men-in-arms.

I

So much has been written about the theoretical basis for the Macedonian state that any full survey of the literature is not practicable. The many arguments and interpretations of the evidence revolve around the fundamental work of F. Granier, and, although the evidence used by scholars varies, most follow his conclusions concerning the Macedonian assembly of the men-in-arms quite closely.¹ Granier's case in the briefest terms is this. The Macedonian kingship developed from the patriarchal style of kingship, known from Homer and parallel to the old Germanic heroic kingship. In these systems the king was chosen by the warriors to be their leader, but they were in a sense his equals and he lived among them as one of them, *primus inter pares*. When the state became more defined, a formal assembly of the men-in-arms existed beside the king, holding sovereign power. Then, as the people settled down and became more scattered, the assembly lost its powers and the nobility around the king usurped its position, in practice but not in theory. In the fourth century B.C., however, with the rise in importance of a regular force of Macedonian infantry, the assembly of the

I wish to acknowledge my debt to Professor E. Badian for his helpful criticism during the preparation of this article. The faults and the views expressed remain entirely my responsibility.

1. F. Granier, *Die makedonische Heeresversammlung: Ein Beitrag zum antiken Staatsrecht*, Münchener Beiträge zur Papyrusforschung, 13 (Munich, 1931). For reactions to Granier's work, see, e.g., the review by W. S. Ferguson, *Gnomon* 11 (1935): 518-22. Cf. W. W. Tarn, *Alexander the Great* (Cambridge, 1948), 2:375, 379, et passim; F. Schachermeyr, *Alexander der Grosse: Das Problem seiner Persönlichkeit und seines Wirkens*, SAWW, 285 (Vienna, 1973), pp. 34 ff.

men-in-arms revived and the kings, in particular Philip II, fostered its political role as a counterbalance against the nobility; it became an important support of the monarchy. Granier sees the exercise of the assembly's sovereign power in many events of the fourth century, in its right to designate the king or regent, and in its role as jury in cases where Macedonians were charged with high treason. In practice, he explains, the men-in-arms did not exercise a free choice in designating the king because the right of primogeniture dominated; and in most matters the king either did not allow them to exercise their powers or ignored their decisions. Nevertheless, Granier argues, the king and his subjects were conscious of their constitutional status, and this consciousness influenced their relationships.

Granier's case has been found acceptable by most scholars, and, though many of his arguments have been shown to be unsound, others have been supplied in support of his conclusion. A different interpretation, however, has been presented by P. de Francisci. In a study of the institutions of power in the ancient world he includes a long discussion of the Macedonian kingship.² He finds little trouble in dismissing Granier's arguments in support of the constitutional rights of the assembly of the men-in-arms, explaining the activities of the assembly as the result of an act of will on the part of the king rather than as the exercise of its constitutionally defined sovereign power. It was at the king's bidding that the men met at the accession and acclaimed their king. There was no question of their choosing their king, and the acclamation was a mere survival of the decision taken by the original followers to give their allegiance to the king. The custom that the subjects meet for certain judicial decisions was established by the kings themselves and was not, therefore, a constitutional right of the subjects. In short, the kingship was a personal one, and the state was founded upon the recognition by the king's followers of his innate superiority. The followers, in theory, had no rights except that of refusal to follow the king; and, once they had accepted the king, they had no rights of limiting his power.

In essence, these arguments concern the theory of the Macedonian state. Is the kingship an organ of the state with its powers dependent upon, and restricted by, the men-in-arms? Or does the kingship exist in the king independently of his subjects, unaffected by any decision of the men-in-arms and unlimited? André Aymard, in two articles published in 1950, settles the question of the nature of the kingship in favor of Granier.³ He argues that Granier's case is supported by the freedom of relations between the king and his subjects, which is particularly apparent in two passages from the ancient sources.

His first text comes from a speech Arrian puts into the mouth of Callisthenes on the occasion of the attempted institution of the custom of *proskynesis*. In arguing against the custom, Callisthenes makes a comparison between the Macedonian and Persian kingships, alluding to Alexander's

2. *Arcana Imperii*, vol. 2 (Milan, 1948), pp. 345-435.

3. "Sur l'assemblée macédonienne," *REA* 52 (1950): 115-37; "Basileus Makedonōn," *RIDA* 4 (1950): 61-97. (These articles have been reprinted in A. Aymard, *Études d'histoire ancienne* [Paris, 1967], pp. 143-63 and 100-122.)

descent from Heracles and Aeacus, and stating that the Argeadae οὐδὲ βία ἀλλὰ νόμῳ Μακεδόνων ἄρχοντες διετέλεσαν (4. 11. 6). This indicates, Aymard states, the existence of a defined and respected political *nomos* which was not dependent on the king, and which limited his actions.⁴ It follows that, contrary to De Francisci's belief, the kingship was not a personal sovereignty, but an organ of the state—as is indicated by the title used by the king, βασιλεὺς Μακεδόνων, and by the presence of "the Macedonians" beside the king in treaties of the third century B.C.⁵

With the *nomos* established, Aymard finds evidence of the power of the assembly of the men-in-arms within this *nomos*. Polybius (5. 27. 5–7) describes how Philip V, wanting to dispose of the commander of the peltaests, Leontius, sent him away to Triphylia and then arrested him. Leontius' troops, on hearing of his arrest, sent a deputation to the king calling on him not to take any further action against Leontius and not to bring him to trial in their absence, saying that, if the king did so, they would consider themselves held in very low esteem and despised by him. Polybius makes the comment that the Macedonians had always enjoyed this kind of freedom of speech (*isegoria*) in their relations with their kings. Although Philip was annoyed and put Leontius to death without delay, the members of the deputation seem not to have been punished for insolence or mutiny. They were obviously confident that they were within their rights when they let the king know what they felt and asked to be consulted on the fate of their leader. Aymard argues that Polybius' note about *isegoria* supports the view that they were acting according to an established tradition of behavior, which both the king and the men-in-arms recognized.⁶ He finds corroboration of this interpretation in a passage of Curtius. In his treatment of the trials which Alexander conducted before the Macedonian men-in-arms in 330 B.C., Curtius remarks, "de capitalibus rebus vetusto Macedonum modo inquirebat exercitus—in pace erat vulgi—et nihil potestas regum valebat, nisi prius valuisset auctoritas" (6. 8. 25).⁷ This passage, when taken with the text of Polybius, shows that the men-in-arms had this right as part of the Macedonian tradition.

Aymard continues that, once this is accepted, there can be little doubt that the political tradition also laid down the competence of the men-in-arms in the designation of their king. For, he points out, this right is much more basic than judicial rights, and must have existed if the judicial rights did.

In explanation of the insignificant influence which the men-in-arms usually had upon the conduct of affairs, despite these important rights, Aymard states that the assembly consciously refrained from using its powers: "Elle demeura un organe constitutionnel infiniment discret en général, et si docile

4. "L'assemblée macédonienne," p. 127.

5. "*Basileus Makedonōn*," pp. 75 ff.

6. "L'assemblée macédonienne," pp. 129 f.

7. E. Hedicke in his Teubner *editio maior* of Curtius Rufus (Leipzig, 1908) inserted *rex, indicabat* between *inquirebat* and *exercitus*; but he did so without manuscript authority. It is not necessary to accept this addition in order to make sense of the text, and for our purposes here I have ignored his suggestion.

à l'impulsion du souverain que celui-ci put l'utiliser à son profit sans risque de la voir entreprendre contre son autorité ou contre sa politique. Peut-être n'est-il pas excessif de voir dans cette discrétion, à peu près sans exemple ailleurs, un paradoxe; elle constitue, en tout cas, l'une des plus puissantes originalités de la Macédoine antique."⁸

These are the three central discussions of the theory of the Macedonian state, and I shall look briefly at each in turn. Granier's case is dependent upon his theory of the origin of the Macedonian kingship, and upon his interpretation of certain events of fourth-century Macedonian history.⁹ But, as Aymard points out, nothing can be known of the origin of the kingship.¹⁰ Any theory could be constructed only from the known workings of the kingship. This argument, therefore, is worth little. As for Granier's arguments from certain historical events, Aymard concedes that nothing can be shown from these, either, because those cases in which the people exercised political power need not have resulted from the working of a constitution, but may in each instance be explained simply as the result of the circumstances prevailing at the time.¹¹

De Francisci's case suffers from the same weakness as Granier's, in that it is dependent upon a theory concerning the origins of the kingship which is unsubstantiated. Nor is his idea of the theory behind the state borne out by what is known of the practice. If there was a defined constitution, under which the subjects recognized the absoluteness of the monarch and their total dependence upon him, it is difficult to see how it became customary for the Argead kings to consult them upon judicial matters. Such a custom surely has no place in a constitutionally absolute monarchy.¹²

Aymard's case is weakened because much of it is based upon evidence relating to the third century B.C. Further, his analysis and interpretation of the official usage of the title "king of the Macedonians" have recently been called into question. R. M. Errington has shown that there were no official royal titles in use among the Macedonians, and he concludes that no hidden traces of a Macedonian constitution can be found in them.¹³ We should, however, look at the texts used by Aymard to prove the existence of specific constitutional rights.

The first text is drawn from the speech of Callisthenes, as it appears in Arrian (4. 11. 6). For Aymard this text proves that there was a political

8. "L'assemblée macédonienne," p. 137.

9. For the details see Granier, *Die makedonische Heeresversammlung*, pp. 13–57, and for more detailed criticism see below, pp. 98 ff.

10. "L'assemblée macédonienne," p. 127. Herodotus is our only evidence on the origins of the Macedonian monarchy (8. 137) and his version was undoubtedly inspired by Argead propaganda. E. Ivanka, "Berghirtentum und Staatenbildung in Antike und Mittelalter," *Saeculum* 1 (1950): 357 ff., suggests that it may have some historical value. But in any case it does not support Granier's case. See also N. G. L. Hammond, *A History of Macedonia*, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1972), pp. 433 f.; and the interesting discussion of H. Kleinknecht, "Herodot und die makedonische Urgeschichte," *Hermes* 94 (1966): 134–46. The story clearly must reflect what the Macedonians of the fifth century B.C. believed about the Argead monarchy, but no reliable account of the origin can be reconstructed.

11. "L'assemblée macédonienne," pp. 128 f.

12. See also the remarks of Aymard, loc. cit.

13. "Macedonian 'Royal Style' and its Historical Significance," *JHS* 94 (1974): 20–37.

nomos among the Macedonians, which laid down a certain code covering the king's actions in particular situations. But the text is far from being good evidence, as it is drawn from a speech composed centuries after the event. The comparison between Persian "tyranny" and Greek "rule of law," or *nomos*, was commonplace, and it is just the sort of detail which might be worked into a speech in this context, whether it formed part of the actual speech delivered at the time or not. Even if, as some might accept, Callisthenes did actually use the words attributed to him in Arrian, he may not have been referring to a defined set of constitutional laws protecting the subjects from arbitrary decisions of the king. *Nomos* came to have the vague meaning of "the characteristic of a free society,"¹⁴ and it need have no more significance than this here. There is no doubt that the Macedonians looked upon themselves as free men and expected to be treated as such, but this does not mean that their freedom was safeguarded by specific statutes or recognized constitutional rights.

Once this basic text of Aymard is taken away, his other evidence, drawn from Polybius and Curtius, carries little weight. The text of Polybius (5. 27. 5-7) refers only to the freedom of speech enjoyed by the Macedonians in their relationships with the king. There is no reference to any specific right, and the only significance the passage has is that, when the Macedonians felt strongly enough about something, they told the king what they thought. Aymard's argument that Polybius took for granted the right of the people to participate in trials, and therefore emphasized Macedonian freedom of speech, is not convincing. If a specific right justified the peltasts' deputation to the king, then the comment about their freedom of speech is out of place: they were merely acting in accordance with the constitutional safeguards. Surely more significant for any discussion of the theory of state is Philip's reaction to the peltasts' message, and the fate of Leontius. The obvious conclusion to be drawn from the incident is that Leontius had no right of trial, and it seems perverse to try to use the evidence to prove that he did.

If Polybius' evidence does not support Aymard's case, then Curtius' comment about the army's, or people's, traditional role in capital cases (6. 8. 25) stands alone. As Aymard himself admits, not much reliance should be placed upon an uncorroborated text of Curtius. He was not a careful writer and had a tendency to generalize from particular instances, as well as to project political circumstances of his own time back into the time of Alexander the Great.¹⁵ Curtius says that it was a *vetustus modus* that the army take a leading part in the trials; if it was peacetime the *vulgus* took the role. The mention of the *vulgus* in itself raises doubts. Few scholars have found reason to accept the existence of any representative assembly of Macedonians apart

14. See the discussion in M. Ostwald, *Nomos and the Beginnings of Athenian Democracy* (Oxford, 1969), p. 32.

15. On Curtius' tendency to generalize, cf. E. I. McQueen, "Quintus Curtius Rufus," in *Latin Biography*, ed. by T. A. Dorey (London, 1967), pp. 17-43, esp. pp. 30 f. On his projection of circumstances of his own day back to Alexander's time, cf. E. Badian, rev. of M. J. Fontana, *Le lotte per la successione di Alessandro Magno dal 323 al 315* (Palermo, 1960), *Gnomon* 34 (1962): 381-87, esp. 382.

from the army.¹⁶ It would appear that Curtius, or his source, was trying to reconstruct constitutional procedure on the basis of a few examples of the army's involvement in trials. If there was no representative assembly in peacetime, this particular detail has been invented. If this was invented, perhaps the army's part also has been invented. It seems not improbable that someone, impressed by the participation of the army in trials during Alexander's reign, assumed that the judicial role was traditional.¹⁷

Even if Curtius' evidence is accepted, Aymard reads too much into it. *Nomos* in its narrow constitutional meaning, as Aymard uses it, has the meaning, "that which is recognized and acknowledged as the valid norm within a given milieu."¹⁸ The word presupposes that the institution or procedure has been agreed upon formally by the parties concerned. There can be no certainty that this is what Curtius meant by *vetustus modus*. It is likely that all he meant was that it was customary for the king to summon the army to take part in such trials. Or, following the line of De Francisci's argument, the army's participation was an act of will on the part of the king: it was a custom he was free to follow or not, as he wished.

If Curtius was thinking in constitutional terms, the passage still is not a good basis for Aymard's argument. For it can easily be demonstrated that Curtius does not distinguish between the narrow meaning of *nomos* and the vaguer meanings of words for "tradition" or "custom." Three chapters after his reference to the *vetustus modus* of the army, Curtius (6. 11. 20) attributes to the Macedonians a *lex* providing for the execution of all relatives of those found guilty of plotting to kill the king. This Curtius repeats in connection with the "Pages' Conspiracy," calling it a *mos* on this occasion (8. 6. 28); but he makes Alexander say in a speech that he had long ago abandoned the usage. Curtius here reveals a total disregard, or ignorance, of the subtleties of the words referring to constitutional practice. *Lex* is perhaps an acceptable Latin equivalent of *nomos* in its narrow constitutional meaning, in that it implies that the parties concerned have agreed to its provisions. But *mos* clearly falls short of this meaning, though there is some implication of general acceptance of its recommendations. But if it was a *lex* or a *mos*, Alexander should not have been able arbitrarily to discontinue it. If he was able to do so, then it was not a *lex* or a *mos*, but simply a general practice followed by the Argead kings, established by an act of will on the part of the king. It is generally agreed that Alexander was not bound by any *lex* or *mos* to execute

16. Cf. for instance the comments of Granier, *Die makedonische Heeresversammlung*, p. 49. Aymard, "L'assemblée macédonienne," pp. 131 f., casts doubts about the *communis opinio* that there was no civilian assembly, but he presents no supporting evidence or argument. P. Briant, *Antigone le Borgne: Les débuts de sa carrière et les problèmes de l'assemblée macédonienne*, Centre de recherches d'histoire ancienne, vol. 10 (Paris, 1973), pp. 237-350, has followed up Aymard's idea, arguing that it is more likely that there was a civilian assembly than an army assembly in the period before Alexander's reign. He invites comparison between a Macedonian assembly and the *ecclesia* at Athens (pp. 280 ff. and 334 ff.), but presents no solid evidence in support of his thesis.

17. The ancient evidence on these trials appears in Arr. 3. 26. 1-3, 4. 14. 2; Curt. 6. 7. 7 ff., 8. 6. 28 ff.; Diod. 17. 79. 1 ff.; Plut. *Alex.* 49.

18. For the definition, see Ostwald, *Nomos*, pp. 20 f.

the relatives of convicted traitors,¹⁹ and if Curtius' evidence has any validity at all, it can only mean that the Argead kings had been in the habit of following such a course of action. But the major point to be noted is that one cannot trust Curtius to have observed nice distinctions of constitutional usage.

To return to our text about the army's judicial role, Curtius uses the vague term *vetustus modus*. Though we know of only two occasions upon which men were tried before the troops,²⁰ it may be thought that the Argead kings were in the habit of using the army as jury. But it is surely unsound to use the passage as Aymard does, to indicate that a political *nomos* existed among the Macedonians, of which the right of the army to participate in trials was an important part.

The attempts of Granier, De Francisci, and Aymard to reconstruct a political *nomos* for the Argead kingdom are all unsuccessful. Their arguments revolve around intangible concepts and unprovable hypotheses which bear little relationship to the practice as revealed in the sources. Granier asks us to accept that in theory the people had defined rights, but in practice they played no effective role. De Francisci states that the king in theory had unrestricted power over his subjects, but in practice chose to allow them some power. The difficulties in Aymard's case are best summed up by Aymard himself. Concluding a long argument to prove the existence and powers of the assembly, he suggests that the assembly's "discrétion" in not using the powers it possessed is perhaps not paralleled elsewhere and is a paradox: "l'une des plus puissantes originalités de la Macédoine antique."²¹ It is indeed exceptional that a people who were conscious of their powers and rights should consciously deny themselves these rights, even when the king went completely against their wishes and against the whole spirit of the constitution. It is one solution to say that the Macedonians were an exceptional people in this respect, but another explanation of their "discrétion" may be thought more likely, namely that the people were not conscious that they had powers defined by constitutional statutes.

I would suggest, in view of these difficulties, that modern scholars have attempted to force the practice of Macedonian politics to fit preconceived theories which are out of place in the context of the unsophisticated Macedonian state. Aristotle, in classifying monarchies (*Pol.* 3. 1285a-b), recognizes that many monarchies can be described neither as absolute nor as constitutional. At one end of the scale he places the Spartan monarchy, as a constitutional monarchy in which the king's power is limited; and at the other end of the scale come the absolute monarchies. Between these extremes, he says, lie most monarchies. Later (*Pol.* 5. 1313a24 ff.) he specifies that the reason for the long survival of the Spartan and Molossian monarchies is that they are limited and that their subjects share power. He does

19. Cf. Tarn, *Alexander the Great*, 2:270; E. Badian, "The Death of Parmenio," *TAPA* 91 (1960): 324-38, esp. 332 f.

20. That is, the trials of Philotas, Alexander of Lyncestis, and Amyntas and his brothers in the autumn of 330 B.C., and the trial of the pages early in 327 B.C. For the sources, see n. 17.

21. "L'assemblée macédonienne," p. 137.

not mention the Argead kingship, although it too was longlasting, and although he is very familiar with it. This might be thought to imply that the Argead kings' power was not limited in any defined way, as the Spartan and Molossian kings' power was limited, and that the subjects did not share power. For, if the Argead kingship had presented an example of the constitutional monarchy Aristotle is discussing, it would surely have appeared.

Aristotle, then, seems to support the view that the Macedonian kingship lay between the two extremes, not absolute, but not limited by any defined constitution. Aristotle's testimony (albeit negative), together with the difficulties involved in any classification of the monarchy as absolute or constitutionally limited, points strongly to the conclusion that there was no constitution which either specified that the kingship was absolute or limited its power. All was determined by circumstances, as, for example, the personality of the king, the atmosphere of the times, the mood of the people. Some kings would be better able to ride roughshod over the wishes of nobles and people than others, and the relations of a particular king with his subjects would change from year to year.²² The conduct of affairs was governed by no particular expectation on the part of the people.

II

THE ROLE OF THE MEN-IN-ARMS IN POLITICS TO THE DEATH OF PHILIP

Granier finds three pieces of evidence relating to the period before Alexander which indicate the constitutional rights of the men-in-arms.²³ The chronographer Porphyry records that Amyntas III "was expelled by the Macedonians" (*FHG*, 3:691). Justin (7. 5. 9) records that Philip, after being guardian of Amyntas, son of his brother Perdiccas III, for a long time, "was forced by the people (*populus*) to take on the kingship." For Granier, these are the earliest examples of the men-in-arms exercising their right to depose and designate their king. That this right was recognized by the Macedonians is confirmed, he suggests, by an action of Argaeus, the pretender at the beginning of the reign of Philip II. Diodorus (16. 3. 5) states that Argaeus appealed to "those in Aegae" to welcome his return and become founders of his kingship. Granier explains that Diodorus' evidence shows that the inhabitants of the old capital town had originally had a special role in the designation of kings, when it had been the prerogative of the people. Their support still had special importance when the designation of the king had fallen to the men-in-arms.

Taking the last text first, it is not necessary to assume any survival of an old constitutional right to explain Argaeus' approach to the inhabitants of Aegae. As home of the Argead dynasty, Aegae was a prestigious place, but the passage does not show that the decisions of its population had special constitutional significance. N. G. L. Hammond has argued, plausibly,

22. This point is emphasized by Aymard, "L'assemblée macédonienne," p. 135, though he insists upon the constitutional safeguards being ever present.

23. *Die makedonische Heeresversammlung*, pp. 25 ff.

that Aegae was near modern-day Vergina,²⁴ which would mean that it was the closest place of any size to Argaeus' landing point at Methone, and therefore the first place he would approach.

As for the two examples of action by the men-in-arms, Granier reads too much into the evidence. It is not sound to press either Porphyry's reference to "the Macedonians" or Justin's to the *populus* to mean the men-in-arms. Justin's evidence in any case does not seem reliable. The idea of a man like Philip being forced by the people to take the throne is not plausible. As guardian to the child-king, he was in an ideal position to seize the kingship, just as Archelaus and Argaeus had done in similar positions.²⁵

It is now widely accepted that the Macedonian commoners made no substantial military contribution at least until the reign of Alexander II (369–368 B.C.), and probably not until the reign of Philip was well advanced.²⁶ Before this time they could not have interfered in politics because they never met as a corporate body and had no means of expressing an opinion. They were scarcely involved in the king's affairs at all.²⁷ Politics traditionally was the concern of factions of nobles, and the kings were made or broken by alliances among factions.²⁸ We should need very compelling evidence before we could accept that the affairs of Amyntas III and of Philip (in his early years) were influenced by the opinions of a corporate body of Macedonian commoners.

THE MEN-IN-ARMS AND DESIGNATION OF THE KING UNDER ALEXANDER

Pausanias chose to kill Philip on an occasion when very large numbers of people were present at Aegae, gathered from all over Macedonia and the whole Greek world, to celebrate a festival and the marriage of Philip's daughter.²⁹ Philip intended it to be a grand occasion. He had prepared a good army for the Persian expedition, which was about to start, and no doubt many of these Macedonian troops were present. Immediately after Philip's murder, Alexander appeared before the troops of Philip, addressed

24. *A History of Macedonia*, 1: 156 ff., calling the place Aegeae. He would seem to be right, against earlier identifications which placed it near Edessa: contra, Schachermeyr, *Alexander der Grosse*, p. 30.

25. Diodorus (16. 2. 5) has nothing about a period of regency, a fact which has led J. Ellis ("The Security of the Macedonian Throne under Philip II," *Ancient Macedonia: Papers read at the First International Symposium, held in Thessaloniki 26–29 August 1968* [Thessaloniki, 1970], pp. 68–75) to suggest that Philip assumed the kingship immediately upon his brother's death. This argument is not convincing, for, while it is conceivable that a period of regency could have dropped out of the tradition, it is difficult to believe that it could have been slipped in.

26. Cf. G. T. Griffith, "The Macedonian Background," *G & R* 12 (1965): 125–39, esp. 128. I have argued elsewhere ("The Army of Alexander the Great" [Ph.D. diss., Leeds University, 1974]) that the Macedonian commoners were not regularly levied until about 340 B.C.

27. On the general lack of involvement of the mass of the Macedonians in the affairs of Philip, cf. Demosthenes 2. 16–17. The lustration in the month of Xanthus was for the army, but the infantry could rarely have been involved, if at all. Polybius (23. 10. 17) implies that only cavalry participated, but Livy (40. 6) and Curtius (10. 9. 12) suggest that the infantry was involved. For a recent discussion, cf. W. Sontheimer, s.v. "Xanthikos," *RE* 9A (1967): 1334.

28. On the political development of Macedonia, see especially the excellent discussion by P. R. Franke, "Geschichte, Politik, und Münzprägung in frühen Makedonien," *JNG* 3–4 (1952–53): 99–111.

29. The sources on the murder of Philip are contained in Just. 9. 6. 11.; Diod. 16. 93. 5 ff.

them, and won their support for his kingship.³⁰ Granier suggests³¹ that in this episode there is evidence that the constitutional right of the men-in-arms to designate the king was recognized, both by Alexander and his supporters, and by the men themselves.

The other evidence relating to this section is drawn from Plutarch's *Life of Alexander* 34. This passage records that, after the decisive victory over Darius at Gaugamela, Alexander was acclaimed "king of Asia."³² Granier argues³³ that this refers to an official designation by the men-in-arms. An inscription in a temple at Lindos in Rhodes, which records the names of those who had made offerings there, states that Alexander had become lord of Asia,³⁴ and supports the view that Alexander used the style as his official title after the men's acclamation.

These two incidents fall far short of proving Granier's case. The sources state plainly that Alexander came before the assembled troops at Aegae after Philip's murder. But this would have been dictated by plain common sense, irrespective of whether the political tradition demanded it or not. The troops were there, and if Alexander did not win their allegiance, someone else might do so. It would have been lunacy for Alexander and his faction to ignore them. And there is no hint that the troops looked for any part in settling the question of the succession. They seem to have played a totally passive role, and they reveal no awareness of their supposed statutory right and duty as the representative assembly of the Macedonians. Antipater, the chief supporter of Alexander, directed the whole affair, and the troops allowed themselves to be carried along with the current.³⁵ The only feelings attributed (in the ancient sources) to the men were personal ones: selfish hopes, expectations, and fears.³⁶

As for Granier's other example, while it is reasonable to assume that Plutarch is referring to an acclamation by the troops, there is no indication that only Macedonians were involved, or that it was anything more formal than an outburst of enthusiasm. The temple inscription has no real bearing on the question: it may do no more than reflect the reality that Alexander had conquered and taken control of Asia.

30. The sources on the episode are not good, but they agree on this detail: Just. 11. 1. 1 ff.; Diod. 17. 2. 1 f. Cf. pseudo-Callisthenes' version in L. Bergson (ed.), *Der griechische Alexanderroman: Rezension B* (Uppsala, 1965), at 1. 26.

31. *Die makedonische Heeresversammlung*, pp. 29 f.

32. βασιλεὺς δὲ τῆς Ἀσίας Ἀλέξανδρος ἀνηγορευόμενος . . .

33. *Die makedonische Heeresversammlung*, pp. 31 f.

34. C. Blinkenberg, *Die Lindische Tempelchronik*, Lietzmanns Kleine Texte für Vorlesungen und Übungen, 131 (Bonn, 1915), p. 32, C 104 f.: βασιλεὺς Ἀλέξανδρος μάχαι κρατήσας Δαρείον καὶ κύριος γενόμενος τὰς Ἀσίας ἔθυσσε καὶ Ἀθῆναι καὶ Λινδίαι.

35. The role of Antipater is described only in pseudo-Callisthenes 1. 26, but there has been some acceptance of the detail among scholars. Cf. E. Badian, "The Death of Philip II," *Phoenix* 17 (1963): 244–50, esp. 248 f.; J. R. Hamilton, *Alexander the Great* (London, 1973), p. 42. Contra, B. Bosworth, "Philip II and Upper Macedonia," *CQ* 21 (1971): 93–105, esp. 103; K. Kraft, *Der "rationale" Alexander* (ed. H. Gesche), Frankfurter Althistorische Studien, 5 (Frankfurt, 1971), pp. 16 ff.

36. Just. 11. 1. 1 ff.

THE JUDICIAL ROLE OF THE MEN-IN-ARMS UNDER ALEXANDER

Granier finds three occasions upon which the men-in-arms were called upon to fulfill their role as a jury at trials.³⁷ The assassin of Philip, Pausanias, did not escape and there are varying versions of his end. *POxy.* 1798, as restored by U. Wilcken, reads [*sc.* 'Αλέξανδρος]. . . . [*πρὸς κρίσιν τοῖς Μ[ακεδόσι π]αρέδωκε[ν. οὗτοι δ'] ἀπετυπάν[ισαν αὐτόν*].³⁸ Granier builds his interpretation upon this text, even though the crucial words *πρὸς κρίσιν* are not in the original and the other sources mention nothing of a trial. Diodorus (16. 94. 4) states simply that Pausanias was killed as he tried to flee, while Justin (9. 7. 10) says he was caught and hung upon a cross.³⁹ Even if the text is accepted, it is difficult to imagine that there could have been a trial, with the Macedonian troops as jury. Pausanias had assassinated a popular king in front of a large crowd. His fate could not be in question. The strength of feeling among the people would have made anything like a trial impossible.

The other two occasions are better attested in the ancient sources: the trials of Philotas, Alexander of Lyncestis, and Amyntas and his brothers in 330 B.C.; and the trial of the royal pages in 327 B.C.⁴⁰ I give a brief outline of the circumstances. Two young Macedonians sought through Philotas to gain an audience with Alexander. Philotas, however, arranged no interview and it was subsequently revealed that they had wanted to report a plot to assassinate Alexander. Suspicion was aroused against Philotas because he had prevented the interview, and Alexander got together a case implicating him in the plot. First, Alexander brought the case before the *hetairoi* councillors,⁴¹ and then before the general assembly of the army. Curtius (6. 8. 23) says that six thousand troops turned up. Alexander made his case against Philotas; Philotas defended himself, but not successfully; and he was killed by the troops. After Philotas and his "associates" had been slain, one of Alexander's agents had Alexander of Lyncestis brought before the troops. He was given a chance to defend himself, but was also killed. Then Alexander brought Amyntas and his brothers, close associates of Philotas, before the army; they were not killed but freed from guilt.

In 327 B.C. Hermolaus led some of the royal pages in a plot to assassinate the king. The plot was uncovered, and, according to some versions, Alexander brought the pages before the army, where, amid threats to their lives, they confessed and were stoned to death by the troops.⁴² Callisthenes, whom

37. *Die makedonische Heeresversammlung*, pp. 41 ff.

38. *SBAW*, 1923, p. 153. Cf. *FGrHist* 148.

39. Certainty on the details cannot be reached. Cf. Bosworth, "Philip II and Upper Macedonia," pp. 91 ff.; *FGrHist*, 2D:534.

40. For the ancient sources, see n. 17.

41. That is, not the *hetairoi* cavalry; cf. G. Plaumann, s.v. "Ἑταῖροι," *RE* 8 (1913): 1374-79.

42. Arrian (4. 14. 2) indicates that his preferred sources, Ptolemy and Aristobulus, do not record that Hermolaus and the pages were brought before the army. These sources, however, give a by no means comprehensive account of Alexander's expedition; and it should probably be accepted that Alexander did call Hermolaus and the pages before an assembly of the troops. But it should also be pointed out that a historian may have invented the appearance of the pages before the troops in order to have an opportunity to display his rhetorical talents. Arrian records that the conspirators were stoned by the troops at the assembly, but Curtius (8. 8. 20) says that Alexander dismissed the assembly and handed the conspirators over to the rest of the royal pages, who killed them.

Alexander implicated in the plot, did not appear before the assembly, but was merely imprisoned or hanged.⁴³

Granier argues that these Macedonians were brought to trial before the Macedonian troops because it was established legal procedure that the assembly of the men-in-arms act as jury in such cases. The Macedonians in service in Asia under Alexander saw themselves as the legal representatives of the assembly of the men-in-arms, and were recognized as such by the king. Yet we may put beside these instances other cases in which Alexander put Macedonians to death apparently without trial before the troops: Menander was executed in 327 B.C. for refusing to command a garrison (Plut. *Alex.* 57); Cleander and Heracon were killed in 324 B.C. (Arrian 6. 27. 3 f.). Reasons other than those proposed by Granier can be found to explain why the men were involved in the trials of Philotas and the others.

It is now generally accepted that Philotas was innocent of any plot or act which could be properly seen as treason. Alexander wanted him removed, however, probably because he was the leading member of a noble faction which opposed the continued eastward progress of the campaign.⁴⁴ Had he wished, Alexander could no doubt have removed less prominent members of the expeditionary force inconspicuously, but the removal of Philotas, the son of Parmenio, commander of the Companion cavalry, who had the support of leading nobles of Upper Macedonia,⁴⁵ was more difficult. Parmenio was an old and eminent general, a veteran of Philip's campaigns, who had held command over many of the troops in the army before Alexander had come to power. He had been Alexander's second in command until he had been left behind in Media a few months before.⁴⁶ His prestige throughout the whole army was high. Alexander knew that he could not remove Philotas without also removing Parmenio, and this he could not hope to achieve without arousing considerable and widespread disapproval among the nobility and the men. Alexander was influenced to take the case before the troops because the life of a powerful man was involved. It was most important that he should be seen to have the open support of a large number of the troops.

In other circumstances the disapproval may not have mattered. Philip V, for instance, did not care about the disapproval of the peltasts when he killed Leontius (Polybius 5. 27. 5-7). But Alexander's men were in a most favorable position for expressing their disapproval. Alexander knew that he could not rely on them to accept docilely such offensive behavior as the removal of Philotas and Parmenio; and for this reason he called the men together, in order to involve them in the offense and so, to some extent, escape disapproval.

43. Arr. 4. 14. 3; Curt. 8. 6. 27 f.

44. Cf. Badian, "The Death of Parmenio," pp. 324-38; Schachermeyr, *Alexander der Grosse*, pp. 326 ff.; Hamilton, *Alexander the Great*, pp. 94 f.

45. Amyntas was a member of a noble family of Tymphaea. Cf. H. Berve, *Das Alexanderreich auf prosopographischer Grundlage* (Munich, 1926), vol. 2, no. 57. Other noble families will also have been close associates of Philotas' faction.

46. Cf. Berve, *Alexanderreich*, vol. 2, no. 606.

The case of Alexander of Lyncestis is different. He had been held under arrest for five years, since being accused of plotting against Alexander's life.⁴⁷ He could have had little support among the army or the nobles. J. R. Hamilton suggests that Alexander may have seen him as a potential rival to the throne,⁴⁸ and this may account for the decision to remove him. Undoubtedly Alexander was feeling threatened at this time; he seems to have found the trial of Philotas a suitable occasion for removing his namesake, when the feelings of the men were aroused. His appearance before the men should be looked upon as incidental to Philotas' trial.

The appearance of Amyntas and his brothers before the men may also be looked on as incidental to the removal of Philotas. Alexander does not seem to have been intent on destroying them: if he had wanted their deaths, they could scarcely have escaped.⁴⁹ One factor in his decision to bring them before the troops may have been a wish to discourage opposition from Philotas' faction. Another factor perhaps was a desire to demonstrate that he had been objective in his demand that Philotas be killed.

The circumstances of the removal of the royal pages were similar in many ways to those of Philotas' fall. The royal pages were the sons of the most prominent members of the Macedonian nobility. They were kept at the king's court during their youth, partly to encourage a community of interest with the royal household and partly as hostages, to guarantee the loyalty of their fathers.⁵⁰ The removal of a number of these young men was obviously a hazardous business. Their fathers would in many cases have held powerful positions in Macedonia: Alexander must have worried over their reaction. Many of the pages may have been influential with the troops. The infantry still served in territorial battalions and these probably felt some attachment to their local noble families.⁵¹ There was, therefore, as in the case of Philotas, good reason for Alexander to demonstrate as publicly as possible the guilt of the conspirators and to involve the troops in their deaths. No traditional legal procedure need be postulated to explain the episode.

Callisthenes, who was tutor to the pages and was thought at the time to be behind the plot, did not appear before the troops. In explanation of this, Curtius makes Alexander say that, as an Olynthian, Callisthenes did not have the same legal rights as a Macedonian. Granier uses this passage⁵² in his case to prove the legal rights of the Macedonian subjects. But interpretation of this evidence is difficult. For Olynthus had been destroyed by Philip in 348 B.C., and presumably its citizens became subjects of the king. It is by no means clear in what sense Callisthenes could have the legal

47. Arr. 1. 25. 1. Cf. Berve, *Alexanderreich*, vol. 2, no. 37.

48. *Alexander the Great*, p. 95.

49. Had he wished, Alexander could have implicated them directly in the plot against his life. They would then have been killed by the troops along with the other conspirators (Arr. 3. 26. 3; Curt. 6. 9. 38).

50. Cf. Berve, *Alexanderreich*, 1:37 ff.

51. Three battalions at least—the Elimiot, the Lyncestian and Orestian, and the Tymphaean (Diod. 17. 57. 2; no others are named)—came from Upper Macedonia, where local allegiance was strongest.

52. *Die makedonische Heeresversammlung*, pp. 46 f.

status of a citizen of Olynthus. In fact, it seems most likely that Curtius has invented the distinction in order to provide Alexander with an argument. F. Helmreich, in an analysis of the speeches of Hermolaus and Alexander on this occasion, shows that one of the themes of Hermolaus' speech is an attack upon Alexander for not daring to bring Callisthenes before the troops.⁵³ It is a charge that must be answered in Alexander's reply, and I would suggest that Curtius has invented the legal right which forms the basis of Alexander's answering point. That Curtius is capable of such invention is made more probable by a reference earlier in the text to a law among the Macedonians that the relatives of traitors be killed along with the guilty.⁵⁴ It is generally agreed by scholars that no such outrageous law existed.⁵⁵ It is probable that Curtius has invented it for dramatic effect.

The reference of Curtius should not, therefore, be seen as support for the existence of legal theory among the Macedonians. Certainly no such theory is needed to explain why Callisthenes did not appear before the troops. He was a Greek intellectual and may well already have been unpopular with the troops.⁵⁶ In any case, his life could have meant very little to them, and there could be no advantage to Alexander in bringing him before them.

It is, therefore, not necessary to assume a statutory legal procedure in order to explain these events. Nor is there any indication in the sources that the troops saw themselves as representatives of the Macedonian people, or even that they were conscious of being anything other than a body of soldiers called together by their general. Details of the proceedings at the trials are confused, but it would appear that they were directed not so much toward proving the guilt of the accused as toward arousing the emotions of the troops to such a pitch that they would kill him.

THE MUTINIES AT THE HYPHISIS AND AT OPIS

The mutinies at the Hyphasis and at Opis are the only occasions during Alexander's lifetime on which the Macedonian troops can clearly be seen asserting their collective will.⁵⁷ They are, therefore, most important in any discussion of the troops' attitudes to the king. The precise course of events at the Hyphasis is obscure, but there can be no doubt that the decision to turn about was forced upon Alexander by the spontaneous opposition of the troops.⁵⁸ At Opis, when Alexander discharged veterans of the Indian campaign, the troops mutinied, refusing to follow the king unless he led them all homeward.⁵⁹ It cannot be maintained that these mutinies were

53. *Die Reden bei Curtius* (Paderborn, 1927), pp. 183–201, esp. p. 201.

54. 8. 6. 28. The reference is picked up in the speech of Hermolaus (8. 7. 15) and the speech of Alexander (8. 8. 18).

55. See n. 19.

56. Berve, *Alexanderreich*, vol. 2, no. 408.

57. There is some evidence of lack of enthusiasm among the men to continue the campaign after Darius' death (Plut. *Alex.* 38; Diod. 17. 74. 3), but Alexander called them together and easily won them over. Cf. Granier, *Die makedonische Heeresversammlung*, pp. 34 f.

58. The sources are Arr. 5. 25–28; Curt. 9. 2; Diod. 17. 93–95. For a discussion of the difficulties, see Schachermeyr, *Alexander der Grosse*, pp. 492 ff.

59. The sources are Arr. 7. 6. 1 ff.; Curt. 10. 2. 9 ff.; Just. 12. 11. 1 f.; Plut. *Alex.* 70. 3 f.

examples of the Macedonian troops exercising a constitutional right as representatives of the Macedonian assembly. For, as Granier sees,⁶⁰ it is unthinkable that the soldiers should have had the constitutional right to disobey their commander. But F. Schachermeyr has seen in the mutinies a developing political consciousness among the troops, which at Opis had as its focal point opposition to the policy of fusion with the Iranians.⁶¹

It may be readily granted that on these occasions the troops expressed a unanimous opinion and spontaneously opposed the will of the king. They showed independence of thought and confidence to resist their commander. But to see in this the "stirrings of democracy"⁶² is to introduce political notions among the troops which find little support in the ancient evidence, or in what is known of the background of the troops.⁶³ The mutiny at the Hyphasis seems to have been nothing more than a refusal of the soldiers to follow a general who was making extreme physical demands upon them for inadequate returns. The mutiny at Opis is more plausibly interpreted as a symptom of the estrangement which had developed between Alexander and his men. Alexander's policy of fusion with the Iranians was perhaps an important factor in this estrangement, but it is not necessary to suppose that the troops saw themselves opposing the policy as representatives of the Macedonian people: rather, they were simply acting as soldiers who had lost their relationship with their leader.

THE ROLE OF THE TROOPS IN THE STRUGGLE FOR THE SUCCESSION AT BABYLON

In 323 B.C. Alexander died leaving no heir. The majority of the prominent officers supported the suggestion of Perdiccas that a decision about the succession should be postponed until Alexander's child by Roxane was born. But Meleager, with the backing of the mass of the infantry, pressed the claim of Alexander's half-brother, Philip Arrhidaeus. A compromise was reached and the details were settled before a gathering of the Macedonian troops. Philip Arrhidaeus was to be king, and, if a son was produced by Roxane, he would share the kingship. Other arrangements were agreed before the troops, to provide for the command of the army and the administration of the empire, but these were in large part overridden when Perdiccas took over the direction of affairs.⁶⁴

60. *Die makedonische Heeresversammlung*, pp. 34 f.

61. *Alexander in Babylon und die Reichsordnung nach seinem Tode*, SAWW, 268. 3 (Vienna, 1970), pp. 152 f.

62. "Eine demokratische Unterströmung"; Schachermeyr, *Alexander in Babylon*, p. 152.

63. At least three out of the seven battalions of Macedonian heavy infantry were drawn from districts of Upper Macedonia (see n. 51). (For the total number of battalions see R. D. Milns, "Alexander's Seventh Phalanx Battalion," *GRBS* 7 [1966]: 159-66.) It is possible that more of the battalions came from Upper Macedonia (Berve, *Alexanderreich*, 1:114 f., suggests that all of them did). The men of Upper Macedonia had in general led a seminomadic pastoral existence until they had been brought down from the hills into settled communities on the plains. Their political experience could have been only of the most primitive kind. Cf. the discussions of Ivanka in "Berghirtentum und Staatenbildung," and Franke in "Geschichte, Politik, und Münzprägung."

64. The sources are Arr. *Diad.* 1 ff.; Curt. 10. 6-10; Diod. 18. 1 f.; Just. 13. 1 ff. For a full discussion of the evidence, see Schachermeyr, *Alexander in Babylon*. For a less legalistic approach, see G. Wirth, "Zur Politik des Perdiccas in 323," *Helikon* 7 (1967): 281-322, esp. 284 f.; R. M. Errington, "From Babylon to Triparadeisos: 323-320 B.C.," *JHS* 90 (1970): 49-77, esp. 50 ff.

Granier argues⁶⁵ that this episode again shows the awareness of the Macedonian troops that they were the representatives of the assembly of the men-in-arms and that the king must be formally instated by them. He points to a passage of Curtius in which Perdiccas addresses the army. Perdiccas states that it lies in the power of the army to name its head ("capite opus est; hoc nominare in vestra potestate est," 10. 6. 8). Yet no such awareness need be supposed to explain the participation of the troops, and Curtius need not be referring to any constitutional power held by the army. The support of the army was the only possible basis of power on which the officers at Babylon could rest their political ambitions. This practical necessity is quite enough to explain the attitude of the officers and the participation of the troops. And Curtius' passage may be interpreted to refer to the reality of the army's decisive role in this particular situation, and not to any theory of state.⁶⁶

Schachermeyr interprets the role of the troops in the settlement at Babylon as marking the point at which the proper function of the assembly of the men-in-arms was realized.⁶⁷ For not only did the troops intervene to protect what they saw as the national interest, but the nobles recognized their right to intervene. Thus a true consensus of the Macedonian people was reached, through the constitutional process of a formal assembly. In supporting the claims of Philip Arrhidaeus, the troops rejected the broad imperialist policies of cooperation with the Iranians and supported a return to the more narrowly nationalistic aims which they identified with Alexander's father.

It seems unnecessary to see any political motivation or nationalism behind the troops' decision to support Philip Arrhidaeus. Their views can be explained in much simpler, more personal terms, which, I suggest, are more in keeping with the general background and experience of the men. They had been led by Alexander through a decade of hard fighting, only to be asked at the end to share the fruits of their victory with the conquered, and to be asked also to share their king with them. They had become alienated from Alexander, therefore, in the last years of his reign. The proposal presented to them by Perdiccas was that a decision concerning the succession be postponed until Alexander's child by Roxane was born in several months' time. The alternative suggested by Meleager was that the adult son of Philip, half-brother of Alexander, be made king immediately. Schachermeyr reasons that the men decided between the two proposals on the basis of their awareness of the national interest, but their response was surely not so intellectual. The child of Roxane was not yet born; it might be female. It would certainly be semi-Iranian. This was hardly likely to appeal to the troops, in view of their feelings on this subject. On the other side, the nearest male relative of Alexander was available, the son of Philip who had done

65. *Die makedonische Heeresversammlung*, pp. 58 ff.

66. E. Badian in his review of Fontana points out that Curtius seems to see the succession to Alexander in terms of the succession to Augustus.

67. *Alexander in Babylon*, pp. 150 ff., 168 ff.

so much for the Macedonians. The troops reacted as they did, not because of their political experience as Macedonians, but because of the personal relationship they had had with Alexander.

CONCLUSION

The Macedonian monarchy was not governed by a constitution which laid down the political rights of the king and subjects. The Macedonians who fought under Alexander reveal no awareness of any such constitution and no political consciousness. They intervened in decision-making only when the king called upon them for support, or when personal suffering drove them to oppose his will. In every case their reactions can be understood simply in terms of the relationship between soldiers and their leader, a relationship unaffected by any ideological influences.

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